ONLINE EDUCATION: TEACHING IN A TIME OF CHANGE

• Paper / Proposal Title:
When will it go back to normal?

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• Abstract (300 words):
The past academic year has witnessed higher education institutions around the world delivering their teaching remotely. This presentation focusses on the experience of the remote learning environment and explores the challenges experienced by teaching staff and students as well as the potential legacy of the pandemic and the shifts made to pedagogic practice. It offers a glimpse of the impacts of Covid-19 on tourism courses and the future employment prospects for students in the field. Lecturers and students confronted a number of problems from technical glitches to excess time in front of the computer while dealing with issues such as isolation or home schooling. Tourism lecturers also faced the rapid evolution and near devastation of the industry they were preparing their students for. Students saw their employment opportunities morph and dwindle.

This presentation reports on the preliminary findings of research into the impacts of remote teaching on students and lecturers in several universities in Europe from self-
videos, in-depth interviews and a qualitative survey. It discusses how teachers and learners adapted to the new medium and which adaptations are likely continue and to lead to improved delivery in the future. It explores the student experience, the effect of the loss of contact with colleagues and lecturers, the increased independence of study and time management, the trade-offs between time saved from commuting and the lack of social interactions and a forum for discussion and assessing one’s progress.

Most students and staff had expectations that the tourism industry would recover, but that it might take a number of years. Discourse analysis is used to examine how the experience is framed, whether there are significant differences between how students and staff talk about their experiences and to identify whether there are substantial differences between countries.

• Author(s) Biography (200 words each):

Jan Bamford is a Professor of International Higher Education and Head of Student Experience and Academic Outcomes at London Metropolitan University and has been a Principal Fellow of the Higher Education Academy since 2014 and University Teaching Fellow. Her research interests are focused around the experience of cultural diversity in the classroom, developing student belonging, improving the student experience and internationalising the curriculum. She has recently published books on exploring students’ cultural journeys in higher education and international joint degrees and international transitions in higher education. Jan is currently involved in a number of research projects looking at improving the student experience through gamification in higher education, staff and student teaching and learning experiences during the Covid pandemic, the internationalisation of the self and the role of third space professionals in improving and understanding the student experience. Her new book, on improving the student experience will be published by Routledge in 2022. Jan is a founder member of the Advance HE Connect INRAP group and Co-Director of the university’s Higher Education Research Group (HERG).

Jo Guiver is a senior lecturer in sustainable tourism and transport at the University of Central Lancashire, UK and Vice President (Research) for the International Tourism Masters Network. After a varied career in language teaching, local government and researcher for a group of charities, Jo combined her interests in sustainability, language and transport to investigate the way people construct how they talk about travel for her thesis. She has worked at UCLan since 2004, is sustainability lead for the School and teaches on a number of modules about sustainability, tourism and transport.

Her research covers several aspects of tourism, travel and sustainability and more recently wellbeing, perceptions of time and the shorter working week. She has led and contributed to a number of research projects funded by the EU, European Parliament,
British local authorities and charitable organisations. She is working on a project about how to monitor student wellbeing, a review of sustainable tourism papers and the impact of lockdown on rural tourism. Her methods include focus groups, semi-structured interviews, surveys and discourse, thematic and statistical analysis. Author of numerous papers on tourism, travel and sustainability, she has organised several events and discussions for researchers and students.

Kate Torkington is Professor Adjunta at the University of the Algarve, School of Management, Hospitality and Tourism. She holds a PhD in Applied Linguistics from Lancaster University (UK), with specialisation in Critical Discourse Analysis. She has been active in international initiatives and internationalisation activities in Higher Education for many years. She is a researcher at CITUR - Centre for Research, Development and Innovation in Tourism (Portugal) and co-editor of the academic journal Dos Algarves: A Multidisciplinary e-Journal. Her research interests include: language practices in tourism and migration contexts; migrant identities and place-identities; politics of place; discourses of and about tourism; sustainability practices in tourism.

Lauren Uğur is professor for International Tourism Management at the Heilbronn University of Applied Sciences, Germany. Lauren applies her interdisciplinary background to both her teaching and research and has contributed to a wide variety number of independent consulting projects in the broad fields of international tourism and urban development. Her works focuses on sustainability in terms of resilience building and enablement at the community level and her current research interests explore the means by which the creation of [urban] tourism products shape planning and development processes, specifically highlighting the need for novelty and innovation in promoting more inclusive forms of development.