

SO8

**Blended Learning, Knowledge Co-construction and Undergraduate Group Work**

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Blended approaches weave face-to-face interactions with educational technologies to enhance student learning outcomes. In the fully-integrated, problem-based learning (PBL) curriculum at The University of Hong Kong, undergraduate dental students co-construct a group 'product' (assignment) which is posted online for staff feedback. The aim of the task is to consolidate learning within a problem cycle. Objectives: An internal review of group products indicated a need to improve both the quality of products and the online submission process. Methods: As a large proportion of Year 1 products were in the form of concept maps, an intervention introducing single- and multi-user versions of CmapTools Version 4.12 (<http://cmap.ihmc.us/>) was conducted to address the above concerns. Evaluative data included student work samples with corresponding staff feedback and an online student questionnaire. Results: Work samples indicated that students had improved in identifying concepts and relationships and that their maps had increased in complexity while at the same time were more clearly presented. Reflective student data indicated that after workshops and trialing CmapTools, concept mapping had positively affected their thinking processes and improved knowledge retention. Students reported preferring face-to-face collaboration using the single-user version of CMapTools for map planning and online drawing. Conclusions: For blended learning initiatives in PBL, this project indicated the need for scaffolded instruction when introducing online learning tools and reinforced the significance of face-to-face group work for Year 1 undergraduates.

Oral Presentation- SO-8