# **ILTA Portfolio**

R.Dixon, 15/09/19

# Contents

# 1.0 Introduction

# 2.0 Reflection

- 2.1 Evaluation and Selection of Reflective Model
- 2.2 Reflection on Micro-Teaching Session, Gibbs (1988)
  - 2.2.1 Description
  - 2.2.2 Personal Feelings
  - 2.2.3 Evaluation
  - 2.2.4 Analysis
  - 2.2.5 Conclusion
  - 2.2.6 Personal Action Plan

# 3.0 Continuous Professional Development Plan

# 4.0 References

# 5.0 Appendices

Appendix A PSF engagement map

Appendix B Micro Teaching Plan

Appendix C Micro Teaching Feedback

### 1.0 Introduction

Before embarking on the journey through this portfolio, it is important to consider the wider context. The author is an entrepreneur who over the past 30 years has set up and grown several different businesses, however, for the last 15 of these years, he has also lectured in the field of entrepreneurship and enterprise for 1 day per week. As an experienced practitioner in his field, he has been able to directly engage and inspire learners within his subject area, however he has never had any formal educational training on the underpinning academic theories of learning. Hence his enrolment on the "Post Graduate certificate in Higher Education and Learning" of which an "Introduction to Learning, Teaching and Assessment (ILTA)", is the first module.

The approach throughout ILTA has been disruptive. In the very first session, the learners were challenged to make Lego models of how they currently visualised themselves as teaching professionals. Subsequently, they had to produce an

Figure 1

aspirational model, showing the visualisation upon completion of the unit. Figure 1 depicts the authors initial model, a lone Indiana Jones type figure guiding the metaphorical learning experience down the theoretical river of wisdom. Figure 2 visualises the new tools and skills that the educator would now have onboard his raft to assist in this journey.



Figure 2

Although superficially having the appearance of playing when you should be learning, there is a significant body of work underpinning the use of Lego in a wide range of learning settings. Bushnell (2009) utilises Lego to facilitate the teaching of Japanese as a foreign language. Atmatzidou, Markelis and Demetriadis (2008) investigate Lego's uses in triggering learning in elementary and secondary education. In Higher Education Nerantzi and Despard (2014) look at the potential for using lego to develop Postgraduate Academic Practice. The primary experience of the author as a participant in a session based on the underlying work of Nerantzi and Despard (2014), can certainly testify

as to its effectiveness and longevity. Visualisation of one's own pedagogical preferences facilitates both personal development and a desire to continuously evolve as an educational professional.

It is within this context that the author, an experienced entrepreneurial practitioner, would meet the disruptive challenge of ILTA and all the academic learning principals and theory which underline the course.

### 2.0 Reflection

### 2.1 Evaluation and Selection of Reflective Model

Four different reflective models were considered for the purposes of this assignment. The Reflective Cycle, Gibbs (1988); The Experimental Learning Cycle, Kolb (1984) and The Six Thinking Hats, De Bono (1985).

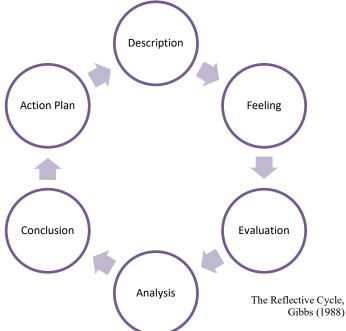
Gibbs's (1988) six stage Reflective Cycle guides the user through a series of 6 distinct stages. This structured and logical approach ensures all aspects of the experience are described, analysed and considered throughout the reflective process.

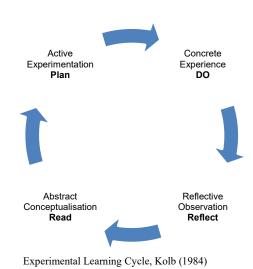
Although Gibbs originally promoted it's use for repeated situations, it work's equally well for single experiences too.

It is both straightforward and simple to use and therefore a good approach for reflecting upon new experiences for the first time.

Arguably, it is one of the most famous models of reflection and is widely used by both students and academics a like.

Kolb's (1984) Experimental Learning Cycle, pre-dates Gibbs work and indeed influenced Gibbs in the development of his six-stage cycle. The concept divides the learning process into a cycle of four basic theoretical components: concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation. The cycle can begin at any of the four points.





Kolb stated that learning involves the acquisition of abstract concepts that can be applied flexibly in a range of situations. In Kolb's theory, the impetus for the development of new concepts is provided by new experiences.

"Learning is the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience" (Kolb, 1984, p. 38).

De Bono (1985) uses a metaphor of thinking hats to reflect and evaluate experiences and problems from different perspectives. In order to utilise the thinking hats correctly, it is important to understand different think styles. This metacognitive approach enables what De Bono refers to as "deliberate thinking". By systematically restricting the reflective process to an individual hat, and then by moving through all six hats as such, the reflector can explore all perspectives of the experience.

After reviewing each of these 3 different approaches to reflection, it was decided that Gibbs six stage reflective cycle was the most appropriate. With ILTA being an introductory course in the field of educational learning theory and practice, Gibbs seemed the most straightforward and easy to use. It's systematic and thorough approach should mean all facets of the experience could be encompassed.

## 2.2 Reflection on Micro-Teaching Session, Gibbs (1988)

### 2.2.1 Description

The task was to plan and deliver a 15-minute Micro-Teaching session to a group of peers and a tutor. Feedback was to be given at the end of the session. The task can be considered as three distinct phases. Preparation, Delivery and Feedback.

**Preparation:** This involved the completion of a Micro-Teaching Plan (see appendix B). Inspired by learnings throughout the ILTA programme, a disruptive approach to teaching the threshold economic concept of productivity, was decided upon.

"A threshold concept can be considered as akin to a portal, opening up a new and previously inaccessible way of thinking about something. It represents a transformed way of understanding, or interpreting, or viewing something without which the learner cannot progress. As a consequence of comprehending a threshold concept there may thus be a transformed internal view of subject matter, subject landscape, or even world view. This transformation may be sudden, or it may be protracted over a considerable period of time, with the transition to understanding proving troublesome. Such a transformed view or landscape may represent how people 'think' in a particular discipline, or how they perceive, apprehend, or experience particular phenomena within that discipline (or more generally)." (Meyer and Land, 2003).

Threshold concepts are likely to be transformative, irreversible, integrative and potentially troublesome. Once a learner truly grasps the concept of productivity it can result in a change of perception, particularly when considering the relative benefits of a free market economy. This discovery is unlikely to be forgotten and some learners may have difficulty coping with the new perspective that is offered by true comprehension of productivity.

This overarching session objective was distilled into 3 more specific learning outcomes:

- To Summarize and explain the benefits of increased labour productivity in the UK economy
- 2. To analyse the contribution of ScaleUp Companies to increased productivity

 To Understand and Apply the knowledge and data available on the ScaleUp Institute's website to help spread best practice

The general feel of the Micro-Teaching session was intended to be that of a learner focused inclusive environment. The specific learning theories utilised in the preparation of the Micro-Teaching Plan were as follows:

- Experimental Education (Dewey, 1938): The planned Productivity demonstration would immerse both learners and teacher alike, in a shared direct practical experience of the concept
- Discovery Learning (Bruner, 1961): The Productivity Maths demonstration would engage the learners with the teacher's hypothesis relating to the previous shared experience. The maths would then be worked out on the spot, hopefully demonstrating the tangible benefits of increased productivity.
- Instructivism (Skinner 1954, Merrill, Carrol): The central part of the session, would involve the teacher taking a central role in directly transferring knowledge to the learners through the traditional format of a presentation. However, by utilising hyperlinks for referencing, the learners would be implicitly challenged at some later date, to re-visit this content and, where interested, delve deeper. This would also allow the teacher to respond more precisely to specific questions during the session.
- Cognitivism (Vygotsky, Chomsky): The slide delivery aspects of the session would be organised into a logical structure so as to aid the learners with absorbing the content.
- Experimental Learning (Kolb, 1984) and Constructivism (Piaget, Bruner): The final Padlet exercise would engage the learners in an individual exercise of discovery using the ScaleUp institutes database. Findings would then be interactively shared using Padlet which would then allow the teacher to lead a constructive process whereby the shared, and yet individual experiences, could be used to enhance the learner's comprehension and ability to apply the knowledge and data available on the ScaleUp Institute's website.

To ensure the constructive alignment (Biggs, 1996) of the session, guidance on assessment of learning was included in the Micro-Teaching plan. In this way the teacher would be able

to verify that the learners were achieving the intended learning outcomes as the session progressed.

Delivery: The session was delivered in front of four peers and a tutor. The Productivity demonstration went to plan with learners buying into the fabricated emergency of needing to pick up the accidentally spilt the nails on the floor, whilst the teacher went to get help. Upon the return of the teacher with a magnetic sweeper, everyone became fully engaged and intrigued as its superior productivity was demonstrated. This made the maths bit easy. As productivity equations were written on the whiteboard, learners were clearly demonstrating an ability to relate the algebra with the prior group activity. However, engagement during this section was greater than anticipated. Valeria, in particular, was very keen to engage in the ethics of productivity to which the teacher responded by stating this was a political question and not one for economics. This enthusiastic engagement caused the session to overrun and resulted in the Padlet and Summary sections being severely truncated.

Feedback: Feedback was given by the peers and a tutor. This can be surmised as follows:

**Examples of Good Practice** 

- Great introduction, very engaging throughout
- All activities illustrated the intended learning outcomes and made the concepts clear
- Questions were dealt with well
- Student expectations were managed in a confident and professional way

Areas for Further Attention

- 15 minutes was not long enough to fully deliver this lesson plan too adventurous
- Some of the slides were too wordy
- Teacher centred vs learned centred balance could have been better. The learners were bursting for more discussion

### 2.2.2 Personal Feelings

Preparation: Preparation of the teaching plan felt somewhat daunting. Whilst I have prepared many session plans previously, I have never before considered which educational learning theories were being utilised and whether the session was constructively aligned. However, once I got into this I felt a sense of satisfaction, as many of the approaches I would naturally take to teaching fitted in well with the theory. It turns out I had been practicing much of this for years without being aware.

**Delivery:** Excitement was the feeling before and during the first 10 minutes of my session. The productivity demonstration had worked well and the students were engaged with the material. However, the discussion developed more than I'd expected, at which point the anxiety of knowing I only had 15 minutes begin to influence my actions, adding a slightly stressed tone to my delivery. I realised it would be exceptionally difficult to fit in the padlet activity.

**Feedback:** I was disappointed with myself as the feedback came, overrunning seemed like quite a basic error. However, as my peers informed me of my examples of good practice, my mood lifted and a mindset of personal reflection ensued.

### 2.2.3 Evaluation

Learning Outcome 1: "To Summarize and explain the benefits of increased labour productivity in the UK economy"

The initial productivity group experiment and whiteboard maths activities worked well. Through observation and interaction with the learners, the teacher was clearly able to confirm that this learning outcome, had been achieved.

Learning Outcome 2: "To analyse the contribution of ScaleUp Companies to increased productivity"

During the delivery of slides the teacher allowed the learners to interject and ask questions as they came up. This two-way dynamic fostered the intended constructivism and via

interaction and observation with the learners, the teacher was able to ascertain the achievement of the second learning outcome.

Learning Outcome 3: "To Understand and Apply the knowledge and data available on the ScaleUp Institute's website to help spread best practice"

As the session progressed to the padlet and summary activities, time was at a premium. Conscious of this, the teacher moved to a more instructivist approach, accelerating through the activity and slides. This restricted learning and several of the learners did not attain the third learning outcome as was clear from the feedback.

### 2.2.4 Analysis

The failure of the teacher to successfully enable the learners to achieve all three learning outcomes resulted from a lack of time in the session. Achievement of all three was perhaps overly ambitious given the time constraints. In retrospect the plan should only have focused on the first two learning outcomes with activities being reduced accordingly.

During the session and given the level of engagement and discussion the learners initiated during the initial two activities, the teacher perhaps should have adapted the session "on the fly" and axed the padlet activity. This would have allowed the student-led learning and interactions to have been fully embraced, bringing about a better balance between teacher centred and learner centred activities in the session as a whole. This could have significantly deepened the students understanding of these difficult threshold concepts.

### 2.2.5 Conclusion

In short sessions, it is important not to be too ambitious in terms of activity content and learning outcomes.

The ability to adapt a teaching plan "on the fly", based on learner feedback will facilitate the optimisation of a session's outcomes. It is better to truncate content and deliver some

learning outcomes fully, as opposed to including all planned activities at the expense of deepening the understanding of the learners.

### 2.2.6 Personal Action Plan

On a personal level, this exercise has given me confidence in my core style and approach to teaching. My engaging, disruptive and passionate approach works well and is liked by learners. My intention is to build on this core style and add in some of the key takeout's from the experience:

- Don't Rush Do not pack too much content into sessions, especially when dealing with difficult or new concepts
- Be prepared to deviate from the lesson plan Embrace student led engagement and enthusiasm – go with it – it will only enhance the learning experience.
- Flexibility Be prepared to adapt one's approach to teaching and learning to different situations. Humanism, Behaviourism, Cognitivism and Constructivism will all have varying degrees of effectiveness in different context's and situations.

# 3.0 Continuous Professional Development Plan

My experience to date includes both 30 years of entrepreneurial and business practice, and 15 years of part time lecturing at undergraduate and master's level. However, I have had no formal educational training and my lecturing experience has focused primarily on two 30 credit modules.

Therefore, my professional development priorities at present, are to supplement my practical business and entrepreneurial experience with educational qualifications, wider reading and personal development and to diversify the units on which I teach.

A key component of this will be my completion of the Post Graduate Certificate in Learning and Teaching in Higher Education (PGC LTHE), which enable me to become a Fellow of the Higher Education Academy. This will be essential if I am to be considered a professional in this field as opposed to a dabbling practitioner.

As such I have already enrolled on the following modules which build on ILTA:

- Developing Academic and Professional Practice (DAPP), commencing 21/01/2020
- Enhancing Learning, Teaching and Assessment with Technology (ELTAT),
   commencing 30/01/2020

This will leave one 15 credit option left to complete which I intend to enrol on over the summer.

In addition to completing the PGC LTHE, I have also secured a place on the waiting list to study an ILM Level 5 Certificate in Coaching and Mentoring. Although I have already been mentoring several business owners for some time, this qualification will allow me to understand how my practical mentoring experiences fit with the current academic thinking in this field. It should also allow me to refine, develop and improve my Coaching and Mentoring skills – formalising my capabilities in this area.

I am also intending to partake in as many departmental feedback sessions as possible, where there is significant opportunity to learn from my peers. Particularly those with a research and academic background.

The 2019/20 educational year will also see me commencing lecturing on a new unit, Management in Practice (MIP). This is a student lead unit where students form consultancy teams and work to complete real projects for real organisations. This is a somewhat different format to the previous units I have taught on and should prove to be an exciting personal development challenge.

## 4.0 References

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Skinner, B.F., 1954. The science of learning and the art of teaching. Cambridge, Mass, USA, 99, p.113.

# Appendix A – PSF Engagement Map

							Dimens	ions of	Practic	e					
		Areas o	f Activi	ity (page	<del>(</del> )	Core Knowledge (Page)						Professional Values (page)			
Portfolio Content	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4
1.0 Introduction	Х												Х		
2.1 Evaluation and Selection of Reflective Mod	el							Х		Х					
2.2.1 Description (preparation)	Х					Х	Х	Х	Х	Х			Х	X	
2.2.1 Description (delivery)		Х				Х	Х	Х	Х	Х		Х	Х	X	
2.2.1 Description (feedback)										Х					
2.2.2 Personal Feelings (preparation)	Х														
2.2.2 Personal Feelings (delivery)		X										Х			
2.2.2 Personal Feelings (feedback)															
2.2.3 Evaluation									Х	Х					
2.2.4 Analysis									Х	Х					
2.2.5 Conclusion									Х	Х					
2.2.6 Personal Action Plan					Х									Х	

3.0 Continuou	s Professional Development			Х							Х	
Appendix B	Micro Teaching Plan	Х			Х	Х	Х	Х	Х			
Appendix C	Micro Teaching Feedback								Х			

# **UKPSF Dimensions of Practice**

Areas of Activity:	Core Knowledge:	Professional Values:
1.Design and plan of learning	1. The subject material	1. Respect for individual learners
activities and/or programmes	2. Appropriate methods for teaching	and diverse learning
of study	and learning in the subject /	communities
2.Teach and/or support learning	disciplinary areas	2. Promote participation in
3. Assess and give feedback to	3. How students learn, both	higher education and equality
learners	generally and within their subject	of opportunity for learners
4.Develop effective learning	/ discipline	3. Use evidence-informed
environments and approached	4. The use and values of appropriate	approaches and the outcomes
to student support and	learning technologies	of research, scholarship and
guidance	5. Methods for evaluating the	continuing professional
5.Engage in continuing	effectiveness of teaching	development.
professional development in	6. The implications of quality	4. Acknowledge the wider
subjects / disciplines and their	assurance / enhancement for	context in which higher
pedagogy, incorporating	academic and professional	education operates
research, scholarship and the	practice with a specific focus on	recognising the implications
evaluation of professional	teaching.	for professional practice
practice.		

# Appendix B - Microteaching Plan

### What

What is the title of your session? What kind of session is it (interactive lecture, seminar, practical etc.)? What level is it set? What is your microteaching-learning outcome? Does it reflect the level of learning?

Session Title: Increasing Productivity, The ScaleUp Challenge

**Session Type:** Interactive Workshop

Level: 7

# Microteaching Learning Outcome(s):

### By the end of the session students will be able to ...

- 1. To Summarize and explain the benefits of increased labour productivity in the UK economy
- 2. To analyse the contribution of ScaleUp Companies to increased productivity
- 3. To Understand and Apply the knowledge and data available on the ScaleUp Institute's website to help spread best practice

### When

Remember that you will need to keep to time (15 minutes for microteaching).

Date: 27/06/2019 Time: 9.30-12:30 Duration: 15 mins

### Where

What facilities do you have available? What will you need to bring (also see resources in your plan below)? Do you have a plan B in case you encounter a problem with the room or equipment?

Room: Library 5.11

# Facilities (in place and/or for you to supply):

- Projector
- Whiteboard + Whiteboard Markers
- Screws
- Magic Tool
- Yellow & White scrunched Paper
- Pre-Prepared Padlet

# **How and Why**

What techniques are you using when undertaking your teaching? Why have you selected these approaches? Link to theory as appropriate. How will you assess that your students have achieved the learning outcome?

## Approaches to learning:

The overriding approach to learning within the micro teaching session is Learner Focused inclusive approach. As detailed in the section below, the target students for this session are primarily industry-based and not academics. These industry practitioners are well known to place great importance on the relevance and application of academic theory to practical problems, issues and challenges, within their own organisations. Therefore, the techniques used and general approach taken, aims to demystify academic theory by presenting it to the learners in a plain English relevant format that allows them to push through the threshold concept of seeing their own organisation as one of many dynamic entities operating within a continuously changing business environment.

The specific learning theories to support this overall approach are as follows:

- Experimental Education: The Productivity demonstration immerses both learners and teacher in a direct experience of the concept of productivity in practice
- Discovery Learning: The Productivity Maths demonstration engages the learners with the teacher's hypothesis relating to the previous shared experience. The maths is then worked out on the spot, hopefully demonstrating the tangible benefits of increased productivity
- Instructivism: The central part of the session, involves the teacher

taking a central role in directly transferring knowledge to the learners through the traditional format of a presentation. However, by utilising hyperlinks for referencing, the learners are challenged at some later date, to re-visit this content and, where interested, delve deeper. This also allows the teacher to respond more precisely to specific questions on the fly – so to speak.

- Cognitivism: The slide delivery aspects of the session has been organised into a logical structure so the learners can absorb the content
- Experimental Learning and Constructivism: The final Padlet
  exercise engages the learners in an individual exercise of discovery
  using the ScaleUp institutes database. Their findings are then
  interactively shared using Padlet which should then allow the
  teacher to lead a constructive process whereby the shared, and yet
  individual experiences will enhance all learners understanding and
  ability to apply the knowledge and data available on the ScaleUp
  Institute's website to help spread best practice

### **References:**

- Experimental Education, Dewey
- Discovery Learning, Bruner
- Experimental Learning, Kolb
- Constructivism, Von Glassersfeld; Piaget; Millwood

# Who and Why

What assumptions have you made about your learners?
What strategies have you put in place to ensure an inclusive classroom?
Link to theory as appropriate.

### The Students:

- The learners are either educated to degree level in a relevant qualification and have some industry experience or they have at least 5 years industry experience
- The learners will typically be studying a management degree apprenticeship, either at level 6 or more likely level 7 (eg. MBA degree apprenticeship)
- Learners studying as part of an apprenticeship, and particularly their respective employers, put great emphasis on the efficacy of applying the learning outcomes of the course in their day to day roles. It is therefore of vital importance for the individual learner to make the connection the between academic theory taught and the context of their own job role

Time (mins)	Activity Description (and LO addressed)	Activity Type	Assessment of learning	Resources required
0 to 1	Introduction			Google Slides with internet connection
2-3	Productivity Demonstration  Learning Outcome Addressed:  To Summarize and explain the benefits  of increased labour productivity in the  UK economy	Group Experiment: A practical demonstration of productivity involving all learners and teacher together	Observation and interaction with learners	Screws, Magic Tool
4-5	Productivity Maths Demonstration Learning Outcome Addressed: To Summarize and explain the benefits of increased labour productivity in the UK economy	Whiteboard Maths: The teacher will calculate the relative productivities of the previous exercise. The answers will then be used to demonstrate the benefits of increasing productivity using real world examples	Observation and interaction with learners	Whiteboard, Whiteboard Markers
5-9	Slides  Learning Outcome Addressed:  To analyse the contribution of ScaleUp Companies to increased productivity	Lecturing: The teacher will go through the content of the slides, in order to prepare the students understanding of the productivity and ScaleUp context, in which the subsequent padlet exercise occurs	Observation and interaction with learners	Google Slides with internet connection
10-13	Padlet Learning Outcome Addressed:	<b>Workshop:</b> The learners will all participate in an interactive	Observation of the Padlet and	Pre-Prepared Padlet, Yellow and White

	To Understand and Apply the	activity using padlet.com, a	interaction with the	Scrunched Paper
	knowledge and data available on the	cloud-based application which is	learners.	
	ScaleUp institutes website to help	used to create an online bulletin		
	spread best practice	board that can display	The learners will be	
		information in real-time on a	able to successfully	
		website.	complete the task	
	Summary	<b>Lecturing:</b> The teacher will	Observation and	Google Slides with
	Learning Outcome Addressed:	summarise what has been	interaction with	internet connection
14-15	To Understand and Apply the	learnt in order to reinforce and	learners	
14-13	knowledge and data available on the	embed the depth of		
	ScaleUp institutes website to help	understanding		
	spread best practice			

# Appendix C - Micro Teaching Feedback



CELT
Centre for Excellence
in Learning and Teaching

Microteaching Peer Feedback

 $09.59 \rightarrow 10.14$ 

Name of microteaching presenter	Robert Dixon
And name of person feeding back	Stephen Powell
Date and time of microteach	27th Jine

Some Critical Questions to think about when providing feedback: Is the session well structured (introduction, main body and conclusion) and sequenced? Did the session run to time? Is there successful student engagement and participation? Are there opportunities for students to seek and receive clarification? If used, were supporting technologies, materials or resources effective?

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#### Microteaching Peer Feedback

Name of microteaching presenter	Robert Dixon
And name of person feeding back	Danielle Labhardt.
Date and time of microteach	27 June 2019 930-1230

Some Critical Questions to think about when providing feedback: Is the session well structured (introduction, main body and conclusion) and sequenced? Did the session run to time? Is there successful student engagement and participation? Are there opportunities for students to seek and receive clarification? If used, were supporting technologies, materials or resources effective?

examples of good practice include

good use of padlet technology and the use of post to notes - different materials teep it engaging.

good demonstration of productivity.

I really liked that we could ask questions as we went along to clarify infameution.

Areas for future attention / development include

I found the last activity guik confusing and vocant clear on the link. Perhaps a slide to provide that information would be beneficial to clonely information. (nod presentation of information but perhaps more exponential in delivery could improve presented.

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### **Microteaching Peer Feedback**

Name of microteaching presenter	ROB
And name of person feeding back	DANIEL
Date and time of microteach	27/06: 10 AM.

Some Critical Questions to think about when providing feedback: Is the session well structured (introduction, main body and conclusion) and sequenced? Did the session run to time? Is there successful student engagement and participation? Are there opportunities for students to seek and receive clarification? If used, were supporting technologies, materials or resources effective?

### Examples of good practice include

- -GREAT INTRODUCTION , VERY ENGAGING THROUGHOUT.
- ALL ACTIVITIES ILLUSTRATED THE ILO AND MADE THE
- MANAGED EXPECTATIONS OF STUBENTS IN A CONFIBENT & PROFESSIONAL WAY.

## Areas for future attention / development include

- SLIGHTLY TOO ADVENTUROUS IN SCALE FOR
- PADLET IS A GREAT RESOURCE, BUT DON'T FORGET THAT PEN & PAPER WORKS IN A PINCH.

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#### **Microteaching Peer Feedback**

Name of microteaching presenter	fobert	2
And name of person feeding back	Valuia	
Date and time of microteach	10 am	2218612016

Some Critical Questions to think about when providing feedback: Is the session well structured (introduction, main body and conclusion) and sequenced? Did the session run to time? Is there successful student engagement and participation? Are there opportunities for students to seek and receive clarification? If used, were supporting technologies, materials or resources effective?

Examples of good practice include
experiented learning is helping me vernisher the advirty. It was god interestly to look at the website and the results in the padlet.

Areas for future attention / development include

Unforheately there wasn't enough true
for the adint is although there
were intradre elements the active part for
the shahls was mainly at the end when
there wasn't that much thre.

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