

## European Association of Faculties of Pharmacy

### **EAFP Organization**

#### **From the President: Pharmaceutical Strategy**

On 25 November 2020, the European Commission adopted a Pharmaceutical Strategy for Europe with a focus to ensure equitable access to state-of-the-art and affordable therapies. The unexpected pandemic brought about by the SARS CoV-2 virus highlighted not only the importance of infectious disease and vaccinology but most effectively the relevance of crisis-resistant systems. The aspect of crisis-resistant health systems together with the opportunities presented by sustainable innovation, emerging science and digitalisation are features of the pillars for this EU Pharmaceutical Strategy.

A responsibility for academia is to ensure fit-for-future curricula and relevance towards the needs of society and stakeholders. In the context of the Pharmaceutical Strategy for Europe outlined by the EU Commission, there is the opportunity to provide a roadmap of how academia is reacting to support the evolution of this strategy. The Commission has identified a proposal to revise pharmaceutical legislation in 2022 based on the implementation of the Strategy. Now is the time for EAFP to continue building on a pharmaceutical education vision for Europe and contribute to the updating of pharmaceutical legislation. The four pillars of Pharmacy Education specified in the 2018 EAFP Position Paper namely: science-practice balance, teaching methods, team players, and

preparedness have established a pathway for the evolution of competency frameworks. The next step is to create frameworks and support evolution of pharmacy education programmes at undergraduate and postgraduate levels exposing transferable skills and competences. In parallel to this scenario, the Directorate General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs of the European Commission has sub-contracted a study for the Mapping and Assessment of Developments under Directive 2005/36/EC for pharmacists. The study was commissioned to support possible future updates of the Directive to reflect scientific and technical progress.

EAFP is contributing to this process as a stakeholder and is also in continuous dialogue with other stakeholders. I look forward to discussions and reflections from member institutions as we prepare feedback from EAFP for the Mapping exercise. I invite you all to reflect on the Pharmaceutical Strategy for Europe and how competence frameworks for pharmacy education can support the implementation of this action.

**Lilian M. Azzopardi**

University of Malta

## EAFP 2020 Virtual Conference



The 2020 Annual Conference was co-organised in collaboration with the Department of Pharmacy of the Faculty of Medicine and Surgery at the University of Malta as a virtual event. The theme of the conference was 'Synergism in Pharmacy Education: A new dimension.' At the time when the theme of the conference was identified for the 2020 Annual Conference, little did we know how much a pandemic would rapidly bring forward a *new dimension* to pharmacy education. The relevance of the changes brought forward by the pandemic prompted the committee to maintain the original theme selected.

The conference was held between the 9 and 11 November and 45 abstracts were presented as e-posters, 4 abstracts were presented orally and over 120 participants registered for the conference. The plenary sessions were followed by round table discussions that allowed for a virtual platform to share experiences.

The Executive Committee and the Organising Committee would like to acknowledge the support of Amanda Calleja from the administrative team at the Department of Pharmacy of the University of Malta who acted as the conference liaison.

## *Reflections from Plenary Session on Networking in Pharmacy Education*

The first day of the EAFP 2020 Virtual Conference, with the theme 'Synergism in Pharmacy Education: A New Dimension', kicked off with a Plenary Session entitled *Networking in Pharmacy Education*, moderated by Dr Francesca Wirth from the University of Malta. This session was addressed by Professor Luciano Saso and Professor Alan Lau. Professor Saso is a member of the Faculty of Pharmacy and Medicine at Sapienza University in Rome, Italy and the President of UNICA, the Network of Universities from the Capitals of Europe, and Professor Lau is the Director of International Clinical Pharmacy Education at the University of Illinois at Chicago College of Pharmacy in the USA.

In his presentation, entitled 'Internationalisation of pharmacy education in the (Post) COVID era', Professor Saso effectively combined various aspects related to the adaptation of pharmacy education to the digital push in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. His interesting talk touched upon innovative pedagogical techniques and resources such as the flipped classroom approach, soft skills development, interdisciplinarity, artificial intelligence and internationalization through high-quality hybrid staff and student mobilities. The presentation by Professor Lau, entitled 'Transforming pharmacy education through transnational partnerships', shared successful experiences of interdisciplinary collaboration and networking in shaping pharmacy curricula and in advancing clinical practice and pharmacy education.

The plenary was followed by a Breakthrough Session on 'Equality to access and empowerment to improve health and education' delivered by EU Commissioner for Equality, Dr Helena Dalli, and moderated by Professor Anthony Serracino-Inglott from the University of Malta. In her inspiring speech, Dr Dalli recognised the contribution of pharmacy to equality in access to care and emphasised the social responsibility of pharmacy educators to be role models for gender equity.

The plenary session generated active debate in the Round Table Discussion. The panelists included Professor Saso, Professor Lau and Professor Serracino-Inglott, and the discussion was moderated by Professor Maria Margarida Caramona from the University of Coimbra, Portugal, and Dr Francesca Wirth, University of Malta. Professor Caramona contributed to the session by discussing the Education and Practice platform being developed and implemented by the different pharmacy schools in Portugal. There was significant interest from participants regarding soft skills development and how to overcome the challenges associated with online teaching, learning and assessments. The recently launched International Pharmaceutical Federation development goals to advance practice, science and education, such as academic capacity, competency development, leadership development, equity and equality and digital health, were reflected upon by the panelists and attendees.

#### **EAFP Post-Conference Webinar on Vaccines in a Pandemic Era**

The Malta Pharmaceutical Students Association (MPSA) collaborated with the Department of Pharmacy of the University of Malta to offer an EAFP Post-Conference

webinar on Vaccines in a Pandemic Era. The focus of the webinar was intended to present updates on COVID-19 vaccines in development and reflect on inter-professional perceptions.

Participants at the webinar included pharmacy students, pharmacists, physicians and faculty. Participants were welcomed to the webinar by Professor Lilian M. Azzopardi, Head of Department of Pharmacy at the University of Malta, Martina Fitzgerald, President of MPSA and Hon Dr Deo Debattista, Parliamentary Secretary for Consumer Protection who addressed the relevance of providing updates on COVID-19 vaccines development to present regulatory processes being followed to ensure safety and efficacy. Dr. Christopher Barbara, the Clinical Chairperson at the Pathology Department at Mater Dei Hospital, Malta, reflected on the history of vaccines and the different types of vaccines available today, with a special reference to the COVID-19 vaccine. Dr. Rodrigo Burgos, a Clinical Pharmacist on Infectious Diseases at the University of Illinois at Chicago, USA, spoke about strategies for the development of safe and effective coronavirus vaccines. He discussed accelerated vaccine development in the light of his involvement in two clinical trials, namely the Moderna Vaccine Trial and the Janssen Vaccine Trial.

A panel discussion moderated by Ms. Martina Fitzgerald followed. The panel members were Professor Mark Brincat (Obstetrics and Gynaecology), Ms. Aoife Huethorst (Vice President of External Affairs, Irish Pharmaceutical Students Association), Ms. Katie Remmers (Commissioner of General Affairs, Royal Dutch Pharmaceutical Student Association), Mr. Bram Wagner (Chairperson



for Regional Office, International Pharmaceutical Student Federation), Mr. Matthew Gauci (Vice President, University of Malta Student Council; Marketing Student), Mr. Jeremy Mifsud (President, MaltMUN; Law Student) and Ms. Sarah Zerafa (Social Policy Officer, Malta Health Students' Association, Nursing Student). The panel discussion provided a holistic platform. Health care professionals contribute towards the scientific implications of the viral disease and vaccination, other professionals can contribute significantly towards the perception and socio-economic factors. The legal implications and the marketing strategies used for the production of a vaccine from trial to worldwide distribution go beyond the science of vaccines.

This webinar was shared on Facebook and may be viewed at <https://fb.watch/1K59ztpu5y/>

#### **Tamara Attard**

University of Malta Pharmacy Student

#### **Literature alert**

Plenary sessions of the 2020 Virtual Conference of EAFP, focused on networking in pharmacy, innovative teaching methods and digitalisation. A session was dedicated to teaching methods and how these have been impacted from the pandemic, and what lessons can be taken to the future. An aspect of discussion was the digital assessment formats including planning, resources, approach and ensuring process fairness. Experiences in the re-design of laboratory sessions and experiential placements were also put forward- are we moving in the age of Avatars in pharmacy education?

In this literature scan, examples of papers in the literature which address these aspects are

included:

**Medical assessment in the age of digitalisation** by Egarter S et al. BMC Medical Education, 2020; 20: 101.

**The COVID-19 pandemic across the academy: Sustainable pharmacy education in the time of the COVID-19** by Lyons KM et al. Am J Pharm Educ 2020; 84(6): article 8088.

**A paradigm shift in US experiential pharmacy education accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic** by Fuller KA et al Am J Pharm Educ 2020; 84(6): article 8149.

**The Pharmacy Game-GIMMICS, a simulation game for competency-based education** by Fens T et al. Pharmacy 2020; 8(4): DOI:10.3390/pharmacy8040198

**Interactive clinical avatar use in pharmacist preregistration training: Design and review** by Thompson J et al. J Med Internet Res 2020; 22(11) e17146.

#### **News**

##### **Proceedings of the EAFP 2020 Virtual Conference**

Visit the EAFP website to access the Conference Abstract Book, the electronic posters submitted and the speakers' audiovisual aids.

##### **EAFP 2021 Conference**

Dates for the Annual Conference for 2021 are 5-7 May, Malta. Further updates will be released in January 2021.

### Membership Invitation for 2021

The process for renewal of membership for 2021 has started and you will be receiving invoices accordingly.

Applications for new institutional membership or individual membership are welcome. Please visit <https://eafponline.eu/about/membership/> for information on the different opportunities to join EAFP. For colleagues who are coming from an institution which is not a member, we invite you to join as an individual member to benefit from conference member fees and to be able to participate in the Grant applications amongst the membership benefits.

We look forward to welcome you for 2021.

### Students' perspectives- EPSA

One of EPSA's main focuses is represented by pharmaceutical education and EPSA is constantly



advocating for improvements and equality in the teaching process across European universities, as well as the need to encourage students to become lifelong learners. We believe that students should be provided with a constantly assessed and updated, fit-for-future curricula, that will guide them towards becoming the healthcare professionals of tomorrow.

To achieve this goal, in 2018 EPSA released the 1st Methodology Booklet where pharmaceutical students' and recent graduates' opinions on teaching processes around Europe were collected and organised. The document aims to assist educators and policymakers to improve European pharmaceutical education.

The plan is to follow-up on the main outcomes of the Methodology Booklet and develop several annexes focusing on more specific areas.

Annex 1: Soft-Skills was released in July 2020, as a further investigation for this outcome from the Methodology Booklet was needed: 93% of students expressed their desire for more inclusion of soft skills in the European pharmaceutical curricula. It aimed to evaluate how Soft-Skills should be taught from the pharmaceutical students' perspective. On the 3rd of September, EPSA organised a Webinar together with EAFP, where Lilian M. Azzopardi, Daisy

Volmer and Adéla Firlová talked about Soft-skills in pharmaceutical education: Innovative teaching methods to meet student perspectives.

The survey for Annex 2: Teaching Methodologies was recently released and the report will be available in April 2021. It aims to propose how different teaching tools should be implemented in pharmaceutical education, how the knowledge transfer between educators and students could be improved, as well as how progressive digitalisation could be incorporated in the education process from the pharmaceutical students' perspective.

1st Methodology Booklet and Annex 1:Soft-Skills can be found on EPSA's website:

<https://www.epsa-online.org/methodology-booklet/#1596709229004-500902f7-ce81>

**Andreea Iordache**

EPSA Educational Affairs Coordinator

## Announcements

### Navigate Covid-19 at your institution together with this unique online leadership course

The “Enhancing Academic Leadership Horizons in Trying Times” course which consists of four modules, developed by FIP together with the AACP (American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy). The course programme has been meticulously planned for the academic pharmacy leaders from around the world to equip them with the requisite skills to navigate through the COVID-19 pandemic and similar crises. The course will help pharmacy academics stand out in the global arena and shape the future of pharmacy education and practice even in challenging times.

**FIP AIM Chair Pierre Moreau** from Faculty of Pharmacy at Kuwait University, Kuwait says; “The course includes modules on the impact of COVID-19 on pharmacy education and the needs created during this pandemic, the growing importance of digital health and digital leadership, and what does the future holds in terms of education in general and pharmacy education in particular. This four-module series is a great opportunity for seasoned and emergent academic leaders to reflect on what we all lived during the past months and likely to experience for several months/years ahead.”

**EAFP President Lilian M. Azzopardi** from Department of Pharmacy at University of Malta, Malta is also a speaker at this unique course’s second module, where she addresses the impacts of COVID-19 on pharmacy education. To learn more about the course programme, you can visit the website

from [here](#) and apply now! If you have any questions, please contact [aim@fip.org](mailto:aim@fip.org).



### Enhancing Academic Leadership Horizons in Trying Times

An online leadership programme by FIP & AACP for academic pharmacy leaders from around the world



#### Impacts of COVID-19 on pharmacy education

**Lilian Azzopardi**  
Head of Department  
of Pharmacy,  
University of Malta,  
Malta

“Maximise on teamwork and communication to lead creative improvisation in adapting effective teaching modalities and driving curricular transformations which reflect relevance within the new normality.”

Please visit <http://aim.fip.org/galfp/> to apply now.



## Survey invitation

My name is Josefiën Revere. As a Master's student in Pharmaceutical Care at the Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB), I am carrying out my thesis in collaboration with the Belgian Pharmaceutical Association. This master thesis project tries to analyse the current situation of leadership within the community pharmacy. With this questionnaire we want to make an overview of the different aspects of leadership offered within the pharmacy training programmes in Europe.

The survey contains at most 6 questions and takes only a few minutes. Answers are processed entirely anonymously. The questionnaire is open until 31 January 2021 and you can open it by clicking on the link below:

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=qHxbaagtRUWi2kLQN4TIhYdhR92B4-NIqvGhJMhlcW9UQIQ1ME9MNF12WkhWOTlwQk1FWjZESjM4OS4u>

## EAFP grants for 2021

The EAFP executive committee has decided to make available 4 partnership development grants for the year 2021. Each grant involves a maximum of 2000 Euro's, plus a free participation in an EAFP annual conference.

The grants are intended to facilitate network forming between European member institutions, to identify new opportunities for education (PED-grant) or for research (PRD-grant). The grants are primarily intended to provide funding for members and member institutions to start up new projects and to assist in the development of an effective collaboration.

Project-funded activities must take place within one year after the grant allocation.

Details about eligibility criteria and the application procedure can be found at: <https://eafponline.eu/grants/>

**SUBMISSION DEADLINE: 31 March 2021**

## **Pharmacy Teaching and Studying in the University of Helsinki during the Covid-19 Epidemic**

Outi Salminen, Mia Sivén, Leena Hanski, Pia Saarinen, Jouni Hirvonen

Faculty of Pharmacy, University of Helsinki, Finland

Covid-19 epidemic abruptly interrupted and distorted the University research, teaching and learning activities throughout Europe in Mid-March 2020. Almost overnight all the courses were transferred into a remote mode. In Helsinki, only vitally important maintenance of research infrastructure (animals, cell cultures) and equipment was allowed until June 2020. Thereafter, research activities in Viikki Campus were gradually restored, and laboratory teaching in groups of less than 50 students at a time allowed. Now in November 2020, the only teaching activities not in remote mode are the laboratory practices, where safety distances (1.5-2 m), hand hygiene, face masks and a strict rule of not coming to laboratory with even mild symptoms, have enabled to keep the laboratories open until now. All other courses are held remotely. Hopefully the second and later waves of the epidemic are avoided and a preventing vaccination developed rather sooner than later. This article describes some exemplary actions taken to guarantee the high levels of teaching and learning also during the epidemic.

### ***Course exams and alternative means of evaluation***

Starting from the very first days of the exceptional situation declared by the University of Helsinki, all the lecture hall exams were cancelled. The cancellation of lecture hall exams has since been extended to the ongoing autumn term and will cover also the spring 2021. Out of the 17 lecture hall exams scheduled for spring 2020, only 2 were not organized at all, while the remaining 15 were organized either as remote Moodle exams or done via Examinarium, UH's electronic exam platform involving video-supervised computer rooms harbouring computers with restricted internet access. Throughout the epidemic, these facilities have been kept open, yet the capacity has been reduced to approximately half of its previous normal user capacity, allowing the students to keep the distances when entering for an exam. Given the short notice for the rearranging the exams during the spring 2020, many teachers relied on Moodle exams as they were readily familiar with the platform. However, the longer the teachers had time to consider the rearrangements, the more popular the Examinarium platform has become.

### ***Laboratory teaching***

The beginning of the lockdown in March 2020 coincided with the first days of a lab course targeted to the first-year Pharmacy students. The lab course was postponed, but carried out with minor contents modifications during June and August. This was enabled by the hygiene guidelines formulated by the collaboration between teachers and Faculty's epidemic steering group.

The four-page guideline document includes detailed instructions on the compulsory use of a face mask, as well as behavioural guidelines both inside the course lab and in everyday life prior to and during the lab course. With minor modifications, the same guidelines have been used also during the autumn term, allowing us to conduct laboratory teaching according to the normal curricula.



Besides guaranteeing student and teacher safety in the course lab, a central objective of the guidelines is to prevent any carryover between the course lab and research laboratories of the Faculty. By November 2020, seven out of the 160 students in the lab courses have entered a corona test due to exposures taken place outside the University premises. To the best of our knowledge, no transmission of covid-19 infection has occurred within the teaching laboratory premises.

### ***Interactive and collaborative teaching in various remote-teaching platforms***

In our Faculty we have gained a lot of experience on various interactive ways of teaching using f.ex. Zoom and Teams. As an example, we have been able to conduct the patient counselling practical courses within Zoom in a form of role play between pharmacists and patients with videos on. A collaborative teaching method, “the learning café”, using the breakout room function of Zoom was conducted successfully and got positive feedback from the participating students. Also, Teams and its channel function enable small group work within a course. End of degree two-day practical test was conducted solely in remote fashion, where student groups made videos of their solutions to challenges.

### ***Student experiences***

Our students show remarkable variation in terms of their experiences on the remote teaching. A University-wide questionnaire was conducted in May 2020 to gain information on this topic. Based on this data, the mean scores of students’ self-assessment on their study capacity or exhaustion showed no statistically significant difference to those obtained under normal circumstances. However, the deviation within the data collected during the epidemic was remarkable, illustrating the polarization of the student population in their performance under the exceptional situation. A similar trend has been observed in the end-of-term feedback questionnaires of our Faculty: while some students report that their studies have proceeded much better during the remote teaching period, others express their difficulties in reaching the goals they had set.

Data shows that pharmacy students’ finished grade points were increased 39% during the epidemic. End-of-the-term questionnaires showed that some of the students expressed the wish to get back to the normal situation, as they missed the peer support and group working in face-to-face mode. Also, they missed face-to-face interaction with teachers and teachers live feedback. Others were pleased with the remote teaching and the flexibility it offers. Some students were happy as their long-distance commuting to campus was not necessary because of the remote teaching. Further, those students who are oriented to deep learning tended to overburden themselves, whereas those students whose self-regulation is weak, were not able to concentrate sufficiently on their studies while learning remotely. The total closure of laboratories and libraries clearly delayed the Master Thesis processes during the Spring of 2020.

### ***Digital tools and Mixed reality open new digital worlds for pharmacy education***

Transition to remote teaching in the epidemic circumstances took place very quickly. Although remote lecturing could support the achievement of learning outcomes in the same manner as face-to-face teaching in lecture halls, teaching laboratory sciences necessitated finding of new ways. In the Faculty of Pharmacy, the interest in use and development of digital learning tools had taken place prior to the epidemic, which assisted in transition. The Faculty had been a project member of the University of Helsinki Digital Leap (2017-2020). In the project, the teachers of the Faculty had been active in exploring innovative digital technologies for teaching and evaluating their pedagogical value. Furthermore, new skills had been obtained in making high quality audio-visual teaching materials and other digital materials. Digital learning materials, such as educational videos on laboratory procedures, facilitated remote learning opportunities. Introducing mixed reality tools offered new digital worlds for the learners.



Mixed reality can be used as an umbrella term to describe digital technologies and virtual learning environments that allow the learner to interact with the digital contents as if they were real, or the digital content can provide added information to the learner. Mixed reality merges real and virtual worlds to produce new environments and visualizations. It may, for example, consist of interactive 360-degree materials, which enable the student to engage the virtual environment in unexpected ways, either by watching on a 2D screen or by wearing VR-headset. Mixed reality includes virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) technologies. In VR, the real world is hidden, and the learner is completely immersed in a digital environment via VR-headset. The learner can interact with the objects of virtual environment with haptic controllers. In augmented reality, AR overlays digital information in the field of vision at the same time when the student is operating in real world. AR-equipment consists of smart-glass or mobile device with an interactive AR-software.

Variety of mixed reality tools were developed in the digital leap project, especially for science lab education. A VR game, in which the student practices aseptic manufacturing procedures in a virtual GMP facility, and an AR laboratory guide, which interacts with the learner, supports performance and guides the learner to focus on learning objectives. These were developed in collaboration with IT-professionals (Department of Information Technology, University of Helsinki, Sciar Company, Finland). The technology and the equipment are available for the students at the Campus. From the variety of mixed reality tools, the interactive 360-degree materials were particularly suitable for remote teaching purposes during the epidemic. Several virtual 360-degree environments were developed, such as virtual aseptic laboratory (series of 360-degree materials on procedures carried out in virtual aseptic laboratory and aseptic manufacture of dosage forms) and virtual pharmacy (materials for marketed drug products, patient counselling). The ability to play 360-degree videos on computers, mobile devices and tablets, make the 360-degree materials readily accessible to the learner.

The 360-degree digital learning materials offer several advantages. The visual and interactive nature, as well as immersion, could allow more efficient processing of the topic than traditional educational videos or text materials. In a 360-degree environment, the learner can explore the virtual world in a rather authentic manner (Fig. 1). Various kinds of teaching materials and information contents can be embedded to the platform to generate an interactive learning environment. Such contents can be in various forms, like videos, text, voice or a learning quiz. The formative evaluation can be built in the platform and instant feedback can be expected to facilitate learning. In addition to 360-degree materials, we used an H5P-tool, which enables making a rich variety of interactive materials, such as interactive videos. We utilized H5P to build up virtual patients based on a branching scenario. The virtual patient is composed of a video with several paths (branches). As the learner makes decisions, the story unfolds in different ways. Like interactive 360-degree materials, interactive videos with branching scenario could make learning interaction engaging and result in better learning results. However, relatively scarce research data is available on the effects of these new technologies on learning outcomes. In the Faculty of Pharmacy, several research projects are ongoing to evaluate the pedagogical value of these new teaching interventions.

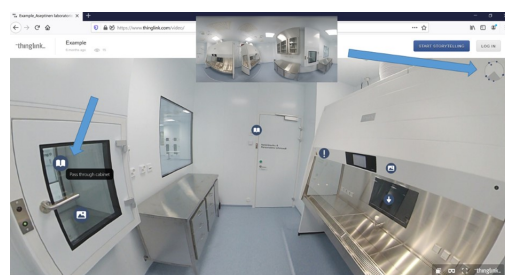


Figure 1. A 360-degree environment of aseptic manufacturing facilities. The learner can explore the space by moving around and clicking the objects. Various kinds of information contents, like videos, text, voice or a learning quiz, can be embedded to the platform to generate an interactive learning environment.

## ***Applying to the degree programs of the Faculty of Pharmacy during the COVID-19 epidemic in spring 2020***

Covid-19 epidemic changed dramatically the entrance examinations in the University of Helsinki. The Faculty of Pharmacy (1592 applicants), which normally prepares the entrance examination in national collaboration with the Universities of Eastern Finland (1046 applicants)

and Åbo Academy University (91 applicants), had to prepare an entry examination for 2729 applicants following national safety rules, for example limiting the gathering to less than 20 persons, keeping the 1-2-meter distances, and ensuring hand cleaning.

The student recruitment process was thus changed substantially. Traditional paper-based exams normally held at the University Campus area were changed to two-phase electronic examinations. Helsinki University made use of the University of Applied Sciences exam platform (AMK), but it was only allowed to be used for the 1st phase preliminary examination (no guarantee against cheating in the examination). The Faculty of Pharmacy Council decided to weed out applicants in the first round, so that only twice the number of applicants, compared to open degree positions, were admitted to the second-round exams physically present in the University premises. The first phase of the entrance examination was arranged as a remote online examination without supervision. Applicants were responsible for their devices and the internet connection. This was possible, as in the upper secondary school, all students possess a device for their daily studies. The second part of the entrance examination was kept as a Moodle classroom electronic examination with applicants bringing their own devices. ID of the applicants were verified in person. The Faculty of Pharmacy was the first to arrange such an examination for 124 applicants in the University of Helsinki.

As for the risks and opportunities, the examination exceeded expectations. There were almost no problems in either of the exam rounds despite of the recognized risks:

new version of the platform that had not been tested with such high applicant volumes, security breaches, uncertainty of compatibility of applicants' devices, substantial risk of cheating due to no supervision, quality and reliability of the network connections etc. What comes to opportunities, the applicants did not have to travel during the first phase of the examination, and during the second phase they could take the exam in closest cities compared to earlier practice, where they had to travel to the University they had applied into. Also, all the traditional paper printing, sorting, and questions of confidentiality were diminished. The grading of the exams was automatic and fast, too. Appeals against the grading were decreased. Finally, the risk of Covid-19 infection was reduced as we found out later that none of the applicants or supervisors had been infected.

### ***Final remarks***

Covid-19 epidemic has forced the teachers and students alike to find out new ways of teaching and learning. For some students the dramatic change has not caused unsurmountable difficulties, while for others true problems of motivation exist and learning skills in a remote fashion are lacking. Today it seems inevitable that some of the novel teaching innovations will prevail also after the epidemic is over – hopefully sooner than later.

**Editor:** Professor Daisy Volmer

**Contact:** [info@eafponline.eu](mailto:info@eafponline.eu)

**Website:** <https://eafponline.eu/>