

Title: **More than just a postcard from Cyprus: lessons from a staff development programme with an overseas partner**

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Session Learning Outcomes

By the end of this session, delegates will be able to:

- Explain the principles of blended learning to colleagues
- Evaluate the effectiveness of different learning environments
- Apply learning to new situations

Session Outline

Key issues to be addressed are:

- Pedagogy of learning and teaching on-line
- Creating learning communities with a dispersed cohort
- Application of appropriate technology

The background to the session is the creation of an overseas campus of UCLan in Cyprus, the recruitment of new staff, and the subsequent staff development which has been undertaken. For engagement with the PGCert programme we have, like other institutions, adopted a model which is a mix of face-to-face visits and sessions, together with on-line delivery and learning. We now have two cohorts of staff in Cyprus, the first of which has progressed nearly to completion of the PGCert programme.

Another reality is the huge advances in the availability of mobile devices which can access learning environments, and in social media tools which support engagement: Keengwe and Kidd (2010) noted “the need to fundamentally change and transform pedagogical approaches to the learning and teaching process to meet the instructional needs of online students”.

The outline of the session is to begin with a sharing of experiences of on-line delivery, assessing the positives and negatives against a traditional classroom based environment, using flip-charts to visualise outcomes. There will then be an audio-visual interaction with colleagues in Cyprus through an on-line facility, to understand what the experience has been like for staff on a course delivered in this mixed mode. Finally, in groups, there will be an opportunity for action planning using post-it notes, of the ‘one thing I am going to do as a result of today’ format.

Session Activities and Approximate Timings

The outline of the workshop is as follows;

- Attendees will review and share their impressions of the positives and negatives of on-line delivery methods (15 mins). Indicative questions:
 - a) In what context have you used an on-line approach?
 - b) What tools / platform have you used?
 - c) What sort of feedback did you receive from the cohort(s) involved?
 - d) In what ways did the on-line approach provide a 'richer' learning environment than a traditional ('face-to-face') mode of delivery?
 - e) Were there any specific ways in which the on-line element of the experience was poorer than a traditional mode?
- A live interaction between participants and colleagues from UCLan Cyprus, exploring the experience of being a participant-at-a-distance on the PGCert. (15 mins).
- Action planning, with ideas for new ways to approach on-line provision (10 mins).

References

Key texts mentioned in the outline, please use the Harvard referencing system.

Keengwe, J and Kidd, T.T. (2010) Towards Best Practices in Online Learning and Teaching in Higher Education. *Journal of Online Learning and Teaching in Higher Education*
http://jolt.merlot.org/vol6no2/keengwe_0610.htm (accessed 2.5.2013)