Submissions Abstract Book - All Papers (All Submissions)

0426

V6 | Denbigh 1

Fri 13 Dec 2019

12:00 - 12:30

"The value of selective 'Technology-Enhanced Learning' (TEL) tools in evidencing Conformity, Creativity and Criticality in the provision of 'high-quality' education as required by the Student Contract to Educate (SCTE) in a new 'local' era of accountability in U.K. higher education. Can conformity be a catalyst for creativity and criticality?"

Annie DHO. McCartney[1], Dawn DK. Story[1], Clare Kell[1]

[1]University of South Wales, Pontypridd, United Kingdom

Research Domain: The Digital University and new learning technologies (DU)

Abstract: It is implicit in the SCTE that the educational service provided to students by HEIs is of 'high-quality' and in accordance with standards of 'reasonable skill and care'. For employers, 'high-quality' education is one that emphasises the development of creative and critical skills, but concerns are raised that graduates lack these key skills, and that there is a 'Creativity Crisis' in HE. This paper argues that one way to meet this challenge is through compliance with legal requirements and the effective use of TEL tools. These provide evidence of 'high-quality' provision when supported by innovative and creative pedagogical models which drive creative and critical provision and put students at the heart of their own learning. A list of common markers of 'high-quality' provision was circulated to stakeholders to assess the feasibility of a 'common approach' to high-quality provision across the disciplines and to act as a benchmark by which it could be evaluated.

Paper: It is implicit in the SCTE that the educational service provided to students by HEIs is of 'high-quality' and in accordance with standards of 'reasonable skill and care'. Compliance with these legal duties set out in the SCTE means HEIs should produce graduates who can gain meaningful employment and meet the needs of the employer. However the complexity of meaning of both 'standards' and 'quality', especially when used in legal and educational contexts, requires extensive investigation. For employers 'high-quality' education is one that emphasises the development of creative and critical skills amongst all graduates. While it is recognised that for some these terms are indefinable, they are widely recognised as the skills that foster innovation and originality, problem-solving, collaborative working and strong analytical skills. As well as this, students should be provided with skills better able to meet the challenging digital needs of employers in a 21st century digital workplace and facilitating this should drive **creativity** in teaching, learning and assessment. However, an extensive review of the literature and recent reports from the world of industry show increasing concerns that not only do graduates lack these key skills, they are not being developed in Higher

Education where there is a 'Creativity Crisis'.

This paper argues that one way to meet this challenge is through compliance with legal requirements and the effective use of TEL tools to scaffold 'high-quality' provision. Negative and bureaucratic assumptions rather than inspiration and the development of creative and critical skills are more usually associated with legal compliance. However, this paper posits that when supported by innovative and creative pedagogical models, compliance can and should drive creative and critical provision that puts students at the heart of their own learning. Professionals are required to keep up to date with the changes relevant to their profession (see *Eckersley v Binnie and Partners 1988 18 Con LR 1*) – and to the ever-evolving understanding of what is 'reasonable skill and care' when applied in the context of the SCTE and the professional higher education classroom.

The research aimed to test selective TEL tools in 'local' environments to evaluate the extent to which the tools can evidence (and consequently see that) provision **COMPLIES** with the SCTE, enables **CREATIVITY** in 'high-quality' teaching, learning and assessment and facilitates the development of key **CRITICAL** skills for students. Inherent in this was an analysis of the reliability of the information generated by the TEL tools. This was key as increasing emphasis is being placed on the reliability of evidence, which leaves a 'digital footprint' in preference to 'memory recall of facts'. Therefore TEL tools have potential to be highly valuable accountability tools. As a consequence, an independent report was commissioned to test the value of the selected TEL tools through the digital information they generated and to explore how that information could be used for the benefit of students and academics alike. In this instance, the effectiveness of the tools was used to defend against mock (but based on real) disputes against quality provision. In this way, the methodology enabled an exploration of the link between 'accountability' and 'high-quality' in HEI, emphasising the importance of 'accountability' at local program and course level, where it can be argued that it matters to most to students and taxpayers.

The research adopted a case study approach. Both secondary and primary data were used. Secondary data was used for a mini literature review on 'quality' and its educational counterpart, 'standards'. Primary data was gathered in the form of semi-structured questionnaires completed by a range of professionals and students to gauge respective viewpoints on how 'high-quality' might best be judged across the disciplines. A list of common markers of 'high-quality' provision was circulated to key stakeholders (HEI, academics and students). This was to assess the feasibility of a 'common approach' to high-quality provision across the disciplines and to act as a benchmark by which it could be evaluated. These markers were then presented and discussed at an open forum workshop at the annual learning and teaching conference in June 2019.

The value of TEL tools as potential evidence to demonstrate 'high-quality' provision and ensure effective and current pedagogy is clear. However, it also has the potential to ensure accountability and to hold HEIs to the high standards often promised to prospective students. At the same time, it can provide evidence that promises made by an HEI have been kept – which could be of import if HEIs are to avoid a highly litigious sector. In a report in the THE it is stated that one of the TEL tools (Lecture Capture) enabled a university '…**to check the content of** …lectures after they were recorded and saved on its virtual learning environment.'

The judge in the case of **Siddiqui v University of Oxford [2018]** stated that resolving disputes about educational provision will come under the spotlight given the costs of tuition and that resolving such disputes via litigation should be the last resort.[1] Use effectively and openly, TEL tools can provide transparency for HEIs, academics and students alike.

Compliance in relation to the SCTE that students have received high-quality is required by all stakeholders, students, accrediting bodies, academics, HEIs and of course taxpayers. Accrediting bodies are revising their accreditation standards to ensure that education reflects criticality and creativity. Employers too who fund student's education also want to see a return on that investment and will want to ensure the key skills set that they require their graduates to have are met. The effective use of TEL tools will help evidence such requirements. However, it must not be overlooked that TEL tools can also ensure that students have also met the engagement requirements for a 'high-quality' education. Compliance is a contractual two-way process in the SCTE, and it will be equally important that students evidence their engagement in the process as required.

References:

The 'best fit' definition that will be applied here is provided by the noun: "compliance with standards, rules, or laws."**conformity to** regulations"

synonyms:

"The Creativity Crisis" 2010, by Po Bronson and Ashley Merryman, Newsweek, 7th October 2010 – subsequently developed into a film in 2013 by Matthew Worwood entitled, "Creativity in Education: Exploring the Imbalance" 2013 and accessible via Amazon Prime: https://www.amazon.co.uk/Creativity-Education-Exploring-Joseph-Renzulli/dp/B07QH7XRCC/ref=sr_1_2?keywords=The+creativity+crisis+in+education&qid=1561322732&s=gateway&sr=8-2

Page 114 of "Research Methods and Methodologies in Education" 2nd Edition, L.D.Ashey (2017) Sage Publications

"Is Creativity the Number One Skill For The 21st Century?" 14th June 2018 - Rosi Lister

UK Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre (PEC) (2018).

"Creativity and the future of skills" Eliza Easton, Head of Policy Unit, Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre (PEC) Jyldyz Djumalieva, Data Science Research Fellow, Nesta 13 November 2018

"Innovation Skills for the Future: Insights from Research Reports: Future of Jobs "Report 2018

"Soft skills for business success" DeakinCo. May 2017, Deloitte, Access Economics

"The Oxford Tutorial: Thanks, you taught me how to think", edited by David Palfreyman (new Kindle version 2019), Blackwell Publishing