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The CPD2 Change Cycle: Enabling development for Online Higher Education

*Anne Adams, Elizabeth Fitzgerald, Julia Sargent, Duygu Bektik,
Nashwa Ismail, Carina Bossu and Gill Clough*

The Open University

The Covid-19 Pandemic has challenged Higher Education to change practices towards online provision requiring a huge shift in developing teachers, administrators and university management to understand these activities. The Institute of Educational Technology has a long history of providing academic development for the Open University in its 50 years as an international distance learning university. Key to our development practices to support change in crisis has been to use innovation, adaptability and a wholistic approach to professional development. In particular, the professional and personal development required to facilitate online learning is truly interdisciplinary and can be viewed both from a bottom-up, life-long learning or a top-down, learning organisation perspective. However, bottom-up innovation can suffer from poor sustainability and top-down strategies can have limited adaptation and relevance to contextual needs. This presentation provides a research-informed connection between these perspectives of change during crisis by pulling together the advances and research evaluations, often related to technology enhanced learning. These wholistic perspective reviews cross-disciplinary professional development activities that come from, or have relevance to, the Higher Education context. Through this work we have identified three key factors that are critical elements of professional development for developing online learning in a crisis: Context, Philosophy and Delivery (CPD). We have further identified, through connecting the individual and organisational level of change, a CPD2 cycle. This cycle can support effective implementation (from organisational to individual needs) and evaluation (from personal to contextual impacts) of professional development enablers and barriers. There is an evidenced account of delivery tools, methods and approaches that have been used within three CPD2 cycle case studies (online learning design and Tricky Topics, knowledge exchange and Evidence Cafés, and personalisation in online learning). The findings identify impacts from these professional development activities which are discussed with reference to 'squaring the CPD2 cycle' in crisis change situations (i.e. completing the impact evaluation side of the cycle). Finally, we conclude with insights for HE to help implement and advance their own philosophies and contexts for professional development to support developing online HE learning in a time of crisis.

Keywords: change management, professional development, sustainability, adaptability