Learning about learning: how demonstrating a willingness and ability to learn may be key
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The start of term is approaching as I write this editorial, and in the turbulent context which Higher Education in the United Kingdom has become, this new term offers less a time of the restart of familiar routines, and more a time of disconnects, anxiety and uncertainty. In the last decade HE in the UK has gone through enormous growth, now approaching 50% participation (Bolton, 2018). This growth has been accompanied by a concentration of the sector, as the removal of caps has led to the most prestigious universities doubling their intake, while post '92 institutions struggle to recruit. The University of Brighton, where I work, has seen fierce competition for the students with the highest grades and as a result, changes to the entry criteria. We struggle to meet our recruitment targets.

This turbulent UK HE regulatory context is part of many changes to the life of academics, particularly an increase in targets and measures that accompany more money and more students. This pressure of measures and targets is characterised by Burrows as "Living By The H-Index" (2012). Our students frequently characterise themselves as customers, and universities as service providers. Undoubtedly students are building large debt and for graduates there is a fervent hope for well-paid employment as a necessity to cover the burden of the cost of their study. This looming debt puts pressure on them and us, as they perceive the need for a high grade as a key to well-paid work.

So as the start of term approaches, we face large numbers of diverse students, with varying academic grades and very high expectations of what higher education will deliver. In this context, the importance of sound and informed choices about how to use interactive learning environments to extend and enrich the students learning experience becomes particularly important. And, there are an ever increasing range of options, for the role technology might play in offering learning environments to our students. Several papers in this issue outline ways that ILEs can foster deep learning and facilitate positive learning outcomes. In their paper "Effects of a linked data-based annotation approach on students' learning achievement and cognitive load" Zarzour & Sellami offered students a means to annotate their learning materials by links to semantically interlinked educational resources, which demonstrated a positive correlation with learning achievement.

To foster deep learning Sung et al also looked at gaming; their paper focuses on "Facilitating Deep-Strategy Behaviours and Positive Learning Performances in Science Inquiry Activities with a 3D Experiential Gaming Approach" for students learning geography. There is an increasing demand for self-service learning resources of this type, but if large numbers of students are spending significant amounts of time working on their own, institutions may need more ways to identify how the emotional experience of study is for their students, as part of the universities' duty of care. Daouas & Lejmi use their paper "Emotions Recognition in an Intelligent E-learning Environment" to present a Bayesian system which they claim identifies signs of Joy, Distress, Satisfaction and Disappointment in users.

The desire to offer access to online learning environments is widespread, but take-up and provision is varied. Two papers offer an interesting comparison between retention of students accessing MOOCS, and rural students who are considered in the case examined in the paper by Kyzy eadt al "Learning Management System Implementation: a Case Study in the Kyrgyz Republic". For these rural students in the Kyrgyz Republic inexperience with ICT among faculty and student procrastination played key roles in the whether the LMS was adopted. For Hsu, Chen & Ting the focus was on retention in a MOOC. In their paper "Understanding MOOC continuance: An

empirical examination of social support theory" they found that a sense of community, and the perceived gains of continuance influenced behaviour more than other factors

The role of technology in learning has application in many places besides University and the journal's editors welcome papers from a range of domains from kindergarten to workplace and beyond. In this issue we have three papers from China considering the very young. In their paper "Detecting the correlation between mobile learning behaviour and personal characteristics among elementary school students" Sun et al looked at the use of mobile by Beijing early learners and found that higher test scores in the conventional Chinese subject course had a positive impact on their mobile learning though all their students were far more inclined to consume than create digital content. Li et al looked at even younger learners as they tested "The Validity of Computerized Visual Motor Integration Assessment Using Chinese Basic Strokes" for diagnosing Chinese pre-schoolers. Their findings indicate potential writing difficulties may be detected early, and early intervention achieved. Also from Bejing and concerned with diagnostic interventions is "A Case Study of Gesture-Based Games in Enhancing the Fine Motor Skills and Recognition of Children with Autism" by Cai et al who found that the participants' performance in playing the games improved greatly during their intervention.

The scope of the papers in this edition of Interactive Learning Environments offers insight into learning across a wide range of educational contexts. As we prepare for the arrival of new students in just a few days, the findings of Bourner et al's 2011 paper on New Vocationalism seem very apposite. Most employers are not concerned with the subject that students study, for graduates seeking work, the key quality most sought by potential employers is their demonstration of a willingness and ability to learn.

References
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