Record of Observation or Review of Teaching Practice

Session/artefact to be observed/reviewed:
"**Introduction to Wearable Technology & Physical Computing:
A Beginner's Workshop**"

Size of student group: **2-12 (Depending on Turn-Out)**

Observer: **Dr Lindsay Jordan**
Observee: **Elliott Hall**

Note: This record is solely for exchanging developmental feedback between colleagues. Its reflective aspect informs PgCert and Fellowship assessment, but it is not an official evaluation of teaching and is not intended for other internal or legal applications such as probation or disciplinary action.

Part One
Observee to complete in brief and send to observer prior to the observation or review:

What is the context of this session/artefact within the curriculum?

The session to be observed is extracurricular and is open to students from all around LCF. I offer nine different workshops with this one being the introductory workshop. It covers a broad range of information about getting started with Wearable Tech/Physical Computing.

This is what students see when booking the workshop:

"**Please bring a laptop, this is required, if you don't have a computer, turn up and we will find a solution.**

This workshop, Introduction to Wearable Technology & Physical Computing, is designed to provide participants with a comprehensive understanding of the intersection of technology and fashion. Participants will learn about the basics of wearable technology and physical computing, including the components and tools used in creating interactive and connected wearable devices. Through hands-on activities and projects, participants will gain practical experience in designing, prototyping, and testing wearable technology. This workshop is suitable for individuals who are new to the field of wearable technology and physical computing and are interested in learning more about the possibilities and potential of this exciting and rapidly evolving area. By the end of the workshop, participants will have a solid foundation in wearable technology and physical computing and will be well equipped to pursue further study or explore new creative projects."

How long have you been working with this group and in what capacity?

This will be a unique group and may be comprised of students I have never met before, students who have attended previous workshops or students I work closely with to assist with degree work. The group attending tomorrow (due to low January/February numbers) will

be a mix of sign-up and invited students whom I have worked with prior – I will make this clear on the day to the Observer.

What are the intended or expected learning outcomes?

By the end of the session, the idea is just to get students curious about the area of physical computing. I personally am looking for some Ah-Ha moments when they learn about how consumer devices work, along with hopefully some satisfaction in having their own working prototype to play around with. This session has a range of predefined activities. Essentially, I am trying to pique students' interests into how physical computing is useful in the hopes they will choose to implement these techniques into their own work if suitable. My ideal scenario is to get students engaged, asking questions.

What are the anticipated outputs (anything students will make/do)?

Within the session, there will be an introduction to the area, giving a general understanding of the terminology. There will be time in which the software is downloaded and introduced to the students, where we will then lean into predesigned activities.

Are there potential difficulties or specific areas of concern?

My main areas of concern are technical issues, sometimes it goes very smoothly sometimes, it does not. Although my goal is to make the activity simple to follow – there is a lot of work in the backend to do this and unfortunately things do go wrong that are both in and out of my control. From issues with the hardware, code, laptops, wifi, access to online resources – however I do my best to circumvent this… but any suggestions are always welcome. I have no problem with things going wrong; I want to make sure that I resolve this issue quickly and smoothly so as not to disrupt and disengage the rest of the group.

How will students be informed of the observation/review?

At the start of the workshop, I will introduce myself and Lindsay, and will give a brief explanation explaining that I am being reviewed for my PgCert. Critically though I will reassure them that it is me being observed as I do not want this to lead students to feel embarrassed or judged on asking questions. There are no stupid questions.

What would you particularly like feedback on?

My main interest I suppose is making sure the content is relevant, easy to follow, and most importantly that I am keeping all students engaged. I do my best to make sure I address everyone and not just those who participate more than others – but also not forced into the spotlight.

How will feedback be exchanged?

I can do in person feedback or receive written feedback.

Part Two

Observer to note down observations, suggestions and questions:

As no students attended your workshop today, we spent the time talking through the session you had planned and exploring your teaching space. I was impressed with the work that had gone into the visuals for the presentation. It makes sense that creating these visuals is—and has to be—central to your pedagogy, as you're teaching innovative techniques and there probably aren't books on this stuff yet (and maybe if there were no-one would buy them because they would be out of date very quickly). The pattern-cutting tutors just need to dig a diagram out of a dusty old book but you're having to create this content yourself and it is obvious that much time and effort goes into it.

The fact that this time and effort isn't being rewarded with bums on seats must be frustrating at times. Your workspace is a similar story; it is spacious and well-equipped, with cutting-edge kit, but it is very much underused (only LCF students are allowed to use it).

I got the sense from you that your impact and influence on the situation is limited. Getting more students in the door will give you more work to do but it should also make your days more interesting and push you to develop your skills and creativity alongside the students. So let's break down the different kinds of strategies you might use to reach out, inform and engage potential students.

- **Workshops and Demonstrations**: You're already doing this — organising regular workshops and live demonstrations showcasing what wearable technology can do. The goal is to get people along to them. The other ideas below might help. You might also informally canvas staff around the college about interesting projects or cutting-edge technology that they think will capture students' attention and use them as hooks for workshops.
- **Social Media**: Make friends with whoever runs LCF's social media. Get them some shareable content to showcase student projects, workshop capabilities, and upcoming events. Create a Wearable Tech Instagram account, link up with students who uses the facilities and follow back any followers. Interact with them. Create and post short videos. This kind of thing might be right up your street, or it might give you the ick; I don't know...!
- **Collaborative Projects**: You may already do this too: partner with a specific course team to integrate a wearable technology project into their curriculum. You might also consider preparing a short-ish interactive lecture that can easily 'slot' into other courses and offer it college-wide.
- **Hackathons or Competitions**: Host hackathons focused on wearable technology. Apply for a little college funding so that you can offer pizza and/or prizes for the best outcomes (once you have your PgCert/FHEA you are eligible to apply for central [teaching development grants).](#)
- **Open House Events**: Hold open house events where students can tour the workshop, see demonstrations of the equipment, and try out some basic hands-on activities.

- **Interdisciplinary Projects**: Can you circumvent the "only LCF students" rule by initiating an interdisciplinary project involving students from other colleges/disciplines (fine art, product design) and even from other universities? You could propose it as a one-off to generate content and a buzz about the place...
- **Guest Speakers and Industry Connections**: Are there spaces to suggest and/or bring in guest speakers to talk about the real-world applications of wearable technology? Does LCF have careers fairs? (they should).
- **Network:** Go to interesting events at LCF and find people to collaborate with. This one looks thought-provoking: https://www.arts.ac.uk/whats-on-radical-imagination
- **Feedback and Evolution**: Talk informally to students you're working with about what would have attracted them to the wearable technology workshop. Use this feedback to adapt and evolve the offer.
- **Partnerships and Sponsorships**: Look for opportunities to partner with companies or organisations interested in wearable tech. They may offer sponsorships, equipment, or resources.

You are probably already doing some of these things. Looking at the list, what jumps out at you as having a high ratio of outcome for input?

I think I might have mentioned in our first PgCert workshop that you give an outward impression of being quite laid-back and easygoing. I don't know how real that impression is; it's obvious from your teaching materials and the workspace you've set up that you have a keen eye for detail and a head for organisation. I suspect what I read as laid-back may well be the calm and clarity of an ordered mind, and I'm mindful that the above list might sound like 'you're not doing enough, do more'. It's not that. It's about identifying the low-hanging fruit 😊

Let me know what you think...?

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Part Three
Observee to reflect on the observer's comments and describe how they will act on the feedback exchanged:

The feedback from Lindsay is very kind and very much appreciate the recognition of the work that has gone in to make it productive space, but equally the frustration of that being underutilized – of course there is a sweet spot between being swept off my feet and having no students at all at points.

Regarding the imagery I appreciate you noticing that, in honesty I would say that actually there is some imagery out there but would say it in not really suitable – mainly as the people producing this imagery are doing it purely from the lens of a computer scientist and so can be quite overwhelming on the detail that is included. As my creative practice falls under the remit of a communication designer, it only feels fitting that I would attempt to make visuals that better represent the aspects I want students to take away. Since we met for this observation I attended a workshop at a different college and found that the imagery being used overwhelmed the students, being messy and undirected caused from my observation students to seem confused and lose focus on what was being directed – as a result the technician was forced to keep zooming in and readjusting the screen creating time gaps in which concentration was lost.

Regarding my influence again I appreciate that being recognised as this is definitely a departmental issue and have raised the lack of signposting, visibility, and understanding of the lab within the college as a whole – that paired with the overlap that the media team offers which believe creates confusion on who the students should go to.

I really like this grass roots suggestion of going round the building to network and can definitely work on this and could certainly get the word out to tutors and students, and do believe once in the right hands, students will begin to flow.

In regards to social media this is unfortunately another suggestion that has been turned down, as management would prefer that this go through the internal communications team. That being said I have seen some really great engagement with LCC's 3D workshop Instagram and also Falmouth University print room Instagram account – having followed these accounts since studying there. I believe this has a two stage benefit 1. Introducing to students to the interesting work and technical facilities available. & 2. More importantly showing our students that their hard work should be celebrated internally by the staff, I really do believe an Instagram would have a great effect of the lab.

Collaborative projects is something I have managed to do, following the moto: "it's easier to ask for forgiveness than permission" a moto I unapologetically subscribe to. So far I have been able to work with a technician from digital embroidery to create really interesting conductive interfaces, but also reached out to fashion performance to see if they are interested in collaborating with some students to create a wearable garment for performance, this is something I am currently in the progress of doing with a meeting after the Easter break with the course leader. I think this could have a great impact on raising awareness within this course.

Hackathons is something as technicians we have suggested within the department, however, access to additional funding could be a really great idea of getting boots through the door and look forward to suggesting this again!

I love the idea of an interdisciplinary project and think it would be a great idea, especially if we could connect LCC, CSM and potentially CCI's technicians in the same specialist area to help run an event. This is something I will look into but the bureaucracy could be difficult to navigate.

Open house events, is something that we have actually done at the start of the year – at when we moved to Stratford. My line manager reached out to courses to invite them to attend our open event "Tech Expo", which stretched over a 2 week period. Throughout this time I demo'd equipment and example projects that I had worked on over the summer holiday in preparation, such as different technologies and the use cases within fashion. This was successful to some extent, but believe that the invitations were pushed out to late. We have suggested improvements for the next event next year.

Regarding the partners, again this is something I had put forward but unfortunately I've been told there is quite a stringent process to this due to the value of the UAL brand. When I first joined I proposed a workshop that used an underutilized/never used piece of very expensive kit. One aspect needed for the workshop (printed PCB's) I was unable to get onto ABW (procurement system) and so paid out for these myself out of pocket in the hopes that the workshop will be of interest to students. I have been unable run this workshop yet, due to H&S equipment not being in place as of yet but feel free to take a look at the workshop:

Circuit Prototyping with the Voltera-One Rapid PCB Machine: An Advanced Workshop

Get Hands On With Cutting Edge Technology and Make Your Own Retro Inspired "Snake" Game Console!

"This workshop, Circuit Prototyping with the Voltera-One Rapid PCB Machine: An Advanced Workshop, invites participants to journey through the intricate world of PCB (printed circuit board) design, facilitated by the cutting-edge Voltera-One machine. The workshop promises more than mere theory; participants will witness the transformative process of how their digital designs can become tangible, production-ready electronics. To showcase this marvel and engage attendees in a delightful hands-on activity, each will have the opportunity to assemble their very own retro-inspired game console PCB, capable of reliving the classic charm of the 'Snake' game. Beyond the thrill of game creation, this workshop aims to demystify the transition from prototyping to production, illustrating how innovations can be readied for the broader world. By the workshop's end, participants will not only walk away with their bespoke game console but also with the insights and inspiration to harness the potential of advanced PCB fabrication for their future projects.

The workshop has an estimated duration of 3 hours and includes 2 x 10-minute breaks. This workshop will take place at the Stratford Campus in Maker Square next to the DLL (Entrance of the building before security, opposite room 1.21). If you would like to discuss accessibility requirements and or adjustments prior to the session, please contact the organiser or dll@fashion.arts.ac.uk and we will happily make arrangements for you."

Regarding my 'clear and ordered' mind I am anything but, however, I would say my ADHD traits of procrastination and my double edged sword of perfectionism have certainly helped with the details, if not at the expense of more long term admin based tasks – however in an educational environment I would say there are certainly worse attributes to have, and some students certainly appreciate that eye for detail where as I forget that some just want a minimal viable project and have done my best to adapt to that (see my blog post on positionality).

I very much appreciate you're feedback Lindsay and hopefully I will have students flooding through the door soon – and suspect I will have the exact opposite problem to contend with!