Flexible, accessible, sustainable and engaging higher education: Can we have it all?

Dr Kay Hack (PFHEA)

Principal Adviser (L&T)

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Provocation

How do we meet the diverse needs of students including those who are craving the in-person social experiences they signed up for whilst leveraging lessons learnt from the pivot to online teaching?

The future is not what it used to be – subtle shifts in framing

Physical places   ⟶   Physical and/or digital places

Teaching   ⟶   Learning

Blended/Hybrid   ⟶   Multi-modal

Consultation   ⟶   Co-creation

Academic outcomes   ⟶   Graduate outcomes

Volunteering   ⟶   Service learning

Extra-curricular   ⟶   Co-curricular

Student Engagement   ⟶   Belonging

Student Journey   ⟶   Learning Journey

Team   ⟶   Community

Student Success in HE

- Transforming Assessment

- Employability

- Access, retention, attainment & progression

- Flexible learning

- Student engagement as partners

- Internationalisation

The framework for enhancing student success in higher education
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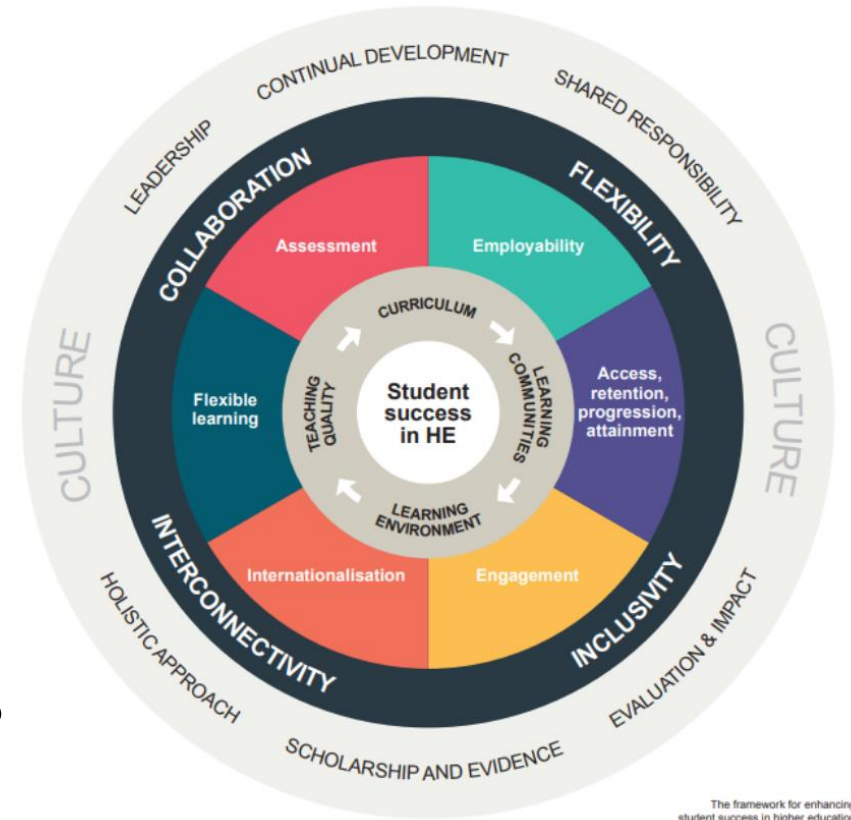
Inclusive   sustainability   digital

Flexible Learning

- Empowers students by providing choice in how, what, when and how they learn:
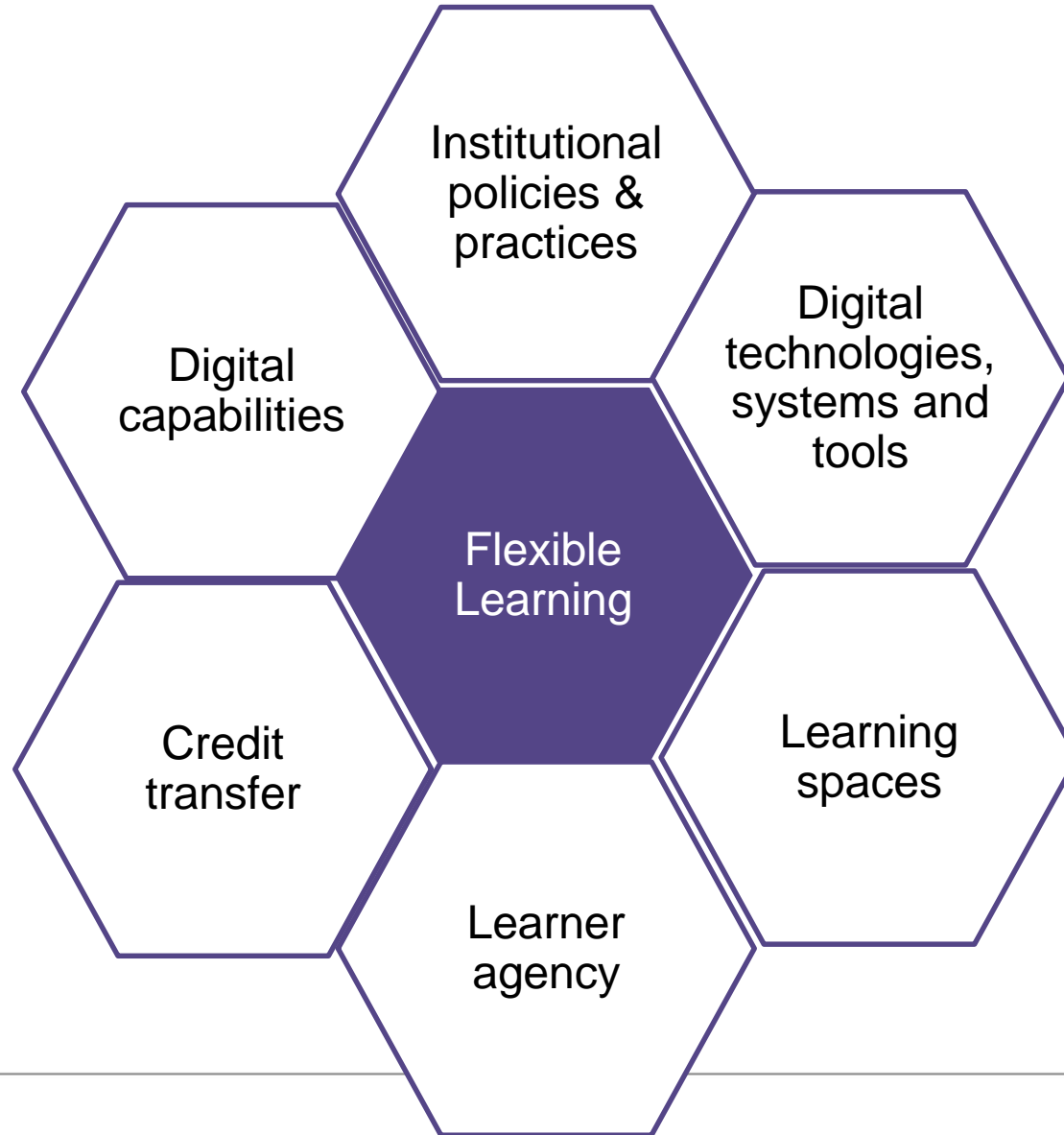
  – pace, place and mode of learning

HEA Flexible Learning Framework (2016)

Flexible learning concerns institutions constructing and continually evaluating infrastructure, policies and practices that offer the **widest possible opportunity** *for successful* **student engagement and belonging of all stakeholders** *in higher education*

Jones-Devitt, Arnold and Snowden (2017)

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Emergent themes

Institutional policies & practices

Digital capabilities

Digital technologies, systems and tools

Flexible Learning

Credit transfer

Learning spaces

Learner agency

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Pedagogic practices

+ Active learning aligned with intended outcomes

+ Develop staff and students digital capabilities

+ Develop learner agency and self-awareness

+ Embed choice and self-directed learning

+ Personalised learning

+ Support transitions in and out of programmes
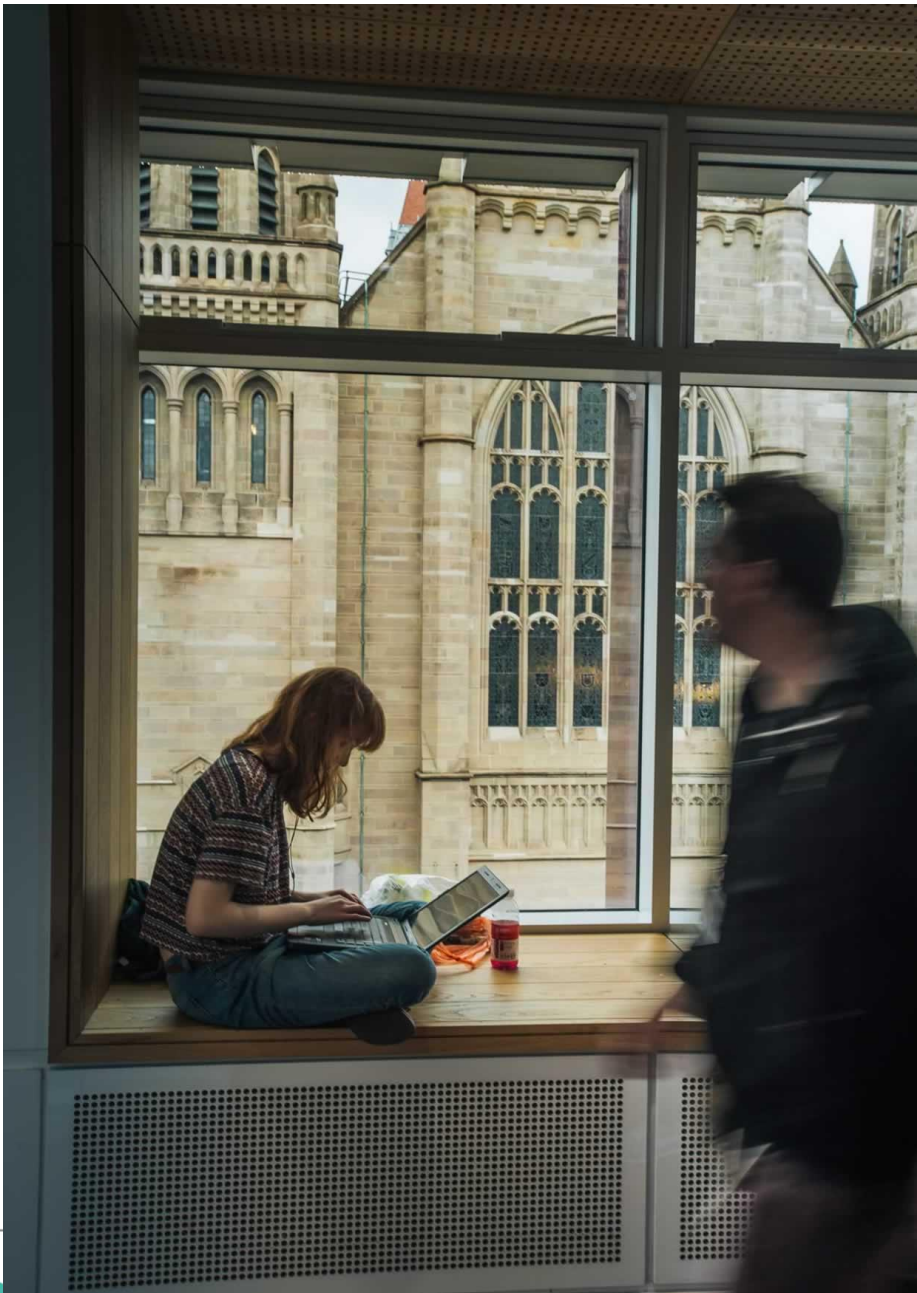
- Online, Virtual or Digital?
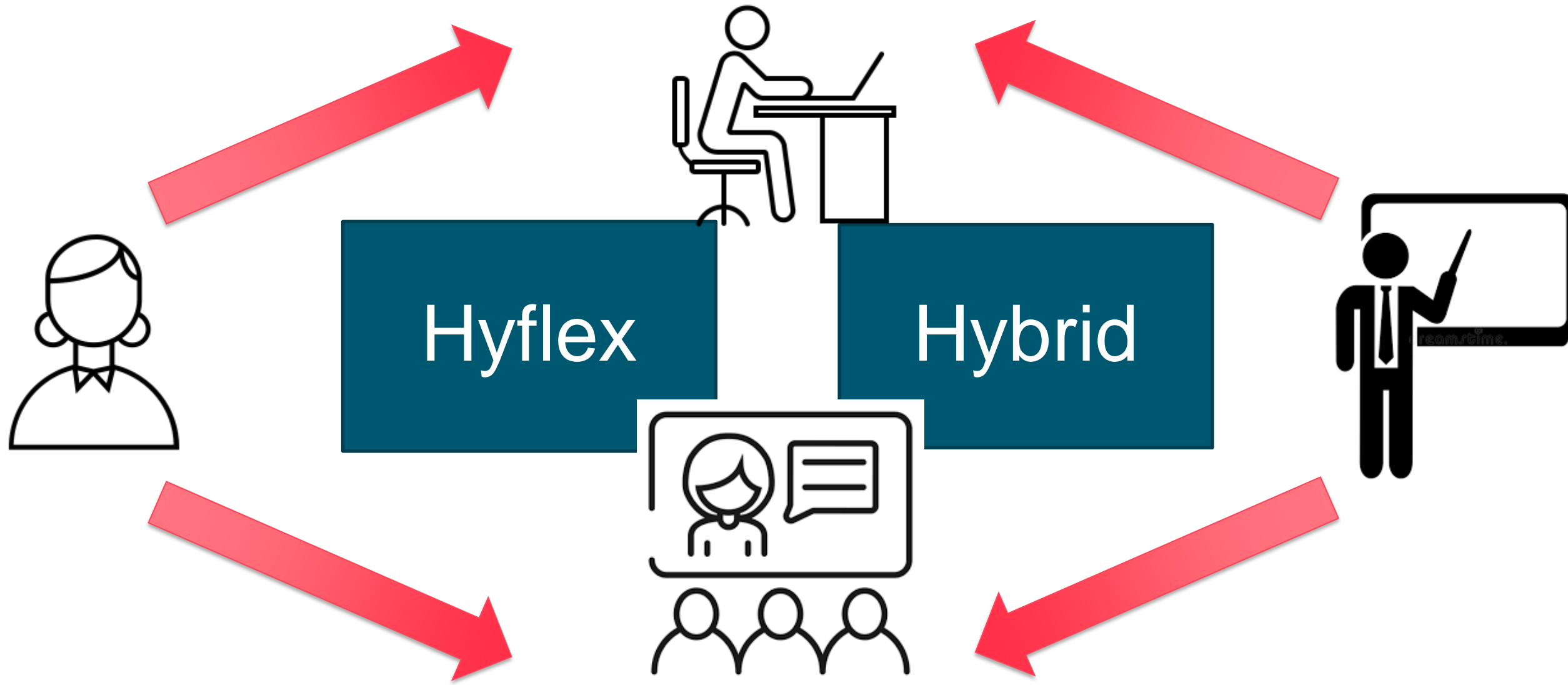- Re-defining modes of Learning

The reductive argument about online vs in person masks the real challenges of digital access and participation, and how new methods of mixed mode teaching and assessment might support groups of students who are often marginalised from the debate
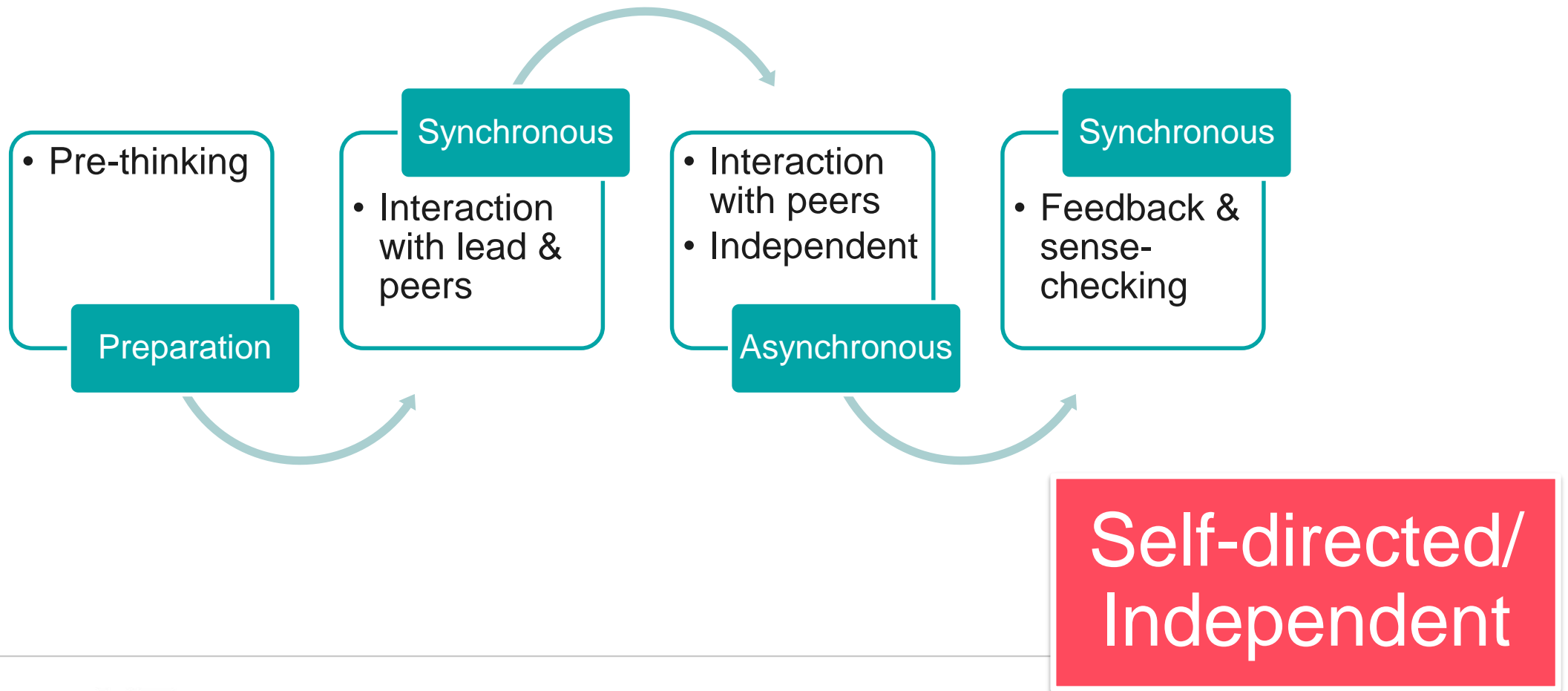
UPP Foundation, Student Futures Commission

Online, Virtual or Digital? Defining Modes of Learning

In... (f2f, on campus)

Multi-modal

Blended

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Hyflex

Hybrid

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Hybrid model

- Pre-thinking

Preparation

Synchronous
- Interaction with lead & peers

- Interaction with peers
- Independent

Asynchronous

Synchronous
- Feedback & sense-checking

Self-directed/ Independent

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Rich is NOT Teach

Professor Alejandro Armellini

Rethinking the student experience

- Pedagogies
- Learning spaces
- Competencies

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What binds the university experience together outside of live sessions?

Digital Disruption?

+ Disrupting the workplace

+ Disrupting Higher Education

+ Disrupting Learners

Or digital enabling?

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What will the workplace look like in 2030?

- [Continued] economic growth driven by innovation
- Increased automation of 'professional' work
- High-tech industries based on novel technology and materials
- Productivity enhanced through ICT solutions
- Virtual or Flexible workforce
  - Freelances
  - Short-term contracts
  - Zero hours contracts

+ Value of HE questioned

+ Need for upskilling/ reskilling
  - Just-in-time
  - 'Bite-size' skill development and assessment
  - Life-long loan entitlement
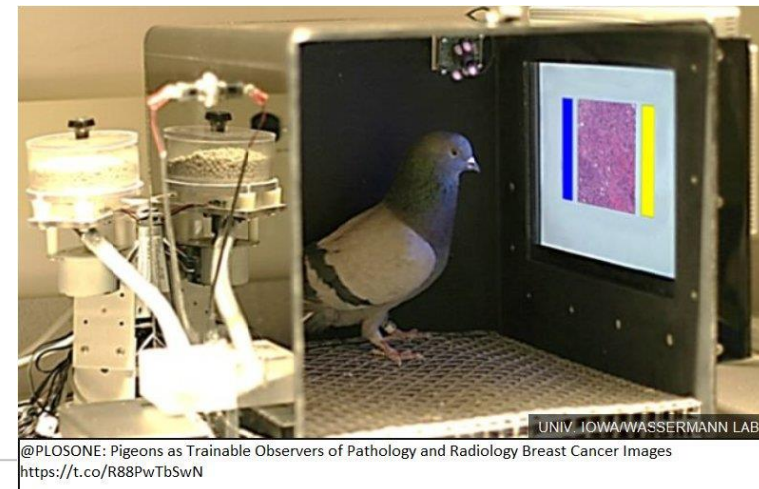
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@PLOSONE: Pigeons as Trainable Observers of Pathology and Radiology Breast Cancer Images
https://t.co/R88PwTbSwN

01/07/2022

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	Institute for the Future (Davies, 2011)	Future of Jobs Report (World Economic Forum, 2016)	Building Higher Education Curricula Fit for the Future (Coonan and Pratt Adams, 2018)
Social Skills	• Virtual collaboration • Cross-cultural competency • Social intelligence • New media literacy	• Co-ordinating with others • People management • Negotiation • Emotional intelligence • Service orientation	• Managing diverse stakeholders • Emotional intelligence • Communication • Self-awareness • Resilience
Cognitive Ability	• Novel and adaptive thinking • Cognitive load management • Sense-making	• Cognitive flexibility • Critical thinking • Creativity	• Cognitive flexibility • Adaptable to change • Creativity • Understanding 'the big picture' • Entrepreneurial and enterprising
Complex Problem Solving	• Design mindset • Transdisciplinarity • Computational thinking	• Complex problem solving • Judgement and decision making	• Apply knowledge in a complex environment • Use and interpret data

The challenges

+ Use technology to provide quality education 'for all'
+ Ensure learners (& teachers) develop digital capabilities for living, learning & working with technology
+ Learners need to learn with and about technology
+ Sustainable citizenship and institutions

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Use a design based approach?

+ Quality assurance

+ Align learning environment with core principles

  + strategy, vision and values

+ Consistency

  + Reduce cognitive load

+ Inclusivity and accessibility

+ Developing digital capabilities

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What are your Learning Design Principles?

Active Digital Design
Explore | Collaborate | Create | Share | Reflect

- Explore
- Collaborate
- Create
- Share
- Reflect

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THANK YOU

Catherine.Hack@advance-he.ac.uk

@hack_kay