

SHEILA

Framework

Academic Quality

Control Review

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Methodology

The methodology has involved a range of research instruments: a literature review of key areas such as ethics and privacy, policies, institutional strategies, institutional readiness, and institutional capacities; interviews; a group concept mapping exercise; and focus groups. Consultation took place with a wide and appropriate group of stakeholders, bringing in the considerable expertise and wide-ranging perspectives of institutional leaders and 29 international learning analytics experts. These were supplemented by consultations with 74 students from 4 European institutions and 59 staff from the same institutions. This highly comprehensive data gathering exercise helps to validate the research findings.

Structure of the framework

The framework has been structured in a logical manner which provides institutions with practical steps to develop learning analytics at their institutions. The 6 dimensions of the ROMA model which the framework utilises (map political context, identify key stakeholders, identify desired behaviour changes, develop engagement strategy, analyse internal capacity to effect change, and establish monitoring and learning frameworks) cover the key areas which an institution must consider in order to effect real change to its processes and create an impact from learning analytics.

Recommendation 1

The “ROMA framework” is introduced in the framework document with no explanation or background. The acronym should at least be expanded and, ideally, a link incorporated to background information on the model.

The ROMA framework includes the concept of monitoring and learning but does not explicitly demonstrate a feedback loop. A supplementary perspective which could be considered would be to view the dimensions as part of a continuous improvement cycle, which is likely to take place in an institution over several years. The final stage of monitoring and learning therefore leads to a re-evaluation of the political context, reengagement with key stakeholders and revisiting of the other dimensions.

Recommendation 2

Consider developing an additional view of the framework as a continuous improvement cycle. This need not take place in the framework itself but could be described in supplementary documentation.

Three “key elements” are described for each dimension: action (strategic action points to take), challenges and policy (questions to guide the development of policy). As the whole SHEILA Framework relates to policy, it is not immediately obvious why this element should be called “policy”. Calling it “questions” would help to make the framework more instantly understandable.

Recommendation 3

Consider renaming the third key element of each dimension as “Questions”.

There are various themes within each of the three elements. These themes are logical and comprehensive. The points and questions within the framework however are apparently equally weighted. It is not clear whether a point has been included because it was mentioned by a single stakeholder or because a number of interviewees, respondents or focus group members had considered it to be important. What process was used to decide whether to include a point in the framework?

Recommendation 4

Briefly outline in the introductory section or in clearly accessible supplementary documentation pointed to from the framework the methodology/rationale for including a point.

Supplementary documentation / publications

The framework has been disseminated widely and is incorporated in and expanded upon in a number of publications. These include three useful introductory papers: “Adoption of Learning Analytics in Higher Education”, “Teacher and Student Perspectives on Learning Analytics” and “The State of Learning Analytics in Europe”. Two papers at LAK’17, which will have been subjected to a peer review process were: “Learning Analytics in Higher Education – Challenges and Policies: A Review of Eight Learning Analytics Policies” and “SHEILA Policy Framework: Informing Institutional Strategies and Policy Processes of Learning Analytics”. A further paper, “The SHEILA framework: informing institutional strategies and policy processes of learning analytics” has been accepted for publication in the Journal for Learning Analytics. These publications are part of a successful dissemination process for the project to date.

Recommendation 5

Seek further publication / dissemination opportunities for the final version of the Framework for the learning analytics community as well as in outlets with more mainstream readership to maximise impact e.g. University Business, EDUCAUSE, The Conversation, Computers and Education.