

SEDA ANNUAL REPORT 2008



Report from the Co-Chairs

SEDA has continued to provide its members and the wider community of educational developers and practitioners who support and lead educational change, with opportunities to network in the form of conferences and events, a range of publications and its portfolio of awards and courses.

2008 has been productive in a number of ways. SEDA has developed a greater understanding of its members and their needs through a membership survey and through discussions with stakeholders. The findings were generally positive but provided some areas for consideration about how SEDA might further support its members in the coming years.

Developing SEDA

An ongoing debate within SEDA is about its core constituency of members and the roles or functions they represent. The very nature of educational development has changed over time and the way the function is referenced in terms of role descriptions and activities has also changed. As an organisation, SEDA needs to acknowledge, understand and reflect this, whilst remaining mindful in evaluating its own practices, organisational structures and ways of working. During 2008 SEDA, through its committees and the work of the Executive, has put into place a number of strategies to achieve this.

There has been significant activity throughout the year developing a new website. The new website will provide a much clearer window on the work of SEDA, providing a clean and accessible route for members to engage with SEDA on a number of levels, including the registration for events and courses, and accessing SEDA news. It is intended the new website will also improve over time as we work with our providers during the coming year to understand how it is being used and what we can do to add functionality.

Development opportunities

SEDA continued to provide a portfolio of awards and courses and 2008 saw increasing interest in the Professional Development Framework and its potential use in CPD, particularly following the mapping of the SEDA-PDF awards against the UK Professional Standards for Teaching and Supporting Learning in Higher Education (UK PSF), which was made available the previous year in SEDA Special 21 (*SEDA PDF – A Tool for Supporting and Structuring Continuing Professional Development Frameworks*, by Ruth Pilkington with Anthony Brand).

In addition, the Fellowship scheme continues to build the community of professional educational developers, with the Summer Schools and the online courses proving successful in providing regular opportunities for practitioners at many levels to enhance their practice.

Attendance at the two conferences increased this year, with the mix of familiar and new participants, creating a productive and supportive atmosphere in which to consider the workshops and discussion papers. SEDA's one-day events successfully meet immediate needs, and are always well attended.

Developing collaboration

Throughout the year, SEDA expanded and developed its links with other organisations and associations in the sector in an attempt to collaboratively provide the best possible sector-wide support. This has involved meetings, and in some cases joint events, with the Higher Education Academy, the Association for Learning Development in Higher Education, the Centre for Recording Achievement, and with regard to the international context, the Association of Commonwealth Universities, the International Consortium for Educational Development and the Scottish Heads of Educational Development.

Meetings with the Higher Education Academy have been grounded in a joint commitment to, firstly: working together to develop a range of ways in which the work of the Academy would recognise and promote SEDA-PDF, Supporting and Leading Educational Change and the SEDA Fellowship across the sector, and particularly in relation to the UK PSF; and secondly: engaging in active ongoing discussions about ways the two organisations can work together in the future to utilise and promote the expertise in the educational development community in the most effective way.

As a consequence of the discussions, SEDA will in 2009 host a new group called 'The Reference Group' which operates within the Academy's 'supporting academic staff' theme, and which will:

- Support the Academy in its mission to help UK higher education to provide students with the highest quality learning experience in the world, by providing a broad educational development perspective on initial and continuing professional development to inform the Academy's activity in this area, and
- Support the work of, and coordination among, the organisations active in academic development, by providing a forum to bring together, at practitioner level, the discipline-specific and generic aspects of professional development, and thus ensure that the Academy serves the combined needs of institutions and their professional development communities.

We have maintained our ongoing liaison with the Heads of Educational Development Group and continue to support the long-term future of the International Consortium for Educational Development through close involvement at council level.

The work of SEDA is enabled by people giving their time freely to contribute to the work of the committees and the executive. During the year, there were over 100 people contributing in that capacity. Other people give support by running workshops and helping with events and we have the administration team working hard in the offices at Woburn House. The commitments and effort of these people is crucial to the success of the Association and makes SEDA the organisation it is today, and our appreciation goes to every one of them. SEDA recognises and acknowledges the substantial contribution of individuals, and one of the highlights of the year was the presentation of the SEDA Roll of Honour award to Professor Liz Beaty at the November conference. The SEDA Roll of Honour recognises the exceptional contribution Liz has made to the work of SEDA and her long industrious involvement and the lasting legacy of her work. The Association owes a great deal to Liz and it would not be the successful, well-administered and stable association it is today without her involvement.

Finally, we must thank our members, whether they are individual or institutional. SEDA is an organisation that is grounded in the needs of our members and strives to meet that need and to represent them. The continued support of you and your institution is essential in providing a firm footing from which SEDA can grow and develop.

Liz Shrives and Lawrie Phipps, SEDA Co-Chairs

Committee Reports

Scholarship, Research and Evaluation Committee

The remit of this committee is '...to promote research, scholarship and evaluation in staff and educational development as a means of bringing about understanding of, and further improvements in, our practices'. As such, the committee focuses on four main areas of activity: the SEDA Journal – Innovations in Education and Teaching International (IETI); the SEDA reading group; collaborative activities and events; and the SEDA Research and Development Grants.

Members of the committee have joined the editorial board of the SEDA Journal (IETI) and are actively encouraging research articles with relevance to staff and educational development practices. The reading group met at the spring and autumn conferences and in each case held an in-depth discussion of a recent journal article on academic development.

In 2008, the committee awarded eight small grants that furthered research into a range of topics including professional standards, doctoral supervision practices, and internal and external networks. A further call for bids for grants was made in late 2008. The committee is working on improving methods to support grant-holders and to disseminate the outcomes of their research.

Frances Deepwell, Chair, Scholarship, Research and Evaluation Committee

Fellowships Committee

We saw an eventful stable year for the Fellowships Committee during 2008, following the embedding of the new suite of courses on Supporting and Leading Educational Change. These courses help to ensure a growing number of Associate Fellowship holders, with six awarded in 2008. In

terms of activity on the main scheme, there were five new Fellowship registrations and one Fellowship was awarded. This brings the total number of Fellowship holders to 33, with 35 registered for the Fellowship.

The Fellowships scheme continues to provide an excellent means for colleagues to network and to enhance their own work as developers. One highlight of the year was the CPD master class, which drew a good audience of 22 members. This was given by Professor Bernard Moss and focused on the SEDA Values. In looking to future developments, we will continue to seek ways to enhance our collaborations with the SEDA-PDF Committee. We now hold some committee meetings on the same day, with an open event of mutual interest over the lunch period. Over the coming year we will be looking at the main Fellowship scheme, with a view to considering suggestions for updating this scheme. In addition, we are actively seeking to recruit additional members to the committee, particularly to seek to appoint to the Assessment Coordinator role.

Clare Pickles, Chair, Fellowships Committee

Professional Development Framework Committee

This year has been one of significant development in this core area of SEDA activity. Whilst recognitions continued at a consistent level, there has been a growing trend for organisations and non-university institutions to engage with SEDA-PDF. This has involved discussion with the Centre for Recording Achievement, the Association for Learning Development in Higher Education, and the Subject Centres. In July 2008, an event was held to invite Subject Centres and CETLs to engage with SEDA-PDF as a means of recognising and awarding development work undertaken within these organisations. This has been supported through the developing links with the Higher Education Academy.

In addition, the move to engage PGCert programme leaders more with the work of SEDA-PDF has been effective with several new programme leaders becoming involved in the SEDA-PDF Committee, resulting in the committee currently having a full cohort of members. To support this further a new JISC mail service was introduced allowing the Chair of the SEDA-PDF Committee and programme leaders to network around their developmental work using SEDA-PDF.

The committee continues to focus on the issue of finance and detailed discussions about the complexity of the current fees and achieving a more coherent and cost-effective structure will continue with SEDA's finance team.

In numerical terms two new institutions were recognised: *ifs* School of Finance and Edinburgh Napier University, bringing the total number of institutions recognised in 2008 to 19, and the total number of programmes recognised to 44. In addition, 542 certificates were issued to people who completed recognised programmes. This reflects a drop of 15% on 2007 (641), which may reflect the current concerns in the sector in relation to changes in TQEF. It will be a key priority to monitor this in 2009-10 and to develop an attractive costing model.

Two events were offered by the SEDA-PDF Committee in 2008 continuing a now well-established trend to support mentors and recognisers, and to provide updates on new SEDA-PDF activities. These were well attended:

- SEDA-PDF Mentoring and Recognising: an initial and continuing development day, 29th April 2008, London

- Enhancing Academic Practice in the Disciplines, 8th July 2008, London

The Chair of the SEDA-PDF Committee, Ruth Pilkington, actively promoted SEDA-PDF at conferences and events to ensure wider knowledge of SEDA-PDF. This included both of SEDA's national conferences and workshops on CPD and UK PSE.

Finally, the complementary work of SEDA-PDF and Fellowships has been the focus of debate and discussion within SEDA and the two committees held their first annual joint meeting in 2008, a trend set to continue into 2009.

Ruth completes her term as Chair of the SEDA-PDF Committee at the start of 2009 and will be replaced by Stephen Bostock.

Ruth Pilkington, former Chair, Professional Development Framework Committee

Papers Committee

Philip Frame and Mark Schofield stepped down as Co-Chairs of the committee as they had served their term of office and the committee warmly thanks them for their work. Caroline Stainton was proposed as Chair and took office in April 2008. Jac Potter was proposed and accepted the office of Deputy Chair.

A key activity of the committee during the year has been to address marketing in a much more proactive way. This resulted in:

- a revised SEDA publications brochure produced in an A5 format
- the introduction of publications in CD format for out of print stock
- special arrangements for institutional members' conferences (110 copies of SEDA Special 16, CD format, were produced for conference participants at De Montfort University)
- SEDA special offer packs
- targeted marketing.

The following Papers and Specials were produced in 2008:

- Frame, Philip and Burnett, Judith (eds.) (2008) *Using Auto/Biography in Teaching and Learning* (SEDA Paper 120)
- Cook, Anthony and Rushton, Brian S. (eds.) (2008) *Student Transition: Practices and Policies to Promote Retention* (SEDA Paper 121)
- Hall, Julie and Wisdom, James (2008) *Educational Developments – The first five years. 15 key texts in staff and educational development* (SEDA Paper 122)
- Hand, Len and Bryson, Colin (2008) *Student Engagement* (SEDA Special 22)
- Foster, Monika (ed.) (2008) *Enhancing the Experience of Chinese Students in UK Higher Education – Lessons from a Collaborative Project* (SEDA Special 23)
- Moore, Sarah (2008) *Supporting Academic Writing Among Students and Academics* (SEDA Special 24).

There was an increase in sales of Papers and Specials compared with 2007 (747). The SEDA special offer and the Induction Packs increased sales and six publications were produced compared to three in 2007. The total sales figures for 2008 were:

Papers: 881
Specials: 2348
Totals: 3229

Caroline Stainton, Chair, Papers Committee

Educational Developments Editorial Committee

In 2008, SEDA published four issues of Volume 9 of *Educational Developments*. The total number of subscribers has remained constant over the last two years at 83 with circulation at approximately 2000 copies. The issues contained 33 substantive articles within 116 pages, and book reviews, SEDA news and photographs. In keeping with the work of educational developers, these articles covered a wide range of topics, though the most frequent theme was professional development – of new staff, of established staff, of leaders and managers – and how SEDA-PDF can support this work. When one of our long-established members left the committee, we advertised through the SEDA list and so Vivienne Caruana (Salford) and Liz Grant (UCL) joined the group. We are continuing to attract good unsolicited articles, which is very pleasing. However, a theme noted in last year's report has continued, namely the tension between the light tone of the magazine and the submission of heavily referenced and sometimes ponderous academic pieces. While SEDA is committed to a scholarly approach in all its work, we also know that scholarship can exist in many forms. One of the virtues of *Educational Developments* is that it can rapidly convert ideas to articles and will continue to provide this opportunity to its members and those in the wider development community.

James Wisdom, Chair, Educational Developments Editorial Committee

Conference and Events Committee

In 2008, the Conference and Events Committee organised two conferences. In May we held the SEDA Spring Conference 2008 at the Royal National Hotel, London. The theme was Engaging with Student Expectations and delegate numbers were very healthy. Professor Stephen Ball opened the conference with an interesting keynote on the globalisation of HE and the conference finished with a vibrant and insightful student-led panel.

In November the 13th Annual SEDA Conference had as its theme Changing Educational Development: Whose Values? Whose Agendas? Whose Futures? For this year, in response to delegate feedback, we moved the event from its traditional base at the Novotel in Birmingham to Aston Business School Conference Centre. Though costs rose, delegate feedback was very positive. Dr Liz Beaty provided an engaging keynote and on finishing she was awarded a place on the SEDA Roll of Honour in recognition of her work for the organisation over many years.

In addition, the committee instigated a number of one-day events including Professional Standards and CPD for Academic Staff: challenges, issues and ideas, and Supporting New Academic Managers and Leaders. This event generated particular interest with materials requested by educational developers from places as far apart as Australia and the West Indies. It also resulted in SEDA being invited to run the event again at the Cavehill Campus of the University of the West Indies in Barbados. This has led to stronger links with the Association of Caribbean Higher Education Administrators (ACHEA).

The Staff and Educational Development Association (SEDA) is the professional association committed to improving all aspects of learning, teaching and training in higher education through staff and educational development. SEDA's purpose is to enable staff, institutions and the sector to meet the fast-changing demands of the external environment for the benefit of student learning.

SEDA members, SEDA Fellowship holders, and holders of all SEDA awards are a community that shares the same values, being committed to:

- An understanding of how people learn
- Scholarship, professionalism and ethical practice
- Working in and developing learning communities
- Working effectively with diversity and promoting inclusivity
- Continuing reflection on professional practice
- Developing people and processes.

SEDA Executive Committee 2008

Dr Simon Ball
Dr David Baume
Fran Beaton
Dr Stephen Bostock
Professor Tony Brand
Dr Frances Deepwell
Dr Philip Frame
Julie Hall
Dr Peter Kahn
John Lea
Professor Ranald Macdonald
Professor Kristine Mason O'Connor
Ivan Moore
Lawrie Phipps
Dr Clare Pickles
Ruth Pilkington
Phil Poole
Dr Ann Rumpus
Mark Schofield
Professor Pam Shakespeare
Liz Shriver
Ellen Sims
Dr Caroline Stainton
Maurice Teasdale
Nicky Torrance
Dr Shân Wareing
Dr Andre van der Westhuizen
Professor James Wisdom
Professor Gina Wisker

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A 'Hot Topics' one-day conference was organised in December to provide an opportunity for delegates to share their views on the impact of the proposed changes to the HEFCE Teaching Quality Enhancement Funding. This was a joint conference offered by SEDA and the Association for Learning Development in Higher Education and proved to be enormously popular, attracting colleagues from a wide range of roles.

The committee put a paper to the SEDA Executive in the autumn suggesting ways of coordinating events across SEDA through a virtual sub-committee with closer involvement of the SEDA Treasurer. It is hoped that this will aid SEDA in costing and planning future events more effectively.

Thank you to all those whose committee stint came to an end in 2008 and welcome to Pam Parker, Louise Naylor and Sue Burkinshaw, who have already made an impact on the committee's activities. Also thanks to Fran Beaton who has been a very helpful link with the SEDA Executive Committee and to Roz and Ann in the SEDA office who play a huge part in conference and event organisation.

Julie Hall, former Chair, Conference and Events Committee

Membership Committee

SEDA's membership numbers increased slightly during 2008. Institutional members increased from 90 in 2007 to 97 in 2008, the individual membership categories increased very slightly with institutional associate members moving from 111 in 2007 to 113 in 2008, and the individual membership increasing by one to 156 in 2008.

The Membership Committee has focused on ensuring that SEDA continues to reflect, respond to and be relevant to the educational development community. A membership survey was conducted through a web-based instrument in April 2008 with a report of the findings published in the September issue of *Educational Developments*. The responses indicated that members felt that SEDA provided value for money, offering high quality publications and services which were warmly welcomed by members. The findings also indicated that members actively promote SEDA to their colleagues. The report suggested some areas for development which included ways of encouraging an active 'SEDA community' inside institutions through support for institutional contacts, a review of the categories of membership and exploration of ways to provide more resources through the website. The SEDA Executive and the committees have considered how the Association might respond to the survey findings. The Executive Committee undertook a substantial review of the membership packages and a new membership category of partner institution was introduced, to encourage FE partners to take advantage of SEDA membership. Additionally, a special institutional membership offer was offered to all institutions who were not SEDA members. Eight institutions took up the offer on institutional membership.

The members are very important to the Association and the Executive Committee has been considering, and will continue to consider into the coming year, how to identify the most effective ways of communicating with its members and responding to the needs of both individual and institutional members. Part of these considerations concerns the effectiveness of the Membership Committee as currently constituted and the relationship between this committee and the roles and responsibilities of the Executive.

Phil Poole, Chair, Membership Committee

SEDA Executive Committee

The Executive Committee met on four occasions throughout the year. Philip Frame, Peter Kahn, Kristine Mason-O'Connor, Ivan Moore, Mark Schofield and Shân Wareing completed their terms of office as members of the Executive Committee, and were thanked for their work.