Students and Qualifications

Accrediting MOOCs

Dr Benjamin Brabon

Email: brabonb@edgehill.ac.uk

Twitter: @BenBrabon

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Overview

- Context
  - Challenges and opportunities
- MOOC Pedagogies
  - The student experience
- Accreditation
  - What's it worth?
- Headline Recommendations

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Context

- **Managing Massive**

- "The larger the MOOC […] the more it destabilizes the centrality of the teacher's role within the course. [A]t massive scale, that relationship cannot be expected to be directly reciprocal. Even where a MOOC instructor centers a course on his or her expertise, the scale of the class violates the convention of personal focus and contact between teacher and student. In MOOCs with 20,000 or even 2,000 students, teachers cannot humanly assess and validate the mastery of those learners."

Stewart, B. (2013). Massiveness + Openness = New Literacies of Participation? *Journal of Online Learning and Teaching*, 9(2), 228-238. Retrieved from http://jolt.merlot.org/vol9no2/stewart_bonnie_0613.htm

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Context

- **The role of the teacher**

- "'The teacher' persists in the MOOC. Though MOOC teaching functions are often disaggregated and delegated to automated processes and community-based social learning, the place and visibility of the teacher remain of central importance. MOOC teaching is high visibility, high risk and dependent on significant intellectual, emotional and time commitment from academics and the professionals who work alongside them."

Bayne, S. and Ross J. (2014) *The Pedagogy of the Massive Open Online Course: The UK View*. Higher Education Academy. Retrieved from http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/assets/documents/elt/HEA_Edinburgh_MOOC_WEB_240314.pdf

MOOC Pedagogies

- Tension between ‘cMOOC’ and ‘xMOOC’ pedagogies
  - **Underpinned by process of validation/accreditation**
    - *Containment/Openness*
    - *Subject Benchmark Statements*
    - *Learning Outcomes*
- A very cautious approach to quality assurance and delivery can inhibit ‘social constructivism’ and ‘connectivism’

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Accreditation

- Scalability of Teaching and Assessment
  - **How do you assess effectively on a massive scale?**
- Student Engagement/Experience
  - **Very low completion rates**
- Delivery Platform
  - **Partnerships**
- Capacity to Approve
  - **QAA context**

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Headline Recommendations

- Understand student motivations for engaging with MOOCs
  - Upwards of 70% of MOOC students are already educated to degree level
  - Know the ‘Unknown Learner’
- Use MOOCs to develop valuable soft skills
- Accredited MOOCs need to prioritise niche areas/applications

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