



# Educational Futures: The Challenges of MOOCs

Rebecca Ferguson

*Institute of Educational Technology  
The Open University, UK*

Rethinking Education: Stockholm

# The Open University (UK)



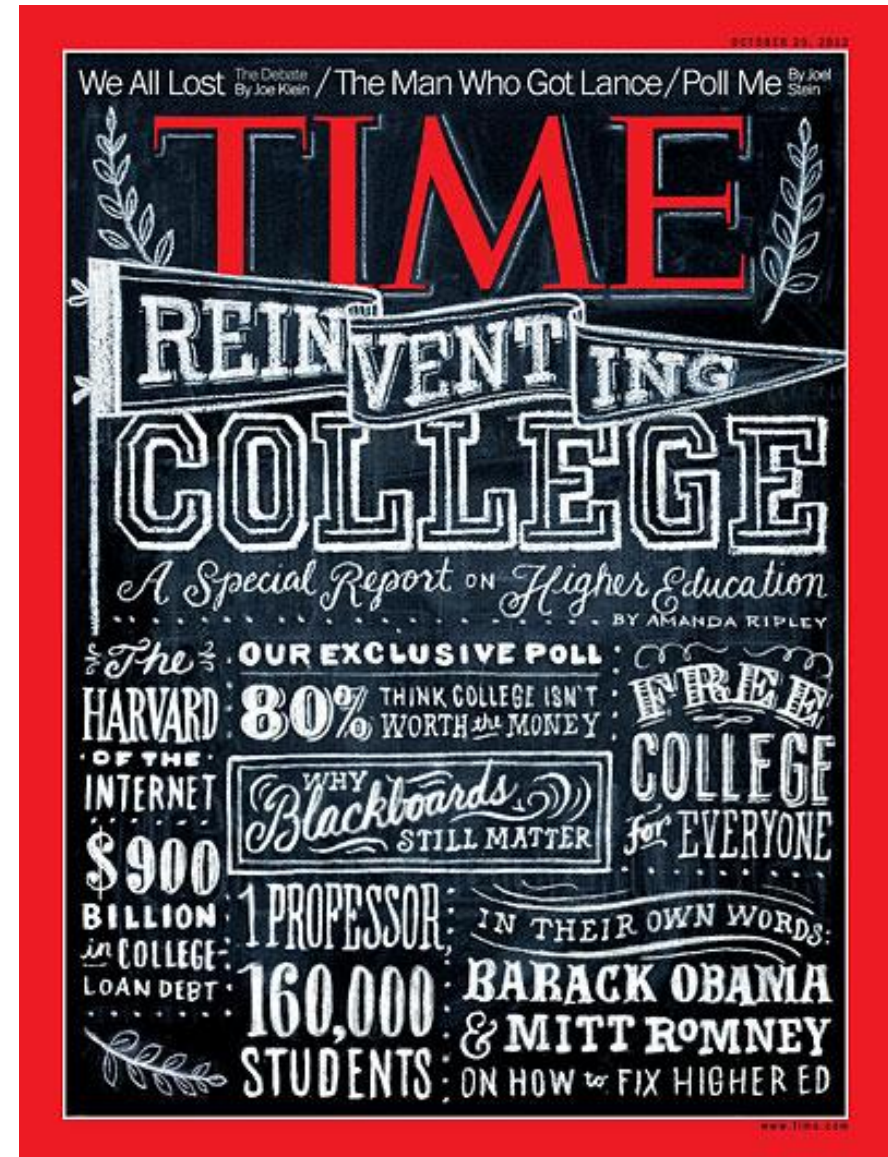
- Supported distance education at scale
- Largest university in the UK
- More than 240,000 students
- 8,700,000 iTunes downloads in 2013
- 5,100,000 YouTube views in 2013



# What are MOOCs?



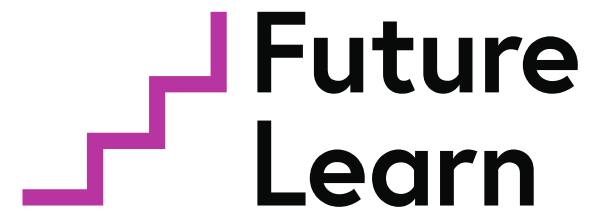
- M**assive  
thousands may sign up
- O**pen  
no payment is required
- O**nline  
resources on the Internet
- C**ourses  
time-bounded cohorts





Inspiring learning for life by

- Telling stories
- Provoking conversations
- Celebrating progress



Launched September 2013

29 partners; 26 universities

Nearly 400,000 course sign-ups

Over 200,000 registered users

Six of the first eight courses hit their cap of 10,000

Nearly 30,000 learners joining some of this year's courses

<http://about.futurelearn.com/blog/>



# **Advantages of massive for teaching and learning**

# Advantages of massive for learners



Massive participation offers learners

- support from a wide range of other learners
- resources provided by those learners in the form of discussion and links
- a range of diverse cultural perspectives.

# Support, resources and a variety of perspectives



Improving Your Image:  
Dental Photography  
University of Birmingham

Elias Adan Gimenez Feliu

I'm one of the very few photographers in an area twice as big as Scotland (the Paraguayan Chaco), where 8 different cultures live together. There's no record-keeping or proper research done with regards of dental treatment, specially among the most remote areas on the country. I believe there's huge opportunities to enhance the dental service through the powerful medium that photography provides, by providing material for research and education. Mainly to inform central and local government and other decision makers, about the realities the region faces, but specially to educate patients (elderly and children) dental workers and other professionals, that sometimes have to travel hundreds of kilometres on very bad roads, in order to reach a small town with no proper facilities but where people in need of proper treatment live.

Advantages of MOOCs



# Advantages of massive for educators

Massive participation offers educators

- affective benefits
- potentially increased access to resources
- motivation to develop teaching practices

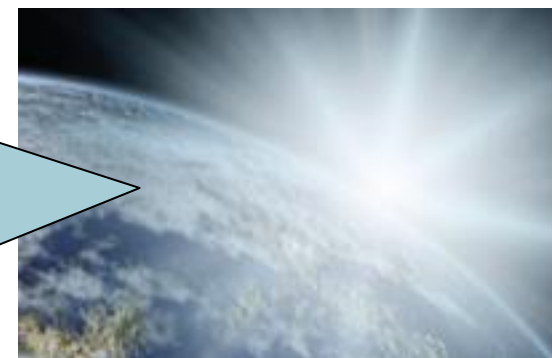
# Enjoyment, resources and motivation



Corpus Linguistics: Method, Analysis and Interpretation  
Lancaster University

I am very passionate about the study of language based on naturally occurring speech and writing. So getting more people to know about it and be able to do it is my goal

Practise what you preach, as they say. So I have decided to do some reflective learning and blog about my experience with our Climate Change MOOC.



Web Science: How the Web is Changing the World  
University of Southampton

Advantages of MOOCs

# Advantages of massive for society



Massive participation offers society

- potential to develop tools and resources
- potential to develop professional practice
- increased access to higher education
- potential for global impact



# FutureLearn launch event

[UK] Universities and Science Minister David Willetts said: 'I encourage all our institutions to explore the opportunities offered by new modes of technology, such as Moocs. This will keep the UK ahead in the global race to deliver education in worldwide markets.'



<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-24109190>

Advantages of MOOCs

# **Challenges of massive for teaching and learning**

# Access for all – supporting inexperienced learners



We have provided a short video to highlight a few points to help make your learning experience effective and enjoyable. The video includes:

Preparing to learn [...]

Listening and reflecting [...]

Making notes [...]

Communicating with others



Fairness and Nature:  
When Worlds Collide  
University of Leeds

# High levels of engagement – potentially overwhelming



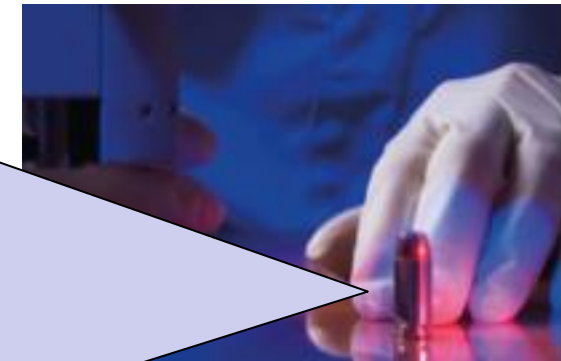
Introduction to  
Forensic Science  
University of Strathclyde

You have been actively engaged in the discussions, which is excellent, thank you, but with more than 23,000 participants it means that our responses and comments risk getting lost. One way to ensure we keep in touch with all of you is by sending out our weekly email – like this one

# No prior qualifications required – getting the level right



This will be primary school material for some of you and exactly the opposite for others. It is just not possible to tailor the material to each of you [...] If it appears too technical, forget the detail and concentrate on the higher level principles; if you think ‘yes I know all about that’ we’d encourage you to be an active participant in the learning community



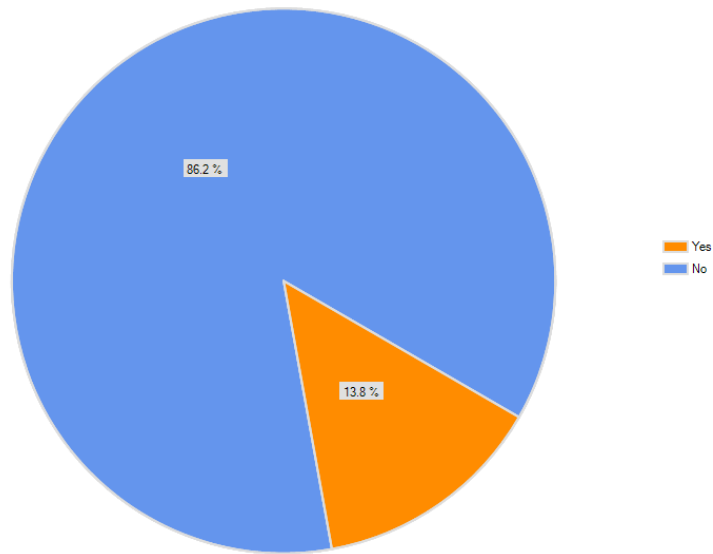
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# Providing education for all – improving accessibility



Do you consider yourself to have a disability?



	Percent
Blind or partially sighted	2.9%
Deaf or hard of hearing	10.5%
Restricted mobility	32.4%
Restricted manual skills (difficulty handling items)	10.5%
Impaired speech	0.0%
Dyslexia or other specific learning difficulties	9.5%
Mental health difficulties	18.1%
Personal care support	1.0%
Fatigue or pain	37.1%
Unseen disabilities (for example, diabetes, epilepsy or asthma)	26.7%
Autistic spectrum disorder	3.8%
Other disabilities	3.8%
Prefer not to say	0.0%

# What does success look like...



...for learners?

increasing global reach

...for educators?

increasing employability

...for the institutions?

having a worldwide impact

...for society?

showcasing research

developing new teaching methods    accrediting learning

increasing alumni numbers    learning a little

earning certificates    making a profit    learning a lot

widening access

being seen as innovative

keeping up with others

attracting investment



**Rebecca Ferguson**

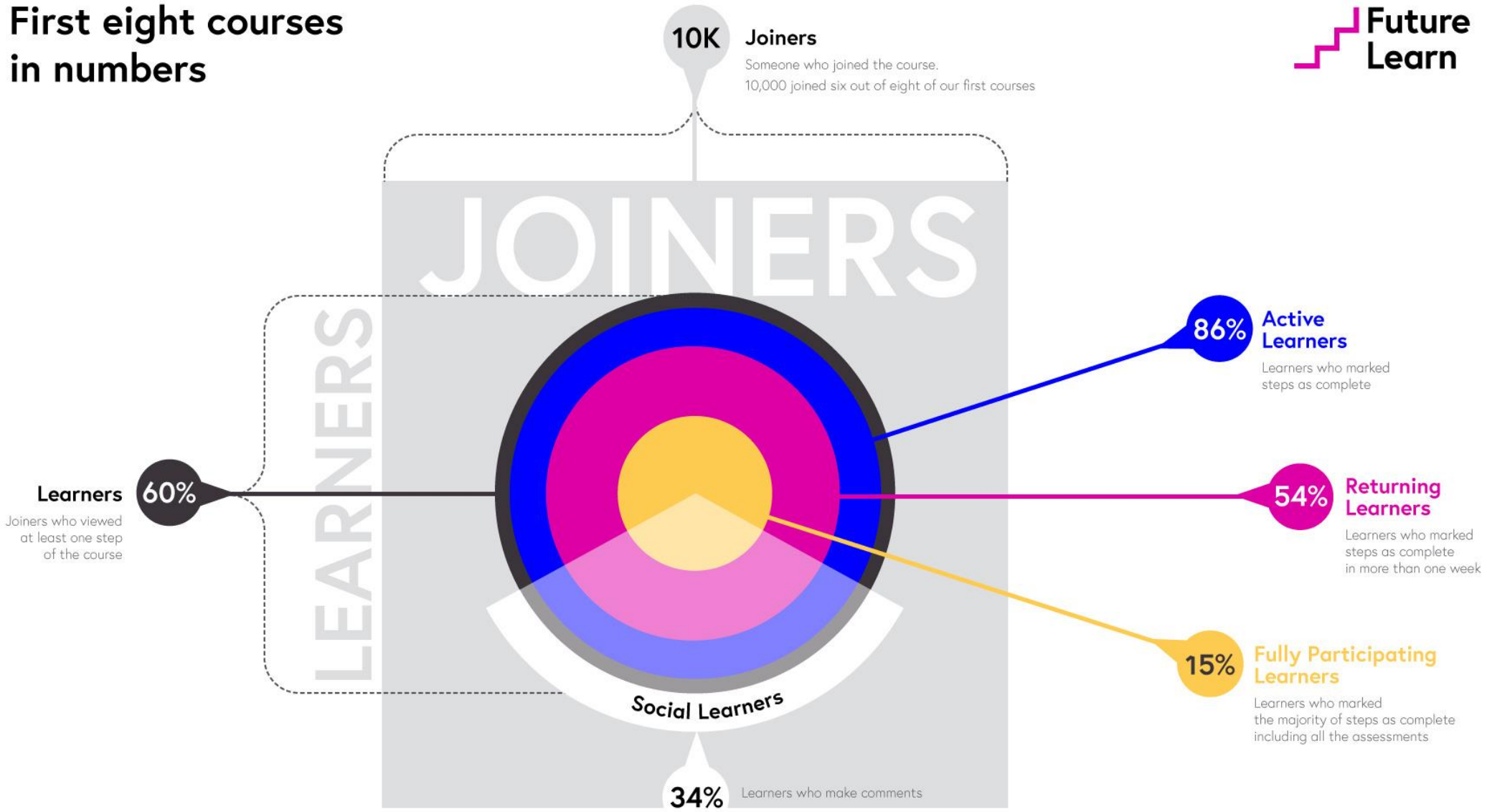
**@R3beccaF**

Lecturer at The Open University, focused on educational futures, learning analytics, MOOCS, augmented learning and online social learning.

Milton Keynes, UK · [r3beccaf.wordpress.com](http://r3beccaf.wordpress.com)



# First eight courses in numbers



# High levels of engagement – managing workload



Good Brain,  
Bad Brain: Basics  
University of Birmingham

I have been amazed and impressed by the level of interest and input – 1800 of you have posted at least one comment. If you posted something hoping to get a reply but haven't then I am sorry, but me and my four mentors have been doing our best to monitor what's going on in between doing our usual activities.