

A 3D virtual world for awareness and training on academic integrity topics

Paraskevi Kleanthous, Angelika Kokkinaki, Styliani Kleanthous Loizou & Louis Nisiotis

University of Nicosia, Cyprus

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Abstract:

A 3D Virtual World (VW) (e.g. SecondLife, OpenSim) provides shared multi-dimensional space that supports synchronous interaction and communication, enhancing the socialisation and interaction between users. The avatar use enhances the immersive feeling to its users of actually 'being there'. Until recently VWs, were mainly used for socialising and recreational purposes, however, the use of such environments have also been adopted for collaboration, learning and training purposes.

To this end, in this paper we are presenting the implementation of a gamified approach for incorporating training and educational material on anti-plagiarism and academic integrity topics. We developed a 3D Virtual World in OpenSim platform, which simulates a university campus with different lecture rooms and areas for meetings and evaluations. This environment is designed in such a way that virtual meetings/lectures can also be able to be handled online for training/learning purposes. The material is made available through a 3D VW that allows the user to navigate in the world and get informed about relevant issues and good practices. Furthermore, self-assessment quizzes and other evaluation techniques are made available for the user to test his/her knowledge and understanding on academic integrity matters.

A number of students have been brought in and evaluated the environment in terms of usability, learning experience and usefulness. The results will be discussed.

Keywords: 3D virtual world, academic integrity, education, learning, plagiarism.

Editors' note: This study benefits from theoretical discussions in an earlier paper that was published in the proceedings of the 9th Nordic Conference on Human-Computer Interaction.