

## Submissions Abstract Book - All Papers (Included Submissions)

0624

Learning from Crisis and (Re)Imagining Our Post-Pandemic University: Insights from a University of Warwick Enquiry Project

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**Research Domain:** Learning, teaching and assessment (LTA)

**Abstract:** This paper shares the work-in-progress of a group of academics and undergraduate students at the University of Warwick who, in partnership with the RSA, are working together to co-create a project of enquiry and reflection across the University. Particularly, it draws on the RSA's Future Change Framework to consider the measures that the University of Warwick has taken (and are taking) in response to Covid-19 in four categories – stopped activity, paused activity, temporary measures, and innovations – with a view to making recommendations about what we should take forward from this time, and what can be left behind, specifically in regards to policy, practices and cultures of learning and teaching.

The project team, from across the University, are Naomi de la Tour, Bob Thomson, Tiana Holgate, Gervaise Savvais, Nana Adwoa Obeng.

**Paper:** Since March 2020, the Coronavirus pandemic has rapidly and drastically altered the ways we teach and learn within HE. On one hand, this has resulted in some practices which have been beneficial and innovative, useful to teaching more widely. On the other, practices have developed relevant only to the context of the crisis itself, Higher Education would benefit from setting aside with intentionality when the pandemic comes to an end. This paper shares the insights from the work-in-progress of a the Learning From Crisis project at the University of Warwick, in which a group of teaching-active academics have come to consider what we might choose to take forward and leave behind from the time of Covid within Warwick, as well as what we want to restart, or deliberately not restart that stopped in response to the crisis.

### **Rejecting the idea of ‘back to normal’**

Within the sector, there are calls to consider the shape of the ‘post-pandemic university’ and what we can learn about teaching and learning from this time of crisis (see for example, the recent series and articles produced by [BERA](#) and [WONKHE](#), the recent [UUK education summit](#), and the work done by the [Post-pandemic University](#) project). More widely, [the RSA](#) has been doing work to support organisations, institutions and society in considering their response to the pandemic, and how learning from this time can support more robust responses to crisis and change in the future, developing a [‘Future Change Framework’](#) as a result and the publication of a [report into the value of](#)

[considering future change](#). These analyses and arguments suggest a more ambitious approach to a post-covid

### **Learning from Crisis**

Focusing specifically on learning and teaching, the project draws on the [Bridges to the Future work developed by the RSA](#) created in response to the pandemic, to frame a process of gathering insights from the Warwick teaching and learning community, both staff and students through ‘Friendship as method’ (Tillman-Healy, 2003) in which conversations between people who have shared experiences of learning and teaching during the pandemic are recorded and coded to learn from the rich experiences of learners and educators over the past year as we consider how we might reimagine the future of the University.

As part of this, the team is working to identifying excellent teaching practice which has sought to support students in engaging with the pandemic in the (virtual or in-person) classroom, using it as an opportunity for learning and supporting students in engaging in the super-complexity and uncertainty of now (Buttarazzi, 2020), and looking to highlight that practice within the wider learning and teaching community.

### **Staff and students co-creating the future of Higher Education**

A recent article in WONKHE (Nov 2020) argued that in the post-pandemic university the strategy of universities must be “to place the relationship between student and teacher at the heart of all university activities and also, perhaps more importantly, empower both parties to make decisions.” This project seeks to put that into practice, and is therefore grounded in practices of authentic co-creation between learners, both academics and students alike, with a view to supporting the embedding of that learning within the university with and learning experiences and outcomes going forward. In her recent article for BERA, Gabrielle Buttarazzi (2020) argues that the pandemic has revealed the need for “teaching and learning that is explicitly built upon preparing our students to cope with the inevitable super-complexity and uncertainty of modern times.” As part of this project, we seek to identify excellent pedagogic practice which has engaged with the context of the pandemic and used it as an opportunity to support students in engaging with the uncertainty of these times, mindful that the possibility of future crises is ever-present, especially as climate change gains pace.

Writing in July 2021, the Learning from Crisis project is currently in the process of gathering and transcribing ‘Friendship as method’ conversations, case studies of good practice, and written reflections from individuals. The project is be running over the summer of 2021 with findings ready to be shared by the Autumn. Early themes emerging are around questions of the purpose of Higher Education, how moving online can be grounded in pedagogically-driven practices and decision making, and cultural shifts around working and learning practices. The Learning from Crisis team is seeking to share the learning of the project with the wider sector to invite conversations about how we might (re)imagine the future of teaching and learning in Higher Education after Covid-19.

WHAT PRACTICE  
ARE WE SEEING IN  
COMMUNITIES,  
INSTITUTIONS,  
POLICIES?

## Understanding crisis-response measures

Collective Sense-making



RSA (2020) [www.thersa.org](http://www.thersa.org)

### References:

### Bibliography

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