

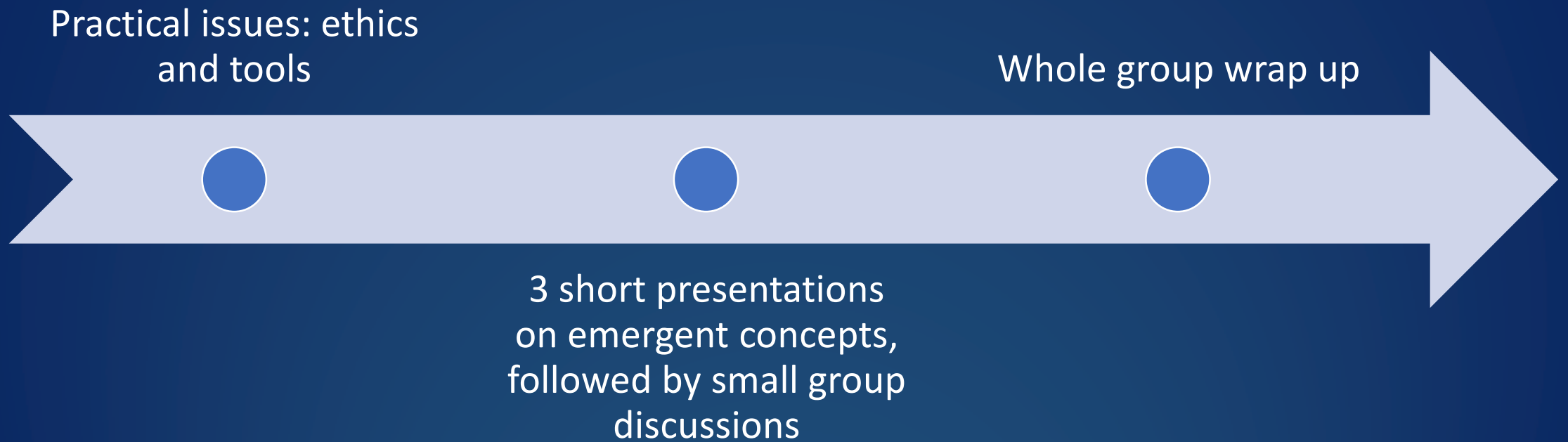
# That thing we don't talk about: Facilitating and assessing student collaborative assignments



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**BALEAP Conference, April 2023**  
*Caution! EAP under DEconstruction*  
University of Warwick

# Session Format



# Ethics

- We'd like to be able to potentially use the Flinga board posts as part of our research.
- If you don't want your discussion group's comments to be used, please post in grey.
- If you would like to participate further in the research project, please complete a consent form at the end of the session.

# Using 'Flinga'

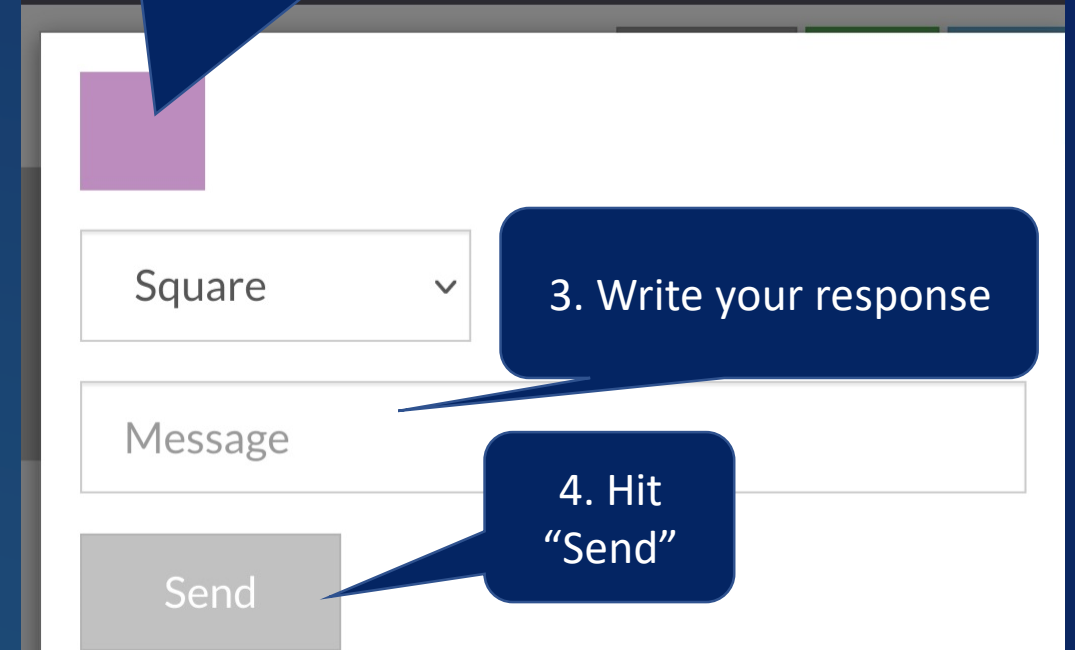
- During the small group discussion, make notes in Flinga, an online response tool.
- You can access it via computer or phone.



# Using Flinga: Phone



2. Choose the colour to match the question (or grey if you don't want your comments recorded)



After clicking send, you can drag your answer to where you want it

# Using Flinga: Computer



Choose the colour to match the question (or choose grey if you don't want your comments recorded)



Square



Message

Send



Write your response

Hit send

What does student collaboration mean to you?

Do we want students to collaborate and, if so, why?

Why do you think what you think about student collaboration?

Then you can drag your answer to where you want it

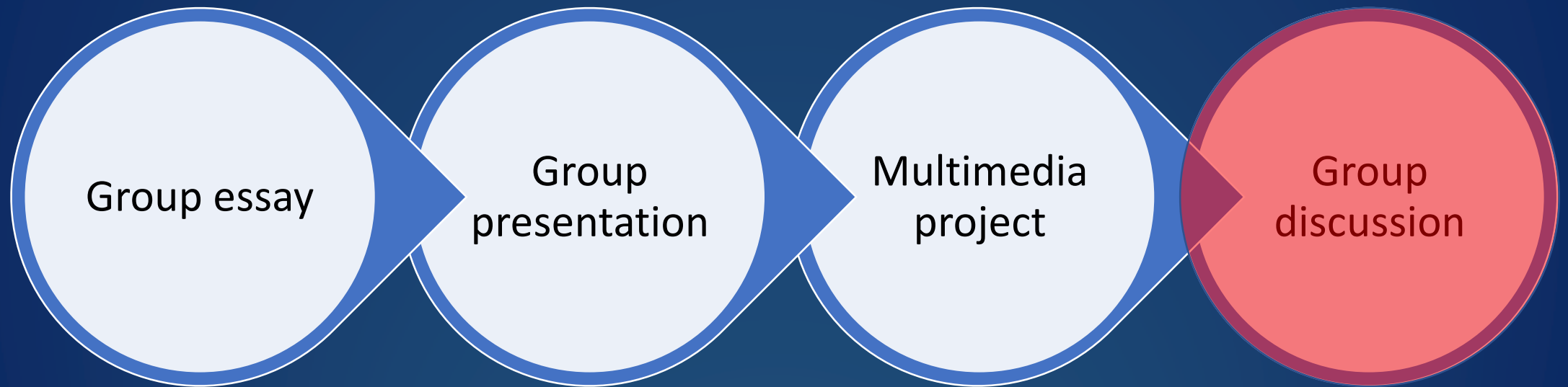
How does your own experience of collaboration impact your attitude to student collaboration?

Other points of interest



# Today's Session: Student Collaboration

- Specifically, collaborative assignments where students work together to produce an artefact e.g.



# Theoretical Background

- We're not going to cover the literature on collaborative learning or assessment today.
- Our research and publications about collaboration can be found at:


## DEVELOP EAP

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Research & Papers Connected to *Develop EAP* and collaborative learning

**Book Chapter (2022) - *Fast-forwarding toward the future of EAP teaching in "the happiest country in the world"***

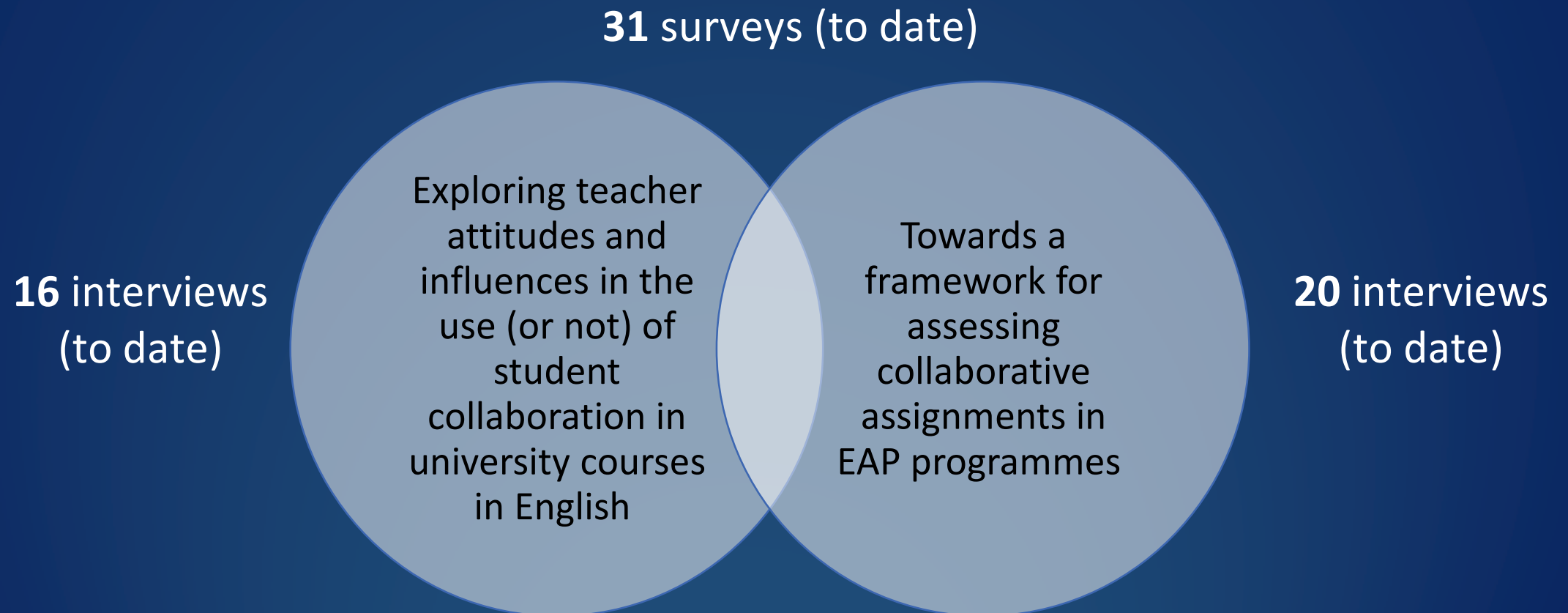
In this chapter of *International perspectives on teaching and learning academic English in turbulent times* from Routledge we discuss the experience of teaching EAP in Finland during the start of the pandemic and the "pandemic pivot" into online teaching. We highlight the importance of backward design in generating robust courses which can adapt to new circumstances and the need for considering the whole student experience.

<https://developeap.weebly.com/research.html>



# Our Research Interests

- Following a Grounded Theory approach utilising surveys and in-depth interviews.



# Main areas of discussion

- We'll be sharing early concepts that have emerged from our data to help facilitate discussion in three areas.







# Beliefs about collaboration



# Emergent concepts: Beliefs

## Collaboration echoes

- Personal triggering events of collaboration can have a strong impact on beliefs and teaching practices.

## Experience trumps theory

- EAP practitioners have limited exposure to training about collaboration, so grow to understand collaboration through their own teaching practice.

## Jagged expertise

- Experienced ELT/EAP practitioners take pride in their competence and methodologies but have an 'expertise gap' when it comes to collaboration.

# Beliefs

[Flinga.fi/FJGHFPF](https://flinga.fi/FJGHFPF)

- **COLLABORATION ECHOES:** Why do you think what you think about student collaboration, i.e. how did your beliefs develop?
- **EXPERIENCE TRUMPS THEORY:** How did you come to learn about student collaboration?
- **JAGGED EXPERTISE:** How confident are you in your knowledge and expertise of student collaboration?



Finish

10 mins





Facilitating collaborative  
assignments



# Emergent concepts: Facilitation

## Engagement tribes

- Practitioners take very different roles in student collaborations, from the very hands off to functioning as an active group member.

## Collaboration foundations

- Discussion about collaboration, team roles and working together provides a foundation to help students navigate the process.

## Compensating the 'discipline deficit'

- Students will encounter collaborative assignments in their discipline courses but won't receive scaffolding, so EAP has to prepare them.

# Facilitation

Flinga.fi/F3FCPT9

- **ENGAGEMENT TRIBES:** What is the role of the teacher in a student collaboration?
- **COLLABORATION FOUNDATIONS:** How much do you explicitly talk about collaboration with students?
- **COMPENSATING THE 'DISCIPLINE DEFICIT':** How responsible are EAP courses for developing students' wider academic and soft skills? If not in EAP courses, where?



Finish

10 mins





Assessing collaborative  
assignments





# Emergent concepts: Assessment

## Multi-lens assessment

- Assessment of collaboration is complex, requiring a variety of assessment tools (e.g. teacher-group conferences, observation, reflection, self- & peer-assessment)

## Task dilution

- Learner training for different potential assessment lenses takes time from the main academic task e.g. essay writing.

## Performative collaboration

- Specific assessment criteria can lead to students performing superficial collaboration rather than genuinely collaborating.

# Assessment

Flinga.fi/F4Y56Q9

- **MULTI-LENS ASSESSMENT:** In what ways can student collaboration be assessed?
- **TASK DILUTION:** How much assessment is too much assessment?
- **PERFORMATIVE COLLABORATION:** What do we want to see when students are collaborating?



Finish

10 mins

# Wrap-up

- We scratched the surface of student collaboration today.
- There has to be a lot more community discussion about collaboration.
- When you get back to your teaching centres ...

# KEEP TALKING



A dachshund dog with black and tan speckled fur is running across a tennis court. The dog is in profile, facing left, with its mouth open and tongue out, appearing happy and energetic. The background shows a chain-link fence and some trees, slightly out of focus. The overall scene is bright and sunny.

# Thank you

## Questions or comments?

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