

Exploring student and community sport practitioner experiences of an impact-based authentic learning educational delivery in the online environment.

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The purpose of this study is to investigate the effectiveness of remote authentic learning in promoting an impact-based learning pedagogy at a higher education institution. Challenging the assumption that authentic learning has to take place in person, this paper will explore whether an online learning environment can contribute to authentic learning from both a student and practitioner perspective. Despite the challenges facing the HE industry as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, we sought this as an opportunity to engage members of the sports industry to engage with students remotely, resulting in the creation of an online Professional Guest Speaking Seminar (PGSS) as part of a Professional Development unit delivered during Semester 2 (20/21). The PGSS was designed as a contingency plan for the unit, in the likely event that students would be unable to undertake a professional observation in the community. There were two rationales behind the PGSS: Firstly, students could hear from members of the sports industry about their careers and professional development; and secondly, students were given the opportunity to apply theory and innovation to practice, through a planned summative assessment in collaboration with the practitioners, therefore creating ‘impact-based’ learning. Bureau (2018: 244) introduced the new concept of ‘impact-based learning’, which refers to changing practices and habits which exist beyond the academic arena, and thus means learning is not confined to the classroom. Impact-based learning allows for students to work on meaningful projects, which enables them to learn and use the knowledge acquired in class to contribute to meeting social demands and academic requirements (Bureau, 2018). Through both formative and summative assessments, students were required to evaluate and propose a solution to a real issue which faced an organisation involved in the PGSS, these would then be shared with the organisation. Research suggests that innovation pedagogy in HE emphasises effective learning and an institution’s external impact (Kettunen, 2011), thus strengthening the importance of such interventions for authentic learning experiences. Essentially, the key aim was to bring the sports industry to

the students in a way that was both accessible and informative. The data collection period is scheduled for the up and coming months, with the aim of evaluating this innovative pedagogical practice for educational delivery from both the student and practitioner viewpoint.

Keywords: Authentic learning, impact-based, professional development, pedagogy, higher education.

Bureau, S. 2018. Learning from fictions or facts? Moving from case studies to the impact-based method. In: A. Fayolle, ed. *A Research Agenda for Entrepreneurship Education*. Cheltenham: Edward Edgar Publishing, pp. 243-261.

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