

# Pedagogical principles for the design of virtual learning spaces in higher education

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This paper focuses on effective learning spaces in contemporary higher education. Drawing on empirical data from a qualitative study of international students' experience of blended learning programs conducted in three computing courses in two Australian universities, a range of issues and challenges are reported. Three pedagogical principles are then presented that respond to these challenges: 1. *Enabling learners* – learning how to learn in virtual learning spaces; 2. *Programming for flexible learning* – learning how to manage virtual learning environments; and, 3. *Transforming learning* – learning how to capitalise on the affordances of new technologies. The pedagogical principles are presented together with examples of types of practices that they support.