The University of Manchester
Institute of Teaching and Learning

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DEVELOPING AN EDUCATION FRAMEWORK FOR SIMULATION

ITL FELLOWSHIP 2021/22

PROJECT REPORT

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EMMA ORMEROD

Emma is a Clinical Lecturer (teaching-focused) in the School of Health Sciences and a Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy. In 2018, Emma won a grant from the University's Investing in Success scheme to visit the University of Queensland to observe their innovative work in simulation, and subsequently received a team teaching award from the Faculty of Biology, Medicine and Health (FBMH) (2019) for her work in this field.

Fellowship Student Partner Intern

MUNKHBILEG MUNKHTSENGEL

AN EDUCATION FRAMEWORK FOR SIMULATION

ITL Fellowship project

Simulation is a teaching methodology which is being increasingly used in healthcare education. A lot of focus is given to the technology and resource needed to support simulation but, by comparison, little focus is given to the value of the learning taking place in simulation. I believe simulation will play a significant part in revolutionising and transforming how healthcare education is delivered, particularly when considered as part of a continuum of learning, and can also benefit teaching and learning in many other disciplines.

Context

Prior to starting my fellowship, I established and Chair the **Faculty of Biology, Medicine and Health (FBMH) simulation group**. At the start of the project, my experience of simulation was limited to FBMH and predominantly within the division of Psychology, Communication and Human Neuroscience. The FBMH simulation group highlighted a significant gap around multi-professional simulation within the curriculum. In practice, health care professionals work in teams but healthcare education has limited opportunities for inter-professional education and training.

Healthcare students are trained to work in areas that are unpredictable, changeable and unique to the person they are treating. They need to demonstrate compassion, flexibility and resilience and maybe some vulnerability; these are all 'human skills/factors'. For safe and clinically sound practice, the focus needs to be on **preparing and supporting students to deal with uncertainty and interdependence** through clinical reasoning and decision-making and to bring their human element to learning.

I believe that in order for inter-professional simulation to have impact, we need to focus on **humanising healthcare education**. This includes understanding different values bases, working as groups and developing capabilities.

Objectives of the Fellowship project

The original objective was to develop a multi-professional simulation model.

I initially thought I would focus on the student pre-brief and debrief of the simulations and create guidance for staff on what needs to go into these. However as the project progressed I realised the importance of laying the right foundations for creating the optimum environment if simulation is going to impact on student learning.

I therefore refined my objectives to develop an education framework that focuses on supporting student learning in simulated learning activities.

In short, it became less about what goes in the simulations and more about **the psychological safety of simulation and how we create safe learning spaces**.

Project activities

I initially approached this project as a piece of research. An evaluation where I gather students' thoughts, and maybe pilot something. However, it became apparent that it is the start of a conversation.

Quite a lot of the activities were around thinking time and discussion with colleagues, to synthesise the information gained and to envisage something that does not currently exist.

The activities and questions we pondered included:

- Scoping and conceptualizing what it is that we are creating … is it a framework, a model, a strategy?
- Discussing and thinking aloud / brainstorming with my student partner – what is simulation and what is needed to support use of simulation in teaching?
- Conducting a literature review around various teaching methodologies that underpin simulation
- Networking across the university to find out what work is already happening with simulation
- Looking at what other universities are doing in simulation – what is their focus? Do they have a simulation strategy, what type of simulated learning activities are they using?

These elements combined together in a narrative enquiry approach: gathering information, anecdotes and experience to add to my story of using simulation.

An education framework for simulation: key findings

As I'm really interested in the human side of learning and caring, our literature review and scoping spanned across a broad range of areas including adult learning theories, leadership, and wellbeing. After all, it's all about people. Here are some of the key principles and ideas we gathered as part of this process.

- Failure – when taking on something new you are going to get things wrong. The importance is taking learning from the mistakes
- Vulnerability – following on from the above in order to be open to getting things wrong and learning from mistakes, it requires some level of vulnerability
- Learning is not linear – I believe we should proactively and explicitly support students in the reality of the chaos of learning (and trying to make sense of things) and to know that all students are on a learning journey which is unique to them
- Psychological safety – it is important for the learner to feel seen and heard and to feel they add value
- Self-awareness and metacognitive awareness – I believe being aware of how you are, being aware of your values base and biases is vital for humanising healthcare
- Reflection – it is by reflecting either in action or on action that we can begin to make changes and continue to develop
- Socio-material theory – understanding how experiences and belief systems impact on your ability to learn

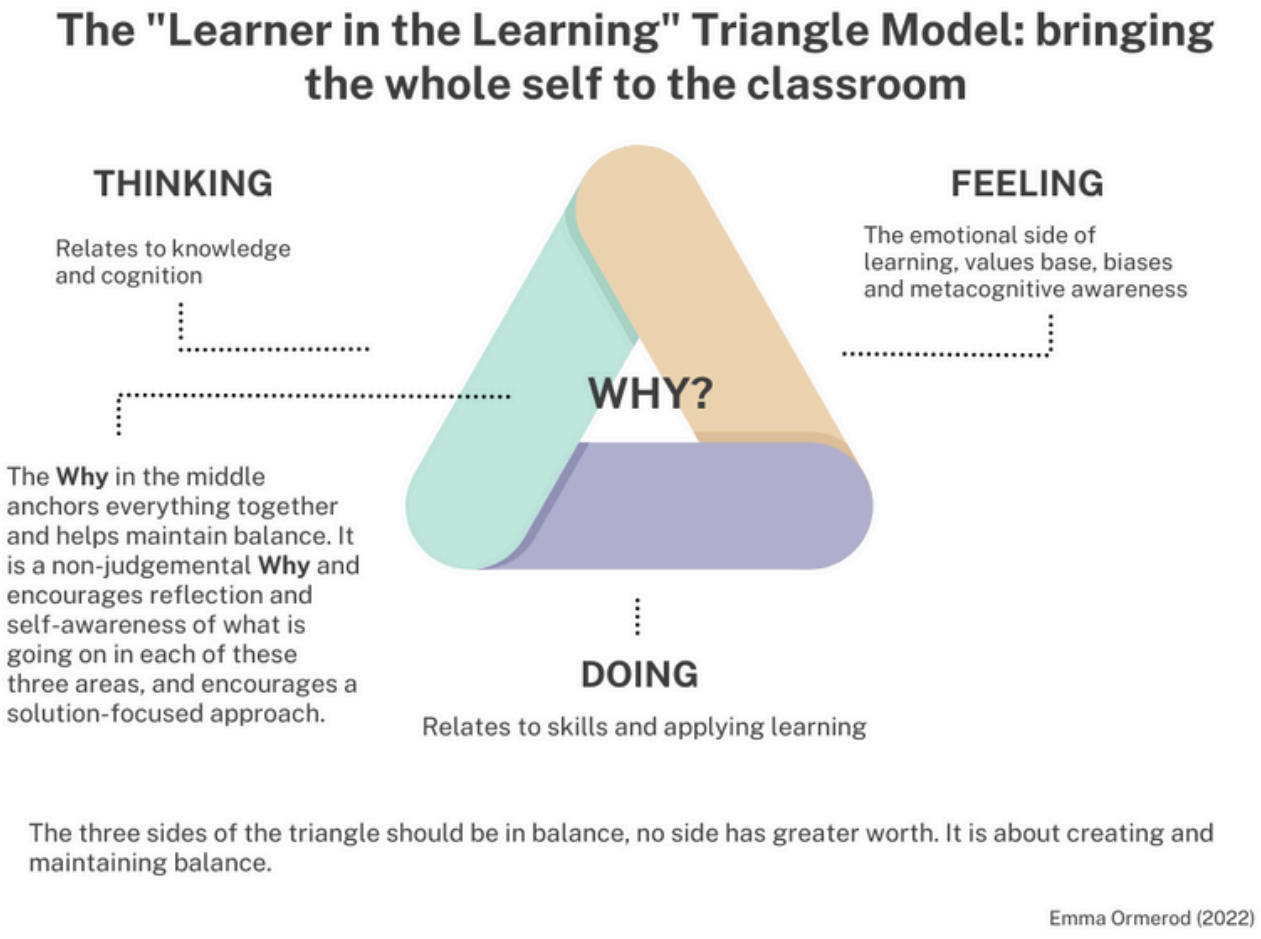
For me, this needed a different approach. An approach that allows the learner to bring their whole self to the classroom and to highlight some of this ‘hidden curriculum’.

It is difficult to fully code and encapsulate what is needed to help lay the right foundations for learners to thrive and feel able to bring their whole self to the classroom as it will be different for different people. I can therefore only share thoughts and ideas I have on this at present, and offer a lens through which to view simulated learning experiences.

During my fellowship I have stumbled upon and uncovered lots of great work that seeks to combine the concepts of mind/body/spirit and think/feel/do, and these are related to various fields including wellbeing, cognitive theories and therapies. What I am proposing is therefore not a new idea, I am sharing my perception to this ongoing conversation.
I really do feel it can be useful to see education through a lens that incorporates thinking, feeling and doing, and to try and educate the whole person.

Thinking, feeling and doing correlates with the 3 domains of Bloom’s taxonomy of learning (cognitive, affective and psychomotor). When using ‘thinking/feeling/doing’ as a lens to view education, we invite the whole person into the classroom and acknowledge that learning is always personal. This is very much in line with Etienne Wenger’s work on social learning theory. An added step of reflection helps to close the learning loop.

I would therefore like to invite you to consider, when looking through the lens of ‘thinking/feeling and doing’, that you support the learner to develop and grow an element of curiosity and compassionate enquiry. When things show up in any of the three areas, pause and ask why without judgement, think about the language you use and ensure it is supportive and compassionate. I believe this is the key to helping join up the dots and helping to educate both the inner and outer worlds for the learner.



Challenges faced

- At times, it was difficult to carve out protected time for the necessary ‘thinking space’ – I actively sought out people to facilitate my ‘thinking aloud’ in order to maintain momentum.

- Similarly, when working on multiple projects in addition to teaching and academic advising responsibilities it can be a challenge not to blur the boundaries between the different projects. Having specific objectives for my fellowship definitely helped me to stay on track.

- Other challenges have been trying to condense, define and conceptualise what it is I am trying to achieve. My fellowship had the potential to be huge and unwieldly. Writing a logic model really helped to order my thinking.

- Lastly a personal challenge for me has been the confidence to tell and share my story in simulation and to role model the ‘human skills’ listed above which I believe are fundamental to learning. With support from the ITL, student partner, mentor and supervisor I am growing in confidence with this.

Student partnership

It was such a great experience to be partnered with Munkhbileg. Having a student dedicated to the product was a real luxury. I think we worked well together, bringing the different perspectives of lecturer and student. I wanted to create a safe space for us to work together and learn more about simulation. From the positive feedback received, I think this worked.

I was also mindful that Munkhbileg could benefit from experiencing the academic side of things and invited her along to various planning meetings around simulation to help broaden her knowledge and understanding of simulation.

We took a very iterative approach to the fellowship and explored many avenues. Having Munkhbileg to chat through ideas and then have her summarise this, really helped to develop & translate some of the early ideas and to gain perspective on the focus of the fellowship and what is achievable at this stage, in the context of the longer term vision.

Collaborative work

- Dr Mike O'Donoghue (Senior Lecturer, Manchester Institute of Education, School of Environment, Education and Development, The University of Manchester) has been a great supervisor, allowing me to sound out ideas and offer useful suggestions and alternative viewpoints.

- Colleagues in ITL have been invaluable in helping translate and conceptualise ideas and communicate these effectively.

Outputs

- Simulation in teaching - guidance for staff in all disciplines

- The "Learner in the Learning" Triangle Model: bringing the whole self to the classroom - see above

- Workshop for the ITL's Focus on Teaching week (19/05/22): Simulation as a teaching methodology: how to create a safe space

- Podcast – conversation with Mike O'Donoghue of Manchester Institute of Education around the triangle model

- Blog post for the University's Teaching and Learning Blog TEA: Teach, Explore, Apply (to be published Winter 2023/4)

- "Safe Simulation" e-learning resource for educators with a focus on healthcare (access is via the University of Manchester Training Catalogue)

Impact

1.Impact on the staff and students within the Faculty

- Pilot using “Learner in the Learning” triangle model to guide intended learning outcomes for Speech and Language Therapy simulations and for a FBMH Virtual Reality /Inter-professional simulation project, which I am leading.

2.Impact on the institution

- Following my ITL workshop, colleagues from Faculty of Humanities have contacted to find out more about this work, e.g. in Project Management (Alliance Manchester Business School) and Law (Social Sciences). They are also keen to develop simulated learning activities on their programmes.

Reflections

This project has taught me a lot. It gave me permission to protect time to do a lot of thinking, thinking out loud and discussion that is invaluable. I feel very fortunate and grateful for this opportunity.

This narrative enquiry approach is new to me and whilst it feels the right approach, it has taken a lot of confidence to share my thoughts in this way.

I believe my fellowship has been successful as I have codified the “Learner in the Learning” triangle model and situated it within the pedagogic literature. Part of the process has been redefining what success is and what an education framework should not only look like, but defining its purpose.

The “Learner in the Learning” triangle model is simple yet powerful and links to prior work around mind/body/spirit trilogy for holistic care and teaching, Sir Ken Robinson’s work on education revolution, and also builds on the many and varied teaching methodologies that underpin simulation.

I truly hope this is the start of many more conversations and stories to share around creating psychologically safe space for learning and creativity.

Next steps

1.Sharing the triangle model
The plan now is to start socialising the triangle model and gather feedback from teaching staff: share the triangle model and get feedback and work on ways to incorporate this into simulations.

2. Professional competencies
I would like to do some work around mapping the “Learner in the Learning” triangle model onto professional competency development to make it tangible and applicable.

3. Student feedback
I am also interested to find out student’s perceptions of the “Learner in the Learning“ triangle model and possible ways it could support their learning.

4. A community of practice
The FBMH simulation group will continue and the Community of Practice continue to grow, hopefully expanding across the other Faculties.