

Experiences of Online Training

David Henty
d.henty@epcc.ed.ac.uk

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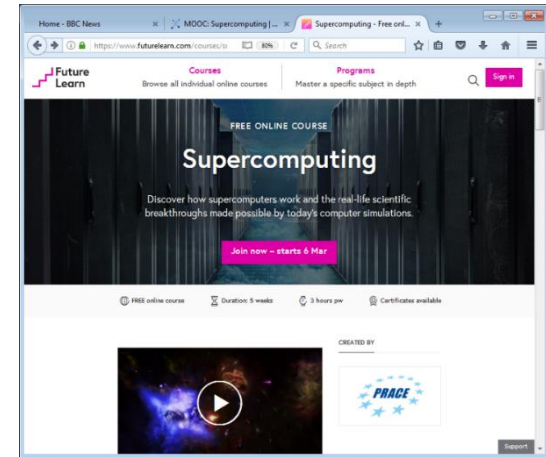
Pre-COVID19

- Already had a range of delivery mechanisms
 - but still mainly face-to-face
- Standard PRACE course
 - two or three days intensive delivery in a training room
 - lecture/practical/lecture/practical ...

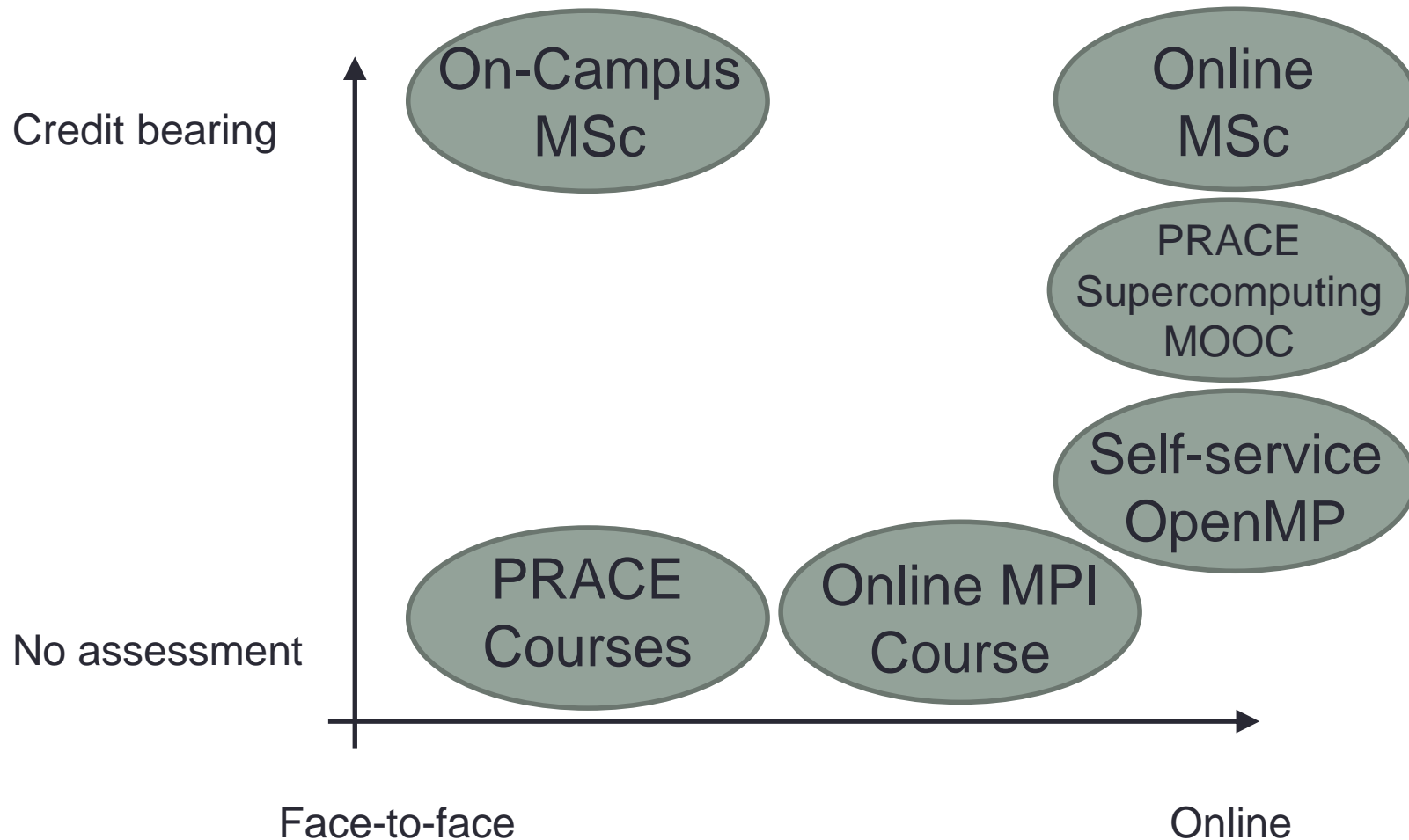


futurelearn.com/courses/supercomputing/

- Free introductory course
 - videos, articles, quizzes, discussion boards etc.
 - largely conceptual
 - tutors contribute to discussions
 - “ask an expert” sessions
- Five runs: Feb 2017, Aug 2017, Jan 2018, Sep 2018, October 2019
 - approx joiners: 3000, 3000, 1500, 1000, 600
 - approx completion: around 10%
- Now runs all the time in an “unfacilitated” mode



EPCC Ecosystem



Options for online teaching

- Maintain intensive delivery
 - perhaps alter practical examples to keep people involved
- My experience
 - people (attendees and lecturers) experience burn-out
 - no “down-time” chatting to other attendees at coffee / lunch
 - interaction in practical sessions is poor
- Intensive delivery model entirely based on physical travel
 - true for both lectures and hands-on practical sessions
 - minimises travel and accommodation costs
 - only way to enable non-local attendees
 - we don't use it for most University courses

Taking advantage of online delivery

- Maintain live lectures
 - allows for some interaction, e.g. quizzes and polls
- Do live examples
 - live coding (warts and all)
- Consider “long-thin” model, not “short-fat”
 - e.g. every Tuesday for three weeks
 - or every Monday and Wednesday afternoon for three weeks
 - we offer a tutorial “office-hour” session a few weeks afterwards
- Attendees can attempt practicals in between
 - provide asynchronous support via message boards etc.

Diversity and Inclusion

- Don't worry about declining attendance during course
 - online makes attendance more diverse in background etc.
 - it is a huge commitment to attend a physical course
 - online, can attend a few lectures to see if it's useful with little cost
 - widens access to the courses



- People have other commitments (childcare etc)
 - recording lectures guards against occasional clashes

Any questions?

- Thanks for your attention!