Bridging the transition into credit bearing online distance learning

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INSPIRING PEOPLE

MOOC & PGCert in Art Crime & Antiquities Trafficking

Course Lead: Dr Donna Yates @drdonnayates

Winner of Best Online Learning Experience (STAs, 2016-17)

MOOC as a transition aid to PGCert

10,960 learners, of which 5,202 were active and 1,628 completed 90% or more steps

Now on its 9th run

PGCert 60 credits (3 x 20-credit courses) (30 learners)

Feeding into existing F2F Masters

Learner experience research methodology

Research questions:

- Experiences of MOOC & PGCert
- Preparedness for PGCert in terms of:
  - Foundation knowledge
  - Study skills
  - Digital literacies
  - Readiness for self-directed learning
- What else could have been done to support students
- Semi-structured interviews (n=9)

Learner experience research methodology

Main themes:

- MOOC stimulated enrolment for PGCert
- MOOC enhanced preparation for PGCert
- Importance of the lecturer
- Challenges & suggestions for improvement

MOOC stimulated enrolment for PGCert

Awareness
"It seems like many, if not **all of** the students who applied that aren't already Glasgow students found out about it **through the MOOC**."

Motivation, confirming interest
"It's a good enough introduction to whatever subject it is to make you decide whether you **actually are interested or not**. I think that will cut down on people enrolling for courses they had really misunderstood or misjudged or whatever."

Self-efficacy
"I was in doubt if I [was] up to the task, to be able to **study online**. And the way the **MOOC is structured**, with the lectures and the chat with [the lecturer], and how she was asking questions and all of that; that **encouraged** me to say, okay, yes, **I can do that**."

Recognising value of online learning
I'd had really bad experiences of … like, really difficult online platforms. But the MOOC was a **good example** of how actually it can work quite nicely and it can be easy to share your ideas […] Actually if it's **done properly** an online learning course can be just as good as a, sort of, in person thing."

MOOC enhanced preparedness for PGCert

Foundation knowledge
"I have a background in archaeology and heritage management so I'm aware of some of the issues that this course covers but the MOOC gave me a **good rounded introduction** and had me thinking more about some of the areas that I wasn't so strong in."

Digital literacies
"The MOOC was a nice first step into getting **ready to deal** with this kind of online technology, **specifically for learning**."

Study skills (built on existing)
"…just for me and my experience I think it was more **using those skills already** [rather] than, kind of, developing them further."

Readiness for self-directed learning
"The MOOC kind of shows you that […] if you get behind, you know, if you take it easy and let yourself get behind, if you don't keep up with the reading things in the lectures then you're going to have to **pay a price** for it so it's better not to get behind if you can possibly help it."

Importance of the lecturer

Enthusiasm
"I saw short lectures by [the lecturer] and by other various members of staff and I was **convinced** obviously they were engaging and dedicated to teaching as well as to studying."

Presence
"We could **leave questions** and then Donna would answer, or **other students** would come in, and then she would do a **video session** commenting on all the questions we'd done."

Support
"One other thing that is definitely important is just the **level of helpfulness**, I guess, or the level of concern that Dr Yates brings to this. Again, when I was having issues with getting some of the videos I got **very quick responses** from her."

Learning design
"It was just so **well presented** and well done that I wanted to learn more and when I saw that there was a PGCert I decided that this was something **I wanted to do**."

Challenges

More academically challenging content
I could certainly have […] read more academic type sources, more journal articles and book chapters for example, […] I think more of the underlying theory could push it towards the, kind of, PGCert focus.

Academic writing
I think optional assignments, you know, mini, not quite essays but mini maybe questions and stuff does, sort of, **prepare your mind for the fact that if you do this you will have to do more writing**

Advanced study skills
... just getting back into the mode of, like, you know, **challenging sources** […] That's something I've had to look at carefully, because there's not been any in the nature of my previous postgraduate study

Challenges

Technical challenges
The Glasgow interface is very different from the MOOC one, so you have to navigate things differently and, you know, that took a bit of time to register with the university online and do everything.

English as a Second Language
The vocabulary […] I love the [chat] seminar but **I still don't have the speed to really take part**, I make some small comment but I'm pleased [to] be there and read the discussion

Online study and communication skills
For the description of the course, maybe **add a time frame** that would be needed each week.

The lecturer's experience

"I've really enjoyed doing this PGCert [in Art Crime and Antiquities Trafficking]. … I think this project has greatly **improved my confidence** in teaching and improved my teaching all around. I've seen **positive changes** in my **in-person teaching** as a result, both in delivery but, more importantly, in lecture and **whole module design**. I think about it all in a much more informed way: less like bits and pieces of information, more as almost a **story arch** where every bit of lecture, every reading, contributes to an **identified whole**."

Dr Donna Yates, Lecturer in Antiquities Trafficking and Art Crime
at the Scottish Centre for Crime and Justice Research at the University of Glasgow

Future directions

Aligning our MOOC provision to aid transition to online degrees as standard
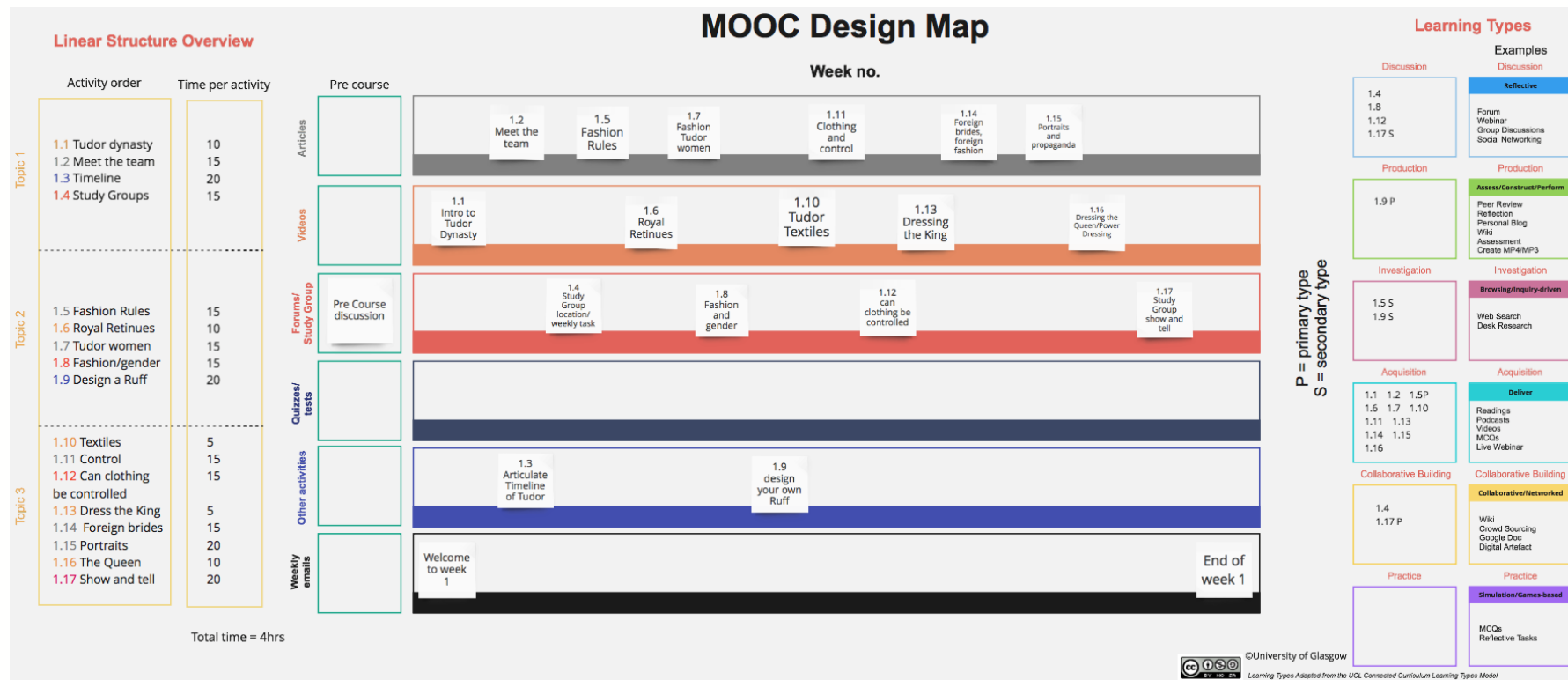
Looking at the potential for RPL

Development of a MOOC strategy

MDMF

MDMF

MOOC Design Mapping Framework