PT A, thanks very much for the follow-up meeting here about the pilot scheme that we ran at the Foundation. A couple of things I wanted to just sort of run through with you was, so obviously we're at the point now of the study where it's looking now at, obviously, evidence in what the student outcomes were, specifically more, well, yes, ok, student engagement would be one. If we do them in numbered order, actually. Student engagement would be number 1, number 2 would be numeracy, number 3 would be language, number 4 would be IT, or mobile technology, and then number 5 would be any not mentioned, which I'm hoping that you might allude to something there. So what I wanted to do, A, first of all, so I just wanted to share my screen with you. So hopefully, you can see. This was the questionnaire sheets. When we get the guys the devices after we'd done the presentations and that, and the orientation of the programme, it was more, "Right, ok, guys, go and start doing it", and then you set them a classroom task, if you remember, about what the results were, and to compare themself with somebody else, and also what do you want to improve, and how you can achieve it. So quite a brief questionnaire, to the point, and I just sort of want to reflect on that and see how your thoughts obviously, being the lecturer, how that did impact on those four points. So if we go on point 1, or shall I sort of summarise or give like an overview of what this was, the task that you set them? Or do you want to explain the task that you set them and why?

A No, I mean, if you want to go through that. Again, I'm just making some notes on some of the points 1 to 5 that you've just made.

PT OK. Well, I suppose before we go through the points, the task that you set, what was your motivation for it, other than assessing their engagement with the technology? Did you have anything else? Did it fit with any of the units of work that you were specifically doing at the time, and if so, how did it benefit? I'm not going to tie you down now to say, "Right, you've got to answer me here and now". I can follow that up with an email later on, asking you if you could detail those, any specific units of work that this related to.

A I can do, yes.

PT And if it did, what were those outcomes of those results? So did it improve attainment or decrease attainment? Did it improve student engagement or decrease it?

A OK, so the point of the task first of all. So me and a co-lecturer set this task out for our lads, because obviously, we were trialling the units in order for you to be able to make sure that we could gather data from outside of the classroom and bring it back inside the classroom, understand that data and then be able to apply that data as well, and then trying to use what we've found to identify strengths and weaknesses, to tie it up to personal gain to develop themselves in terms of their football and what they could do outside of education, as well as try to tie it into some of the assessments that we've got going on, what we had at the time. So there was a point of them trying to understand what they were trying to get from quantitative data, and put it into qualitative data in terms of informative assumptive assessments. That's what we tried to do. At the time when we did this assessment with them, or this task with them, we were working on Unit 27, which was technical and tactical, where what we tried to do was, we tried to identify what they could do technically within their sport, and how they would compare and contrast it against someone other on a different level, whether that be participation level, whether that be elite level. Trying to gather the physiological data of an elite level athlete proved to be quite difficult at FE, something that we can't get hold of, because we don't have the resources, we don't have Wii Scout, we don't have the bio-labs, we don't have regular elite athletes to stick one of these units on and say, "Can you run for us?" So we did actually be able to compare and contrast against another athlete so we can actually get some of the data. Again, this helps, working with their data. I might go off the beaten track, as you know, always. With the data we've got, one of your points was to look at the numeracy. A lot of the students that we get can be Level 2 learners, so they didn't pass their GCSE maths or English. It really helps them out in terms of something that is relatable to them, not just learning about decimal points or percentages, and they're like, "I don't understand", but actually making it relatable for something that they've done outside in the field in sports that they love, bringing it back into the classroom and having a look at data, and instead of just seeing numbers on a page, they've actually seen numbers which are relating to what they've done. So that's where it helps them understand working with numbers and their numeracy skills, and we could progress even further, we could have brought it into GCSE maths and English by saying, "Right, could you work out the mean? Could you work out the percentage that you were standing still for 90 minutes?" We could have done that. For this task we didn't, but what we did was, we did find quantitative data, and then from there, in the assessment that we actually did, was to meet the distinction criteria, was to evaluate, and to evaluate what they did was, they compared themselves to another student, as you see there, and then they wrote about the strengths and the weaknesses which they found out from that comparison, and then, from the weaknesses which they found out, they actually made recommendations from there, so how could they recommend getting better for themselves. Their attainments went up because they identified their own strengths and weaknesses, but not only that, as well they started to critically think. So it started improving their critical thinking skills about, "Well, what could I do for somebody else? How could I apply this if I was a coach? How could I apply this if I was a strength and conditioning coach?" Then that, I guess, for them, that's where their engagement started to increase a little bit more because they started applying it to real life theoretical issues for themselves, these real life employment opportunities for them, how can they use it, how can they use this experience to get them better in life? So I think, again when we spoke last time, I had a really good chat with a lot of my students about how they perceive their future now changing. It wasn't just one straight road for them, it was like, "Right, I can actually go to different avenues", which was quite good. In that task that we did as well, and throughout the time that we were using the units with you, ICT skills, being able to use their mobiles. It's accessible for them. We were very fortunate that we've got a lot of our students in Level 2, Level 3 who have got access to a mobile device, a smart tablet or a smart phone, so it was quite easy and accessible for them to actually get the data and know what I'm doing. So it was quick and easy as well to apply it into the classroom. So to students that data was available, it was available to them to write with, there was no waiting around. Compared to, in the past we've used Veo, which again, is a great tool to use Veo in terms of analysis of the games, observing and stuff, but once we've actually recorded data, it took us over about twenty-four to forty-eight hours to actually get that data back, so it needed to be well planned in advance. However, with this data, it was accessible instantaneously, it was easy for us to do. So yes, let me see, what else have we got? So with the unit in which we used, the students were seeing a connection to their module in which we were teaching. I've already mentioned Unit 27 and Unit 19, which is technical and tactical unit, and Unit 19 is analysis of sports unit. And as I mentioned last time as well, we can use the unit in various other modules that have sprung to mind. It's really from the 2010 spec of Pearsons, and going forward into the new spec of Pearsons, again it could still be used. And again... Go on, sorry.

PT I was just going to jump in on there where you were saying about the Pearson specs. I wanted you just to perhaps look a little bit further now, and I know they haven't come online yet. They're not due out until the end of 2021, and that's the new T Levels that the government are now channelling all FE qualifications towards, and if you felt that, yes, this could fit in with that, or well, no, it's not really suitable for that.

A Sorry, could you say that again for me?

PT Yes, so I'm just thinking here, I just wanted to stop you there because you were saying about the Pearsons, the old spec, and then the new spec, so the 2010, the 2019/20 re-engineering of them, and now as we move forward to next year, with the government now starting to push for the T Levels, and over the next sort of three to four years phasing out BTEC as a qualification and more towards these new Technical or T Levels that the government are now going to start pushing all the funding towards for FE to go for, and it really is, do you think that this will, well, how this could impact on those T Levels?

A Well, from my understanding of the T Levels, it's more of like, it's taking a mixture of the classroom to real life, on-the-job real life experience and learning. So as me and you just said then, a lot of the students that I've got struggle to relate theory to practical, but that's where in terms of sport, if we can actually have data, like I say, available to us, and have equipment and resources available to us, we can actually use that on-the-job experience and data and bring it into the classroom so you can actually see that connection. So in terms of T Levels, when the government say they want an on-the-job experience, then yes, I do see room for it.

PT OK. Thank you. And the last point on this one was, you said about, we'd only done like a small pilot study there with your guys, but you said about, so it wasn't in the GCSE. Is it something that could perhaps be included in that in another programme, do you think, or...?

A Yes, definitely. It definitely can. Like you say, with the numeracy especially with my Level 2 learners in the past, they've come to us studying maths for the past four years, five years in high school and didn't get the pass. A sixteen-year-old, trying to teach them maths again, you kind of face certain barriers, of motivation, commitment to the course, there's several things that we come into difficulty with with learners when it comes to maths particularly, but making numeracy not just about numbers, but making it relatable to them in sport, to specialist sport students, being able to provide them data to be able to relate that to performance, where they can see, "Right, ok, now I can understand why and how you work something out", and the importance of using it, not just your, I don't just mean your, no, I mean like, we always say that common joke as like, "Why did they teach me trigonometry? I never use it any more". It's making students understand that they will use maths, and if they want to go down to a job role as sports scientist or physiotherapist, a PE teacher, a sports coach, strength and conditioning coach, anything, there is going to be an element of numeracy and English, and I think using this data and using tasks, just simple tasks like this, will get them more engaged and willing to work as well, especially in numeracy, and then when you can actually turn it into writing, into literature for them, to say, "What does that actually mean to you?" Use the data which you've actually collected and just explain what's happened, and they put words on paper. That there, right there, they're starting to analyse and evaluate. Those big verbs that Pearson love anyway is being to analyse and evaluate it, well, that's your distinction criteria at BTEC level, even Level 3, so being able to use it in English as well, and making them understand how to actually describe, explain, evaluate, the big balloons as well. Yes, students will actually be able to develop, because they're starting to understand how to write, and not just write, but write to a Level 3 criteria as well. So if I get opportunity to do it again, would I use it more in maths and English? I would, yes.

PT OK. Well, A, that's sort of blown me away there. You've kind of ticked all the boxes there of saying, so number 1) student engagement we've covered, numeracy, language, IT. Was there anything else there that we haven't mentioned, or do you think we've covered everything there?

A I mean, other things, like I did mention to you was, I always look at the employment routes for my learners because as a Level 3 lecturer, I don't see me as the end product for them. Obviously, I want them to continue on, whether that be into HE, whether it be into full-time employment, whatever it will be, I'm just a stepping stone, and so one of the things I really did want, and I've said this in the past, I've seen my students actually, open-mindedness, have a growth mindset now about their future, not just, "I'm going to be a football player", or, "I'm going to be a PE teacher", "I'm just going to be a football coach". That's different now, that's changed, and I think it's because they've actually experienced using different equipment that's never been available to them before, and then being able to buy in to different scenarios and seeing the benefit of it, and so therefore they move away from just, "Oh, I want to be a PE teacher", to now moving into, "Oh, what does sports science do for me? Where can I go with that?" So the employability aspect of this last twelve months, eighteen months, has been great for me and my students, and from there as well, the interest in the students as well. So the interest's not only in what they're using in the units which they're using and the equipment that they're using, but the interest in their education as well. That's been very well received by me, my colleagues, the Foundation staff as well.

PT Right. OK. I'm kind of struggling here to ask you all the questions I feel like I should be asking you, but you just sort of blow me away, really, with the answers, or the feedback, I should say, that you've given me. So I do remember early in the conversation there you were saying about students using it away from the actual college day and the classroom. First off, could you give us an example of that, and secondly, could you, if there is one, provide support of that of where they have used something away from the college day and then brought it into the classroom at some point?

A Yes. I don't know whether I'm allowed to mention names. We've got one student particularly springs to mind. He bought himself his own Strava unit. You might have actually met him. He bought his own Strava unit, and he said himself that the contract unit was a lot easier for him to use, in terms of switching it on, gathering of data. Covid hit us, and as the lecturers, and more particularly, the sports coaches that we have, they monitored the unit. What they did was, they asked them to use it. They set them a sporting excellence framework for this, they set them a certain amount of miles a week, how many kilometres they should be running, certain tasks of the weeks and sessions. So that's how the coaches could monitor what they were doing, and that's how our students proved and evidenced their sporting excellence framework. And in doing that, they got positive marks for their registers as well, so it kept their attendance up, obviously kept their bursary coming through to them as well, so it was important that they maintained their physical exercise as well as using the units for us. Then we had a brief spell where we were allowed back into college, where we got to use some of the data, but what we've seen more of is, when the students had more time on their hands when we were online learning, we could actually share screens, and the students could share with us what they'd done, how they'd used their data, and then you could see it within the analytical writing as well within the assessments that they would use their data to back up certain points of, like I say, in technical and tactical or Unit 19, when they were comparing and contrasting against sports performance. So they could use that, and also they shared data. It's something that we've seen. Students would share what they've done with other students. We've seen competitiveness increased as well, especially over lockdown. We've seen students, again, I've got to say someone's name and I don't know, am I allowed to?

PT Yes, you can, yes, you can.

A As I say, ET, we've seen ET try to run a little bit more than LS. We've seen a really good little competition between those two until, I think it was LS decided to do, I think it was like two marathons in a week near enough. That was just too much for anybody to do. Yes, so we've seen competitiveness reach up as well, but coming back, like we said, we started using it a little bit more in the classroom because the students could provide data to back up their evidence or their writing, use the data as evidence to back up their writing for certain units that we do.

PT Yes. I've just got one last point here, and it relates to Covid, but you know, we've always got to throw in. It's really about something you've said there, and also I've recognised that myself in one of the earlier studies, about the lack of engagement from the actual football coaches or the sports coaches, with technology, and do you feel that because of Covid, given what you just said there about the coaches giving them tasks to do, do you feel as though that's actually got the coaches now more engaging with the technology and the benefits of it?

A Yes. So let's break that apart. So I understand in some points, because when Covid hit, coaches really didn't have a handle on athletes because they couldn't make them do the sessions, and they couldn't ideally prove that they were doing the sessions, and because the education programme works very closely with the coaches, and obviously with the sport excellence framework, the students still need to get a positive mark for that, it was decided by us and the coaches that we needed to get them to do something, and it started off slowly, 5K a week, from the Couch to 5K, I think it was, that we got involved with. So it rolled out slowly, we started using the government schemes like that, so yes, students, athletes, Couch to 5K, off they go, and we had a couple of students that could evidence it, and we had mixtures. We had people sending in the screenshots of the Nike app or screenshots of Strava, using the units as well from yourself, but then nothing was standardised. We couldn't tell, because with your units we could tell with the heat maps how far they've gone, but with the other apps we couldn't. So it was decided by the coaches that we could standardise it and we could all of us use one playing field. So students started to use the units that were given to them, and then slowly, more and more students started to feed their data back to their coaches. The coaches could see what students and what athletes were participating, and then from there as well, we knew that when everything opens back up and students were allowed to play again, it made it a lot easier for the coaches to be able to select their teams, identify weaknesses or health concerns or those students who may or may not have put on a little bit more weight over Covid. so it helped them structure their training then a little bit better. So in total, it was useful for the coaches to be able to use and evidence the running which the students did.

PT If, A, I'm just trying to think here now of the bigger picture-type thing, and obviously, like you said, I think it's something like 98% of all people, young adults between the age of sixteen and twenty-five, have a mobile smart phone. Yet again, with these electronic devices, an additional thing, additional item, I should say, no matter how useful it is, it's still an expense, an additional expense. Do you feel that perhaps, I mean, one of the ideas we've got, we've actually looked at trialling it already was where you've got, like you have at the Strachan Foundation, where you've got a small number of units, and the guys are using those, and they can see the results on their phone. Now although you can't use a mobile phone in a football match, they can, like they're using the apps like Strava and Nike where they're out running doing physical training with their mobile phones. If we could use the app the guys are using the units with, the phone then becomes the unit itself, that would then reduce the expense to FE and, well, everybody, really. What are your thoughts on that?

A Yes, I mean, if you turn the app into the actual units, it would be a lot more accessible to a lot more students, and obviously it would bring the cost down. So I mean, that in terms of a consideration would be great because of the cost, I guess, so yes. There were four. I'm trying to think of a counter for it. I think the benefit of having the actual units is that you've actually got something tangible, that they've actually got something that they're, "I need this to demonstrate that I'm doing it". So it gives them a kind of responsibility as well.

PT Yes, I'm with you. OK.

A So there's pros and cons to it. I agree with the app becoming the actual unit, and logging everything for them, but that does take away the autonomy of them saying like, "You need to take this with you. I'm going to go and do this, I'm going to go and do that. I need to take this with me to prove it", because as we all know, a mobile becomes second nature. I mean, wake up in the morning, grab my mobile, I go to sleep, I've got my mobile.

PT Yes.

A And I've lost my bank card more times than I can count, but I've never lost my mobile.

PT Oh, don't say that to you.

A No. I get up, I have the phone.

PT Yes.

***End of Interview***