Williams Centre for Learning Advancement

Faculty of Business and Economics

Raising the Bar:

Supporting Teaching Renewal in Business Education

Professor Angela Paladino

@PalaProf @williams_centre #remoteteaching #highered #education

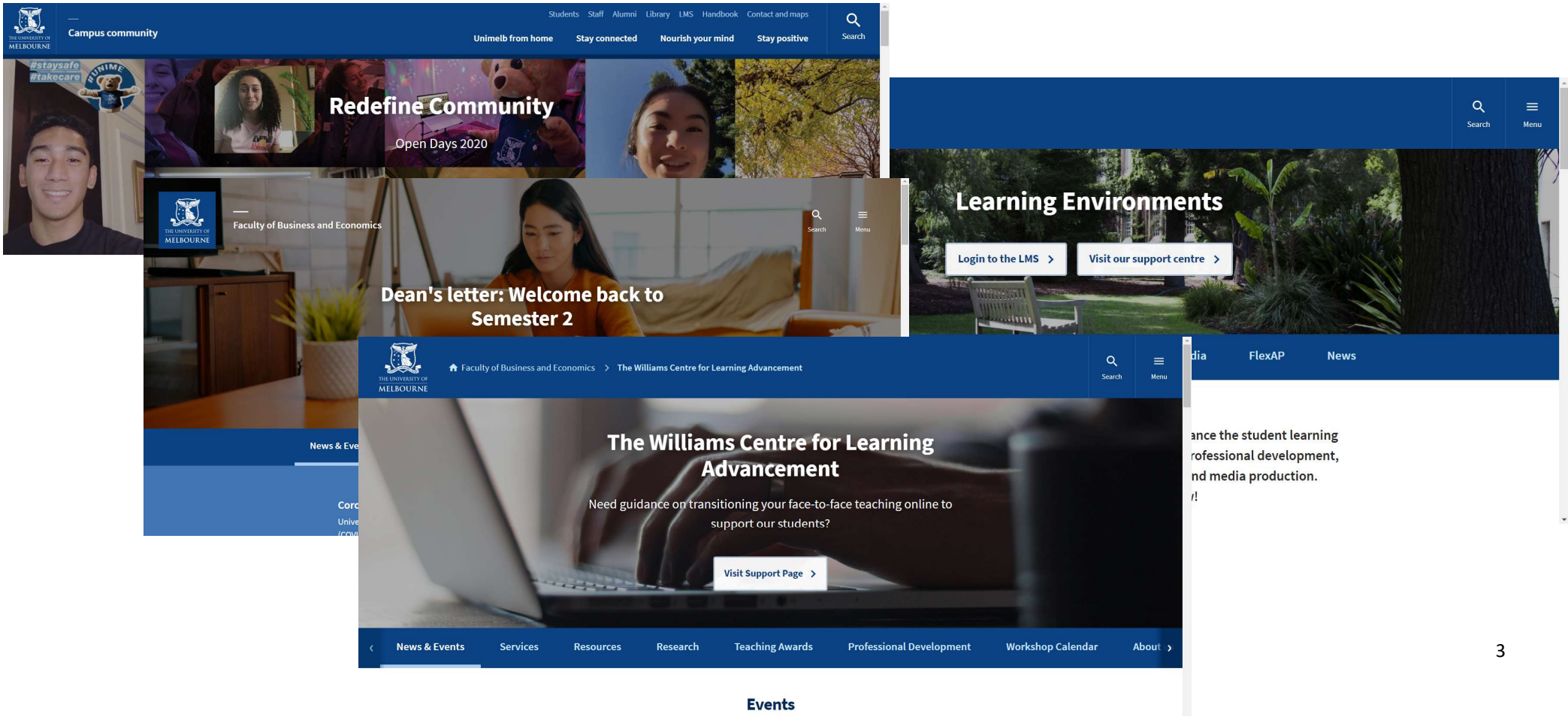
With Professor Carsten Murawski, A/Professor David Byrne & Ms Maggie Singorahardjo

@carstenmurawski @dprbyrne @msingorahardjo

Overview

- Overview of the Changing Environment
- Learning from our Transition in Semester 1
- Lessons Learnt
- Faculty Reflections
- Examples of Innovation: Three Disciplines
- Planning for the Continued Unknown
- Preparing for Semester 2: The Framework
- Ongoing Local Support for Faculty
- Q&A

Context


Campus community
Students Staff Alumni Library LMS Handbook Contact and maps
Unimelb from home
Stay connected
Nourish your mind
Stay positive
Search
#staysafe
#takecare
Redefine Community
Open Days 2020
Faculty of Business and Economics
Search
Menu
Dean's letter: Welcome back to Semester 2
Learning Environments
Login to the LMS
Visit our support centre
FlexAP
News
ance the student learning
rofessional development,
nd media production.
Faculty of Business and Economics
The Williams Centre for Learning Advancement
The Williams Centre for Learning Advancement
Need guidance on transitioning your face-to-face teaching online to support our students?
Visit Support Page
News & Events
Services
Resources
Research
Teaching Awards
Professional Development
Workshop Calendar
Events

Rapidly Changing Environment

- To ensure teaching continuity in Semester 1, faculty were required to transfer their face-to-face classes to online in a matter of days.
- This rapid transition was taking place at a research-intensive university, distinguished by face-to-face teaching.
- Teaching modes in FBE consisted of lectures, tutorials, seminars and workshops, with class sizes varying from 5 to close to 2000 students.
- As an added complexity, our students were located across a multitude of time zones, across the Northern and Southern Hemispheres.
- This high adoption of online teaching would never have occurred in a non-Covid environment
  - this turbulent environment has presented as many opportunities as it has challenges for us.

Reflecting on Semester 1 Challenges

- We faced a number of challenges on all fronts
- It was ‘all hands on deck’ and team approach, from academics through to professional staff

- But how do we compare?
  - Where were your most significant challenges to teaching experienced?
  - (Please use a '-' to keep connected words together)

https://pollev.com/angelapaladi531

Learning from our Transition

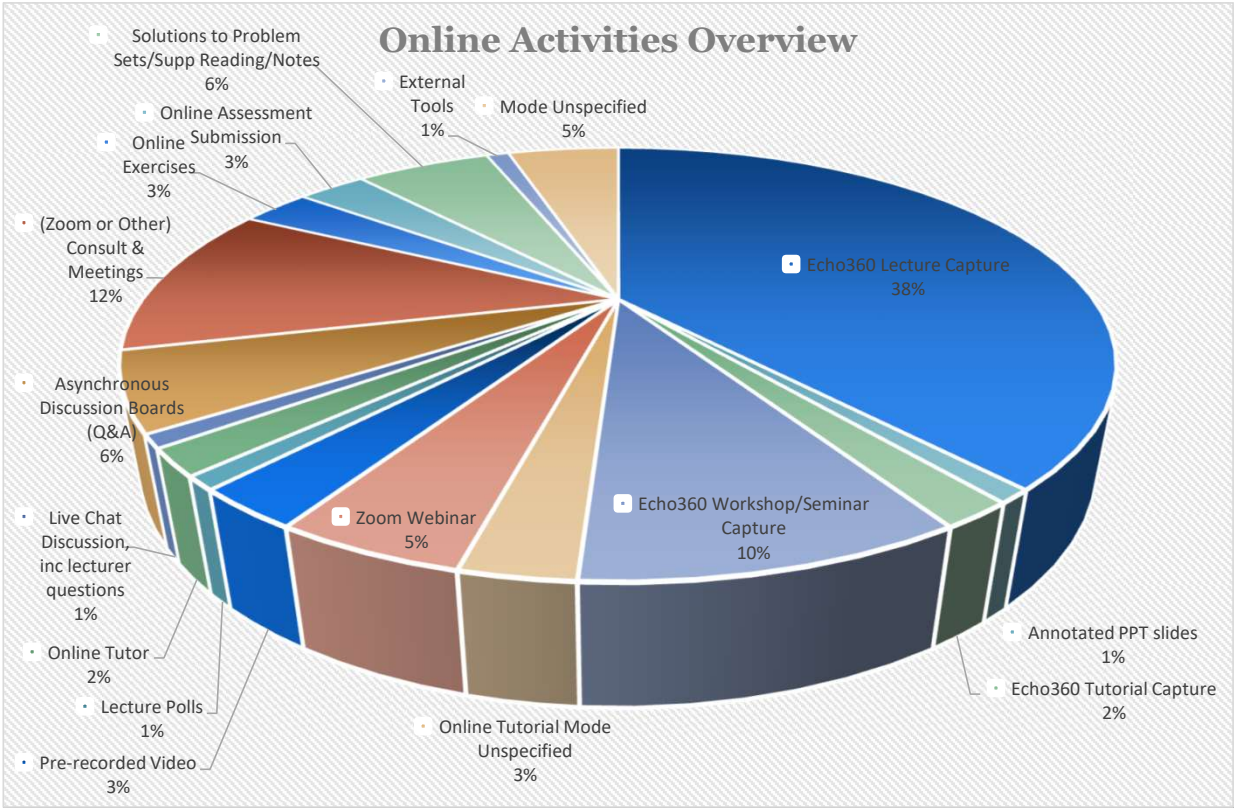
- Three different groups of data collection took place in Semester 1 to inform FBE of:
  - how academics were transitioning their teaching online and
  - to gauge staff and student feedback on the learning experience. While there are undoubtedly areas for development (which are the focus of this overview), there were also areas of positive insight.
- Three sources of feedback, collected across three different points in time, helped us to gauge an understanding of how we transitioned to an online environment and where our main challenges lay.
  1. WCLA survey to academics late in March to track the transition outcomes to an online environment,
  2. Mid-semester survey from Chancellery to students to track their experience in the online environment and
  3. WCLA call for data from HoDs to track activities and challenges in the online environment later in the semester.
- The data provide us with a relatively robust picture of where to focus our improvements for Semester 2.

Lessons Learnt

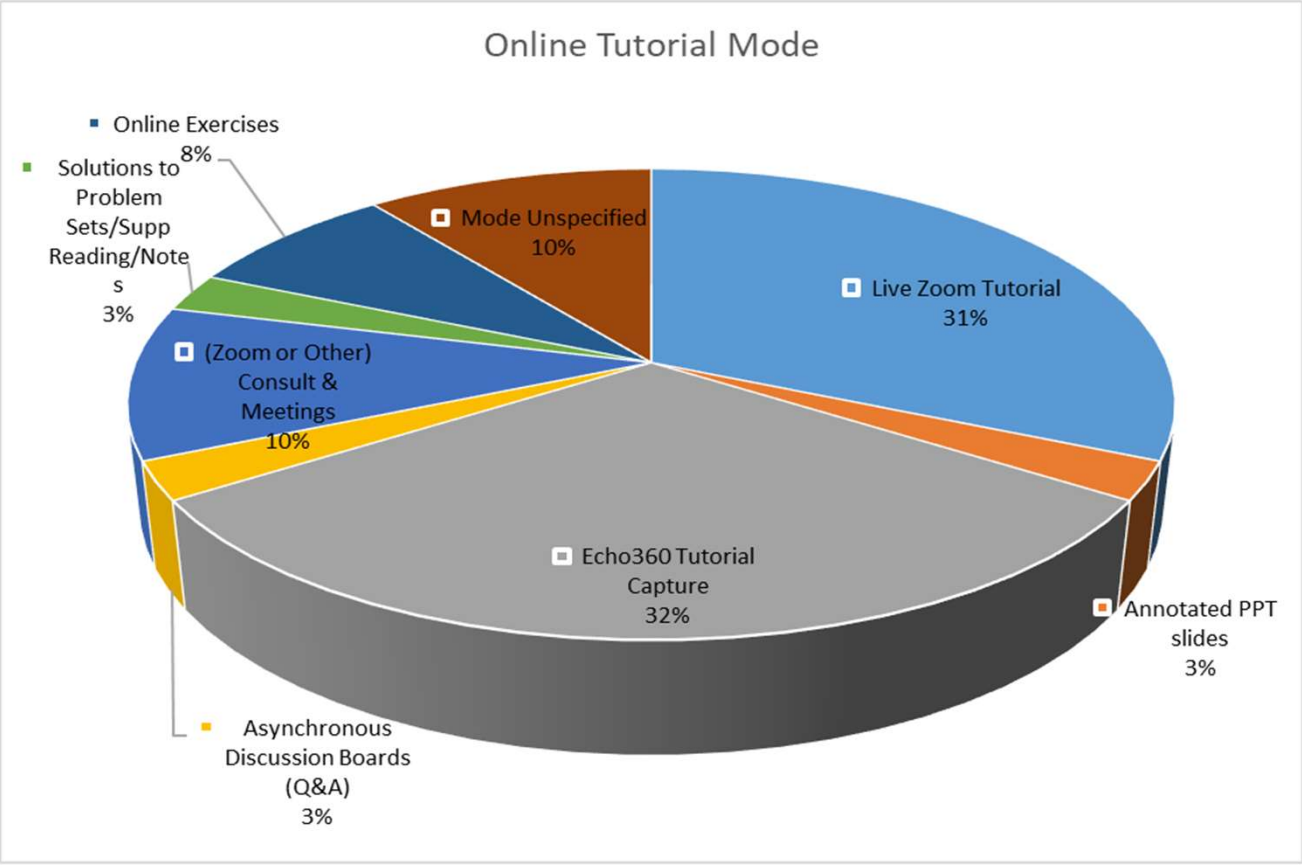
- From our data, we found that academics have been predominately involved in lecture capture and asynchronous modes of teaching.
- In face-to-face teaching, academics do not just lecture, but engage in an array of activity modes to promote student learning.
- Academics transitioning to online teaching have found the sequencing of teaching challenging, and as a result, have predominately focused on one part of the online teaching experience.
- This has been consistent with the global experience due to the rapid transition needed. We now have more insight of what worked well and where to improve.

Reflections: A Team Effort as a Faculty

- WCLA Online Review in late March
- 65 subjects represented
- Phase 1 of data collection and inquiry

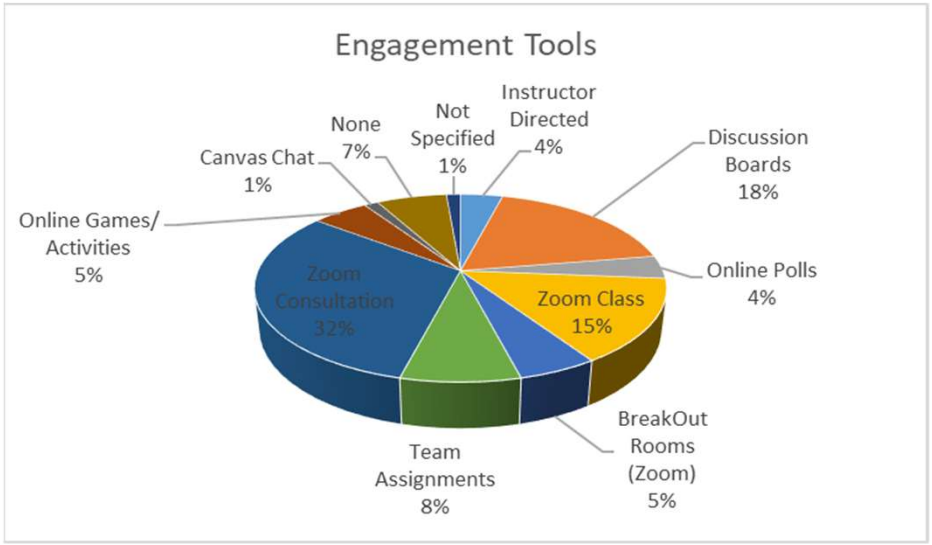


Online Tutorial Delivery

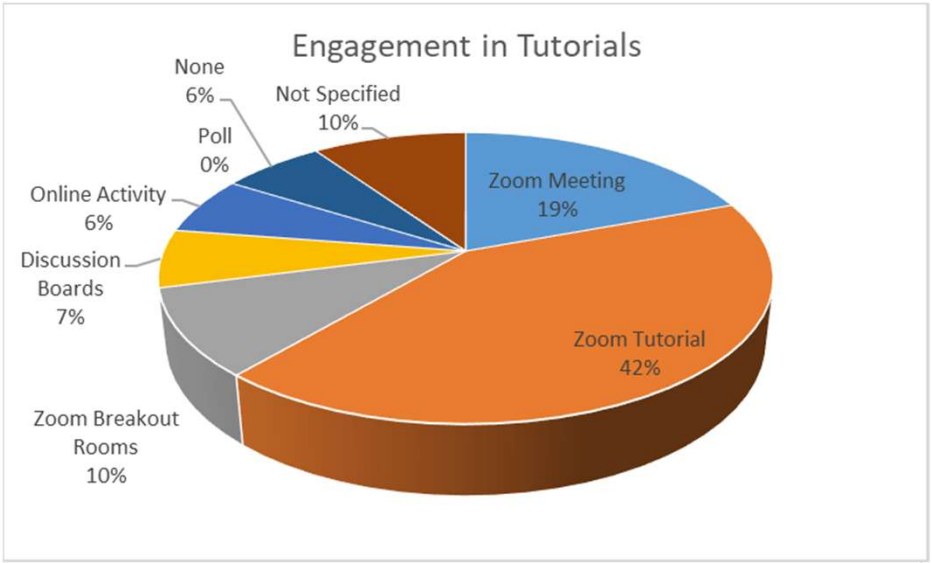


Engagement Overview

Engagement in Lectures & Seminars



Engagement in Tutorials (Where Echo360 Was Not Applied)



Academic Development

- The WCLA was the primary source
  - academics sought out materials, academics in the centre and workshops for support
- This was followed by or complemented with discussions among colleagues and online exploration.
- This points to the importance of a central point of information for academics that provides relevant resources for them and accurate information, as well as communities of practice.

Student Mid-Semester Feedback

- Dashboard data was provided from a mid-semester survey distributed to students in late April
- Overall, FBE had 6,505 responses. There was generally no discernible difference between the undergraduate (U/G) and postgraduate (P/G) results, with the one exception pertaining to engagement.
- For U/G, 43% strongly agreed/agreed that activities provide them with opportunities for interaction and collaboration with other students.
  - This contrasted with 55% strongly agree/agree for PG. This was also related to perceptions of 'interactions with teaching staff help them to learn'.
- *Increasing interactions between staff and students and among students* was one area where strong improvements could be made to alter student sentiment and enhance the quality of delivery.
- Another consistent concern expressed by students was that lectures had been reduced in length and they missed engagement with the lecturer.
- *Academic development in enhancing engagement activities in the classroom (large and small) was needed* to address this area of concern.

Faculty Feedback: Phase 2 WCLA

- A third piece of feedback was solicited by the WCLA later in the semester.
- For this, data was provided from each Head of Department in FBE, alongside consultation with academics.
- Four main themes emerged:
  (1) Tutorial attendance and Participation;
  (2) Weekly Consultations;
  (3) Technical Issues and Space Constraints; and
  (4) Need for Academics to Engage in Training.

Tutorial/Seminar Attendance & Participation

- The data showed that perceptions of student engagement in classes was mixed. Reports of both engaged and disengaged students in seminars/lectures and small group activities.
  - Some had great success with breakout rooms, with energetic student discussions.
  - For some, attendance and engagement levels were higher in Zoom environments as compared to face-to-face classes.
  - Others reported that students were disengaged, distracted, or even choose to drop out of the breakout room discussions, or of the class entirely once breakout room activities commenced.
  - Some commented that “students can’t go to one whiteboard or show their workings” which leaves more time for tutors to fill the void.
  - For those that used discussion forums, there was a dominant sense of a lack of student participation in them. Furthermore, there was particularly low peer-peer engagement.
- Many of these classroom tools (eg., a whiteboard) can be translated to an online environment.
  - gap in skills for some of our teaching staff: to be addressed to enhance teaching agility.

Weekly Consultations

- In tutorials, solutions are sometimes posted on Canvas and a set of tutors/TAs offer weekly zoom consultations on a “drop-in” basis, plus there is an on-line tutor.
- For seminars and lectures, students are encouraged to set up appointments directly with academics.
- Some commented that consultations are rarely used, while others stated that there was a high demand for 1:1 assistance for students who are confused or falling behind.
- This consult was more time consuming in an online context.
- Finally, some academics offered open consultations to many students simultaneously (akin to a group drop-in session). Some commented that while many students join, most simply listen rather than participate.

Technical Issues & Space Constraints

- Some academics commented on a range of technical difficulties. This did not feature as a significant issue in the other two sources of information collection.
- Challenges with Zoom discussions and breakout rooms
- Lack of a good interface available to upload recordings for some. There were comments made about various technical problems and extra time required to check the recording quality.
- Some students had challenges with finding a suitable physical environment to participate in online activities, as well as equipment or internet constraints.
  - This was also found in the university wide survey data.
  - Some academics noted that the quality of their teaching delivery was impacted by the lack of suitable equipment such as cameras and microphones.
- Finally, some academics used lab installed software, which was not effective via remote access and necessitated a change in student assessment

Need for Academic Engagement with Training

- Finally, several comments were made regarding some academics struggling to learn how to use Zoom or how to identify or apply online tools in a way that enhances student teaching.
- Others were unclear on the breadth of options available.
- This signalled the need for upskilling in departments, and potentially also using peers who have upskilled effectively to engage with this process.

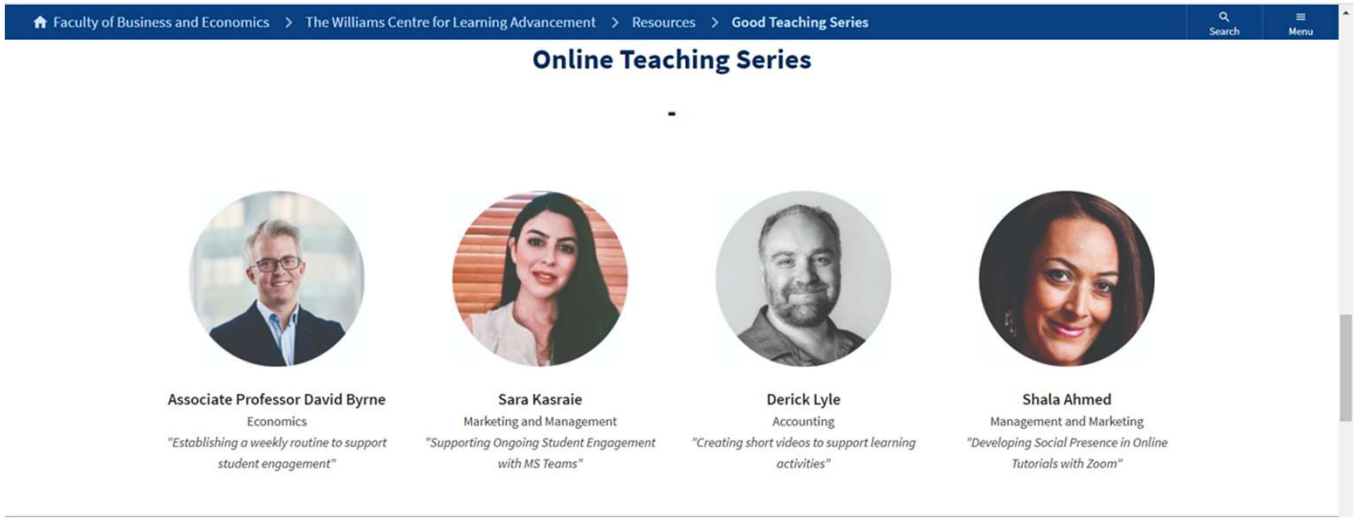
Lessons Learnt

- **Challenges**
  - Challenge 1: Balance asynchronous teaching with synchronous learning opportunities
  - Challenge 2: Improve student-lecturer and student-student engagement
  - Challenge 3: Enhance the structure and ease of navigation of LMS sites; Improve the quality of subject design across Canvas sites
  - Challenge 4: Improve academic engagement with PD to reduce uncertainty in transition
  - Challenge 5: Improve insight sharing across FBE to enhance learning across peers

Lessons Learnt

Insights

- We learnt about some innovative examples applied within disciplines that were valuable to share
  - Some examples are being curated by Miriam Edwards (our Educational Designer) and are available online: https://fbe.unimelb.edu.au/wcla/resources/teaching-inspiration/good-teaching-series
  - To provide a better indication of some of these exemplars, we will illustrate these next



Engagement in online classes for Finance

Professor Carsten Murawski
Department of Finance

Street Finance: Improving youth financial education

Financial problems among Australia's youth a growing concern

Financial decision making skills are becoming ever more important. People must make more complex financial decisions and assume greater financial responsibility than their parents.

Prevalence and burden of financial problems is particularly high among the young. One quarter of 12-17 year olds in Australia have some form of financial debt.[1]

Youth from disadvantaged backgrounds are at high risk of debt and financial exploitation.

Improving financial behaviour through community financial education

There are three important ways to improve financial behaviour:

(1) Improving knowledge of basic financial concepts such as budgeting, interest and compounding, debt and saving.

(2) Improving awareness of severe financial mistakes including mobile phone "bill shocks", failure to repay (credit card) debt and not understanding the true cost of debt.

(3) Improving knowledge of basic consumer rights and dispute resolution mechanisms.

Street Finance is a novel approach to community financial education

Business and economics students develop lessons on financial literacy and deliver the lessons in Victorian high schools.

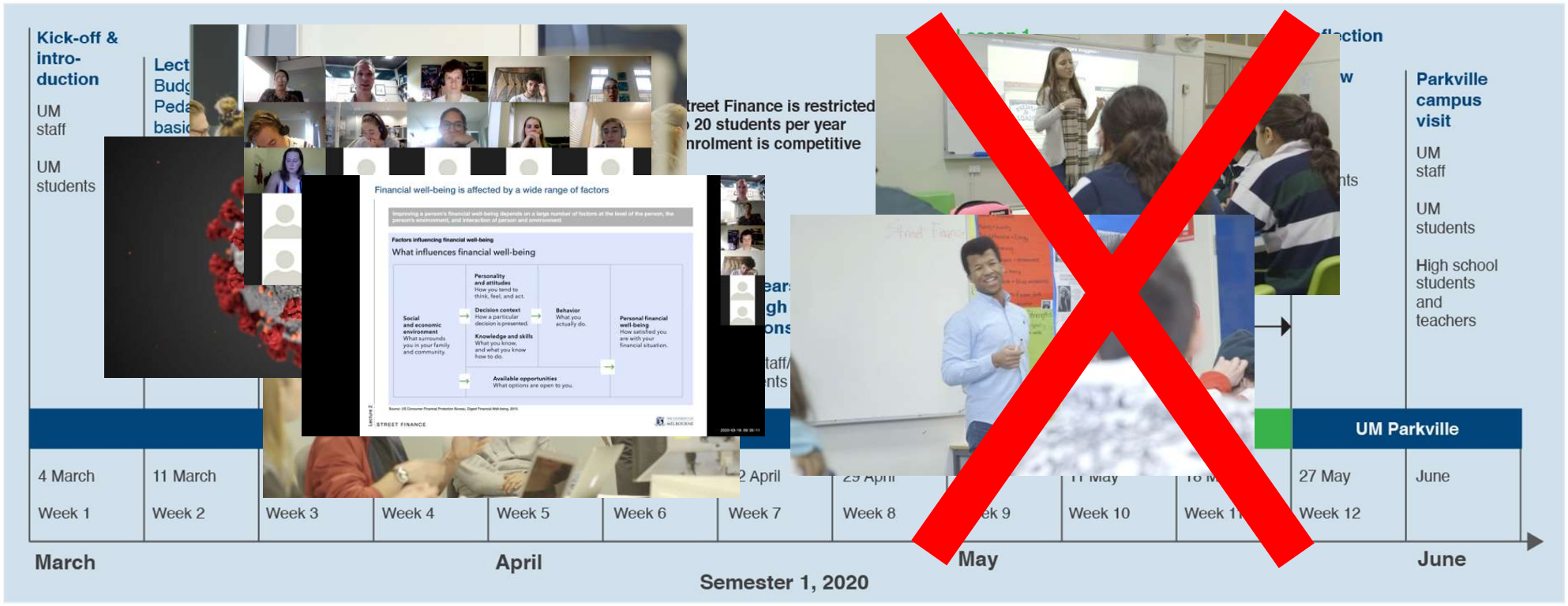
Stage 1: Content delivery to university students (lectures at The University of Melbourne).

Stage 2: Development of high school lessons (workshops at the University facilitated by University staff as well as external guest speakers).

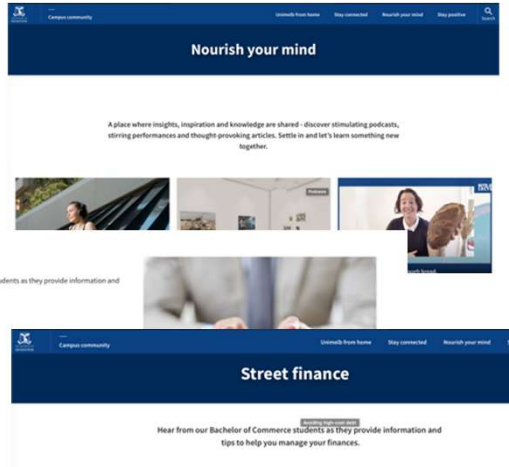
Stage 3: Delivery of three lessons by university students in Victorian high schools over three consecutive weeks (year 10).

Street Finance allows University students to use their finance knowledge to help high schools students improve their financial behaviour, and high school students to interact with University students

The Street Finance experience (expected and actual)



The Campus Community project



https://unimelb.edu.au/community

Engagement in online classes for Economics

A/Professor David Byrne
Department of Economics

Some thoughts on a big question

How can we engage students in a virtual environment?

GAME OF THRONES™

What does Game of Thrones do?

- Creates a major event every Sunday night: a new show is released

- But in our virtual world, it is not just the show, it is the conversation that follows
  Media
  Social media: Twitter, Facebook, Instagram
  Podcasts
  YouTube
  Blogs

- That is, Game of Thrones is an engine for thought-provoking **digital content** that can consumed **when** and **how** viewers want

Post-secondary education in a virtual world

- In a virtual world, our subjects need to evolve to become like Game of Thrones: they need to be engines for thought-provoking **digital content**

- Also like Game of Thrones, our subjects' design and delivery also need to cater to students demands over **when** and **how** they want to digitally engage with the subject material

- So what did I do try to Game-of-Thrones-a-fy ECOM20001: Econometrics 1 at U. Melbourne as we transitioned to virtual delivery in Semester 1, 2020?

Creating an engine for econometrics content

- **Sunday 6pm**: release the new content
  Post all the subject material (lecture videos, tutorials, assignments) for the upcoming week
  Post my video-blog previewing the upcoming week, talking about random things in my life

- **Every day of the week**: every question on the subject discussion board answered by COB

- **Wednesday 12pm**: provoke conversation with real-world, current applications of subject material
  #EconTwitter, Podcasts, YouTube, connect relevant content however possible

- **Friday 3-5pm**: consultation hours, student Q&A, discussion board Q&A, recap content from the week
  Record and post office hours. This is the ultimate flipped classroom.

Our role as (virtual-based) educators

- We are engines for producing digital content in post-secondary education
- Need to deliver the material in ways that is relevant to a 20-yeard old in 2020, allowing for flexibility in:

  Where they want to consume

  How they want to consume it
- We can no longer be a radio station or cable TV channel when all of our students listen to Spotify and Podcasts or watches Netflix, Hulu, Stan, Apple TV, YouTube, etc.
- The rapid, COVID-19-driven shift to virtual learning has crystalized this for me, and I've found thinking of **educators as digital content producers** a useful frame for figuring how to engage students

Brings us to another big question

Do we need physical lectures in a post COVID-19 world?

(yes…even in large subjects…but we need another entire seminar to get into this)

Engagement in online accounting classes

Maggie Singorahardjo
Teaching Specialist – Department of Accounting

Style of delivery/engagement

Webinar:

- Ability to ask questions/confirm points that students are unsure of straight away
- Making large classes (>75 students) interactive
- Downside: needing at least two staff (delivery and monitoring Q&A)

Online study group:

- Outside of class student collaboration
- Students arriving in online class well-prepared
- Anecdotal evidence: found friends during isolation
- Downside: variability in groups, monitoring engagement can be difficult and previous in-class guidance needs to be formalised

Discussion board (Piazza):

- Monitored peer-to-peer support (not discussion)
- Anecdotal evidence: a cohort sense of belonging (subject: 300 students)

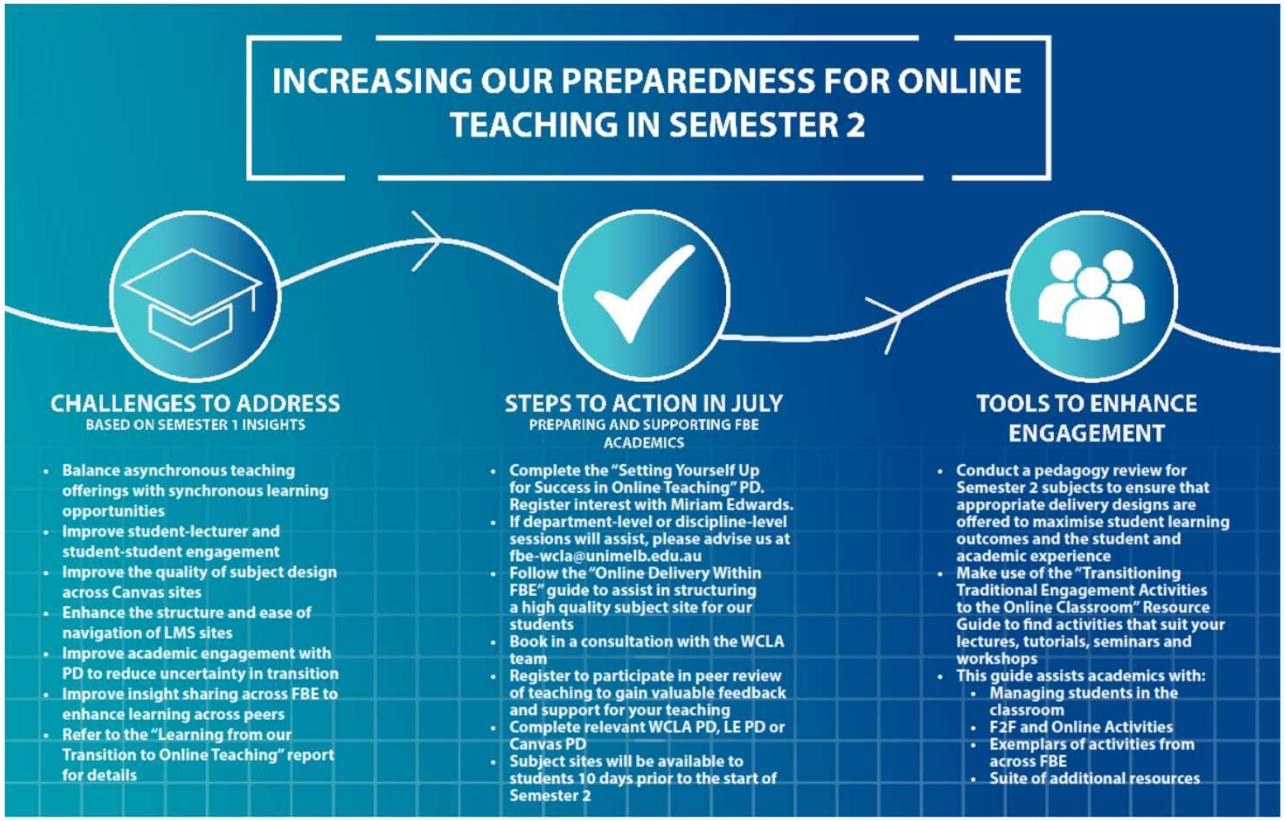
Lessons Learnt & Considerations for Semester 2

- The Semester 1 transition to online teaching presented a number of challenges for academics which we sought to address to increase our preparedness for Semester 2.
- These insights are allowing us to capitalise on existing learning that has taken place and shift academics towards improving teaching delivery in the face-to-face classroom, online classroom and/or in dual-mode delivery.
- Two further documents were developed by the WCLA to assist in this transition:
  - "Online Delivery Within FBE": A reference guide to assist academics to develop best practice online subjects, underpinned by the principles of effective online teaching.
  - "Transitioning Traditional Engagement Activities to the Online Classroom". A comprehensive resource guide to assist academics to integrate engagement activities across their teaching.

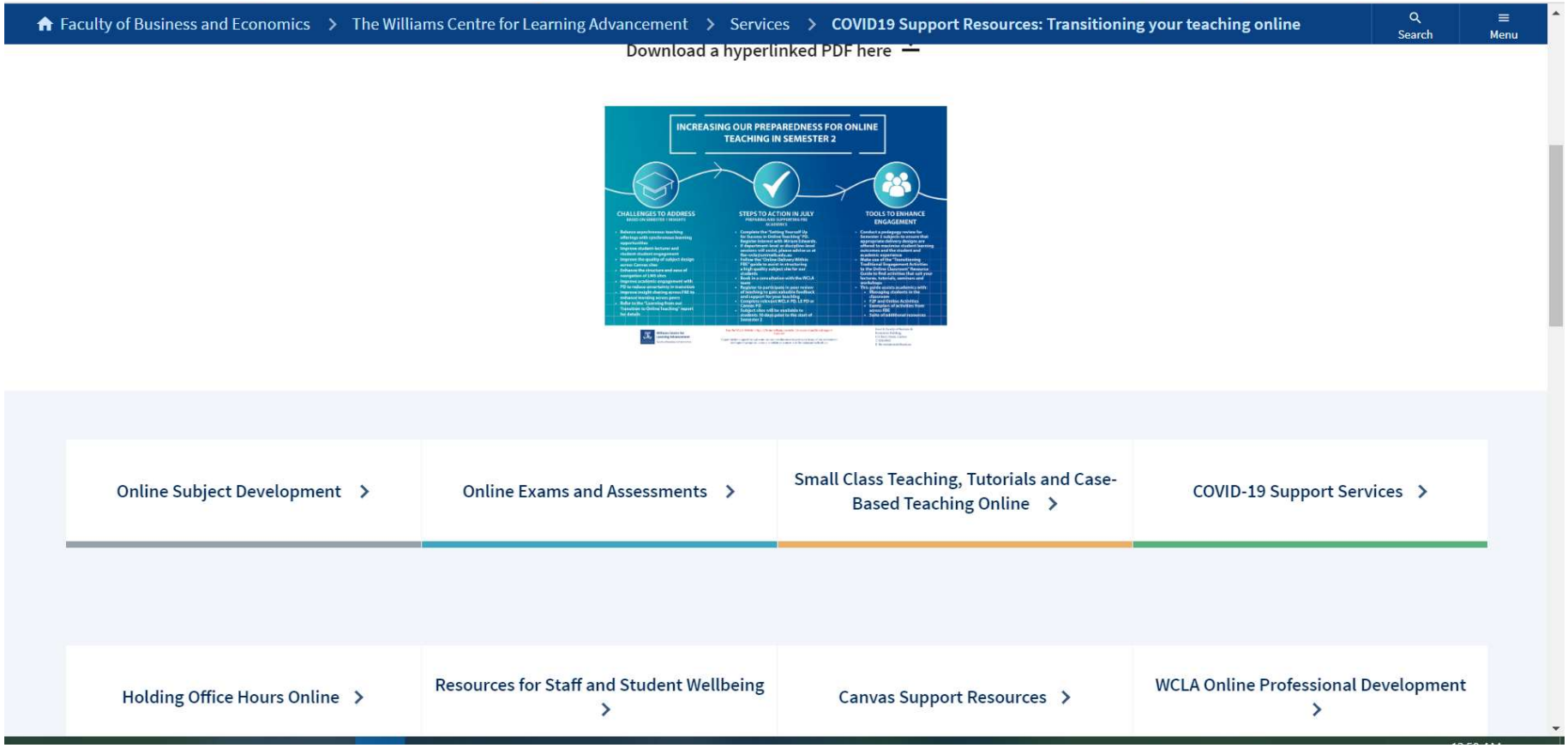
Preparing for Semester 2

- Academics have done a phenomenal job in transitioning to the online environment quickly to ensure the continuity of education for our students.
- As we now move to a second semester of online teaching, with potentially some face-to-face teaching for small classes, we now need to leverage the gains achieved in skilling academics towards upskilling them.
- This will enable us to target some of the areas of concern and improve the quality of the student experience and online teaching. We have summarised the approach in a framework for faculty.
- This data collection process has allowed us to develop an evidence-based approach to change in FBE.

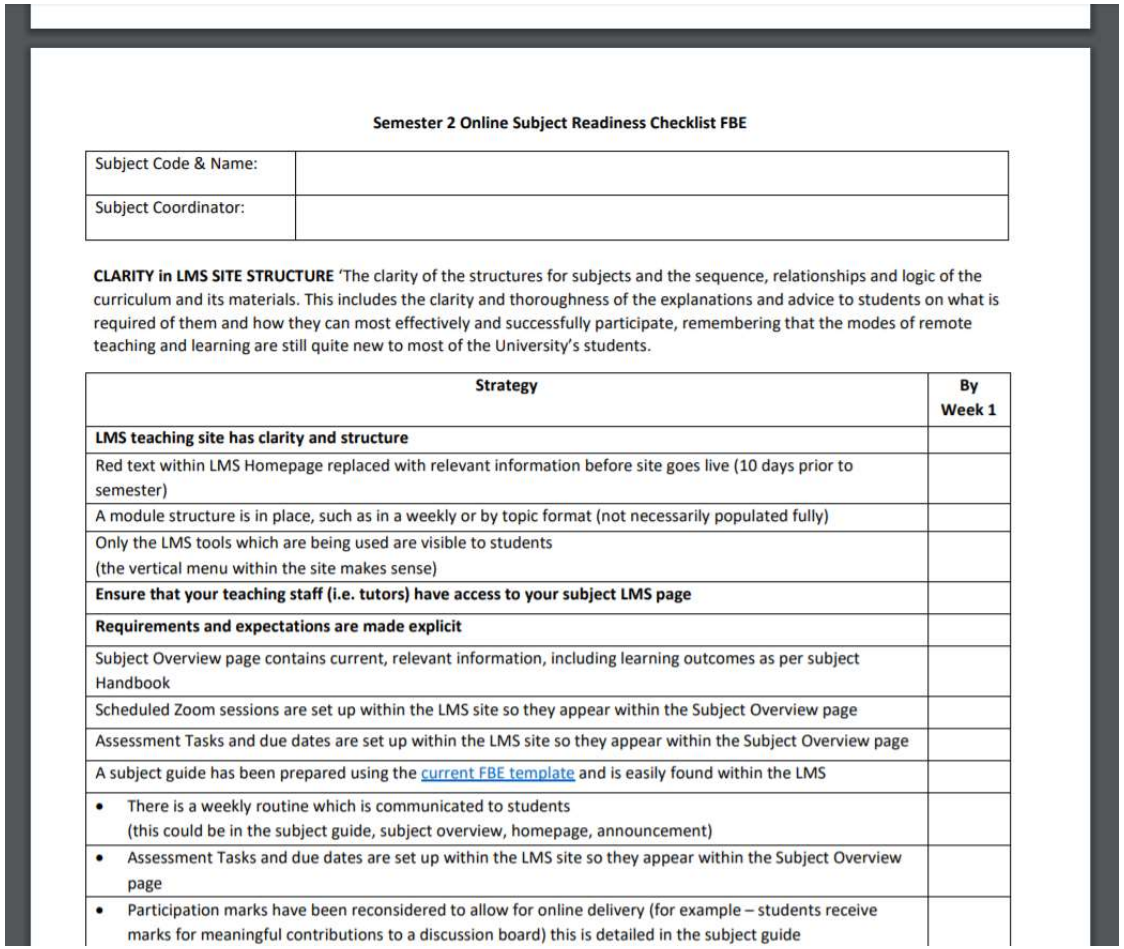
Supporting Staff: Evidence-Based Framework



Supporting Staff: Guides & Resources



Supporting Staff: Guidance & Checklist



Semester 2 Online Subject Readiness Checklist FBE

Subject Code & Name:	
Subject Coordinator:	

CLARITY in LMS SITE STRUCTURE 'The clarity of the structures for subjects and the sequence, relationships and logic of the curriculum and its materials. This includes the clarity and thoroughness of the explanations and advice to students on what is required of them and how they can most effectively and successfully participate, remembering that the modes of remote teaching and learning are still quite new to most of the University's students.

Strategy	By Week 1
LMS teaching site has clarity and structure	
Red text within LMS Homepage replaced with relevant information before site goes live (10 days prior to semester)	
A module structure is in place, such as in a weekly or by topic format (not necessarily populated fully)	
Only the LMS tools which are being used are visible to students (the vertical menu within the site makes sense)	
Ensure that your teaching staff (i.e. tutors) have access to your subject LMS page	
Requirements and expectations are made explicit	
Subject Overview page contains current, relevant information, including learning outcomes as per subject Handbook	
Scheduled Zoom sessions are set up within the LMS site so they appear within the Subject Overview page	
Assessment Tasks and due dates are set up within the LMS site so they appear within the Subject Overview page	
A subject guide has been prepared using the current FBE template and is easily found within the LMS	
• There is a weekly routine which is communicated to students (this could be in the subject guide, subject overview, homepage, announcement)	
• Assessment Tasks and due dates are set up within the LMS site so they appear within the Subject Overview page	
• Participation marks have been reconsidered to allow for online delivery (for example – students receive marks for meaningful contributions to a discussion board) this is detailed in the subject guide	

Where to Next?

- Covid-19 is changing the nature of our sector
- International student travel influences the size of our sector
- But our commitment to teaching renewal through teaching innovation; learner engagement and achieving quality outcomes for our students remains stronger than ever

Questions?

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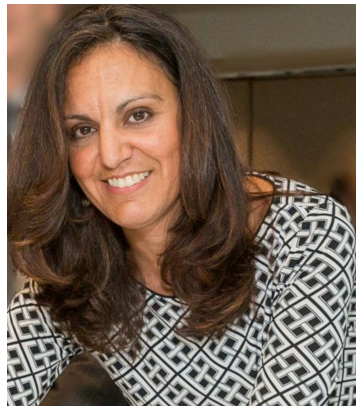

Thank you

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