

Learning and Teaching Day 2025

Book of Abstracts

10:30-11:30

Mini Keynotes 1

Partnerships, Communities, and Collaboration in Teaching

Signing the way to more engagement

Simon Lancaster and Beth Wakefield

Evolving active learning pedagogies have utilised developments in technology and the advent of smartphones to enable student polling. Doubtless such anonymous methods encourage greater engagement with the questions. Active learning approaches such as peer instruction, have leveraged these changes to transform the learning experience. However, active learning means active teaching and being reactive to our students. The requirement to pre-program questions on our chosen platform risks stifling spontaneous, ad-hoc interactivity. One can fall back on traditional methods but that returns to the familiar problems of only a small proportion being willing to engage.

Our solution began with invitations to "raise your hand if" aimed at soliciting a response from the whole class. It evolved to expand the vocabulary, introducing gestures like "ironing". Premature recognition by a Student Union award both shamed and inspired a more rigorous approach. After consultation with members of the deaf community we applied signs from British Sign Language (BSL), we are clear that we are not teaching BSL. Students are shown the signs from 1–20 and key expressions like "true" and "false". We will illustrate the sort of pedagogy simple signing can facilitate during our presentation and present preliminary results of our evaluation.

Role-play as a pedagogical tool

Dan Neale and Revd. Lesley Crawley (Eastern College)

This presentation will demonstrate some examples of use of role-play as a tool for bringing to life interpersonal dynamics. The presenters teach on a counselling degree but these techniques could be adapted to a variety of other settings which contain personal or interpersonal elements. The presenters will role-play various interpersonal games from the famous book "Games People Play" by the psychotherapist Eric Berne, illustrating how this medium immediately brings to life descriptions which on the page can be much harder to engage with. There will then be space for people to think about whether they recognise these patterns, and

also for the presenters to show how they could then draw theoretical learning from the overall experience.

Gamifying Module Recap: An Escape Room Approach Using Padlet to Enhance Learning.

Justin Brown

A Padlet 'Escape Room' developed to support the recap of a module on Communication and Integrated Care within the Nursing Associate Apprenticeship. The activity was designed to reinforce key concepts through interactive, scenario-based challenges embedded within a series of linked Padlet boards. Each stage required learners to apply theoretical knowledge to solve problems, unlocking subsequent levels and culminating in a comprehensive review of the module content.

The approach integrates principles of gamification and active learning to foster engagement, critical thinking, and collaboration. It also supports the development of essential nursing competencies such as clinical reasoning and effective communication. Initial feedback from participants was highly positive, with students reporting increased motivation, improved content retention, and a more enjoyable learning experience. The activity was particularly well-received for its ability to simulate real-world decision-making in a low-stakes, supportive environment.

This model is adaptable across disciplines and delivery modes, offering a scalable solution for both in-person and online learning contexts. It can be incorporated into other sessions for revision, formative assessment, or induction purposes. The success of this initiative highlights the potential of digital tools like Padlet to transform traditional revision methods into immersive, learner-driven experiences that align with contemporary pedagogical goals in education.

Research-informed and collaborative re-design in university mathematics teaching: The case of a secondary to tertiary transition module.

Owen Hooper, George Witty, Elena Nardi, and Irene Biza

Mathematics students face many difficulties during their transition from secondary to tertiary education. During the teaching of an introductory course for first-year mathematics students titled Mathematical Skills. Witty, the course lead, encountered numerous issues which he associated with this transition such students' attempts at mathematical communication, low engagement and participation in lectures. In his role, Witty believed it is important to address and support students in overcoming these challenges of the secondary-tertiary transition. As a result, he became interested in exploring what pedagogical changes to his teaching could help facilitate this. There have been calls for the design and evaluation of interventions that support students during the secondary-tertiary transition. Witty reached out to members of the Research in Mathematics Education group with the aim of re-designing, implementing and evaluating a new set of teaching sessions for his course. The goal of the intervention was to shift from a largely talk and chalk pedagogical approach to one that is infused with active, inquiry oriented and engages the students in the mathematical process. By shifting the pedagogical approach, we hope this would alleviate some of the difficulties of the secondary-tertiary transition. This intervention was produced in partnership between Witty (an academic mathematician) and mathematics education researchers (Hooper, Nardi, Biza). The design, intervention and evaluation of the course forms part of Hoopers PhD project which is funded by an SSF doctoral studentship from UEA.

The presentation will explore this partnership, the design, intervention and evaluation of the intervention. We aim to demonstrate how active learning, and digital tools can facilitate the teaching of mathematics. This presentation is based upon work presented at several international conference including the Congress of the European Society for Research in Mathematics Education, The International Congress for Mathematics Education and the International Network for Didactic Research in University Mathematics.

Co-Creating Confidence: Working with Students to Shape Inclusive Medical Education.

Bethan Gulliver and Danielle Deaville-Lees

The Medicine with a Gateway Year course, was established in its current form in 2020. Each year it offers a pathway into medicine for approximately 40 students from disadvantaged backgrounds. In common with many from 'widening participation' backgrounds, our Gateway Year students encounter significant barriers, not only in academic preparedness but in navigating the unspoken expectations of medical education. Recognising these challenges, we have developed the course to demystify the hidden curriculum, strengthen core competencies, and cultivate both confidence and belonging. Enabling our students to truly "feel like medical students".

Transformation through incremental change

Progress was achieved not through sweeping overhauls but via a series of deliberate, iterative steps. Drawing on Callon's (1999) concept of coproduction, we engaged students in an ongoing dialogue, using their feedback to implement adjustments, from small-scale interventions like assessment literacy workshops to larger structural changes such as new modules and viva-style assessments. Every modification was grounded in evaluation, ensuring changes genuinely enhanced the student experience and built confidence.

Fostering professional identity

Central to this evolution was creating opportunities for students to start to develop their professional identity. Weekly clinical relevance sessions, structured conversations with volunteer patients, modelled professional behaviours and allowed students to link theory to practice. These sessions, alongside an increased focus on clinical medicine throughout the course, not only reinforced skills but also nurtured a sense of identity, helping students to internalise what it means to belong in medicine.

Callon, Michel. "The role of lay people in the production and dissemination of scientific knowledge." *Science, Technology and Society* 4.1 (1999): 81-94.

Co-creation Research Initiatives to Enhance Student Engagement, Belonging, and Success.

Tom Butt, Vicki McDermott-Thompson, and Jen Coleman

Student co-creation within educational settings is gaining momentum, however, there remains a need to critically explore the specific strategies that underpin effective student involvement in research and the outcomes this collaboration can produce. In this presentation we will reflect on a UEA University Fellowship for Inclusive Teaching (UFIT) co-creation project involving Academic Staff, a PhD student and five undergraduate student interns within the School of Psychology. Together, we have explored undergraduate psychology students' experiences of inclusion and belonging, using collaborative methods that prioritised equity, shared ownership, and reciprocal learning.

We will outline the practical strategies we used to involve students at different stages of their academic journey - from project design to data collection and dissemination. Drawing on the reflections of the student interns and project leads we will provide an overview of our progress and highlight how co-creation can help build student confidence, enhance academic identities and shape student engagement and feelings of belonging.

This presentation aims to offer both conceptual insights and concrete practices that educators and researchers can adopt to support more inclusive and participatory research environments. Underscoring how engaging students as research partners is not only beneficial for research quality but is itself a meaningful activity that promotes belonging and success.

12:00-13:00

Mini Keynotes 2 Powering Teaching Practice: creative ideas

Powergogy - power-centred pedagogy!

Pablo Dalby

How can teaching and learning challenge the power dynamics that perpetuate inequities in education contexts and society? This session introduces Powergogy, a power-centred pedagogy developed by Dr Pablo Dalby that supports learners and educators to critique, challenge and change relations, systems and structures of power.

In some contemporary formal education contexts (e.g. in the United Kingdom) learning and teaching initiatives such as 'peer learning,' 'students as partners' and 'inclusion' have challenged lingering teacher-centred pedagogical orthodoxies. Although these learner-centred innovations make invaluable contributions they have, for the most part, only implicitly and partially challenged the power dynamics that operate in and through formal education systems. They don't explicitly focus on power and place it at the centre of the process and content of teaching and learning.

Powergogy encompasses, builds on, and redresses the limitations of several contemporary initiatives by offering a means to explicitly address power. It proposes to move beyond the 'teacher-centred vs learner-centred' dichotomy towards a third 'power-centred' paradigm. The Powergogy Framework synthesises a set of principles and 'big picture' ideas about the social purpose of education with specific, practical activities for supporting learners and educators to develop power literacies as agents of social change.

Lets talk: Facilitating open discussion of feedback to support students with improving their academic performance

Jen Coleman and Ian Norman

Continuation rates in PSY have dropped year on year since 2020/1 (93.8% 2023/24), with academic fail becoming an increasingly prominent reason for non-continuation. An intervention was developed to increase support for students in the first year of studying psychology. The first year is passed based on an aggregate grade across six assessments, below average performance on the first assignment is an early indicator of students at risk of academic fail at the end of the year. Upon receiving their first summative grade and feedback, students who received a grade in the third boundary were invited to a meeting to discuss their feedback. The emphasis of the meeting was to provide a supportive space to explore with the

student why they may have received the grade they did and to guide them to improve their mark in the future. The intention is to provide personalised feedback, support and encouragement to prevent a drop in academic engagement and reduce the risk of non-continuation. Thirty-five students were invited to a 1-1 tutorial, 23 accepted. The tutorial took place with one of four academics from the module team who had agreed in advance a structure for the conversation that would allow freedom to be led by the students' needs. To help the student to feel comfortable, where possible they were matched with a member of staff who was known to them. The intervention was well received by students and data indicates an improvement in grades from the first essay to the final essay of the year, and that this improvement is higher than the previous year when no intervention took place.

Blackboard Knowledge Checks: instant feedback to support learning and engagement

Katy Appleton

Knowledge Checks were introduced in Blackboard Ultra this academic year. They offer a way to embed multiple-choice questions directly within a Blackboard document, delivering pre-set feedback immediately on submission without leaving the page. This presentation outlines the results of a survey publicised to three modules employing Knowledge Checks during structured, task-based IT labs, along with analytics and personal observations from classroom sessions where they were used. Although based on a small sample size, the results are positive and suggest that Knowledge Checks offer a straightforward and useful way to support students' progress and check their understanding through a multi-stage task with instructions delivered on Blackboard.

Simulated interprofessional learning: reflections on running mock child protection conferences for students on professional programmes

Mark Gregory, Natasha Rennolds, Helen Humphrey, and Ellie Taylor

Academics in the School of Social Work (SWK) began running mock child protection conferences for their students in 2022/23. The conferences are chaired by practicing conference chairs from Norfolk and Suffolk County Councils and actors are used to role play the parents to ensure the experience is as realistic as possible.

From 2023/24, students from the School of Health Sciences (HSC) have also participated in the conferences, and additional learning activities were devised to create a full-day event. In 2024/25, students from the School of Education (EDU) also joined us, reinforcing the interdisciplinarity of the event. The aims of the day are to foster interprofessional learning, to promote professional curiosity, and to support students to develop confidence in their professional judgement.

The presentation will offer reflections from the four academics from SWK and HSC who have developed the learning event over the past two and a half years, and a discussion of feedback on the event from students. We will talk about the benefits and challenges of running this type of event for us as academics and the learning we have taken from it as educators. We will also report some preliminary findings from a qualitative survey of how the event has impacted the knowledge, skills, and confidence of participants in relation to child protection practice and interprofessional working.

Key benefits of this innovative approach to delivering learning are the opportunity to learn from peers and embed interprofessional working at an early stage in students' professional

development, and the value of authentic simulations for providing depth of learning. Challenges include logistics and planning, given the complexity and scale of the learning event. Working together on the event has helped us to forge strong working relationships across our professional disciplines, and has led to other opportunities being explored across the Schools.

War in North Terbonnew? Global Development Students as ‘Peace Consultants’

Thi Bogossian

This presentation showcases an innovative seminar activity I developed for the module Big Questions for People and Planet, where students grapple with the complexities of peace and conflict through immersive role-play grounded in cultural-historical learning theory. Working in small groups, learners become ‘peace consultants’ hired to address four distinct crises in fictional nations—scenarios co-created using a GenAI language model. Each case study integrates drivers of tension such as religious divisions, climate-induced displacement, and political repression, requiring students to co-create knowledge through dialogue, debate, and iterative problem-solving.

The activity is designed around Vygotsky’s principles of social constructivism, where peer interaction and scaffolded reasoning enable students to analyse root causes, propose interventions, and adapt strategies to unfolding crises. By engaging in high-level reasoning and perspective-taking, learners mirror real-world peacebuilding processes while developing empathy and communication skills. Feedback highlights its success, with students praising the session as interesting”, “intellectually stimulating”, and “engaging”.

Blending AI-assisted scenario design with active learning, this approach demonstrates how technology can enrich student-centred pedagogy, positioning learners not as passive recipients but as active co-creators of their understanding—a core tenet of cultural-historical theory.

Embedding Employability: Integrating the UEA Award into Taught Modules.

Natalie Freeman and Julia Robathan

In an increasingly competitive graduate labour market, embedding employability into the curriculum is no longer a “nice to have”. This presentation shares the journey of integrating the university-wide UEA Award into two core modules of the BA Physical Education, Sport and Health course. Our aim was to equip students with the confidence and language to articulate their transferable skills, bridging the gap between academic learning and real-world application. We’ll outline the rationale behind this curriculum innovation, including the need to enhance student agency, increase engagement with employability support, and provide inclusive access to structured skills development for all students rather than just those who opt in. We’ll explore the practical steps taken to make it happen: aligning award criteria with learning outcomes, securing module approval, co-designing assessment with academic staff, and delivering engaging sessions that support reflective practice and career planning.

This collaborative approach between the award team and course leaders led to high levels of student engagement, meaningful reflection, and improved confidence in skill articulation. Feedback from students and staff highlights the value of this embedded model in making employability feel relevant, achievable, and genuinely supportive of future aspirations. The session will offer transferable insights for academic and professional services colleagues seeking to embed employability into their own programmes. We’ll share key enablers, common

challenges, and practical tips for co-creating sustainable, discipline-relevant employability learning.

14:00-15:00

Mini Keynotes 3 Harnessing the Power of the Digital

Evolving perspectives – rewriting the rules of AI in assessment

Paul McDermott, Rosemary Norton and Leoni Palmer

What happens when academics stop fearing the use of AI in assessment and actively encourage students to use it? As generative AI becomes a fixture in HE, how are students adapting – and what does that mean for assessment design? Now in its second year, our pilot project explores the integration of AI into scientific literature reviews. In this session we'll share emerging insights from student reflections, discussing how their evolving attitudes are reshaping academic practices and offering new pathways for authentic assessment in an AI enhanced learning environment.

Imagining a Pedagogy for Creative Writing, Literature, and Artificial Intelligence

Philip Langeskov, Sophie Butler, and Stephen Benson

As artificial intelligence (AI) rapidly reshapes creative and critical practices, it is crucial for students of Creative Writing, Literature, and the humanities to not only understand the technologies driving these changes but also to engage critically with their ethical, social, and philosophical implications. To this end, we are developing a module—The Rise of the Machines: Creative Writing, Literature, and Artificial Intelligence—for launch in 2027-28. This module will offer first-year students the opportunity to explore the evolving relationship between writing, literature, and technology, covering the history of writing technologies, ethical dilemmas of AI authorship/involvement, and the potential for collaborative creativity between humans and machines.

The course will raise essential questions: How can we guide students to think critically about AI's growing presence in academia and the wider world? What ethical frameworks should guide our interactions with AI? How can we prepare students for a future in which familiarity with AI is crucial while also equipping them to influence its development? Drawing on Joshua Rothman's argument that "A.I. will affect us all, but a politics of A.I. has yet to materialize," the module emphasizes the importance of including voices from the humanities—those outside the technological sphere—in shaping AI's future. It calls for a broader conversation about what we value in creativity, scholarship, society, and technology.

To bring this vision to life, we seek collaboration and expertise from across the university, from colleagues in the humanities, but also colleagues working in and around ethics, law, technology, AI, and programming. By working together, we aim to ensure that students are not only skilled in using AI tools but also intellectually prepared to shape debates that will define AI's role in creative industries and society, directly boosting their employability and leadership potential. The project might also initiate university-wide discussions on AI's place in our work, both now and in the future.

‘The question is mightier than the answer’: Interdisciplinary approaches to AI learning and teaching in the Humanities

Mark Hobbs

AI is here to stay and there is no going back; it is changing the landscape and pedagogy of Higher Education. But are we forgetting the human agent with lived experience who entered the prompt? Since the launch of Chat-bot GPT in November 2022 conversations about AI have been at both the centre and periphery of school and faculty teaching meetings across universities around the world. The question always seems to be: how to respond to, understand and incorporate the technology? The human agent with their individual experience can't ever be captured in an AI neural network so perhaps it is from here the Humanities can start to question. Yet a search of pedagogical material on teaching AI in the Humanities yields few results.

As the value of the Humanities is increasingly questioned in hostile anti-expert political discourses and students are increasingly ushered to STEM subjects, how are the humanities to respond to AI generated allegory, art and answers? The answer may lay in the questions asked about AI and how to incorporate these enquiries into teaching pedagogy and assessment design. Questions about how humans have responded to fundamental changes in the past and how these changes shaped new political, philosophical, literary and scholastic panoramas is at the core of the humanities. Reflecting on the long-term future of humanity to make short term changes could provide an organic basis for interdisciplinary approaches to understanding AI and help in developing meaningful strategies for teaching and assessment design.

This presentation will seek to establish some broad parameters on which to establish collaboration across the Faculty of the Arts and Humanities, but it also welcomes interventions from members of other faculties to offer insights into their own AI pedagogical journeys. For now, it's about finding the questions the answers can come later.

UEA Teaching and Recruitment in Global Contexts: Creating a Community of Practice for English Literature Teachers in South-East Asia

Sophie Butler, Birgit Breidenbach, Clare Connors, Philip Langeskov, and Tom Roebuck

How can we combine pedagogical innovation with UG recruitment priorities, raising the international reach of UEA teaching practices? This is a question LDC staff and UEA Global colleagues are seeking to answer through collaborating on a series of activities for teachers and students of English Literature based in international schools across South-East Asia. This Spring, we ran a series of 3 online workshops for SE Asia teachers, each sharing distinctive creative-critical approaches to teaching English Literature and Creative Writing developed in LDC, alongside a writing competition for SE Asia school students (attracting 160 entries). The workshops sought to provide teachers with new ways of engaging students with their learning and to build a shared approach towards tackling challenges facing the teaching of English literature (and creative writing) in a global context and at different stages of student education. The workshops provided practical examples for teachers to integrate into classrooms, but also a space to share challenges and inspiration, where teachers could learn from each other, as well as from us. They therefore offered Continuous Professional Development for teachers with the added potential of establishing a sustainable community of practice, facilitated by UEA. Furthermore, by enabling teachers to share examples of their own practice and to explain distinctive features of teaching English within SE Asia, the workshops also provided a reciprocal opportunity for LDC colleagues to learn from SE Asia teachers and develop our own pedagogies,

as we seek to extend our ongoing work to decolonise and internationalise our curriculum and teaching methodologies. We believe the workshops and writing competition offer a new model for teaching/admissions collaboration within an international context, and are now looking to expand the project next year, both within SE Asia and potentially into new regions.

Making Regression Intuitive: A Visual Approach to Understanding 'Holding Other Factors Constant'

Georgios Papadopoulos and Thomas Martin (University of Warwick)

Regression analysis is one of the most widely used tools in quantitative research, appearing in fields as diverse as economics, education, psychology, health sciences, and environmental studies. It is therefore widely taught in higher education, as part of research methods and quantitative skills training. At the heart of regression lies the Multiple Linear Regression (MLR) model, typically estimated using the Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) method. Its usefulness stems from its ability to isolate the effect of one variable on an outcome of interest while 'holding other (confounding) factors constant', an interpretation often referred to as *ceteris paribus*.

This ability is particularly valuable when working with non-experimental, real-world data, where distinguishing causation from mere association is important, especially when findings are intended to inform evidence-based policy or practice. However, while many researchers and educators are aware of the 'holding other factors constant' property, the question of how OLS achieves it is often less well understood. Commonly, textbooks explain the method using formal mathematics, which can obscure the underlying intuition. This presents a challenge in the classroom: students may disengage when abstract algebra is not clearly linked to the real-world questions they care about. As educators, we need tools that help bridge that gap.

In this presentation, I share a set of visual and conceptual tools, particularly using 3D graphs, to explain how OLS constructs a best-fitting plane in a way that isolates individual effects. These visuals provide a clear and intuitive understanding of what it means to 'hold other variables constant', without relying on mathematical exposition. The approach is designed to be accessible to students and educators across disciplines. By making regression analysis more intuitive, we can reduce reliance on memorisation, improve understanding, and foster greater interest in quantitative methods, whatever the subject area.

A Digital Fast - Building Community and Retrieving Stolen Focus

Leoni Palmer and Paul McDermott

This presentation describes a month long digital fast carried out by students in the School of Chemistry, Pharmacy and Pharmacology (CPP). This fast was proposed in response to research findings that there is a significant correlation between the use of smartphones (and online technologies such as social media) and the increasing cases of diagnosed mental health illnesses, loneliness and attention fragmentation. We will outline the structure of the fast which contained four key milestones:

- Detach (Creating space and regaining a sense of presence)
- Discover (Exploring what emerges in the newly created space)
- Delight (Cultivating joy in the newfound space)
- Determine (focus on solidifying lasting changes).

We share within this presentation qualitative data obtained from focus groups with participants exploring their experiences of the fast.

15:30-16:30 Mini Keynotes 4 The Bigger Picture: wellbeing, sustainability, inclusion, and CPD

PEAS: Promoting Education About Sustainability (One Plant at a Time)

Pauline Bryant and Natasha Grist

1. Summary

- Overview of the PEAS initiative at Norwich Medical School (NMS), University of East Anglia (UEA).
- An innovative project using plant-growing as a catalyst for promoting sustainability in healthcare education.
- Supports the GMC's mandate to embed sustainability in the MBBS curriculum and encourages broader institutional change.

2. Project Aims & Objectives

- Raise awareness of the importance of sustainability in healthcare practice and education.
- Promote the personal and societal benefits of growing plants: physical, psychological, social, and economic.
- Encourage individual and collective action through practical, low-barrier engagement (e.g. growing pea plants, Green Pledges).
- Foster cross-disciplinary sustainability education across UEA.

3. Strategy & Methodology

A.

Education and Engagement

- Host events like Green Day in MED of UEA Climate Week to generate interest and conversation as part.
- Provide education on the new GMC requirements for sustainability in medical training.
- Use accessible plant-growing activities to create reflective, meaningful engagement.

B.

The PEAS Model

- Share pea plants with individuals as a symbolic and practical action to support sustainability.
- Collect Green Pledges to encourage behaviour change and personal commitment.
- Use the PEAS acronym to brand and reinforce the project identity:
 - o Promoting
 - o Education
 - o About
 - o Sustainability

Locker Rooms and Lecture Halls: A Winning Combination

Julia Robathan and Mark Heazle

The benefits that regular participation in sport and physical activity have on the physical and mental wellbeing of individuals has been widely acknowledged for a long time; but there is growing recognition of the role that our programmes and facilities play across several key strategic themes important to the University.

Building on the 2024 British Universities and Colleges Sport (BUCS) Position Statement, UEA has been at the forefront of developing research into the value and impact of sport and physical activity programmes delivered for students.

The Sport, Health and Education Research Group in EDU has published data that cross references students involvement in Sport, with key outcomes sought by the university. Direct correlations in sports participation have been found to positively influence student recruitment, retention, conversion to postgraduate study, and graduate outcomes; contributing to the overall success of the institution. We would love to share these outcomes today and generate some interest across campus in the use of sport as a tool for academics and academic advisors; encouraging student sport and physical activity participation further; that can be promoted alongside other key university services.

From 'Ought-To' to 'Want-To': Understanding What Keeps Students Going

Gemma Standen

This research explores what helps students persist with their Higher Education studies, particularly those who may face additional barriers. Using a mixed-methods approach, the study combines survey responses from 52 undergraduates with 12 in-depth interviews. The findings are considered through the lens of Harrison's (2018) possible selves framework, which helps us think about how students imagine their future selves and how these imagined futures shape their motivation and decisions.

Many students were motivated by career goals or the hope of a better quality of life. However, confidence, belonging, and the ability to manage competing responsibilities often varied depending on income and access to support. Students from higher-income households reported feeling more confident and engaged, while others described challenges around self-belief, isolation, and financial pressure. Those who continued spoke about the importance of routines, informal support networks, and finding ways to stay focused even when things were difficult.

A key finding was that many students felt pulled towards what they ought to do—such as securing a job quickly—rather than what they ideally wanted. This highlights the value of helping students reflect on their goals and build personalised strategies that align with their hopes, not just their obligations. The study suggests that targeted, proactive support—especially around time management, confidence-building, and belonging—can make a real difference to students' ability to stay the course.

Creating Safe Environments for Difficult Topics - Putting safety and engagement at the heart of wellbeing workshops

Rachael Morrison and Gemma Ebbage

We acknowledge that students can have a mix of feelings about attending wellbeing workshops that we deliver as a training team across the University. Each student has a different frame of reference due to their previous experience and knowledge about mental health, other life experiences and how they are feeling on the day, which can impact how they might engage with the workshop.

However, we know that the only way any of us can make a meaningful difference to our wellbeing is by taking an active role. We have designed our workshops to prioritise psychological safety so that students feel able to engage with the session but in a way that works for them. At the same time ensuring they feel empowered to continue engaging in practices to support their wellbeing beyond the workshop too.

Some of the ways we do this:

- Trauma-informed approach – recognising the different frames of reference people are bringing to the space, creating a safe and supportive environment with opportunities to opt out.
- Managing expectations – acknowledging different knowledge levels in the group and that we cannot solve all challenges.
- Building on existing skills and strengths – drawing out what they are already doing.
- Opportunities to connect and reflect – establishing that challenges can be moments of togetherness rather than isolation.
- Relevant material with tangible strategies and takeaways – some mental health discussions can feel fluffy so we ensure there is clarity around why we have having the discussions with clear takeaways.

Beyond skills: How Interprofessional Schwartz Rounds support wellbeing and reflection in student training

Georgia Panagiotaki, Amy Zile, and Joel Owen

Interprofessional Student Schwartz Rounds (Rounds) are facilitated, confidential, multidisciplinary reflective spaces that support health and social care students. Through storytelling, Rounds provide an opportunity to participate in group reflective practice and witness peers role-model how to acknowledge and normalise emotional responses during clinical training. A systematic review (Zile et al., 2025) indicated that Rounds in HEIs promote teamwork and connection, normalise emotions, improve self-awareness, and resonate with students' work and training.

Our evaluation of UEA's Rounds used a mixed-methods design. We analysed responses from 164 evaluation questionnaires and follow-up interviews with 11 participants. Results indicated that students' experience of taking part in UEA's Rounds was overwhelmingly positive, with high ratings for relevance to training, promotion of interprofessional learning, and relevance of discussions. No significant differences in ratings were found across Round themes or participant demographics such as professional affiliation, ethnicity or disability status. This suggests that Rounds are beneficial for all students, regardless of programme of study. Younger and older participants, staff members, and females, tended to rate Rounds slightly higher. A significant 70% of respondents supported the integration of Rounds into their course curricula and 85% rated them as excellent or exceptional.

Data from our interviews further demonstrated that Rounds foster emotional resilience by creating safe spaces where students (and staff) can discuss emotional aspects of their training. Participants reported that Rounds promote a culture of connection by breaking down interprofessional barriers and hierarchies. Rounds also require students to be flexible and dynamic in their learning and reflection, providing both stimulation and opportunities for personal growth.

The findings of our work suggest that Rounds in HEIs, and at UEA, are a highly valued addition to health and social care education. Considering the link between the well-being of health professional students and outcomes such as academic achievement, retention rates, and clinical effectiveness, implementing Rounds offers significant potential benefits during training and beyond.

SIReN - Building a Community of Scholars in Health Professions Education Scholarship, Innovation and Research

Amy Wong and Lisa Taylor

Health Professions Education (HPE) research and scholarship are pivotal to informing evidence-based educational practice in both academic and clinical settings to continue enhancing learner experience and the quality of healthcare provided to the public. The Faculty-wide Scholarship Innovation Research Network (SIReN) was established in 2023 to support colleagues in promoting health professions education scholarship and research with a focus on academic career development. Aligning with the multiple roles of health professions educators being scholars, researchers and leaders, we adopt a broad definition of scholarship which includes teaching, research, application of theory into practice, and integration of information across disciplines.

Over 40 colleagues across Norwich Medical School and the School of Health Sciences have joined the network to-date. Members co-designed the mission of HPE SIReN@UEA.

‘To be impactful in health professions education scholarship, research and innovation nationally and globally’. The SIReN’s strategic vision encompasses 5Cs: creating (peer network); co-designing (with key stakeholders including students); collaborating (locally, nationally, and internationally); cultivating (facilitating individuals’ potential); and consolidating (dissemination of findings to promote evidence-based practices).

The HPE SIReN@UEA is also in line with the idea of expanding faculty development through a Community of Scholars, in our context, a supportive network consists of academic and clinical educators who have a passion for successful research and scholarship in HPE collaborating to co-create knowledge, disseminate outcomes and make changes.

To be impactful, we successfully gained support from the senior management to enable students and colleagues to present the outcomes of their scholarly activities and research at conferences such as the Association for the Study of Medical Education (ASME) Annual Scholarship Meetings.