education for health

Education for Health
Technology Enhanced Learning
Strategy for 2020

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1 INTRODUCTION

The growth and enhancement of technology over the last two decades has changed the way we view the world, communicate and interact with one another. These changes are profoundly influencing how we teach and how our students learn, as well as providing opportunities for providing education in very different ways. Education for Health has a reputation for excellence and innovation in flexible teaching and learning provision, particularly for nurses working in primary care. In doing so, the Charity has played a key role in shaping the increasingly important part they play in the management of Long Term Conditions (LTC). The availability of high quality education and training is crucial to support ongoing development of key clinical skills, as well as those in areas such as critical thinking and reflection, and is fundamental in supporting our mission to improve the lives of people living with LTC. There is clear evidence that innovative education technology provides opportunities for Health Care Professionals (HCP) to acquire, develop and maintain the essential knowledge, skills and behaviours needed for safe and effective patient care.

However, it is important to remember that technology enhanced learning is about learning rather than teaching and should therefore have students at its heart. Fundamental to the aim of this strategy therefore, is consideration of the extent to which it addresses the needs of students and this is central to our philosophy. In order to understand the context for a Technology Enhanced Learning Strategy, the environment in which our students work, the challenges affecting the commissioners of our education as well as those affecting the wider Higher Education Institute (HEI) community needs to be considered. An understanding of the emerging policy drivers affecting our clients is also essential to ensure that the strategy is fit for purpose.

This Technology Enhanced Learning Strategy is underpinned by the overarching mission of the organisation, *to improve the lives of people living with LTC.* It articulates specific commitments relating to the provision of TEL, outlining the priorities for action over the next five years and setting the direction and pedagogical approach taken. It supports a systematic approach to the design and planning of the organisation's TEL based on learning theory and evaluation of good practice. It is underpinned by the Technology Enhanced Learning Plan, which details how the strategy will be implemented. The plan is not a static document, but will be used across the organisation to inform and share progress. It is worth noting that ensuring that all staff have the opportunity to develop the skills required to implement the strategy and the work to ensure this happens, is being considered as part of the work currently being undertaken to develop the organisation's IT Strategy and to avoid duplication is therefore not covered here

The Technology Enhanced Learning Group is the main forum for discussing external developments that are of strategic importance, understanding and evaluating best practice research and ensuring that pedagogical research and student feedback feeds into strategy policy and practice. This Strategy results from ongoing discussions at Teaching and Learning Committee and was approved by the Executive Team on 17th February 2018.

The aims of the strategy are:
- To enhance the quality, convenience, accessibility and flexibility of learning experiences for our students
- To support staff in their vision for eLearning based on best practice
- To guide and inform development based on student need and in line with the organisational objectives

2   BACKGROUND

Education for Health has always been innovative in the way we offer our education and training, realising at an early stage the benefits that flexible approaches such as distance learning can have for busy health care professionals. We adopted eLearning as a way of offering a blended and flexible approach to improve the experience for our part time and geographically disparate students. We have continued to build on this, refining our pedagogical approach to continue to meet the needs of our students. The focus of this strategy is on improving the students' experience of their learning in order to meet the organisational objectives:

- *To provide an excellent learning experience that develops the capabilities required to manage LTCs effectively and lead to sustained change*
- *To be at the forefront of adopting innovative technologies and digital solutions to enhancing learning*

Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) is used to describe a spectrum of approaches, from supporting learning in the classroom to blended learning, a combination of eLearning and face to face delivery and learning which is delivered entirely online.   It also covers a wide range of learning enhancements, including peer-to-peer learning (e.g. forums), online resources (e.g. library resources), webinars etc. The strategic development of our eLearning is based on the needs and demands of our learners to ensure the quality of their educational experience. Our aim is to apply the quality principles of good teaching to create an effective learning experience, which suits a range of learning styles, to be able to measure progress against learning outcomes and to enable students to apply what they have learned.

We value our students' previous experience, values, understanding, beliefs and insights and acknowledge the unique contribution of the personal and professional knowledge that they bring. We know that they value the learning they get from their peers in the classroom and our TEL needs to also facilitate opportunities in the online environment for students to effectively communicate, reflect, share, respond and work together to problem solve. Alongside the use of TEL to support the curriculum, there is a need to equip students with the knowledge, skills and expertise to use technology for learning, employability and professional development purposes (HEE 2017), which is reflected in our Graduate Attributes.

TEL has a key role to play in the achievement of our core objectives in relation to providing an outstanding educational experience for all students. To date we have not set out specific goals or priorities for its development, but have incorporated our aims and objectives into our Teaching and Learning Strategy 2020 and worked to a clear plan for the different aspects of our eLearning approaches. However, as student expectations for learning continue to change and the potential for the use of digital technologies is growing, there is a need for an overarching strategy to direct the

Charity's work in this area and support a cohesive approach for those involved in supporting learning across the curriculum.

2.1 Key benefits

Students have increasing expectations in relation to technology and recognise its ability to provide a rich learning and teaching environment with an increased range and quality of resources. Additionally, they are increasingly engaged with its use in education and more generally, being used to accessing the resources of and communicating with, an increasingly networked world both professionally and personally. The Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) in their e-learning strategy, identify three levels of potential benefits that TEL might bring (HEFCE 2009):

- Efficiency – existing processes carried out in a more cost-effective, time-effective, sustainable or scalable manner
- Enhancement – improving existing processes and the outcomes
- Transformation – radical, positive change in existing processes or introducing new processes

These three areas remain a useful way of categorising the benefits that TEL brings today. Efficiency, as well as convenience, particularly in relation to communication and administrative processes and more recently assessment and feedback processes to support learning, is fundamental to the organisation's strategic direction.

There is clearly opportunity for enhancement of student learning as TEL provides a rich learning and teaching environment with an increased range and quality of resources. The ability for communication with an increasingly networked world promotes social aspects of learning and is increasingly important for students to develop as autonomous, empowered learners.   Additionally, TEL supports transformation, promoting personalised learning, learner centred approaches, active learner participation and the co-creation of the curriculum to enable high quality learning in innovative ways.

The potential for reaching out to new groups of students is an important benefit; eLearning gives us the potential to transform our delivery and reach out beyond geographical boundaries with different types of learning that support our mission.

2.2 Key Challenges

The main challenges to consider for the Charity are:

- the need for digital literacy
- the cost of developing high quality eLearning content
- the lack of clear evidence supporting pedagogy

Digital Literacy has been described as '*the capabilities which fit someone for living, learning, working, participating and thriving in a digital society'* (HEE 2017) and the requirement for students and staff to be digitally literate is fundamental to the successful delivery of TEL. However, the demographic of Education for Health students could largely be described as 'digital immigrants' (Prensky 2001), born

before the existence of technology and adapting to it later in life. Although it is important not to generalise, we need to be mindful that our students may have lower levels of skills or confidence with technology than those entering university from school and that the way they perceive their eLearning experience is likely to be complex and context dependent and this means that the availability of high quality, personalised support is essential.

Developing digital literacy skills is crucial for our students to maximise their life-long learning and for their employability.   HEE describe the need to promote digital literacy to build a digital ready workforce. They see digital literacy as being person centered and divided into 6 domains each with its own capabilities and behaviours to help improve the health and social care workforce:
- Communication collaboration and participation
- Teaching, learning and self-development
- Information data and media literacies
- Creation innovation and scholarship
- Technological proficiency

They also promote the concept of digital identity, well-being, safety and security and the importance of a safe and secure context with due regard for our own and others well-being. As an organisation delivering education to health and social care workforce, it is essential that our TEL Strategy supports students to use technology routinely as autonomous, critical thinking, reflective learners

The cost of developing high quality TEL is important to recognise, given it is substantially higher for the organisation than producing print-based education. For more specialist courses, which have a lower throughput of students, there is less opportunity to recover these costs and see the benefits associated with delivering at scale. Equally, given the multitude of online training providers and free to access learning, demonstrating the worth of a higher quality offering is challenging and is an important focus for the organisation. As well as the importance of demonstrating the comparative worth of our TEL, its effectiveness in making a real difference to our students and the patients they manage, needs to be an area of focus. It is interesting that in the HEFCE statement above, effectiveness does not appear as a potential benefit and specific theories to support the development of eLearning are still largely emergent. It is therefore important to ensure that our approach supports implementation of evidence based pedagogies, evaluation and benchmarking. It is vital that our approach to TEL is effective, in order to provide a good student experience and to ensure return on investment (JISC 2015)

3. THE STRATEGY

The development of our TEL is based on theories and concepts which support an environment for learning, which is evidence-based and appropriate for health care professionals in a blended learning environment. Additionally, our experience to date of developing, delivering and evaluating TEL means that we have a wealth of quantitative and qualitative feedback, which enables us to be truly reflective of our students' preferences and needs.

The approach taken can be demonstrated as a framework using the work of Nareyen and Herrington (2014) who build on McLoughlin and Lee's 2008 work and describe a mobile heutagogical model,

which is summarized in the principles of personalisation, participation and productivity. These principles particularly resonate with our students' feedback and current approaches for HCP learning. The framework, including examples of the key concepts which influence our thinking, are shown in the diagram (fig 1) below:
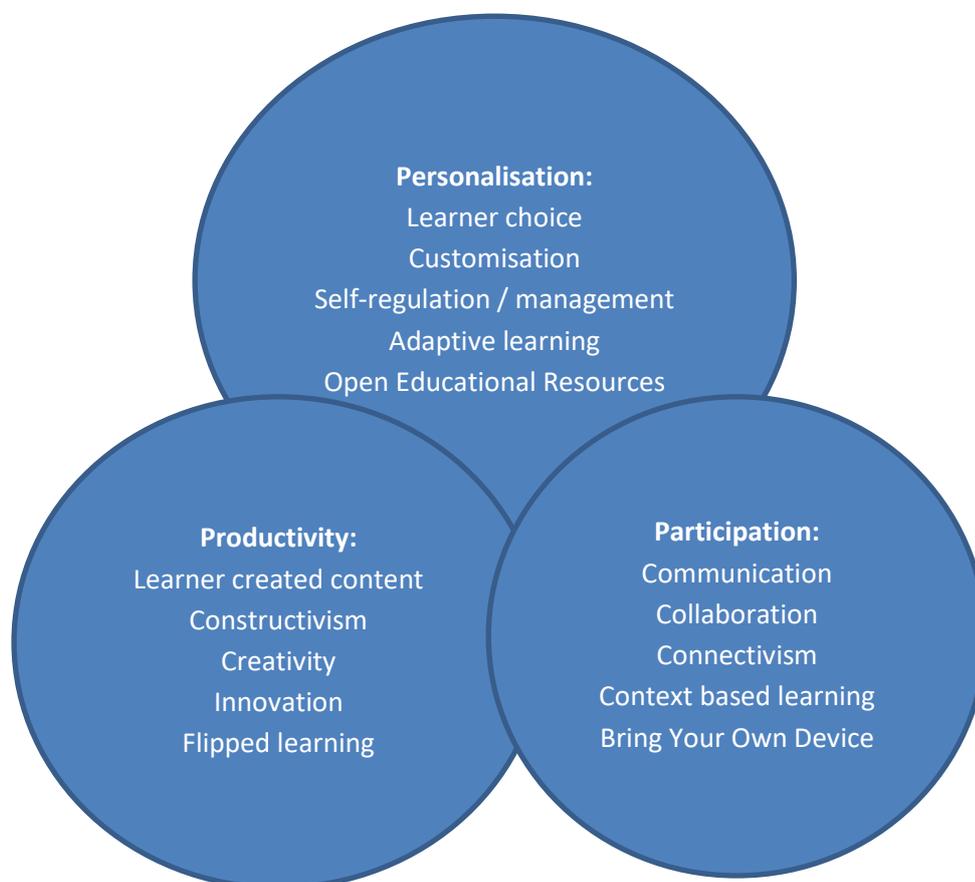

Personalisation:
Learner choice
Customisation
Self-regulation / management
Adaptive learning
Open Educational Resources

Productivity:
Learner created content
Constructivism
Creativity
Innovation
Flipped learning

Participation:
Communication
Collaboration
Connectivism
Context based learning
Bring Your Own Device

Fig 1: Diagram to illustrate our approach to eLearning

4. ALIGNMENT WITH OTHER STRATEGIES

We believe that technology can enhance every aspect of the student journey, from application through to graduation and beyond. Objectives which relate more specifically to the students overall experience, for example of course administration, are set out in the organisation's IT Strategy. Additionally, the requirement to ensure that staff delivering the TEL Strategy have the expertise required, is a focus for the organisation's IT Strategy and an important objective of the organisation's HR Strategy. This strategy focuses on the use of digital technologies for the purposes of learning and teaching and its effective management. As such it builds on the approach set out in the Education for Health's Teaching and Learning Strategy.

The following documents also support the Technology Enhanced Learning Strategy:
- Education for Health Organisational Strategy
- Education for Health Marketing Plan
- Education for Health Assessment Strategy
- Education for Health Human Resources Strategy (draft)
- Education for Health IT Strategy (draft)

5 IMPLEMENTATION AND GOVERNANCE

The Chief Executive has ultimate responsibility for the effective development and implementation of the organisation's strategies and policies. The Director of Education and Training is responsible for providing strategic leadership for the Technology Enhanced Learning Strategy and has overall delegated authority for coordinating its development, implementation and operation, working closely with the TEL Manager. The supporting action plans will enable the delivery of the strategy based on the specified priorities. Specific areas of responsibility relating to successful implementation of the Strategy will be identified and timelines will be based on the priority. The action plan therefore provide the road map for identifying progress and is incorporated into the meeting structure of the organisation for identification of management information and reporting.

The Teaching and Learning Committee, chaired by the Director of Education and Training, is responsible for co-ordinating the annual progress reports and Management Information relating to the Strategy. Monitoring information will be generated through the collation of information collected during annual review for the duration of the Strategy with reports being monitored by the Academic Board, Strategy Implementation Group and Trustees. In this way, the Strategy will become embedded into the culture of the organisation. Enhancements will be evaluated through a process of continuous improvement.
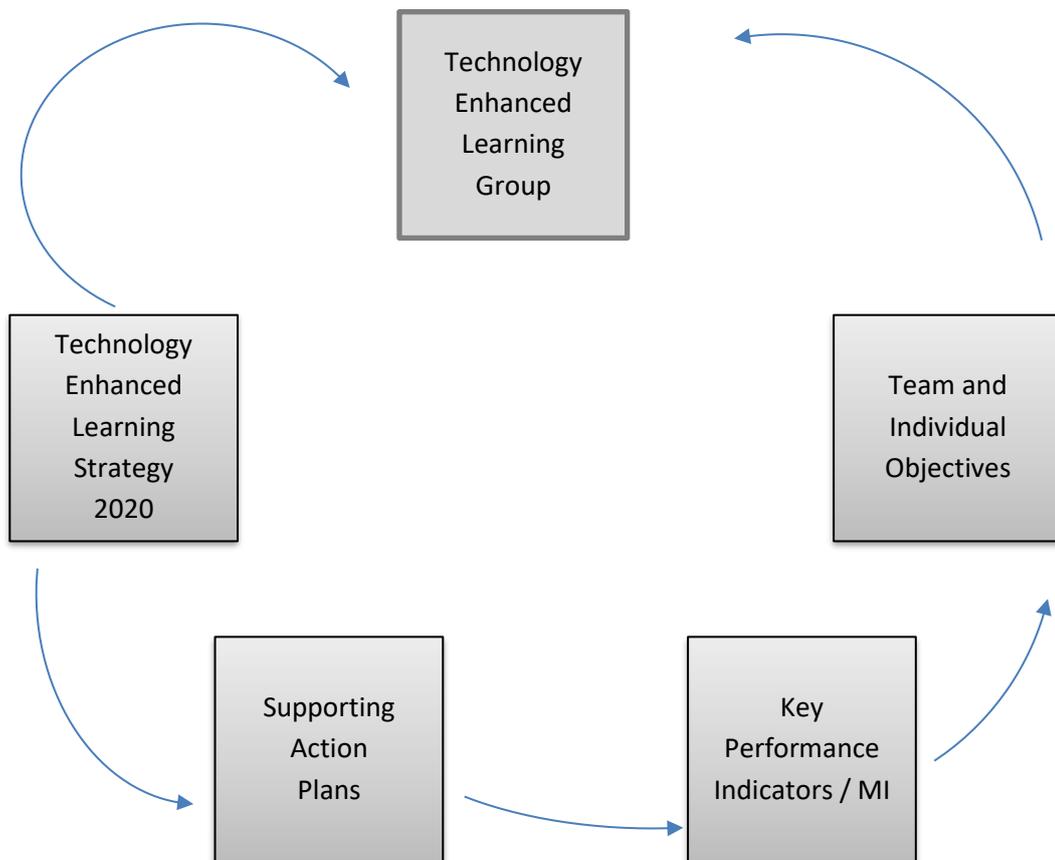
4   TECHNOLOGY ENHANCED LEARNING STRATEGY AIMS AND THEMES:

Education for Health will focus its efforts in TEL over the period to 2020 around four themes:

- Using technologies to enhance student engagement with learning
- Developing the digital skills and capabilities of students
- Electronic management of assessment
- Facilitating curriculum design for online learning opportunities.

The following lists the areas which will provide the framework for the Technology Enhanced Action Plan and support planning for progress against each of the four themes.

THEME 1: Using technology to enhance student engagement with learning
- Promote flexible access to learning
- Develop the use of learning and assessment analytics to support student engagement, retention and achievement
- Provide high quality, effective and timely support function for students
- Extend opportunities to capture evidence of achievements and reflection on learning to support Personal Development Planning
- Develop personalisation options across the range of eLearning
- Provide access to a range of learning materials that facilitate students' individual learning styles
- Support an inclusive approach to teaching and learning
- Ensure student involvement in the creation and delivery of strategy
- Promote creativity and innovation in teaching learning and assessment
- Enable patient and carer contribution to the curriculum
- Promote collaboration with other institutions to promote knowledge exchange

THEME 2: Developing the digital skills and capabilities of students
- Embed the development of digital and information literacies in the curriculum
- Strengthen the induction of students in relation to digital learning and provide effective tools to support online study and collaboration in distance learning
- Enable students to discover and access online resources with minimum effort and delay through integration and internal systems and adoption of technology which facilitates external interaction
- Incorporate literacy learning within student experience so that it is meaningful and effective
- Incorporate technologies which facilitate and enhance communication, collaboration and participation
- Develop TEL solutions that foster creation, innovation and scholarship

THEME 3: Support and promote electronic management of student assessment
- Implement effective and integrated systems for the electronic management of assessment which permit online submission, marking and moderation, and feedback
- Integrate plagiarism detection software with electronic submission systems and enable its use by students and staff for formative and summative purposes

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- Promote the use of plagiarism detection software to support students in understanding academic integrity and in the development and execution of the academic skills associated with referencing required in higher education
- Extend the range of assessment processes and tools
- Encourage innovation in eLearning assessment support and feedback and facilitate dissemination of good practice in these areas

THEME 4: Facilitating curriculum design to support learning
- implement standards for eLearning that are based on best evidence in relation to design and accessibility
- Include technology enhanced principles into design including scaffolding, differentiation and ladders of progression and which support participation, productivity and personalisation
- Encourage creativity and innovation in course design
- Encourage and support social learning
- Develop a culture of research and scholarly activity encouraging publication of work and dissemination activity

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