

Title: **Reflecting on student reflections: Lessons learnt from delivering an online pre-arrival course to prepare students for remote PGT study**

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Learning Outcomes

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

- List a range of strategies that can be used to set student expectations and prepare students for remote learning
- Recognise the impact of various strategies to address student preparedness and expectations
- Reflect on an example case study to consider how learnings might enhance their own particular learning and teaching context

Outline

Though literature on the PGT student experience is limited, it consistently suggests the transition from previous to postgraduate study to be a significant challenge, with possible explanations including student confusion regarding what Master's-level study is, and what is expected of them at this level (1,2,3,4,5). With a rapid shift to online learning as a response to the current pandemic, this presents additional challenges to those that already exist for PGT students, as many students were also required to transition to fully or mostly remote study (6,7,8).

As such, in order to address this significant need, a team of students and staff at Imperial College London collaboratively designed and delivered an online pre-arrival course entitled 'Adapt To Postgrad' (ATP) for prospective PGT students within the Faculty of Medicine, with one of its key aims being to prepare students for remote Master's study. This was addressed by a specific component of the course dedicated to 'Learning how to learn in Online Environments' which actively prompts students to review and optimise their remote working space, unpack what online learning consists of, explore differences between synchronous and asynchronous learning, and reflect on example student case study experiences of online learning. Student learning in relation to this is captured through consistent written reflections.

ATP has experienced early success, with preliminary findings showing that over 600 students have engaged within the first year of its release. As part of our attached research project, we are using quantitative and qualitative methods to explore not only the general impact of an online, pre-arrival course on student expectations prior to commencing PGT

study, but also its specific impact on preparing students for remote learning. This session intends to share relevant lessons learnt and preliminary results.

Activities and Approximate Timings

This session will be delivered as a 30 demonstration with discussion to enable participants to view online learning resources. The provisional session plan is as follows:

0 – 5 mins: Introductory Activity

Participants invited to engage in Mentimeter/ Padlet exercise, writing responses to the following question: “If you could access prospective HE students 1 month in advance of their study, how would you prepare them for remote learning?”.

Addresses the following LO: List a range of strategies that can be used to set student expectations and prepare students for remote learning

5 – 20 minutes: Overview of the Adapt To Postgrad course

ATP Team reveal the strategies they employed as part of the Adapt To Postgrad online pre-arrival course to prepare students for remote study.

Participants invited to answer the following question (via Padlet/ Mentimeter): “What might the challenges/ benefits of such an approach be?”. ATP team to facilitate discussion related to this question.

Addresses the following LO: Recognise the impact of various strategies to address student preparedness and expectations

ATP Team reveal what they found to be the impact of this approach, with key lessons learnt.

20 – 25 minutes: Lessons learnt and reflection

Participants invited to answer the following question (via Padlet/ Mentimeter): “Can you apply any of these approaches to your practice/ institution?”

Addresses the following LO: Reflect on an example case study to consider how learnings might enhance their own particular learning and teaching context

Final 5 minutes set aside for Q&A.

Preparation before the session

Participants would not be required to prepare before the session.

References and sources

- 1 <https://www.timeshighereducation.com/news/students-arent-prepared-uk-masters-level-study-finds>
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- 7 Trout, B.S. (2020) The Coronavirus-Induced Transition to Online Learning: Perceptions and Intentions of First-Time Online Students. *Quarterly Review of Distance Education*, v21 n1 p1-11 2020.
- 8 Jeffery, K.A. (2020) Students' Responses to Emergency Remote Online Teaching Reveal Critical Factors for All Teaching. *Journal of Chemical E*