

Promoting a European dimension to teaching enhancement

A feasibility study from the European Forum for Enhanced Collaboration in Teaching (EFFECT) project

APPENDIX 1

The EFFECT pedagogical staff development workshops: methodology, assessment, and lessons learnt

This support material provides an overview of how pedagogical staff development has been addressed, based on research carried out in the framework of this project (and complemented by additional sources such as Trends data), and lessons learnt from EFFECT activities.

Under EFFECT, the staff development workshops have been implemented by a working group chaired by Fernando Remião (University of Porto) and Tuula Heide (University of Eastern Finland). Special thanks go to Alison Robinson-Canham, from Advance HE (formerly the Higher Education Academy), for her methodological input and contribution in designing and facilitating the workshops. Luisa Bunescu, EUA Project & Policy Officer, coordinated and supported the group's work.

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1. Definitions and scope of study

The terminology used in the area of learning and teaching varies across Europe, sometimes with the same concepts being understood in different ways. In the context of this Appendix, “pedagogical staff development” is used for any kind of formal teacher training, such as initial teacher training and continuous professional development.

The quality of any education system crucially depends on the quality of its teachers. Pedagogical development for academic teaching staff continues to be implemented against a background marked by a lack of consensus on what makes quality university teaching and how teachers can be efficiently and thoroughly prepared for it. Not only is the definition of quality teacher training problematic, but there is also an ongoing debate on what the appropriate levels for enhancing teaching are: the micro (individual level), the meso level (the department, the discipline) or the macro level (the higher education institution, the regional and national authorities).¹ The danger is having several actors striving, without coordination to enhance learning and teaching, arriving at a “pretty” yet ineffective model of policy development, the so-called “Christmas tree”: “plenty of pretty lights and shiny baubles, but they don’t last long, have little relationship to each other and don’t have any lasting effect on normal daily life”.²

Initial and continuous professional development for academic teaching staff are often organised, having in mind a theory of change, where teacher training leads to new insights and behavioural change among the academics, which in turn will lead to a cultural shift across the entire higher education institution and system. This, it is believed, will eventually enhance the educational experience for students. Therefore, the enhancement of teaching competences of academic staff aims to facilitate

and increase student learning. However, evidencing and measuring the impact of the development of teaching competences remains challenging. In general, although there is anecdotal evidence of the benefits, it proves to be extremely hard to compare between various teaching enhancement programmes implemented in different national and institutional contexts and delivered through different modalities. The relationship between student success and teaching competences can be nevertheless analysed from two angles:

- By assessing the practicalities of learning processes (such as assessment and feedback), while promoting the quality of learning and teaching;
- Through a pedagogical perspective based upon good practice in facilitating learning.

Gibbs and Coffey³ demonstrated that pedagogical staff development gives way to a more student-focused approach, which in turn leads to a deeper approach in learning by the students.⁴ Students adopting deep learning attempt to make sense of the content, compared to those students who adopt a surface approach to learning, by trying to memorise and remember content. Research shows that students who take a deep approach to learning have superior learning outcomes, especially in terms of understanding and developing new and more sophisticated conceptions of the subject. Hence, changing the teachers’ approach to teaching, for instance by working in collaboration in learning and teaching, or by co-creation between students and lecturers, can mean positive learning outcomes for students.⁵

- 1 Classification taken from Torgny Roxa and Katarina Martensson, *How effects from teacher-training of academic teachers propagate into the meso level and beyond*, January 2012, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/285489579_How_effects_from_teacher-training_of_academic_teachers_propagate_into_the_meso_level_and_beyond (accessed 17/01/2019).
- 2 Trowler, P. and Bamber, R., 2005, “Compulsory Higher Education Teacher Training: Joined-up policies, institutional architectures and enhancement cultures”, in *International Journal for Academic Development*, 10 (2), p. 3. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13601440500281708?src=recsys&journalCode=rja20> (accessed 17/01/2019).
- 3 Gibbs, G., Coffey, M., 2004, *The impact of training university teachers on their teaching skills, their approach to teaching and the approach to learning of their students*, <http://reforma.fen.uchile.cl/Papers/Teaching%20Skills%20-%20Gibbs.%20Coffey.pdf> (accessed on 25/09/2018).
- 4 Trigwell, K., Prosser, M. and Waterhouse, F., 1999, “Relations Between Teachers’ Approaches to Teaching and Students’ Approaches to Learning”, in *Higher Education*, 37, pp. 57-70. <http://edmeasurement.net/5245/Trigwell-1999-cluster-anal.pdf> (accessed on 25/09/2018).
- 5 Asikainen, H. and Gijbels, D., 2017, “Do Students Develop Towards More Deep Approaches to Learning During Studies? A Systematic Review on the Development of Students’ Deep and Surface Approaches to Learning in Higher Education”, in *Educational Psychology Review*, 29:2, pp. 205-234, <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007%2Fs10648-017-9406-6> (accessed on 25/09/2018).

Based on the annual reviews of its accredited continuous professional development schemes, Advance HE (previously the Higher Education Academy),⁶ notes that the introduction of such continuous professional development schemes has been having a significant impact on the higher education culture, although such reviews are still hesitant about pointing to concrete and definitive correlations between scheme activity and teaching. The evaluation shows cumulative impacts as a result of synergies that continuous professional development schemes entail. In the annual review of HEA-accredited continuous professional development schemes 2016-2017, 73% of the respondents stated that schemes impacted teaching and learning, especially by encouraging critical reflection on one's practice, which is shifting staff's attention "onto the students' experience of teaching and improving their capacity to enhance and develop their practice in the longer term. [...] There was an acceptance across reports that by changing and rethinking how staff practise as a result of engagement in Fellowship/scheme activity, there is a cumulative transformative impact upon the student experience".⁷

6 In March 2018, the Higher Education Academy merged with the Equality Challenge Unit and the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education to form Advance HE.

7 Advance HE, Annual Review of HEA accredited CPD schemes 2016-2017, p.7, <https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/system/files/downloads/Annual%20Review%20of%20HEA%20accredited%20CPD%20schemes%202016-17.pdf> (accessed on 06/11/2018).

2. Case study: organising staff development workshops on inclusion and citizenship skills

2.1. Working definitions

The way professors teach is of critical importance in any reform designed to enhance inclusion and citizenship. Promoting inclusion means stimulating discussion, challenging stereotypes and unconscious biases, as well as improving educational and social frameworks.

UNESCO defines inclusion as “a process of addressing and responding to the diversity of needs of all children, youth and adults through increasing participation in learning, cultures and communities, and reducing and eliminating exclusion within and from education.”⁸

In the context of the EFFECT project, inclusion bears a broad interpretation, and rather than focusing on particular groups identified by a single characteristic, such as gender, ethnicity or disability, the definition of inclusion embraces a wide range of differences and explores their effects on individual learning. Inclusivity was hence tackled in terms of addressing any factors other than intellectual capability which inhibit academic performance and attainment. Thus, on the one hand, **inclusive learning and teaching in higher education** was defined as referring to “the ways in which pedagogy, curricula and assessment are designed and delivered to engage students in learning that is meaningful, relevant and accessible to all. It embraces a view of the individual and individual difference as the source of diversity that can enrich the lives and learning of others.”⁹

On the other hand, **citizenship skills** were understood as pertaining to the concept of **active citizenship**, which could be defined as follows: “Participation in civil society, community and/or political life, characterised by mutual respect and non-violence in accordance with human rights and democracy.”¹⁰

Therefore, the project consortium discussed citizenship skills in the broadest sense of the concept of participation, including:

- For students: the ability to use knowledge and skills acquired to improve society through actively engaging with issues of equity, sustainability, community development and social justice;
- For institutions: the willingness to re-engage educators with the social, cultural, community and economic purposes of higher education;
- For educators and the academic community at large: the objective of fostering and nurturing citizens of the future.

Citizenship and inclusivity topics have many aspects in common. Neither issue is considered a “hot topic” for the majority of higher education teachers, who are rarely receptive to staff development events and resources explicitly labelled as “inclusivity/citizenship teacher training”. Furthermore, for some countries and higher education institutions, the challenge is how to cope with diversity, while for others the challenge is how to foster and increase diversity. Both angles also impact the notions of inclusion and citizenship.

8 UNESCO, 2009, *Policy Guidelines on Inclusion in Education*, pp.8-9, <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0017/001778/177849e.pdf> (accessed 16/01/2019).

9 Hockings, C., 2010, *Inclusive learning and teaching in higher education: a synthesis of research*, York: HEA, p.1, <https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/knowledge-hub/inclusive-learning-and-teaching-higher-education-synthesis-research> (accessed 17/01/2019).

10 Hoskins, B., 2006, *Draft framework on indicators for Active Citizenship*, Ispra: CRELL, p.4, <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.132.1723&rep=rep1&type=pdf> (accessed 22/01/2019)

2.2. The methodology

A conservative pedagogical training model hardly lends itself to conveying values-related topics such as inclusion and citizenship in an academic context. A “how to” training approach would be ineffective as it does not engage teachers in a deeper reflection about the topic and about their personal agency in addressing specific circumstances they experience with their students. That is why the EFFECT workshops were based on an innovative methodology, namely the Change Laboratory. It is an intervention-research methodology where people work together in a structured and cyclical way to envisage new activity in their organisation.

As described by Brett Bligh and Michelle Flood,¹¹ the Change Laboratory methodology prioritises challenging conventional wisdom and reconceptualising activity, while being a direct attempt to foster expansive learning, an activity in which people work together to re-imagine the object of their activity.

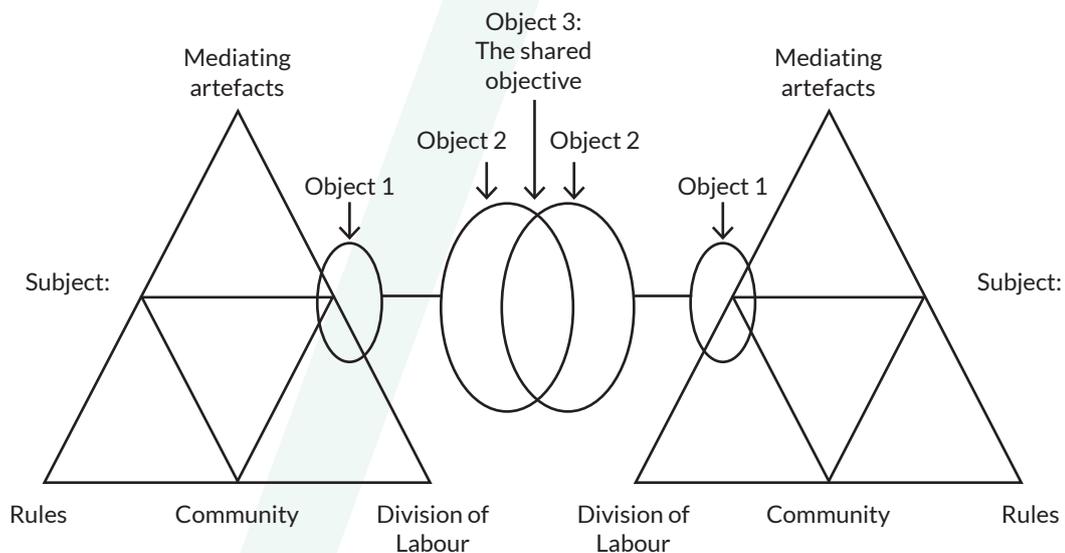
Expansive learning is based on four reflective questions, namely:

- Who are the subjects of learning, how are they defined and located?
- Why do they learn, what makes them make the effort?
- What do they learn, what are the contents and outcomes of learning?
- How do they learn, what are the key actions or processes of learning?¹²

In expansive learning, the activity system is taken as the prime unit of analysis, perceived in relation with other activity systems, such as in the figure below.

For instance, student success can be seen as a single shared objective addressed through the interaction of two different activity systems, namely: specific programme curriculum and the work of academic developers with teachers from a respective programme.

Engeströmian representation of two activity systems in pursuit of a single shared objective



11 Bligh, B., Flood, M., 2015, “The Change Laboratory in Higher Education: research-intervention using activity theory”, p. 10, in Huisman, J., Tight, M. (2015), *Theory and method in higher education research*, Vol. 1 (s.l., Bingley). http://eprints.lancs.ac.uk/74672/1/Volume_3_Bligh_Flood.pdf (accessed 01/10/2018).

12 Engeström, Y., 2001, “Expansive learning at Work: Toward an activity theoretical reconceptualization”, in *Journal of Education and Work*, 14:1, pp. 133-156.

According to Engeström, an activity system is a community with multiple voices, traditions and interests. Participants in an activity system have their own histories, in addition to the history of the activity system itself, engraved in its artifacts, rules and conventions. Because of their historicity, transformation of activity systems occurs over lengthy periods of time. One of the sources of activity system transformation are contradictions, understood not as problems or conflicts, but rather as structural tensions that are historically accumulating within and between activity systems: “As the contradictions of an activity system are aggravated, some individual participants begin to question and deviate from its established norms. In some cases, this escalates into collaborative envisioning and a deliberate collective change effort”.¹³

Change Laboratory is based on several successive sessions that work on addressing the stages in the cycle of expansive learning, namely:

- **Questioning and criticising:** people reject established wisdom, current practices, and existing plans;
- **Analysis:** people investigate and represent the structure and history of the present situation;
- **Modelling:** people pose a new, simplified model that aims to explain the situation in a public form and to suggest potential solutions;
- **Examination:** people work with the model (in discussion or in practice) to better comprehend its dynamics, potential and limitations;
- **Implementation:** people render the model more concrete by applying it practically and conceptually, so enriching and extending it;
- **Process reflection:** people evaluate their current process, generating critique and identifying further requirements;
- **Consolidation and generalisation:** people attempt to embed stable forms of new practice.¹⁴

In the Change Laboratory methodology, generating mirror-data (also called vignettes or stimulus material) is an important step. Stimulus material are practice problems and systemic contradictions that are presented to the workshop participants. They can take various forms, including documents, statistics and transcripts. Video footage and other image-heavy media are effective in provoking visceral reactions within sessions and conveying that problems exist undeniably.

Normally, Change Laboratory presupposes that the implementation team works with the same group of participants over the duration of 9-12 months. The group meets several times during this period, with tasks in between the sessions: “A Change Laboratory is typically conducted in an activity system that is facing a major transformation. [...] Working practitioners and managers of the unit, together with a small group of interventionist researchers, conduct five to ten successive Change Laboratory sessions, often with follow-up sessions after some months.”¹⁵

Given the constraints imposed by the project lifetime, the EFFECT consortium could not implement the full-cycle of Change Laboratory. Instead, it adopted a revised Change Laboratory methodology, and decided to organise a series of face-to-face and online pedagogical staff development workshops, so that the methodology could be tested both in a physical and virtual environment. For the four face-to-face workshops, the implementation team worked each time with a different group of participants, in different national and international contexts. For the online workshops, the same pilot group of ten participants followed a series of three pedagogical staff development sessions.

The workshops were designed to:

- use open reflective questions for teachers to provoke discussion about the challenges faced in their own learning and teaching contexts;
- identify possible solutions and approaches;
- act as catalysts for change, even if no specific change project was discussed;
- foster discussions which help academic staff recognise the “problem” even when the latter is not the most pressing issue in their context;
- lead to the design of a customisable workshop prototype for local and digital adaptation, and which could lend itself to a range of topics and themes, in addition to inclusivity and pedagogic practice for academic teaching and learning support staff;
- lead to the development of supplementary resources specifically derived from the discussions about inclusivity and citizenship.

13 *Ibidem*.

14 Bligh, B. and Flood, M., 2015, *op.cit.*, p. 10. http://eprints.lancs.ac.uk/74672/1/Volume_3_Bligh_Flood.pdf

15 Engeström, Y., Rantavuori, J. and Kerosuo, H., 2013, “Expansive learning in a library: Actions, cycles and deviations from instructional intentions”, in *Vocations and Learning*, 6:1, pp. 81-106.

The project consortium envisaged that the physical and online workshops would be both research (for the implementation team, into the adopted method and into inclusivity/citizenship attitudes and practice) and development activity (for those participating in roundtable discussions and in the online pilot group).

2.3. The face-to-face workshops

Four physical pedagogical staff development workshops (see Table below), having as the main target group academic teaching staff, took place in 2017. Two of the workshops (in Porto and Joensuu) were implemented in culturally and institutionally homogenous environments, whereas the workshops in Budapest and Paris gathered a European audience.

In these workshops, the consortium used scenarios and videos as stimulus material in order to trigger discussions and help academic teaching staff address real life/work problems. The stimulus was initially based on short, single-sentence extracts from student feedback, becoming progressively more complex and nuanced to reflect issues and attitudes arising in the workshops. The implementation team aimed to identify small changes to practice which would yield high impact on student/learning outcomes.

The four physical workshops were constructed on the following sequence:

- Introduction to the EFFECT project
- Context and purpose of the workshop
- Splitting the participants into smaller discussion groups (around six per table)
- Distributing the mirror data
- Two rounds of group discussions based on the mirror data
- Groups delegating a rapporteur to share conclusions with the other groups
- Collective debriefing
- Ways forward
- Concluding remarks

The small discussion groups were configured to reflect a diversity of stakeholders: lecturers, students and other staff (technical, library, support), distributed evenly.

Table: Summary of the face-to-face workshops

Location	Date	Number of participants	Workshop audience	Facilitation language	Data capture
University of Porto, Porto, Portugal	31 January 2017	71	Local (Porto)	Mostly Portuguese, with some feedback in English	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitated feedback on flipcharts • Video recording • Written feedback from facilitators
Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE), Budapest, Hungary	20 March 2017	33	Regional/pan-European	English	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitated feedback on flipcharts • Written feedback from facilitators
University of Eastern Finland (UEF), Joensuu, Finland	22 August 2017	12	Local	English	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitated feedback on flipcharts
University Pierre and Marie Curie (UPMC), Paris, France	27 September 2017	7	Regional/pan-European	English	Facilitated feedback on flipcharts

Main lessons learnt from the implementation of the four face-to-face workshops:

a) The methodology

- In general, the experience of workshops showed that conversations and disagreement are powerful tools for understanding thoroughly the challenges and advancing towards the identification of possible solutions.
- The methodology was perceived as innovative by the workshop participants, irrespective of where the workshops were implemented.
- Stimulus material should be carefully prepared, as this is the main element that steers the conversation in the direction intended by the facilitator.
- Provocative stimulus material summarising challenges in terms of inclusivity and citizenship worked very well, as not only did it stimulate more energised debate, but also counterbalanced the tendency towards a fast (yet at times superficial) achievement of consensus. The Change Laboratory methodology is intended to be provocative.
- Stimulus material should be a combination of written case studies and visual support (e.g. videos, interviews, etc.). Stimulus material should be disruptive and lead to disagreement. This is particularly important, as the Change Laboratory effect is born from the provocation arising from the stimulus material.
- If the workshop is organised in a national/institutional setting, the stimulus material should be adapted to the local higher education culture, so that the attendees identify themselves with the challenges raised.
- The group conversations tended to focus much more on inclusion, rather than on citizenship, although stimulus material was prepared for both topics.
- The transformational learning and changes to practice arise from the cumulative impact of reflection on increasingly complex, contextualised and relevant stimulus material. Therefore, it is crucial to repeat such workshops with the same group of people, conceding adequate time to the discussions.
- At the end of the workshop, the facilitators should invite the participants to reflect on their individual practice as professors/support staff and on how to take the impressions/lessons from the workshop further in their activities. As with any development intervention, reflection should be purposeful and lead to action.

A repository of the stimulus material used is available under Appendix 2 on the EFFECT website: <http://bit.ly/EFFECTproject>.

b) Attendance and profiles of participants

- Although the main target group was academic teaching staff, the discussions were more meaningful and inclusive, with a combination of teachers, students and support staff. A homogenous group (e.g. only teachers) tended to keep the discussions politically correct and often identified solutions outside their influence, for instance by referring to the university management or to the “right” kind of students, rather than recognising their own agency in the teaching interaction. One of the aspects most appreciated by the attendees in Porto was the fact that the workshop brought together different stakeholders of the university and facilitated open and informal discussions. This heterogeneity was thought to be necessary for coming up with sustainable and effective solutions. A key benefit from the methodology is to move participants from a position of “blaming” other groups and management to thinking about what they can do themselves. This is to be expected in a first cycle of Change Laboratory workshops but would be an aspect to challenge and pursue in later cycles until changed perceptions and practices, and greater ownership of the problems and their solutions, had been observed.
- Student representation in such teacher training events is welcome and can be constructive as long as the student perspective is presented in a way that encourages academic teaching staff to reflect on their own personal role in addressing the challenges.
- Presence of leadership as participants did not appear to inhibit the discussion, and they appeared well engaged themselves. Conversely, it could be important that some participants in the workshop are influencers in senior positions and/or having credibility with their academic peers.
- It was important that discussion groups included participants from different cultural and disciplinary backgrounds so that peer-learning could take place in an intercultural and interdisciplinary context.

c) The organisation of workshops

- A 3-4 hour workshop is ideal to give adequate time for addressing more difficult and contentious aspects, as the transformation learning intended to derive from a Change Laboratory methodology requires discussion to focus on rather than avoid the most challenging areas of disagreement. The first workshop (University of Porto, 31 January 2017) lasted for two hours, which was generally considered too short to fully explore the issues and address the real tension points.
- It is important to consider the size of the table for group discussions, and it was observed that smaller tables were better for encouraging participants to “lean into” the conversation, literally and figuratively. Large tables made it easier for individuals to be marginalised or disengage. Set up facilitated round tables of up to six participants.
- The facilitators should stir, but not monopolise the conversations. They should be carefully briefed before the workshop, familiarising them with the methodology and their role.
- Participants should receive preparatory material before the workshop (e.g. working definitions for inclusion and citizenship; summary of the methodology).

Evaluation

A first round of follow-up surveys was launched among all the participants, immediately after the workshops, with a very positive overall feedback. For instance, 71% of the participants to the workshop in Porto rated the event as very good and 29% as excellent.

As a result from the workshops, the respondents referred to more work for cultural adaptation from their own side, more involvement in issues concerning students and their difficulties, proactivity, awareness in terms of conveying inclusivity through the academic practice, empathy, attention paid to group dynamics and flexible learning paths to better accommodate a diversity of students.

Statement from one of the workshop facilitators: “The participants appreciated the opportunity to be heard and valued reflection spaces like this one. There were no difficulties in conducting the discussion, as people were willing to talk.”

To see if and how workshop discussions impacted the professional practice of the attendees, the implementation team prepared and launched a second follow-up survey four to seven months after one of the workshops on inclusion and citizenship skills took place. The main questions raised in the survey were:

- Did you organise any kind of follow-up activity after this workshop? If yes, please briefly describe it.
- Did the discussions raised during the workshop influence your activity afterwards? If yes, please mention which aspects have had the most impact on your practice.
- Which aspects of the workshop would you like to discuss again?
- So far, did you attend other similar teaching enhancement workshops or initiatives? If yes, which ones?

60% (9) of the 15 respondents to this second survey confirmed that the discussions raised during the workshop influenced their professional activity afterwards by helping them to:

- reflect on how to integrate different cultures into their societies;
- develop methods and tools to better integrate migrants into local and higher education communities;
- come up with inclusion strategies in higher education and classroom activities to promote collaboration and more exchanges between students;
- some respondents stated that it was also comforting to see that lecturers face similar problems all over Europe and that this workshop proposed a new methodology mostly based on self-reflection, which enabled participants to think about their pedagogical practice and change the design of their lectures to respond more to students’ needs.

Interestingly, 80% (12) of the respondents said that they did not attend other similar teaching enhancement workshops or initiatives, which points to both the systemic need for such initiatives all over Europe, but also to the innovative aspect of the approach. This might explain why the majority said that this workshop influenced their professional activity, but had yet to organise a follow-up activity.

2.4. The online pedagogical staff development workshops

The aim of the online workshops was to bring together a pilot group of academic teaching staff to participate in online-facilitated discussions designed as pedagogical staff development modules on inclusion and citizenship skills.

Why go online?

The initiative to digitise the pedagogical staff development workshops on inclusion and citizenship skills came while implementing the four face-to-face workshops. The consortium wanted to check if and to what extent such pedagogical staff development modules have the potential to be delivered in a virtual learning environment.

The proposal arrived at a time not only of manifested need for teacher training, but also of technological opportunity. Progress in video technology has promised to turn such online exchanges into easy, accessible and comfortable methods for interaction, coupled with a wide-spread predisposition and willingness to explore the world of virtual learning environments that have already become part of many higher education institutions and systems around Europe, especially through blended learning. The online approach has become feasible because of technological advances, and necessary to address the potential to deliver pan-European staff development at high scale and low cost. Moreover, although the current European student population is the most mobile youth cohort in the history of the European construction (mainly through the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Commission¹⁶), international peer learning and professional development opportunities for academic teaching staff across Europe still remain limited due to a variety of financial, socio-economic, time and personal circumstances. Online facilitated discussions have the potential to address these barriers, being a feasible alternative for academic staff unable to participate in physical peer learning or continuous professional development activities.

Advantages and risks

Alongside face-to-face pedagogical staff development events, online teacher enhancement workshops could be effective tools in fostering dialogue and cooperation.

Online adaptations of pedagogical staff development modules could have the following advantages:

- Include people and countries unable to participate in physical teacher training activities
- Offer a safe and diverse learning environment
- Provide on-going facilitation during the discussions
- Develop participants' digital skills
- Lower costs as compared to international teacher training events

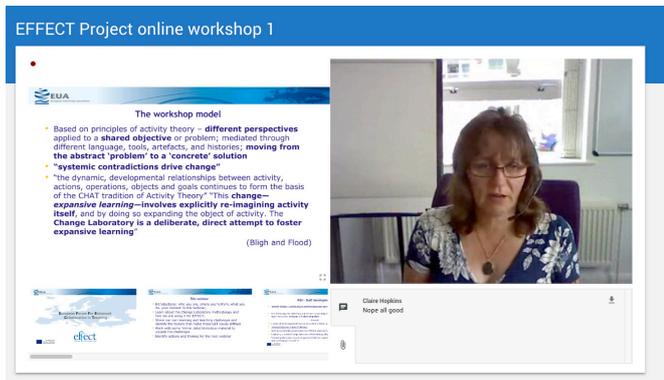
However, development and implementation of such virtual sessions can be exposed to several risks. Below a summary of the most important risks that the consortium identified:

- Difficulty in ensuring participants' commitment/participation
- Proposing engaging tasks for participants
- Limits to participation: only academic teaching staff with good access to the internet and good digital skills would join in
- Difficulty in finding experienced facilitators, previously exposed to teacher trainings on virtual learning environments (VLE)
- Unattractive and unclear user interface
- Unreliable technological resources (such as unstable Virtual Learning Environment platform, prone to crash)
- Cultural misunderstandings among the participants
- Low incentivisation, no badges or other recognition mechanisms awarded
- Particular risk related to the inclusivity and citizenship themes was potential reluctance of participants to make authentic contributions online.

Technology

No unique technology was developed. Instead, the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) of one of the project partners (Advance HE) was used, namely Bongo from YOUSEEU, a company specialised in delivering Virtual Classroom capabilities, combined with feedback and coaching mechanisms, specifically tailored for higher education. Bongo works with Mozilla Firefox and Google Chrome and proved to be extremely stable, with no single crash. According to participants' feedback, they found it easy to log in and maintain their connection during the online sessions.

16 In the period 2014-2016, 1.8 million individuals took part in mobility activities under Erasmus+. European Commission, 2018, *Report from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. Mid-term evaluation of the Erasmus+ Programme (2014-2020)*. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52018DC0050&from=FR> (accessed 28/09/2018).



Screenshot from Bongo by YOUSEEU. The facilitator introduces the workshop model.

The chat function of the online platform was mostly used by the participants to raise questions for further clarification or to comment on remarks made by the facilitator.

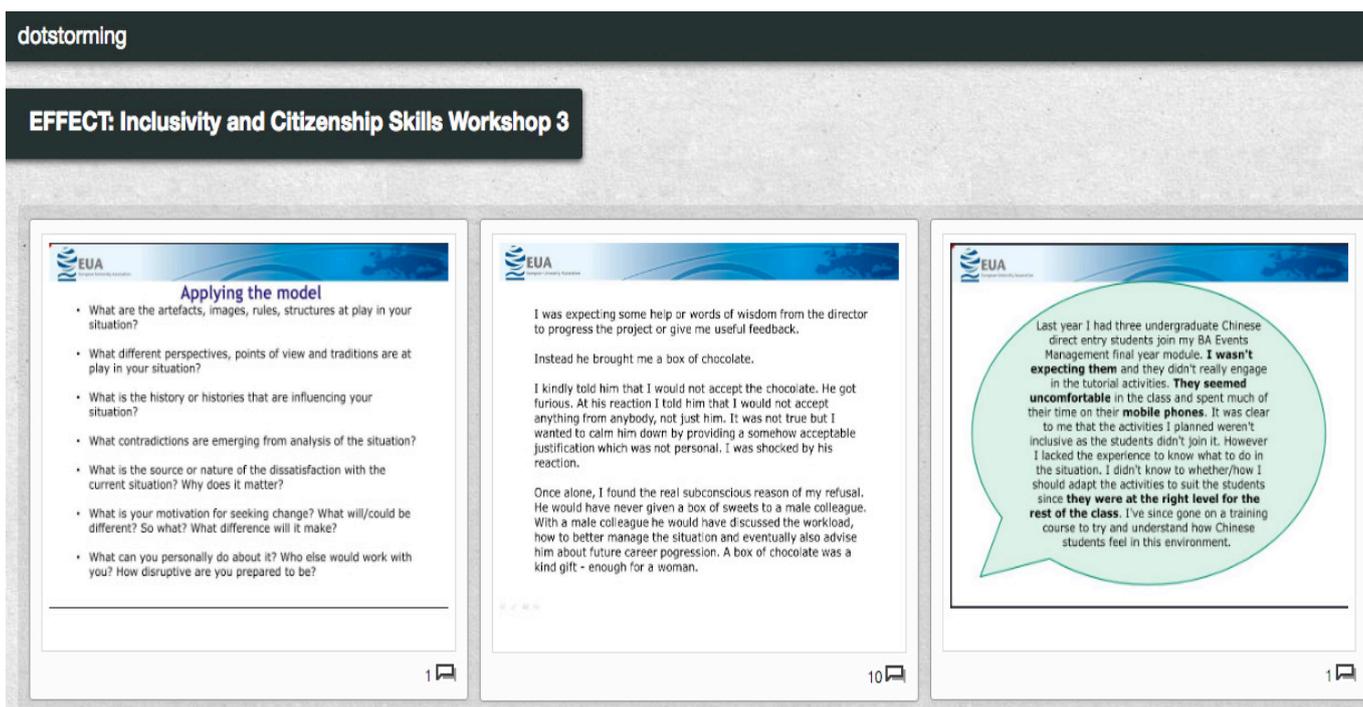
In addition to the YOUSEEU platform, the software Dotstorming¹⁷ was tried out for posting stimulus material on which the participants could comment and exchange

views. Dotstorming is a free sign-up platform, used as a real-time group brainstorming and decision-making app. Among the functionalities of Dotstorming one could identify:

- Users can view and comment on each other's posts
- It keeps the contributions structured and the wall neat
- It allows for comments to be attached to a specific stimulus material
- It has an in-built voting and chat functions
- One can sign up with his/her real name or with an *alias*, hence it is also good when creating a safe environment through anonymity
- One can easily upload pictures and YouTube material (as vignettes) and they can be watched directly from Dotstorming

Content and methodology of the online pedagogical staff development sessions

A webinar was organised on 15 May 2018 to present the results of the face-to-face pedagogical staff development workshops and the methodology they were based on.



A preview of one of the Dotstorming boards during the online sessions

¹⁷ <https://dotstorming.com/>

The webinar attendees were informed of the potential to become part of an online pilot pedagogical staff development module on inclusion and citizenship skills, based on an adapted Change Laboratory methodology. Ten participants from six different European countries (Finland, Ireland, Italy, Germany, Portugal, the United Kingdom) were selected to become part of this online pilot group, based on their motivation, while ensuring a geographical representation and a balance of staff profiles.

This series of three successive online pedagogical staff development sessions with the same group of participants was intended to better mirror the Change Laboratory cycle.

In addition to the facilitator, a colleague ensured the smooth functioning of the online platform and dealt with all technical-related aspects.

Summary of the online workshops

Date	Number of participants	Agenda	Duration	Assignment after the workshop	Data capture
17 July 2018	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • round of introductions • brief presentation of EFFECT by the facilitator • introduction to the Change Laboratory methodology • round of discussions on the challenges in L&T • questioning the teaching practice (based on stimulus material uploaded on Dotstorming) • reimagining the teaching activity 	60 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • take one or both of the following unconscious bias tests: https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/ and http://www.understandingprejudice.org/iat/. 	Video recording Dotstorming
7 August 2018	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sharing feedback on the assignment on unconscious bias • discussing unconscious bias in higher education • commenting on fresh stimulus material on Dotstorming 	60 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • revisit the activity theory model and analyse one of your own challenges through this model • have a conversation with someone on a topic about which you disagree. Observe the strategies you and they adopt for avoiding confrontation and what impact this has on finding a novel solution to the issue. Try to move the discussion from “agreeing to disagree” towards exploring completely different answers to the question 	Video recording Dotstorming
26 September 2018	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recap of the Change Laboratory methodology • applying the model to one’s own set of teaching practice challenges (based on the reflective questions below) 	90 min		Video recording Dotstorming

Example of a stimulus material

I was appointed as project manager of a newly established post-doctoral school which merged three different doctoral programmes. I was supposed to manage the three single programmes and set up the common legal ground and administrative procedures and products for the school (statute, website, etc.). I received no recognition either for my career or economically. In summer, in particular, I was single-handedly managing three international selection procedures including about 600 candidates, besides all the rest of the responsibilities. I worked from 8:00 am to 8:00 pm.

I was expecting some help or words of wisdom from my director to progress with the project or give me some useful feedback.

Instead, he brought me a box of chocolates.

I kindly told him that I would not accept the chocolate. He got furious. At his reaction I told him that I would not accept anything from anybody, not just him. It was not true, but I wanted to calm him down by providing a somehow acceptable justification which was not personal. I was shocked by his reaction.

Once alone, I found the real subconscious reason of my refusal. He would have never given a box of sweets to a male colleague. With a male colleague he would have discussed the workload, how to better manage the situation and eventually also advise him about future career progression. A box of chocolates was a kind gift — enough for a woman.

A set of open reflective questions for teachers was proposed during the workshops:

- What are the artefacts, rules and organisational structures at play in your institution and which directly affect your teaching practice?
- What different perspectives, points of view and traditions are at play in your teaching practice?
- What is the history or histories that are influencing your situation as academic teaching staff?
- What is the source or nature of the dissatisfaction with your current teaching practice? Why does it matter?
- What is your motivation for seeking change? What will/could be different? What difference will it make?
- What can you personally do about it? Who else would work with you? How disruptive are you prepared to be?

Main lessons learnt from the implementation of the online workshops

- a) The methodology
 - The stimulus material should be contextualised, based on cultural and social issues specific to a certain region/ state;
 - As the online workshops tend to be shorter than physical ones, sufficient time should be reserved to capture feedback from the participants once a workshop draws to its end. Debriefing should be an important part of the online facilitation.
- b) Attendance and profiles of participants
 - There is a tendency for participants to rush to bland consensus around the safe space of familiar (but not necessarily effective) solutions rather than pushing for novel solutions and changed practice. This is an aspect to challenge and pursue in later cycles and workshops until changed perceptions and practices have been observed.
- c) The organisation of workshops
 - Having a stable virtual learning environment platform, which does not crash when multiple users enable their cameras and microphones, is very important for conducting such online staff development workshops;
 - Commitment to the topic and to the community in between the online sessions should be ensured, for instance by having an online discussion space where participants could further exchange ideas once an online session is over;

- Online sessions with a length of 1.5-2 hours are optimal;
- It would be important to have a skilled facilitator who engages with the participants throughout the sessions and keeps the interactions lively, accompanied by technical support to aid navigation of the session, as there is a lot of activity from participants to monitor;
- The facilitator should make sure that the pace of sessions is adequate and tailored also to non-native English speakers who might need longer time to read through the documents and write down their reflections;
- Recognition for such pedagogical staff development workshops (for instance, through open badges and certificates that valorise teaching and learning and help with career progression) should be established.

Evaluation

Assessing progress in change processes requires data collection before and after an intervention. In this case, no specific study was carried out among the pilot group participants before they joined the online pedagogical staff development sessions. However, feedback from participants was elicited both during and after the online sessions.

Seven out of the ten participants responded to the online survey, with five (71%) rating the online pedagogical staff development sessions as very good/excellent. When asked what was the most relevant in these online sessions, the respondents mentioned:

- The methodology used as it was a different method of reflection on the teaching practice, which helped to identify one's own assumption and biases;
- To think, describe and analyse situations taken from everyday life at work that can potentially be troublesome and frustrating;
- Interacting with others and seeing how other higher education practitioners react to the same problem.

All seven respondents believed that the Change Laboratory methodology, as it was applied during the online sessions, would be useful for discussing themes other than inclusion and citizenship. They perceived it as a transversal and a one-size-fits-all thought-provoking method whose value-add is to facilitate discussion and bring to light unconscious thinking.

Five of the seven respondents have never attended similar teaching enhancement workshops or initiatives. One of the respondents believes that this is because "focus is mostly on innovative teaching methods or on quality assurance measures rather than on issues related to inclusiveness or citizenship which might be understood by teachers as issues for elementary or high schools (teachers at HEIs understand their job as delivering skills and knowledge)."

3. Concluding remarks

On pedagogical staff development

Attitudinal and behavioural change is a shift that requires time and involves a reassessment of one's conceptions and behaviour. For this to happen, pedagogical staff development should have a certain duration in time and its impact might not become visible until a period of daily practice has passed. Levinson-Rose and Menges concluded that seminars and workshops, lasting from half-day to weeklong or longer, are useful to raise awareness and motivate teachers, but are the least likely to "produce lasting changes in teaching behaviour or lasting impact on students."¹⁸ Weimer and Lenze¹⁹ and Prebble et al.²⁰ reached the same conclusion about the reduced impact of short courses, workshops and seminars on changing teachers' behaviour and attitudes. A systematic approach in teacher training is recommended instead, rather than interventions that have no continuity and are independent of one another. EUA's 2018 thematic peer group on continuous development of teaching competences came to the same conclusion and recommended that continuous professional development should be seen as a process with which academics engage throughout their career in higher education. This process should include activities that support the enhancement of the quality of learning and teaching activity as well as research and academic career development.²¹

Given its influence on individual teachers, the meso level (i.e. one's department, discipline, workgroup, significant networks or even the institution) should not be left aside when discussing and implementing pedagogical staff development. The meso level reflects the institutional culture, which is "not something an organisation has, but rather what it is. It refers to ways of doing, talking, and thinking about things, about patterns that make up a group visible against the backdrop of other groups."²² Department and discipline colleagues and supervisors impact the outcomes of individual teacher training, whereas individual teacher training left alone would not be enough to have a considerable impact on teaching enhancement in universities, as institutional cultures are powerful and often resist change. It is therefore important to consider the meso level to check if and to what extent the effects of pedagogical staff development go beyond the individual level, and have the potential to turn into an institutional culture.

On the topic of inclusion and citizenship skills

Given their importance and complexity, conveying inclusion and citizenship skills in a pedagogic context should be a systematic effort that accounts, in particular, for student engagement, considering that:

- students make inclusiveness happen, therefore it is vital to involve students in any teacher development modules pertaining to this topic;
- educators need to understand more about how students learn, while students need to understand their own learning approach and take ownership of their learning experience;
- it is necessary to think about how to harness new technology to support learning, as technology and social media are natural environments for younger generations. There is also a pressing need to equip graduates to adapt to, function in and shape a technology-mediated world we cannot necessarily anticipate while they are students.

18 Levinson-Rose, J. and Menges, R.J., 1981, "Improving college teaching: A critical review of research", in *Review of Educational Research*, 51, pp. 403-424.

19 Weimer, M. and Lenze, L.F., 1997, "Instructional interventions: A review of the literature on efforts to improve instruction", in R. P. Perry & J. C. Smart (Eds.), *Effective teaching in higher education: Research and practice* (New York, Agathon Press), pp. 205-240.

20 Prebble, T., Hargraves, H., Leach, L., Naidoo, K., Suddaby, G. and Zepke, N., 2004, *Impact of student support services and academic development programmes on student outcomes in undergraduate tertiary study: A synthesis of the research*, New Zealand, Ministry of Education <https://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/publications/80898/5519> (accessed 14/08/2018).

21 McIntyre-Bhatty, T. and Bunesco, L., 2019, *Continuous development of teaching competences. A Thematic Peer Group Report* (Brussels, European University Association, Learning and Teaching Paper #2). <https://www.eua.eu/resources/publications/811:continuous-development-of-teaching-competences-thematic-peer-group-report.html> (accessed 17/01/2019).

22 Alvesson, M., 2002, *Understanding Organizational Culture*, London, Sage.

The European Forum for Enhanced Collaboration in Teaching (EFFECT, 2015-2019) project aims at facilitating European collaboration on teaching enhancement, identifying and developing innovative practices, supporting higher education institutions in developing strategic approaches, and assessing the feasibility of a sustainable structure for the enhancement of learning and teaching at the European level.

The project consortium is led by the European University Association, and brings together experts, dedicated networks, organisations, national rectors' conferences and institutions from different parts of Europe.

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