

Interactive comment on “A Flexible, Open and Interactive Digital Platform to Support Online and Blended Experiential Learning Environments: Thinglink and thin sections” by Adam J. Jeffery et al.

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Dear authors, I would first like to express my genuine excitement for this project. While reading I could not stop thinking about how useful a resource this would have been for all of the optical mineralogy/ petrography modules I had during my undergrad. I can see it being particularly useful for students as a revision tool for up-and-coming exams.

All of the figures are of a good quality and very informative. I am especially happy to see a full list of all the feedback in Table 1. This is something that is sadly often left out

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of a lot of papers that utilise questionnaires.

I do have a few questions/suggestions that would help improve the quality of the manuscript:

1) Introduction Are there any more references that you add into the first paragraph to back up your claims of the use of thin section petrography? I feel there should be particular references to back up the SEM (L.35) and optical microscopy (L.37) comparison.

2) Section 3.2 – Collection of Feedback Could you clarify the age group of the students? Are these A-Level, Undergrad, Postgrad students or a mix?

3) Section 3.2 – Collection of Feedback Is there any possibility to get some more feedback from students? Even though this is a resource that has been designed primarily for the use of students, a majority of the feedback you gained was from staff members. While I understand staff gave more in depth comments, would it not be more important to gain feedback from the main target audience of the resource? I feel this would also make for more valid statistical comparisons between the student and staff feedback made throughout Section 4.

4) Section 5.4 – Continued Development Potential for a database input? In regard to the student's feedback in Section 4.6 requesting additional samples, and from experience, university modules that utilise thin sections have students looking at a vast number of samples, have you put any thought into how you might achieve the ambitious goal of creating so many samples? Would there be a way to develop the resource to allow other institutes to contribute their own thin sections, or collaborate with the Open University's VMESP?

I hope this feedback is useful and I wish you all the best moving forward with this project.