**BRITISH COUNCIL**

# Higher Education Policy Dialogue
# Online Teaching & Learning
# Forward Looking & Forward Thinking

AMMAN

26 May 2021

# Contents

# Table of Acronyms

| HE | Higher Education |
|---|---|
| **MoHESR** | Ministry of Higher Education & Scientific Research |
| HEC | Higher Education Council |
| **AQACHEI** | Accreditation and Quality Assurance Commission for Higher Education Institutions |
| **HEIs** | Higher Education Institutions |

## Overview

Everyone agrees that owing to the Covid 19 pandemic we are experiencing a significant and accelerated disruption of the Higher Education (HE) sector worldwide.  At the centre of this disruption is Online (blended) Teaching and Learning, which has become a critical resource for the survival of educational systems, HE institutions and the learners' HE journeys.  Moving on from the early reactive approaches to the call for online teaching and learning, we are witnessing the emergence of systematic efforts towards the proactive and full immersion of Online (blended) Teaching and Learning in the HE Experience worldwide.  This will require a fundamental reimaging of the HE Experience and the adoption and diffusion of technological and programmatic innovation by all stakeholders shaping HE.

In alignment with the education goals of the British Council Jordan, the purpose of this HE Policy Dialogue was to provide a platform where such reimaging is enriched through collaboration and partnerships between universities in Jordan and the UK.  The key *objective* was to encourage fruitful dialogue on sharing best practices in the online (blended) environment from the learner and faculty experiences, navigating technological paths and creating further opportunities for innovative and effective collaboration among Universities in Jordan and the UK in the post Covid 19 HE environment.

The Policy Dialogue, was targeted to HE leaders in Jordan and was informed by the Action Plan for Embedding Online Learning (Full & Blended) in the Higher Education System published by Jordan's Ministry of Higher Education & Scientific Research (MoHESR).

Distinguished speakers from Jordan and the UK higher education sector reflected on their University's experience of online (blended) teaching & learning and in dialogue with participants addressed challenges and opportunities from the student and faculty perspective, thus contributing to policy recommendations for enhancing the effective and efficient implementation of the MoHESR action plan.

## Speakers

HE Professor (Dr.) Mamoun M. Al-Debi'e, Secretary General, **MoHESR**

Professor (Dr.) Ahmad Y. Majdoubeh, Vice president of Humanities **Jordan University**

Professor (Dr.) Christine Ennew, OBE, Provost, **University of Warwick**

Professor (Dr.) Osama Khan, Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Education, **University of Surrey**

Professor (Dr) Amelia Hadfield, Dean International, **University of Surrey**

Professor (Dr.) Louise Brown, Associate Dean International, **University of Bath**

Professor (Dr.) Momna Hejmadi, Associate Dean Learning & Teaching, **University of Bath**

Professor (Dr) Nikolaos Tzokas, (**facilitator**), Vice Dean Faculty & Research, **MBSC**.

> *"I take this opportunity to thank the British Council for arranging today's events, and for always being a reliable partner and supporter of Jordanian education. I'm also immensely thankful to the speakers and presenters from the UK as well as well as the participants from the Jordanian side. I wish you all the best of luck, and look forward, to a very instructive and fulfilling encounter."*
>
> *HE Professor (Dr.) Mamoun M. Al-Debi'e, Secretary General, MoHESR*

## Main features of Jordan's Action's Plan for Embedding Online Learning (Full & Blended) in the Higher Education System

**Ministry of Higher Education & Scientific Research** (Professor (Dr.) Ahmad Y. Majdoubeh, Vice president of Humanities
(**University of Jordan)**

Professor Majdoubeh, outlined the main features of the plan which was developed to navigate Jordan's HEIs while embedding online learning in their curriculum and programs.

## A holistic and rigorous plan was presented which was:

➢ **Clear**, in terms of aims and objectives
➢ **Holistic** in that it addresses all aspects of successful implementation (pedagogy, study plans and curricula (with emphasis on curriculum design), governance, required IT infrastructure, training of faculty and quality assurance)
➢ **Pragmatic**, in that it acknowledges the key challenges and threats for students, teachers, university management.
➢ **Actionable**, in that it has a phased and manageable implementation
➢ **Rigorous**, in that it is based in diverse input and organic recommendations for its successful implementation.

## The plan supported and owned by all: HEC, AQACHEI, HEIs and described as:

➢ If defines online learning clearly for the purpose of implementation, and related terms and concepts.
➢ It is divided into two main forms: full-online learning and blended learning.
➢ It defines the pedagogical structure of each: online learning (synchronous and asynchronous); the blended (face-to-face and online); and suggests three parallel models for each: 2+1; 1+1; 1+2.
➢ It proposes re-structuring of assessment: less weight to exams and more to tasks, projects, etc.

➢ It encourages the adoption of new teaching/learning methods.
➢ Main idea is embedding of online and blended learning in a structured manner into programs.
➢ Each academic program is expected to embed according to certain percentages: 10-20% full online courses; 40-60% blended; 20-30% remain face-to-face.
➢ The aim: from fully face-to-face programs to hybrid programs, with three types of learning.

> *"The plan for hybrid and online education for Jordan is robust and progressive"*
>
> *Professor (Dr.) Osama Khan, Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Education, University of Surrey*

## The Challenges of Digital Transformation in Higher Education
## A View From 3 World Leading UK Universities

**Online and blended learning at the University of Warwick: Implementation challenges and implications for the student experience**

Professor Christine Ennew, OBE, Provost, University of Warwick

Professor Ennew presented the Warwick experience and outlined their short-term response and the eventual decision and lessons learned that defined their strategy for the future. These were as follows:

## The Warwick Response (short term) …

▶ Digital natives? – Warwick Online Learning Certificate;
▶ Enabling transition – Warwick Online Learning Framework;
▶ Preferred Delivery Models (1:1:1, 75:25, 60:40);
▶ Supporting staff – Learning Development Consultancy Unit; Partnerships;
▶ Student services online (well-being, skills, careers, volunteering);
▶ Digital events; in-person social activity in student houses

## From short term Covid response to future strategy…a joint blend of strategic decisions and lessons learned quickly.

▶ We will remain a campus university
▶ Blended model brings benefits for student learning – both flexibility and effectiveness (positive feedback);

► Transformation from "quick solutions to a problem" to more durable changes to pedagogy and delivery – the genuine flipped classroom?;
► Building a culture of re-useability, curating learning materials, demonstrating benefits;
► Experience of blending makes pure online more accessible (alone or in partnership) – but serving a different type of student;

> *"What was much more of a challenge was the extracurricular activities the sports, the student societies, the events, those activities where students developed skills, but also where they developed the networks that will be important to them later in life. Digital events were put in place, …and of course the other missing piece was Student Exchange and Study Abroad. And in that case we relied very heavily on virtual mobility, not great, but it gave them some international experience."*
>
> *Professor (Dr.) Christine Ennew, OBE, Provost, University of Warwick*
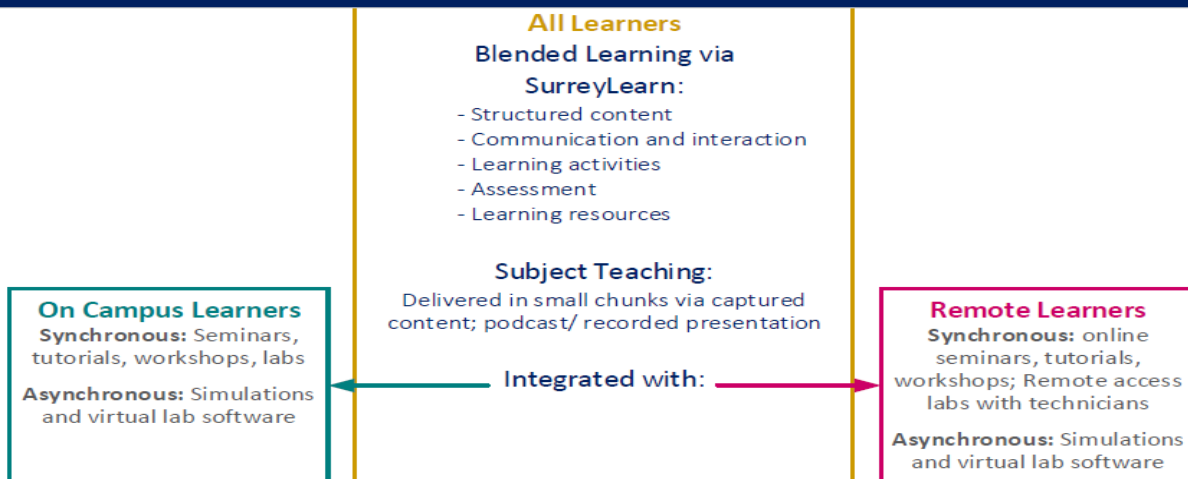
**UNIVERSITY OF SURREY**

Professor (Dr.) Osama Khan, Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Education, **University of Surrey**

Professor (Dr) Amelia Hadfield, Dean International, **University of Surrey**

Professor Khan outlined the importance of 'interaction' as a keystone of learning which is a socially constructed process. The following diagram presents Surrey's approach to hybrid learning teaching and assessment.



## Principles for Hybrid Learning, Teaching and Assessment — UNIVERSITY OF SURREY

**All Learners**
**Blended Learning via SurreyLearn:**
- Structured content
- Communication and interaction
- Learning activities
- Assessment
- Learning resources

**Subject Teaching:**
Delivered in small chunks via captured content; podcast/ recorded presentation

**Integrated with:**

**On Campus Learners**
**Synchronous:** Seminars, tutorials, workshops, labs
**Asynchronous:** Simulations and virtual lab software

**Remote Learners**
**Synchronous:** online seminars, tutorials, workshops; Remote access labs with technicians
**Asynchronous:** Simulations and virtual lab software

> *"So when we design a synchronous or asynchronous session, the prime objective has to be that we support the complex learning through interaction, because it's a socially constructed process. And when we do that, we have to make sure it's inclusive so that everybody has access to it."*
>
> *Professor (Dr.) Osama Khan, Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Education, University of Surrey*

Professor Hadfield reminded everyone of the importance of formative and summative assessment in class and of experiential learning. She put forward the big challenge of enabling our students to become global citizens while at home and highlighted a number of avenues for doings so, particularly through international institutional collaborations.

> *"The best of hybrids, I think is really trying to mix it up in the classroom, trying to mix formative and summative assessment, and making sure that the students get equal amounts of both. I particularly put a stress on experiential learning.  The big challenge and opportunity: Being a global citizen at home"*
>
> *Professor (Dr) Amelia Hadfield, Dean International, University of Surrey*

**UNIVERSITY OF BATH**

Professor (Dr.) Louise Brown, Associate Dean International, **University of Bath**

Professor (Dr.) Momna Hejmadi, Associate Dean Learning & Teaching, **University of Bath**

Professors Brown and Hejmadi highlighted Bath's Resilient Curriculum Strategy and its Implementation. Critical to this was the Centre for Learning & Teaching at the University which has provided support through training videos, guidance, resources and case studies.

![British Council logo]

## ✖ CENTRE FOR LEARNING & TEACHING @ BATH

**Part 1: Course-wide planning**

Taking a course-wide approach to planning for your Bath Blend will provide a clear understanding of the big picture of course and unit information.

Read more

**Part 2: Unit and session planning**

How can you make informed choices about learning and teaching activity that will benefit you and your students?

Read more

**Part 3: Weekly planning**

Using a weekly plan to give staff and students a clear overview of how the different elements of their course fit together.

Read more

## Getting started with blended delivery

**Teaching online**

How the approaches we choose now have the potential to confer long-term benefits for students, staff and the institution.

Read more

**Live Interactive Online Learning**

In addition to engaging learners through active discussion and immediate feedback, synchronous activities can also allow for more in depth

**Independent Learning**

'Asynchronous learning' refers to forms of learning and teaching that place flexibly online and do not require learners and/or tutors to be online simultaneously.

Read more

> *"I think online opens up opportunities for collaboration, especially with overseas institutions where we can get the best complimentary expertise in different disciplines and building that together to form programmes that are really cutting edge…the future of the labour market in terms of the students that we can generate as a result of this."*
>
> *Professor (Dr.) Momna Hejmadi, Associate Dean Learning & Teaching, University of Bath*

## Shared Experience

Based on the experience of the three UK universities a number of challenges have emerged alongside corrective responses as follows:

1. <u>At the Institutional level:</u>

   a. Early bias to 'status quo' dissipated as Covid acted as a catalyst leaving no alternative to digital transformation.
   b. Infrastructure challenges (equipment, wifi, digital platforms).
   c. Teaching online reflected not only the need to change pedagogies but also the need to change the university's 'business model'.
   d. The way forward: a pedagogically driven balanced approach of campus based-online and blended-learning formats.
   e. Regulations for Quality assurance of assessment required amendments.
   f. Considerable investments in technology required.
   g. Instructional designers required to support curriculum development and assessment methodology.
   h. Lessons learned were quickly translated to online delivery strategies and frameworks to guide further development.
   i. Learning and Teaching development units at the institution played a critical role in supporting the transition to online/blended learning through training of staff and students.

2. <u>At the staff level:</u>

   a. Variable staff engagement (change was followed at different paces).
   b. General fear with the use of new/untested technology.
   c. Despite problems the new online reality prompted pedagogical improvements as it allowed added evidence use during course delivery.
   d. New reality created early pains but highlighted later gains for staff.
   e. Economies of time owing to reusability of learning material and faster update of course outlines and content.

3. At the student level:

   a. Flexible learning to suit circumstances.
   b. Inclusive learning.
   c. Higher academic attainment for disadvantaged students.
   d. Lack of peer to peer learning, limited extracurricular activities.
   e. Quick response as digital natives.
   f. The new **online learning reality** provided opportunities to develop more of the skills & competencies required in the new **online work reality**.

## Key Recommendations

> *"I think we've heard this morning very similar experiences from Warwick, Surrey and Bath in the process that we've all been through, and much that we have learned, I would also like to stress that there's much that we still have to learn about putting these systems in place. It's not perfect yet."*
>
> *Professor (Dr.) Louise Brown, Associate Dean International, University of Bath*

**Recommendations for implementing the 'online and blended learning' approach.**

1. Critical to this is the development of an institutional digital learning framework to provide alignment towards a common purpose.
2. Building resilience in the curriculum by bringing together faculty, professional staff and student to co-create the educational experience.
3. Full engagement of faculty, professional staff and students.
4. Investment in new technologies alongside solid in use training.
5. Top-down and bottom-up buy-in required.
6. Communicate-Communicate-Communicate to keep everyone involved and engaged.

**Recommendations for supporting faculty and staff in designing student-centered online and blended learning content.**

1. Critical to this is the use of instructional designers to support faculty and staff.
2. Establish and empower Learning and Teaching development units at the institution to support the transition to online/blended learning through training of staff and students.

3. Motivate faculty & staff through a combination of reward & challenge, trust & respect.
4. Empower faculty through solid training on how to engage with online teaching and the design of student-centered online and blended learning content.
5. Fully engage students to drive their learning environment (digital natives, active learners).

**Recommendation for effective assessment of learning in online and blended classes.**

1. Experiment with new methods of assessment.
2. Capitalize on the opportunity for manageable and affordable ways for formative assessment.
3. Create framework for quality assurance of online assessment methods.
4. Embrace new technology, new approaches, new realities



A virtual Learning Environment for GEN Z/Alpha with Analytics

Learning Capture / Moments: Streaming

Virtual and Augmented Learning Gamification, wearables and App based

Education on Demand: Flexibility in Learning

Sharing Best Practice in Authentic Assessment

Technology for Collaboration Connected Learning, MOOCS, SPOCS, Micro-credentials

(source: from Prof Osama Khan presentation)

## Next Steps

The British Council is committed to working with partners in Jordan to help implement the Ministry's action plan for online/blended learning and the emerging recommendations wherever possible.

In the short term, the British Council will focus on driving forward the following activities:

1. *Dissemination of this policy dialogue*

    a. Share report with all key stakeholders and participants.
    b. Provide access to slides and video of the presentations.

2. *Action planning*

    a. Continue supporting the Jordan's Ministry of Higher Education & Scientific Research efforts to develop the online/blended learning competencies of faculty in Jordan's universities.
    b. Continue facilitating closer collaboration among UK and Jordanian universities in the field of online/blended learning.
    c. Link country stakeholders of online/blended learning to the relevant UK expertise and help them to learn **with** each other.

3. *Community of best practice*

    a. Facilitate the creation of a community of best practice in Jordan on online/blended learning, supported by experts from UK universities.
    b. Create local capacity to innovate in the use of online/blended learning in Jordan through focused events to address specific issues e.g. new technologies for quality assurance in an online/blended environment.

## Some Feedback from The Experts

**My sense is that there are some really interesting (and reassuring) parallels in our experience of lockdown and some fascinating similarities in our thinking about how to move forward into a new hybrid/blended environment.**

*Professor (Dr.) Christine Ennew*, OBE, Provost, *University of Warwick*

**It was an honour and privilege to share our learning with our Jordanian colleagues. I thoroughly enjoyed the experience….The plan for hybrid and online education for Jordan is robust and progressive.**

*Professor (Dr.) Osama Khan*, Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Education, *University of Surrey*

**Thank you so much, I thoroughly enjoyed today. It was a well-managed and insightful occasion, and a pleasure to interact with Jordanian and UK colleagues on really cutting-edge issues.**

*Professor (Dr) Amelia Hadfield*, Dean International, *University of Surrey*

**It was a pleasure to share some of our experiences and plans with our Jordanian colleagues today. It was such a well-organised session, thank you to all those involved in organising this timely event and for the opportunity to share our experiences.**

*Professor (Dr.) Momna Hejmadi, Associate Dean* Learning & Teaching, *University of Bath*

**Great job everyone. I congratulate everyone on a job well done, …Many, many thanks to the Ministry, the British Council, and all the participants from the UK and Jordan. Continuous networking on the subject is crucial.**

*Professor (Dr.) Ahmad Y. Majdoubeh,* Vice president of Humanities, *Jordan University*

**Many thanks for inviting us to the event, which was so well run. The Plan is very interesting, and I look forward to hearing how implementation goes. It would be good to follow it up with another workshop if that was at all possible.**

*Professor (Dr.) Louise Brown*, Associate Dean International, *University of Bath*

Downloads

[POLICY DIALOGUE PROGRAMME and SPEAKER BIOS](#)

[PRESENTATIONS/POWERPOINT SLIDES](#)