Università degli studi di Torino

Review Process

Abstracts submitted to this Learning Teaching and Training Activity (LTTA) have been double-blind peer reviewed before final acceptance to the LTTA. Many thanks to the reviewers who helped ensure the quality of all the submissions.

Ethics and Publication Malpractice Policy

IDEAL Consortium adheres to a strict ethics and publication malpractice policy for all publications– details of which can be found **here**.

LTTA Proceedings

The LTTA Proceedings is a digital book with an ISBN and ISSN. The proceedings have been submitted to a number of accreditation, citation and indexing bodies including Elsevier Scopus.

An Open Space to discuss the relationship between inclusion and online learning e-LTTA Proceedings 9-11 November 2021

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Preface

In November 2021 the partners of the Improving Digital Education for All Learners (IDEAL) project, an Erasmus Plus-funded collaboration between nine partners (representing universities, vocational learning providers and specialists in inclusion and communication) met together in Torino for a knowledge and practice sharing event, intended to promote knowledge and awareness of inclusion in the context of access to and delivery of online learning, and to reflect on what understanding had been gathered in reviewing the impacts of online learning during the early days of COVID-19, the global pandemic. The event was hosted jointly by the University of Turin (UNITO) and the Istituto dei Sordi di Torino (IST), which specialises in inclusive education for those with severe hearing impairment and promotes better understanding of the d/Deaf community and culture. The three-day event, was itself a hybrid event where some of the partners were able to meet face to face, and others participated online due to travel restrictions. 13 participants attended face to face and were joined by 11 participants online. In total there are 25 abstracts contributed by those involved and their colleagues. All submissions were peer-reviewed by colleagues within the partnership.

The participants included experts in higher education and vocational learning pedagogy, higher degree students and academics, experts in inclusion (hearing impairment, sight impairment and cognitive impairment specialists) qualification development, training of trainers, and learning materials development. IDEAL's innovation exists in the use of technology to drive solutions to empower tutors to re-think learner engagement and pedagogy. The project is seeking to develop and trial creative and innovative online/blended delivery methodologies, to further the understanding of the limitations and opportunities technologies in a learning setting. The use of innovative pedagogies and technologies is being explored in the context of a demand for more inclusivity in learning design. The objective for this event was to pair the knowledge of the inclusion experts with the experience knowledge of those teachers and facilitators who represent other partners to identify how inclusion can be woven into the practical project outputs; a Digital Competency Framework for Tutors a Digital Pedagogy Toolkit, a Digital Pedagogy Report and a Becoming Online-ready Roadmap for learning institutions. This will also influence the applications of inclusion in pedagogy, the election and application of resources and also the selection and use of learning systems.

The list of titles and contributors are as follows:

- Alix Lewer, MRCSLT: **What are hidden communication disabilities - and how do they impact on digital learning**. Include.org (UK)

- Dr. Enrico Dolza: **Deaf History and Culture in Italy**. Istituto dei Sordi Di Torino (Italy)

- Francesca Giovanna Maria Gastaldi: **Wellbeing and mental health in university students with disabilities**. Department of Philosophy and Education Sciences, University of Turin (Italy)

- Giuseppe Boano: **The Integration of d/Deaf Students in Italian Higher Education Institutions**. Istituto dei Sordi di Torino (Italy)

- Martina Berchiatti: **The contribution of student-teacher relationship in school adjustment of students with special needs**. Department of Psychology, University of Turin (Italy)

- Dr. Sofia Mastrokoukou; **Inclusive teaching environments for students coming from vulnerable groups: Utopia or an ongoing process?** Department of Psychology, University of Turin (Italy)

- Claudio Longobardi: **Student-Teacher relationship in higher education: a challenge to promote knowledge and awareness of inclusion**. Department of Psychology, University of Turin (Italy)

- Diego Di Masi & Rosa Bellacicco: **Inclusion and Higher Education: Students with Disabilities perspective**. University of Turin (Italy)

- Matteo Angelo Fabris & Shanyan Lin: **Power of groups in international relations. What the analysis of TDI measures tell us**. Department of Psychology, University of Turin (Italy)

- Prof. Paolo Bozzato: **The impact of resilience and future orientation on academic achievement -the mediating role of social support**. Department of Human Sciences, Innovation and Territory University of Insubria (Italy)

- Shanyan Lin & Matteo Angelo Fabris: **Resilience and psychological distress in the transition to university: The mediating role of emotion regulation**. Department of Psychology, University of Turin (Italy)

- Mandy Crawford-Lee: **A Policy and Learning Perspective**. University Vocational Awards Council (UK)

- Anna Boumpouzioti: **EU projects' experiences on cultivation of digital skills**. University of Thessaly (Greece)

- Meropi Koutsounaki & Maria Papadopoulou: **Towards a Definition of Digital Pedagogy**. Hellenic Open University (Greece), Kainotomia Innovation Center for Lifelong Learning (I.C.L.L) (Greece) & Department of Social Administration and Political Science of Democritus University of Thrace (Greece).

- Dr. Stan Lester & Mandy Crawford-Lee: **Learning from digital adaptations to the pandemic: enhancing work-based higher education**. University Vocational Awards Council (UK)

- Breda Leyne & Robert Alison: **An opportunity to influence Education Technology to become more inclusive**. Cogito Development Projects (UK)

- Dr Stan Lester: **Linking digital and workplace learning through scaffolding reflective practice**. University Vocational Awards Council (UK)

- Dr. Tim Pascoe: **Digital Inclusion – What do we mean and where are we?** Cogito Development Projects (UK)

- Meropi Koutsounaki: **Crossing the digital divide**. Hellenic Open University (Greece) & Kainotomia Innovation Center for Lifelong Learning (I.C.L.L) (Greece)

- Dr. Tim Strickland: **Delivering learning in the COVID-19 pandemic – a reflection on coping strategies**. Further Education Sussex (UK)

- Breda Leyne: **COVID-19 – Challenges in virtual learning- a student experience**. Cogito Development Projects (UK)

- Irene Valachis – Ferro: **COVID-19 as external shock to rethink learning processes and the importance of inclusiveness**. Department of Social and Political Sciences, University of Milan (Italy)

- Alessandro Mignogna, Giulia Ricci, Michele Settanni & Davide Marengo: **Passive Instagram activity, well-being and academic performance during the COVID-19 pandemic**. Department of Psychology, University of Turin (Italy)

- Prof. Mustafa Hilmi Çolakoğlu & Özlem Kalkan: **Leaving nobody behind; inclusion issues during COVID-19**. Nevşehir Hacı Bektaş Veli University (Turkey)

- Robert Allison: **Post-pandemic reflection - an opportunity to improve the quality of blended/online learning**. Cogito Development Projects (UK)

- Prof. Mustafa Hilmi Çolakoğlu & Dr. Öğretim Üyesi Gökçe **Special education teachers' views on distance education processes during the COVID-19 epidemic**. Nevşehir Hacı Bektaş Veli University (Turkey)

Participating partners:

- Cogito Development Projects Limited (UK)
- Include.org (UK)
- Istituto dei Sordi di Torino (Italy)
- Further Education Sessex (UK)
- Kainotomia Innovation Center for Lifelong Learning (I.C.L.L) (Greece)
- Nevsehir Hacı Bektaş Veli University (Turkey)
- University of Turin (Italy)
- University of Thessaly (Greece)
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Session 1

Moderator: **Matteo Angelo Fabris**
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What Are Hidden Communication Disabilities - And How Do They Impact On Digital Learning?
(Overview Presentation)

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SLCN (speech language and communication needs) or 'communication disabilities' affect up to 1 in 5 of the UK population at some point in their lifetime. These difficulties can be developmental or acquired and may affect expressive, receptive or social pragmatic communication. Educators in HE and FE systems may or may not be aware of these difficulties in individual students.

This presentation is intended to give an overview of the range and general prevalence of SLCN and some clarification of the terminology used in this area.

While the clinical population is highly heterogeneous, the presentation provides a broad summary of the range of psychological, physical and socio-economic consequences of speech language and communication needs, and introduces some of the limited evidence of the consequences of enforced digital learning environments for students with these difficulties.

The context of this presentation sits within a social model of disability, in which the challenges experienced by the individual result from barriers and lack of reasonable adjustment in the environment, as opposed to being an inherent result of a medical condition. In this case the environment in question is a communication environment; all learning environments are, by definition, communication environments, raising the question of what reasonable adjustments may be required of educators delivering online learning.

Keywords: Communication Needs; Autism; Learning Difficulties; Receptive language; Online Learning.

Deaf History And Culture In Italy

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The Turin Institute for the Deaf has been providing education and rehabilitation for d/Deaf people for two hundred years. The educational intervention is carried out by staff specialised in sensory disabilities and trained by the institute itself.

In Italy the d/Deaf population is 0.1% of the total, which means that there is one d/Deaf person for every thousand inhabitants.

The term "deaf" represents a very complex and varied reality.

Sign Language is used by people who become d/Deaf in adulthood (Late Deafened), or by people who were born d/Deaf or became d/Deaf before the acquisition of language- defined as Early d/Deaf. This last category includes: a) those who have a deficit of the hearing apparatus accompanied by a speech disorder; b) and those who belong to a linguistic minority, sharing a common language, traditions, social rules. Those that consider themselves part of a linguistic minority are not necessarily d/Deaf, but they feel part of the d/Deaf community, such as KODAs (Kids of Deaf Adults).

Sign language is a real language, endowed with phonological, morphological and syntactic structures and has a dedicated cultural community that uses it. The grammar of Sign Language is different from the grammar of the historical-oral language of the country of origin.

It should be pointed out that sign language is not universal, but like all languages, sign languages vary in time and space and each d/Deaf community has developed its own sign language.

Today, on an international level, d/Deaf communities started to use developed International Sign, a kind of desperado sign language, developed and promoted by the World Federation of the Deaf to enable communication between d/Deaf people of different nationalities.

Keywords: d/Deaf; Sign Language; KODAs; International Sign.

Wellbeing and mental health in university students with disabilities

Francesca Giovanna Maria Gastaldi
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The literature shows that the number of students with disabilities attending University has constantly increased in recent years. However, the study of inclusion processes is at present limited.

At the same time, a consistent increase in mental health problems has been observed in the last few years in the population of university students and, in this regard, it should be emphasised that university students with disabilities report higher rates of anxiety, suicidal ideation and suicide attempts than their non-disabled peers.

In relation to these aspects, the literature shows that perceived social support can play a

significant role in moderating mental health problems in university students. Several studies have shown that students with disabilities living in residential communities ('campus') are characterized on average by a higher sense of belonging and higher levels of academic success, compared to students living in other accommodations. Specifically, a protective role against the manifestation of psychological distress was found to be played by the possibility of sharing specific contexts of daily life with other students with the same type of disability.

Therefore, these findings invite us to consider campus-type university communities (living-learning communities) as contexts able to support the development of a sense of community and social support among peers.

Future research could explore whether these disability communities can be associated with the development of a positive disability identity.

It would also be interesting to investigate in the future the role played by student communities, about university students with disabilities who have multiple marginalized identities.

Keywords: Students With Disabilities; University Students; Wellbeing; Living-learning Communities; Mental Health.

The Integration Of d/Deaf Students In Italian Higher Education Institutions

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In Italian Education history, the 20th century will be remembered as the last stage of on age-old process of inclusion of d/Deaf people in the aducability framework following the adoption of Law 17/99 which was approved by the Italian Parliament on the 28th January 1999.

This was after two thousand years during which d/Deaf people were regarded as individuals without language and thought. The University of Turin is providing a wide range of different services customized to the needs and interests of d/Deaf students.

The number of d/Deaf students has increased significantly in the last 15 years and, on average, about 30 d/Deaf students attend the university each academic year. The services provided comprise of specialized activities to support d/Deaf students to access lectures and other university activities, in order to facilitate the interaction and communication with their teachers and peers. Interpreters and communication assistants create individualized plans, under the supervision of specialized staff and collaboration with the Turin Institute of the Deaf in order to ensure the successful inclusion of d/Deaf students.

Further efforts should be undertaken to improve offered career guidance and accessibility of information within universities. A lack of information is probably one of the reasons for the low rate of participation of d/Deaf students in international mobility programs, but also for poor choices at the enrollment stage.

Keywords: Inclusion; d/Deaf Students; Higher Education Institutions; Support; Services.

Inclusive education:
The contribution of student-teacher relationship in school adjustment of students with special needs

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Children with disabilities are among the world's most vulnerable, marginalized and stigmatized populations.

Despite the increased prevalence of students with disability included in mainstream schools and the well- established benefits of their inclusion in educative contexts, they could be at greater risk for problems with school adjustment.

The quality of relationships between students and their teacher (STR) is considered relevant because it has an impact on students' well-being, development and success at school.

This presentation will illustrate the main findings of three studies conducted in primary and secondary Italian schools. The aim was to explore the role of STR in school adjustment among groups of students with different types of neurodevelopmental disorders (NND) and other special education needs (SEN), in comparison with their peers with typical development. The sample included students who stutter, with attention deficit-hyperactivity disorder, with learning disabilities, and with other SEN. Data was collected through quantitative methods and statistical analysis was conducted.

Results highlight that, compared with typically developing peers, some groups of students with disability are more at risk of problems in school adjustment, and that STR has an impact on it.

Findings provide an in-depth knowledge about the role of STR, and other variables, in school adjustment of students with DDN/SEN in primary and secondary school. Results might inspire future research focused on the topic of STR and school adjustment of students with disability in higher education contexts.

Keywords: Children with Disabilities; Special Education Needs; Student-Teacher relationship (STR).

Inclusive teaching environments for students coming from vulnerable groups: Utopia or an ongoing process?

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Students coming from vulnerable groups need a different teaching approach that can facilitate their learning process.

The study begins by exploring the concept of vulnerability, drawing from the extant literature in other fields, and identifying critical approaches that have been used in these fields, which can potentially be used in a Greek Higher Education Institution (HEI). Based on the theoretical frameworks for exploring vulnerability, the study presents some preliminary results concerning the teaching style that students from vulnerable groups prefer.

The research ends with emerging findings and early implications for strengthening processes, which might help in interrogating student vulnerabilities in Higher Education.

Keywords: Vulnerability; Vulnerable Students; Higher Education; Learning Needs; Teaching Styles.

Student-Teacher relationship in higher education: a challenge to promote knowledge and awareness of inclusion

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The relationship between teachers and students plays a crucial role in the psychosocial development of children and adolescents. The literature is replete with studies that have examined the relationship between teacher-student relationships (TSR) in typical and atypical development and various outcomes over several decades. Few studies, however, have addressed TSRs in higher education and, in particular, the impact of online learning during COVID-19 with a student with learning disabilities (LD). However, in 2017, unofficial surveys by the Italian Ministry of Education recorded 6,500 students with learning disabilities. In 2020, there were 16,084 university students with LD: an exponential growth.

This review aims to understand the role of TSR in higher education during the COVID-19 pandemic among students with learning disabilities. Searches of three electronic databases (PsychINFO, CINAHL, and ProQuest) were conducted. Twenty-one peer-reviewed articles published between 2020 and 2021 were included in the study. The results demonstrate the Importance of

technological use of appropriate tools for learning for students with LD and the supportive role of the teacher in promoting motivation and interventions to improve student engagement. Recommendations for educators and researchers are provided.

Keywords: Teacher-student relationship; Higher Education; Learning disability; COVID-19; On-line learning.

Inclusion and Higher Education: Students with Disabilities perspective

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Since the middle of the last century, recommendations from international organizations have increasingly promoted the creation of educational environments that are equal and open to diversity (UNESCO, 1994). With respect to persons with disabilities, the United Nations Convention (UN) on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN, 2006) granted the full enjoyment of human rights in all areas of society, including the right to academic integration and lifelong learning. This position was reiterated in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which emphasizes the importance of ensuring equal access to all levels of education and training for people with disabilities by 2030 (UN, 2015). Like other European countries, Italy has sought to draft and implement legislation focused on the inclusion of students with disabilities in higher education (HE). Law No. 104/ 92 (Framework Law for Support, Social Integration and Rights of Persons with Disabilities) and Law No. 17/99 (Integration and Amendment of Framework Law No. 104 of February 5, 1992) establish the legal framework and introduce the right to reasonable accommodation; Italy also ratified the 2006 Convention UN in 2009. These intensive reforms have led to an increase in the number of people with disabilities in universities over the years. However, barriers to full participation of students still exist (Di Masi & Bellacicco, 2017).

The study conducted at the University of Turin (Northern Italy) aims to analyze the experiences of students with disabilities and assess their abilities in academic life. Following the Capability Approach (Sen, 1999), a participatory research method with structured focus group discussions was used (Biggeri & Ferrannini, 2014). Fifty students with different types of disabilities participated in the study, selected through purposive sampling.

Two important findings emerged from the data: (a) the essential value, beyond the learning dimension, of being able to use academic educational spaces, move off campus, and socialize with peers; and (b) the tendency for performance to vary by type of disability, particularly for students with visual impairments, who still experience relatively lower levels of mobility on and off campus and a lower sense of respect in the academic community.

Keywords: Educational Environments; Higher Education; Students with Disabilities; Barriers; Inclusion.

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SESSION 2

Moderator: **Sofia Mastrokoukou**
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Power of groups in international relations. What the analysis of TDI measures tell us

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The transition from high school to university forces young adults to face multiple challenges and it is considered by different scholars as a period of potential threat and acute stress. The aim of the study was to describe the relationship between resilience, emotion regulation, and psychological distress during the first year of university. The convenience sample consisted of 417 first year university students (250 females, 60%), aged 18-33 (M_{age}=19.87, SD_{age}=1.47). They were recruited from an Italian university.
The Resilience Scale, the Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale-18 and the Depression Anxiety Stress Scales-21 were used to measure resilience, emotion regulation, and psychological distress respectively. Results showed that there was a negative correlation between resilience and difficulties in emotion regulation, depression, anxiety and stress; while there was a positive correlation between difficulties in emotion regulation and depression, anxiety, and stress. In addition, results also indicate that difficulties in emotion regulation may play a significant mediating role in the association between resilience and psychological distress. Higher education institutions may benefit from these findings and develop or readjust intervention programmes for first year students in order to ensure their successful transition.

Keywords: University Transition; Higher Education; Resilience; Emotion Regulation; Psychological Distress.

The impact of resilience and future orientation on academic achievement. The mediating role of social support

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Several factors contribute to academic achievement, among which there are resilience (i.e., the ability to succeed despite barriers that make it difficult academic success) and future orientation (i.e., an individual attitude toward their future). In the

attempt to study the mechanisms underlying these relationships, it seemed important to look at the role played by social support (i.e., the experience of being valued and loved by others), since it is described as both a buffer against life stressors as well as an agent promoting academic success. Thus, this study examines the mediation effects of social support (from family, friends, and significant others) that accounted for the link between resilience/future orientation and academic achievement.

A convenience sample of 954 first year high school students (522 females, 54.7%), aged 13-15 (M_{age} = 13.76, SD_{age} = 0.47) completed online questionnaires on resilience and future orientation (The Design my Future), social support (The Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support), and self-reported Grade Point Average (GPA). Results showed that resilience, future orientation, social support, and GPA were all significantly and positively correlated with each other. In addition, social support was a significant mediator in the relationship between resilience/future orientation and GPA. These results highlight the potential benefits of social support for students to achieve academic success in hard times, such as the COVID-19 pandemic or school transitions. Higher education institutions may benefit from these findings and develop social support programs for first year students in order to promote their academic success.

Keywords: Resilience; Future Orientation; Social Support; Academic Achievement; High School.

Resilience and psychological distress in the transition to university: The mediating role of emotion regulation

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Matteo Angelo Fabris
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University of Turin

The path from high school to university can be defined as a challenging period for students. The aim of this study was to identify the associations between self-efficacy, academic achievements, and regulation in first-year university students in northern Italy.

We recruited 374 first-year students (230 females, 61.5%), between the ages of 18 and 33 (M = 19.86, SD = 1.51). Students were successively invited to participate in the study upon receipt of the student's informed consent. They were assured that their participation was voluntary, their responses would remain confidential, and that they could withdraw at any time without incurring negative consequences. They were required to anonymously fill out the subscales from the

Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire and the Inventory of Learning Patterns of Students. A self-reported grade point average (GPA) was used as an indicator of each student's academic performance.

The results revealed that there was a positive association between students' self-efficacy and self-regulation and a negative one between students' self-efficacy and a lack of regulation. Students with higher self-efficacy and self-regulation strategies tended to report better GPAs. Male students performed worse in academic activities and adopted less external regulation strategies.

The findings may help university institutions, educational practitioners and policy makers to develop intervention programmes for first-year students to facilitate their transition from high school.

Keywords: High School, University; Self-Efficacy; Regulation Strategies; Academic Achievement.

A Policy and Learning Perspective

Mandy Crawford-Lee

Chief Executive
University Vocational Awards Council

In the context of a COVID-19 recovery response the research, evaluation and dissemination of national/international good practice and the promotion of new approaches to online and blended learning to deliver technical (level 4 and 5), professional (level 6 and 7), higher and degree apprenticeship programmes is now needed more than ever.

The pandemic has impacted on experienced educators and their student given the rapid response to the changes in mode and method of delivery across all programmes and especially those work-based and employer led. What is needed now for the global HE sector is to identify what has worked well/less well to inform future delivery.

Throughout the pandemic we have found that HE providers and employers wished to collaborate and innovate and not 're-invent' the wheel and have shown how practice has refined from enforced rapid change to embracing the opportunities presented in the use of learning technologies, learning design and pedagogy to support learner achievement and progression in addition to providing a legacy of online, work-based, and blended learning example of the highest quality and effectiveness. In addition, we have observed how HE systems have optimised the use of learning technologies in high stakes tasks such as assessment of work-based competencies.

The importance of distance, work-based and blended learning have not been sufficiently recognised in skills policy by governments.

Occupational competence developed through the acquisition of knowledge and competence via a 'blended' learning approach, incorporating and 'mixing' classroom, distance and work-based learning is a good idea. Post COVID-19, national skills systems have a one-off opportunity to develop a new culture that values and places the use of a variety of learning technologies at the centre of the learning system. The fundamental value and importance of online, work-based, and blended learning at higher education levels to achieving career aspirations should be the aim. Innovative learning environments will better equip tutors and teachers in their support of learners who will need skills to learn independently with pedagogical practices better resistant to future shocks to the skills system and economy. During COVID-19, it can be observed that there were those students and practitioners who grabbed the opportunity to accelerate their learning and teaching online, while others did not. We can learn from this to support employers, students, and apprentices.

Keywords: Higher Education; Work-based Learning; Skills Policy; Pedagogy; Learning Technologies.

EU projects' experiences on cultivation of digital skills

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The COVID-19 outbreak has impacted every aspect of our lives and digital skills suddenly became a requirement for many. COVID-19 highlighted the critical need for the acquisition of digital skills as every daily routine for millions of people became digital. Physical work became telework, education moved online, and the business sector is trying to use more innovative approaches to survive. The unknown future after the end of COVID-19 outbreak and the possibility of future pandemic situations make the need for digital skills and out-of-the-box thinking more imperative than ever.

The EU has initiated and promoted technology and digital platforms for the purposes of integration, inclusion and education. Schools, Universities and corporates nowadays use the digital platforms to further educate their users in innovative and interactive ways. EU funded project initiatives have implemented and established many digital platforms that correspond to the needs of our society and are free and open to use by everyone. Digital platforms for further integration, awareness, information and education are currently being used by most of the population with a great

impact on society. Furthermore, the innovative background of these platforms had made the users more interested and engaged. Indicative initiatives are listed below.

O-City: Promotion of the orange (creative) economy through the culture of our cities, using the talent of our young people, properly trained

3DP Teacher: implementation of 3D Printing in future education

Digitalis: Digital Innovation for young Students

Keywords: Digital Skills; Digital Platforms; EU Projects; Experiences; Innovation.

SESSION 3

Moderator: **Francesca Giovanna Maria Gastaldi**, Assistant Professor, Department of Philosophy and Education Sciences, University of Turin

Towards a Definition of Digital Pedagogy

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The proliferation in use of technologies has created a shift towards more student-centered and self-regulated modes of teaching and learning. The term "digital pedagogy" has been introduced to include the study of how to teach utilizing digital technologies in every aspect of the teaching process, from educational material development to the teaching process itself inside the classroom (Clarke & Clarke, 2009). More specifically, the insertion of digital technologies changed the roles of both educators and learners according to learning theories of constructivism and Freirian critical pedagogy; the first ones create learning environments that enable learners to take ownership of their learning, facilitating the access to existing knowledge and acting as eModerators in the acquisition of the "new" knowledge (Rosen, Smale, 2015).

On the other hand, students are empowered to actively participate in the learning process by critical challenging unquestioned narratives, keeping track of their progress (e.g., e-portfolios) and co-creating in the learning space, in which they participate (Howell, 2012). This approach can bring critical pedagogy into higher education, encouraging students to take control of their learning, engage in productive dialogue and co-creation of knowledge instead of passively accepting knowledge via lectures. As a result, technology appears to be more than an educational tool used inside the classroom: it alters how and what we learn.

Keywords: Digital pedagogy; Teaching; Learning; Technology; Digital knowledge.

Learning from digital adaptations to the pandemic: enhancing work-based higher education

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Mandy Crawford-Lee
Chief Executive
University Vocational Awards Council

This paper examines how the COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated digital developments in apprenticeship and work-

based learning in higher education (HE), focusing on practices that have ongoing value. There has been limited research on the impact of the pandemic on work-based learning with most of the literature focusing on placements and projects. This paper presents findings at a point when universities are considering how technologically-supported methods will be employed on a more permanent basis.

A literature review was carried out on the theme of HE work-based and work-integrated learning during the pandemic, followed by minimally-structured interviews with UK university staff responsible for apprenticeship and other work-based programmes. The pandemic has accelerated adoption of online and digital methods to support work-based and apprenticeship learning. There has been progress from emergency measures to more pedagogically consistent ones. A blended approach is becoming common, with the learning and logistical benefits from digital methods ensuring their continuing use. Progress is uneven and there is still a need for improved digital pedagogy and better integration of theoretical and practical learning. More attention is needed to focus on digital pedagogies and the effective use of online methods to support work-based learning with corresponding implications for staff development. There are institutional implications in terms of ensuring that systems and structures support what is, particularly for work-based learners, likely to be a permanent move towards digital, blended and online learning.

An opportunity to influence Education Technology to become more inclusive

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The capability and competency of vocational learning students is being undermined as a result of their learning transitioning onto digital education platforms. The non-theoretical understanding and practical experiences are inherently missing from existing mainstream digital learning platforms. Based on existing research by Cogito, supported by FE Sussex and UVAC, digital platforms supplied to deliver higher education require advanced user development that is missing within the existing front-line education practitioner work force. This has a knock-on effect of potentially

limiting the non-theoretical learning and practical experience of the future workforce. Where available, digital platforms and tools are often too complex to be utilised or adapted by non-specialists and therefore the update and impact is reduced to negligible.

The global EdTech market is expected to and grow at a rate of 19% over the period 2022 – 2030 (Research Nester, December 2021) With many of the key players operating in Europe there is an opportunity to influence the development of future Educational Technology (EdTech) in a way which will benefit learners of the future.

Working closer with EdTech to improve their understanding of higher education market requirements, would have the potential for better learning engaging for those students who find screen-based communication and learning is an inherent barrier. There could be cost benefits for education establishments, who buy off-the shelf EdTech then find it doesn't suit all purposes, and skills benefits for the future workforce. By working closely with EdTech in design, the risk of exclusion is mitigated particularly within vocational learning.

Keywords: Education; Technology; Exclusion; Vocational; Learning.

Linking digital and workplace learning through scaffolding reflective practice

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The growth of work-based and apprenticeship-type programmes in higher education in recent years has required a different kind of pedagogy to traditional HE delivery. What has become known as 'work-integrated learning' treats work as a primary source of learning, rather than just a site of application, and aims to integrate seamlessly between learning through work and from other sources. In moving to digitally-mediated methods this means more than 'teaching and learning online', as the digital learning environment needs to be used to support workplace learning. Established methods of doing this include reflective practice, action learning and action research. Any of these can be 'scaffolded' through the provision of relevant digital resources and (synchronous and asynchronous) online support and interaction, and developed to a point where they become part of ongoing practice and the scaffolding can be faded out. Research in progress is indicating that digital platforms have not only been effective at supporting work-based learning during the pandemic, but will have a major role to play in the future in improving the efficiency and

effectiveness of supporting learners in diverse and geographically dispersed workplaces.

This presentation takes reflective practice (reflection before, in, on and beyond action) as an example, and provides a short demonstration and interactive session (within the constraints of the time allowed and the digital platform) on reflective practice scaffolding.

Keywords: Higher Education; Work-Based Learning; Digitally Mediated Learning; Reflection; Scaffolding.

Digital Inclusion – What do we mean and where are we?

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Inclusion is key to any higher education process whether it be traditional teaching or digital. However, a recent review by Krischler et al (2019) shows that inclusion remains an ambiguous concept, with definitions that vary according to a person's experience involved in the education system. This is further reinforced by Bunescu (2021) who suggests Higher Education in Europe still falls short of being inclusive and points to be a lack of understanding that curriculum design and the way academics teach are critical importance for any reform intended to open up universities to learners from disadvantaged and underrepresented backgrounds.

This is before we consider Digital Inclusion which has become even more important since the COVID crisis as many organisations have relied on digital to deliver their education services. Digital Inclusion is a positive as it uses digital means to improve access to learners who are otherwise excluded e.g., because of distance, time or funds. However, it can also lead to digital exclusion as learners may have limited digital literacy, lack of access to devices or good internet connections.

The European University Association research has suggested teaching staff need support and tools to know how to adapt their practice and advance an inclusivity agenda in the classroom and question whether this is happening? This is before trying to deliver it digitally.

We suggest there is an urgency now to define what is meant by inclusiveness in academic education and second how it can be integrated seamlessly into digital curriculums and practice.

Keywords: Higher Education; Inclusion, Digital; Curriculum Design; Practice.

Crossing the digital divide

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The outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic has transformed the traditional way of teaching and learning to an online experience, in which digital technologies wielded the power. In the framework of this new learning environment that has already lasted over two years, many voices have been aroused regarding the equitable opportunity new technologies give to migrants and refugees to have access to educational resources. This paper will examine the role of educators in creating inclusive and safe digital learning environments.

Beyond merely training teachers in understanding the functions of devices or the kinds of content accessible in digitally enhanced classrooms, teachers need to be equipped with an all-inclusive training on blending technologies and pedagogical methodologies, and in-depth knowledge of the subject matter to design and promote inclusive technology-based learning processes.

A literature review was carried out on pedagogical methodologies based on digital technologies for creating inclusive learning environments that ensure accessibility and active participation for migrants and refugees. Furthermore, semi-structured interviews with Greek educators of Tertiary Education followed, in order to explore their level of knowledge on creating digital accessible content and inclusive environment for migrants and refugees.

Preliminary results of the survey revealed the need for educators' support not only on digital literacy, but also on the development of digital accessible content and inclusive learning environment for students with a migratory background. In that way, educators will make a step forward to cross the digital divide that deprives from migrants and refugees' equal access to digital learning.

Keywords: Digital Technologies; Access; Educators; Migrants; Refugees.

SESSION 4

Moderator: **Claudio Longobardi**, Associate Professor on Developmental and Educational Psychology, Department of Psychology, University of Turin

Delivering learning in the COVID-19 pandemic – a reflection on coping strategies

Tim Strickland
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The change from face-to-face teaching to remote learning in vocational education came swiftly and suddenly placed demands on teachers which could not have been envisaged a few months before.

The adjustment of teaching methodologies from face-to-face delivery to that of remote presentation required staff to be adaptable and versatile in their pedagogy. Resources had to be changed from the printed sheet and basic screen format (e.g., PowerPoint) to a design which attracted and engaged students without classroom interaction.

Teaching methodologies varied in their effectiveness. In the best lessons teachers adapted quickly to the remote nature of their audience and the need to use closed questioning techniques which prevented learners from not participating. This, alongside skillful use of supporting software (for example, in engineering the use of virtual scientific calculators), established and maintained an active and responsive learning environment.

In the less well taught classes teachers mistakenly thought they could replicate a conventional lesson via remote delivery. PowerPoint slides suitable for the classroom failed to inspire students, reading from printed notes created boredom and there was no use of supporting software. Questioning techniques used were closed (e.g., ''Does everyone understand? – Good") and learners hid behind a silence of non-engagement.

In summary, the quality of the learner experience varied from teacher to teacher. The lack of staff training in remote delivery showed and it is gratifying to acknowledge appropriate training programmes are now being delivered.

Keywords: Pedagogy; Resources; Methodology; Questioning; Quality.

COVID-19 – Challenges in virtual learning- a student experience

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The transition from secondary to tertiary education is not always easy. The transition for a high-school student to a university environment in a totally virtual situation

proved more challenging. This is the account of Kim, a first-year student at the University of Cape Town (UCT) reflecting on her first year.

"I matriculated in 2019 and I opted to take a gap year, so this is the first year I have had to experience what it is like to study during a pandemic. I know I would've performed a lot better academically if we had in-person lessons and tutorials. I have always had trouble with time management and self-discipline. I understand that UCT had to manage the coronavirus and continue the academic year without in person lectures. The majority of modules in which I have participated this year have been delivered with recordings allowing students to access videos and watch them at any time, or not with the only consequence being failure. My weekdays did not seem to have any structure to them. I now know that I need to organize my day, create a study schedule and set limits to social media and television time. I will surround myself with fellow students who inspire me to work hard and encourage me."

Kim was unprepared for entering a fully virtual learning environment at transition from school to higher education. Kim, a typical student, illustrates the demands of self-discipline that a virtual learning environment presents to young learners.

COVID-19 as external shock to rethink learning processes and the importance of inclusiveness

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The COVID-19 crisis has affected us from the global to the local level and has led to changes at the micro and macro levels: We have had to face several challenges, and if the time between high school and university is already difficult, this meeting reminds us and helps us analyse that we cannot underestimate the impact of the closure on it and how we need to continue thinking about new approaches to online and blended learning, how to improve, make inclusive, support and reinvent teaching.

The discussion brought to the field by this event is relevant because it touches on multiple areas and advances knowledge and awareness of inclusion in the context of access to and delivery of online learning. It focuses on the impact of online learning in the early days of the global pandemic and more broadly on learning environments, and raises the question of what adaptations may be needed by educators providing online learning.

With the rapid shift to online learning, educators can draw on the principles of inclusive teaching to provide students with a sense of belonging. Diversity, equity, and inclusion are foundational elements of online courses and online education as they impact every aspect of the learning experience. The shift toward the need for e-skills has been accelerated by the pandemic, but at the same time has highlighted the fact that we need a global discourse. In addition, digital skills can help create a more inclusive classroom for people with disabilities or from disadvantaged groups. And this is important for creating an increasingly inclusive and integrated European community.

Keywords: Online courses; Inclusive Teaching; COVID-19; Knowledge; European Community.

Passive Instagram activity, well-being and academic performance during the COVID-19 pandemic

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Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, enforcement of social distancing measures required higher education institutions to rely on distance learning, resulting in significant increase in the use of digital media, as well as in the increase in feelings of isolation and loneliness, among their university students. In such a context, it becomes paramount to investigate the negative impact that excessive digital media use, including social network use, might exert on the student population in distance learning.

Here, we build on previous literature suggesting the existence of links between

passive use of social networks, motives for use, and many psychological outcomes. Data were collected during January 2021 by disseminating an online questionnaire investigating use of Instagram and a set of psychological outcomes, including satisfaction with life, depression, and Instagram addiction behaviors, loneliness, and emotional regulation. Eventually, we recruited a sample of 554 Italian university students with an average age of 23 years, 68% females. Significant positive correlations emerged between Instagram browsing behaviors (e.g., scrolling the homepage instead of actively perform searches or interacting with other users, checking the profile without leaving comments), the use of Instagram for escapism motives, and depressive symptoms (e.g., anhedonia, low energy level and self-esteem, difficulty concentrating). Moreover, escapism motives for Instagram use, and passive Instagram use were both associated with students' perceptions that Instagram could exert a negative effect of Instagram on their academic performance. These findings highlight the heightened negative impact that passive digital media use exerted on youth well-being during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Keywords: COVID-19; Instagram; Academic Performance; Italian University Students; Impact.

Leaving nobody behind; inclusion issues during COVID-19

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Although the distance education process has compelling effects for all children who are away from school and social life and closed at home, it can be said that these effects are much greater for children with special needs who cannot find enough space, physical and mental stimulation, materials to keep their interests and curiosity alive, and supportive parents. In addition to the knowledge and skills gap, which is difficult to close with individual effort, for children from socioeconomically disadvantaged families and with limited resources in accessing distance education, inequality is likely to deepen in terms of the development of social and emotional skills, which are important predictors of interest in learning and school belonging.

In this context, we discussed the effects of being closed, learning losses, deficiencies, and how a mixed teaching model can be applied during the pandemic and later by examining current practices with the thought that it could provide clues about the current situation regarding the inclusion of all

students from different parts of the society and tried to reveal the experiences gained during the COVID-19 epidemic.

Keywords: COVID-19; Education; Inclusion; Disadvantaged; Special needs.

Post-pandemic reflection- an opportunity to improve the quality of blended/online learning

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The COVID-19 pandemic thrust many sectors into a time of instantaneous change. This change did not come without efforts from professionals and institutional appetite and capacity for innovation. For some regions of the world, the road ahead toward an endemic is appearing, creating a clearer view as to what must be achieved to capture innovations and move forward towards sustainable operation. In this project, we will identify the skills required by college and university lecturers who deliver FE & HE programmes digitally. The focus will include vocation learning at Higher Education level, including apprenticeships.

The research conducted to support the project notes a lack of key skills amongst practitioners required to carry out blended/online learning identified as a barrier to delivery effectively via online platforms explored. By completing self-analysis against revised competency frameworks practitioners will be to utilise the project output to benchmark themselves and identify areas of development and opportunities for improvement. In turn, this will lay the groundwork for the opportunity to set a standard for the delivery of online/blended learning within college and universities. Further work on the benchmarking method may facilitate its use at organisation-level, contributing to the creation of a sustainable change plan to fully roll out blended/online learning delivery. The IDEAL project will seek to develop a toolkit that will enable the packaging of the findings into a usable solution, allowing practitioners to address development needs and further analyse the skills required to deliver a Digital First approach.

Keywords: Opportunity; Digital; Innovation; Benchmarking; Skills.

Special education teachers' views on distance education processes during the COVID-19 epidemic

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The COVID-19 epidemic has affected education systems around the world and led to the closure of schools and universities. In this process, where all the stakeholders of the process were caught unprepared, a sudden transition was made to emergency distance education applications in order to carry out educational activities with the least negative impact. In Turkey, the Ministry of National Education (MEB) decided in March 2019 to switch to distance education due to the COVID-19 epidemic. Within the scope of the measures taken by the Ministry of Education, distance education services were provided for primary school, secondary school, high school and special education students through the application of Education Informatics Network (EBA) and TRT EBA which is established within TRT. It can be said that this extraordinary process affects students who need special education more deeply. Indeed, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) states that the education of more than one and a half billion children worldwide was affected during the COVID-19 pandemic, especially children with special needs were more negatively affected in this process. One of the most important stakeholders in the success of the distance education processes of children with special needs is special education teachers. Evaluation of the experiences gained by special education teachers in the emergency distance education process gains importance in order to use technology more effectively in face-to-face education in the future, to make face-to-face-online blended education as a regular part of the lessons, and to be prepared for distance education in a possible epidemic.

The aim of this study is to determine the problems experienced by special education teachers in distance education processes, their solution suggestions and their opinions and suggestions for future applications.

Keywords: COVID-19; Distance Education; Special Education Teachers; Impact; Problems.