

Huw Morgan – Good Practice in Teaching Podcast, Recorded 7th October 2021

Transcript

Becki Bennett: Hi Huw. Thanks for coming and talking to us.

Huw Morgan: No problem.

BB: I hear that you've been doing some of the dual delivery of teaching and we thought it might be useful for you to maybe tell us something about what you did and how you found that experience and maybe if you've got any kind of insights that might help people who maybe have less experience in doing that at the moment?

HM: Yeah, sure. I had a sort of a session on the welcome week for the BA Econ students. And we had roundabout, I would say, about a hundred in the room. It was in Simon Lecture Theatre. About fifty to a hundred remote, possibly 50, more like 50. So, it was just a brief introduction to the programme to welcome students, and I'd never used the dual teaching equipment before. I'd been on the course, had a rough idea on how to work it. But I think what helped most was having the intern – I had an intern who was there to help me, basically just go through the steps of setting up. I got onto my Zoom account, started the Zoom session, and I could see students logging on straight away and that was good. So, I knew people in there at the same time, obviously as people are entering the room. So that sort of an interesting perspective from both in person and remote.

The session wasn't exactly active. It was more like a presentation by me on the programme, but I did offer students, I paused every so often to offer a chance for students to ask questions and those in the room did and those online posted them on chats and the kindly intern sort of monitored them and raised the relevant questions and was actually answering quite a lot herself because she knew a bit about the programme too, which was great. So, it went very well, it seemed to sort of flow quite naturally, it came to the end and I again opened it up for questions. I started again with people in the room.

One thing I should say, in that particular lecture theatre, the camera for Zoom was on the wall facing out, so all they could see was the back of my head, which is nice and shiny. But of course, not ideal. So, I had to sort of, I did roam the room as well. So, I put one of the lapel mics on because I like to do that anyway and just every now and again, I would turn back to the camera behind me just to say, because there were one or two points that were specific to the remote students, so turning around to them and just sort of keeping them in mind when you're presenting was quite useful to do.

And of course, the other thing is, you can see what they're seeing because, you know, there's a small monitor as you present. Sometimes I think it might be a bit off-putting, but I left it on there. Also, interestingly, part way through one of the students requested live subtitles which I thought, okay, you know, go for it, see what happens. And immediately I could see what I was saying, was being typed up on the bottom of the screen, so slightly off-putting, but probably very helpful for students with either, you know, sort of audio issues.

So, I think it went quite well, I think next time I might try and hide, you know, minimize the Zoom image because it was, I think being projected onto the screen. Not that that's again a bad thing,

because the students then are aware that it's not just them in the room. At the end we had questions and after those questions in the hall, we turn to the remote students. There was chat, but then I did, one thing I also did was I realized that when I first sort of students were logging into Zoom, there was pinging going on all the time, little "ping, ping", people joining, hopefully not leaving, so lots of pings. So, I asked how maybe we could stop that, and it was very simply a case of going down, because I use the PC in the room, so it was the desktop. Just going down to the bottom left where the audio setting is and just muting that. And that's much easier than asking students to mute themselves.

Of course, you have to remember to unmute if you then want to converse with the remote students. That's what I did, so I just turned off the mute at the end and said, right, does anyone want to talk to me? And they did and it was really quite nice to hear quite a booming, voice coming through the speakers in the lecture theatre. So yeah, it was quite simple, quite straightforward.

BB: That sounds great. I mean, how different do you think it was from how you would have normally presented that lecture? Do you think it was, you know, obviously there was a bit of trepidation at the beginning because you've never done it before but once you got into it, do you think it was...?

HM: Yeah, no, because it was it was more of a presentation and then a question and answer at the end, it seemed to work very well. I was quite pleased. I just finished it off thinking, yep, good. So not really very different from a standard presentation- style lecture. I'm also planning to do some more active lectures. So that's where it might become a bit more challenging. But again, hopefully, I'll have an intern there to help me again. And, you know, we'll see how it goes. Got to try these things, haven't you?

BB: Definitely, and I think those interns are really helpful. How did you manage to get your intern? I'm sure a lot of people will be interested to know if they can apply for an intern as well. So, who did you contact to organize that?

HM: I think, I can't remember to be honest, I think it was done through the school. I think the school organized it because they were sort of organizing the whole sessions. But I am aware that our school, we do have, there was an email that went out that said, do you want someone to help you, and if so, how much? So, it could be just the first one if you just want, if you feel after you've done one you can manage it. Or you can have them coming in more than once. So, I'm going to do that for the actual lectures when they get started.

BB: Yeah, I think if people contacted the Director of Teaching and Learning probably is a very good point of call for that. Or have a look for that email because I think I got the same email as well, so, that might be a way of doing it. And perhaps if they weren't able to get an intern for any reason, they might be able to see if there was a volunteer from the students who might do some of that work, because I think, as you say, at least for the first time you do it, it must have made you feel a bit more secure knowing that there was somebody else to kind of just keep an eye on what was going online, in case it became a bit difficult to do it.

HM: One thing, I suppose a suggestion might be – there was supposed to be two of us in the lecture theatre because there's two pathway directors. But the other pathway director was not well but was able to log on at home, so she acted as a student. So that sort of helped. It's not immediate feedback, but you get feedback after as to whether the presentation was okay, whether you could be heard. But I think I could because I mean it when I was having that, that was the nice thing right at the end. Maybe do this at the start, just say hello to someone and ask them to say hello back remotely. Just so you've got that initial communication, you know you can be heard.

BB: Yeah, definitely. I think that's really important for your own confidence doing the session knowing that you're not talking to thin air. Just having that little check-in at the beginning. Did you think you got more or less questions and interaction this way than you would if you'd had no online element at all?

HM: Probably like most of us: you tend to say, anyone got any questions? There's no questions. But then there's like a row of about 50 students at the end all wanting to speak to you. So that still happened, but less so I think, because the opportunities were twice, you know, so that the students in the room could ask plus those remote. The chat, I was wondering whether the chat function is something we should be using or not. Because if it's just being used by the remote students, what do the students in the room do? They have no sort of opportunity of almost anonymous questions that the chat might offer.

BB: Unless you got them to log into Zoom as well and they could use the chat. So, if you felt that the chat was helping and encouraging, maybe those ones that normally don't say anything, then you could have either get the students to, in the room, to log into Zoom or you could use something like Padlet and let both the Zoom people and the people in the room, type questions and interact on something like Padlet. Because I think, it's not always the case, but I think for a lot of people they've noticed that being online and having that ability to write questions rather than have to speak up can be really helpful.

HM: Absolutely, that, that really does promote a bit more engagement, I'm sure. I've been using TurningPoint as well which also has a sort of a message function as well as polling. And that seems to sort of just promote a bit more engagement. If you wanted an active sort of session.

BB: Yeah, it's definitely worth thinking about. Maybe quite complicated for the first time. But once you've settled in, you know, start thinking about how much you could use that kind of different way of interaction.

HM: Yeah, and I think the other thing to remember is that no one's going to complain if you're trying to do something to help the students. They're very understanding.

BB: Thanks Huw. I think that's really useful, particularly given that you had such a large group because I think we could kind of see how it works in the training with having people online, and we've done several workshops and other meetings, but they've all been fairly small. So, hearing about, you know, that experience of that, quite a big group of people with quite a lot of people online. It's been really useful. So, thanks very much for talking to us.

HM: Okay. Thank you.