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## **An interactive social media workshop using Lego® Serious Play®**

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### **Abstract**

Through a #SocMedHE19 conference workshop, the aim was to provide a supportive and open way to discuss the use of social media and to explore any concerns or barriers raised; as well as to gain insights into their professional use of different social media in learning and teaching. A generic overview of Twitter, LinkedIn, Snapchat and Flipgrid were given, drawing on examples of our own learning, teaching and sharing practices in our local institutions. We then wanted to engage the delegates (staff and students) to explore these specific tools themselves and consider how they could be utilised in their own practice. An innovative approach was taken to facilitate and capture this discussion using Lego® Serious Play®, Padlet and Flipgrid. This paper considers how effective this interactive approach was and to what extent it encouraged open discussion about the perceived enablers and barriers to using this selection of social media tools.

Key findings highlight the benefits of using social media tools in a classroom setting, enabling participants to increase understanding and confidence of each available tool and exposing them to utilising it pedagogically. The workshop enabled participants to connect with one another, expanding their network and to share potential ideas for learning and teaching. The need for ongoing support for colleagues who are not familiar with the approaches used and implementation in a classroom setting was strongly recommended by participants.

### **Keywords**

Lego® Serious Play®, Snapchat, Flipgrid, Padlet, Social Media

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## Introduction

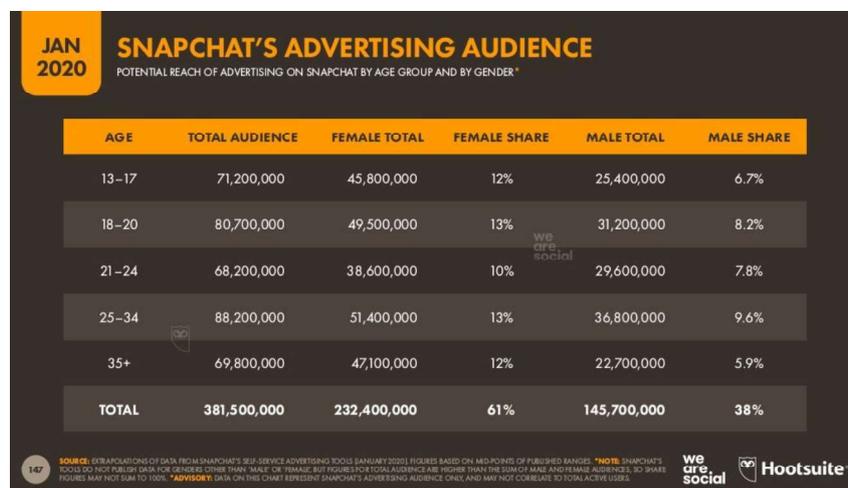
Mobile technology has become ubiquitous providing almost instant access to people, organisations and information. For many social media has predominantly been used to connect with already established networks, but also creates new links for knowledge exchange opportunities. Educators have recognised this and developed new ways to enhance active learning and teaching in an educational setting. However, adoption of these approaches has not been widespread in higher education. To facilitate open discussions and an opportunity to learn how to use a range of social media, an innovative approach was taken to facilitate the workshop.

## Background and Rationale: The Growth of social media use

The use of social media has pervaded many lives and across the world continues to grow. Nearly 60% of the world's population is already online and over 50% are using social media (We are Social and Hootsuite 2020). Statista (2020) ranks global social media sites by the number of active users in millions. Facebook (launched 2004) maintains a strong lead with 2.49 billion users, followed closely by YouTube (2005) and WhatsApp (2009). Snapchat has 398 million and Twitter 386 million active followers. What is significant here is the rapid growth of tools such as Snapchat (2011) and Instagram (2010) and their use by younger adults as indicated in Figure 1 and Table 1 below.

In Figure 1 the potential reach by age and gender shows that 81.7% of the audience are under 35.

**Figure 1: Digital 2020 A Global Overview - Snapchat reach (We Are Social and Hootsuite 2020)**



Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn are just a few examples of the possible social media tools that are being used to enhance teaching and or research experiences, including professional skills (Griesemer, 2012; Neier and Zayer, 2015). Yet, the efficacy of using social media in higher education requires investigation to explore the way in which staff and students choose to communicate on these platforms and conversely why they choose not to. Tools such as Snapchat and Flipgrid are less prominent, certainly within higher education and require further investigation. The popularity of different platforms and where students feel comfortable is an important consideration.

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This is evidenced in Table 1, where the use of Snapchat by US adults under 30 is far higher than LinkedIn and Twitter.

It is important to consider the demographics of the users of these platforms. Table 1 highlights 24% of US adults are Snapchat users, however when considering the age group of 18-24, reflecting the traditional student university demographic, the use of Snapchat increases to 73%. Whilst this does not identify how these spaces are used, previous statistics have remained unchanged since 2018. This opens up an opportunity to:

- Understand newer spaces being used.
- Consider why LinkedIn is not used as much by under 30s.

**Table 1 Breakdown of use of different online platforms by age of US adults**  
**(Pew Research 2019)**

<b>Platform</b>	<b>LinkedIn</b>	<b>Snapchat</b>	<b>Twitter</b>
<b>US adults</b>	27%	24%	22%
<b>Aged 18-24</b>	17%	73%	44%
<b>Aged 25-29</b>	44%	47%	31%

## **Affordances of social media**

The social affordances of social media spaces to develop and maintain social networks (Baym 2010, Boyd 2011, Ellison and Vitak 2015) have long been recognised by educators. Many have experimented and gone on to adopt social media to develop interactions with students. Furthermore, mobile learning has offered new opportunities to enhance self-directed learning in and outwith the classroom. Yahya et al (2010:120) refer to opportunities for ubiquitous learning, describing this as “a learning paradigm which takes place in a ubiquitous computing environment that enables learning the right thing at the right place and time in the right way”. The mobility of handheld technology and access to wireless connectivity has without a doubt changed how people can connect with each other (Merchant 2012); the development of both personal and professional connections (Thulin *et al.*, 2010; Thulin and Vihelmsen, 2017); the ability and immediacy of being able to access information; and the notion of ubiquitous knowledge construction (Peng *et al.*, 2009).

Schrock (2015) considers four mobile media affordances: portability, availability, locatability and multimediality. Portability expounds to the ability of being able to engage with people and information wherever you are. Availability whilst a matter of choice provides the potential for being in perpetual contact. Similarly, locatability popularised by social media like Foursquare and later Swarm, can provide information about where people are but also identify the location of shared images. Multimediality is perhaps the most significant in so much as the ability to take and instantly share images and video has changed the way we communicate. Whilst portability and multimediality may be perceived as positive affordances, there are concerns about the notion of being always available and the implications of the location being public.

However, as mobile technology has become embedded into everyday life with individuals depending on such tools to engage, communicate and complete tasks, offering new innovative ways to work; it is surprising that for some, the connection to use this technology for learning has not always been recognised.

Similarly, the affordances of social media that allow users to express themselves using the like button or comments encourage interaction and dialogue (Bucher and Helmond 2019). Unlike desktop computers, mobile technology has been accepted by individuals, as despite time spent on devices increasing screen time, the ability to do so indoors or outdoors, and ‘on the go’, does not tie the user to a specific location (Schilhab *et al.*, 2018).

Education facilitates an important role in developing knowledge and providing opportunities for students to increase both human capital and social capital (Brown and Lauder (2001). Whereas human capital focuses on the skills and knowledge we develop through both formal and informal learning, social capital is built through meaningful interactions, networks and community. Using social media as a way of connecting with others and as a conduit for information mobilisation can contribute to ‘surfacing existing resources’ (Wohn *et al* 2013) and creating a sense of belonging to a university or more specifically a course community (Johnson *et al* 2013).

## **Perceived barriers of using social media for learning and teaching**

So whilst there is evidence that educators support the use of social media for personal connectivity, sharing and professional development; there remain concerns about its use in practice within learning and teaching.

The use of mobile technology and access to social media has long been a concern of many, in that its use is considered a distraction (Andersson *et al.*, 2013; Selwyn, 2009). Waycott *et al* (2010) suggest that students are more likely to attempt to explore emerging technologies as a means of connecting with each other and communicating. However, highlight that there can be a difference between *living* and *learning the* use of technologies. Anderson (2019) raises the concerns of privacy breaches and such risks can affect the motivation for staff to use social media (Manca and Ranieri 2016).

Understanding what both the benefits and limitations of social media might be, requires time and guidance from those that have explored the affordances in the context of learning and teaching. Yet the opportunity for staff to hear about innovative approaches are often isolated. There is resounding evidence that many institutions do not provide the technical support for learning how to use social media, focussing on the VLE and a select number of technologies for learning, teaching and assessment.

We recognise that research using social media for learning can benefit greatly by working with students. Staff-student partnerships are evolving and have been identified as an effective method for knowledge exchange (Huet and Woodfield, 2017; Beckingham *et al*, 2019; Sum, 2020); and the opportunity to co-evaluate the use of social media and digital applications which provide new approaches to enhancing learning and teaching.

## **Aim and objectives of the workshop**

The workshop aimed to provide a supportive and open way to discuss the use of a variety of social media tools for learning and teaching (see Table 2). Workshop participants included lecturers, learning technologists, educational developers and most importantly students.

The objectives were:

- To provide participants with the opportunity to reflect on the facilitators and barriers to using social media in learning and teaching.
- To provide participants with the opportunity to experience communication and reflection facilitated by Lego® SeriousPlay® (LSP).
- To reflect on the use of Lego® SeriousPlay® Padlet and Flipgrid to capture output from a conference workshop.
- To explore innovative methods of workshop facilitation and ways capturing discussions that take place before during and after the conference, thus extending the conversations.

**Table 2: Selected Social Media tools used in the workshop.**

<b>Tool</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Help Guides</b>
Twitter	Microblogging tool that allows messages of up to 280 characters. Users can add links, images, video, GIFs to tweets. Participants can like, retweet and reply with comments. Users can set up private Direct Messages with individuals or groups. There is a useful search function and often users include hashtags in their tweets which enables another way to filter messages.	<a href="https://help.twitter.com/en/twitter-guide">https://help.twitter.com/en/twitter-guide</a>
LinkedIn	Professional networking tool that allows users to connect with people and follow companies. Groups allow for public and private discussion forums. The search allows users to find individuals, organisations and jobs.	<a href="https://www.linkedin.com/help/linkedin">https://www.linkedin.com/help/linkedin</a>
Snapchat	A messaging app primarily, primarily used for exchanging picture messages often with filters. Videos, text and drawings can also be shared. When used outwith the group chat function, messages (Snaps) disappear within 10 seconds. Users can send direct Snaps to other users or can publish wider using the stories feature to reach all their friends.	No official help guide available however see this explanatory video by Suzanne <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TNMdLzbxioQ">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TNMdLzbxioQ</a>
Flipgrid	Flipgrid is a free online video tool. Learners can record and share videos and also provide feedback. Learners reflect upon, discuss and showcase what they are learning.	<a href="https://info.flipgrid.com/">https://info.flipgrid.com/</a>
Padlet	This is an online virtual pinboard for sticky notes. Users can also add links, YouTube videos, files and images to Padlet notes; providing a visual multimedia artefact. This was used to facilitate the workshop	<a href="https://padlet.com/support">https://padlet.com/support</a>

## Method

The decision was taken to use Lego® SeriousPlay® as the main vehicle for facilitating more open conversations about user perceptions using social media in learning and teaching.

LSP is ‘play with purpose’, in this case, the purpose was to discuss how social media is currently being used in learning and teaching, capturing this landscape in real-time. It is imperative that a LSP workshop does not progress without completing a skill build exercise. The skills-building exercise is vital to help participants to communicate using metaphors and introduces the storytelling element while allowing participants to experience the depth of communication that can take place using Lego® SeriousPlay®. Importantly, with LSP there are no right or wrong answers, participants communicate through their models, everyone participates. Importantly everyone's voice is heard. It was explained that Lego® SeriousPlay® is a facilitated communication, sense-making and problem-solving technique that is used in many diverse settings including in learning and teaching in Higher Education (Roos, 2018). This was then followed by an introduction to Lego® Serious Play® (LSP) and how it was going to be used for this workshop to explore the use of social media. (It should be noted that two of the workshop facilitators are certified facilitators of LSP).

This technique facilitates storytelling with a deeper meaning (Roor and Victor, 2018). Storytelling encourages deeper reflection through the use of colourful metaphors. Sharing of these stories results in a shared understanding and appreciation of each other's build. In this sense LSP is unique in that it combines three methods of communication; visual, auditory and kinesthetic (Blair *et al.*, 2016).

## The workshop

Given the ever-increasing collection of social media tools available, a small selection of tools based on the authors' collective experience was used as a focus for the workshop to facilitate discussion and to prompt reflection from the participants. Initially, when planning the workshop we had considered splitting participants into groups to reflect on the use of individual social media platforms. However, without prior knowledge of attendee experience and number of participants likely to attend, we decided to enable the self-selection of groups.

The facilitators of the workshop began by each giving an overview of how they personally used social media tools for learning and/or teaching. The intention here was to open the participant's minds to the potential of some of the affordances of these tools. This was felt to be of particular importance for the lesser-used tools. The key points shared in the short presentation were:

Twitter is a microblog that enables users to post messages up to 280 characters with options to add links to websites, images and polls; and to ask and respond to questions.

- Enables a mix of personal and professional profile use.
- Acts as a bridge connecting academic studies and professional practice, becoming an effective research/ collaboration tool to initiate conversations and a space sharing resources (e.g. advertising products, services and activities with useful content and growing awareness).
- Allows users to keep up to date with the latest news and developments, such as early access to new publications, follow well-known people, stay connected with friends and or network with new connections - extended opportunity to interact with professionals in your field; similar to texting.
- Enable real-time communications.

- Contribute and follow discussions at events - via the use of hashtags and lists to bring together shared conversations and resources e.g. module or event hashtags.
- Considerations:
- False profiles are very common and can generate distrust in the network.
  - Risks of negative criticisms (e.g. spams) on the network with limited control, thus the trust of the network is lost.
  - Summarising everything in limited characters per tweet limits the amount of content, and can often generate problems by having to abbreviate the message.
  - Risk of becoming an addiction to spending time on Twitter.

LinkedIn is a professional networking site within which you can extend your network and keep abreast of interesting news in your sector. Users can:

- Share a professional profile to outline your work experience, skills and education that was familiar to many participants.
  - Showcase presentations, publications and projects; as well as volunteering and extracurricular activities.
  - Opens opportunities to build a global network connecting with both people and organisations.
  - Join or create groups, for example, a course group enables tutors, students and graduates to share achievements, jobs and information.
  - Give and receive recommendations
- Considerations:
- Information shared should always be professional.
  - Care should be taken when receiving new connection requests to ensure the identity is authentic (where the person is not known personally).

Snapchat is primarily considered to be a camera. It is a free multimedia messaging app where users communicate by sending ‘Snaps’. The app is recognised for the fact that the messages are only available for a short period of time, this has led to the app being used by some for ‘sexting’ however, the app has several benefits when used in a higher education setting, for example:

- Snapchat facilitates communication between and with students in a less formal way.
- It is considered by students to be a more relaxed space to ask questions than email and can, therefore, enhance communication.
- When using the group chat function, students can interact with tutors and peers simultaneously.
- Conversations can be saved benefiting all students and enabling asynchronous engagement with the content at a time that is suitable to them.
- When used in the group chat function messages can be saved indefinitely.
- Students can see when tutors are available making ‘office hours’ visible.
- Images and videos can be shared as well as text in response to student questions during/after class, or for exam revision Q&As.

- Considerations:
- Students and tutors should be aware that outwith participation in the group chat they can decide who can view their stories (their Snaps) with their friends.
  - If using a Snapchat group, the maximum group size is 32, this can work well for tutorial groups and small class sizes. However, an alternative would be to use Snapchat stories to broadcast to a wider audience.
  - Due to the nature of communication with Snapchat students may expect to have access to tutors 24/7. From the outset, tutors should manage this expectation indicating when they will be available on Snapchat.
  - Students and tutors should be made aware of ghost mode. Selecting ghost mode means that the accurate location of the user is not made public to others.

Flipgrid is a free online tool and app that can be used to record and share videos. It can be used to:

- Comment and record video feedback.
- Encourage reflection and connection through fostering online social presence.
- Active community and many innovative ideas and resources shared for reuse.
- Share welcome back messages and the class can create and share ‘about me’ videos as an induction activity.
- Students can share critiques of articles/book review/new stories, create collections of tech tips, or reflect on group work or an assignment.
- Tutors can provide feedback to students and students can provide feedback to one another.

Considerations:

- Users will benefit from using ‘practice’ Flipgrids and encouragement through the feedback functionality in terms of leaving a text sticker ‘vibe’ or video responses.
- Users may be hesitant to record a video and may not wish to be on camera. This can be mitigated by the use of the text, sticker and audio functionality.
- Users can feel quite vulnerable if there are no examples to follow. Tutors can lead by example in recording videos that are authentic and demonstrate that it does not have to be perfect.

## **How Lego® SeriousPlay® and selected social media tools were used during the session**

Following the outline of practical applications of social media, we delivered an overview of Lego® SeriousPlay® to explain the concept and explore how it would be used within the context of the session using a skills-building exercise.

Participants were given a series of prompts and asked to build responses to these using Lego®.

- Which one of these platforms (i.e. Twitter, LinkedIn, Snapchat, Flipgrid) do you enjoy using?
- Which of these platforms (i.e. Twitter, LinkedIn, Snapchat, Flipgrid) don't you use and why?
- What will you do differently as a result of attending this session?

The participants initially shared the story of their Lego® builds with those on their table and were then invited to share their feedback on their experiences with the wider workshop group. For some, it was sharing their social media usage with regards to learning and teaching, whilst others commented on the benefits and perceived barriers of using social media.

Participants were encouraged to contribute to the curation of how they used or could use Twitter, Snapchat, LinkedIn and Flipgrid for learning and teaching in Higher Education by posting on the Padlet board. Participants were also invited to add a video message using Flipgrid of their key takeaway moments and one for general feedback. Reflections and discussions using Lego®SeriousPlay® were captured through Flipgrid, Twitter and Padlet.

## Outcomes

The Lego® creations and their accompanying metaphors, written on Post-it notes, were photographed by the participants and documented on the Padlet board. It was fascinating to see how quickly participants added both comments and photos of their Lego® builds that had stimulated the discussions

As a result of adopting a unique approach to facilitating conversations using Lego® SeriousPlay® and capturing these discussions on Padlet and Flipgrid with accompanying Post-it notes, our results are presented in a unique way to reflect this. A selection of the photographs is presented in Figures 2-6 below. (A larger collection of images can be seen in this Adobe Spark: <https://spark.adobe.com/page/OkEfQgm3vVV6f/>).

During the discussion of the models, there were mixed views with regards to which platforms were considered safe for students. One of the participants commented that, although they use Twitter professionally they chose not to use Twitter with their students. This led to a conversation about the range of behaviours that can be observed spaces as illustrated in Figure 2 below.

**Figure 2: Lego build highlighting reluctance to use Twitter with students.**



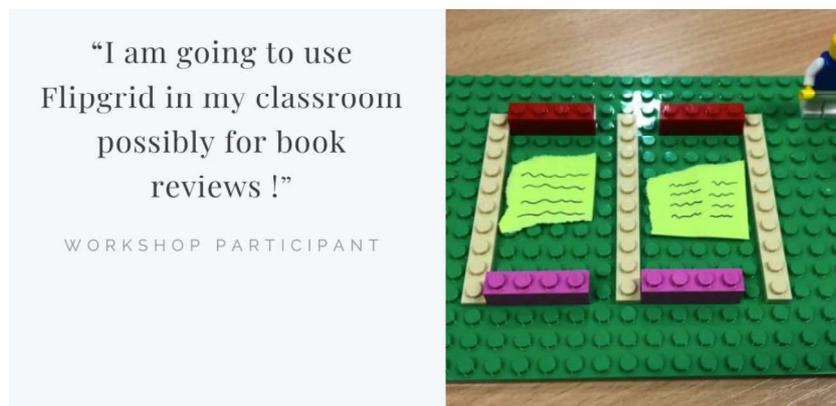
In contrast, other comments were positive demonstrating a willingness to embrace Twitter, as evidenced by tweeting their build and noting that in their experience, Twitter stimulates ideas and inspires practice as highlighted in Figure 3 overleaf. Participants talked about the value of using Twitter to build networks.

**Figure 3: Lego build highlighting the use of Twitter to build connections and curate ideas that are then used in the classroom.**



Several comments explored how participants might use practical ideas from the workshop in their practice. These focused on the future use of some of the actual tools mentioned, such as introducing Flipgrid to conduct book reviews (Figure 4).

**Figure 4: Lego build highlighting the use of Flipgrid for conducting book reviews.**



In addition, some comments also highlighted that participants had been inspired by the design of the workshop in combining practical and digital approaches, this is highlighted by Lee Fallin who expressed that as a frequent user of LSP he has been inspired to use Padlet and Twitter as platforms for output of future LSP workshops (Figure 5 Overleaf).

**Figure 5: Lego build highlighting the enjoyment of combining practical and digital approaches within the workshop**



Two participants said they would be trying Flipgrid, and one said it would be useful for book reviews. That said only one participant recorded a Flipgrid video during the workshop itself.

Some participants found it challenging to use the Augmented Reality (AR) facility of the Flipgrid App using the app instructions alone. To provide more practical help, the app was demonstrated live during the session by one of the facilitators using her mobile device to scan the QR code. This practical demonstration facilitated a 'lightbulb' moment during the session, as participants could see the video (of the facilitator) 'appear' in the classroom environment via their mobile phones when the QR code was scanned. The moment was captured by a participant showing his view of the video and of the facilitator in real life (see Figure 6). Thus demonstrating the power of active and responsive learning within a safe environment.

**Figure 6: Demonstrating the Flipgrid Augmented Reality Features within the classroom**



## Workshop Outputs

Quite often in workshops, there are rich discussions and the use of paper flip charts and post-its are often used to capture this. However, this is not always shared after the event. During this workshop, the Padlet provided a live digital repository to gather these discussions and reflections. After the session, Piktochart was used to create an infographic poster to highlight some of the ways the tools can be used in learning and teaching together with a Wakelet collection capturing tweets from the day. The aim being to create additional information and other resources that may be helpful for others.

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Discussions from the workshop were documented in the Padlets below and the infographic was created highlighting the social media tools discussed.

Workshop Padlet

[https://padlet.com/Debbaff/socmedHE19\\_LSP](https://padlet.com/Debbaff/socmedHE19_LSP)

Session Feedback Padlet

<https://padlet.com/Debbaff/Sessionfeedback>

Wakelet

<https://wakelet.com/wake/ejhSOW0MBHH8jzyoF1c81>

## Infographic

The objective was to provide a succinct but useful visual resource others would find useful beyond the event and provide inspiration for ways the social media platforms can be used as an additional tool for learning and teaching. An infographic can be saved as a PNG image file and then used to embed in a Padlet, blog or website, and shared via social media. The tool used to create this infographic was Piktochart. The infographic was shared after the event via Twitter to seek further feedback. The infographic was then updated with additional suggestions.

This can be accessed at <https://create.piktochart.com/output/44664407-using-twitter-snapchat-linkedin-and-flipgrid-for-learning>

## Adobe Spark Resource

We have also created an Adobe Spark as a visual presentation that showcases some more images from the workshop itself, together with additional resources that may be helpful including links to session padlets and workshop slides. This can be accessed at:

<https://spark.adobe.com/page/OkEfQgm3vVV6f/>

**Figure 7: Home page of the Adobe Spark resource.**



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## Discussion

This section of the paper, first of all, focuses on the facilitators' reflection on the multidimensional approach taken to facilitate the workshop. This is then followed by a discussion of the conversations that ensued as a result of the Lego® SeriousPlay® approach.

Using LSP provides the participants with permission to play and to play with purpose. The ground rules enforced in LSP, that everyone builds, everyone participates and that everyone has the opportunity for their voice to be heard creates a different, more relaxed, open and honest group dynamic and perhaps the most important rule of all - that there are no right or wrong answers enables participation in this innovative facilitation technique. The facilitators observed that every participant happily took part in the builds. There was a genuine buzz in the room, leaning in and smiling faces.

Capturing the stories of the LSP models using video would have been a fantastic way to showcase all of the rich stories facilitated by the use of LSP, however, recording participants sharing their stories removes the safe environment created and is therefore discouraged. A key concern is that this might inhibit discussion and the building process itself. Instead, participants were given the option to use Flipgrid to share their reflections in their own time once the building and sharing had been completed.

While there were two workshop facilitators trained in the Lego®SeriousPlay® methodology and this is recommended, LSP is open source meaning that anyone can use it. However, if a more in-depth, longer duration of LSP workshop is required, enlisting the services of facilitators trained in the LSP methodology is advised. The workshop made use of the 'window explorer bags' (specific Lego bags comprising 36 bricks designed specifically for use in LSP). This comes at additional cost, and in reality, random pieces of Lego available to anyone running an LSP workshop could be used. The window explorer bags limited choice of bricks can be considered a benefit in an LSP workshop of short duration. A dedicated LSP workshop is usually 3 hours in duration with a whole host of bricks available to participants. The rationale for using the window explorer bags in the workshop means that everyone has access to the same bricks.

It was noted that there was less of uptake in recording reflections using Flipgrid than on the Padlet using the Lego® builds. It is possible that the skills-building exercise used in LSP as a low-risk activity and safe introduction to LSP perhaps was instrumental in facilitating this. Perhaps providing an equivalent low-risk opportunity to engage with Flipgrid might have enhanced participation. However, it is acknowledged that there is a difference between capturing an image of your build and capturing a video of yourself. For participants to be comfortable capturing a video of themselves and their thoughts, they need to embrace vulnerability. Something they may not be prepared to do.

It was recognised that Flipgrid does take time for participants to familiarise themselves with the platform. Having a longer workshop would have given the facilitators more time to support individuals to try this tool. Participants that had come across Flipgrid were surprised to find that there were options to go beyond the 60 second time limit and to just use audio or take advantage of the text-only function using the whiteboard option. Awareness of this functionality may have increased experimentation with Flipgrid for those participants hesitant to be on camera. Similarly for Padlet, those used to using the open Padlet page where users simply double click anywhere on the page, were puzzled at first by the less intuitive + button where a structured column effect Padlet has been set up for the workshop. This highlights again the need for support and time to learn how to use some of the tools.

The links to the Padlet and Flipgrid were shared during the workshop as live reflective spaces and the infographic was shared shortly after the conference and we did receive some feedback. Adobe Spark was created to bring all of these resources together.

Some of the participants were confident and adept at using social media in the context of learning and teaching. They also actively used Twitter to share their models during or shortly after the workshop. Given they were attending a Social Media for Learning in HE Conference, it was not unexpected to find this. This, therefore, highlights the need to consider how this workshop could be extended to staff in our institutions as a development opportunity.

For others, at the workshop, it highlighted the need for support for those colleagues not familiar with the approaches used, in addition to understanding the pedagogical potential for learning and teaching (Purvis *et al.*, 2016). Having both time and ‘at elbow’ support to discuss the use in practice during the workshop, was valued by the participants and considered to be important. Without this, they were less likely to try new approaches.

There was certainly evidence that those present felt that the use of social media was a useful way to extend their professional development and as a means to share different ways to enhance their teaching, but missing was the practical element of learning how to use the tools. A concern from participants was that outside this conference, opportunities in their home institutions for staff development in the use of social media for learning and teaching were at best limited and for a number non-existent. However, there are areas of good practice that we are aware of, for example at the University of Strathclyde staff are supported centrally through the Operational Staff and Development Unit (OSDU) to explore the use of social media for learning and teaching. This is facilitated by staff throughout the University who are actively using these approaches in their practice. This practice is disseminated further through the Strath Tech Ed group. There is certainly scope to explore further examples for staff development and whether there is an opportunity to benefit from this, for example involving students as Digital Champions and other students as partners initiatives to involve students as co-researchers.

One of the limitations of this research was the short duration of time spent with the participants. Ideally, a follow up in the form of a focus group or interviews to establish if participants had gone on to implement any new innovative approaches to their practice and specifically if these included the tools demonstrated within the workshop would be useful. Further to this, it would be of value to understand what the impact was on the student learning experience.

## Recommendations

### Staff perspective

For staff to have the confidence to adopt innovative approaches into their teaching practice they need to be given the time and support to explore such changes. It is recommended that:

- Time is given to consider the pedagogical affordances of social media for learning and teaching.
- Time is given to discuss both perceived and real barriers, and the outcomes are respected.
- Ensuring there is support for staff to explore the use of social media first hand with opportunities to have a safe space to share examples of use in practice.
- Time is given to involve students as partners to co-evaluate the effectiveness of any social media tools used for learning and teaching.
- Consider the use of the Lego®SeriousPlay® methodology and active, practical immersion in social media tools to facilitate workshops for other purposes.

## **Student perspective**

It is recommended that when introducing any new innovative approach to using social media in your teaching that you discuss this with your students. The following are important considerations:

- Students should always be given the option not to use these spaces.
- Ask the students ‘where’ they would like to meet you (as in which platform).
- When introducing a new innovation, start with a low stake activity.
- Provision should be made for alternative activities for any students who do not want to engage with social media tools.
- Support for emotional needs for students (and staff), ensuring mental health and wellbeing are considered.

## **Future Research**

The workshop identified scope for further research to explore the following:

- To evaluate how Lego® SeriousPlay® could be used in this context for further research.
- To investigate how other lesser-known social media tools can be used, complementing existing practices.
- To understand how social media tools are used and in different contexts in Higher Education, such as with different cohorts of students, learners, facilitators or practitioners.
- To reflect on the experiential learning over a long period of time, identifying the impacts and changes in engagement.

## **Conclusion**

The workshop was well received and enabled the facilitators and participants to share best practices in social media usage in addition to exploring the less familiar tools, it also stimulated engagement in conversations about the perceived barriers. Lego®SeriousPlay® helped to encourage participants to build their stories and shared experiences through their models; capturing visual reflections using the Padlet and Flipgrid tools that were set up to collect feedback during the workshop.

There is always a risk of including too many activities into a workshop. Nonetheless, the authors felt it was important to share practices between institutions to facilitate how best to use social media in a pedagogical context. The overall feedback received was positive with participants suggesting how they might use the Lego®SeriousPlay® workshop setup methodology back at their home institutions to facilitate discussions.

Despite perceived barriers being discussed (i.e. lack of confidence and knowledge of effective use), it was concluded that social media can provide useful approaches to enhance participation between and with students.

The use of Lego®SeriousPlay® acted as a stimulant to engage active reflection in addition to prompts for self-reflection, and as a way to express their feelings and experiences of social media. The workshop overall provided a good insight for participants to experience different social media tools available and its effective applications to the pedagogy context.

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## **Disclosure statement**

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.