Developing HE practitioner confidence and skills to ensure effective online teaching and student support.

Conference or Workshop Item

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Developing HE practitioner confidence and skills to ensure effective online teaching and student support
Hannah Gauci and Janette Wallace

Increasing number of HE institutions offering online tuition.
Important to prepare practitioners new to online education to ensure effective teaching and support for students.

Identify previous experience and confidence in core online tuition tasks of new OU tutors and make recommendations for their induction.
Draw parallels for student induction.

67 novice tutors surveyed in first month of new role in the STEM faculty at the Open University (OU) between October 2018 and November 2019.
Questions asked about:
- Previous teaching experience
- Confidence in core online tuition tasks, assessed via Likert scale (5 categories not at all confident – very confident).
- Data summarised and analysed using Excel.

New tutors had varied previous experience of online tuition and of the OU which relates to their confidence levels.
Tutors felt least confident about moderating discussions, marking assessment, supporting disabled students and delivering tutorials online.
To support development of these skills we offered a bespoke induction programme comprising a web page, face to face and online workshops, and asynchronous support via discussion forums.
As part of ongoing evaluation, tutors will be asked about their confidence levels and usefulness of the programme on its completion.
Based on our research, we recommend training for HE practitioners new to online teaching that develops their skills and confidence in core tasks.
Additional support for those with less experience should be considered.
We suggest that student induction should also include similar, specific training for online study skills to ensure students have the tools and confidence to engage fully with online learning opportunities.

Table 1 Proportion of respondents who said they felt confident or very confident with online tuition tasks.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Online task</th>
<th>Proportion of respondents (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tutorials</td>
<td>48</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marking assessment</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderating discussions</td>
<td>28</td>
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<tr>
<td>Supporting students</td>
<td>57</td>
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<tr>
<td>Supporting disabled students</td>
<td>45</td>
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<tr>
<td>Team working</td>
<td>76</td>
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