

BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

Escaping Traditional Outreach: Digital Escape Rooms to Engage Potential Students.

Kyle Martin, Rebecca Wright and Mark Zarb

Outreach has been linked to many advantages, including improving access for typically disadvantaged students and raising their completion rates [1]. The Access To programme is an outreach initiative for under-represented groups in secondary education. Participants take part in a series of remote learning classes to develop skills and build an understanding of university life.

PALS wanted to develop an engaging escape room to consolidate the learning from five previous online sessions, so contacted SoC for a bespoke solution. This resulted in an asynchronous collaboration on MS Teams over an 8-week development period. A digital escape room was created using iterating prototypes to allow contextual input from the Course Development Team.

The escape room demonstrated multidisciplinary collaboration across STEM Schools within RGU and provided a fun & educational way for pupils and staff to close the programme. The challenges relied on scientific knowledge covered during the sessions and showed the breadth of what can be achieved when delivering online practical skills. Staff involved stated: “This approach of combining clinical expertise with technological expertise, is the way forward for engaging future RGU students

1. Herbaut, E. and Geven, K., 2020. What works to reduce inequalities in higher education? A systematic review of the (quasi-) experimental literature on outreach and financial aid. Research in Social Stratification and Mobility, 65, p.100442