



# Lessons learned from using Skype to engage students in authentic case based learning.

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## Introduction & Background

Interprofessional learning (IPL) is promoted within all health care professional programmes. There are many ways to deliver inter-professional education, however the common aim is to prepare students for future collaborative working. Two educators from NUI Galway were keen to promote student engagement through IPL within their undergraduate Occupational Therapy and Speech and Language Therapy programmes. One area of collaborative practice for both professions is the assessment and provision of assistive technology including assistive technology (AT) or augmentative and alternative communication (AAC).

## Methods

The two educators developed four interprofessional learning sessions building on the foundation of a previous online IPL unit at the beginning of the semester. Design features included: collaborative timetabling, use of flipped classroom, connecting with a client expert via Skype and a workshop on devices and software. The educators and the client expert reflected on:

- What worked well?
- What didn't work well?
- Suggestions for improvement.

## Findings

### What worked well?

The length of the sessions was good, one hour or two hour

Students really enjoyed coming together

Attendance was very high considering that no credits were given for the course

Client expert got plenty of notice before Skype

Client expert knew what students were expecting

Students and client expert got questions beforehand

Students recognised that joint working needed in the area of AT and AAC.

### What didn't work well?

Wi-Fi connection not reliable during the call.

Students not enough preparation to prepare an argument for AT and ACC to a provider

Client expert felt Skype not very practical

Students may need more time to explore the assistive technologies

Not clear if students watched and read the pre session information

Timetable clash with assignment on the last session

### Suggestions for CHANGE

Review skype or person attending

Provide more flipped materials or examples of assistive technologies

Offer credits

## Conclusions

Collaboration of educators from different disciplines and areas of expertise, in supporting students to learn in an integrated way, has the potential to support them in their future collaborative practice. This is an innovative way to create authentic IPL experiences. We need to explore the use of Skype further.