Developing a Consistent and Structured Approach to Online Teaching and Learning.

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The adoption of online learning in a situation of emergency represents a need, but it has also stimulated experts, policymakers, citizens, teachers, and learners to search for new solutions. This is producing a shift from the concept of online learning to emergency remote teaching, which represents "a temporary shift of instructional delivery to an alternate delivery mode due to crisis circumstances".

For the students the most immediate impact has naturally been that the temporary cessation of face-to-face teaching. This has placed all within the Education sector into a completely new situation, without a clear idea of how long it will last, immediate impacts on daily life, financial burdens and, of course learning continuity. The situation is particularly worrying for those higher education students who are more vulnerable on account of their more fragile condition.

A disruption of their space brought on by a crisis such as this one, can exacerbate their fragile condition and force them to drop out, thereby yet again, perpetuating a situation of exclusion. Students have had to rearrange their daily lives to adjust to a situation of confinement and balancing social and academic responsibilities. Vulnerable students participating may be harder hit by isolation. In general, it does not seem that the change in modality has been received very positively.

The content offered was never designed within the framework of a distance higher education course, but rather tries to make up for the absence of face-to-face classes. The expectations of students are to experience the social and experiential elements that always accompany the face-to-face experience in a HEI. Distance education requires more discipline and commitment on the part of the student, which perhaps explains why it is more successful among mature learners. The face-to-face experience is particularly important for vulnerable students who have often had fewer opportunities for interaction as that offered by a university campus that allows them to strengthen their social skills.

My approach was to create and maintain structure and consistency in my online teaching, learning pedagogy. Since April 2020 when moving to a completely online learning

platform I have maintained a structured approach with the delivering of my module online and I believe this approach and providing learners with consistency in the planning and delivery of the module has had a positive impact on my module.

The challenge was to use Technology as the means and the tool for teaching and learning but as far as possible to maintain the human interaction and increase our ethics of care onto an online environment. The crisis has a different impact on different students, but it is undeniable that it can deepen existing inequalities and generate new ones.

QUESTIONS:

Has the structured and consistent approach been received well by student with the changeover to online teaching and learning?

Have we introduced too many technology options to students in adapting our modules to online teaching and learning?