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Navigating the Terrain:

Emerging Frontiers in Learning Spaces, Pedagogies, and Technologies

Focusing the Juggernaut: How can educators leverage collective EdTech resources to achieve individual goals?

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Education technology (EdTech) is at the forefront of many universities' desires to improve, evolve and better the student experience. From learning management systems to hybrid capabilities, many processes are updated to ensure relevance in the face of challenges and modern trends (Josué et al., 2023). These updates can be small and incremental but can also come in the form of large-scale, institution-wide EdTech rollouts. Due to the scale and the diversity of our institutions, this is fraught with issues including aligning technology with pedagogy, ensuring digital literacy and training for educators (Bower, 2017), and infrastructure adequacy (Al-Busaidi and Al-Shihi, 2012). Universities invest heavily in resources to address challenges and promote sustained EdTech adoption (Deacon et al., 2022). Strategic and flexible educators, sometimes with differing perspectives from their institutions, can leverage these resources to achieve their individual educational objectives.

This case study, situated at the University of New South Wales (UNSW), involved one such large scale EdTech adoption in the form of an institutionally wide digital assessment platform, Inspera™, with a view to streamline and enhance the online assessment experience. This had a significant impact, reaching approximately 67 courses and 8.8k students in its first 3 terms of piloting, and to aid this implementation UNSW deployed multiple resources in the form of dedicated staff, in-depth training and central support for high stakes exams. With many educators already using other forms of digital assessment, the adoption was not uniformly accepted, creating friction and causing some to reject the platform. It also created opportunities for others. Wanting to uplift a newly inherited course, Dr Megan Kalucy saw Inspera™, and the resources associated, as an ideal opportunity to improve student experience and reduce educator workload.

With the support of the implementation team, Dr Kalucy adopted Inspera™ for specific in-course assessments, reaching approximately 300 students. Paper-based, short-answer, invigilated assessments, which were administratively inefficient and suffered from delays were replaced by weekly multiple-choice-question (MCQ) quizzes in Inspera™. Automated marking, immediate feedback, and broader content coverage resulted in an overall improved experience for both staff and students, which was reflected in improved student feedback and reduced workload.

This work investigates sector wide issues focusing on the research question of how educators can leverage collective EdTech resources to achieve individual goals. It addresses two key challenges; achieving widespread institutional adoption of EdTech and helping educators with increasing workloads find the time and resources to update their courses. A mixed-methods approach was used, employing a case study methodology comparing student satisfaction data, before and after, to validate the improvements made to the course through the adoption of Inspera. Qualitative data from staff and students was used to inform, implement and revise these improvements. The study found that technology adoption in the educational landscape is not exclusively dependent on knowledge of advancements, but more significantly about leveraging the resources available (Oyetade et al., 2020). Here, the universities adoption of Inspera employed strategies such as training, hands-on support, as well as platform and student support, lowering the energy barrier for improvement to Education Focused staff. These resources were deployed practically and with a focus on educators, increasing the number of early adopters and the uptake of Inspera across the university. This case study also shows that the diverse needs of various disciplines need to be considered for uniform EdTech adoption, as a

'one size fits all' approach is often ineffective.

Keywords: EdTech implementation, digital uplift, digital assessment, educator empowerment

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