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PROMOTE – issues of reward and recognition in educational development

Ray Land, Coventry University and **Jan McArthur**, Napier University

Introduction

The PROMOTE Project (Professional Recognition of Methods of Promoting Teaching and Learning Enhancement) arose from a growing awareness that within UK higher education institutions new roles and forms of practice were emerging in relation to the promotion of high quality teaching and the improvement of learning environments. These roles were being taken up by colleagues who, though they would be unlikely to refer to themselves as 'education developers', were nonetheless engaged in important forms of development practice. Our objectives were to examine alternative ways of fostering educational development in HEIs, perhaps in collaboration with, or perhaps independently of, 'mainstream' (ie centralised) educational development agencies. We were particularly interested in methods of enabling greater involvement in teaching and learning initiatives by department-based academic staff, and methods of recognising such involvement.

Within the Educational Development Sub-Committee of Universities Scotland one of those small opportunistic funding opportunities arose (through HESDA) which allowed a small group of enthusiasts to buy some time and space to investigate such practices a little more systematically. Our team comprised Ray Land and Jan McArthur (Edinburgh), Shirley Earl (Napier), Liz Elvidge (Cambridge, formerly Heriot-Watt), Charles Juwah (Robert Gordon) and David Ross (Abertay).

Scope and focus of the research

The aims and resources of PROMOTE remained modest. Though we gained access to all institutions in Scottish HE, this was never to be the Scottish Domesday Book of educational development practice. Our approach was necessarily informant-led and our sampling opportunistic. We sought primarily to produce a set of illuminative, highly contextualised and culturally nuanced accounts. But though we were mapping the emergence of a new range of pedagogically related posts it soon became clear that we would need to address the effects of other phenomena, such as the role of promotion criteria. As the project Report makes clear:

> We found that the posts we were interested to examine had to be considered in relation to other concerns such as personal and public space, institutional isolation, psychological safety, and the nature of the many boundaries that simultaneously construct, demarcate, define and hedge in academic practice. As our interviews progressed our study also became concerned with academic identities, roles and power relations.

Approximately 25 models of posts, structures or roles used to enhance teaching and learning in Scottish HEIs were identified in the interviews with institutional

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contacts. These were grouped into five categories based upon their primary function or objective, namely:

- Promotion and Reward
- Research, Innovation and Dissemination
- Networks, Representatives and Conduits
- Student and Learning Focus
- Support, Administration and Development

The main focus of the PROMOTE Report however is a set of eight substantial case studies. These cover the use of revised Promotion Criteria (Readerships) at Strathclyde University, Secondments to the Teaching and Learning Service at Glasgow University, Action Researchers at the Open University in Scotland, the Teaching Fellowship Scheme at Napier University, the use of Department Learning and Teaching Co-ordinators at Queen Margaret University College, Mentors on Postgraduate Certificate courses at The Robert Gordon University, the use of the Learning Advisor at the Crichton Campus of Paisley University, and Teaching Organisations at the University of Edinburgh. Each of the case studies contains an overview, a section on the main characteristics of the scheme under discussion, an account of the post holders' experience, issues to consider if educational developers elsewhere feel inclined to introduce a similar initiative, the achievements of the scheme to date and key factors in its success.

Developer's perspectives – emerging themes

A range of issues emerged from these different approaches to enhancing teaching and learning that are of concern to educational developers in terms of the degree and style of involvement of EDUs in these initiatives. It is possible to consider the development initiatives we studied in terms of a number of defining characteristics. These are:

- Origin, sources of support. Where did the initiative originate? Does it have a champion?
- Strategic alignment. How closely is the initiative linked to the institution's strategic priorities?
- Visibility. Is this a high profile development or low key?
- Embeddedness. Is the initiative firmly located within, or relatively independent of institutional structures?
- Closeness of relation with the EDU.
- Type and nature of reward for post holders. Financial? Titular? Symbolic?
- Type and nature of recognition for post holders. Formal or informal?
- Locus of control. Where does power lie within this initiative?
- Is this intended to be a short, mid or long-term initiative?

In the light of these characteristics we were able to identify six broad approaches to development, a loose typology, which these non-mainstream initiatives seem to exemplify.

1 Strategic

The Readerships initiative at Strathclyde might typify a strategic approach. Here development is taking place within strongly tribal, research-minded disciplinary communities. It is very much concerned with territory, space, and the language/discourse of specific groups. There are tight, strong boundaries. The EDU can be seen as 'irrelevant', peripheral, non-legitimate by the disciplinary tribe. Power lies at Faculty level but the EDU adopted a meta-level approach, concerned with policy, and the need to put a strategy in place. Hence there is high institutional strategic alignment and this long-term initiative becomes strongly embedded. There is reward but recognition remains problematic.

2 Secular

A good example of the secular approach might be the Secondments initiative at Glasgow, where the secondees were described in one interview as 'secular representatives'. Here the boundaries are more fuzzy. The secular representatives understand educational development but don't see themselves as 'developers'. They have to retain their disciplinary identity to have credibility within their own

departments. They remain critical of 'quality' or other managerialist discourses. The EDU offers
a framework, an investigatory space, an introduction to a new discourse and a new body of knowledge. The project approach is attractive to research-minded academics within strong disciplinary communities of practice. There is virtually no strategic alignment (in some respects it is almost subversive of 'official' strategy). There is no reward or recognition other than the activity itself, which is highly valued. It is deliberately short-term and not embedded. There is healthy collaboration with the EDU but it is a critical and not a close relationship.

3 Federal

In federal approaches developments are coupled more closely with a strategic push, and initiatives are about a highly visible extension of reach across the institution. Insiders are used within departments to create an institutional network and there is strong embeddedness. The EDU can be more authoritative, integrative and directive, as in the long-term Teaching Fellowship Scheme at Napier, with incremental financial reward and titular recognition, or the locus of control might lie more with the Chair of an influential Teaching and Learning Committee, with a more modest role for the EDU, as in the Departmental Teaching and Learning Co-ordinators initiative at Queen Margaret University College. Here there is no reward or recognition and only a mid-term shelf life envisaged to avoid the group becoming ultimately stylised or too closed.

4 Advisory

The use at Edinburgh University of Teaching Organisations – large School-based structures handling day-to-day practical administration of large courses in terms of timetabling, staffing, teaching, examinations and curriculum issues – is an example of a highly embedded and strategically aligned initiative which uses the EDU in a mainly advisory role. The EDU is seen as offering complementarity, a source of objectivity in educational issues and essentially as a development *resource*. It can serve as a bridge to the outside, providing a bigger picture on practice elsewhere through its environmental scanning function. Developers work with the Teaching Organisations mainly in a consultative mode. The Learning Adviser scheme at Paisley University – focused more directly on supporting students rather than courses as in the case of the Teaching Organisations – would serve as a further example of the advisory approach.

5 Participatory

An initiative undertaken within the Open University in Scotland used Action Researchers to create a new ethos of inclusivity, to help integrate academic staff who felt marginalized for geographic or other reasons. The emphasis was on creating a new participatory space. Tutors involved in the action research initiative brought to this space a developed capacity for reflection on teaching, but needed to develop pedagogic research skills. Members needed to adopt a common language across the institution. The relationship with the educational developers was intended to be modest, more open, with identities less fixed. The mode of collaboration was envisaged as a partnership but as the initiative progressed the emphasis moved to leadership and inspiration on the part of the developers. It turned out that their role, at the participants' request, had to be more instructional. The initiative had medium visibility within the wider institution, was designed to be short-term and not embedded but was able to draw upon the OU's formal defined contract.

6 Functional

A final example of an initiative using academic staff for a specific, functional developmental purpose is that of the Mentors scheme at The Robert Gordon University. The scheme operates within the parameters of the Postgraduate Certificate in Tertiary Level Teaching course. Mentors are department-based but are situated within the community of practice of the Certificate programme, several of them having undertaken the course themselves previously and the scheme draws on the specialized pedagogic and disciplinary knowledge of that community through a cognitive apprenticeship model. The initiative is envisaged as mid-term, operates informally and locally but is strongly embedded. There is medium visibility and medium strategic alignment but a very close working relationship with the EDU. The model could easily translate into 'secularism'.

Post holders' perspectives – the importance of recognition

Evidence from colleagues interviewed for this project indicates that a desire and a need for recognition is a major issue for those undertaking teaching and learning initiatives. It was striking that the form of recognition that most people are seeking is extremely modest. We did not find that they were yearning for large financial rewards or grand titles. What people wanted was: firstly, a simple recognition of the work they were doing in teaching and learning; if there followed a recognition that they were doing this work well, then even better; and finally, if the recognition that they were doing their work well brought with it some reward or benefit, then better still again. The rewards or benefits mentioned were not only formal acknowledgements such as titles or monetary rewards but equally informal or indirect opportunities and benefits.

Explaining the absence of the most basic recognition, people spoke of being made to feel "invisible" by department colleagues as they focused on teaching and learning activities. Others stated that what they lacked, or were denied, was recognition of the validity of their teaching and learning activities. It was both pleasing and sad that several interviewees stated that simply talking to this project had provided the only, or best, recognition of the work they were doing. Several had had no other opportunities to discuss their teaching and learning work, or to have someone else show interest in it.

Formal recognition and reward

Many post holders believed that titles such as Reader or Teaching Fellow did provide a real recognition of teaching and learning achievements, and were a valued reward. However problems could emerge if the significance of titles was not clear or transferable.

In the case study on Readerships, post holders acknowledged this as a very prestigious title and yet some also thought it a bit "old-fashioned" and irrelevant in the general community. It is not a title they would use to describe themselves outwith an academic institution. Similarly Teaching Fellows encountered problems using that title outwith their own institution (though it was well accepted and highly regarded within) as some other institutions used the same title to denote part-time, temporary lecturing staff. It has been argued that over time the use of Teaching Fellow to denote excellence and significant innovation is likely to prevail over such other uses.

The institution featured in the case study on Readerships deliberately chose to expand their existing title of Reader to include recognition of teaching scholarship alongside research scholarship rather than create a separate title. This institution believed that not creating a different title such as "Reader in Teaching and Learning" was more likely to ensure that such promotions accrued the same status and recognition as traditional research-based promotions. The conundrum in research-intensive institutions is that while such non-differentiated titles may be more prestigious they also potentially hide the teaching and learning aspect of the promotion and thus perhaps deny recognition of that teaching and learning achievement?

Non-formal recognition or reward – issues of space and safety

Informal recognition and reward, such as added opportunities, overcoming isolation and finding space for collaboration or reflection, were of overwhelming importance to many post holders interviewed.

Several post holders explicitly described their involvement in these educational development initiatives as being about finding a "space" in which they could legitimately reflect on, talk about and explore their teaching. It was argued that such space not only provides opportunities but an institutional recognition of the validity of teaching and learning activity. Such space, be it conceptual or physical, only becomes "real" if it is a safe place in which people can participate. One post holder explained that she did have a department common room but she felt totally unable to speak freely within it and share her teaching experiences with colleagues. She described her feelings once she took part in one of the teaching and learning initiatives:

> I remember being very close to tears in one session because...the weight of the oppression sometimes is so great...[but this place] was safe and it was fine and you could be yourself and you could be legitimately passionate about teaching and learning.

The Teaching Fellowship Scheme established a network that was a conceptual place for exchange, support and dissemination, as well as opportunities to make use of physical spaces to meet, collaborate and interact. Teaching Organisations can provide an organisational space for teaching and learning issues and developments as well as a physical place to meet.

Opportunities to attend conferences were mentioned by quite a few people as a significant and beneficial form of reward. Conferences can also provide peer recognition and valued opportunities for one's work to be recognised by a broader academic community. Several post holders mention the value of this recognition to them.

There was a sense among people who had worked on teaching and learning projects that small projects, generally less formally organised than larger ones, provided a greater sense of direct recognition for the individual whose own contribution was likely to be larger and more distinct. However larger projects, undertaken more formally, were likely to have a higher profile which could lead to greater recognition for the project even if less for the individual's contribution. Larger projects may also be more sustainable, which again may provide greater recognition.

One post holder stated that the reward to him of being involved in the teaching and learning initiative at his institution came from:

> maintaining or building a culture that means I'm likely to enjoy my job. I think I can put quite a lot of value on that.

He explained that he liked to contribute to an atmosphere and a culture of peer recognition and support. This ensured encouragement and stimulation for all colleagues.

Conclusion

There were strong arguments that some of these indirect 'rewards', particularly space and safety, should really be *rights*. The description of them as forms of recognition or reward is perhaps indicative of some of the problems still faced by colleagues focusing on teaching and learning in many institutions.

Similarly the modest forms of recognition and reward mentioned by interviewees no doubt partially reflect the realities of what is available to them. The highly contextualised initiatives discussed here clearly give rise to issues of scalability, transferability, sustainability, credibility, policy and financing which would require much wider discussion than space permits. But on a more positive note the attitudes and teaching and learning experiences of those interviewed do suggest that for comparatively little monetary or other investment, institutions could inspire and encourage much more from those involved in teaching. For example, for roughly the cost of one full-time educational development post, the EDU directing the Teaching Fellowship Scheme had created a network of almost forty Teaching Fellows across the University, covering nearly all departments. They received one extra annual increment, but far from being an exploited source of labour they appeared motivated and committed. A post holder summed this message up for us:

> recognition is good because it makes you want to do things.

These studies represent educational development, in the main, as a collaborative rather than an embattled enterprise. It is encouraging to see developers recognizing the invaluable contribution of academic staff to a wide range of development activities rather than constructing for department-based colleagues an identity of the

resisting 'other', and academic colleagues (with occasional exceptions!) refraining from constructing developers as ivory-towered educational jargonists devoid of disciplinary understanding

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PROMOTE – *Alternative ways of fostering educational development,* McArthur J, Land R, Earl S, Elvidge L, Juwah C and Ross D. The report will shortly be available from HESDA and the LTSN Generic Centre. Enquiries about the project or the report should be forwarded to **promote@ed.ac.uk**

Elizabeth de Lowerntal

It is with great sadness that we have learnt of the sudden and premature death of Elizabeth de Lowerntal on 30th May 2003.

She was an active member of SEDA's Teacher Accreditation Committee for many years speaking with great passion about learning and teaching issues. Colleagues at the University of Westminster are collecting to establish a prize in her name for the postgraduate Certificate in Higher Education which she led. Contributions sent to the SEDA Office will be passed on to the University.

Elizabeth will be greatly missed in our community.

Work-based learning – the next paradigm shift?

Mike Laycock, University of East London

Within higher education, the development of programmes of study geared to continuing professional development through 'work-based learning' has increased dramatically and the implications for higher education have been widely documented (eg Brennan and Little, 1996, Boud and Solomon, 2001). The growing recognition of the significance of prior learning, and the negotiation of work-based and problem-focused projects and programmes, has led to the development of a range of flexible approaches to learning at, through, and from work.

What new economic, political and cultural relationships have made work-based learning such a seductive alternative for some universities?

Firstly, reforms in the workplace leading to increased professional mobility and extended working life have redefined the potential markets for higher education to ones where work-based learning is fast becoming an increasing area of potential recruitment. Embedding work-based learning through encouraging innovation in curriculum design, delivery and assessment is one way in which higher education can contribute to widening participation and lifelong learning agendas. The Government's target of increasing participation towards 50% of those aged 18-30 by the end of the decade suggests that increasingly flexible modes of delivery of HE programmes will be required. Work-based learning offers higher education institutions the potential to continue to service the professional development and qualifications of people throughout their working lives.

Secondly, the rise of information and communication technology has not only permitted learning *outside* the institution to occur but it is already beginning to legitimise sites of information and knowledge production that are outside normal educational establishments. The globalisation of access to, and multiple providers of, higher level learning, the emergence of 'corporate universities' and private 'for profit' institutions have all conspired to re-shape the notion of what the architecture of the modern 'university' should comprise. A re-configuring of its structures, processes and pedagogic practices, a radical paradigmatic shift in what constitutes the 'university', seems inevitable.

More prosaically, but no less important, is that recent changes in the funding of student grants and maintenance have reduced student applications to higher education affecting the traditional recruitment of a number of universities. The current vigorous debate surrounding the implementation of 'top-up fees' suggests that some HEIs which cannot command such an enhanced degree of investment in learning may necessarily have to discard former conceptions of higher education for the traditional 'full-time student' and that other ways of attracting learners to HE without financial penalty need to be developed.

Competition between HE institutions for HEFCE funded student numbers has increased and recruitment for some universities has been made worse by the change in the MASN tolerance. Macro-economic changes resulting in the decline of the 'old' manufacturing economy and the rise of the 'new' services sector and, in particular the emergence of the new creative and high technology industries, has already significantly affected demand for courses.

The recent Government White Paper (2003) highlights the importance of knowledge transfer between higher education and business in a knowledge-based economy and of encouraging

links between HEIs and RDAs and Sector Skills Councils. Among many recommendations the Paper, acknowledges that:

> *it will be important for universities to adopt a more strategic approach to the design and assessment of courses, and also of work experience placements, which will become ever more important as vocational provision expands*
> (Para 3.17, p42).

What is work-based learning? A range of work-based or work-related learning activities are emerging, whatever the drivers for change are considered to be. The term work-based learning is usually (but not exclusively) defined from a perspective which specifies that the learners are primarily full time employees. Ebbut (1996) defines it, for example, as a major constituent of a programme of study where 'students' are full time employees and most of the research based fieldwork is carried out in the learner's workplace. Garnett defines it more broadly as learning at higher education level derived from undertaking paid or unpaid work (Garnett 1997).

A helpful typology of curricular frameworks which might be said to support learning through work is offered by Brennan and Little (1996):

Type A *Curriculum framework controlled by higher education institution, content designed with employers - learner primarily a full time student.*

This type would include the traditional placement element of sandwich degrees, or shorter periods of block placement/work experience such as a 'work-based module' within a traditional modular course.

Type B *Curriculum framework controlled by higher education institution and professional body, and content designed with employers - learner primarily a full-time student*

One of the more common types of work-based learning occurs at the interface between those programmes meeting requirements for academic awards whilst at the same time meeting professional body requirements.

Type C *Curriculum framework controlled by higher education institution, content designed with employer - learner primarily full-time employee*

Through either institution-wide frameworks or through individually tailored programmes, these versions of work-based learning occur where discipline-based university programmes are translated into a form which can be delivered through the workplace – the so-called 'transportation' model.

Type D *Curriculum framework controlled by higher education institution, focus and content negotiated by learner who is based primarily in employment.*

This 'pure' form of work-based learning which is not bound to any discipline area and where the learner/employee negotiates the content, level and scope of his or her programme with the academic institution and the employer, constitutes a more 'radical' version which departs 'substantially from the disciplinary framework of university study and...develop(s) new pedagogies for learning' (Boud, Solomon and Symes 2001).

Other definitions and forms of practice are also possible. Work-based learning can also be construed as 'learning at work' through in-company training/ professional development programmes which universities can accredit.

The recent DfES 'Work-Related Learning Report' (2002) cites a range of recommendations for the development of what is termed 'work-related learning' which 'encompasses learning during term-time, in voluntary and paid employment, as well as sandwich courses and other academically recognised learning'.

While the central feature of a work-based or related 'curriculum' will always be learning tasks undertaken in conjunction with work there are some basic requirements or precepts that could be identified as characteristics of all programmes. Boud (2001) identifies seven 'elements' of work-based learning. These now form the basis of the SEEC Notes for Guidance on Work-related Learning (to be published shortly). The guidance recommends that institutions should:

1. ensure that work-based learning, while commonly undertaken at work, is not necessarily identical to work;
2. address the diverse range of knowledge and skills possessed by learners at the commencement of work-based learning;
3. locate the outcomes of work-based learning in a common framework of levels and standards of achievement;
4. promote the development and negotiation of a programme of activities;
5. support the ongoing learning of learners in situ;
6. encourage critical reflection throughout the programme;
7. enable learning to be documented in a form that can be assessed in terms of the common framework of levels and standards of achievement.

The Challenges of Work-based Learning

For HEIs contemplating a model of learning where the learner has some role in negotiating the content, level and scope of her or his intended programme with the academic institution and the employer, the challenge is to the traditional academic, intellectual assumptions of higher education. But how real is that 'challenge'?

Work-based learning in practice has been developing in higher education over the past decade. Many institutions offer placements and use workplace problems as learning resources and some utilise negotiated learning contracts in work-based action learning projects. Many institutions have developed processes and procedures for accrediting and prior experiential learning (APEL), blurring the boundaries between learning gained in HEIs and through work.

The idea of a 'partnership' in learning is not, however, part of the conventional discourses of higher education (Boud and Solomon, 2001). Its very openness, thorough collaborative and negotiated processes, involves the co-production of knowledge bringing with it differing views on what

constitutes legitimate knowledge. The kinds of knowledge generated in workplaces may differ greatly from those generated by academic institutions. Among others, Gibbons et al (1994) have attempted to provide a distinction between the kinds of knowledge valued by universities and that of other settings, described as Mode 1 and Mode 2 knowledge. Among other characteristics, mode 1 knowledge is hierarchical and relatively permanent, linear, causal and cumulative, rooted in disciplinary knowledge and publicly organised and funded. Mode 2 knowledge (and perhaps knowledge created through work-based learning), is, by contrast, heterarchical and transient, multi-variant and unsystematic, trans-disciplinary and is constructed in a much wider social arena. Though Gibbons and his colleagues were focusing on research, the typology provides an epistemological starting point from which to articulate the challenges a work-based curriculum faces.

Work-based Learning – redefining 'employability'

For many UK full time students, part-time work is a financial necessity, but is normally not accorded academic credit by the university, though some examples exist (eg Marshall I S and Cooper L S M, 2001). Some undertake voluntary work. Any work, however menial, can still lead to significant learning of the more general 'employability skills'. The difference between 'work' and 'work-related learning' is the ability to reflect and articulate on the experience and what the learner has learnt. These processes can convert paid or unpaid work into a vehicle for learning.

Among the key findings of the DfES report were that 'with guidance, students of all ages can learn from their experiences in the world of work to develop their key competencies and skills and enhance their employability'

For many years, Higher Education has been under increasing pressure to demonstrate its relevance, and contribution to, economic growth and regeneration. At the heart of the Dearing Report, for example, is the assertion that the primary purpose of higher education is to prepare students for the world of work:

> *We conclude that those with higher education qualifications should be familiar with the outside world and be able to reflect constructively on issues related to work, such as how they have managed situations or learned from work experiences. Students can benefit from experience in many different settings, structured and informal, paid and unpaid. Their academic experience should help them understand how experience relates to their personal and future professional development (para 9.30)*

The debate about 'employability' has, so far, given rise to discussions about the current ability of HE to deliver programmes that are deemed to enhance the graduates ability to gain and maintain employment. The requirements of employers/graduate recruiters are frequently cited. Essentially, then, the debate is either institution- or employer-led. But as Harvey (1999) notes this depends on a range of assumptions. Foremost among these, perhaps, is that employers have an idea of what the necessary attributes are and that they have mechanisms to determine whether graduates exhibit these attributes. He goes on to say that:

> *"Employability is not about training or providing add-on skills to gain employment. On the contrary, employability is about how higher education develops critical, reflective, empowered learners" (Harvey 1999)*

Very little discussion has centred on the need to enable HE students to assess their own capacity and capability for employment – to provide a student-centred and student-driven definition of employability. From such a definition, shifts in perspective about the nature and purpose of higher education, the development of particular teaching and learning methods and curriculum design, and the wider co-ordination of an HEI's resources are possible.

An alternative approach to a concept of employability would be for an HEI to provide an integrated curriculum framework of work-related learning where students are encouraged to take responsibility for their own 'employability' by engaging in work-related projects. Such an approach would not rely on potentially varying measures of a person's capacity for gaining/maintaining employment, nor one that focused on an institution's capacity to deliver a skills-led 'operational' curriculum. Instead, a shift towards a definition that concentrated on individual responsibility for determining 'employability' might lead to a more strategic way of ensuring that employability issues are embedded in undergraduate programmes. Such a definition might be:

> *"The ability of a student realistically to assess their capability for employment in their chosen field, to make informed choices towards enhancing that capability, and, with institutional support, to take responsibility for their own continuous professional development through work-related learning."*

Conclusion

National and international developments in work-based and work-related learning are motivated developments – adaptive shifts in educational thinking to internal and external pressures and in particular, perhaps to the broader global forces of economic change and the need for higher education institutions to be responsive to them (McIntyre J and Solomon N 1999).

No practitioner, however adaptive, would ever doubt the political complexity of attempting to introduce such innovation into the interstices of conventional practice. In all work-based learning there is a serious challenge to the dominant discourse of higher education, to what counts as a legitimate site of learning, to what counts as legitimate knowledge. For many universities, as work-based and work-related learning become more systematically embraced and drives toward more flexible learning challenge traditional orthodoxies, where legitimacy in terms of control over objectives, content, timing, pace, location and forms of assessment is weakened, the principal challenge, as Boud (2001) has noted, is to make the 'architecture of higher education' work for work-based learning.

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Nurturing creativity through an imaginative curriculum

Norman Jackson, LTSN Generic Centre and University of Surrey

We may all be limited by our imaginations, but some people are able to think freshly about something and in doing so open up new possibilities for themselves and others. Imagination (to cause to come into existence) and creativity (the ability to create) are inextricably linked. Creativity involves first imagining and then working with the ideas to produce new things. It could be new knowledge, a new process, a product or a unique performance or any combination of these things. We can encourage our imaginations to think many ideas or develop the habits that limit us to working with a few ideas. The world gets ever more complex: in the words of Ron Barnett, 'higher education is faced with not just preparing students for a complex world, it is faced with preparing students for a supercomplex world' (Barnett, 2000). We need imagination and creativity to work with, adapt to and exploit such complexity.

Higher education is full of creative people (staff and educational developers being some of the most creative) and the professional act of teaching, with the significant autonomy attached to this role, provides fertile conditions for people to be creative in order to promote students' learning. But many of us do not take advantage of this opportunity. All too often we prefer to replicate well tried methods and designs rather than experiment with more imaginative but riskier and perhaps less comfortable ways of doing things. The constant pressure for greater efficiency in what we do combined with pressures for research output are two major inhibitors (or excuses) for the absence of experimental enterprise. Quality assurance and peer review systems that favour conservatism are others. Being professional about teaching requires us to question and challenge the methodologies we use to promote students' learning. Will traditional methods of teaching deliver the increased efficiency that is required with the increased range of abilities/aptitudes (beyond mere knowledge) now being expected? Do our methods develop the behaviours and attitudes that are necessary to survive and prosper in this world of continuous change and problem working? The world requires people to be creative in order to grow the knowledge that is necessary to sustain themselves and the social and economic enterprises they inhabit.

The LTSN Generic Centre's Imaginative Curriculum project is trying to foster the conditions for teachers and those involved in supporting curriculum development to think freshly about the curriculum, to share their experiential knowledge and to stimulate the imaginations of other teachers. Participants in the Imaginative Curriculum network share the belief that enabling students to be creative is a worthwhile and desirable educational goal that will benefit students throughout their lives and any programme can be designed to make it more favourable to nurturing creativity.

Teacher Conceptions of their own Creativity

Being creative is, for the most part, a subconscious act. HE teachers do not sit down to design a course and think I'm going to be creative now! But they do believe that teaching involves being creative (see the research studies of McGoldrick 2002; Tait 2002 and Oliver 2002).

Some ways in which creativity is recognised by academics designing a curriculum (Oliver 2002, McGoldrick 2002) include:

- creativity as personal innovation – something that is new to individuals. This is often about the transfer and adaptation of ideas from one context to another;
- creativity as working at and across the boundaries of acceptability in specific contexts: it involves taking risks;
- creativity as design that promotes the holistic idea of graduateness –the capacity to connect and do things with what has been learnt and to utilise this knowledge to learn in other situations;
- creativity as making sense out of complexity i.e. working with multiple – often conflicting – factors, pressures, interests and constraints;
- creativity as a process of narrative making in order to present the 'real curriculum' in ways that conform to the regulatory expectations of how a curriculum should be framed.

Creativity in students' learning

There are strong similarities between the perceptions of academics of their own creativity and what they perceive are the characteristics of creativity in students' learning. Creativity involves the extended abstract outcomes of learning (Biggs, 1999; 2002) like hypothesising, synthesising, reflecting, generating ideas, applying the known to 'far' domains, working with problems that do not have unique solutions. The capacity to connect ideas and create evaluative frameworks to judge the value of ideas and potential solutions are essential features of academic creativity. The Imaginative Curriculum project has the potential to make an important contribution to understanding the nature of creativity in students' learning in different learning contexts.

Creative performance also requires positive attitudes and high levels of motivation (passion) evidenced by persistence and willingness to work hard. Such attitudes derive from personal beliefs that obstacles can be overcome. So learning processes to foster creativity must develop self-confidence and self-esteem, encourage by not penalising risk-taking in relatively safe environments and help students to be 'comfortable' in messy/complex and unpredictable situations where there are no right and wrong answers. Working with complexity in a self-sustained and determined way is a fact of life and helping students to learn in complex unpredictable situations must be a worthwhile and appropriate enterprise for higher education. Such beliefs connect us to the fundamental moral purpose of education – making a difference to students' lives.

While different disciplines recognise and value different forms of creativity, research studies recognise a range of intellectual attributes, attitudes and behaviours associated with creativity. DeWulf and Baillie (1999 p14-15) identify three characteristics.

- **ability to visualise ideas** – holistically, spatially, metaphorically and to be able to transform ideas through imaginative manipulation (complimentary reasoning, McKim, 1980). Flexibility, fluency and adaptability are important to the transformation of ideas.
- **effective use of memory** – for previously learnt knowledge and the ability to make connections and associations with and through this knowledge.
- **convergent and divergent thinking** – academic ways of thinking tend to value convergent ways of thinking – logic, reasoning, analysis, objectivity, judgement (left brain thinking – McKim, 1980). Divergent thinking brings in to play the right brain thinking which is associated with openness, subjectivity, feeling, intuition, emotion, sensory and imaginative processes (McKim, 1980). Convergent thinking focuses on one answer while divergent thinking produces alternative possibilities and solutions. Creativity involves both convergent thinking (focused, analytical, judgemental and detailed thinking) and divergent thinking (diffuse, free flowing, associated, perceptual and imaginative). Training in creative thinking techniques such as those described by DeWulf and Baillie (1999) can help foster the habit of thinking in both divergent and convergent modes.

Course designs as a means of sharing and stimulating imaginations

DeWulf and Baillie (1999) offer a definition of creativity as 'shared imaginations.' Unpacking this further it involves firstly having your own and imagination, then doing something useful with it (sharing it) and perhaps encouraging others to use their own imaginations (the process of sparking each other!). The idea of shared imaginations is an attractive conception for the curriculum context as a teachers' course and module designs provide the vehicle for sharing the imaginations of the designer and provide prompts and stimuli for further creative action by the teachers who operationalise the designs. Indeed, the real act of creativity for most teachers is in making a rudimentary design come alive through the teaching process.

These abstract ideas are all well and good but what practical things can we do to nurture students' (and for that matter teachers') creativity? Any programme can be designed or redesigned to make it more favourable to nurturing creativity and developing the habits of thinking creatively (Knight 2002). The following points (adapted and developed from Knight 2002 and Jackson 2002b) provide some guiding principles for helping teachers to develop their capacity to help students learn more creatively and to designing a curriculum that nurtures creativity.

Teacher conceptions of teaching and learning: We are enabled or stopped from doing things by the conceptions and perceptions (imaginations!) we hold. Conceptions and perceptions that support creativity in students' learning view teaching as a learning process itself and the role of the teacher is to engage students actively in challenging learning processes and help them create their own processes and frameworks for working with 'problems.' Teaching strategies foster students' intrinsic motivations for learning that derive more from the pleasure of interesting challenges than from the threat of assessment. Teacher conceptions must also value the idea that we can learn through systematic reflection in order to optimise the potential for learning from any situation – even those that don't go the way they are expected. John Biggs identifies

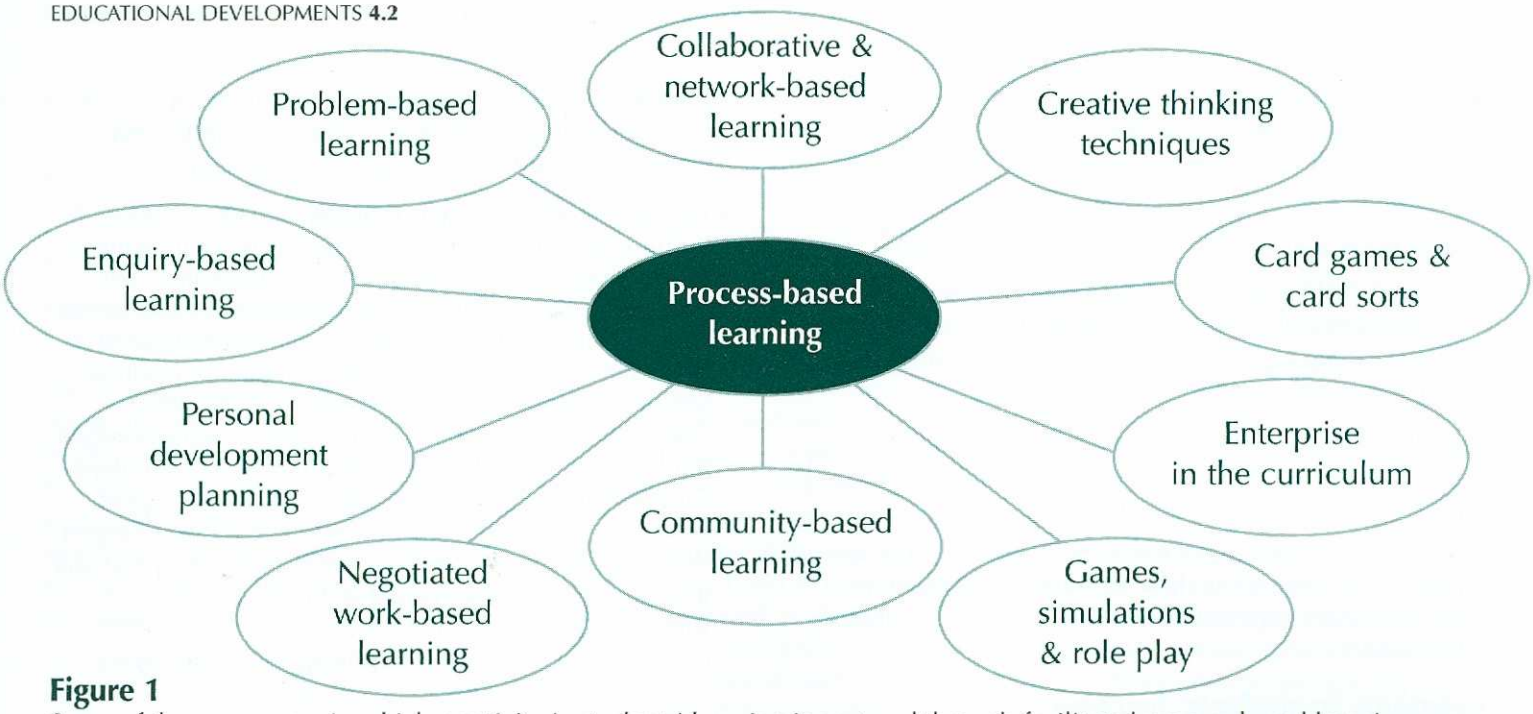

Figure 1
Some of the many ways in which creativity in students' learning is nurtured through facilitated process-based learning.

3 levels of thinking about teaching in terms of what is focused upon (Biggs 1999, chapter 4). At level 1 the focus is on what the student is, at level 2 the focus is on what the teacher does and at level 3 the focus is on what the student does. Teachers' who are likely to be most sympathetic to fostering creativity in students' learning are likely to be thinking in ways that are consistent with the second and third levels – what do I need to do to promote this type of learning and what do students need to do to learn this way? Houghton (2002) added a fourth level called 'how the student manages what the student does', initially within frameworks created by the teacher, but ultimately negotiating or creating his/her own framework. This conception supports self-habits of self-regulated learning (Zimmerman 2000).The inference is that an expanded commitment to nurturing creativity will only occur if teacher perceptions of teaching and learning embrace these higher order and increasingly sophisticated conceptions.

Sharing understandings and conceptions: Designing a curriculum to support creativity in students' learning works best when teaching teams develop a shared understanding of the different meanings of creativity for the particular learning contexts. In reaching an understanding it is helpful to examine what teachers understand by creativity. Subject benchmarking statements rarely mention creativity so there is plenty of scope for discussion within disciplinary communities.

Developing the knowledge and skills of teachers: Helping students to be creative requires particular facilitation skills and the adoption of a collaborative pedagogic model. Building the knowledge and capacity for this type of teaching is an essential step in the development process. Growing knowledge that will help teachers and those who develop teaching to be more knowledgeable about the ways in which creativity in student learning can be nurtured, is the central concern of the Imaginative Curriculum project.

Mapping what already exists: Most programmes will contain within them opportunities for students to work in creative ways. Making these opportunities explicit and understanding the nature of the creative processes within these opportunities is a necessary first step in designing for creativity. When the mapping is completed additional ways and strategies in which creativity might be fostered can be considered (see above).

Progression to independence: Nurturing creativity requires teachers to respect the goals, motivations for learning and decision making processes of learners. This way of thinking is consistent with the idea of enabling learners to become autonomous and self-regulating. A well designed curriculum will prepare students for learning creatively, equip them with a range of tools and encourage them to use and adapt these tools and work towards independence. Zimmerman's (2000) notion of self-regulated learning provides a good theoretical model on which to develop teacher conceptions and practice.

Openness to choice and negotiation: Teachers introduce the tools – concepts, strategies, information sources – and then have students practise them on problems and situations that they choose/identify. This requires teachers to be flexible and adaptable in their approach and to facilitate students' decision making. These characteristics of learning are also consistent with Zimmerman's model for self-regulated learning.

Novel tasks: Students' learning is facilitated through tasks that promote divergent thinking and require them to draw from their learning in several modules and allow a variety of acceptable/appropriate/valid responses. Teachers might find themselves considering the plausibility of the solutions and then awarding marks on the basis of students' accounts of their problem-working strategies. (NB. It is not a good idea to automatically join the phrase 'problem-solving' with 'creativity'. The first is often convergent, the other employs both divergent and convergent thinking. Creative thinking techniques which promote both

divergent and convergent thinking can be used to bridge the gap, Baillie in press).

Developing students' knowledge about creative learning processes: If students understand the 'rules of the game' and why the programme is as it is, then they are better placed to reflect and enter into the spirit of the creativity game. The development of skills in creative thinking are particular important in enabling students to think freshly and differently about their problem working situations (De Wulf and Baillie 1999).

An emphasis on learning: for understanding rather than learning for extensive content mastery. There is evidence that an emphasis on coverage encourages superficiality. Superficiality is not conducive to creativity. Understanding, which comes from covering less ground with more emphasis on the underlying concepts, strategies and assumptions, is conducive to creativity. Put it another way: cover less material but in ways that help students to understand more about the domain and its complex learning outcomes and their own engagement with the learning process. They might also approach problem working using creative thinking techniques which encourage divergent rather than convergent ways of thinking. The learning outcomes for creative learning are those used for *extended understanding* (Biggs 2002): being able to go beyond what has been taught; deal creatively with new situations; apply to novel contexts; hypothesize; reflect; connect and associate; generate ideas; and evaluate/judge the worth of ideas. Learning outcomes will also value the process of learning and recognise students' own unique outcomes and more general outcomes that were not planned or anticipated.

Knowledge and capability/learning transfer: Being able to use knowledge, skill and behaviours developed in one context in another context is an important ingredient for creativity (Gardner 1993). The ways of thinking outlined above are important in the transfer of knowledge as well as the generation of knowledge. Encouraging learning that involves such behaviours is more likely to be achieved in situations that are experienced as novel and unpredictable to learners. This is what people encounter in real life and they can be simulated in the HE curriculum.

Personal accounts of learning to promote reflection and further learning: The capacity to record, describe and evidence learning and the process of learning are central to metacognition. They encourage learners to recognise their own learning as it emerges and to make claims to understanding and achievement. There is a clear relationship with this aspect of creativity and personal development planning* (Jackson 2002a). Teacher perceptions of their own learning are important here. Encouraging teachers to see the value of creating personal accounts of their own teaching process in order to reflect on and understand more deeply how process-based learning actually works is perhaps necessary in order to change belief systems that are not sympathetic to this way of learning (see Jackson 2003c for an example of a simple framework for recording teaching). Teacher participation in the construction and sharing of their own accounts of learning provides good role models for students.

Openness to innovation and change: Possibilities for change need to be designed into the module from the beginning so that teachers and students can respond to what emerges from the process.

Assessment: The current assessment model with its atomised approach to assessing learning at module/curriculum unit level is a major inhibitor of designs for creative learning which may need to foster development over a longer period of time and a range of contexts before assessing capability. The idea of synoptic assessments that enable students to draw together and apply their learning throughout a course (such as final level projects and dissertations) provides important opportunities for students to demonstrate their creativity. Strategies that require students to reveal their understanding of how they have acquired core learning outcomes from a course (e.g. through reflective report or portfolio) offers students another way of demonstrating their unique creativity.

Student instrumentalism driven by the teachers' belief that students only learn when they are assessed inhibits creativity. Narrow, summatively-driven assessment practices and criteria that focus on what is known, which do not recognise the process of learning and how people come to know, or recognise emergent unanticipated learning outcomes, will smother creativity.

Processes that foster creativity

Many of the characteristics of designs for creative learning are those found in learning strategies that are process-based i.e. in which the process of learning is as important as the results of learning. Our emerging notion of an imaginative curriculum that nurtures and enhances students' creativity is one that is rich in the experiences of learning. Such learning environments are process-rich rather than being overloaded with content. They move away from teacher directed classroom situations and embrace more facilitated and collaborative models of teaching and learning. They work towards enabling students to be self-directing, self-regulating and resourceful learners. They give them space to learn through the experience and processes of learning. To achieve this condition students have to be properly prepared and supported. They need to acquire the habits and behaviours and self-awareness of self-regulated learners (Zimmerman 2000). Self-regulated learning involves self-determined processes and associated beliefs that initiate change and sustain learning in different contexts. It is fundamentally linked to:

- metacognitive processes such as planning, organising,

* PDP is now being introduced across all higher education programmes in the UK. It seeks to help students learn through the interconnected processes of doing something – recording the learning and the experiences – self-evaluating/judging and identifying directions for change/improvement/future actions – and then acting (Jackson 2003c). The research evidence shows that these connected strategies can improve students' learning and achievement (Gough et al 2003).

self-instructing, self-monitoring and self-evaluating one's efforts to learn;
- behavioural processes such as selecting, structuring, and creating environments for learning;
- processes and beliefs that motivate self-regulated people to learn – such as beliefs about their own capabilities to learn, beliefs that the outcomes of learning will be worthwhile, intrinsic interest in the task and satisfaction or dissatisfaction with their own efforts to learn.

Personal development planning is underpinned by the model of self-regulated learning (Jackson 2003c) and it is possible that this scientific theory of learning can be extended to other forms of process-based learning. There are a rich variety of learning processes and curriculum designs that provide experiences of learning in novel and emergent situations including – problem-based, enquiry-led, work-based, context-based, collaborative learning, game-play, role-play and simulations (Boyle and Smith 2002, Ellington 2002, Newman in press, O'Rourke and Kahn in press). There are also examples emerging of these processes being connected through the strategic process of personal development planning (Maggi Boyle University of Leeds personal communication). There are also lots of opportunities for experiential learning outside the formal curriculum and the academic curriculum for example through work experience, work placements, study abroad and learning in the community. Again PDP can be used as a tool for supporting, recognising and valuing this type of learning.

But it is not enough to have rich imaginations. Ultimately, we need the enthusiasm, commitment, skills and courage of teachers who are willing to experiment, take risks and translate their imaginations into creative learning experiences for their students.

Sense of direction

These emergent ideas on process-based learning provide us with a sense of direction. We are currently producing a number of curriculum guides which will be available through a dedicated web site **www.surrey.ac.uk/Education/ic/1.htm.** Our intention is to work towards a conference to share ideas about process-based learning and ways of nurturing students' creativity early in 2004. If you would like to contribute ideas or examples of courses that involve process-based learning, or you have an idea for a curriculum guide please contact the author at the LTSN Generic Centre.

Further information about the Imaginative Curriculum project and network can be found at **www.ltsn.ac.uk/genericcentre/projects/curriculum**. The booklet How to Foster Creativity by Simon DeWulf and Caroline Baillie can be purchased for £5 from the LTSN Generic Centre. A new booklet edited by Caroline Baillie *How to Foster Creativity through Creative Thinking* will be published in the autumn.

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Putting the 'E' into 'QA'

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Introduction

In *Educational Developments* Issue 3.1 (2002), Norman Jackson presented a thorough and thought-provoking analysis of the challenges of engaging staff and institutions in quality enhancement (QE) within the context of Quality Assurance (QA) processes. He argued that the potential benefits of QE would only be achieved if the QA process engages people about thinking hard about what they are doing and why they are doing it. He cautioned that once QA becomes routinised it loses its potency as an aid to self-review and development, and admitted that a significant gap still existed between enhancement and compliance. He presented us with a set of general principles as a guide to how that gap might be closed.

This article provides some additional perspectives on Norman Jackson's analysis by drawing upon work on educational innovation. It offers insights into how we can provide the conditions to engage staff in QE within institutional environments where QA, like RAE, has almost become a mini-industry in the quest to achieve good results. I am aware that since Norman's article a lot has happened in terms of national policy initiatives but my concern here is how we can achieve real change within institutions.

Context

We know that assessment has a significant influence on student learning. The parallels with institutional assessment and behaviour are striking. The focus on QA for reward tends to push QE to the icing on the cake. The behaviour is almost Pavlovian and one is reminded of the classic behaviourist statement that 'behaviour is determined by its consequences'. Pursuing this behaviourist analogy suggests that the current QA regime needs to be changed to engage and reward greater QE behaviour. In terms of Biggs' (1999) constructive alignment model, we need to be assessing higher-order learning outcomes and generating appropriate learning activity and behaviour. We are yet to see whether the new QA regime is able to do this.

This may be too simplistic an analysis as universities are complex organisations with multiple goals and ways of working. We know that facilitating change within universities is notoriously difficult (eg Becher and Kogan, 1992). Behaviourally-driven change management models have limitations in such environments and we need to look at change models which take into account the human and social dimensions of institutional activity.

Put another way, how are we going to engage hearts and minds, and facilitate a deep approach to the teaching role rather than a more compliant and minimalist surface approach?

In my experience, new academic staff coming to the usual learning and teaching introductory course are generally keen and motivated to become good teachers. They want to do a good job. Even though one gets a range of reactions to such courses (eg those who want the basic survival kit and those who want some underlying theory or rationale for their teaching), most appear committed to continue to develop their teaching. However, as the process of socialisation into their own departmental cultures occurs these good intentions give way to other priorities. In a research-led university, the RAE is a priority and competes heavily for time. The demands of teaching are also such that development can get edged out to a survival approach.

All the usual suspects are present, eg lack of priority given to teaching, rewards systems which do not value teaching as much as research, little time or recognition for teaching development activities. In spite of the higher profile of QA and its impact on institutions, and of institutional learning and teaching strategies, the

management of disciplinary groups, especially in a research-led environment, feel that that they have to favour the reputational activities of scholarship and research, and to protect time for them. Under these circumstances engaging people in QE through QA is challenging.

The reality at the chalk face does not give one grounds for optimism. Awareness of quality policies and issues tends not to be all that high except for those involved in relevant quality committees. The vast volume of QA procedural and related documentation is off-putting and is written in a style which is far from clear and engaging, and appears to have low face validity for many as far as academic practice is concerned. This is possibly unsurprising as it tends to be written by those not directly engaged in teaching and learning. Anyway, universities have various people and units who can answer quality questions related to procedures, so academic staff need not engage with the material directly.

QA 'Speak' a Barrier to QE?

The volume, clarity and style of much QA material are a concern. For example, take the development of assessment strategies. The QAA Code of Practice (2000) document lacks a sense of theoretical and practical coherence to those charged with writing an assessment strategy. The LTSN Generic Learning and Teaching Centre (Mutch and Brown, 2001) attempted to produce a more coherent guide. It is a better written document but becomes overwhelmed by numerous checklist points in its quest to convey clarity and practical guidance.

Writing credible and clear QA procedural guides is a craft. They need to possess a convincing rationale which articulates with the reality of academic practice and to offer practical examples. If they do not, disengagement is likely to follow with the adoption of surface learning behaviour and a tick-box mentality. The development of programme specifications perhaps provided an ideal opportunity to link QA to QE by stimulating fundamental reviews of curricula along the lines of the principles of constructive alignment. However, the rationale and guidance provided left many staff unsure and sceptical of why and how they should be proceeding in this way. There are also many real and unresolved issues regarding, say, the use of learning outcomes which many teachers feel require further debate (eg Hussey and Smith, 2002). Typically quality units issue instructions and highlight the importance of meeting deadlines for the production of programme specifications. While educational developers might offer workshops on the principles of programme specifications, I suspect that in many cases they do not form part of a coherent institutional strategy for quality enhancement. Heads of department and other institutional managers tend to think primarily of meeting deadlines rather than engaging staff in enhancement debates. Programme specifications simply need to be produced to satisfy an external agency's requirements.

Perhaps this is an exaggerated view of reality but it does highlight worrying trends towards teaching staff disengagement with QA matters and the lack of strategic leadership exhibited by academic managers in the quest to meet short-term political objectives. Possibly a redeeming feature for QA and QE is the development of SEDA- and ILT-accredited programmes in many institutions for new teaching staff. Such courses provide an opportunity for long-term engagement in initial professional development which can lead to a deeper understanding of the educational issues and a genuine stimulus for taking a more professional and informed view of teaching and learning. Some departments view the products of such courses as the new 'experts' in learning and teaching, and as people they can rely upon to translate the jargon of QA and provide guidance and consultancy on local teaching policy and practice.

An Innovation Perspective

In their study of radical innovations in Swedish universities, Berg and Ostergren (1977) employed Lewin's (1951) systems perspective as an analytical framework. They postulated four decisive factors which were likely to explain the relative success or failure of such innovations: power, gain/loss, ownership and leadership. Using their framework can provide useful insights into both the problems and opportunities associated with getting higher education teachers engaged in QE.

In terms of power, the QA regime represents a driver towards compliance in terms of departmental and institutional reward (ie favourable ratings which find their way into league tables). QE drivers are difficult to locate. Innovatory teaching is recognised but not necessarily rewarded. If it is too innovatory, it is perhaps even frowned upon in case it falls outside QA expectations. What should be primarily developmental activities, such as staff appraisal, observation of teaching and student feedback, are increasingly used as crude performance measures of individual teachers in the quest to assure quality and standards by managers. This can weaken trust, collegiality, openness and risk-taking.

In terms of gains and losses for the individual, there are personal gains of professional satisfaction, improved efficiency and improved student learning which are more widespread than the small bands of usual enthusiasts might indicate. Many staff work on their teaching relatively quietly possibly because they do not wish to be identified as teaching enthusiasts! Some institutions have teaching award schemes which recognise excellence and perhaps reward it with money and development time. But on the downside, there is rarely time formally recognised for teaching development, let alone teaching preparation. The allowance for preparation in workload management schemes tends to be minimal. New staff in particular can feel vulnerable under these regimes. In workshops I run on lecture preparation, many new teachers report that they typically spend two days for every hour of lecture preparation. To admit this in a department can suggest lack of competence. Spending time on developing quality teaching and learning, especially in a research-intensive environment, does not get one promotion.

In terms of ownership, QA can bring a sense of disenfranchisement over academic experience and judgement in teaching matters. 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. Local managers may fume at more impositions but life is too short to create a fuss and so they unconsciously collude to disengage academic practitioners from challenging QA demands and engaging in the QA debate.

Educational developers to the rescue? Possibly, but in some institutions their status has been eroded in favour of strengthening QA units to ensure that external requirements are met. Professional administrators rather than academic practitioners or educational developers increasingly advise institutional learning and teaching policy bodies perhaps because they are felt to be a safer pair of hands politically in QA terms. Even QE support functions (eg professional development) have become increasingly subsumed within the professional administrative sector, which arguably removes them from their roots and ownership in academic practice. Implicitly, this can send a message that QA and QE are things that are done to academics rather than with them or by them.

Institutional and local leadership should ideally be able to stand back from the detail, see the bigger picture and inspire a way forward towards strategically and credibly coherent outcomes. With the pressures many universities are under, high quality leadership and management would seem vital in terms of creating a vision, signing people up to it and constructing a practical and effective strategy for achieving agreed goals. The politicised environment in which universities operate has led to a more political style of leadership and management in many institutions. The rhetoric of goals, targets and strategies often gives way to the quick fix.

Maybe this is understandable in response to changing external demands and the survival instinct, but it undermines deep thought and reflection, and the achievement of long-term meaningful goals.

As well as the head of department, there is now an infrastructure of leaders and management co-ordinators for learning and teaching in most institutions. My observation is that many are part-time, are mostly occupied with dealing with the demands of QA and have little by way of recognition or status. At the institutional level we still have some way to go in conceptualising and implementing effective strategies for learning and teaching in a co-ordinated way and linking these holistically to other institutional strategies.

The above analysis suggests that the long-standing issues of recognition and reward for teaching, and time for development remain in a system where there are increasing demands on an academic's time. QA demands have failed to engage practitioners in a deep sense and there are increasing tensions as traditional development activities are increasingly used as evidence of performance. Institutional investment in QE has tended to migrate towards strengthening QA systems which are often managed centrally. At the same time, academic ownership of QA, and increasingly of QE support processes, has been weakened.

The one optimistic QE development is that of SEDA- and ILT-accredited programmes for new lecturers which are typically run by educational developers or education academics, and which are underpinned by scholarship and research, and encourage a critical, reflective and questioning attitude. Such programmes could well be a Trojan Horse in providing well-informed university teachers with the understanding and confidence to influence the QA and QE debates. We should not forget SEDA's pioneering work in this area and the impetus it is continuing to provide in the whole area of accredited professional development. This is a good example of practitioners taking control of the agenda.

Possible Ways Forward

Against this reality, Norman Jackson's analysis and recommendations appear idealistic. However, it is easier to provide a critique than it is to offer positive solutions. The solutions are not quick or easy as they tend to be systemic and reflect how perceptions of environments within which people work can influence their approach to what they do and how they do it, eg compare the research on students' experiences of their course environments and their approaches to learning (Ramsden, 1992).

I have selected three key solutions to engage staff positively in QE. The first involves simply dealing with the long-overdue problem of providing recognition and reward for teaching in promotions criteria, coupled with providing genuine time for teaching development. The Government's recent White Paper on The Future of Higher Education (Department for Education and Skills, 2003) identifies this as a priority, which may drive some institutions to giving it a sense of urgency.

The second involves building positively on the success of the SEDA- and ILT-accredited programmes for new lecturers, influenced by SEDA's innovatory work, initiated by the Dearing Report (1997) in the context of professionalising teaching and recognising it as a scholarly activity. We need to place a greater emphasis on Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and one way of elevating its importance is through some form of accreditation scheme. Such a scheme needs to be simple to operate and not unduly burdensome. SEDA has already initiated work in this are but credit-bearing CPD provision through institutional validation may prove an attractive option for some staff who want the value and currency of credit to contribute towards a recognised qualification.

There are issues to resolve, however, if staff are to feel a sense of ownership over their own CPD. There are tensions between institutional human resources and learning and teaching strategies. While the human resources function needs to concern itself with the delivery of its corresponding

institutional strategy, institutional restructuring has tended to bring the educational development function within a human resources operation and removed it from an academic and scholarship base. If CPD is to articulate genuinely with academic practice, feel collegial and credible, and be informed by scholarship and research, educational development needs to be relocated where it has always belonged – within an academic rather than an administrative environment.

Finally, we need to professionalise the management of teaching and learning so that those responsible for key areas of educational strategy and delivery, whether it be the course co-ordinator, faculty leader or pro-vice-chancellor, can exercise informed and strategic leadership. Educational management in higher education seems to me to be a neglected area and typically has low status and recognition. Yet, potentially, it can have considerable systemic impact in promoting innovation and development, and enabling people to work together more effectively in a joined-up way. More importantly, many of these positions are held by academics who should be able to make that vital connection with academic practice and facilitate linkages between QA and QE.

Ramsden's study (1998) of leadership in higher education offers some useful links between research on the impact of departmental environments on students' approaches to learning, and the wider impact organisational environments have on teachers' approaches to teaching and how these impact on students. As he observes: 'Good academic leadership should help create an environment for academics to learn how to teach better: an environment where interest in teaching is nurtured, and where solving educational problems collaboratively is routine' (p64). But this can only happen if there is clear leadership from the very top of the institution – and maybe performance-related pay to go with it!

End Note

As I completed this piece, the Cooke Report (2003) was published which proposed, among other things, the establishment of a new Academy for Advancement of Learning and Teaching in Higher Education. No doubt there will be much debate about its implications but for the purposes of this article, it is interesting simply to compare the above analysis with some of the Report's observations:

'the arrangements for QE are complex and fragmented'
'QE...flourishes in an environment which allows space for staff and students to generate enthusiasm and commitment'
'QE is primarily an academic issue'
'QE...involves innovation and risk'
'One of the notable weaknesses of ...QE in HE is that policies and strategies tend to be largely reactive...'
'QE is fundamentally a responsibility of management in institutions, and of the busy individual professionals in higher education'
'the management of learning and teaching should be within the remit of the Academy proposed'.

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Interview with Pat Cryer

Professor Peter Mertens talks to Professor Pat Cryer (FSEDA and SEDA roll of honour) **to mark her retirement**

Peter Firstly I would like to congratulate you on your retirement and the completion of a really remarkable career. With this in mind perhaps now is a particularly pertinent time to interview you for SEDA, isn't it?

Pat Yes, SEDA was a significant part of my professional life in my mid-career staff development work, for which SEDA was good enough to place me on its roll of honour – and now that I come to say goodbye to professional life, it is useful to pause to look backwards as well as forwards.

Could you tell us why specifically SEDA put your name on its roll of honour?

I think it was mainly for my part in setting up SEDA. SEDA was the combination of two organisations. I was chair of the SRHE staff development group (primarily for university staff developers) and David Baume was chair of SCED (the 'polytechnic'/new universities equivalent). David and I were put onto the roll of honour together on the occasion of SEDA's fifth birthday 1998.

Did you already have a SEDA Fellowship at that time?

Yes, I was part of the group that set up the Fellowship scheme for staff developers and I was a member of the first group to receive fellowships.

Yet there may be some SEDA members, particularly those who have joined in recent years, who will not have heard of your work. Perhaps you could you tell us first, though, why many others will know your name so well?

Well, when I first became involved with staff development, very few of us were in it. In the late 1970s/early 1980s, I found myself, more by luck than judgement, doing a PhD in the subject area. It was at the University of Surrey, which was then an oasis for anyone wanting to base staff development on academic research. Liz Beaty was there at the same time, as was Diana Laurillard and a good many others who have become household names in teaching and learning. My PhD involved research and development on workshop materials for facilitators to use with university lecturers. At that time facilitators were almost entirely regular academics, seconded from their teaching and research on a very part time and short-term basis. They were having to operate without any training and in a hostile environment. So the workshop materials proved popular and useful, and of course my name was on them.

Are there other reasons why staff developers would know of you?

When Government and universities started to take staff development seriously, CVCP (as UniversitiesUK was then) set up a national unit for staff development. I was appointed to it, which involved a great deal of travelling around to visit universities. I also advised and gave seminars on staff development in Australia, Austria, Ireland, Singapore, South Africa, Sweden and Thailand. While at the unit,

I had the day to day management and editorship of a project funded by the Employment Department to develop training materials. This resulted in a compendium called *Active Learning in Higher Education* in twelve large blue tomes. It is old now but most libraries and resource centres still have copies.

Anything else?

I played my part, with my husband and children, in writing the first book for the first ever personal computer, *Basic Programming on the BBC Microcomputer.*
That really dates me, but I still do find people saying "Oh, you're *that* Pat Cryer!"

Yet the fact remains that many SEDA members, particularly the newer ones, probably don't know you. Why is that?

I've always felt at my happiest and most productive breaking new ground. About ten years ago when effectively all universities had professional staff developers in post – good, keen people, who were trained in some way and committed to the concept of life-long learning – I felt that it was time to move on, to use my skills and experience in virgin territory.

That area was the support of postgraduate research students and supervisors. You are certainly well-known in that field. Can you tell us how you approached the challenge?

On a number of fronts: One was informal research with academics and students via a few short-term consultancies. This led to my book for research students.

Yes, *The Research Student's Guide to Success*, published by the Open University Press. I know it went to a number of printings in the first edition and now it's in second edition with translations on the way.

I also set up the SRHE Postgraduate Issues Network, a forum of afternoon meetings where individuals could come and hear about latest developments and discuss them. It proved particularly popular with academics who had a management responsibility for research. Then I set up a series of booklets of advice for supervisors and management. They were based on the Australian HERDSA

green guides, which I knew and valued from my earlier staff development work. THES was joint publisher with SRHE and I understand that the series is still selling well.

But you were tempted away from paper by the internet, weren't you?

Yes, the web has so many advantages. It's free at the point of delivery, can be accessed at a time and place of the user's choosing, and users can work at their own pace and pick and choose where to put their effort. So I set up a portal or gateway on research supervision to annotate and link to pertinent sites generated throughout the world. It also provided a framework for supervisor support and training. With your own help and support and under the umbrella of the supervisor accreditation programme, TAPPS[i], which you started, the gateway was piloted on a BBSRC server, although it was, in fact, designed for all fields of study. Now a permanent team at the University of Manchester has taken over the maintenance and development of the gateway[ii] with funding from the Learning and Teaching Support Network.

How does the University of Manchester fit into this story?

I feel really privileged that the University of Manchester invited me to be its Visiting Professor for the Development of Graduate Education. That was over three years ago, and was much more than a nominal position. I have worked on site on countless occasions. I have nothing but respect for Manchester. Not only does it have an excellent research tradition; it was also one of the first universities to accept the need for this to be underpinned by training for staff and students.

So why are you choosing now to retire?

It was important to me to see the work embedded so that it would have a life of its own after me. That has happened. People coming up now are well able to take up and progress the staff-development of research degree supervisors. I am delighted at the programmes of support that have sprung up. I also wanted to see the web gateway continuing in some way. The whole area will probably look very different in a few years time, but that is what I want for it. It must go forward with good people at the helm.

I can't imagine you settling back now to a retirement of sitting by the fireside or growing roses.

I'm remaining available as a resource for the University of Manchester and I'm keeping my external examinerships on the supervisor support programmes that I consider particularly groundbreaking. In general, though, now is the time to take up my interest in all the other things that I didn't have time for before. I'm renewing old friendships, seeing more of my grandchildren, developing my family history and researching and documenting the history of my ancestors' pottery business. My personal website[iii] has grown in leaps and bounds, and I've already been asked to write some articles and contribute to a couple of books. So it looks as if I shall be as busy as ever.

As now is the time for looking back, are there any particular individuals who stand out as having been influential in your career?

Ooh, that's a difficult one. There have been so many who have helped me along the way and provided ideas and support when I needed them. I suppose, if you forced me, I'd have to say my husband Neil who has always made a point of being interested in what I do and being there as a sounding board and a source of good judgement. Also, Lewis Elton has always been dedicated to the care and development of his research students. If he had not been my PhD supervisor, my life would certainly have turned out very differently.

Well, Pat, both personally and on behalf of SEDA, good luck and our very best wishes. Thank you for talking to us.

[i] **www.iah.bbsrc.ac.uk/TAPPS**
[ii] **www.research-supervision.man.ac.uk**
[iii] **www.cryer.freeserve.co.uk**

New Kogan Page book in the SEDA Series

A Guide to Staff and Educational Development

Editors: **Peter Kahn and David Baume**

In recent years, staff and educational development – the systematic and scholarly support for improving educational systems and the practices of educators – has moved to centre stage within higher and further education around the world. Educational development units are widespread, both within institutions and subject disciplines, and extensive funding is being applied to projects that seek to improve the quality of student learning. Large numbers of staff are now involved in the field, yet often receive little or no professional training or support for their role as developers. This timely, comprehensive guide is a practical introduction to the key issues and practices in staff and educational development. Leading contributors draw on their expertise and experience to provide authoritative accounts of the core areas that a good developer should know about, from planning a staff development event to promoting strategic organizational change. Essential topics covered include: *the nature of staff and educational development; *consultancy; *development through ICT; *evaluating development; *discipline-specific development; *working on educational development projects; * national agendas; *personal and professional coping strategies; *professional and career development.

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Shall I stay or shall I go?

Students who leave Kingston University in semester one

Steve May, Research fellow, Kingston University and
Mary Bousted, Head of the School of Education, Kingston University

The government target of 50% participation in Higher Education amongst 18 to 30 year olds and the House of Commons report on student retention (House of Commons 2000) has focused attention on the retention rates of higher education institutions. This issue has been widely discussed by many sections of the University community at Kingston over the past three years and in particular, that of retention on level 1 of the undergraduate programme as it is widely acknowledged, through the research literature, that the first year experience is crucial in determining retention rates within higher education.

This article reports on recent work at Kingston University that aims to add to other research (Mackie 2001; Hall et al 2001; Yorke 2000; Dodgson and Bolam, 2002) by bringing together quantitative and qualitative methodologies to give a rich picture of the forces which make some students leave the university in their first semester and thereby assist managers and staff developers in their decisions in areas such as staff training, resource distribution, mode of student support and course structure.

Responses from withdrawn students

Data from withdrawn students was gathered through telephone questionnaires based on those used by Yorke (2000) and combined with university held data on student profiles. Of the 145 withdrawn students telephoned 55 responded and were asked the extent, on a scale of 0 to 3, to which a range of 32 factors covering course, and university life issues influenced their decision to leave. They were invited to comment where appropriate. The table below illustrates the ways in which the 10 most cited issues tested were linked to groups of students and to other issues. As with other research (Yorke, 2000; Dodgson, R and Bolam, H, 2002) these results show that withdrawn students cited course related issues as the strongest factors leading to their withdrawal from University. The table also shows that the student group admitted through the UCAS clearing scheme consistently cited issues more often than standard entrants and that the issue "Programme not what I expected" was by far the most often cited.

Enhancing the data through focus groups

To further illuminate the findings, qualitative data on issues of retention and the first year experience were gathered from focus group discussions with about ten students from each faculty which probed the positive and negative aspects of the students' experience under the following headings:

- Induction and information given prior to starting the course;

Table 1

Main Issues Cited	Sum of citing scores	Number of strong citings	Associated student groups	Linked issues
Programme not as expected	87	25	Clearing	Level of course and workload
Financial problems	54	14	Clearing and mature students	Travel and programme not as expected
Lack of academic support	53	13		Organisation of the course; Workload and programme not as expected
Travel difficulties	52	15	Clearing, non white, not in halls	Financial problems, programme not as expected, accomodation and organisation of the course
Level of the course	51	13		Workload and programme not as expected
Workload	50	12		Level of the course and stress related to the course
Organisation of the course	50	9	Clearing	Lack of academic support and programme not as expected
Class size	49	10		Lack of academic support and programme not as expected
Accommodation	39	12	Clearing	Travel difficulties
Stress related to the course	38	8	Clearing	Workload and Level of the course

Sum of citing scores: The 55 students contacted each gave a score of between 0 and 3 for each of 32 issues. The total scores of the 10 most frequently cited are given.

Associated Student groups: The citings were broken down by the variables: age (mature or under 21) gender, (male or female) admissions route (clearing or non-clearing), ethnic group (white or non white) and accommodation (halls or not in halls). When one group within the bracketed variables predominated it is shown as an associated student group.

Linked issues: These are the issues which were cited most frequently with main issue strong citings. They indicate those most closely associated with the corresponding main issues.

- Learning and teaching at KU compared with previous experiences;
- Joining clubs, making friends and other social issues;
- Assessment of work;
- Academic, pastoral and financial support.

The focus group data were independently analysed to identify common themes and used in conjunction with the data from withdrawn students to give a fuller and richer picture of the issues considered by students to be factors in whether they should leave the University.

The project has completed its first stage looking at the first semester and further work is being done on the analysis of the quantitative data generated by withdrawals during semester 2 of year 1 and through analysis of additional focus group discussions. This will be completed in April 2003. The findings at this stage of the project are, therefore, rather tentative. However, some implications can be safely drawn from the data analysed thus far.

Expectations, admission and course organisation

Rates of withdrawal peaked during the first few weeks at university and data from the focus groups illustrates that students feel vulnerable and anxious about what to expect and what will be expected of them at this time; however, 'programme not as expected' was more likely to be cited as a strong reason for withdrawal by students admitted through clearing. It would appear therefore that more could be done to enable these students to gain as clear and as accurate a picture of the programme they are about to embark upon – although the difficulties involved in this endeavour are apparent (short time-scales and a pressured recruitment environment).

It became evident from the students that where they have to make increasing financial commitments to come to University they expect the actual experience of studying on the course to have some connection with the publicity in recruitment materials. Another important factor in this regard is the increased competition between HEIs to attract students which has led to an increased focus on recruitment and marketing strategies. The focus group discussions demonstrated that for many retained students who spend more than 2 hours each day travelling to Kingston University that sacrifice means that they also expect, and feel they have the right to expect, consistent, high quality provision in both teaching and organisation. The late cancellation of lectures and tutorials was frequently mentioned in conjunction with the time it took to journey to and from the University – particularly if students had travelled in only to attend the cancelled event.

"I have to leave at 6.30 in the morning so I don't get stuck in traffic...at the end of the day I get back at 5, half past 5"

Travel difficulties was a greater issue for clearing admitted and non-white students because these groups were less likely to live in university halls; clearing students because the limited number of places would already have been taken and non-white because a higher proportion live close to the university making them ineligible for a place. The link between travel difficulties and course organisation was more apparent from focus groups conducted with students from vocational courses, for example, Education and Nursing. These students were the most concerned with what they saw as a heavy workload and, because they tended to be older students, travelling to university each day, and with greater other responsibilities including the needs of dependants, this meant that time management was crucial for them. Many students rely on part-time work to survive financially at University and it was apparent that changing timetables, lack of information about holidays and very long gaps between lectures, were sources of stress for students having to manage their time to include studying and working enough to manage financially. The use of Blackboard (the MLE used at Kingston University) to communicate changes in course timetables and unexpected alterations could alleviate the stress and dissatisfaction caused by the unanticipated events such as staff illness.

Class size and its influence on students' experience of teaching and learning

"It makes problems writing notes and stuff. Also with such a big cohort... The first time I sat there and saw this I just thought 'japers man!'".

This issue elicited some comments from the withdrawn students which were illuminated by the focus groups where it generated detailed discussions. Students reported that they felt that it was more difficult for them to establish a group/course identity when the majority of their teaching and learning activities took place in large lecture cohorts. Some found the deleterious effects of large class size difficult to come to terms with particularly as these did not accord with previous experience at school or in FE. These included antisocial behavior by some students, the mechanics of taking an attendance list of 200+ and the near impossibility of asking questions to clarify points. Students talked about the sense of security engendered by small groups and tutorials and the need to feel able to ask questions and make mistakes in a secure environment.

The findings also indicate that the issue of class size is strongly related to the issue of lack of academic support. It is accepted that there is a strong economic imperative behind large group teaching; however, within these constraints it may be important to consider ways in which large group teaching can become more interactive and less intimidating for a first year student cohort.
At the very least, students need to be able to see what is being presented visually and to hear the lecturer, and academic staff may well benefit from further guidance in these essential areas of presentation. There may also be a case for the consideration of a code of practice for student behaviour in lectures, as poor behaviour by a few was mentioned as a distraction in several focus group discussions.

Teaching and Support

The great importance for students new to University of forming friendships for both social interaction and for peer support with studying was strongly felt across focus groups. For students not staying in University accommodation the time taken up with travelling means less time available for studying and social activities and these students can miss out on the bonding first year social activities and peer support often centred around halls. Quality of teaching, pastoral and peer support were rarely cited as a factors by withdrawn students but the issue of lack of academic support outside the timetable was the third strongest factor influencing the decision of students to withdraw and closely linked by those students with course organisation. Focus group discussions, however, consistently indicated that the quality of teaching was the most important issue for students who remained and that support was not viewed in the discrete academic, pastoral and peer support categories but rather as a single issue. For example, the same support was sought through a course tutor, personal tutor, student services staff or peers and the value of student accommodation was as much due to the easy access to academic support provided by peers as to enhanced university life experienced.

The overall picture from the focus groups was of students who felt that they received and appreciated high quality teaching and commitment from academic staff. However, retained students felt that those who have been away from education for some time, or who were finding the level or workload too much, or who were suffering from stress related to assignments, need academic support outside the timetable. Here, it was noted that the students framed their response to this issue with great care and discrimination. They were very aware that academic staff were over stretched and very busy and realised that the great majority of them were trying to be as helpful to students as possible. However, students also stated that in many cases the personal tutor system operated unevenly, with some staff making themselves more available than others to see students.

"I think maybe some personal tutors were better than others but they obviously have too much on, they've got too much of a workload but that's not our fault. They need to do something about it. It's a struggle, it's a hard course and we need that support and I think we didn't have it, I certainly didn't".

Students across focus groups were well aware of the potential benefits of extra academic support and were sometimes prepared to be proactive in this respect. Two requests were made, in two focus group discussions, that they be assisted in setting up their own study and personal support groups (with a regular time and place to meet); however, it was clear that the students in general expect support systems to operate effectively. There may be as many negative effects of promising a system which does not, in fact, operate, than in not operating such a system at all.

Assessment and feedback

"I think we learn a lot more through assignments. I wouldn't have done half the reading I did unless I had had an assignment"

It emerged from discussions with students that they felt feedback to be a key part of their learning experience. The data generated by this project shows that rates of withdrawal start to rise more steeply when the assessment period at the end of semester one looms. The issue of assessment received a great deal of discussion during the focus groups. Four themes emerged strongly:

1 Students, in general, preferred assignments rather than exams as a means of assessment.

2 Students wanted the course to be well structured so that assessment outcomes arose out of the course content covered before the point of assessment.

3 Students appreciate feedback that is timely and diagnostic (i.e. assessments are returned within a reasonable time frame in order that the recipient can build upon the assessment in future modules and realise where they need to strengthen their academic performance).

4 Students noted that even when they had done well in an assignment, they still needed formative feedback in order to progress.

Finally

Whilst it soon became clear that the single reasons for withdrawal given by students on departure rarely explained the whole story or the underlying factors, this study indicates that certain *combinations* of factors make students more vulnerable. These might be used to predict withdrawal, thereby providing the university with valuable evidence on which to make strategic and policy changes in the allocation of resources, staff training, course structure, and the ways in which students are supported.

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Steve May would be pleased to receive comments on this article by e-mailing on **s.may@kingston.ac.uk**

Supporting Students with Disabilities in Higher Education – a review of web resources

Amy Pearson - Education Development Co-ordinator for Web-based Staff Development, University of Salford

A version of this article with live links is available on the SEDA web site

According to the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) the total number of students in the 1994/05 academic year known to have a disability was 15,699. By 2000/01 this figure had almost doubled and will almost certainly have continued to increase. Until the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 (SENDA) was introduced, education did not have any legal obligation to provide additional support for these students. Skill, the National Bureau for Students With Disabilities web site contains a series of guides which have been produced to provide staff in HE with information about the SENDA and suggestions for complying with the requirements of the Act.

The following web sites and materials are the result of recent projects related to supporting students with disabilities in education. The information offered covers a range of disabilities, subject areas and educational activities.

1 DEMOS (Online Materials for Staff Disability Awareness), a collaborative project between Manchester Metropolitan University, University of Manchester, UMIST and University of Salford has produced a series of interactive online modules offering practical information and advice on issues related to supporting students with disabilities in HE. The modules can be used as stand alone online staff development materials or integrated into a face to face workshop session. The topics covered are:

- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act: Guidance for Teaching Staff
- Disability Awareness
- An introduction to students with dyslexia in HE
- Admissions of disabled applicants to HE
- Modification of examination and assessment arrangements for disabled students: additional support or added advantage?

2 Materials to support the creation of an accessible curriculum for students with disabilities have been produced by the Teachability Project at the University of Strathclyde. These online materials are intended to inform the development of action plans to enable departments to more effectively meet the teaching and learning needs of students with various impairments. As well as asking a series of key questions to get you to think about current provision, the materials offer practical suggestions for supporting students through the various activities which they are likely to engage with whilst studying. Throughout the materials readers are invited to add their own comments, experiences and suggestions.

3 The Cowork project (Widening Access for Disabled Students: creating a staff development programme) involving Coventry University, University of Warwick and University College Worcester has written a series of straightforward and practical leaflets for academic staff. These leaflets provide advice and information on teaching disabled students in a variety of learning situations including using video and other media with disabled students, work placements and making lectures effective for disabled students.

4 The IDEAs Resource Pack is a useful tool for auditing disability provision and for the development of a systematic method of integrating disability issues within institutional practices. The pack is structured around a series of questions aimed at all staff, departmental disability contacts and students. Throughout the pack the reason for asking the question is indicated and useful tips and responses from the IDEAs pilot are offered. Of particular use is the inclusion of the appropriate QAA precepts. The pack was developed by University of Aberdeen in collaboration with The Robert Gordon University, Northern College (now the University of Aberdeen Faculty of Education) and the University of Stirling.

5 The ADDS project based at the University of Nottingham focused on academic staff development for the support of disabled students. The resulting publication "Making Reasonable Adjustments with Disabled Students in Higher Education" is intended for academic staff, disability specialists and staff development personnel. It offers a number of practical case studies about what is being done within different subject areas and learning and teaching situations, for a range of disabilities.

6 The Geography Discipline Network (GDN) based at the University of Gloucestershire has produced six web-based guides which are the result of the 'Learning Support for Disabled Students Undertaking Fieldwork and Related Activities' project, funded by HEFCE. Although these guides are primarily aimed at academic and support staff in geography and related disciplines, the principles are equally relevant to all disciplines in which students spend time outside the classroom.

7 The Disabilities and Additional Needs Service (DANS) at Loughborough University has written a set of general and disability specific teaching strategies for supporting students with disabilities.

8 The 'Accessible Curricular: Good practice for all', jointly produced by TechDis (Technology for Disabilities Information Services) and the Generic LTSN offers practical suggestions for making different areas of the curriculum accessible to students with disabilities.

9 The RNIB have produced a useful pack of booklets on designing, producing and planning accessible information. The See It Right Pack covers the main information sources including clear print, braille, signs and handwriting. This pack is not actually available online, however details about each booklet along with ordering information can be found on the RNIB web site.

10 The RNID site has a wide range of fact sheets and leaflets about deafness, hearing loss and tinnitus. Whilst they are not all specifically aimed at supporting deaf and hard of hearing students in higher education, they do offer a lot of information to anyone who wants to learn more about the issues that have an impact on deaf people.

11 TechDis and the Association for Learning Technology (ALT) have jointly published 'Access All Areas: disability, technology and learning'. This guide provides information on how to support students when accessing learning through technology.

12 AbilityNet is a national charity and a leading provider of expertise on computing and disability. The Technology section of their web site contains information about adaptive technologies and offers information and guidance on disability specific technologies. In addition to this their fact sheets and skill sheets provide information to help people with disabilities get the most out of IT.

13 The TechDis Accessibility Database contains information about assistive, adaptive and enabling technologies which are available to assist people with disabilities. The database can be searched or browsed by product or company and it will also display products for specific disabilities.

Web Sites

HESA
www.hesa.ac.uk/holisdocs/pubinfo/stud.htm

Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (2001)
www.legislation.hmso.gov.uk/acts/acts2001/20010010.htm

Skill
www.skill.org.uk/info/drc_guides/index.asp

DEMOS
ww.jarmin.com/demos/

Teachability
www.ispn.gcal.ac.uk/teachability/contents.html

Cowork
www.techdis.ac.uk/archive/cowork/development/materials/

IDEAs
www.ideas-project.org/pack/index.hti

QAA Code of Practice - Students with Disabilities
www.qaa.ac.uk/public/COP/COPswd/contents.htm

ADDS
www.nottingham.ac.uk/ssc/staff/randd_asdsds/index.html

Geography Discipline Network (GDN)
www.glos.ac.uk/gdn/disabil/index.htm

Disabilities and Additional Needs Service (DANS)
www.lboro.ac.uk/disabilities/

TechDis
www.techdis.ac.uk/ Generic LTSN www.ltsn.ac.uk/genericcentre/index.asp

RNIB (See it Right pack)
www.rnib.org.uk/seeitright/welcome.htm

RNID fact sheets and leaflets
www.rnid.org.uk/html/factsheets/factsheets.asp

Access All Areas: disability, technology and learning
www.techdis.ac.uk/accessallareas/

Association for Learning Technology (ALT)
www.alt.ac.uk

AbilityNet
www.abilitynet.co.uk/content/home.htm

TechDis (Technology for Disabilities Information Services)
www.niad.sussex.ac.uk/

Notice to Publishers

Books for review should be sent to: **Rachel Segal** Book Reviews Editor, Educational Developments Centre for Higher Education Practice, The Open University, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes MK6 3AA E-mail: **r.a.segal@open.ac.uk**

Call for Reviewers

Rachel would also like to hear from people willing to write book reviews for the magazine. Details are available from Rachel herself or the SEDA Office.

Information for Contributors

The Editorial Committee of Educational Developments welcomes contributions for consideration on any aspects of staff and educational development likely to be of interest to readers – guidance on how to do this is clearly provided on the SEDA website **www.seda.ac.uk**

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Back issues available from the SEDA Office.
Go to the SEDA website for the complete listing.

SEDA EXECUTIVE 2003 – 2004

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Book Reviews

Delivering Digitally
Alistair Inglis, Peter Ling and Vera Jooten

Kogan Page, London (Second Edition 2002)
£19.99 pbk
ISBN 0 7494 3471 6

I start most books about teaching and learning by investigating what the book says about learning. I do this with particular care when the book is about the use of information and communications technologies for education. This is not because I am a Luddite – I have rather over the years been an early adopter, with varying degrees of success and with consistently high expenditure of money and time – but because I have read and heard too many expositions allegedly about learning technology that started and ended with the technology, and never got to the learning, other perhaps than as an unproblematic consequence of teaching through technology.

'Delivering Digitally' starts to deliver reasonably well on learning. Chapter three, 'Learning in an electronic environment', critiques well the transmission model which the authors see as implicit and underpinning much teaching, both face-to-face and electronic. It was good to see my old heroes Ausubel and Polanyi being used to bolster an account of learning as also involving action and the construction of knowledge, alongside more recent authors including Schon, and McGill and Beaty. But, frustratingly, the chapter rather fades out, following less than a page to answer the question 'What constitutes good teaching?' with a useful but thin account of conceptions of learning as seen in the development of distance education.

Only slightly deterred, I turned to chapters dealing with the origins of the knowledge media – a brisk 12 page account – and with the forces driving educational change, this going back as far as Cardinal Newman and ending with the suggestion that "The key factor now driving change is technology", a view not wholly uncontested in the world.

Useful lessons for the successful implementation of on-line learning are reported: the need for on-line learning to be tightly integrated into the curriculum, rather than offered as enrichment or compensation, if students are to take it seriously; the need for developers to be clear about the difference between efficiency and effectiveness; the long learning curve which the implementer of on-line learning must climb. Case studies illuminate the principles and methods described and valuable illustrations and examples are included throughout.

Ten principles are offered. The first of these is that 'Good practice for online delivery involves planning and management of resources' but later principles are rather more profound – number 10 reminds us that good practice in online delivery involves supporting the needs of learners, obvious perhaps but often forgotten in action. A short final section called 'in the end, teaching is about supporting learning' suggests that the authors are already well aware of some of the difficulties raised in this review. "Technology", they say, "can be seductive" and can lead us to "allow the application of the technology to become the end rather than the means." Yes indeed. This book partly addresses this concern. I hope that a third edition will do so much more thoroughly.

David Baume
adbaume@aol.com

Teaching and Learning Online: Pedagogies for new technologies
Edited by John Stephenson

Kogan Page, London (2001)
£19.99 pbk, 222 pages
ISBN 0 7494 3511 9

This book is a collection of 17 papers arising from a seminar hosted by the International Centre for Learner Managed Learning at Middlesex University (**www.iclml.com/**) The aim of the book is to use pedagogies for online learning to examine what added value the technologies offer to the learner; how they enhance or change the learning or make new learning more effective. All the case studies have been carefully edited to contribute to the main theme of discussing the effectiveness of online modes as a learning medium.

The book starts with a group of papers which examine online learning from their own pedagogical perspectives. Here Alexander and Boud approach online learning from the perspective of experiential learning and consider the design and facilitation of learning activities that assist learners to learn from experience. They attempt to identify key features of online learning environments which enhance learning from experience. Taking a constructivist perspective, Terry Mayes notes that views of good learning have converged on constructivist approaches offering collaborative, authentic tasks with opportunities for reflection and dialogue. Indeed online environments can not only support constructive learning approaches but should use such principles to provide effective learning experiences and courses which are inherently scalable.

In Part 2, the research literature is used to find out what works well in online learning. Marion Coomey and John Stephenson in an extensive review of the literature up to 2000 pick out the common themes of dialogue, involvement, support and control for successful online learning. The next chapter from Jackson and Anagnostopoulou confirms that it is not the technology that enhances learning but the existing teaching and learning approach and the teacher's pedagogical conceptions. The remainder of the book views online learning not from different educational approaches, but from the particular perspectives of practitioners, designers and producers. The authors have been drawn from the UK, Europe, USA and Australia to use their experiences to provide practical guidance and insights into their pedagogical underpinnings.

The careful editing has resulted in a readable book where

***Book review** continues on following page*

What would YOU do?

Responding to students' behaviour in higher education

Tony Claydon, Northumbria University

Have you ever had bad dreams about how on earth you would deal with 'difficult' students' behaviour? Suppose that a class broke out laughing when you entered the room, and didn't stop; or a student threatened publicly to complain about you; or two students started fighting half way through your seminar.
What would you do?

Much of the advice that has been published about such incidents is directed at school-teachers so, to provide a resource for teachers in higher and further education, colleagues at Northumbria University have produced a CD-ROM with the same title as this article.

For some years, in the introductory block to our in-house training programme, we would engage newly-appointed colleagues in discussions about classroom incidents. However, although these were well received, we felt that something more was needed than brief written case studies to help bring such situations to life. Hence the CD-ROM.

Nightmarish tales from colleagues suggested to us that student behaviour that they find challenging is becoming more frequent. It may be due to several factors, such as:

- a hardening 'consumerist' attitude that causes students to feel more justified in protesting or not complying;
- the admission of students who are ill prepared for their higher education experience;
- the fact that the student population is becoming more representative of the population at large, so increasing, for example, the number of students with mental health problems;
- larger classes, which tends to increase anonymity and adversely affect students' mutual support;
- reduced contact between students and teachers with more time spent learning independently or at a distance, etc.

We assembled a small group to produce the CD – a director, a producer, and three consultants who were experienced teachers at Northumbria. Between them, they identified three dozen classroom situations that they regarded as potentially difficult to handle, nine of which were finally selected for inclusion in the CD, as representative of their kind. These include, for example, students:

- whose spoken English is hard to understand;
- who are unwell in class;
- who fall asleep;
- who become emotionally upset,
- who fail to prepare
- who are inattentive. etc.

The CD provides a short video vignette of each incident, followed by some questions that users, usually working in small groups, are invited to discuss. They may then select up to three possible teacher responses to each incident, and can see how each response might play itself out. Another set of questions, for further discussion, is displayed after the responses. The questions revolve around the central theme: "What would you do?" They seek to elicit users' views on the teachers' responses, but also to reveal how teachers' feelings and thoughts may affect their reactions, in some cases adversely; and what kinds of values might underlie different responses. Several of the teacher responses that are shown in video prove to be less than effective. The CD also contains some general, practical ideas for good practice, but its primary purpose is to generate discussion among users to help them deal with such incidents, rather than to prescribe specific courses of action in the classroom.

The CD should be particularly useful in lecturer training and development courses in English-speaking institutions. It uses QuickTime software that can be played on PCs with Windows 98 and later. It is available from the:

Learning in Organisations Division
School of Health, Community and Education Studies
Northumbria University
Coach Land Campus
Newcastle upon Tyne NE7 7XA

Please send a purchase order or cheque for £29.50 in the UK (plus postage and packing at £2.50 overseas).

Book review

sections are introduced, chapters are linked and key themes underpin the entire text. In summary, this collection argues that although current uses of new technology appears to be replicating existing approaches to teaching and learning, online learning does offer a chance to more courses of being more learner centred, collaborative, constructivist and engaging.

This book will be of interest to both teachers and staff developers who are using learning technologies in their work. It provides a jargon- free introduction to the research which is emerging to support our justification for promoting the use of learning technologies. Alongside this, the collection provides practical and honest examples of uses of technology which are underpinned by consideration of the added value for the learner and their learning.

Dr Rhona Sharpe FSEDA
Oxford Brookes University

'Sit Back and Relax'

A TechDis Workshop

Bruce Douglas Ingraham, University of Teesside

TechDis is the UK Higher Education Funding Council (HEFCE) body charged with developing strategies to use contemporary information technologies to support learners with disabilities. More information about TechDis can be found at **www.techdis.ac.uk**

Introduction

On 20th March 2003 TechDis hosted a workshop, entitled 'Sit Back and Relax' at the Network Centre in York. The workshop, presented by Bruce Ingraham and Emma Bradburn of the University of Teesside, reported on studies undertaken into the readability and accessibility of eBooks and other forms of electronic text. The workshop provided participants with an opportunity to consider a range of issues related to the use of electronic text for academic purposes. Participants were given the opportunity to evaluate several strategies for the creation of readable / accessible electronic texts and to evaluate a range of physical electronic books (eBooks).

Background

The work being undertaken at Teesside has its origins in a project conducted for the Open Learning Foundation (OLF) that required the conversion of some 1500 pages of paper-based learning materials into a format that could easily be read on screen; and a detailed report of that project (Ingraham & Bradburn, 2003) is available from the OLF (**OLF@mailbox.ulcc.ac.uk**). Although this began as a 'one off' solution to a 'one off' problem, it rapidly became apparent that as long as substantial bodies of continuous text remain the primary medium of conducting scholarly discourse, there could be substantial advantages to disseminating such discourse electronically rather than on paper. These include cost efficiency and ease of access for those unable to easily read paper documents as well as the potential to evolve new and more complex modes of discourse (e.g. hypertext, multimedia, etc.).

However, none of these advantages can be realized unless material can be made comfortably readable. Received wisdom suggests that reading from computers is a bad idea, but today there are few, if any, real technological obstacles to the creation of comfortably readable electronic text. Most of the obstacles to reading from screens are the result of poor text design leading to ergonomic discomfort for readers. Hence the workshop's title – 'Sit Back and Relax'. Moreover, genuinely 'readable' electronic text also appears to be 'accessible'. Researchers studying issues of accessibility (by individuals with, for example, some visual impairment) already have a good understanding of how to overcome many of the obstacles to screen-based reading and, in consequence, it is possible to design text that is not only readable but 'accessible by all'.

Funding from TechDis and the Institute for Learning and Teaching in Higher Education (ILTHE) allowed this research to be extended to consider reading texts from a range of handheld devices (PDAs and bespoke eBooks) as well as PCs and laptops. The principle objective of this current research is to assess the utility of electronic books, both physical devices and software constructs, to the support of learners with disabilities. The study is focusing on the usability of such resources by learners in FE and HE with special needs on the grounds that if this technological opportunity can 'make a difference' to them, it can make a difference to all learners. The interim results of this further study were reported at the workshop in York. Participants also had an opportunity to evaluate the 'readability' of some texts themselves as well as examining a range of eBooks.

Electronic Books

Electronic books (eBooks) can be understood both as software objects and as physical devices. Understood as a software object, an eBook is simply an electronic text that serves the same purpose as a conventional printed book and may also share some of the look and feel of a printed book. eBooks may also be enhanced with other electronic features, but that isn't essential.

Participants in the workshop were introduced to 2 approaches to creating software eBooks: first, using HTML to create web documents that serve as eBooks; and, second, using specialist eBook software to create eBooks. Two proprietary eBook softwares were examined: Microsoft© Reader and Mobipocket Reader©. There are others, and the full project report will reflect on some them. The two that were chosen were chosen because both Readers are available as free downloads and both also provide software for publishing in these formats as free downloads. As such, they, like HTML, provide a cheap and easy way for academic staff to produce eBooks and other electronic texts. Both are also currently in wide use and between them provide coverage of both Microsoft© and Palm© operating systems. The project's web site (**www.readability.tees.ac.uk**) site contains simple guidelines for using these to create eBooks. N.B. Unfortunately, neither of these currently runs on Apple's operating system.

Properly speaking, a physical eBook is a book-sized object through which an infinite number of texts can be read. Currently, there are three such devices available in the UK:

Franklin eBookman —
www.franklin.com/ebookman/

Gemstar GEB 2200 —
www.gemstar-ebook.com/ebcontent/devices/default.asp

IPM-NET MyFriend —
www.ipmnet.com/EN/myfriend/default.htm

Each of these has their own strengths and weaknesses. Additionally, handheld devices like PDAs and Pocket PCs can be used very effectively as eBook readers. Without

wishing to prejudge the outcome of the current trials, it is probably fair to say that while such handheld devices are capable of displaying text in ways that will be comfortably readable and accessible by many, the devices themselves are not always as user-friendly as one might hope. However, these accessibility issues are largely issues of processor power and are likely to disappear in the immediately foreseeable future.

Additionally, it should be noted that while this study is focusing on the production of readable/accessible electronic texts, there is already a huge amount of material available, often freely available, for academic use. In the case of disciplines like literature and history there are large numbers of primary sources; and for most disciplines the key scholarly journals are available electronically as well as in print. At the moment many of these resources are currently in formats that are either inaccessible to those with special needs or unsuitable for comfortable reading by anyone. However, with the application of techniques like those being developed in this project, it should be possible for scholars to make much more effective use of these online resources.

The final report of this study will be made available on the project's website. The site already contains a number of reports and conference presentations that discuss many of the issues involved in the creation and use of electronic texts as well as sets of guidelines and style sheets to support the production of readable/accessible electronic texts and eBooks. There is a list of further sources of information related to electronic texts and of sources of existing eBooks, etc. The site is currently under development and further information will be added from time to time over the next few months, but it should be completed in the autumn of 2003.

References

Ingraham, B. & Bradburn, E. (2003), Converting OLF Materials for Use Online, The Open Learning Foundation, London.

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Sit Back and Relax website
www.readability.tees.ac.uk

Representation and Consultation *continued from page 28*

Whilst we welcome the investment and commitment in establishing Centres of Teaching Excellence (paras 4.28-4.30), our experience of supporting key practitioners leads us to conclude that the money could be more effective if allocated differently. What is needed now to deliver the new agenda is an infrastructure which supports implementation and change rather than just dissemination of good practice. We have learnt a great deal about dissemination, consultancy and change and, with a focus on the management of change; we suggest that the planned Centres are larger than need be. Smaller pots of money have a wider reach both within and between organisations. We are keen to see that the Centres are thematic rather than based purely around the teaching of a subject within a certain department (e.g. 'work based learning in vocation subjects', or 'e-learning in professional development'). The criteria for the award of Centres obviously need to be developed and clarified and we would welcome being involved in these discussions.

We have made a separate response to the final report of the Teaching Quality Enhancement Committee (para 4.25).

In summary, SEDA generally is supportive of the agenda outlined in the white paper and we are keen to see that organisations such as ours are enabled to deliver it. We have a strong, proven track record in empowering HE staff to deliver change and we welcome discussions with the HEFCE about our continued role.

SEDA's Response to the Teaching Quality Enhancement Committee on the Future Needs and Support for Quality Enhancement of Learning and Teaching in Higher Education:

SEDA was not one of the specific organisations forming the central part of the review but it is gratifying to note that our contributions to and role in the sector were noted.

The SEDA Executive Committee generally welcomes and endorses the tone and conclusions of the final TQEC Report for quality enhancement across the sector. In particular the SEDA Executive concurs with the recommendation made in paragraph 13 (amplified in 17 and 5.3) for the formation of a unitary body – being an inclusive body which would establish partnerships. This underscores SEDA's initial response to the Interim Report cited in paragraph B109. Additionally the SEDA Executive supports an approach to quality enhancement which is high profile and strategic (paragraph 1.13). This is congruent with the mode of operation adopted by SEDA over the last ten years in developing and establishing the UK's first framework to accredit teachers in higher education. Subsequently SEDA has worked actively in the sector to establish a professional development framework (SEDA-PDF) which closely matches the aspirations and potential benefits to institutions identified in paragraph 5.13.

In reviewing the Report SEDA has identified a number of key issues:

- Success will depend upon delivery. Those in institutions who will have the principal responsibility for translating strategies into actions and practice are staff/educational developers. This vital dimension is not explored in the Report. Clearly those involved in such roles in HEIs will need to be supported; perhaps through a model which parallels the approach of the LTSN subject centres.
- The substantial institution fee proposed for funding the new Academy may well distort institutional approaches to funding quality enhancement initiatives. As a result the institutional relationship with organisations such as SEDA may well become jeopardised. Therefore alternative funding mechanisms need to be explored in order to support and maintain the acknowledged expertise and contributions made by SEDA.
- In paragraphs 2.1 to 2.7 an attempt is made at defining quality enhancement. While SEDA acknowledges this, it additionally identifies a more embracing concept which is securely grounded in Reflective Practice and a Values-based approach. This has been shown to be effective in enabling change and development. In conclusion the SEDA Executive has expressed a desire and intent to work closely and collaboratively with the Academy (5.3/5.7) and has identified the following areas in which our expertise will be of value:
  - History of successfully acting as a change agent (2.18)
  - Track record of accreditation (5.22)
  - Supporting, developing and professionalizing staff/educational developers (3.24/3.27)
  - Integrating CPD activities is well established in SEDA and reflected in the SEDA-PDF approach (5.13)
  - Institutional membership/links/networks (5.13)

The quality enhancement agenda set out in the Report presents challenges and opportunities and SEDA looks forward to addressing them through working in a strategic partnership with the Academy. Members of SEDA's Executive would be very pleased to contribute to further discussion and planning.

Representation and Consultation

Meeting with Leslie Wagner

and SEDA response to the White Paper and to the TQEC

Co-Chairs Barry Jackson and Kristine Mason O'Connor met with Professor Leslie Wagner in Leeds on 11 June. Leslie Wagner, Vice-Chancellor of Leeds Metropolitan University is responsible for leading the development of the new enhancement academy.

The consultative meeting was very positive; it was gratifying that Leslie Wagner had carefully studied SEDA's briefing documentation and that he reminded Barry and Kristine of his presence some ten years ago at the launch of SEDA's Teacher Accreditation Scheme in London – the first of its kind.

This provided a very conducive context for Barry and Kristine to summarise SEDA's history of achievement in the field of staff and educational development. They then went on to emphasise the key role of staff and educational developers in actualising the new quality enhancement agenda and pointed out that the significance of this role had not been properly recognised in the White Paper. They also presented examples of how SEDA had successfully collaborated with the ILTHE and LTSN; indeed, three days before the meeting with Leslie Wagner, Barry and Kristine had been in discussions in London about joint activities with Caroline Bucklow and Sally Brown.

Leslie Wagner outlined some of his ideas for the proposed Higher Education Academy and Barry and Kristine emphasised SEDA's determination to work collaboratively with or through the Academy to ensure that staff and educational developers would be supported in their efforts to improve student learning and contribute to positive strategic and organizational change.

Given the short timescale for setting up the new Academy it is doubtful whether Leslie Wagner will have much time to read scholarly texts; nevertheless at the close of the meeting he warmly accepted a copy of the most recent book in the SEDA/Kogan Page Series: 'A Guide to Educational and Staff Development' edited by Peter Kahn and David Baume.

SEDA's Response to the White Paper

The Staff and Educational Development Association (SEDA) is the professional association for staff and educational developers in the UK, promoting innovation and good practice in higher education. SEDA is seen by many as the shaper of thought and initiator of action in staff and educational development, not only in the UK but in the international domain also. SEDA has been at the forefront of helping higher education to cope with change through our work with teachers and staff and educational developers. As an association we empower people to consider and action cultural and organisation change, underpinned by our core values. In the past we have successfully supported staff to consistently deliver and manage quality educational experiences with expanding student numbers and emphasis on skills development.

The White Paper is a complex agenda for change including widening participation, designing new degrees, and meeting regional skills shortages. Whilst we support the general tone of the White Paper, we are disappointed that there is no recognition of the strategic and operational significance of staff and educational developers in implementing this new agenda. The change agents who will implement the agenda in the White Paper are the community which SEDA works closely with and SEDA is well placed to support the changes to the curriculum embedded in the White Paper.

The examples below illustrate how SEDA's provision continues to support many of the key areas identified in the white paper.

We have been involved in the setting of national standards for higher education teachers (para 4.14) since we developed the first accreditation scheme for the training of university teachers. In recent times we have recognised the many and varied roles of those supporting teaching and learning in higher education and in November 2002 launched the SEDA Professional Development Framework which has routes not just for learning, teaching and assessing but also supporting learning, supervising postgraduate research and embedding learning technologies, enhancing academic practice and developing professional practice.

SEDA now focuses its work on supporting and developing those managers of change who provide staff development including those who run the SEDA-PDF recognised awards.

The SEDA-PDF is based on a set of core outcomes and underpinning values and foregrounds educational processes – particularly the teacher's role in enabling students to learn. The white paper continues the government agenda to ensure all students become lifelong learners. This approach to teaching which SEDA has supported maintains the quality of the higher education experience and is reflected in the quality judgements made by students. We support the position of student quality judgements as the ultimate proof of a shift from teaching quality assurance processes to supporting the quality of learning (para 4.2).

We have experience and resources to support many of the important areas in the white paper such as helping staff to deal with diversity of student need, aiding completion rates and the training of external examiners (para 4.16). We have consistently attempted to raise the importance and value placed on university teaching and many of our members have been involved in implementing systems for rewarding teaching including devising criteria for promotion based on good teaching (para 4.17 and para 4.27).

Areas we would like the HEFCE to consider further:

The white paper recognises the dual profession of lecturers as teachers and researchers. SEDA encourages staff to explore the scholarship of teaching and to conduct research into their own teaching. In this respect, staff and educational developers, as a profession, enable and support staff to develop as reflective practitioners and action researchers of their own practice. This involves collaborating with and providing specialist support for staff to facilitate their work as researchers both into student learning underpinning teaching practices, the effectiveness of learning, teaching and assessment practices to enable student learning, empowering students to achieve learning outcomes, and become lifelong learners. Discovering 'what works', and why it works in teaching, learning and assessment becomes more important with the emerging new curriculum. However, research into teaching has been consistently underfunded with little recognition or reward for staff to engage in such research. We particularly support the aim to support the development of new research areas which are strategically important (paras 2.20 and 2.21) and the HEFCE could use this to make an enormous difference to the scholarship of teaching across all disciplines.

Continued on page 27