

# Blended Learning@EdUHK - Stories from the Frontline

## Description/Teaching Philosophy

This is a course for full time B.Ed. Students in the Department of Early Childhood Education. There are students from ECE major and also from other departments, mainly in their year three and year four. They should know the basics of using the Moodle system. Therefore, I tried some new apps and activities with them in order to increase their learning motivation and group collaboration. My teaching philosophy is: "Innovative, Interactive, and In Time". To arouse learning motivation and promote effective learning, I adopt various teaching and learning strategies, including both online and face-to-face modes, in many of my classes. Some examples are:

† To foster group collaboration and encourage active learning, students need to complete a task in the university campus by accessing the information from a QR code. They need to take appropriate photos or video in the campus, discuss, compare, and analyze within the group. Then, post their results/findings onto a e-journal platform (<https://app.Seesaw.me>). At the end of the lesson, each group shares on the e-platform with others about their main findings.

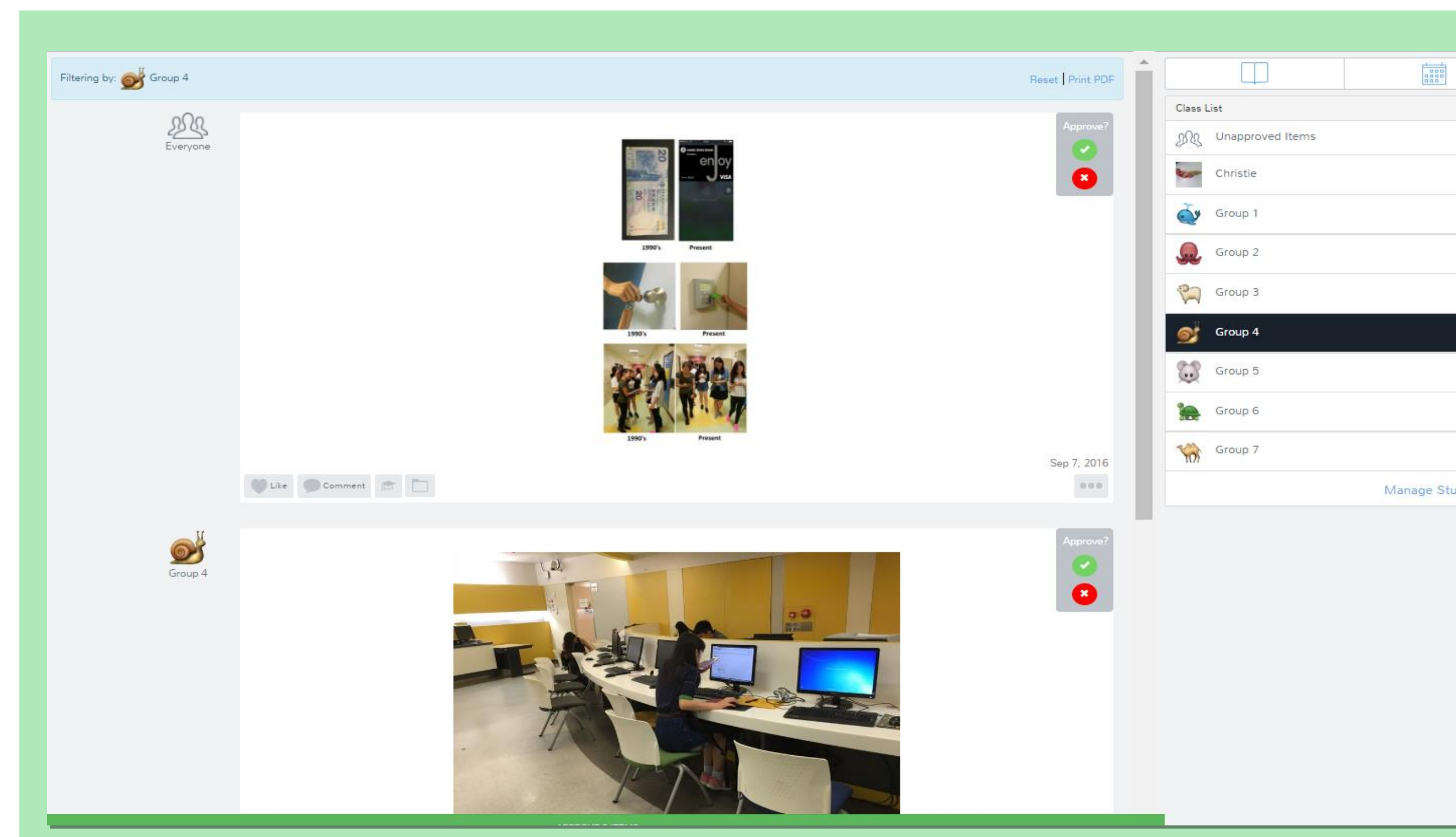
† Review personal learning by rethinking and revisiting what have been learnt in the lesson is a vital exercise of learning. I invite all students to write a couple of lines in their e-journal during the last five minutes in class. I call it "Five-minutes reflective e-journal" (<https://Moodle.eduhk.hk>). They simply use their own smartphone to write the most important points they learnt in that lesson. By doing this, they need to refresh their notes and deepen their learning: a really good brain exercise!

† I also keep my teaching journal in the Padlet app for easy referencing and for idea exchange with students and colleagues. (<https://Padlet.com>). I normally note down what I feel are the strongest and weakest parts of my lessons. I am sure I can review and improve my own teaching by doing this reflective exercise.

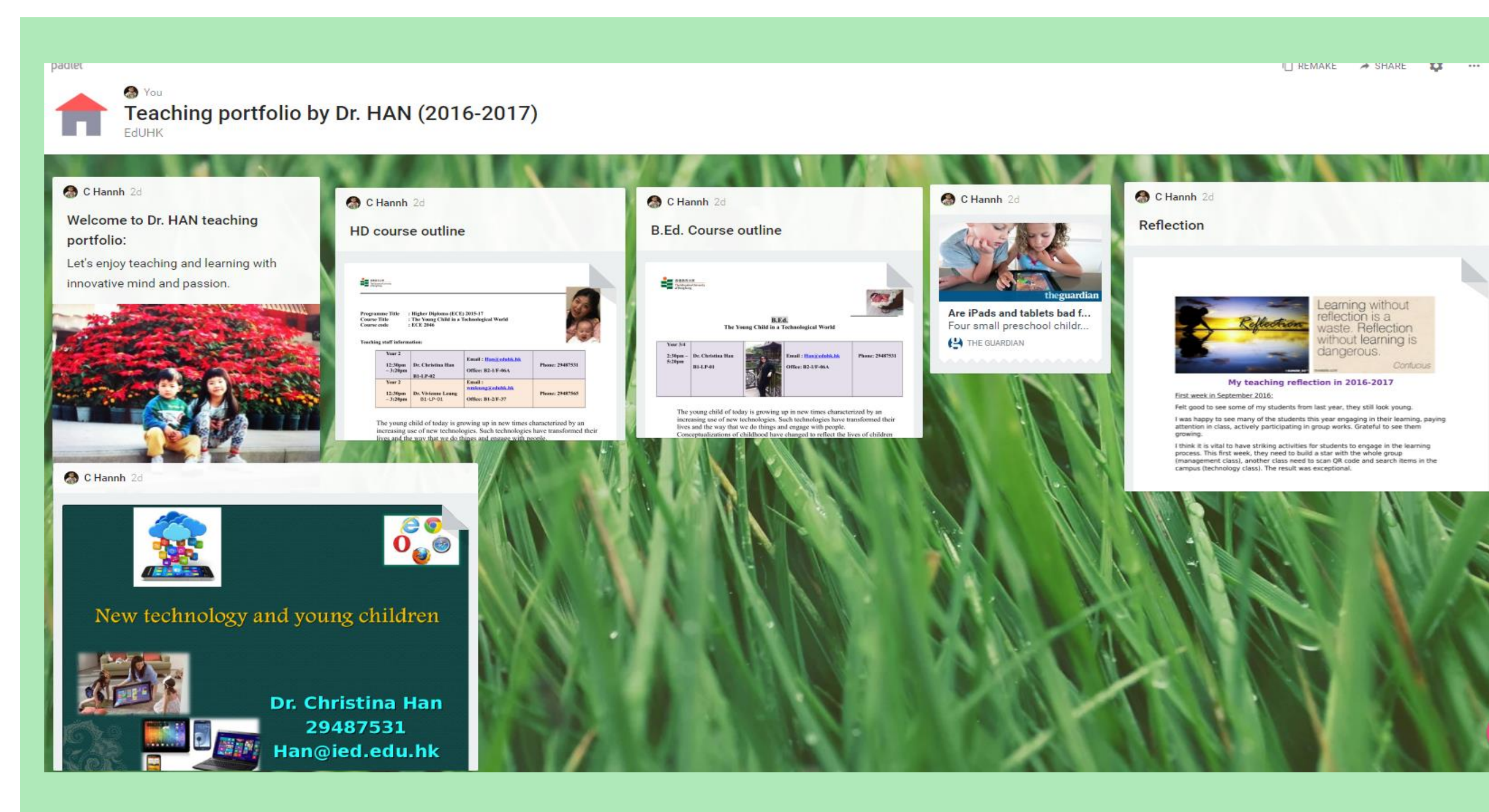
† Incorporating flipped learning and critical discussion by using video clips and advance questions setting to encourage pre-class self learning mode. Class follow-up discussion helps to clarify queries and further elaboration. (<http://www.Youtube.com>)

## Sample Activities and the Artefacts

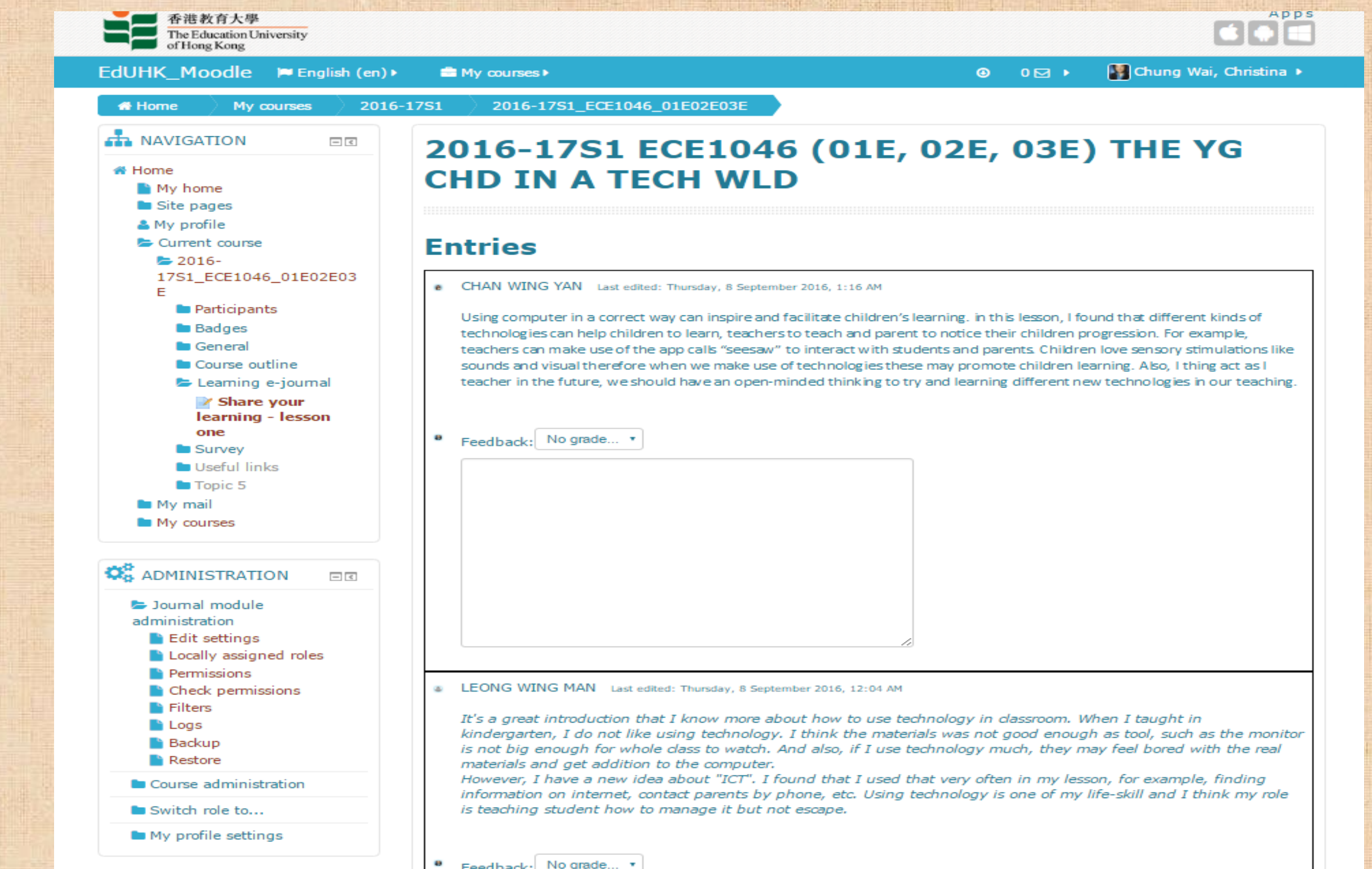
Group interaction and collaboration is invaluable. The best part is that they can share with the whole class by using a web platform.



QR codes enable easy access to information and the exchange of ideas through the e-platform.



Padlet helps me keep my teaching journal accessible and enables idea exchange with students.



"Five-minutes reflective e-journal" to record students' own learning of the day.

## Effectiveness and Lessons Learnt

In this course, from the students' e-journal and feedback, they indicated that they enjoyed using various web or app platforms to learn and to do their group work. Especially in the group tasks, those students who were not familiar with the new technologies got good support from other group members. This enhanced group collaborative learning.

Students also liked to spend five minutes at the end of the lesson to share what have they learnt in the lesson. This is a good way to review and refresh before they leave the lecture hall. They can clearly bring a couple of key points home from the lecture.

## ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

The issues and challenges in my class are:

- ❖ Different models of smartphones and tablets may not be compatible with the instructor's. Some of them may not know how to use iOS if they use an Android-based device.
- ❖ Lots of preparation time for instructor to explore new web/ Apps.
- ❖ I think it encourages students to participate if their contributions are rewarded with a higher percentage of the total course grade.