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We did it our way! Narratives of pathways to the profession of educational development

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Introduction

'My first teaching gig was launched in my elementary years, in our basement, where I lined up desks and ran a "school" for younger siblings who I enticed to attend with snacks and a long recess.'

'I've always thought of myself as a teacher. My mother tells me that, as a toddler, I neglected my toys to play school, where I was always the teacher and the pillows and cushions were always my students, errant ones who needed scolding and (gasp!) flogging.'

Clearly educational developers begin young! And what is their destination? What are they most proud of?

'I love the process of helping others to better calibrate their actions to their goals by introducing theories and strategies related to assessment, experimentation, and reflection on practice.'

'What I have learned and relearned all along the way is that POD [Professional and Organisational Development Network] has been, is, and, always will be dedicated to creating a professional space that is generative, renewing, based on discourse across boundaries, and offering mutual support, collegiality, and community in every sense of those words.'

These quotes are from the personal narratives written by a group of 13 international educational developers who came together in Ottawa, Canada from June 23-29, 2007. Their goal was to develop an international 'pathways' research agenda for educational development. The seed for coming together was planted by Jeanette McDonald of Wilfrid Laurier University (Canada) whose doctoral studies addressed pathways into educational development from a Canadian university perspective. Based on this work, she believed that there was an urgent need to understand better why individuals make the decision to become educational developers, and that researching this question would require a concentrated and collaborative effort by developers from around the world.

Each member of the group was asked to write a 'position paper' about their identity as an educational developer (Stefani, 1999), including a career biography in preparation for the week-long seminar designed to plan the international research project. These papers provided some fascinating insights into how each person within this group of people drawn from the USA, Canada, UK and Australia saw their personal journey into this 'profession.' What was it that took us down the 'path less travelled'?

The narratives

Not surprisingly, each of our pathways is unique. In the absence of a common career structure developers within our profession represent a truly eclectic group of professionals (Weimer, 1990). We have varied educational backgrounds, disciplinary allegiances, and academic standing. We have different types of appointments (for example, programme coordinator, educational developer, manager, director, vice-president/provost), remits and responsibilities, orientations to practice (e.g. facilitator, broker, researcher), institutional values, local contexts, and career motivations. As a result, there is no one position profile that captures who we are or what we do. There is no such thing as a typical educational developer.

Yet some common themes did begin to emerge from our stories. The excerpts below have been taken from the position papers written by those of us who met in Ottawa (but with the names omitted to preserve confidentiality). Let us examine what these themes were.

Commitment to teaching

Something that was very clear, as the opening quotes in this article illustrate, was the interest in teaching long before the person made the commitment to enter the profession of faculty or educational development:

> *'I think I have been an educational developer throughout my entire career although I have not always used this name.'*

Even at this early stage in their career there was evidence of what was to come later:

> *'Thus began my entry into teaching at the post-secondary level of the education system, albeit one that is markedly different from the one I was to adopt later. I taught English, Literature, Speech and Drama, and something called "Teaching Methods". More importantly in terms of my personal journey into my current profession, I became actively involved in formal efforts to improve the common curriculum and assessment.'*

For many in North America, the period of being a teaching assistant was critical in stimulating an interest in student learning and teaching:

> *'From the beginning I organized TA training days for new Psychology TAs within my department and participated as a workshop facilitator in our university-wide Conference on Teaching for TAs.'*

For one person, the principles about learning that she learned as a graduate have stayed with her for the whole of her career:

> *'We were one of the few institutions that used contingency management techniques for the undergraduate courses. This involved things like mastery learning, small steps in development, reinforcement contingencies, specification of learning objectives, and so on. As a graduate student I was the teaching assistant for one of the courses using that design. As a result I became very interested in and knowledgeable about instructional design and the application of psychological principles to it.'*

Virtually everybody in the group early in their careers showed an interest in activities that they would later recognise as educational development even though at the time they were not aware that this is what they were doing:

> *'I expect my career path was evolving long before I was mindful of it. As a teaching assistant in undergraduate biology courses, I was struck by the different worlds of learning in most classrooms and learning and working in many labs.'*

Some of the group progressed directly from their postgraduate studies into higher education, but several had their first experience of teaching outside of universities:

> *'My first teaching was as a volunteer in Nigeria in 1964 before I went to X University where I studied philosophy. After my masters, I became a Liberal Education Lecturer in a Further Education College, studied to gain qualified*

teacher status and then moved on to teach English at a 'comprehensive' secondary school in Yorkshire.'

'I studied English literature as an undergraduate at Y University and my love of that particular subject led me to think of becoming a secondary school teacher in that subject. I took a postgraduate course at the University of Z to train as a teacher of English and Drama and then taught in secondary schools in Manchester and London.'

For one of our group the teaching was not within a traditional institution at all:

'Just after graduation I was offered a full-time counselor position with Upward Bound, a federally funded education development program for minority or low income youth.'

But this interest in teaching normally meant a commitment to a discipline, not to faculty development. Most of us started out with aspirations of entering traditional academic careers within a specific area of study or discipline, for example; Psychology, Biology, Philosophy, English, Organisational Behaviour:

'I was initially trained as a Psychologist with my area being educational psychology specifically focusing on higher education. For 15 years I was a Preceptor in the Psychology department.'

Even those who began to take an interest in teaching and learning did not immediately consider becoming an educational developer:

'Although not yet a journey, I was taking a few day trips in conversations with a small number of colleagues who shared my interests. I still thought I would be a biologist.'

Nevertheless the significance of these early interests in laying the groundwork and increasing people's receptiveness to opportunities that would present themselves later cannot be underestimated.

Serendipity and career decision-making

The reasons for turning away from their originally planned career were various. One factor that resonated for us most as a group involved various chance events or 'serendipitous' moments – critical incidents that led us down one pathway (some straightforward, some not) versus another (and possibly away from an existing one). Within our limited sample, this seemed to be the norm, not the exception. Cabral and Salomone (1990: 6) define chance as 'the particular people who influence an individual, as well as the timing and context within which life events occur'; Miller (1983: 17) defines happenstance as 'an unplanned event that measurably alters one's behaviour'; while Betsworth and Hansen (1996: 93) define serendipity as 'events that were not planned or predictable, but that had a significant influence on an individual's career.'

The importance of serendipity within career decision-making is increasingly reflected in the study of career development.

While historically the career development literature has been rooted in the work of Parsons (1909) and a modernist approach to career decision-making that is systematic, rational, and linear (Gysbers *et al.*, 1998) in matching individual knowledge, skills, values and interests with various career options, more recently, theorists and researchers have begun to examine the concept of serendipity and its influence on career paths (Betsworth and Hansen, 1996; Bright *et al.*, 2005; Cabral and Salomone, 1990). But it would seem that both choice and chance are relevant. So how did chance enter into our narratives? Sometimes it was a move to another college, maybe because a partner had taken a post there, that led to a meeting with people who would become influential in their career:

'My partner at that time was on the faculty at College G and I had already met the two people who would eventually become important mentors…'

For several the turning point was being offered a post, even one that they had not initially considered or one they took for less than altruistic reasons:

'I got involved for a couple of years and when the Director of the Unit retired I took over as the Director on a part-time basis. (At the time this was a route to gain promotion, I have to confess.)'

As Cabral and Salomone's definition begins to suggest, one has to be willing to act upon or seize those serendipitous opportunities that present themselves, whether externally or internally directed. Indeed, the 'context of chance events and the interaction between such events and the person's "readiness" to incorporate chance events into his or her career decisions' (Williams, *et al.* 1998: 379) cannot be dismissed. The following excerpt illustrates this 'readiness' factor in one developer's career decision-making:

'After being accepted as a full-time doctoral student at University A in 1974, I was awarded a graduate assistantship to supervise student teachers. Desperately seeking supervision strategies, I walked over to the Clinic to Improve University Teaching and never turned back.'

Becoming involved in networks was a critical step for almost everyone, though they sometimes found these networks by accident:

'I recall discovering in my first month on the job that my predecessor had committed the University to hosting the conference of the International Society for Teaching Alternatives (ISETA) the next year. Since I had never heard of ISETA, I first panicked then recovered enough to arrange to attend that year's conference that was merely three weeks away at Ohio State University. It was then that a whole new world of other associations and conferences, of which I had never heard, opened up for me: Lilly, POD, STLHE [Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education] and the annual meetings of the "Instructional Development Officers".

'In that new mind set, I was off to W in support of the "nation's business". STLHE intervened again as the conference was held at the University of M that year, and

I reconnected once more with "the network".'

Becoming involved in a network enabled people to feel less isolated and part of a wider enterprise that had purpose and common values:

'During that time I took part in a series of meetings in London of a fairly informal but lively and enthusiastic small group of people who were involved in what they called 'educational development'. This group was called SCED (the Standing Conference on Educational Development) and was later to become SEDA [Staff and Educational Development Association]. We felt then a rather beleaguered and ignored group of evangelists.'

But lest we think that the decision to enter educational development was straightforward, two members of the group recalled their misgivings about taking this step. Firstly because of the fear that focusing on teaching would count for less than going into a research-orientated post:

'Even though the criteria were exactly the same as for promotion to Associate, which I had already earned, I still dreaded the process because of the institutional myths and legends that I had heard about tenure, one of which was that teaching excellence did not count…'

And secondly, because of the low profile of 'development' posts:

'…at my university this position had typically been marginalized, occupied by a sessional instructor or, even when a permanent position, had been created for the director – the position had a very low profile within our university.'

Motivation to join and stay in educational development

So, given that these disincentives existed, what motivated people to make the step into educational development? Some saw it as a refreshing and exciting field that would always offer new opportunities:

'One of the wonderful things about education and education development is that "experimenting" is an essential part of our role. Design an intervention, evaluate and improve – there's not a lot of opportunity to become bored!'

A key factor for many was the rewarding nature of the networks they found themselves working in. They found a level of collegiality and support that encouraged them to continue in this field.

Almost every member of the group spoke of key individuals or groups who had influenced their thinking and who had provided informal mentorship in their career. Many spoke of being 'honoured' to meet inspirational individuals, and how they had 'admired and learned from' them and were grateful for the 'opportunities to learn from (and with) my colleagues'.

The group members in turn continue to enjoy contributing to fostering those same networks that had been so important to them in their early careers. They take pride in a shared sense of purpose and values:

'Because most of us were the only individuals in faculty development on our campuses, all our professional contacts and support had to come from the outside. Those of us in POD very consciously cultivated the idea that we had to share to survive. We worked at developing an atmosphere of support and sharing, in which you could call on any other member for advice at any time. We shared advice, ideas, materials, without much thought to intellectual property rights. We had more important issues to worry about than who said what first.'

So what emerges is a group of people with very different backgrounds and academic disciplines who nevertheless shared a common passion for improving teaching – their own and subsequently that of others. Chance events often intervened to allow this latent interest to be transformed into a career path. For some the path was tortuous and unpredictable, for others it followed a 'straight-line' from their graduate studies.

Setting a Pathways Agenda

Educational development in its relatively short history (Moses, 1987) has progressed from a set of activities to a scholarly field of study and practice. Its scope has expanded from a focus on improving teaching and learning through staff development activities to a broad range of educational initiatives and research activity. It now seeks to advance and support teaching and learning in higher education at all levels – national, institutional, departmental, and individual. Educational development units have come to play an increasingly central and expanded role within institutions as change agent and policy leader (Gosling, 2001; Havnes, 2006).

At the same time, the educational developer has become a recognised professional role which has moved from the fringes to the mainstream of higher education (Kahn and Baume, 2003; Kahn, 2004). Like other specialised occupations in colleges and universities, the educational development movement has evolved in response to a variety of internal and external drivers. Among these have been a growing recognition of the importance of the quality of teaching in attracting and retaining students, programme reviews and other quality processes, government policy and funding directives, national reports such as Smith (1991) in Canada, and Dearing (1997) in Britain, calls for accountability, diversifying the student population, and the explosion of educational technology and research on teaching and learning in higher education, to name a few.

Yet, despite this growth, at this time there is no prescribed pathway into educational development. There are no common educational requirements, graduate programmes or formal career paths, what Lynn McAlpine calls 'academic structures' (2006). Indeed the idea of 'developing the developers' is in its infancy and according to some very recent research on attitudes to entering the profession, there is some resistance to having formal entry requirements (Fraser, 1999; Chism, 2007).

Clearly we need a better understanding of how individuals within higher education become educational developers and what attracts them to the field. What draws people to the profession? Why do they get involved in educational development activities? What are the routes that facilitate their entry and advancement? What are the contexts in which this happens? We need to consider both those on the periphery of the field looking in (potential educational developers/champions of educational development) and those who are already well established in the profession in primary appointments.

This enquiry is given greater urgency because there is evidence here in the UK, in North America and in Australia that appointing people to educational development posts is proving difficult. Even as a specialised occupation within higher education, the vocational awareness of educational development compared to other occupations and professions within and outside of the post-secondary arena is limited. Although the number of posts and opportunities is growing (Sorcinelli *et al.*, 2006), there is not an equal supply of new entrants into the field. This is one reason why appointments are often filled from outside the country advertising the post. Educational development appears to be a highly mobile profession – at least across the English-speaking world, as this person's career illustrates:

> 'My career to date has been an interesting one for me. I have worked in the UK and Hong Kong as well as the US and Australia. I am always surprised at how similar the issues are, regardless of the country or the type of university.'

In order to take account of this mobility any study of this phenomenon must take an international cross-cultural perspective.

The evidence we have briefly reviewed above suggests that educational development is at a turning point. So it was fortunate that a rare opportunity to bring an international team of experienced developers together to consider these matters was made possible through an International Opportunities Fund Development Grant from SSHRC (Social Science and Humanities Research Council, Canada) and the support of two partner organisations – the Institute for the Advancement of Teaching in Higher Education (IATHE) and POD.

Together we achieved the following five outcomes:

1. Shared position papers on the educational development scene in our home countries and our own pathways in the profession
2. Offered a professional development workshop and panel to new educational developers at the first International Institute for New Faculty Developers happening at the same time
3. Prepared an international research proposal to submit to our local funding agencies to foster ongoing cross-cultural collaborative scholarship
4. Developed the framework of a book for new developers providing a cross-cultural perspective of

educational development pathways and perspectives
5. Developed a website (http://www.iathe.org/pathways) that will shortly be accessible to the development community to disseminate our position papers and forum reflections.

As a result of coming together in June, we have already submitted conference proposals to the American Educational Research Association (AERA) and received invitations to present at POD (United States) and SEDA (United Kingdom) to promote the pathways agenda and collect data. Through our project co-applicants on the first grant, we have further advanced the 'pathways' agenda with other regional educational development groups such as STLHE, SEDA, POD and the International Consortium for Educational Development (ICED) – all four of which are partner organisations supporting the latest SSHRC research grant proposal.

Charting your Pathway

The seeds of interest in exploring and understanding educational development are sown and the Pathways team has applied for additional SSHRC funding through the International Opportunities Fund Project Grant to continue our work. In addition, we have obtained ethical clearance to conduct focus groups, face-to-face interviews, and online position papers to explore:

1. Why do people get involved in educational development activities?
2. What enables (or inhibits) some individuals to enter into and progress within the field of educational development?
3. What enables (or inhibits) them to commit to a primary appointment in educational development?

We are inviting three types of participants: (1) those who are situated within the field of educational development and consider themselves to be full-time educational/faculty developers; (2) individuals (i.e. graduate students, faculty, administration, *etc.*) who are on the periphery of educational development, but are aware of it as a field of scholarly study and practice, and; (3) individuals who were in Educational Development as a full-time career and have left the field (i.e. returned to their discipline, retired, consultant, *etc.*).

If you are interested in charting your pathway with us, we would like to know about your personal pathway into the profession. Please consider contributing to our research and visit our website at http://www.iathe.org/pathways/.

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Future developments in teacher accreditation

David Baume FSEDA, Higher Education Consultant

Introduction

It has long been a requirement for school teachers. From September 2007 it is a requirement for all Learning and Skills Council-funded teaching, within further education colleges and in the workplace (*The Guardian*, 9th October 2007). And the idea that all new UK academics should undertake and pass a course, and thereby achieve a national qualification in teaching in higher education, no longer seems extraordinary. What, 15 years ago when SEDA launched its new Teacher Accreditation Scheme, seemed wildly ambitious has become national policy and national practice.

So, job done?

Up to a point. We should certainly celebrate what has been achieved.

(For accounts and discussions of the history, see Baume and Baume (1996), Baume (2003), Trowler and Bamber (2005) and Beaty (2006).)

But developers are generally much more interested in planning for particular futures, and then helping to make these happen. (I glance towards the future in Baume (2006).) In the current article I suggest some further possible directions for the development, accreditation and professionalising of teaching and supporting learning in higher education. Not for their own sake. Rather, still trying to realise the belief that lay at the heart of SEDA's submission to the Dearing committee in 1996, the submission that successfully recommended teacher accreditation as national policy – the

belief that all students have the right to be taught well. This student entitlement to good teaching was emphasised again in the 2003 White Paper 'The Future of Higher Education'.

When every student in UK higher education is consistently being taught well, we can perhaps relax a little. So, again; job done? Not wholly, I feel.

I shall consider some current and possible future uses of professional standards and teacher accreditation, informed by some of the ways in which other disciplines and professions deal with standards and accreditation. I shall express one caution about the development and uses of teacher accreditation. I shall suggest some ways in which the

definition of professional standards and frameworks can usefully be enlarged.

Underpinning all of this is a view of teaching in higher education as a profession. This is where, briefly, I shall go next.

Teaching in higher education as a profession

What might we mean by a profession, or by being professional? Grossman (2003) suggests that professions have the following seven attributes:

1. A complex, developing theoretical base from research

2. Expertise needing long study and training

3. Directed at a social good

4. Authoritative advice, which clients follow without knowing why it is good advice

5. Autonomy in setting standards of practice, content of education, entry into and exit from the profession

6. A pledge to follow a code of conduct

7. Greater prestige, influence and financial rewards than other occupations.

As you read this list, you may care to consider, for each item on this list:

- *Is* teaching in higher education, in this particular respect, a profession?

- Whether or not it currently is, *should* it be?

- If it should be, what should we be doing to move it in that direction?

- What, if any, movement is already occurring? What are the indicators of this movement?

You may also think of other respects in which teaching in higher education is, or isn't, or should be, or indeed perhaps indeed shouldn't be, a profession.

We also need to consider briefly the tangled relationship between an academic's first profession or

discipline, that in which they qualified and which may well be the primary definer of their professional identity, and their work as a teacher. For an academic, is 'teacher' another profession that they have to join? This can be a tough sell.

It is probably less threatening and more productive to suggest that one responsibility of any member of any discipline or profession is to ensure the future of the discipline or profession. It hopefully follows that teaching is as much a professional or disciplinary responsibility as are professional or disciplinary practice and research. Teaching is everybody's job.

This view in turn suggests that pedagogy, initial courses and continuing professional development on teaching, and indeed the teaching standards themselves, should, rather than concentrating on the generic, be in at least some respects discipline-specific. They should also explicitly address and work with existing standards and requirements of the academic's original discipline and profession. I shall return to these points.

Current and possible future uses of professional standards

Professional standards are most obviously used to design programmes, and then to teach, resource and assess the work of participants on programmes. But standards can have other uses, and take other forms.

They can take the form of a code of conduct or practice which is binding on a member of the profession. Such a code may also describe the purposes of the profession. The Hippocratic Oath for a doctor is a long-established example. Members of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons promise: '...above all that I will pursue the work of my profession with uprightness of conduct and that my constant endeavour will be to ensure the welfare of the animals committed to my care.'

A professional standard may need to be met to gain entry to the profession,

and in order to remain as a member of the profession. Failure to live up to the professional standard can under extreme circumstances mean suspension or expulsion from the profession, and hence from employment in the profession. Would this be appropriate for those who teach in higher education? 'Academics would never settle for this!' Quite probably they wouldn't. But the claims of academics about the importance of their teaching work might be more convincing if academics were willing to accept both the benefits and the obligations of a professional teaching role.

A professional standards framework provides a fine basis for planning, undertaking and reviewing continuing professional development. If a professional standards framework gives an adequate account of the areas of work, capabilities, underpinning professional values and knowledge of an academic in their teaching work, then it similarly provides a framework against which both initial and continuing professional development can be planned, resourced, undertaken and reviewed.

Thus far in this section we have mainly considered national or institutional uses of a professional standards framework; top-down. But we might feel that a professional standards framework was really working well when individual academics spontaneously and comfortably used the professional standards framework to review their current teaching capabilities, to identify their own needs or opportunities to extend these teaching capabilities, and then to plan, undertake and review their individual continuing professional development.

This is an attractive prospect. What would it take to make it happen?

First, I suggest, each academic will need to see clearly themselves, their own teaching roles and their own work relating directly to a professional standards framework. This will probably require them to work with their own interpretation of the professional standards framework, an interpretation that meets their

teaching roles, in their discipline and their institution.

Each academic could do this interpretation for themselves. However, it would probably be more efficient if each disciplinary or professional body, perhaps with support from the Subject Centres, at least began the process of developing subject-specific interpretations of the standards framework. Some Subject Centres have expressed reservations about the idea of becoming 'standards police'. The Subject Centres are already much concerned with researching, identifying and disseminating good practice in the teaching of their subjects. Producing research-informed interpretations of standards for their subject areas seems a very appropriate and constructive next step.

Similarly, each institution could at least start the process of defining what was particular about teaching in that institution. And the same for departments and programmes.

There are clear roles for academic developers in facilitating these processes of clarifying and further articulating what are necessarily generic national standards.

I have met opposition to the view that professional standards should embrace discipline-related issues. I know that different disciplines adopt different pedagogies. I do not know how many of these differences are necessary, inherent in the discipline, and how many of them are more a matter of custom and practice. I do know that many academics hold strongly to the view that the teaching of their discipline requires a particular and distinctive approach. I would rather go along with this view, and help the disciplinary communities to identify, through research, what is truly and necessarily different in the teaching of their discipline. If it later transpired that some of these differences in teaching methods were less important than was originally believed, well, so be it. In the meanwhile, some useful and applicable pedagogic research and development would have been undertaken.

Second, the academic will need to consider the development of their teaching within the broader context of their career as a whole, involving as it may research, scholarship, professional practice and other elements. A professional standards framework for the whole work of an academic would be of enormous value, encouraging as it would a welcome search for connections among these various roles.

Third, at different stages of their career – their 'academic seasons' in Boyer's (1990) happy phrase – academics should feel comfortable and secure to shift the balance of their work as between research, teaching, management and other roles. They should be able to do this because they know that each of these types of work is equally valued, and offers equal prospect of recognition and, if sought, advancement.

Fourth, the institution, within the lightest possible framework that can be effective, will need to support, resource and trust academics to take responsibility for managing their own development, and for showing the effectiveness of this development and the consequent enhanced contribution they are making to their discipline or profession and to the University and its work.

Fifth, the initial and continuing development of an academic should integrate as far as possible with the appraisal requirements and processes of the University and of the academic's discipline or profession.

You may see further possible uses for standards.

Cautions about the development and use of teacher accreditation

An emphasis on training, professionalisation, standards, accreditation *etc.* may suggest that the quality of teaching and learning is wholly the responsibility of the teacher. This suggestion is of course simply wrong. Contexts – including the University, its procedures and resourcing, the discipline or

profession, and of course the student – also have great effects on the quality of teaching and learning. The teacher is not solely responsible.

Teaching well may require different capabilities in different contexts, 'context' carrying all the meanings listed in the previous paragraph, and doubtless others. Does this variability not bring the whole idea of standards into question? I think not. The overall purpose of developing and implementing teaching standards for higher education is that all students are taught well. Perhaps, even, that all students learn well. 'Taught well' and 'learn well' of course have different meanings for each particular student. And these individual meanings will change throughout the learning life of the student. It's complicated. A challenge for those who develop standards, and for those who design and run courses in teaching in higher education, is to help teachers to get as close as possible to these particulars and individuals whilst making best use of what is known, necessarily more generically, about learning and teaching.

The point of teaching is learning. The effectiveness of teacher accreditation, and the quality of the standards themselves and of their implementation, should be judged by the quality of the student learning. This is where the focus of research and evaluation around teacher accreditation should lie. Not primarily 'Do staff like the way they are trained and accredited as teachers?' Not even primarily – and this may be heresy in an age of student satisfaction surveys – 'Do students like the way they are taught?' But rather – 'Does the teaching work?'

What next?

Here are six sets of questions which I feel need addressing, and indeed answering, in the design and implementation of professional standards for teaching and otherwise supporting learning in higher education. These questions were developed for the NETTLE (2007) project on European standards for higher education teaching:

1. For which university teachers is the standard, course or qualification intended? What are their particular teaching and other roles in the University?

2. In what contexts does each academic work? Specifically:
   – To what discipline or profession does each academic belong?
   – In which institution do they teach?
   – On what programmes do they teach?

Clearly these two sets of questions need to be answered from local knowledge. They need to be answered for – by – each participant in the course. 'Start with the learner' is a sound educational principle. Developers can help individual course participants to build bridges between necessarily generic standards and the particular circumstances of the individual course participant.

3. What are, or should be, the goals and purposes of their teaching work? Again generically, and again requiring individual interpretation for each academic, we may feel that teaching is successful when students:
   – Embrace the goals, the intended outcomes, for their learning on the programme
   – Similarly embrace the learning and teaching methods to be used
   – Work in appropriate and effective ways to achieve these learning outcomes or negotiated variants thereof
   – Receive and use feedback on their work
   – Review the effectiveness of their learning
   – Change their approaches to learning as necessary.

A particular model of the learning process of course underpins this account.

4. What competences do academics need in order to teaching effectively and appropriately? Following closely from the previous account of the goals and effects of good teaching, we may suggest that a competent teacher:

   – Specifies, explains and sometimes negotiates the goals, the intended outcomes, for learning on the programme
   – Similarly specifies and negotiates the learning and teaching methods to be used
   – Teaches and otherwise supports, guides, prompts, provokes *etc.* students to achieve these learning outcomes or negotiated variants thereof
   – Ensures that students receive feedback on their work, including by providing this feedback
   – Marks and grades student work
   – Reviews the effectiveness of their teaching
   – Changes their teaching as necessary to make it more effective.

5. What values *etc.* should demonstrably inform teaching? Perhaps:

   Virtues such as appropriate respectfulness, sensitivity, pride, courage, fairness, openness, restraint, collegiality

   Values or principles such as a concern for students' development; a commitment to scholarship, but in the subject and in teaching; ensuring equality of opportunity; increasing the diversity in the student population.

6. Finally, what knowledge does a teacher need to apply in order to teach effectively and appropriately? Perhaps:
   – The subject being taught
   – Theory and practice related to at least the particular learning and teaching, and hopefully more broadly about learning and teaching
   – The capabilities and goals of the students
   – Relevant national, institutional, disciplinary and professional codes *etc.*

Conclusion
I have suggested some possible further stages in the professionalisation of teaching in higher education. These stages build closely on current practice, in teaching and in other professions. The overall goal remains the same – improving student learning. This task will continue to stretch the whole of the development community. Boredom seems unlikely.

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A Next Generation Educational Development Unit

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Introduction

At Sheffield Hallam University, a conventional educational development unit was formed in 1993 as The Learning and Teaching Institute (LTI) (Blackwell and Blackmore, 2003). Since then, in common with many other educational development units, it has evolved and responded to internal and external drivers. Unusually, the LTI has, for most of its life, been located within the Learning Centre, and is now structurally part of a converged Library and IT Service Department (LITS). For a time the LTI incorporated the Learning and Teaching Research Institute (LTRI) but this no longer exists.

Time and universities do not stand still. The role of the LTI has changed radically in the last four years, and we now see our main aim as leading institutional change, as 'thought leaders'. We manage the Teaching Quality Enhancement Fund (TQEF) and other special initiative funding under the stewardship of the Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Academic Development, through the Quality Enhancement Programme Board (QEPB) and Quality Enhancement Operations Group; key players include the Faculty Heads of Learning, Teaching and Assessment. Our philosophy is that Quality Enhancement (QE) is the taking of deliberate steps towards enhancing the student experience, and the LTI instigates, co-ordinates and supports QE initiatives across the institution. The enhancement of the student experience is the primary focus in all our initiatives in the LTI.

Context

Central to the activities of the LTI is the University's aspirational Learning, Teaching and Assessment (LTA) Strategy, taking learning and teaching in the institution forward to 2010. This was developed through extensive consultation with our four Faculties: Arts, Computing, Engineering and Sciences; Development and Society; Health and Wellbeing; and Organisation and Management, as well as other central departments. The LTA Strategy provides both the direction and our objectives and is written to incorporate the work of the three institutional Centres of Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETLs):

- Promoting Learner Autonomy (CPLA)
- Embedding, Enhancing and Integrating Employability (e3i)
- Inter-Professional e-Learning in Health and Social Care (CIPeL), which is co-hosted with Coventry.

The LTI's role is to initiate change projects, co-ordinate progress and support their institutional embedding; where necessary developing infrastructure to sustain and scale that change, with an emphasis on maintaining the student voice within the QE agenda. This includes informing the development of institutional policies and processes, ensuring there is appropriate technological underpinning and providing examples and principles of good practice. Our aim is to create an institutional environment where academics are enthused by the opportunities to innovate, whilst quietly removing the barriers to innovation and risk-taking. The LTI seeks to work with large numbers of staff, beyond the enthusiasts, in a way that aligns to Faculty realities, through extensive networks of Faculty LTA coordinators and Faculty secondees on projects such as 'Assessment for Learning' and 'Research Informed Teaching'. The secondments last for two years, which enables secondees to establish their role within the Faculties and LTI. We regard this network of LTA-related posts and secondees, which is approaching 100 staff, as 'Associates' of the LTI and their work is both well supported and highly visible at a local level.

Our aim is to win over hearts and minds, moving away from a misconception of academic developers as the 'thought police'. This we have done by using the authentic practitioner voice (the secondees) as a means of encouraging engagement of staff within the Faculties. Secondees have been able to create space for discussion enabling, for example, the mapping of assessment and identification of assessment overload, supporting the enhancement of the student experience, and sharing initiatives between Faculties based on evidence-informed approaches to policy and practice and valuing all aspects of academic practice. This means that some of the work of the LTI is 'invisible' to academics in Faculties, though the work is vital in ensuring ease of adoption and sustainability of change on an institutional scale. Key areas of development are:

- The work around changing the assessment regulations and process in readiness for more innovative approaches to assessment with University Secretariat and Student and Academic Services
- Engaging with the Human Resources Department on LTA career structures, academic leadership and professional development
- Activities necessary to get the Student Portal up and running with colleagues in IT services
- Informing learning space development with Facilities Directorate
- Changes to access and entitlement to support evolving business streams, aligning with Faculty priorities.

The work of the LTI takes in all stages of change: from horizon scanning, anticipating change and exploring the efficacy of new approaches to enhancing learning, to development and implementation of university policy and

strategy. This breadth of role for the LTI provides an institutional resource with expertise that complements, rather than duplicates, Faculty knowledge and experiences. We are not a brokering service, or facilitators of conversations, or mere disseminators of good practice – we are more concerned with informing to initiate, and initiating to inform. With the diversity found within our Faculties, we want academics to be enabled to interpret and apply the innovations we identify in the context of their own subject or profession. Whilst external bodies, such as the Higher Education Academy Subject Centres, provide some guidance, the LTI's role is to provide guidance that will work in the SHU context taking into account institutional constraints and readiness.

The LTI is influential in all the LTA initiatives at the University, and our main areas of activity are:

- Implementing the LTA Strategy – working with Faculties and other central departments on planning around LTA. We also lead on evaluating the impact and effectiveness of the LTA Strategy
- e-learning – integrating e-learning opportunities that enrich and enhance the student learning experience. We anticipate and, where appropriate, implement new user-focused functionality to support learning
- The Assessment for Learning Initiative – gearing up for major changes to assessment practice across the institution, through pilots and a comprehensive staff development programme
- Academic Innovation – horizon scanning to inform institutional thinking regarding the efficacy of innovative opportunities to support and, where possible, transform learning
- Academic Staff Development – the implementation of a Professional Development Framework and a comprehensive programme of CPD opportunities for SHU teaching and learning support staff
- Research Informed Teaching – encouraging teaching that is informed by research (both disciplinary and pedagogical) and enabling learning that engages students in active research opportunities
- Learning spaces – development of engaging learning environments (real and virtual, formal and informal)
- Personalisation online – providing academic focus for the development of the University's personalised online environment encouraging communications, support and information to be increasingly user-centred (personalised, integrated and dynamic)
- Initiating new institution-wide task groups – for example National Student Survey and Human Resources for LTA; the next two will be around Students of the Future, and Digital Fluency
- Supporting an internal Change Academy.

Structure

The LTI has twenty-four academic and research staff in two groups: academic innovation and academic practice. The Academic Innovation team is engaged in a range of innovative initiatives to enhance the student learning

experience by the creative application of technology, information and pedagogy and to identify the potential of new and emerging technologies within learning. They are committed to ensuring that there is a strong pedagogical approach to the further embedding of e-learning at the university, informed by student expectations and experiences within and beyond SHU, and the development of a user-centric personalised learning environment. We work with colleagues across the University to ensure that we are institutionally ready for constantly evolving student needs and emerging LTA practice. Evaluation of these initiatives is integral to their work and is well published.

Academic practice leads on: the development of the University's LTA strategy and evaluation; building capacity for a scholarly approach to LTA and professional development; supporting implementation of LTA policy; and developing the institutional professional development framework for teaching and learning support staff. As a result it is working with models of educational change on a large scale.

The LTA landscape at SHU is varied and complex, but beyond the acronyms and varied funding streams, that complexity provides for a richness of opportunity that should all be moving in the same direction – enhancing the student experience. A student who has an inspirational experience isn't bothered which particular initiative it came from, or what the acronyms stand for.

The main challenge is for the institution to gain the multiplier effect from its multiple LTA initiatives. The aim is to ensure that the management and implementation of LTA at SHU has maximum impact and benefits for students and staff. The LTI is central to achieving the aim of putting learning and teaching at the heart of the university.

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From Educational Development to Strategic Management

Sally Brown, Leeds Metropolitan University

This is the story of a personal journey from being an educational developer to a leader of assessment, learning and teaching in a university. This journey took place in a period when educational developers moved from being a group of 'voices in the wilderness' to being a recognised profession with high influence on higher education, and in telling this tale, I would like to recognise the crucial influence of SEDA, particularly a number of 'heroes' – influential and supportive colleagues who helped me develop the skills and confidence to do the job I do now.

It all started for me when, in the late 1980s, I went to a SCED (Standing Conference on Education Development) Conference in Exeter, and found out what I wanted to do with the rest of my working life. I'd been following what we nowadays call a portfolio career path, since leaving school-teaching to have babies, and was at that time working part-time in a further education college, and part-time at what was then Newcastle Polytechnic, teaching study skills, communication, creative writing and whatever else they'd employ me to teach.

Having started teaching for the Open University at higher education level, without a higher qualification, I knew that I needed a Master's degree if I wanted to become a lecturer full-time, but I was discouraged from following this career path by a brutally honest, elitist, much younger colleague, who told me I was too old, had gone to the wrong kind of university, and, he inferred, was of the wrong social class. 'At your age, with young children, without a PhD, you're just not going to make it,' he said. I didn't like what he said, but recognised some of the truth in what he was saying.

My portfolio included school teaching, mainly at secondary level, home tuition with excluded children, working in prisons, borstals and for the Probation Service, being a trained play-group leader, and teaching for a number of years for the Open University on a radical theatre-studies course that incorporated both practical and theoretical perspectives (I was employed by them for my expertise in the former area). Incidentally, the training I received from the OU on marking and assessment established approaches and practices that still impact on my work. However, with that rag-bag of skills and expertise I could understand why my CV might not leap into the hands of the selection panel for a traditional university literature lecturing post.

Going to the SCED conference was almost literally a Damascene experience. The weather in Exeter was sunny, and I found the whole experience very enlightening. There was a group of people around who, like me, got really excited about how students learn, and how we can foster skills in a whole range of communication and other areas. People there were talking and listening to one another, about the genuine difference that good teaching could make, and about the ways in which subject matter and pedagogic expertise married together could be transformative.

I'd not heard the term 'educational developer' before I went there: on the way home, I knew I was one. I also made friends, people who influenced my work and my life over the next ten years, and helped me in all kinds of ways, mentoring me selflessly, and helping me to realise my own capability. I was soon co-opted onto SCED's Publications Committee, (chaired at that stage by groupwork guru David Jaques), which produced a really innovative and diverse range of publications, which later included my

own earliest, and with hindsight rather basic, first publication, SCED Paper No.63 January 1991, *Self- and Peer-assessment,* co-authored with Peter Dove. When Peter and I were drafting it, trying to describe and theorise the practices we were using in our everyday work, we went up to Edinburgh to visit John Cowan, then and now a leading light for those interested in assessment. I was amazed that someone as high-powered and famous as him would be so generous with his time, and so helpful in guiding our work. His fine example made me determined that I too would help to support new writers later in my career.

I became more and more active in the Publications Committee, and was asked to chair it when David stepped down. This was my first real experience of chairing a cross-institutional group, and gave me opportunities to hone skills in project management and people management, that had probably evolved earlier during my complex multi-tasking career, but had lain dormant until then. Not long after I started chairing the group, I met another key influence who went on to have a key role in my life: Phil Race. I remember sharing my sandwiches with him when he came to his first meeting without realising that SCED worked on wafer-thin budgets and didn't provide lunch. Phil started sending me (and others on the Committee) drafts of a book he was working on, study-skills tips for students. I got really excited by the project, and wrote lots of comments, but was nevertheless surprised when a draft manuscript appeared some months later which credited me with co-authorship. I don't think I would ever have had the confidence to believe that I could complete a book without that highly supportive and nurturing approach to writing that made me believe I could do it.

With the bit between my teeth on the publications front, I was thrilled and terrified to be invited by another SCED Publications Committee member, Peter Knight, to co-author a more research-orientated book on assessment. He persuaded me that my practical knowledge of diverse assessment in the classroom could effectively be melded with his thorough understanding of the international literature, to become a book which was both scholarly and useful. It was scary writing with a high-powered intellectual like Peter, meeting up with him in Carlisle midway between our homes for update meetings, and he certainly increased my work rate, because I was fearful of his disapproval if I were to turn up without having completed my allotted share of the work.

Around this time, back at Newcastle Polytechnic, I was doing more and more staff development sessions, and when a junior post in the Educational Development Service cropped up, I leaped sideways into this role, working in a unit led by Joanna Tate which up until recently had included Liz Beaty. Joanna had set up a service which was well regarded across the university, and was running a New Lecturers' Course, which systematically, and I think very effectively, prepared staff both for the practical aspects of how to teach, and the more reflective and scholarly underpinnings that form the sub-structure of good teaching. I was also at that time contributing substantially to an institution-wide project, Enterprise in Higher Education (EHE), which had been established by the then Tory Government to encourage universities to enable graduates to become more savvy about business and the whole world of work.

Under Freda Tallantyre's leadership, we subverted EHE away from being mainly about entrepreneurship, so that it became mostly focused on encouraging innovative teaching to support student skills development. She set up a resource centre, which I went on to manage, MARCET, the Materials and Resources Centre for Enterprising Teaching, and this gave me the opportunity to commission and

edit other peoples' writing, particularly what became the well-regarded 'Red Guide' series, with authors supported by small amounts of EHE money, given to encourage them to make time available to write about their innovations. I learned so much in this period, from budget management to the powers of persuasion, particularly under the mentorship of Freda, but also from my administrator, Chris McCann, who made me realise that delegation was a good idea.

During this period of growing-on my skills as an educational developer, I was helped enormously by being invited by Graham Gibbs to work with Chris Rust, Trevor Habeshaw, Diana Eastcott, Bob Farmer, James Wisdom, Gina Wisker and many others, on the Oxford Centre for Staff Development projects, particularly a seminal project funded by the Polytechnics and Colleges Funding Council, on 'Teaching More Students', in 1995. It was enormously developmental to be involved in collectively creating workshop materials and publications which were then delivered in workshops by the team, across all the polytechnics and many universities in the UK, over a period of a couple of years. The confidence I gained in delivering workshops through Oxford Centre helped me to feel able to start offering consultancy work in higher education institutions in the UK and internationally. This in turn further enriched my own practice, since I learned more from every international workshop about HE pedagogic practices elsewhere.

Around this time I helped to broker the merger of SCED with the old Association of Educational and Training Technology, working closely with its then Chair, Henry Ellington, to bring about a political compromise acceptable to both organisations. This took a great deal of delicate negotiation and goodwill on all sides, requiring me to fine tune a range of people skills that have subsequently proved invaluable. When EHE finished, and the Educational Development Service was dissolved in one of those periodically fashionable pogroms designed to make institutions meaner and leaner, I moved across to

head up a Quality Enhancement Unit, which not only supported subject groups preparing for Teaching Quality Assessment, but also led initiatives on improving diverse aspects of teaching.

At the time of all this turmoil, I had recently been made co-chair (with Carole Baume) of SEDA (we called ourselves a settee, a two person chair), and much to my later regret, I only served half of my term as co-chair. However, Carole and I had established a principle which still maintains today, of SEDA having co-chairs rather than a single chair, enabling collective expertise to manage what was becoming a fairly ambitious and wide-ranging organisation. From Carole I learned masses about management processes and systems as well as about strategic decision-making.

When the Quality Enhancement Unit at Northumbria was being pressured to become more and more concerned with quality assurance, I realised the time had come for me to move away from Northumbria, where I had by then worked part- and full-time for nearly 20 years. When I took the phone-call following my interview for the post of Director of Membership Services for the nascent Institute of Learning and Teaching, I was so sure that I hadn't been appointed, I had already started my response, thanking them for giving me the chance to apply.

The next five years were some of the most exciting, challenging and demanding years of my life. Helping to set up from scratch, with initially only eleven other people, a new organisation in response to the Dearing Report's insistence on the need for a new professionalism in higher education, with a tiny budget, and a largely unclarified role and mission, was tremendous fun. In the first year, from a standing start, we established a means by which academics and learning support staff could gain professional accreditation, and also a whole range of services to support those members.

When I had first started working in the Educational Development Service at Northumbria, there were fewer than a

dozen 'new lecturers' courses in the UK. By 1999, when the ILT opened, there were around 60 such courses, and by the time the ILT ceased to exist, only around half a dozen UK higher education institutions did not have either their own course or access to one at another institution, thanks to the work of Caroline Bucklow. Under the calm leadership of Paul Clark, we achieved within four years a membership which represented about 14% of eligible higher education staff, and as conventional wisdom claims that when establishing a professional body, achieving 5% of a target market within ten years is a good rate of development, we were not unhappy. Our services to members include our own journal, a book series, fortnightly updates for members, a website with largely member-produced practical content, regular meetings in ten UK regions, and our very highly regarded Annual Conference. My work at the ILT also involved helping to set up the selection process for the National Teaching Fellowship Scheme, which gave me the opportunity to work very closely with senior colleagues across English universities, particularly Professor Sir Martin Harris, and Professor Sir David Watson, heroic figures who both supported and challenged me. This was educational development at a national level.

When the ILT ceased to exist following the merger with the Learning and Teaching Support Network Generic Centre, together with the National Co-ordination Team, to form the Higher Education Academy, I moved on and undertook freelance consultancy and interim management work before taking up the opportunity to work part-time as a Visiting Professor at Leeds Met. Very soon, I realised that Leeds Met was exactly the kind of place where someone with my skill set could make a difference, and I progressively became more and more engaged.

My first big task was to lead on the development of an Assessment, Learning and Teaching strategy, which I did collaboratively with our university Teacher Fellows. The hardest part of the job was gaining ownership across the university, and taking the strategy,

which was progressively refined through a number of iterations, through Academic Committee, Academic Board, the Education Strategy Sub-Committee of the Governors, and finally the full Governing Body. Having succeeded in producing something which looked as if it would work well in practice, I was then delighted to be appointed Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Assessment, Learning and Teaching.

At Leeds Met, which is one of the biggest student-centred universities in the UK, I've had a chance to put into practice all the things I had been advocating over the years, and to actually see the long-term outputs of strategic leadership. I have had to put my reputation where my mouth was, so to speak: you might call it whole-institution educational development. Here I work to recognise and reward excellent teaching, to encourage evidence-based innovative practice, to foster cross-institutional collaboration and to re-engineer the curriculum to incorporate approaches suitable for contemporary student needs.

This Bildungsroman has set out to explain how I became an educational developer, and to argue that educational development provides superb training opportunities for people who want to lead universities. Just about every skill that I need now in my day-to-day work was fostered through being an educational developer at a local and then national level. Educational developers cannot command; they work by persuasion, conviction, and scholarly argument. They are change agents who need to be able to analyse the needs of people who don't recognise they have any, and help people to come to practical solutions to problems that the problem-owners have barely formulated. Mentoring, supportive encouragement, and leadership by example are all necessary means to encourage people to be innovative in their teaching approaches, and are even more important when helping people to start and continue to publish and disseminate their original teaching and learning activities.

When you are trying to bring about changes in practice in universities, fostering inclusive approaches, exploring how best to retain students, developing students' employability, fostering internationalisation in the curriculum, encouraging effective use of technologies to enhance learning, helping people to assess large numbers of students more efficiently and effectively, it really helps to have pragmatic examples supported by scholarship, to help people to think (and more importantly, practise) in the ways that you want them to. It also helps if you're trying to motivate people to go the extra mile with little more than tiny amounts of cash and a cheery smile to incentivise them.

In my current role I am supported to go way beyond boundaries, using all my talents to the full. Being entrusted with leadership in the academic world requires a leap of faith by people who believe in you, and Simon Lee, Vice-Chancellor at Leeds Met, by investing that trust in me, to make a real difference, helped to turn me from an educational developer into a strategic leader (although, across my heart, you will still find written the name 'educational developer').

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Yogis and Commissars: Learning, Teaching and Quality in the QAA Institutional Audit Methodology

Derrik Ferney, Anglia Ruskin University

Yogis and Commissars

The title of this paper is based in part on an essay written in 1945 by Arthur Koestler in which he contrasts two stylised extremes of human behaviour – that of the yogi on the one hand and the commissar on the other. Yogis are contemplative, free thinking, individualistic and spiritual. Conversely, commissars are doctrinaire, compliant, bureaucratic and temporal. Sixty years later, though stripped of its original political and historical context, the archetypal distinction between yogis and commissars is still recognisable in aspects of organisational behaviour. In Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) there is a commonly held view that a similar contrast exists between the Learning and Teaching (L&T) Community on the one hand and the Quality Assurance (QA) community on the other. By the L&T Community is meant all those who teach students and otherwise facilitate their learning, as well as the national agencies and university centres that articulate their interests. By the QA community is meant those agencies and offices – external and internal – that oversee the management of quality and standards within HEIs.

In most HEIs, these two communities tend to have complementary missions but, historically at least, quite separate cultures. This paper argues that such separation is no longer tenable because of recent changes made by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) to its institutional audit methodology. The most important of these changes is the growing emphasis on Quality Enhancement (QE) and, within that emphasis, the explicit connection made by the QAA between QE and institutional L&T strategies. As a result, the QAA's new audit methodology requires the QA and L&T/QE communities to work together more cohesively than they may have done in the past, and this joint activity has given birth to yet another acronym, QAE (Quality Assurance and Enhancement).

Quality Assurance and Quality Enhancement

Several commentators see the QA and QE communities as being about as antipodal as yogis and commissars. The L&T community is seen essentially as an 'enquiring culture' (Jackson, 2002) which espouses values such as originality, individual and group reflection, shared activity with peers, action research – all values that are considered intrinsic to teaching activity. In contrast, the QA community is seen as creating a 'compliance culture' (*ibid*.) that is unremittingly bureaucratic, led by codes of practice written in legalistic language by administrators rather than academics and policed internally by Quality Offices and externally by Quality watchdogs such as the QAA, the Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED) and a range of professional bodies.

Little wonder that there is a tendency to see Quality Assurance as extrinsic to teaching activity, as a process inflicted on teachers.

Raban (2007: 78) refers to what he calls the 'audit culture' and the 'bureaucratisation of quality', arguing that the QA systems derived from the Council for National Academic Awards (CNAA) processes of the 1970s and 1980s promote 'unintelligent accountability' and seem 'unhelpfully dirigiste and burdensome' nowadays. Mathias comments more benignly but in the same vein in his article 'Putting the "E" into "QA"':

> '*A well-meaning bureaucratic QA industry has gradually evolved which appears to many teachers to issue guidelines on policy and practice with little by way of real consultation with practitioners and the reality of their experience, and by being not particularly informed by academic scholarship and research into higher education teaching…Implicitly, this can send a message that QA and QE are things that are done to academics rather than with them or by them.*' (Mathias, 2003: 3)

These observations will strike a chord among some lecturers in higher education, who see themselves as being forced to comply with internal quality processes that seem unduly heavy-handed, that they have not themselves elaborated and that seem alien to core learning and teaching activities.

Quality and Standards

There is no better example of the problems regulatory terminology can cause than the distinction between quality and standards. For the QA community this is a fundamental distinction, without which the purpose of QE cannot be fully understood, but the distinction is far from clear to those outside that community. Many lecturers, for example, tend to use the terms interchangeably.

By *standards* the QAA means nationally benchmarked levels of student achievement. While standards may be revised periodically, they have to be regarded as *givens* at any one moment in time. For this reason they cannot be the object of enhancement activity for individual HEIs. By *quality* the QAA means the ways in which individual HEIs manage the student experience so as to ensure that students will attain the *standards* expected. Unlike standards, quality can be improved on and activities to do with quality can and should be the object of enhancement for HEIs. Importantly, when one factors in the input of the many support services to the overall student learning experience, and the proportion of the working week that students spend interacting with them

rather than being taught, it becomes increasingly difficult to decide where academic quality, let alone the *enhancement* of academic quality, starts and finishes.

This is borne out by a survey of the relevant literature which substantiates the view that enhancement is indeed 'a rich, complex idea' (LTSN-ILTHE-HESDA, 2003: 3). Commentators distinguish between types of enhancement in many ways, including constituency (teachers only, or all staff in a student-facing role) (*ibid*.), a retrospective or prospective outlook (Raban, 2007: 81), relationship with Total Quality Management (Becket, N. and Brookes, M., 2006: 124-5), and impact *i.e.* minor change, incremental change or transformational change (LTSN, 2002: 4; LTSN-ILTHE-HESDA, 2003: 3).

At present, therefore, HEIs still have the opportunity to view enhancement from a variety of perspectives and, in a very real sense, to mould it in their own image. In the medium term quality enhancement is likely to move well beyond the traditional boundaries of quality assurance to become an institutional approach to managing the improvement of most aspects of the student experience. This is certainly within the scope of the definitions of enhancement offered by both the Higher Education Academy (HEA) and the QAA. It follows that the greater its pervasiveness, the less likely it becomes that the enhancement of quality can be managed by a culturally separate QA community acting in relative isolation from L&T and the student experience in the broadest sense.

Enhancement: HEA and QAA definitions

The HEA sees QE in higher education as:

'…an inclusive concept and a collective enterprise. It involves everyone who teaches, supports and guides students and the managers and administrators of HE institutions. It includes significant strategic initiatives and the many small things that people do to try to make things better.'(LTSN-ILTHE-HESDA, 2003)

The QAA's Handbook for Institutional Audit defines QE as:

'…an aspect of institutional quality management that is designed to secure, in the context of the constraints within which individual institutions operate, steady, reliable and demonstrable improvements in the quality of learning opportunities.' (QAA, 2006: 16)

There is no shortage of pleonasm and litotes in the sections of the Handbook describing enhancement which consists variously of *deliberate steps* (46) involving *planned approaches* (50) that are *no less systematic* (46) and *no less based on clear strategic planning* than quality assurance *(46)*. All this applies to postgraduate research degree provision as well as to taught provision (8), and audit reports are now required to comment specifically on the former.

The Agency's insistence on these points may be indicative of two things; firstly, the broader and deeper its links with other institutional (and national) reference points, the more QE is likely to take root in institutions; secondly, *planned, systematic and strategic* activity necessarily provides written records that are amenable to audit. This is made clear in the

sections of the Handbook that explain how audit teams will operate:

'Audit teams will consider the ways in which institutional-level approaches to quality enhancement make systematic use of management information…Quality enhancement has much to do with the way in which institutions collect, analyse and use information from internal and external sources.' (QAA, 2006: 17)

It follows that when elaborating their approach to enhancement HEIs must do so formally, by tracking the development and implementation of enhancement-led activities through their policy-making and committee structures and by continually reviewing their effectiveness. Because the QAA perceives close links between enhancement and L&T, HEIs need to be clear about how the L&T Unit is to operate in terms of its external reference points, its role in approval, periodic review and annual monitoring activity and its contribution to the achievement of incremental and transformational change. Equally though, and paraphrasing Raban (above), HEIs need to ensure that their L&T activities do not lead to the *bureaucratisation of enhancement* in the same way as they have led to the 'bureaucratisation of quality'. There is a real danger of over-complexity and reduced impact if the annual action plans deriving from institutional L&T Strategies, perhaps interpreted at each of faculty, departmental and programme levels, give rise to hundreds of action points, each of which needs implementing, reporting and reviewing. In HEIs where this happens, audit teams may need to check whether the institutional L&T strategy is, or is not, equal to the sum of its parts.

Judging by the latest addition to the QAA's Outcomes from Institutional Audit series, *Institutions' Intentions for Enhancement (2007),* audit teams are likely to be asking this very question about institutional approaches to enhancement in general. This paper provides an overview of enhancement in the outcomes of 58 institutional audit reports published by August 2006, giving examples of the lack of a shared view of enhancement within HEIs and a concomitant lack of overarching strategy and strategic planning. It states that:

'Many of the institutional audit reports published between December 2004 and August 2006 identify institutional approaches to quality enhancement which appear to consist of individual, granular initiatives without a clear overall rationale…Several reports recommend that the relevant institutions adopt a more strategic approach to the enhancement of their arrangements for managing quality and academic standards.' (QAA, 2007b: 4)

This use of the word 'granular' probably refers to the common practice in HEIs of identifying and highlighting 'pockets' of enhancement activity within existing QA processes originally designed to serve different purposes. The challenge English HEIs face is to define what they mean by enhancement, as opposed to assurance, and to find the least complex and most effective ways of achieving it. In this regard they may find the experience of Scottish HEIs instructive.

The QAA's approach to Enhancement in Scotland

In Scotland a strategic approach to quality enhancement which requires Scottish HEIs to have explicit institutional enhancement strategies has been used since the adoption of Enhancement-led Institutional Review (ELIR) in 2004.

Both the English and Scottish approaches make it absolutely clear that the enhancement of quality depends upon the assurance of quality and standards, but there is a degree of nuancing in the way in which this is stated. While the English Handbook says in effect that *assurance includes enhancement* (QAA, 2006:16), the Scottish Handbook puts it the other way round – *enhancement includes assurance* (QAA, 2003:10).

Given that both systems consider assurance to be a pre-requisite for enhancement, does it really matter if assurance is seen as a sub-set of enhancement, or *vice versa*? The answer is that the distinction flags priorities and that its significance is likely to grow to the extent that the goals and scope of assurance and enhancement diverge. Interestingly, the reviews of ELIR commissioned so far by the QAA acknowledge the tensions between assurance and enhancement and, in the first year of operation, some uncertainty on the part of HEIs as to where the emphasis of the new methodology lay (QAA, 2004: 9). However, significant progress seems to have been made between 2003 and 2006 as HEIs in Scotland have accustomed themselves to the new methodology. The QAA's recent review of ELIR (QAA, 2007a) indicates that some of the changes Scottish HEIs have had to make in evolving new enhancement-led systems are very far-reaching, particularly in respect of their committee structures and in the articulation of QAE processes with wider institutional strategies and national strategies for transformational change.

In respect of transformational change the raising of quality enhancement to a level of strategic importance seems to have taken the Scottish approach some way beyond the territory traditionally occupied by quality assurance, to include, for example, adaptation to widening participation and globalisation. This provides a sense of *wider purpose* for enhancement that translates into sector-wide enhancement themes such as 'Employability', 'The First Year' and 'Flexible Delivery' that have the potential to build up familiar aspects of quality assurance into motors for collective change.

While it is unlikely for a number of reasons that the ELIR audit methodology will be adopted in its entirety in England, shifting the balance of audit activity towards enhancement is surely here to stay. The *Findings* section of institutional audit reports now includes a section on the Institution's Approach to Quality Enhancement, and the new Institutional Quality Enhancement Review (IQER) methodology will shortly be implemented to support and audit HE in FE.

Quality Enhancement – repurpose or redesign?

Opinion varies as to whether an institutional approach to quality enhancement can be best achieved by repurposing existing QA practices to augment their potential for enhancement, or whether more radical redesign is required.

An example of the former might be the repurposing of annual monitoring so that significantly greater emphasis is placed on

its prospective rather than retrospective function. In propounding an approach to QAE they call 'Quality Risk Management' Raban and Turner (2006) suggest that the architecture of quality assurance is in need of modernisation. On the same grounds as Jackson (2002: 8) they argue that in an increasingly turbulent academic environment, the purpose of annual monitoring is less to describe a Programme's operation over the previous academic year than to identify risks to the provision over the coming year. Consideration is then given to heading off those risks and this becomes the motor for both quality assurance and enhancement.

A number of commentators argue for more wide-reaching reform to existing QA practices. Biggs (2002) points out the limitations of retrospective QA and argues that for enhancement to occur:

> '*The institution needs…to establish built-in mechanisms that allow it, like the individual reflective teacher, to continually review and improve current practice. New content knowledge, educational innovations, a changing student population, and changing conditions in the institution and in society, all make such a review necessary.*' (Biggs, 2002: 3)

We should note here *en passant* that Biggs relates enhancement to transformational change such as widening participation and technological development, in a manner that anticipates the Scottish ELIR approach.

One of the central mechanisms Biggs identifies as being crucial to helping HEIs deal with transformational change is staff development in learning, teaching and assessment through direct linkage of departmental enhancement activity with the work of University Centres for Learning and Teaching (UCLTs). He argues that enhancement is most likely to occur through mechanisms located at departmental level, involving all staff, and with support from the UCLT.

Indeed, if there is one common theme in the literature it is that unlike QA, QE is a bottom-up activity that can only be achieved with the engagement of the people who teach and otherwise deal with students. Mathias (2003) talks about 'engaging hearts and minds' in order to facilitate a deep approach to the teaching role, and states that 'educational development must be relocated where it has always belonged – within an academic rather than an administrative environment' (Mathias, 2003: 5). The LTSN creative thinking group concurs (LTSN-ILTHE-HESDA, 2003: 2) and goes on to give an interesting overview of what a systems approach to Quality Enhancement would involve,

> '*Quality enhancement is a "systems" concept requiring systems thinking…It involves all the people who teach, assess, support and administer students' learning and the resources that support learning, the regulatory and support infrastructures used to ensure that teaching and learning is of an appropriate standard and quality…It involves structures, processes, procedures, incentives and cultures.*' (LTSN-ILTHE-HESDA, 2003: 11)

Conclusions

Faced with the QAA's new interest in enhancement, English HEIs are currently engaged in identifying and highlighting 'pockets' of enhancement activity within existing QA processes and considering ways in which their Learning and Teaching strategies can become a stronger vehicle for enhancement. This is doubtless pragmatic but the price paid is that the institutional whole is less than the sum of its parts and, as its Outcomes paper (2007b) indicates, the QAA is wise to this.

In the medium term, therefore, HEIs will have to go further than identifying contingent connections between pockets of enhancement activity within existing QA practices. A coherent institutional approach to QE, one that takes 'deliberate steps' to effect transformative change, will rely heavily on the participation of a number of staff constituencies within HEIs, particularly student-facing constituencies. It will need to provide communication channels between those constituencies and, as the recent QAA report on ELIR indicates, this is likely to lead to substantial changes in management and committee structures (QAA, 2007a:6). It will rely on a balance of 'bottom-up' and 'top-down' initiatives that can secure the engagement of teaching staff and locate it in a strategic context.

Enhancement is premeditated, intended, planned, and good practice only 'counts as' enhancement if it can be seen to result from pre-existing institutional strategies and policies. Consequently, the 'deliberate steps' leading from conceptualisation to actualisation need to be recorded if they are to count in an institution's favour when it is audited. This means that the time has come for the L&T community and other student-facing services to join forces with the QA community to design the blueprint for a single, joined-up set of QAE processes that meet the requirements of all parties and align with the strategic directions in which the institution is travelling. In this way the antipodal characteristics of the yogi and the commissar might finally synthesise to produce processes that are reflective and intelligent as well as systematic and consistent.

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Using Work Based Learning and Accreditation to recognise Continuous Professional Development

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Increasingly, professional bodies require their members to maintain their skills and competences by undertaking Continuous Professional Development (CPD) during their career. This is particularly so amongst healthcare professionals, but may also be found in other professions such as management, engineering and education, to name but a few. This paper will consider CPD within the healthcare field and extract some key principles that can be applicable to other professions. The notion of accrediting learning from experiential learning acquired through CPD activities will be explored in relation to several case studies which demonstrate the applicability and flexibility of accreditation as used by Middlesex University's Institute of Work Based Learning.

Organisational and professional learning and development through CPD and lifelong learning have been considered as strategic allies in the business world as they are thought to contribute to increased quality and performance, organisational survival and responsiveness to change and market growth (Browell, 2000). CPD in the health service is viewed as a core pillar in improving and modernising services, by supporting changes in healthcare which involve placing the patient at the centre of care provision, and incorporating new skills and knowledge from those that deliver care (DoH, 2003). The Department of Health (DoH) (1999:3) defines CPD as 'a process of lifelong learning for all individuals and teams which meets the needs of patients and delivers the heath outcomes and healthcare priorities of the NHS, and which enables professionals to expand and fulfil their potential', thus indicating that both the individual and the organisation are involved in the

CPD process. For the individual it involves updating professional knowledge and skills, self management, autonomous learning and openness to learning opportunities that occur during everyday work situations. For the organisation, alignment with service needs and organisational objectives are expected when commissioning training and development for all staff, not just for those with a professional qualification (DoH, 1999).

Within the NHS CPD is expected to be managed locally but be responsive to the national agenda and local constraints in services so that a sound, accountable approach is engendered, which contributes towards building a work environment which supports lifelong learning and enables excellence in clinical care (DoH, 2004). Today, after a decade of NHS modernisation, the national climate is changing, with increased funding constraints within the public sector, although the need for the service to identify training needs in order to implement new technologies and practices remains, and is likely to escalate in the future. Other professions and corporate organisations also recognise the need to continuously develop staff in order that the workforce can meet future challenges and opportunities. The move towards providing professional development which carries academic accreditation (as opposed to accreditation by a professional body), not only ensures a quality product, but also provides lifelong learning opportunities and enables staff and organisations to gain a competitive edge (Luby, 1999), although the form that CPD takes may vary, depending on the educational tradition of the subject discipline.

The concept of CPD appears to be closely aligned to that of lifelong learning. The term 'workforce development' is also used and these terms are often used interchangeably within the literature. This may reflect modern career patterns as practitioners experience a variety of careers within a working lifespan which emerge from changed roles within professions. For example, a health care professional may qualify in a specific healthcare field and maintain professional competences for a number of years before moving into either management or teaching (Eraut, 1994), but then have to gain new professional competences in order to practise both in their chosen profession and as a manager or teacher. This type of professional development extends vocational skills, stretches intellectual capability and deepens professional knowledge in order to practice credibly, as well as enhancing personal career fulfillment. A broader knowledge of practice emerges as well as other social and economic benefits such as flexibility in employment and the stimulation of personal development (Shaw and Green, 1999). Professional competences may be developed in some organisations in order to clarify role expectations and can be used as frameworks in which to situate and accredit CPD courses (Garnett, 2001; Costley, 2001). Exemplars of CPD competency frameworks without academic accreditation are the Association for University Research and Industry Links (AURIL) (2006) which describes a framework for Knowledge Transfer Practitioners, and the Scottish Executive (2003) which outlines a CPD framework for Educational Leadership.

A key principle of CPD is the attraction, motivation and retention of

high calibre staff at all levels of a profession, including managers and non professionals, to provide a service that focuses on the organisation's business or activity. There is inevitably a tension between organisational needs and that of the individual undertaking the CPD with their learning needs and aspirations, and a participative partnership approach needs to be encouraged to ensure maximum benefits for all concerned (DoH, 1999).

The DoH (1999) identified other principles of CPD as:

- Purposeful and patient-centred
- Participative, involving all stakeholders, educationally effective and focused on educational need
- Part of organisational development strategy and in line with national and local service objectives
- Focused on development needs of teams, across traditional multi-professional and service boundaries
- Building on previous knowledge, skills and experience
- Enhancing skills of interpretation and application of evidence-based knowledge.

Whilst these have a health care focus, if applied to any other profession the importance of putting the business of the organisation at the fore and making individuals accountable for their practice and their professional development is paramount for an effective CPD approach. Not all professionals work in multi-disciplinary environments, or within professional boundaries, but working within and across teams and with a variety of individuals outside the usual sphere of practice is professional development in itself, which can be captured by the use of reflective learning techniques in order to inform practice. Learning through reflection is identified by Schön (1987) as an essential professional attribute, and one which he identifies as 'learning-in-action' or 'learning-from-action' where critical reflection upon practice, either during or after the event, creates new insights, solves problems and

enhances future learning and professional practice. Building on previous learning from experience or through training programmes is also recognised as an important contribution to CPD as these activities lend themselves to accreditation and recognition as valuable learning. These themes, together with developing skills of critical appraisal of information, can contribute to effective work-based learning, which, as a mode of learning, is recognised as having real and positive benefits for individuals and their organisations (Costley, 2001). Work-based learning is the form that most CPD takes in the UK (King, 2007), albeit along a spectrum of different modes of delivery and activity.

Case study

A group of Health Care Professionals (HCPs) involved in modernising the NHS, particularly in relation to improving waiting times and the patient experience, were recruited onto a commissioned Work Based Learning Masters Programme. They had received in-house training by the then NHS Modernisation Agency to provide them with skills and techniques of introducing changes into practice. As individuals they had applied and honed this training through initiating changes in NHS Trusts across the country. Using reflective learning skills their learning was identified and evidenced, and individually accredited through APEL (Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning) as part of the work-based learning programme, with the added bonus of increased self-confidence and awareness of their own performance. The next step in the programme gave them skills and knowledge of critical inquiry and research which were applied within a work-based learning project, which reflected the needs and modernisation objectives of their individual organisations. Projects included reducing waiting times for operations, speeding up referrals from GP to Consultant,

and scoping the potential for new nurse-led services. This example demonstrates the possibilities that in-house training offers, in that those selected from the MA programme gained recognition and accreditation for their individual learning from locally delivered training, using it towards an academic qualification that consolidated and enhanced their critical appraisal and reflective learning skills.

For implementation of effective CPD, mechanisms such as individual Personal Development Plans (PDPs) and appraisal systems need to be in place, to provide records of identified learning needs and objectives and the strategies used to address them. It has been found that organisations are particularly weak at tracking costs and uptake of actual training and staff development, and that structured monitoring and evaluation of impact and effectiveness of CPD within the workplace has not been regularly addressed (Jones and Robinson, 1997; King, 2007). As CPD can include both internal and external activities the investment of resources in individuals and training requires a form of accountability and consistency of approach, particularly in terms of allocating organisational investment of time out and temporary cover whilst training and sources of funding streams. Current workforce development has moved the emphasis of CPD from external training provision to various forms of work-based learning (Connor, 2007; King, 2007).

A study of post-qualifying learning and CPD in the allied health professions (DoH, 2004) identified that a post-qualifying learning and CPD framework was needed with a common language and approach, setting clear standards and processes for professionals in the workplace. A credit framework to make learning portable across health and social care sectors, and consistent records to track individual development within the organisation are also needed. The report acknowledges that continuing

learning is a necessary cost of being a professional and that CPD should be considered as being an investment in an individual's career and an organisation (DoH, 2004). However, within a national health care system, due to the mobility of the workforce and the tendency to relocate across the country for work, investment in one location may ultimately be rewarded by impacts on practice in another. In other organisational sectors this altruistic factor may be less obvious, and therefore the CPD investment in employees that an organisation may make is usually focused on local rather than national needs.

The use of work-based learning as a core component of CPD means that it can be thought of in terms of outcomes rather than inputs. It recognises that the workplace offers opportunities for developing and accrediting knowledge (Shaw and Green, 1999) and that there are intrinsic opportunities for relevant learning to occur. It is, however, often overlooked as a rich source of learning as many Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) do not consider that such learning is significant and equitable to that acquired through the more traditional academic route. However, CPD can take many forms, for example:

- External education and training courses delivered by HEIs or private training companies, which may be bespoke to an organisation or 'off the shelf'
- In-house training
- On-the-job training such as mentoring, coaching, supervision
- Individual development through work shadowing, apprenticeships, skills training
- Acquisition of specific competences required for an expected level of performance.

The Council for Industry and Higher Education (CIHE) suggests that organisations and businesses are more focused on providing on-the-job, informal training to meet short term employee needs, rather than higher education courses, which may be costly and require covering for absence. Employers prefer flexible and responsive learning opportunities in bite-size chunks, preferably work based, rather than traditional academic programmes provided by HEIs (King, 2007).

Recruitment and retention of good staff is facilitated if staff development is included in an employment package, particularly if financial incentives are limited due to the nature of the work, as, for example, in teaching or health care, where bonus schemes are unusual. Career development should be considered as being more of a marathon rather than a sprint (Owen, 2004) and opportunities for on-going development at both top and bottom of an organisation need to be considered. Where there are skills training deficits amongst the lower grades of staff, the opportunities to get initial training qualifications encourages new recruits who should be facilitated in their development through a formal structured process. Workers recruited to higher levels such as management also need to be developed to prevent the problem of promotion beyond levels of real capability that can so often overshadow promotions, thus illustrating that on-going development must be available to cater for the changing needs of the workforce at all levels (Owen, 2004). This can often be addressed in-house, but sometimes needs a specific initiative to develop staff throughout an organisation, as illustrated in the following case study.

Case study

A staff development programme for newly qualified mental health nurses was commissioned, providing specialist learning alongside placement rotations to enhance recruitment and retention to a London Mental Health NHS Trust with clinical areas that were hard to staff. Successful recruitment to the programme highlighted a concurrent problem involving senior managers in the Trust and demonstrated that staff development was essential at both ends of the service. A group of experienced mental health care managers were identified and started a work-based learning programme which would allow them to gain a degree or postgraduate award. The cohort had several distinguishing features: they were highly experienced and appreciated, often being used for innovative projects within the NHS Trust, such as shutting down old institutions and commissioning new community mental health services. They were working at a high level of decision-making, but were stuck in their professional careers as they had not been able to take advantage of formal academic programmes to raise their qualifications to bring them on a par with new recruits, because they were too essential in maintaining and implementing services and supporting others. The result was that they lacked confidence in their own academic abilities and could not gain promotion outside the NHS Trust because they had no formal recognition of their achievements. Using the WBL framework commencing with APEL, their experience and achievements were evidenced and accredited at either graduate or postgraduate level. Their programme culminated in a work-based project that was based on their current work, and enabled them to apply critical-thinking and research skills to their daily practice (Workman, Beadsmoore and Rounce, 2002).

Both of these groups benefited from their programmes, but not necessarily in the way the NHS Trust intended. The rotation programme was very effective at recruiting and retaining staff, going from few applications per place in the first year to over forty applicants after three years, thus addressing the staffing problem. The newly qualified practitioners were rapidly promoted, some before finishing the programme. The experienced managers were

slower in fulfilling their potential but most gradually completed the programme, during which they managed to gain new posts both in and outside the NHS Trust due to their heightened awareness and evidence of their achievements. This case also illustrates the impact of staff development in one NHS Trust which can have major benefits to others around the country.

The Department for Education and Skills (DfES) estimates that employers spend up to £15 billion per annum for all their training and development, although HE only sees about £350 million of this, thus demonstrating large financial incentives for providing CPD. Whilst much of this funding is for training and development below or at entry level to HE, there are still considerable possibilities for HE to expand, partly into Foundation degrees, but there are also opportunities at graduate or post graduate levels. The Leitch agenda to raise the level of qualifications for the UK workforce to NQF level 4 or above also indicates that CPD activities will be keenly sought over the next few years (DfES, 2006), although issues regarding the funding of education and training are evident. Learning at, through and for work can contribute significantly to the human and intellectual capital of organisations and individuals (Garnett, 2001), and if it is to be effective, must be equal to or greater than the pace of change within an organisation (Browell, 2000), thus raising challenges to an education provider. Using a framework of work-based learning and individual and organisational accreditation at all levels from Certificate to Doctorate as provided by Middlesex University, provides the flexibility, bite-sized chunks and transferability required by organisations. It provides a framework for individuals to meet their employers' requirements as well as their own development needs and aspirations, and allows the organisation to view the CPD requirements of its workforce within a wider context.

Case study

A London Borough was required to introduce Common Core standards for all professional and non-professional staff across the children's services, ranging across disciplines from health, schools, pre-schools and social services. This training is essential to the Borough in order to achieve its goals and meet its responsibilities, but the number and range of employees involved requires a large investment in training. The manager of the Children's Workforce worked with Middlesex University's Accreditation unit to design programmes that met both non-professionals' and post-qualifying professionals' learning and development needs. Two programmes were devised and accredited; one at undergraduate level 1, the other at graduate level 3, providing academic credits to accompany the compulsory training. These could be used towards either a foundation degree in early years in collaboration with a local FE college, or within HE graduate and postgraduate professional programmes. This maximises the investment into the workforce, as to be awarded accreditation individuals must undertake an academic assessment that integrates new learning into their daily practice. This demonstrates to the programme commissioner that training has been effective, is impacting real practice issues, and allows tracking and monitoring of outcomes.

Summary

The process of CPD contributes to the career advancement of professionals and non-professionals and can be used as an integral part of career planning and personal development strategies. It provides a route to offset a decline in skills and knowledge through engaging in training and education that extends personal and professional capabilities. The health sector has been particularly active in developing CPD frameworks and approaches, catering as it does for a variety of professional disciplines and non-professionals who are increasingly working across traditional boundaries and extending roles to deliver patient care. Both individuals and organisations have a responsibility to ensure that learning acquired for work meets organisational and personal development needs and responds to new areas of growth and development required for practice. Factors such as work-based learning and accreditation can make significant positive contributions to CPD and should be considered when developing programmes and competences.

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Book Reviews

e-Teaching: Engaging Learners Through Technology

SEDA Paper 119

Stephen Bostock (2007)

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Stephen has pulled together a SEDA Paper from his experience as a staff and educational developer running courses on using technology in teaching for Keele University. The book is deliberately titled 'e-teaching' rather than e-learning to 'reassert our responsibility as teachers for the design and support of student learning experiences' (p.5) and will be most suitable for new teachers in FE and HE or those new to teaching with technology. It is written directly to the teacher, mixing knowledge with practical tips and advice based on the author's personal experience. From the start there are reminders about the very practical nature of working with technologies: the importance of backing up your data, of letting students know how often you check your email and of turning off your radio microphone when going to the toilet!

The book attempts the difficult task of talking about technology without being led by the technologies themselves. There is an introductory chapter which presents an organising framework for teaching and learning activities and the idea is that this will provide the structure for the rest of the book. In fact the chapters are a mix of technology and activity centered. While there are sections on 'discussion' and 'peer assessment', there are also sections on 'shovelware' and 'email'. I see this as a book about teachers' activity and teachers should find it fairly easy to find what they are looking for. For instance, the first main chapter is about using technologies to support presentations with guidance on using overhead and digital projectors, interactive whiteboards, visualisers, tablet PCs, pointing devices, panels, handouts and creating multimedia content. The emphasis is on breadth which does mean that some technologies are given little more than a mention in passing. But the chapter is packed full of practical ideas such as passing a tablet PC around a class for students to annotate the display or presenting mind maps rather than bullet points as advance organisers of content.

Chapters follow on online learning activity and interactivity, online resources for learning, online teacher-student interactivity, online student interactivity and virtual learning environments. Within each chapter there are pictures of the technology (even a photograph of an overhead projector) with suggestions for how it might be used. Blogs, wikis, podcasts and mobile learning all get a mention although games and virtual worlds are notably absent. Tucked between the numerous technologies are references to constructivism, the value of peer and formative assessment, accessibility and other issues which should inform learning design and which will appeal to leaders of Postgraduate Certificate programmes relating to learning and teaching with technology. Right from the start Stephen talks about technology as the Trojan horse by which we can open up the issue of how we teach for discussion and this is demonstrated throughout the book. This is pulled together in the final chapter, 'Designing blended learning', which presents a toolkit for making design decisions for blended

learning based on principles of constructive alignment, efficiency and effectiveness. This chapter seems too short to do these ideas justice and I suspect will require mediation from a developer rather than being used by a teacher working alone.

At the end of each chapter there is a list of further reading with websites of interest. Unfortunately, sloppy editing has meant that although this SEDA Paper was published in June 2007 the web addresses have not been checked prior to publication and there are references to 'recent' reviews in 2004 which suggest that parts of the guide are not as up to date as it might at first appear. Unsurprisingly most of the web addresses are no longer functioning and the web site to support the book is no help as it only provides a copy of the first chapter. The missed opportunity to edit and provide updated links to support the text is irritating*.

Despite the title and its rationale, the primary focus of the book is on educational technologies – it can be best summed up as an introduction to tools to support your teaching. As such, this is a comprehensive guide which fits a lot into its 55 pages. It will be useful to new teachers taking Postgraduate Certificates or the SEDA-PDF award Embedding Learning Technologies who need to find out what tools are available to them and start to consider the impact that using such tools could have on the teaching process.

References

Bostock, S. (no date) *e-Teaching: Engaging Learners Through Technology,* at http://www.keele.org.uk/e-t/ (accessed 17 September, 2007).

SEDA (2005) *Professional Development Framework (SEDA-PDF)* at http://www.seda.ac.uk/pdf (accessed 17 September, 2007).

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Further materials relating to this publication will be included at http://www.keele.org.uk/e-t/index.htm

Information for Contributors

The Editorial Committee of *Educational Developments* welcomes contributions on any aspect of staff and educational development likely to be of interest to readers.

Submission of an article to *Educational Developments* implies that it has not been published elsewhere and that it is not currently being considered by any other publisher or editor.

For more information please contact the SEDA office via email: office@seda.ac.uk

SEDA Research and Development Grants 2007/08: Supporting and Leading Educational Change

SEDA invites proposals for SEDA Research and Development Grants 2007/08.

Up to 10 grants (of a maximum of £500 each) will be offered to SEDA members to support the costs of development-related activity which examines how we ensure that our practice in supporting and leading educational change is underpinned by scholarship, research and evaluation. Applicants are also welcome from activities that lead to conceptual outcomes, literature reviews or develop collaborative engagement with practice.

Applications are encouraged from:

- Those employed in central academic development centres or similar

- Staff in faculties/academic departments

- HE Academy Subject Centres, CETLs and other quality enhancement initiatives

Closing date for applications:
Friday 18th January 2008

For more information on the grants and details of how to apply, see:
www.seda.ac.uk.

Active Reading: Transformative Writing in Literary Studies

Ben Knights and Chris Thurgar-Dawson

ISBN 0826487009
Continuum: London 2006, hardcover, 208 pages

Active Reading is a welcome contribution to the transformation of English from a subject in which ideological suspicion, inexperience and uneven institutional support (not least, it is suspected, from the RAE) conspire with other factors against the lecturer who ventures beyond self-improvement into scholarly enquiry into teaching. Not only are its authors researchers in English in a traditional sense, but the Continuum Literary Studies series is otherwise populated by books on Samuel Beckett, Joyce, masculinity and globalisation. Moreover, as Director of the English Subject Centre (part of the Higher Education Academy) and a National Teaching Fellow, Ben Knights is a key figure in an emerging pedagogical research culture in English. His most crucial contribution, of which this book is a part, is his determination to help develop a pedagogical language that derives from and speaks to the subject, rather than borrowing it entirely from disciplines, such as Education, with their roots in Sociology.

Active Reading claims that while the meteoric rise of Creative Writing as a parallel subject may seem new and perhaps troubling to English lecturers, sophisticated reading is necessarily also creative writing, even in the traditional academic essay. Knights' engrossing and insightful critical survey of 'Pedagogic Context' in Part I argues that 'literary criticism…is an articulation and elaboration of the reading process by which virtual or so to speak counterfactual texts are created' (p.42). Fostering active rewriting of literary texts can help to restore the lost connection between secondary and tertiary study of literature, and promote sensual pleasure and engagement rather than the combine harvester approach into which assessment-driven topical and formal analysis sometimes forces students.

Thurgar-Dawson's contribution in Part II, which provides a practical model for active reading modules, is not as impressive – although of course it is difficult to present course outlines and sample work in an intellectually satisfying manner. The active reading approach is informed by psychoanalytic concepts such as 'healing texts' and 'repressed memories', which may imply that the personal development and sense of authenticity invested in a student's response matters more than its analytical quality. Some of the samples of assessment and feedback indicate as much, although there is ample evidence of critical engagement by the tutor as well as generosity and support. Thurgar-Dawson points out that the value of rewriting exercises crucially depends upon a reflective phase in which a student explains how their transformation affects their reading (now a re-reading) of the original source text, but also observes this is 'an entirely alien and counter-intuitive process for almost every participant in our modules' (p.104).

Yet the intellectual value of an uncompleted hermeneutic circle – an unreflective pastiche, say – is probably very low indeed.

The authors are correct, however, in their assertion that English is unlikely to thrive in an instrumentalising, multimedia, mass-access environment with a defensive retrenchment around the core values and protocols of the subject. They are right that 'it behoves "English" to key into the multiple identities, intelligences and aptitudes of its students' (p.158). The phenomenal popularity of Creative Writing is a message for us, and we must attend.

Dr Greg Garrard is a Senior Teaching Fellow in the Artswork Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning at Bath Spa University.

'Supporting Educational Change' Awards

Congratulations to six of the participants on SEDA's professional development course 'Supporting Educational Change', each of whom have submitted their portfolio to the assessment process and been successful. This was a three-month course in which they each developed their own independent, work-based portfolio, facilitated by SEDA's team of experienced educational developers, using the core development outcomes of SEDA's Professional Development Framework, and informed by SEDA's Values. They are now qualified for Associate Fellowship of SEDA (AFSEDA).

Marita Grimwood (Newcastle University)

Vikki Illingworth (University of Bradford)

Geraldine Jones (University of Bath)

Elizabeth Kemp (Newcastle University)

Rachel Kynaston
(Liverpool John Moores University)

Richard McCarter (Sheffield Hallam University)

You can find details of SEDA's suite of courses in supporting and leading educational change at www.seda.ac.uk/fellowship/supportingandleading.htm

Contemporary Perspectives in E-learning Research: themes, methods and impact on practice (Open and Flexible Learning Series)

Grainne Conole and Martin Oliver, editors

Paperback: ISBN 978-0-415-39394-2 (£24.99)
Hardback: ISBN 978-0-415-39393-5 (£85.00)

Routledge, 2007

It may be useful to start at the end. The final summary in Chapter 15, Conclusion, states:

> '*The purpose of this book was not to provide simple answers. It was not intended to say how to "do" e-learning (either as policy or practice), nor to establish any single hegemonic position on how to research it. Instead, its purpose was to inform, to challenge and to sensitise.*' (p.222)

The book lives up to that purpose. If you are looking for a cookbook of research techniques to apply to e-learning, you'll be disappointed. But then again, such a 'cookbook' would almost have to be disappointing in its own right, for e-learning is too young and too complex to allow for easy answers, and that applies even more so to research in the field.

The book is divided into two parts that can be read independently. Part One (Chapters 2-6) addresses broader contextual issues, which the editors describe as the *macro dimensions of e-learning*. Part Two (Chapters 7-14) focuses on particular aspects, the *micro dimensions of e-learning*. In the book's thirteen main chapters (leaving out the Introduction and Conclusion), twenty-nine authors combine to give a succinct but thorough review of virtually all aspects of current e-learning practice and research. In addition to the core authors, another twenty contribute sidebars as commentary or critique of the main message in a chapter. This interesting approach attempts to build into the book a form of dynamic argument, encouraging the reader to engage the authors in active debate.

The chapters can largely be read independently, and some will likely be more relevant to particular individual readers, although everyone should at least read the Introduction and Conclusion. For example, Table 1.2 (pp.16-20) at the end of the Introduction offers an interesting indicative list of a large number of example research questions organised under the foci of Pedagogical, Technical, Organisational, and Socio-cultural. Beyond that, individual chapters from 6-14 are likely to contain topics that interest most readers:

1. Introduction
2. Knowledge, society and perspectives on learning technology
3. A critique of the impact of policy and funding
4. The design of learning technologies
5. The impact of e-learning on organisational roles and structures
6. Learning theory and its application to e-learning
7. Designing for learning
8. Designing digital resources for learning
9. Managing educational resources
10. E-assessment
11. Academic literacy in the 21st century
12. Collaboration
13. Learning technologies: affective and social issues
14. Evaluation
15. Conclusion

Inevitably some very current topics are missing or given minimal coverage, such as the possible impact of so-called Web 2.0 social computing tools (e.g. weblogs and wikis), personalised learning environments, and mobile learning. But these are just beginning to be explored in terms of practice and research.

This book is a worthwhile addition to the secondary literature and should be on the shelf of any e-learning 'professional' – a researcher, a staff developer with a main focus on learning technologies, or someone with strategic interests and responsibilities – with a need to maintain an overall perspective of developments in the area. However, teaching academics or staff developers with a more casual interest in e-learning will probably find more here than they need or want, and will likely want to check out a library copy for the chapters that are of particular use to them.

Dr James Gotaas is Principal Lecturer (e-Learning Academic Development) in the Learning Development Unit at the University of Central Lancashire.

SEDA Special 21 - SEDA PDF - A Tool for Supporting and Structuring Continuing Professional Development Frameworks

By Ruth Pilkington with Anthony Brand

This SEDA Special explores how the SEDA Professional Development Framework (SEDA PDF) can be used to award, structure and inform the CPD frameworks that may arise within organisations as a result of the current drive to professionalise and assure HE professional development. It provides a means of mapping SEDA PDF awards onto the UK Professional Standards Framework descriptors and uses a series of case studies to show how awards have been used by institutions, as well as how SEDA PDF has been applied to institution-wide CPD Frameworks. Whatever your role and context, this publication provides an invaluable tool for comparison and development. It ensures you are able to inform your work with a stronger understanding of the options and approaches available nationally through SEDA with respect to CPD.

ISBN 978 1 902435 38 1
Price £11 *To order contact office@seda.ac.uk*

Educational Attainment and Society

Nigel Kettley

ISBN-10 0826488560
ISBN-13: 978-0826488565
Continuum, January 2007, hardcover, 247 pages.

This is a timely and bold book detailing the findings of a mixed-methods, longitudinal study of differential educational attainment across three sixth-form colleges in England.

The author clearly locates the findings of the study within a theoretical framework that draws from a number of (sometimes seemingly incompatible) sociological paradigms including social class analysis, structural functionalism, phenomenology, neo-Marxism and feminist theory. Impressively, the approach taken by the author straddles many of these traditions while presenting an analysis that is holistic in nature, eschewing many artificial dichotomies previously espoused by educational researchers.

Gender and social background (the foci of the study) and their effects upon educational attainment are considered together, rather than being artificially separated. The context in which educational attainment takes place also receives a thorough analysis. Historical developments within education are considered along with relatively recent phenomena such as marketisation, performitivity, and managerialism. The result is a comprehensive and practical examination of a number of factors that impact upon educational attainment without any of these factors being taken in isolation. Throughout the study, the aggregate lifestyles of students are the basis of the enquiry and the author draws some surprising conclusions.

There are also some interesting asides in the book. Students' own conceptions of the central concepts of the study (gender and social stratification) are considered in detail with empirical accounts (in the form of qualitative interview findings) of constructivist, essentialist, and relational explanations receiving detailed analysis. Constructivist accounts in particular are criticised by the author for being based on false assumptions and as being symptoms of New Right thinking. Interestingly, notes the author, such constructivist attitudes to social stratification are to be found more and more within the New Labour political agenda where social inequalities can then be conveniently attributed to individual differences rather than any embedded structural processes within society. In an age where 'class' is a dirty word, it is refreshing to find a study that deals with this issue head-on.

There are some tensions, and even inconsistencies, between the conclusions drawn and the methodology and theoretical framework employed to reach these conclusions. One claim made by the author is that the significance of gender to educational attainment is declining to the point where it is (all but) irrelevant. This may well be true but it is hard to see how the impact (or lack thereof) of a single variable can be singled out in this way given the holistic theoretical approach that underpins the study. That gender is a largely unimportant factor regarding educational attainment is not as obvious from the findings as the author believes it to be.

However, what makes this a fascinating work is the insight that it provides into the approach to educational research that stems from the Cambridge school of sociology. This 'productive' approach to sociological enquiry promotes rigorous empirical investigation and rejects the positing of *a priori* theoretical categories and arbitrary theoretical dichotomies on the grounds that they are symptomatic of 'unproductive' sociological theories that lead only to explanations rife with contradictions and the proliferation of *ad hoc* theoretical concepts.

Furthermore, in highlighting the assumptions and methods of the Cambridge school, many existing theoretical approaches to the sociology of educational attainment are revealed to be unsatisfactory. The author points out serious flaws with many such approaches, including those based on contemporary intellectual movements such as feminism and new men's studies. All in all, this is a thoroughly researched, insightful, and theoretically cogent work that does not shy from what can be at times a politically sensitive subject matter. Although there are overtones of logical positivism in the philosophy that underpins Kettley's sociological method, some of us may welcome this grounded approach to the study of educational attainment. The application of an innovative theoretical approach is as interesting as the findings of the study.

Dr Sean Walton, Higher Education Academy

SEDA events

SEDA Fellowship Briefing and Development Day
Monday 31 March 2008, London

Towards European Standards for Teaching in Higher Education
Thursday 24 January 2008, London

Professional Standards and CPD for Academic Staff: challenges, issues and ideas
Wednesday 30 January 2008, London

13th Annual SEDA Conference 2008
Changing Educational Development: Whose Values? Whose Agendas? Whose Future?
Tuesday 18th and Wednesday 19th November 2008
Aston Business School Conference Centre, Birmingham

proposals/contributions are invited

For further details and to register visit **www.seda.ac.uk** or contact the SEDA office.

Supporting and Leading Educational Change: Courses and Professional Qualifications

SEDA offers a suite of courses in supporting and leading educational change. At the introductory level there are two six-week online courses, along with a three-day residential Summer School. At the higher level there are two three-month courses that lead to a professional qualification, SEDA's Associate Fellowship (AFSEDA). SEDA also offers its flagship professional qualification in staff and educational development, the Fellowship Scheme (FSEDA).

Introductory Level Courses

SECol	**Supporting Educational Change** 4 February-14 March 2008	Introductory Online Course £595.00
SECss	**Supporting Educational Change** 9 July-11 July 2008	Introductory Summer School £675.00
LECol	**Leading Educational Change** Expected to be Autumn 2008	Introductory Online Course £595.00

Professional Qualification Courses

SEC	**Supporting Educational Change** 14 April-7 July 2008	Three-month course leading to AFSEDA £745.00
LEC	**Leading Educational Change** 21 January-2 May 2008	Three-month course leading to AFSEDA £745.00
SEDA	**Fellowship Briefing and Development Day** 31 March 2008	London £50.00