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The Lecturer as Learner: Exploring that digital divide one more time

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Although there is widespread acceptance of the importance, and indeed superiority, of student-centred learning in the contemporary success equation (McCabe & O'Connor, 2014), charting the route to such success remains problematic. Many assumptions around the nature of digital learning, and inter-generational attitudes to such learning are still made.

Specific to the context of technology-enhanced teaching, learning and assessment in a higher education environment, a range of generic and particular debates around how to be student-centric arise. Technology-enhanced learning (TEL) has been examined extensively from both the student's viewpoint, and the lecturer's perspective (Waycott et al., 2010). But how can these often polar opposite viewpoints be bridged? Gaining an authentic view of the student's perspective relies on garnering student feedback, resulting in such secondary data quickly becoming dated.

The author, an experienced higher education lecturer, reflects on her own experience of becoming an enrolled student on a level 9 module in education technology, the challenges it brought and the enlightenment that, for experienced lecturers, decoding how students learn digitally can be greatly enhanced by adopting a "walk in their shoes" approach. In particular, great insights into aspects of motivation, autonomy, technology-enhanced assessment, and virtual communications were gained, along with a first-hand understanding of which activities actually constituted learning. Understanding these challenges and opportunities first-hand has allowed the author to better construct strategies to embed technology-enhanced teaching, learning and assessment for undergraduate students.

Drawing on thinking around barriers to a more widespread adoption of TEL (readiness, confidence and attitude to perceived power shift in particular), the author explores these debates and proposes that our understanding could become much deeper if lecturers became learners first. Such knowledge gain would be valuable at both individual practitioner level and at institutional level.

McCabe, A. & O'Connor, U. (2014). 'Student-centred learning: the role and responsibility of the lecturer', *Teaching in Higher Education*, 19(4); 350-359.

Walcott, J., Bennett, S., Kennedy, G., Dalgarno, B & Gray, K. (2010). Digital divides? Student and staff perceptions of information and communication technology', *Computers & Education*, 54(4); 1202-1211.