



CASE STUDY

Interprofessional Education at UoN: PebblePad and IPe-Cahoots

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PEBBLEPAD CASE STUDIES

STORIES OF INNOVATION TOLD BY THOSE CHARTING NEW COURSES IN LEARNING, TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT.

THE CONTEXT

Interprofessional Education (IPE) was conceived by a World Health Organisation (WHO) Expert Committee on Continuing Education for Physicians in Geneva in 1973 (WHO, 1973). Professional and regulatory bodies in the United Kingdom (UK) state IPE is fundamental in preparing Health, Education and Social Care students to join a multi professional/ multi agency workforce on completion of their studies (Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC), 2017; Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC), 2018; Social Work England (SWE), 2019). The HCPC states that programmes of study “must ensure that learners are able to learn with, and from, professionals and learners in other relevant professions” (HCPC, 2017, p.35). The NMC states that they “will only approve programmes where the learning culture is ethical, open and honest, is conducive to safe and effective learning that respects the principles of equality and diversity, and where innovation, interprofessional learning and team working are embedded” (NMC, 2018, p.5). SWE states Education and Training Providers should “ensure that students are given the opportunity to work with, and learn from, other professions in order to support multidisciplinary working” (SWE, 2019, p.11). It is therefore pertinent that all NMC, HCPC and SWE approved programmes demonstrate commitment, delivery and implementation of IPE.

The Faculty of Health, Education and Society (FHES) at the University of Northampton (UoN) IPE Steering Committee was put together to create an IPE programme which delivered a learning experience allied with the IPE ethos. In doing so, the **IPE-Cahoots** digital instructional resource was conceived.

THE PROBLEM

Historically, students learned about the theory and practice of interprofessional collaboration and working as a uni-professional activity – the antithesis of IPE, since such an approach does not support professional socialisation within an educational context. Logistically IPE is challenging to organise in terms of co-ordinating multiple timetables and finding appropriate teaching spaces. Add to this the mindset that IPE is somehow perceived as an additional 'learning burden' and it is clear that an innovative, engaging and authentic strategy (i.e. students learning with, from and about students they will actually work with in the practice setting) to help students from across the Faculty understand the relevance and importance of IPE and motivate them to engage with it, is key to its successful implementation (Power, 2019).

The UoN IPE Steering Committee wanted to address the asynchronicity of the multiple professional programmes through creating an instructional resource and learning activity which promoted collaboration, with the solution for asynchronicity built in. IPe-Cahoots was devised as a digital instructional resource to support Health, Education and Social Care students to work together to co-create a digital project to submit to a cross-Faculty e-Conference. Involvement in this activity would not only demonstrate their own understanding of IPE but would also function as an interactive learning tool for their peers. IPe-Cahoots would support interprofessional collaboration by overcoming the historical logistical barriers of space and timetables, while also providing students with a resource to refer to throughout their studies, as well as promoting digital literacy skills (the use of PebblePad and its functionality to embed digital media and resources) which they can employ in future digital submission creation.

THE APPROACH

IPe-cahoots

<https://v3.pebblepad.co.uk/spa/#/public/Hct579h39w66hWkGs498jtnjmh>

The UoN IPE Steering Committee, which incorporates stakeholders from each professional programme and two learning technologists, attended a two-day Creating Aligned Interactive educational Resource Opportunities (CAIeRO) workshop to discuss how IPE could be delivered to level 4 undergraduates (Usher, 2014). UoN's CAIeRO involves a similar 'e-tivity' creation process to Gilly Salmon's Carpe Diem team-based approach to learning design (Salmon, 2016) and provided the e-framework for the IPE curriculum. Given that there was a large number of students in the IPE Cohort (at the time 486 and would increase due to later cohort intakes for various programmes), it was decided the best way to test the student IPE conceptual learning and understanding beyond the self-directed e-tivities and seminar engagement, was to hold an asynchronous e-Conference in June 2020. IPE students would be put into mixed groups (combining professional disciplines) and tasked with creating an e-submission.

PebblePad's diverse multi-application, ease of use and engaging interface was the obvious choice of platform for e-submission creation, especially considering that most of the IPE students would already have PebblePad accounts for their professional programme assessments. In addition, the fact that all group work could be done online and asynchronously using PebblePad's collaboration feature was key, as this meant that those who had courses running at different times, or perhaps placement commitments, could still work on an e-submission together. It also meant that the students would have a different experience of PebblePad as a creative tool, rather than the interactive workbook templates they would usually work with. We decided that using PebblePad to teach how to use PebblePad would be the most effective means of engaging the students and we worked upon the blueprint and storyboard for the creation of an instructional resource **IPe-Cahoots** (see hyperlink above), specifically designed for the students to assist them in the creation of their e-submissions.

Utilising the PebblePad portfolio function, we devised a set of instructions. The types of content that could be created using PebblePad portfolio pages were illustrated; as were instructions for using Kaltura Capture and MediaSpace, and also Padlet (all educational technologies used at UoN), and how these technologies could be embedded in PebblePad to enhance the e-submissions. Learning to use these technologies would also help to build the necessary digital skills that would be required by most students for future assessments. We also created accompanying captioned videos that went through the documented step by step instruction process. These were embedded in the instructional resource; the idea being to ensure that **IPe-Cahoots** was entirely accessible for all learner/users.

When design and construction was completed, **IPe-Cahoots** was shared as a web link – this meant it could be sent out via e-mail for beta-testing, and easily embedded into Blackboard for access when the e-submission activity went live.

THE RESULTS

The activity was due to be introduced to the IPE cohorts at the start of February 2020. We wanted to ensure that the **IPe-Cahoots** instructional resource was usable and fit for purpose, so an initial email was sent out to IPE students with a link to the **IPe-Cahoots** resource, and a request for students to act as beta-testers for the product. This email elicited only one response from a student who would only commit to help if the testing was to be included in clinical hours. Undeterred, we devised an anonymous JISC Survey, comprising 4 Likert scale questions and one free text response, and two weeks before the end of the Autumn term, re-sent the email to all IPE staff and students (534 individuals in total) with the **IPe-Cahoots** link and accompanying survey.

In the time before the end of term we had 17 responses – a slight improvement on the first call for testers, but still only 3.8 % of those on the IPE module. Given that the survey was anonymous, we were unable to identify whether the responses were from staff or students. However, this preliminary insight provided some excellent feedback. The Likert scale questions asked users to evaluate, on a scale of 1-5 with 5 being the highest score:

1. Was the resource easy to understand? Could you follow the instructions?
2. Was the resource accessible for all learners?
3. Was it clear what the resource was intended for?
4. Do you think the resource would help you in creating an e-submission, would you use the guide?

Questions 2 and 4 elicited the most positive responses with 70.6% of respondents giving 4 or above on the scale. Questions 1 and 3 were slightly lower at 64.7%. Only one (5.9%) individual gave below 3 on the scale for questions 2 and 3. The free text question provided even more positive comments with the resource being described as 'clear', 'easy to use', and '*REALLY HELPFUL*'; with the videos being lauded as '*quicker to understand*' and helping the user to feel more '*confident*'. There were only two mildly critical comments: one user challenged using PebblePad creatively stating that not everyone is 'creative'; one user suggested that the accompanying videos were a little too long and should follow the exact structure of the text and image instructions.

Although there was only a small sample of respondents, this initial feedback demonstrated that **IPe-Cahoots** was a valuable instructional resource, so much so, it could be repurposed and redeveloped for other courses outside of the IPE setting. Thus, as a result of the survey, the **e-Cahoots** (for group collaboration) and **Me-Cahoots** (for individual use) formats were conceived.

LESSONS LEARNT

One of the major stumbling blocks that has impacted on the initial take-up and response to the beta-testing, subsequent survey and potentially the e-Conference e-submission is that the e-Conference is non-assessed. As a consequence, although IPE is embedded in each professional programme, the students might see the activity as an extra learning burden when they are already time stretched. To mitigate against this, a two-pronged approach has been adopted. Firstly, stressing the importance to key teaching staff of the exercise as being crucial to consolidating IPE concepts as well as helping to advance the students' digital literacy skills. **IPe-Cahoots** will instill confidence in the use of PebblePad and other technologies that are currently, and will be, essential to their future assessments and seminar engagement as they progress through their programmes of study. Secondly, a competitive element has been included with e-submissions being judged by a panel of IPE and technology experts, with the winning e-submission being awarded Amazon Vouchers. That said, it is an activity that will provide all students with technical skills enhancement for their future studies, professional development profiles or CVs.

Overall, the IPE Steering Committee has recognised that for the IPE module and activities to be successfully adopted and incorporated into the students' learning journey, it has to be accredited in some way, so that the students can see that their work has actively contributed to their programme of study.

IN BRIEF

- **IPe-Cahoots** foregrounds PebblePad's versatility.
- **IPe-Cahoots** is a multi-functional resource that can be repurposed for individual use (**Me-Cahoots**) or any kind of online group collaborations (**e-Cahoots**).
- **IPe-Cahoots** is more than an assessment resource, it is a valuable educational technology skills resource to promote digital fluency.

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AN EXPERT TEAM

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There are an awful lot of things that make PebblePad unique. Not least the fact that it's a platform designed by educators for educators. Indeed, the PebblePad team is bursting to the seams with innovators and practitioners, all of whom learnt their craft in teaching roles. If you want to talk to a team who really understands your world, get in touch.

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