



**ARDEN  
UNIVERSITY**  
10<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY

# **Academic Conference**

## Proceedings & Abstracts

The National Conference Centre, Birmingham.

**27th October 2025**

# 10th Anniversary Academic Conference: Celebrating a Decade of Innovation and Impact

## A Very Warm Welcome

Arden University is delighted to welcome you to our 10th Anniversary Academic Conference, a celebration of a decade dedicated to transformative teaching, impactful learning, and student success.

This special event brings together colleagues from across our institution to reflect on our shared journey, past, present, and future.

Held at the iconic National Conference Centre in Birmingham, the conference offers a dynamic platform to showcase innovative practices, pioneering research, and forward-thinking ideas that continue to shape the scholarship of teaching, learning, and assessment.

Together, we reaffirm our commitment to enhancing student experience and outcomes, and to driving excellence in education for years to come.

Kindest Regards



Professor Carl Lygo, Vice Chancellor, Arden University

*Carl Lygo*



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## Enhancing student careers and employability

### **Abstract 7: Horizon Scanning and Educational Coaching: Designing A Future Ready Curriculum For 21st Century Adult Learners in Higher Education**

#### ***Dr Michael Olumide Edwards***

This session is designed for academic staff, curriculum developers, and education leaders seeking innovative strategies to enhance adult learner success. It will explore how educational coaching and horizon scanning can inform curriculum design to boost retention, engagement, and future readiness. Delegates will engage in an interactive foresight activity, examine real research findings, and collaboratively design a future-focused module. The session encourages active participation, reflective discussion, and practical application. Attendees will leave with tools and insights to embed coaching models and future skills mapping into their own programmes, supporting inclusive, strategic, and forward-looking education at Arden and beyond.

### **Abstract 17: Preparing Graduates for Global Workplaces: Curriculum Internationalisation & Employability**

#### ***Dr Anthony Manning***

In our interconnected world, higher education has a responsibility to equip all students with intercultural skills and global perspectives essential for diverse employment and workplace contexts. This presentation examines how Internationalisation of the Curriculum (IoC) and Internationalisation at Home (IaH) can systematically embed these capabilities across disciplines and delivery modes. Whilst international mobility benefits some students, IaH provides inclusive opportunities for a wider range of learners to develop an employer-valued and internationally attuned skill set, regardless of whether they study on campus, at distance, or through transnational partnerships. Drawing on contexts relevant to blended, online, and multi-campus environments, alongside pathways for mature and lifelong learners, this session demonstrates how differentiated IoC approaches can be tailored to different disciplines, professional fields, and learner demographics. A systematic approach positions internationalisation as a core employability driver rather than a peripheral addition, enabling graduates to

succeed in both local and global labour markets. The speaker will draw on recent publications and policy documents which he has co-authored. By integrating international perspectives and intercultural collaboration into curricular and co-curricular activities, institutions can prepare students to contribute effectively to interconnected and diverse workplace and community environments.

### **Abstract 25: Educational Gains in TEF-Rated Non-Traditional UK Universities: A Thematic Documentary Analysis**

***Dr Kikelomo Mbada and Professor Brian Smith***

One key aspect of the missions of many non-traditional universities is addressing the distinct needs of widening participation groups. The session explores how non-traditional universities in the UK conceptualise the educational gains they intend for their students to achieve. It focuses on submissions from nine non-traditional universities that received gold or silver ratings for student outcomes in the 2023 Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) assessment, using qualitative document analysis with a mapping review approach to identify common priorities and divergences in how educational gains are articulated.

The session encourages critical reflection on institutional thinking and strategy in addressing the unique learning needs of these non-traditional learners. It raises questions regarding the relevance of the educational gains intended for these learners in relation to their unique needs and future aspirations, as well as their alignment with educational equity and social mobility agendas

The session provides valuable insights for enhancing strategic planning, refining institutional metrics, ensuring quality and developing a context-aware educational strategy to achieve educational gains within flexible and inclusive learning environments. This research is a valuable resource for university leaders, academics, curriculum designers, and practitioners focused on widening participation and social mobility and looking to enhance relevance in higher education outcomes.

### **Abstract 37: Enhancing student careers and employability**

***Dr Olta Nexhipi, Dr Erisa Musabelli, and Dr Valbona Mehmeti***

Enhancing student careers and employability is a growing priority in higher education, with universities expected to prepare graduates for an increasingly competitive and dynamic labour market. This session will explore strategies to embed employability into the curriculum through project-based learning, industry collaboration, and the development of digital and soft skills such as adaptability, communication, and problem-solving. By aligning academic outcomes with employer expectations, higher education can serve as a platform for lifelong career readiness. Target audience: This session will be most relevant to higher education lecturers, career services professionals, and academic leaders seeking to strengthen employability pathways for their students.

Level of delegate involvement: The session will be interactive, incorporating short group discussions and activities that encourage participants to reflect on their current practices and explore innovative approaches to supporting student career development. Key takeaways: Participants will gain practical insights into integrating employability skills within teaching, learn frameworks for building stronger employer–university partnerships, and identify strategies to empower students to actively shape their career trajectories. The session will provide actionable ideas that can be adapted to diverse institutional contexts, contributing to both student success and institutional competitiveness.

## The effective and safe use of AI and Digital Technology

### **Abstract 8: Youth Perceptions of Trust, Ethics, and Risk in Artificial Intelligence**

***Dr Harry Udoh, Naveed Alam and Adeel Sarim***

This session explores how young people in the UK perceive the ethical risks, harms, and trust issues associated with artificial intelligence. It is most relevant to professionals in education, technology policy, youth engagement, and digital ethics, as well as researchers interested in AI's societal impact. The session will be semi-interactive, combining a presentation of key findings with guided group discussions to reflect on participants' own experiences and strategies for engaging youth in AI discourse. Attendees will gain insight into young adults' nuanced perspectives on AI, drawn from empirical data based on the Trust in Automation (TiA) Theory and a mixed-method study of 134 respondents aged 18–35. Key takeaways include understanding the disconnect between AI usage and trust, identifying prevalent ethical concerns such as bias, surveillance, and data privacy, and exploring young people's fears around algorithmic control. The session will also present practical recommendations for implementing AI literacy initiatives and inclusive digital governance that centres youth voices in shaping ethical AI futures.

### **Abstract 9: Enhancement of Students' Academic Performance and Machine Learning Models**

***Dr Muhammad Saqib and Dr Sam Aylett***

Machine learning and data mining techniques have revolutionised the process of finding insights from data and, thus making it easier for managers to make better decisions. Relevant tools and appropriate methodologies have enabled several organisations to extract actionable knowledge available within a massive amount of data. This research study is an attempt to investigate the association among several factors and the academic performance of college/university students. We have discussed and analysed the potential benefits of using a few techniques of Machine learning, data mining in the education sector, and thus established an understanding of how those techniques can effectively help learners in overall academic performance improvement.

### **Abstract 13: The Effective and Safe Use of AI and Digital Technology**

#### ***Dr Tanveer Ahmed***

This presentation, “The Effective and Safe Use of AI and Digital Technology,” examines how artificial intelligence and digital tools are transforming society, workplaces, and education. The rapid integration of these technologies offers immense opportunities for innovation, efficiency, and personalized experiences, but it also raises significant concerns around ethics, data privacy, bias, and cybersecurity. The session is relevant for academics, professionals, policymakers, and students who wish to develop a balanced understanding of the opportunities and risks associated with AI and digital adoption. It will highlight practical benefits such as improved decision-making, automation of routine tasks, and enhanced connectivity, while also addressing challenges including ethical dilemmas, potential misuse of data, job displacement, and the digital divide.

Key themes will include responsible and ethical use of AI, principles of fairness and transparency, and strategies to ensure digital safety. Real-world examples from business, healthcare, and education will be shared to make the content accessible to diverse audiences, including learners preparing for technology-driven careers. By the end of the presentation, participants will gain insights into maximizing the benefits of AI and digital technology while promoting safe, inclusive, and sustainable practices for the future.

### **Abstract 15: Assessing the Effectiveness of Learner Analytics in Obtaining insights into student engagement, participation, and interaction with learning materials**

#### ***Ms Chioma Ivy Ukachukwu and Dr Ayuk Patrick Ayehsabur***

We will be sharing our ideas on learner analytics following a recent experience with the technology. We will be presenting using a PP slide and afterwards, we will give audience the opportunity to ask to questions/share their thoughts/provide feedback. Our target audience are specifically lecturers/educators and higher education institutions that are interested in leveraging on learner analytics to improve student engagement, participation and overall assessments of their teaching quality.

### **Abstract 18: The Triangle of Trust: Reimagining the Relationship Between Students, Professors and AI in Higher Education**

***Dr Irina Shafranskaia***

This session targets lecturers, academic leaders, instructional designers, administrators, and student representatives interested in the growing role of AI in higher education. The session will be interactive, inviting participants to actively engage with elements of the research survey that measures attitudes, risks, wellbeing concerns, and trust in AI. Using Mentimeter and short case scenarios, the audience will reflect on their own perceptions of AI and compare them with preliminary findings. By the end of the session, participants will gain a clear conceptual framework for understanding trust in AI within academic contexts and practical insights into how attitudes, risks, and wellbeing concerns shape adoption and acceptance of AI.

### **Abstract 26: Flipcharts to Fun: Building Educational Games**

***Andy Ramsden, Rakhee Sharma and David Baker***

This hands-on workshop will guide participants through the first three steps of designing and developing educational games. Aimed at staff from all backgrounds, it is especially suited to novices curious about how games can support teaching and learning, while still offering fresh insights for those with prior experience. Participants will work with a practical game design framework, apply it to sample teaching scenarios, and build out design briefs, gameplay mock-ups, and simple play descriptions. Each group will then pitch their game idea, with the collective vote selecting one concept to progress further. A unique feature of this workshop is the post-event follow-up: members of the Digital Learning Team will build a prototype of the chosen game in a Custom GPT environment, with outputs and ideas shared openly via the Digital Learning Community of Practice. Key takeaways: A clear, step-by-step framework for designing educational games. Practical experience in creating and pitching game ideas. Inspiration to innovate and integrate playful approaches into teaching practice.

### **Abstract 30: Where Academic Skills and Meets Generative AI: Supporting Student Technological Literacy within Third Level Education**

***Dr Kevin Myers***

This presentation explores how the socio-technical dialectic can be used to better understand the contemporary role and use of technology within third-level education. Importantly, it will address a notable paradigm shift which has taken place due to the recent emergence and use of innovative digital technologies, notably Artificial General Intelligence (AGI) as a digital literacy tool for students and teachers within education. The presentation moves onto build on recent studies which highlight the impact of AGI on core cognitive academic skills over the past number of years, including critical thinking skills, academic writing and problem-solving abilities (Anani et al., 2025; Daniel et al., 2025). Moving on from this, the piece explores how these new technologies inform the professional practice of Academic Skills Tutors (AST) and related services within education. Drawing on the theoretical work of Veblen (1992), the piece looks to bridge the theory practice divide in identifying the empowering role AI can have on student learning and the role of ASTs in facilitating this process. Importantly, it will also address the challenges faced by educator's, most notably in relation to potentially negative outcomes of AI use concerning ethics, academic integrity as an outcome of subjective-based assignments within third-level education module assessment (Balalle and Pannilage, 2025).

### **Abstract 35: Empowering Ethical and Effective Use of Gen-AI**

***Graeme Hathaway and Dr Zulakha Desai***

As generative AI tools become increasingly integrated into academic practice, colleagues face a pressing challenge: how to model using these technologies ethically, responsibly, and effectively. This workshop invites academic staff to openly explore the ethical dimensions of Gen-AI in higher education, with a particular focus on ethical prompt engineering that promotes integrity, transparency, and discipline-specific relevance. Drawing on insights from Kerrie Wyn's recent thought leadership paper (Arden University's Centre for Distance Learning), the session will spotlight the emerging concept of Hybrid Human-AI Collaboration and through practical examples and collaborative discussion, participants will explore how principles can enhance learning without compromising originality or critical thinking. This session is aimed at colleagues who are new to, or well-versed in, the concept as we create space to share, discuss and support each other in this emerging field.

**Abstract 40: Effective use of simulations in teaching and learning*****Mike Ko***

To discuss use of simulations. But need to have teachers who have used simulations before in industries or in teaching for a fishbowl expected to enrich teaching and learning for audiences . Takeaway such as best practices

**Abstract 43: From Risk to Resource: Building Gen-AI Planning Assessment Tools to Enhance Literacy and Integrity*****Kerrie Wynn and Astrid Erentz***

The rapid rise of generative AI (Gen-AI) in higher education presents both opportunities and risks, particularly around academic integrity. We know students are already using Gen-AI tools for assessment planning, but not always in ethical or informed ways. At Arden University, cases of inappropriate Gen-AI use have highlighted the urgency of rethinking how we support students to plan summative assessments by embracing Gen-AI tools to scaffold idea generation, structure, signposting to reputable sources, and critical thinking. This interactive workshop explores the potential of custom Gen-AI tools to help academic and professional staff address this challenge by improving Gen-AI literacy and assessment planning. Drawing on the example of LumiSpark PlanInpsoBot, a bespoke ChatGPT tool trialled in student workshops, we share lessons learnt from its deployment, alongside staff perspectives gathered in a subsequent webinar. A short demonstration will illustrate how a custom ChatGPT tool can be built, with emphasis on test beds, co-design, and developing adaptable tools for assessment planning across disciplines. We seek to explore: How can custom Gen-AI tools be designed to support ethical and effective assessment planning across disciplines?

## Enhancing Scholarship, Learning, Teaching and Assessment

### **Abstract 6: Academic Excellence Through Cross-Campus Collaboration: Lessons from Transnational Education at Arden University**

***Taiwo Fimihan Olajumoke***

This session, Academic Excellence Through Cross-Campus Collaboration: Lessons from Transnational Education at Arden University, is designed for academic staff, education leaders, digital learning specialists, and internationalization strategists. It explores how Arden University's UK and Germany campuses collaborate to enhance academic excellence through its Transnational Education (TNE) model. Drawing on constructivist learning theory (Vygotsky, 1978) and Wenger's (1998) Communities of Practice, the session focuses on co-constructing knowledge, fostering intercultural engagement, and leveraging digital tools for collaborative teaching, research, and student support. The session will be highly interactive, conducted as a hybrid roundtable featuring real-time input via digital collaboration platforms. Delegates will engage in breakout discussions on themes such as joint assessment design, cross-campus mentoring, and collaborative research. Participants will gain actionable insights into building sustainable cross-campus academic partnerships, strategies for inclusive and flexible learning, and approaches to cultivating global academic communities. The session aligns closely with Arden's 2024–2027 Education Strategy and offers a scalable model of best practice in transnational education.

### **Abstract 11: Productive beginnings: design and evaluation of a successful orientation programme for academics.**

***Dr Fernando Rosell-Aguilar***

Target Audience: academics Involvement: mostly passive, some questioning  
Key Takeaways: reflection on best practice in lecturing An induction focused on pedagogy is critical when supporting academics new to an institution because it helps them transition smoothly into the institution's teaching and learning culture.

This paper presents the rationale for the redesign of the Arden University academic induction programme into a two-day new academic staff orientation event focusing on practical activities, reflections and discussions on active learning,

student-centred approaches, assessment, constructive alignment, and scaffolding as well as a micro-teach and reflection on development. The paper will also share the results of the evaluation of this initiative, showing extremely positive reactions, such as 98% of participants feeling that they had been supported to be 'very prepared' or 'prepared' to teach.

### **Abstract 12: Flowing Through Uncertainty: Daoist Philosophical Counselling for Meaning-Making and Identity Development among UK University Students.**

#### ***Mei Wang***

What if ancient Eastern wisdom could help modern students find purpose and balance? This session explores how Daoist-informed philosophical counselling supports meaning-making and identity development in UK higher education. University students face unprecedented pressure, grappling with anxiety, burnout, and questions of purpose. While conventional support services such as CBT and mindfulness address stress, they rarely engage with deeper existential concerns. Designed for higher education staff, student support practitioners, and researchers, the session is interactive. Delegates will participate in reflective exercises and a mini-philosophical dialogue, experiencing first-hand how Daoist concepts like wu wei (effortless action) and ziran (naturalness) can inform counselling and personal growth and development. Key takeaways: •Insights into how Daoist principles can support student meaning-making and identity development. •Practical strategies for integrating dialogue-based, existential support alongside existing student services. Inspiration to foster resilience, balance, and reflective thinking in students

### **Abstract 19: The Use of Genially Quizzes to Enhance Student Understanding of Assessment Briefs**

#### ***Dr Ashleigh Johnstone***

This poster will outline a novel use of digital learning tool, Genially, to provide an asynchronous active learning experience for students to clarify their understanding of assessment criteria.

This has been used in the context of a distance learning postgraduate psychology module and has received positive feedback from students and has contributed towards a reduction in student's failing due to not understanding the assessment

task. The poster will outline the context of the module and assessment, the use of Genially for this purpose, as well as the challenges and how this could be furthered. The aim is to inform other teaching staff about the use of active learning exercises to enhance student understanding and confidence in their assessments and encourage innovative thinking in assessment information. It may be of particular interest to those looking for more active learning methods to bring into their module or those looking for ways to improve assessment pass rates on challenging modules.

### **Abstract 21: Enhancing Teaching and Scholarship by engaging in research collaborations**

#### ***Dr Lynsey Mahmood***

This talk will be aimed at academics, primarily those who teach on applied programmes. I am engaged in external research with UK Fire and Rescue Services on a project that can inform teaching, provide opportunities for research and practitioner experience for students, and emphasise how to join up teaching of research methods with real world research projects. This would be a presentation on tips to encourage more academic staff to integrate research and teaching, especially that can include opportunities for students.

### **Abstract 23: Inclusive and Active Learning Delivery**

#### ***Kevin Brace***

This presentation aimed at academic staff explores the evidence-based practice in the use of Mentimeter to support students and enhance learning and assessment across Arden. Following the launch of Mentimeter in spring 2025, staff interviews generated 12 case studies across academic disciplines and student support services. These demonstrate how interactive polling, quizzes, and collaborative features foster active and inclusive learning, amplify the student voice, and democratise participation. Analysis of the qualitative data revealed common themes of improved engagement, confidence-building, and increases in class participation.

Staff also reported benefits in promoting interactive feedback, supporting inclusive learning, and encouraging standardised practice across teaching teams. To situate

this practice, the findings are mapped against established technology adoption frameworks of SAMR and Jisc Digital Capabilities. These frameworks, support the Arden Next strategy for transformational curriculum design to provide a structured lens for understanding how technology can be embedded to enhance learning and ensure inclusive, student-centred practice. Key Takeaways: Evidence of how Mentimeter supports inclusive, engaging learning, and improved student confidence. Practical exemplars of transformational course delivery across academic and support contexts. Framework informed approaches to guide effective technology adoption and transformational curriculum design.

**Abstract 27: Title: Emotional Intelligence in an AI World: Enhancing Student Behaviour and Outcomes**

***Dr Sree Beg and Jacqueline Foley***

Target Audience - Teaching staff. Level of involvement - Interactive session  
Gain for participants - Knowledge and understanding of Emotional Intelligence through various frameworks and its importance in an AI world.

As higher education increasingly embraces artificial intelligence (AI), the human dimension of learning becomes even more significant. Emotional intelligence (EI) plays a critical role in shaping student behaviour, engagement, and outcomes, equipping learners with the resilience and adaptability needed in an AI-driven world. This session explores the interplay between EI and student development, focusing on how emotional awareness, empathy, and regulation skills can help students manage academic pressures, collaborate effectively, and navigate ethical and interpersonal challenges posed by AI integration in education and beyond.

Drawing on research and practice, the session considers culturally adaptive approaches to EI, particularly for widening participation students who may face additional challenges. By examining EI within the context of the AI era, this session invites discussion on how universities can foster emotionally intelligent graduates who are not only academically capable but also adaptive, ethical, and empathetic in a technology-rich society.

## **Abstract 28: Co-Creating Student Success: A Case Study of Academic Writing in English**

***Amanda Welfare and Louise Skeet***

This poster showcases a successful cross-departmental initiative to deliver Academic Writing in English, a course designed to support students who speak English as an additional language and improve their academic writing and confidence. Academic and administrative staff collaborated closely, demonstrating open communication, shared ownership, and a flexible approach to planning and delivery. By aligning pedagogical expertise with logistical support, we created a responsive and student-centered offering that met a clear institutional need. We will present evidence of the course's impact on student engagement, satisfaction, and academic performance, drawing on feedback, participation data, as well as impact data from an independent research study. The initiative not only improved outcomes for students but also fostered stronger interdepartmental relationships. Importantly, this case study offers a replicable model for other departments seeking to innovate within existing structures. It illustrates how universities can adapt to evolving student needs by breaking down silos and embracing collaborative, agile approaches to supporting students. Our experience demonstrates that when departments co-create with purpose, the result is more than just a successful course – it's a blueprint for institutional growth, inclusivity, and success.

## **Abstract 29: The effectiveness of drop-in sessions to improve submission rates and pass rates for undergraduate programmes**

***Mr Ukonu Obasi***

This is an exploratory literature review on the effectiveness of module leader/academic drop-in sessions as a means to improve student submission rates and pass rates for undergraduate programmes. It will examine and critic available literature on the subject to explore how effective are drop-in sessions. This conclusion will determine if they are activities worth doing based on available evidence. This is a conference presentation targeted at module leaders, lecturers and programme leaders to inform academic policy and intervention. It will help them decide if the investment of time and effort to deliver drop in sessions is evidence based. The study will inform the attitude towards drop-in sessions and will also inspire more research into the subject.

### **Abstract 31: Exploring the Role of Communities of Practice in Supporting Educators' Digital Competence and Practice: A Scoping Review**

***Dr Kikelomo Mbada, Mr Raul Sanchez Corredor, and Dr Nas Yakubu***

Although communities of practice (CoPs) are increasingly recognised as an important driver of professional development, their role in enhancing educators' digital skills and critical thinking in relation to digital pedagogy remains underexplored. This session will highlight the strategies CoPs use to support educators' digital competence and practice, and patterns in what the literature reports as effective and ineffective. The research will include all studies related to educators' participation in CoPs for digital competencies, and those employing alternative related terms, which will be searched out/identified using Google Scholar. The data extraction process will utilise keywords derived from an initial preliminary literature review on CoPs and digital competence, using AND/OR as search operators, and a data charting method. Key findings will be systematically mapped and summarised in a descriptive manner. An inductive analysis will be used to extract relevant codes and themes from the data. The PRISMA extension checklist for scoping reviews and Arskey and O'Malley's framework will guide reporting and data synthesis respectively. This session will provide insights into enhancing digital competence through collaborative learning within professional learning communities. It will be especially beneficial for instructional designers, educators, and researchers who aim to address gaps in digital competencies in higher education.

### **Abstract 32: Between the Woods and Frozen Lake: Using Poetry in Reflective Practice**

***Christopher Moore***

Lerner (2020) argues that poetry "is a word for the meeting place of the private and the public, the internal and the external." At Arden, students in all disciplines are required to write critically and reflectively about their experiences with work and education. This presents a unique challenge for students, as writing reflectively can also be read as an intersection between "public and private" (Lerner 2020). Indeed, many of the skills required to write (and to enjoyably read) poetry are similar to the skills required to successfully think and write reflectively. This paper will examine the transferrable skills between reading poetry and reflective writing and will argue for the inclusion of 'a poet's mindset' into reflective teaching practice. It will draw upon previous poetry-adjacent work I have done with Arden, and from students' experiences in these sessions. This session should benefit tutors who include reflective writing tasks in their assessment papers.

Reference:

Lerner, B. (2020). *The Hatred of Poetry*. London: Fitzcarraldo Editions

**Abstract 33: Examining the pedagogical impact of the PRME's Impact 5 (i5) framework on enhancing student engagement.*****Dr Nabulya N.D. Bakojja***

The session will introduce the Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME) in higher education. The focus will be on how the five key principles of the IMPACT 5 can be applied in teaching and lecture delivery to enhance learning through play. The session is for academics/lecturers and those who deliver learning.

**Abstract 34: Learning Futures: The Journal Project*****Terfot Ngwana***

The aim of this project is to establish a peer reviewed journal within the ambit of the Arden University (and other partner institutions). This is inspired by the perception that the University would or has the potential to, enhance the thought leadership within the global education and scholarship space. The main trigger of this initiative is derived from a recent action based illuminative evaluation study of the flipped learning and teaching conducted in the past year by our team. The relevant implication of the findings of the study which we are relaying in this proposal is that student engagement is central to key components of the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF). The approach would set out to incorporate an interactive workshop within the framework of this anniversary conference. The workshop would aim at co-creating critical and strategic, as well operational structures of the journal. This may be followed up by a working group which will over the next months, set out a project plan and business case in accordance with the input from the University key players. This will be aimed at ascertaining an agile implementation that fits with the strategic objectives of the University for example TEF and scholarship.

**Abstract 36: ATLASS: Arden's map to institutional CPD opportunities*****Dr Amrita Narang***

This short session is designed to raise awareness of ATLASS – Arden's CPD framework, implemented in September 2024. The session will cover what ATLASS is and how it contributes to enhancing Arden's profile in staff development and progression, both internally and externally. I will share examples of how TEA/CELT have applied ATLASS and highlight its role in driving impact and supporting enhancement. The session will conclude with a Q&A and an introduction to the CPD request app, which colleagues can use if they wish to run sessions within their department or school aligned to ATLASS.

**Abstract 41: Problem Based Learning (PBL) as an active learning strategy to enhance student understanding and application of ethical principles in Health and Care Management education*****Dr Jack Juckes***

I am currently supporting the Holborn campus' Action Learning Set initiative, exploring Problem Based Learning as an active learning strategy. I will present a poster about PBL and its use, particularly its background in medical education and how this relates to Health and Care Management education at Arden. In the poster presentation I will then discuss my pilot use of PBL in teaching the "Supporting Dignity and Respect Through Ethical Principles" module this semester. This poster presentation will be useful for all health and care educators, but the principles are transferable to all educators using active learning strategies. There will be opportunity for interactivity where those observing the poster can ask questions. Key takeaways for attendees will include what PBL is and how it can be used to support active learning regardless of academic discipline, and how PBL can contribute to positive student experience and outcomes.

## **Abstract 42: Immersive Learning for Deeper Learning: Reimagining Engagement in Higher Education**

***Kerrie Wynn, Andy Ramsden, Berdel Gulsen and Lee Ward***

Immersive learning is rapidly gaining momentum in higher education as universities seek to design deeper, more meaningful experiences that prepare students for the complexities of real-world challenges.

The literature points to its transformative potential: immersive approaches foster experiential learning through simulations, authentic contexts, and innovative assessment practices that cultivate critical thinking, applied knowledge, and transferable skills. Crucially, immersion is not simply about adopting new technologies; it requires a reimagining of curriculum design, assessment, and the very nature of student engagement. This interactive workshop will present Arden University's vision for immersive learning, showcasing platforms such as Bodyswaps, H5P and Heygen demonstrating use cases for role play, vocational replication and scenario-based learning. Together, we will engage with open-ended questions and cross-disciplinary dialogue to explore: How might immersive learning help us design deeper, more memorable learning experiences? Participants will leave with fresh perspectives on embedding immersive strategies across their disciplines, and practical ideas for rethinking curriculum design and student engagement in ways that align with Arden's strategic priorities.

## **Abstract 44: Student Partnership: Adopting a framework approach**

***Lewis Lay***

This is targeted to all staff who are involved in making decisions or working closely with students. The session will produce a Student Partnership Framework that will provide an approach to determining and evaluating student voice initiatives with students. The approach looks at agentic student engagement and theory of change to ensure that initiatives are purposeful and impactful. This framework approach will also support Office for Students regulatory requirements on student engagement and the Quality Assurance Agencies Quality code. Group activities will look at applying the framework to current practice and give staff key takeaways on how they work with students.

### **Abstract45: The Five Dimensions of Student Engagement**

#### ***Lewis Lay***

Students engagement is key to successful educational journeys. However, Higher Education Institutions often take a narrow view to engagement with a compliance lens that focuses on attendance and submissions. We propose to expand this definition to create a holistic picture of engagement and which areas of HEIs can lead on these dimensions. Staff will be able to takeaway broaden, literature backed, understanding of student engagement that they can apply to their roles.

### **Abstract 46: Exploring the Role of Communities of Practice in Supporting Educators' Digital Competence and Practice: A Scoping Review**

#### ***Dr Kikelomo Mbada***

Although communities of practice (CoPs) are increasingly recognised as an important driver of professional development, their role in enhancing educators' digital skills and critical thinking in relation to digital pedagogy remains underexplored. This session will highlight the strategies CoPs use to support educators' digital competence and practice, and patterns in what the literature reports as effective and ineffective. The research will review all studies related to educators' participation in CoPs for digital competencies, and those employing alternative related terms, which will be searched out/identified using Google Scholar. The data extraction process will utilise keywords derived from an initial preliminary literature review on CoPs and digital competence, using AND/OR as search operators, and a data charting method. Key findings will be systematically mapped and summarised in a descriptive manner. An inductive analysis will be used to extract relevant codes and themes from the data. The PRISMA extension checklist for scoping reviews and Arskey and O'Malley's framework will guide reporting and data synthesis respectively. This session will provide insights into enhancing digital competence through collaborative learning within professional learning communities. It will be especially beneficial for instructional designers, educators, and researchers who aim to address gaps in digital competencies in higher education.

## **Abstract 48: Re- Innovate: Reflecting and designing innovation in the classroom**

### ***Harriet Jones***

Aim of workshop: To encourage staff to actively reflect on their teaching practice and to actively engage in curriculum design. Target audience: Curriculum designers/lecturers/module leaders At the start of the session, I would establish a framework for creating and embedding innovative activities into the learning environment. This framework would reflect the Arden Education Strategy, focussing particularly on educational gains and transforming the curriculum. I would then invite attendees to form teams then use sprint design to create an innovative activity using the framework live in the session, inviting them to submit their ideas for a digital showcase after the event. This can with a DL or SCC focus. This interactive workshop would encourage innovative approaches to student experience and allow for a critical examination of our current learning environments. Colleagues will be able to share best practice and be able to identify ways that they already promoting the Arden Education Strategy. Sprint design is naturally an engaging and inclusive environment for idea sharing (as some members of SLT may be able to endorse having attended other sessions I have previously delivered).

## **Enhancing your academic career, personal and professional growth and self-development**

### **Abstract 10: The Importance of Access and Participation -A Whole Provider Approach**

#### ***Tim Robson***

Access and Participation Plans detail what interventions a university will take to ensure that learners from underrepresented groups have an equal opportunity to be successful in terms of gaining access to, succeed in and progress from higher education. This workshop will explore how Arden University identifies gaps in performance based on learner characteristics and what it is currently doing to support equality of opportunity for all. The session will use the latest demographic data to identify emerging risks and will be particularly useful for academic staff involved in writing Annual Monitoring Reviews as well as those who support students on a daily basis . The session is highly interactive with plenty of opportunities to share good practice and delve behind the headline data

### **Abstract 14: From Persistence to Progression: Empowering Academic and Personal Development**

#### ***Dr Lucy Atkinson***

This dynamic Pecha Kucha session, led by Dr Lucy Atkinson, Director of Academic Persistence at Arden University, explores the intersection of academic career progression and holistic self-development. Designed for early to mid-career academics, student support professionals, and educational leaders, the session offers a fast-paced, visual narrative on how intentional growth strategies can elevate both personal fulfilment and professional impact. Delegates will be actively engaged through reflective prompts and micro-group discussions, encouraging them to identify their own growth priorities and barriers. The format fosters rapid idea exchange and energised participation, making it ideal for those seeking inspiration and actionable insights. Key takeaways include Practical strategies for aligning personal values with academic goals Techniques for building resilience and confidence in leadership roles Insights into fostering a growth mindset within institutional contexts.

Whether you're navigating the early stages of your academic journey or seeking renewed purpose in your current role, this session will empower you to take ownership of your development and thrive in a rapidly evolving educational landscape.

### **Abstract 16: Interactive Introduction to Design Thinking - A Workshop**

#### ***Naomi Keir***

Have you heard the term Design Thinking but aren't quite sure what it means—or how it could help you in your role? Join us for an inspiring and hands-on introduction to the entrepreneurial mindset through the five key stages of Design Thinking: Empathise, Define, Ideate, Prototype, and Test. In this engaging session, you'll: Challenge assumptions and think differently. Experience the power of observation and play. Learn tools you can apply in the boardroom, classroom, or team setting. Whether you're an experienced innovator or completely new to the concept, this workshop has something for everyone. Facilitated by Naomi Keir, Design Thinking Ambassador, who brings global experience from her work with Stanford University and diverse cultural settings.

### **Abstract 20: The Inclusivity Benefits of Online Research Methods for the Scholarship of Teaching & Learning**

#### ***Dr Ashleigh Johnstone***

This poster will address some of the barriers that students may face in participating in research about their teaching and learning experiences, and address how online research methods can help overcome these barriers to create more inclusive research.

This will be of particular interest to anyone within Arden University who wishes to conduct research to better understand the student experience or their educational journey. The aim is to encourage staff to carefully consider the research methods they will be using and consider who may be excluded and the impact that this may have on the insights gathered. It is hoped that delegates will take away a better understanding of inclusive research methods which will then impact their methodology choices when conducting research and evaluation projects.

**Abstract 22: CELT Lunch bites*****Dr Joanna Wilson-Scott***

High workloads of staff engaged in teaching and/or supporting learning within higher education can result in time constraints un conducive to valuable engagement with continuous professional development. The poster showcases how CELT's Lunch bite 15-minute sessions offer a solution that satiates staff appetite for developmental opportunities, evidenced by high attendance rates across Arden staff. The target audience include staff engaged in teaching and/or supporting learning, and those in professional service roles across Arden and at all campuses. Given that it is a poster, it is not interactive, but we can link via QR code to further information for staff and importantly, ways to get involved in the Lunch bites. Takeaways for conference attendees include a developed understanding of the key benefits for Lunch bite presenters and participants, as the poster showcases these along with data from 2025. The poster also offers a pipeline to skills development by inviting staff to become involved through the delivery of topics in 2026, which could lead to dissemination of practice, collaborative opportunities, and evidence that can be used in support of recognition (e.g., awards, Advance HE fellowship recognition, etc.).

**Abstract 39: Continuing Professional Development in Higher Education and the rapid transformation posed by AI – Preliminary perspectives from academics at Arden University*****Dr Jinan Abi Jumaa and Dr Nancy Coulson***

We are preparing to share the findings of our small-scale project, which explored the perspectives of academics within one department at Arden University. Our focus was to understand experiences and expectations around Continuing Professional Development (CPD), particularly in relation to the evolving demands of higher education. We are open to different formats for presenting these findings. One option is a poster presentation, which would create an informal, interactive space where colleagues, researchers, and academic leaders can engage directly with the results, ask questions, and discuss implications. Alternatively, we could design a more structured interactive session. In this format, we would first present the key findings and then facilitate an activity that encourages participants to reflect on their own experiences and contribute ideas.

This would ensure a dynamic exchange, allowing us not only to share insights but also to capture valuable feedback. The overarching aim of the session, whether through poster or interactive workshop, is to raise awareness of CPD programmes that are meaningful and responsive to academics' needs.

### **Abstract 47: Delivering Neuro Labs Online - Evaluating Practice across Universities and Time**

#### **Maratos and Abbey**

Delivering practical elements in online degrees is an important requisite of many STEM degrees across life, healthcare and physical sciences. Quality teaching enhances not only students' completion rates but also academic continuation, careers and employability. This poster reflects on past practice (including grant-funded projects) in delivering neuroscience labs to online cohorts in different Universities / settings from i) development of residential weeks; ii) virtual 'mock' experimental platforms that allow students to collect/analyse data iii) portable biological telemetry system tools; iv) utilising wearable technologies and/or mobile phone digital measurement/sensor tools; v) implementing virtual reality laboratory worlds and last but not least vi) consideration of physical environments including remote outdoor labs unconstrained by campus location. Also considered is how such teaching needs to consider ethics and duty of care during both delivery and assessment and how the use of AI and Digital technology should continue to reflect ethics/duty of care as paramount. Experience in the field, taken collectively from a student and teacher perspective, can help to provide vision and direction in transformative practice and outcomes. Importantly, strategic leadership may not necessarily be from a management perspective but also 'at the coalface' through a sustained record of effective impact across years and across Universities making positive changes on student learning.

## Vice Chancellor Teaching Awards

At our very special 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Academic Conference we are proud to announce and present inaugural Vice Chancellor Teaching Awards to the following colleague and teams.

### Shamsun Choudhury



Shamsun Choudhury is Head of Department for Foundation Year BL with the Centre for Academic Persistence. With a strong background in Foundation Year, she brings over 13 years of experience in teaching and learning and programme development and leadership. Shamsun is passionate about supporting first-year students, ensuring a smooth transition into higher education through tailored guidance and inclusive practices. She collaborates closely with senior leadership, including Lucy Atkinson to align the Centre goals with organisational vision. Inaugural

### The English Language Hub – Louise Skeet

The English Language Hub, led by Louise Skeet, is a team of dedicated and highly experienced lecturers specialising in English for Academic Purposes (EAP). The team support Arden students whose first language is not English, helping them build the language skills needed for university success. Our diverse team speaks more than 15 languages and brings together a wealth of experience from teaching across different countries and cultures. Together, we design and develop our own EAP learning materials to ensure they are engaging, practical, and tailored to the needs of Arden students. *We are committed to excellence in teaching, underpinned by regular peer observations and reflective practice. Beyond the classroom, we actively promote our courses, share our vision across Arden, and contribute to the wider academic community by building strong partnerships with colleagues. Above all, we aim to inspire confidence, foster independence, and equip learners with the English skills they need to succeed at university and beyond.*

## The Academic Skills Team – Trudy Waterton Duly

The academic skills team are one of the three student facing services in the Learning Success Hub who deliver workshops, one-to-one appointments, and teaching sessions on a broad range of academic skills both online and on campus. Formed in 2020 with a team of six and led by Trudy Waterton-Duly, it is now a team of 27 with ASTS on every campus. Since 2022 the team have been developing and delivering embedded academic skills across all blended learning programmes. Following embedded sessions pass rates improved by 72.7% overall, submission rates increased by 63.6% and 72.7% of the modules showed some level of improvement in student performance



