**APPENDIX 1**

*CHAT as used in several courses delivered by Ms. Melanie Heard-White as part of the Institute of Education course:*

*Online Education & Training <*[*http://www.ioe.ac.uk/english/OET.htm*](http://www.ioe.ac.uk/english/OET.htm)*>,*

*was very well received. The following is a list of significant comments from some of the participants [names have been reduced]:*

**1.** Folks, I want to express that I liked a lot of our last Chat. It was a striking experience and I am sad because we did only two chats. To divide this learning with all of you were very profitable.

Melanie, to you my special gratefulness by the didactic and involute way with which you taught us.

Hugs

N.

**2.** Hi All,

The experience was certainly interesting and I would like to say thanks to Melanie and also to all members of the CHAT group.

I really now do recognise the importance of eye contact and body language which one normally takes for granted in a face-to-face session. It is so important for the facilitator to maintain a high level of interaction if he/she wants to make sure that the participants are following the topic being covered. Without that, the facilitator is really clueless regarding the response of the participants. Then, the group members might be talkative, and so you'll have to control the comments/dialogue and if it's a quiet group, you'll have to find creative ways of getting their input.

I find that in a CHAT session the facilitator is under much more pressure than would be the case in a face-to-face setting. You have to type while keeping your eyes on the screen, so that you can respond to questions/comments immediately - and then, all the participants can send you a comment at the same time. Providing individualized attention at all times might therefore be a challenge.

Working in pairs was also a good exercise. While doing this, I wondered if course participants would have the option of having a private discussion during the session without the facilitator knowing. This frequently occurs in the traditional classroom setting.

Regards - enjoy the week!

A.

**3**. I agree very much here with what A. is saying . How many of us are used to looking for the eye-contact that tells us how it is with our students ? The whole gamut of stray information is missing with chat , nobody staring out of a window or texting under desks , or , as Althea reminds us , having private conversations while the session is on .

But also missing are all the things that distract us from what we are really saying , someone’s appearance or habits , our prejudices and presumptions , all these make some ‘noise’ in us through which we have to hear their message . To that extent chat is a great simplifier , quiet , not distracting in the least , easy to focus on and also gives each of us freedom to be and do as we will within the confines of having to be around our machines for the session - no problems for willing students .

**4.** Hi Everyone!

I have reviewed all the materials that have been sent by Melanie (thank you!) and I regret having missed both CHAT sessions! In reading the transcripts, it looked like it was great fun and very interesting in a dual purpose way, in that one of my hobbies is creative writing and, secondly to demonstrate the uses of CHAT for teaching.

The Assignment for week 11 is "What are the advantages of using CHAT for teaching?"

Some of the benefits that were demonstrated in the CHAT transcript include:

-An opportunity to take some time to get to know one another in an informal way, learn about backgrounds, interests, personality

-An opportunity for students to demonstrate their understanding of concepts

-The ability to use a structure that allows for presentation, practice and performance.

-Allows for flexible learning in that students can connect from home as some students (and teachers as well) have work/home commitments that would make it difficult for them to attend campus based courses.

-Can utilize multiple modes of teaching including:

Lecture

Short Question and Answer

Group Discussion

One to One Discussions

Short individual exercises

Demonstration

-The ability to keep a record of the CHAT so that anyone who missed the Live CHAT can be sent the transcript and catch up (like me!)

-The ability to save, print and send out the CHAT so students don't have to take notes

All in all very interesting!

**5**. My subject area is Social Services/Social Work I do training for lay Social Workers nationwide.

I was thinking about the uses of CHAT in training Social Workers. One of the modules deals with documentation using the SAPIE model (SAPIE Stands for “Study, Assess, Plan, Implement, Evaluate”) Based on my experience with the CHAT group for OET, I was thinking that I could send out a worksheet with definitions of each element of the SAPIE process on it. I could also include a sample of each of the elements with a letter next to the phrase; the idea would be an exercise where they match the phrase next to the letter with an element of the SAPIE process. The CHAT could begin with the recommended time for getting to know one another and continue with an introduction and definition of each of the SAPIE elements. The CHAT could then proceed with a process of going through each of the elements of SAPIE, one at a time and asking participants by name if they can think of ways they may be using that particular element in their current work. For example: “Jane do have an example of how you are using planning in your current work?” The next exercise would consist of giving participants a couple of minutes to complete the worksheet matching the letter with the phrase to the element of SAPIE to which it best corresponds. For example letter A best corresponds to planning and letter B best corresponds to assessment. The examples would be very clear cut, almost exaggerated, yet based on actual cases to clearly demonstrate the concepts. The events of this SAPIE lesson probably could also be interchangeable in that the participants could do the worksheet first and then proceed with their examples of the elements.

Best Regards,

V.

**6. What are the advantages of using CHAT for teaching?**

First of all, I have to say that I chose this topic option because I was curious but I didn’t know anything about that and I had no experience at all in this field. In addition, to tell you the truth, I was kind of sceptical because this way of communication sounded “superficial” to me in order to teach. I thought it was funny to chat informally with friends or unknown people, a “sort of social / leisure activity”, as Tim noticed in his post. I couldn’t imagine it was effective in T&L.

But I was wrong! Since the first chat lesson with Melanie, I realized that chat stimulates students to react immediately to teacher’s inputs, more than face to face classes. One must pay attention to the flow of communication, focusing his mind on the topic. There are several advantages in using chat for teaching: from the student’s point of view it is stimulating. If there’s a seating plan, the teacher goes round in rotation for comments and each student is requested to write comments on each step of the lesson. In this way all the students are stimulated to reflect on the topic and participate actively: this doesn’t happen so often in a traditional face to face class.

From the teachers’ point of view there are advantages too, beginning from the fact that they can give the lesson from their houses or wherever they are, as well as the students from all over the world can attend the same lesson from their computers. And this is also another advantage: the chat is an easy way to put together participants (students and teachers) from different countries and with different backgrounds to discuss on the same topic, taking advantage of many different experiences.

**What elements of your course could be taught using CHAT?**

In our second meeting in chat (Saturday 8th) we have been requested to teach our favourite topic for 15 minutes. I’ve chosen Entomology and T. has chosen Fashion.

It has been exciting! I prepared my lesson in advance, writing some notes in a Word document so that I could fish out sentences in order to be precise and succinct (even because I was not using my mother tongue).

It has been a very interesting experience also because other students came out with many interesting and correct ideas although they didn’t know anything about the subject.

I teach Entomology and Biotechnology and these both are subjects rich in concepts (ho do you say that in English?) and not very easy to teach using chat. I believe that the chat is very effective when the subject is very “open” and flexible and students can construct together a “meaning” around that topic, through discussion and collaboration.

In my case, I think I would use chat in my courses for example for discussions about previous reading of scientific articles on particular topics or to examine and make clear hard aspects dealt with during regular classes.

(I hope my English is clear enough for you...if not, I would be glad to clarify my thoughts for you all)

Bye, S.

**7.** Just something to add to the exploration of Chat by this group. I have been investigating Chat over the last two years in relation to supporting e-learning programme delivery and have gathered some information together that I thought would be useful to share with you all. Its a really exciting medium that has such great potential!

Topics include:

* Introduction to Chat
* Appropriate use of Chat
* Tips for Establishing Effective Synchronous Communication
* Establishing Virtual Office Hours
* How to Chat
* Some Potential Chat Roles
* Chat Symbols
* Chat Etiquette
* References

http://www.education.bham.ac.uk/subjects/elearning/chat2.htm

Any further suggestions/ideas/feedback, especially after we've had our Chats that can add/amend this document would be appreciated. I’m hoping to develop a Web area that explores the Pedagogy on E-Learning Tools not only for my own School/University but for anyone else that would find it useful.

Look forward to seeing Group A online this Saturday!

D.

**8.** Hello all,

I'm certainly no expert in Using Chat for teaching and have little experience in using chat at all, so my comments here will be largely based on our Chat session on Saturday, the material read so far and general experience.

Advantages of Using Chat for teaching

- Add interaction and variety to onlines courses

- Allow students on a distance learning course to get to know each other and chit-chat a bit

- Create group identity and foster synergy

- Chat facilities can encourage student-student interaction about course topics or simply socialize

- Provide a chance for real-time brainstorming and idea-sharing

- Provide a time for a group to come together after a period of messaging and individual study

- Do group work that could otherwise not be done through asynchronous distance learning

- Chance for tutor to give live feedback to a student or group and answer questions, perhaps on work done earlier

- Variety of teaching methods (from Melanie):

Q & A

Pairwork

Small group discussion

General group discussion

One-to-one tutorials

Using worksheets

That's all that comes to mind for now!!

I do have a question, however. What chat programs/web sites do people know/like and generally use? What about for teaching... what are the best ICT support systems/platforms?

Thanks!!

P.

**9.** Hi

After taking part in my first live CHAT on Saturday, I have put together what I think are some of the main advantages of using CHAT as a medium for Online Learning.

- Flexibility of scheduling the class

- Multiple and collaborative participation among widely dispersed individuals

- Ultimate convenience, when and where you choose

- Interaction with and among individual from diverse cultures

- Ability to focus on participants' ideas, without knowledge of age, race, gender, etc

- Ability to provide immediate feedback for students

- The social aspects of meeting new learners

- CHAT can be used in many way - one to one, one to many, in conjunction with asynchronous areas (bulletin boards), for guest

speakers, role plays, lectures, demonstrations.

- Students experience a sense of equality

- Instructors are more accessible

These are to mention just a few. I am sure there are many more.

Regards

G.

**10**. Dear All,

After feeling aggrieved that my original choice of topic option was taken - I have been very pleasantly surprised at how useful and interesting I have found the CHAT option. Certainly I am very likely to be incorporating managed chat sessions in my new online course (and I perhaps wouldn't have done so had I not enjoyed the interaction).

**So what are the advantages of CHAT?**

As a distance learner, I actually found myself excited at the prospect of being online with others - I suppose its the craving for human contact and possibilities of discussing the course etc. However, on 1st March when I could not get on, I found myself disappointed and upset - I was left wondering whether it was all taking place without me!

The biggest advantage is that for the distance learner - it gives an opportunity for *live interaction with their fellow students* and thereby allows for peer tutoring/ assisted learning which can be immensely valuable.

The 'here and nowness' of it I found very pleasing - you type in your comments in the sure knowledge that you will get an instant reply.

*No-one is excluded -* it is all embracing - especially if the expectation is that everyone will comment or discuss some point

It has huge *potential for 'specialist' tutors* - short sessions with subject specialists who may be willing to be contracted for 1 hour of on-line discussion - rather than the traveling and inconvenience of visiting an institution for the 1 hour.

*I like the anonymity* - What? what I actually mean here is that you can create groups of students who would not normally choose to work together. They know very little about each other - they have no preconceived ideas about someone - this is good.

The *flexibility* in terms of timing - is both an advantage and disadvantage. If you have international students within very different time zones - this could be a problem - but easily overcome by having several groups at different times.

As a student I found it great to feel as if I had done some work and the moment it was over I could resume with my other activities - immediately.

**Disadvantages** - maybe they should be pitfalls?

It really is essential to have some sort of chairperson - and I am not sure how skilled you need to be to fulfill this role. Therefore, when stetting students to discuss things without overt tutor involvement - I do not know whether this would work.

A think familiarity might breed contempt - in other words I would restrict the use of chat for topics which really need discussion and also which have a defined 'outcome' - in terms of what the students have to do. Of course they can chat anyway - but in terms of scheduled chat relating to their study I see great poetntial for selecting specific topics - rather than trying to get them to CHAT on general topics.

We did not have any dominant personalities in our group - but if you did....this could also cause problems.

Anyhow - well managed CHAT has great potential to enhance the experience and learning of the distance learner.

At the moment I am transferring an existing campus based course into a new online delivery. As you might expect, not everything will go into the new course as it has revised aims and outcomes. However, at the level of the module, I am currently grappling with knowledge/content that is central to the topic. As the students are postgraduates and are all working professionals - I am able to assume a certain level of knowledge and also provide them with essential and recommended reading which they will complete. Additionally, the students bring with them their own experience and, in some cases, expertise. How best to share that? This where CHAT could be very useful. We have scheduled a series of chat topics - broader questions on infectious diseases in which they can bring their specific advanced knowledge (acquired through the completion of their tasks) and their working / professional expertise as healthcare professionals. We could group them according to their professions (medics together, biomedical scientists etc.) or mix them up. Tutors will chair discussions initially (this may change) and together with nominated students, will prepare a summary of the discussion for circulation to all.

We will no doubt have the logistical problems of getting everyone fixed up with a suitable online slot, but I am hopeful that it will prove useful. Time will tell!!

A.