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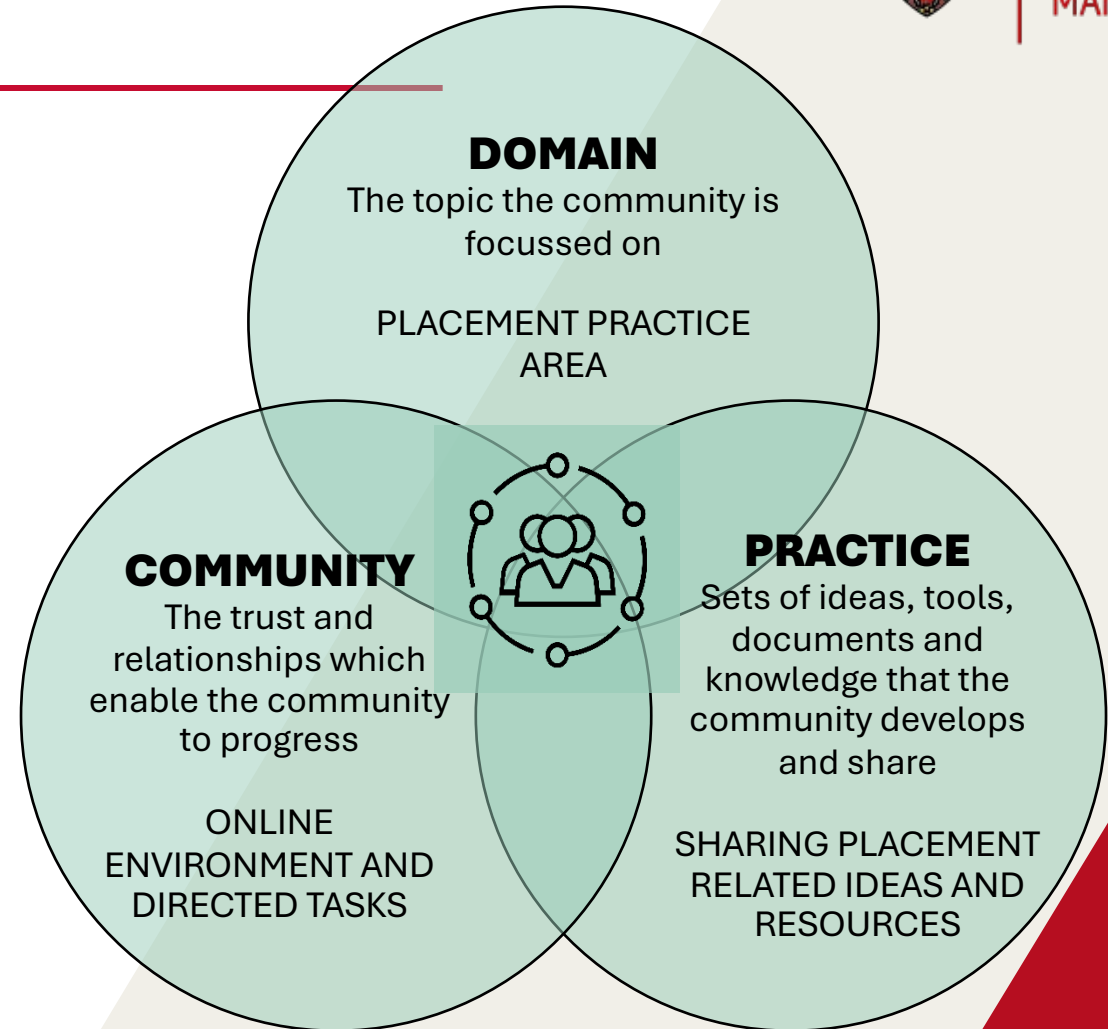
**Development of learner communities of practice to support
contemporary academic and practice-based learning:
Preparation for future innovators**

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Introduction



- Contemporary placements at the University of Salford
- Communities of Practice
“groups of people who share a concern... and who deepen their knowledge and expertise in this area by interacting on an ongoing basis” (Wenger et al, 2002, p4).
- Need to evaluate and improve



Methods

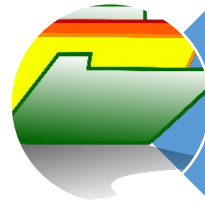


- 23-24
 - Online survey (n=36)
 - Focus Groups
- 24-25
 - Repeated survey (n=33)
- Data collected around four themes

(adapted from European Commission: Joint Research Centre et al (2021))



Engagement
(Participation and engagement)



Resources
(Community and knowledge)



Experience
(Trust and confidence)



Communication

Recommendations after first wave



Engagement:

Not all students recognised how the community of practice benefitted their personal development. Consider teaching more on the benefits of communities of practice and the associated personal benefits

Resources:

Lack of understanding around how to use the resources, therefore more time spent earlier on sharing these resources and how to utilise them

Experience:

More time spent outlining the goals of community of practice and how this looks in practice compared to group work

Communication:

Consider ways to ensure all students are engaged and take responsibility

Resource development – implemented after first wave



Communities of Practice Workbook



Occupational Therapy

Exploring Contemporary Practice (BSc)

Ready for Practice (MSc)

Recommendation:

Lack of understanding around how to use the resources, therefore more time spent earlier on sharing these resources and how to utilise them



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Re-evaluation



Engagement

- More students in the later survey agreed their CoP had a shared goal (64% → 76%)
- 25% more students agreed that their CoP shared the workload equitably (39% → 64%)

"I enjoyed working with my group, they were engaged and hard working"

Resources

All questions about resources showed improvement in the later survey:

- Appropriate resources to enable CoP (78% → 94%)
- Enough support (67% → 88%)
- Enough resources (72% → 85%)

Re-evaluation



Experience

- Same proportion of students felt they had a positive (72% → 73%) or negative experience (11% → 12%) with their community of practice – no change
- 22% more students felt that having a CoP helped prepare them for placement (44% → 67%)

“Working in (a) COP helped me with my placement and doing the Viva”

Communication

- On average the CoPs had the same number of meetings in the latter survey

Key Takeaways



Engagement:

Having defined roles in CoPs was deemed to be beneficial

Support / opportunity to meet CoPs during placement was desirable

Resources:

Improved feedback on resources: workbook supported CoPs with clear tasks

More input from ideas clinics / tutors was suggested

Experience:

Purpose of CoPs was generally well understood, supported by literature in the workbook & introductory lecture

Communication:

Varied engagement & contributions from group members was still a challenge

CoPs used WhatsApp effectively

Next steps



- Continue with the Workbook
- Consider adding more early tasks around engagement and participation and monitoring of task engagement
- Acknowledgement that working with CoPs is challenging / difficult (but mirrors practice!)



References and any questions?



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