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Professional development for new staff – how mandatory is your Post Graduate Certificate?

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When Sir Ron Dearing recommended that institutions 'develop or seek access to programmes for teacher training of their staff' (Dearing, 1997, recommendation 13, paragraph 72), few would have predicted that by 2010 all HEIs either provide an introductory programme or their staff have access to such a programme elsewhere. In almost all cases the programme is an accredited Post Graduate Certificate of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education (henceforth referred to as 'PgCert'). In a sample of 82 institutions, derived from a recent survey via the SEDA list mail, 62.2% (51 HEIs) have a policy which requires new staff to complete a PgCert. Another 18.3% (15 HEIs) require staff to complete some part of a PgCert or equivalent. In all, 80.5% have a requirement to pass all or some of part of a PgCert or equivalent. A further 13.4% require staff to 'engage with' the PgCert without there being a formal requirement that the course should be completed or passed.

Historically, universities have been unwilling to impose restrictions on the autonomy of their staff, so this level of mandating training for new staff is extraordinary. That there is now such a high level of consensus that academics need to be professionally prepared for their role as teachers is a major achievement for educational developers who have long argued this case. Educational developers would like to believe that PgCerts have become mandatory because there is an acknowledgement of the 'importance of ensuring that all new staff members have sufficient pedagogical grounding to enhance the quality of student learning' (Moira Lee Gek Choo, email 29 January 2010).

However, the acceptance of mandatory courses may be more a reflection of the growing regulatory environment which has become common in Britain in recent years throughout the professions. Whereas universities used to be exceptional in having a different view of professional autonomy, most are now managed organisations not unlike other corporate and public institutions. It is now only a small minority of institutions that still work on the basis that they have to attract new staff onto their PgCert – most simply mandate attendance as part of the university's probationary requirements.

Although there are other countries such as Holland, Norway, Sweden, Japan and Sri Lanka which have travelled the same route towards mandating initial professional development, it is interesting to note that academics in the USA continue to be resistant to the idea, as this e-mail from Diana Kelly (now at Southwestern College, California) explains:

SEDA Supporting and Leading Educational Change

'It's extremely unlikely that a mandatory teaching course for HE faculty would ever happen in the U.S. – mostly because of "academic freedom" issues and also because of very strong unions for academic staff in most colleges and universities. If anything like this were to be implemented, they'd have to negotiate it as part of the union contract – and that's very unlikely to happen.' (e-mail 15 March 2010)

For this reason, in the US, preparation of future faculty focuses on GTAs. In Australia there is no equivalent shift towards mandatory initial professional development.

'In Australia, every 4 years or so we have done a survey of Grad Certs and basically for the last 4 years it's remained steady at only 5 in 40 universities requiring new staff (of a certain level and experience) to undertake the GCHE.' (Kym Fraser)

What are the conditions in Higher Education in the UK at the present time which have allowed the Dearing recommendation to come to pass? When Roni Bamber asked this question in 2002, she concluded that it reflected increased interventionism by central government combined with the fact that 'universities cannot afford to ignore government policy, given the tighter coupling between performance and funding' (Bamber, 2002, p. 11). In recent years student fees and the National Student Survey have both caused university management to be more sensitive to student perceptions of teaching quality.

However, a small number of institutions have so far resisted the trend. In this sample, three institutions (City, Lincoln and Aberdeen) encourage staff to attend a PgCert but have no requirement to either attend or pass, and St Andrews simply has an academic staff development programme, which all probationary academic staff are 'strongly encouraged' to attend. Darren Comber at Aberdeen defends the policy of voluntary participation.

'Our numbers are gradually rising as staff talk to each other about the value of the Programme, hence we tend not to have ranks of "arms-folded" staff who have been railroaded into attending. It's also a bonus in that staff with heavy research grant application loads to complete upon entry don't resent the time away from this activity to complete a PG Cert from day 1; some staff have said to me that having the flexibility to come to the certificate later has meant that they actually want to be there, and have compared this favourably with colleagues that they know from other institutions.

I think what we're seeing is a real change in "culture", driven from the bottom by staff who want to engage with our PG Cert. Certainly we have a thriving group of young, enthusiastic staff who have been through the Programme and who make far better advocates for the Programme than either I or a member of senior management ever could.' (e-mail 1 April, 2010)

The recent survey also shows that despite the trend towards mandating initial training, many issues remain in the implementation of the policies that institutions have adopted. Having a policy that the PgCert is mandatory for new staff does not guarantee that all new staff do in fact complete it. Comments from respondents to the survey indicate that some institutions that are part of the 80% who have a formal requirement to pass all or some of the PgCert recognise that there are difficulties in enforcing this requirement. This clearly blurs the distinction between those who require completion and those who merely stipulate engagement with the PgCert.

There are difficult issues when managing 'mandatory training'. Richard Atfield, Assistant Director at the Higher Education Academy: Business, Management, Accountancy and Finance (BMAF) Network, argues that:

'If an action or outcome is compulsory/mandatory and within the HR policies (and few are), there is a mutual responsibility for the university and school to ensure the individual has appropriate access and time to address these

needs and meet the requirement. In reality little is organisationally mandatory because of the difficulties of facilitating and enforcing it and these are rarely written and agreed policies anyway.' (email to the SEDA mail list dated 20 January 2010).

He points to evidence from work undertaken in the BMAF which indicates that:

'The pressures of the need to teach, to obtain research funds or both, means that new academics may not be able to access a PGCert ''course'' in their first year or so (and may even be discouraged). As a consequence any attempt to dismiss/not renew the contract could be seen as unfair dismissal. If, however, completing PgCert and/ or anything else is really mandatory and an individual chooses not to complete it, there are grounds for dismissal if the requirement is clear in the contract.'

These comments will ring true for many involved in trying to enforce a mandatory PgCert policy. Many post-1992 universities continue to have a one-year probation period inherited from the days when polytechnics and colleges were under local authority control. Since staff are rarely able to complete the PgCert within the one-year probationary period, institutions have limited formal powers to impose further requirements on course participants, although they can provide incentives to complete the course and many do create informal expectations that they should complete. If an individual staff member has completed their probation, the likelihood of an institution wishing to dismiss that person for failing to complete the PgCert is remote unless there are other grounds for dismissal. This comment from Wolverhampton is quite typical:

'If staff do not complete and submit for the programme, there is no obvious closing of the loop. i.e. there is no personnel system which says that these staff have not completed probation and it will be followed up. It then comes down to individual managers e.g. Deans/Asst Deans to follow up.' (Helen Gale, e-mail 27 January 2010)

Bournemouth is one post-1992 HEI which has acknowledged this problem by stipulating that staff must start the programme and they are expected to complete the first unit (20 credits) leading to Associate Fellowship of the HEA within the probation period. Thereafter, staff are 'encouraged to complete the full programme (60 credits) to HEA Fellowship although this is not mandatory. However, it can be used as an indicator for promotion purposes, so most starting go on to complete' (Linda Byles, e-mail 26 January 2010).

In practice many PgCerts prefer to say that a candidate is a 'not yet pass' rather than a fail. Atfield suggests that 'the most practical way' of handling this situation is 'to limit the annual incremental rises awarded until the required conditions have been met', but this would be seen by many as a draconian solution.

The implementation of any mandatory policy relies on the co-operation of heads of department. Bamber noted that support for mandatory courses was weaker among heads of department than senior managers because they are responsible for the resource implications of staff having less time to spend on research or teaching (Bamber, 2002: 15). Heads who want to keep a staff member because their research output is of a high standard would be very unlikely to lose that valuable researcher because they had not completed their PgCert. If they agree with the policy of a mandatory PgCert, HoDs can apply considerable pressure on staff members to complete the course, and persuade the person that it is in their interests to do so. However, this is very different from enforcing completion as a condition of employment, and, as we all know, many heads of department who are pursuing the best interests of their department do not believe that completing the PgCert is a high priority and may be actively opposed to it. It is also necessary to say that while some new staff are happy to have the support of their head to avoid taking part or all of a PgCert, there are others who will insist on their right to attend against the wishes of their head.

This difficulty is recognised at Lancaster where there is a formal policy that new staff should normally complete 30 credits of a PgCert, but implementation of the policy is left to the discretion of the head of department, and similarly, at Manchester, 'exemption may be granted from all or parts of the course by the Head of School'. In other institutions, heads can exempt staff informally simply by signing off a new staff member as having completed probation without insisting on them completing the formal course requirements.

Furthermore, there are 16 universities in this sample who have decided that in their institutional culture the mandatory requirement should be a fraction of a PgCert. The requirement can vary between 20 credits (Birmingham) to 40 credits (Leeds and Durham). Others require half, such as at LSE or three-fifths at Bath. In Edinburgh the requirement is simply 'to participate in about one-third of the entire PG Cert without the requirement to complete any assessments'. At Bristol and Manchester the requirement is to complete a course which is not at M-level.

This variety of policies relating to PgCerts raises important questions about the justification for compelling staff to attend or to complete a PgCert. If the reduced requirement is sufficient to prepare staff to perform their teaching and assessment tasks adequately, how can other institutions justify a more rigorous, or demanding requirement? If on the other hand the view is taken that all new staff need to complete a PgCert to be adequately prepared, does that mean staff in those institutions that only have a requirement for partial completion of the PgCert are not adequately prepared?

When Sir Ron Dearing in 1997 recommended that staff 'have access' to programmes of initial training he saw 'initial professional development' as the 'basis for establishing the professionalism of teaching' (Dearing, 1997, paragraph 8.61). Unfortunately, 'professionalism' is an ill-defined concept. It could be understood as a way of ensuring that all students have well-designed courses, competent teaching, fair assessment and the level of support for their learning that they have a right to expect. But can we be confident that all PgCerts deliver these goals?

If it were the case that students would not be adequately taught and assessed if their lecturers had not been prepared

by undertaking a PgCert, then this would be a strong justification for compulsion. But the variation in PgCerts calls this into question. There are significant variations in the time commitment required of participants and the demands made on staff to demonstrate their competence. Some PgCerts aim to be an induction into the whole range of tasks expected of a lecturer in higher education and are not wholly focused on teaching, learning and assessment. Some PgCerts attempt to assess teaching performance through the observation of their teaching, but not all. Some PgCerts do not set out to assess 'competence' but rather seek to encourage staff to become self-critical and reflective teachers. Indeed, it is a valid question to ask whether PgCerts should be doing the work of probationary requirements.

> *'We don't view our PG Cert as a licence to practice or a competency measure. The probationary process is entirely separate and judgements on competency to teach are made by the Heads of Department based on their observation and evaluation data from other sources. We view the PG Cert as a way of engaging new practitioners with the UK Professional Standards Framework. Most importantly, it is a way of promoting a reflective approach to continually developing teaching practice.'* (email Julie Regan, Chester, 26 January 2010)

The process of Higher Education Academy accreditation may be thought to be a response to these variations in content and aims. But does accreditation guarantee that certain minimal standards have been met? The disparity between HEA-accredited courses throws some doubt on whether such a guarantee exists, or is intended. Some HEA-accredited courses are based on the achievement of 60 post graduate credits, but the HEA has accredited courses with less stringent requirements and some that are not validated at postgraduate level.

If the intention was to ensure that students would only be taught by staff who have completed a PgCert as a way of assuring the quality of teaching, then institutions would have to insist that part-time staff would be subject to the same requirements. Atfield reports that a project with the HSAP Subject Centre into part-time teaching staff found that many HEIs do not expect part-time staff to take a PgCert or wish to pay for their time if they were to attend. Some staff prefer a part-time contract to avoid having to take a PgCert (http://tinyurl.com/PTstaff).

Of course, students are taught by many staff who have never taken a PgCert and who never will. Only at the University of the Arts have they had a policy that all full-time staff should take the PgCert:

> *'We had a university strategic target set in 2005 to have all teaching staff who had over a threshold number of contact hours with students (360 hrs per year – we have a large number of associate lecturers who are also practitioners and teach a small number of hours) complete our PgCert by 2010. I am pleased to say that we have nearly met that target (aside from the few stragglers that will always exist).'* (Nancy Turner, e-mail 21 January 2010)

Increasingly, institutions are taking seriously the question of teacher education for GTAs. For example at Kent:

> *'We have ever-increasing numbers of postgrads taking half of our PgCert, which gives them Associate Fellowship of the HEA. A number then try to go on to the full PgCert and we now require them to get the agreement of their PhD supervisor before doing this so that they don't overreach themselves.'* (Fran Beaton, e-mail 19 January 2010)

The inconsistencies in implementing PgCerts as a professional requirement for teachers in HE may be ironed out in time, or more likely, if the requirement continues to be managed at the level of each institution, they will remain. The process may be accelerated if, like Middlesex, institutions make it clear that it is essential for staff to have completed a PgCert to be considered for promotion, but at present there is no prospect of having a profession of teaching in higher education that consists only of people who have been trained to do the job. Neither is there unanimity about what kind of professional development staff should be engaged in or what level of performance they must demonstrate to be successful.

There is unlikely to be a profession-wide agreement on what are the necessary skills to be a lecturer in HE. We do not have the equivalent of a British Psychological Society or General Medical Council setting entry requirements to the profession. The HEA is not a professional body in the same sense, nor do I sense there to be any appetite for it to become one. A centrally imposed solution, however, is not only unlikely, it is also undesirable. The differences between the post-1992 'modern' universities and the 'ancients' are too great. It is better that each institution decides for itself what it wants for its staff and its students and we accept that diversity will always exist. Differentiation rather than consistency is more likely to serve us well in the long term.

Despite the difficulties that the survey has revealed, the overwhelming conclusion is that Dearing's vision has very largely been realised in less than 15 years. There is now a growing number of academics who have been introduced to ideas about pedagogy, and have become enthusiastic advocates of the importance of a professional approach to teaching and assessment in higher education.

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Note: The full spreadsheet of institutional responses to the survey is available from **http://www.davidgosling.net.**

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Higher Education without Academics?

John Pitt, Surrey County Council, and **Anne Lee** and **Robert Griffiths,** University of Surrey

Introduction

This is a case study of an innovative MSc programme, developed and delivered by senior staff in industry in partnership with academia. The main themes are employer engagement and work-based learning; both of these are central to the development of a strategy that harnesses the skills of both practitioners and academics. The programme described here is the MSc in Transport Planning and Practice, offered by the University of Surrey, now in its fourth year.

The approach adopted needs to be seen in the wider context of current government thinking on the future role of universities. *'Higher Ambitions',* the 10-year strategy for higher education, launched by the government on 3 November 2009, identifies six key measures. Two are especially pertinent here:

- *'Business to be more engaged in the funding and design of programmes, sponsorship of students, and work placements*
- *Creating more part-time, work-based and foundation degrees to make it easier for adults to go to universities, with routes from apprenticeships through to Foundation Degrees and other vocational programmes.'* (BIS, 2009)

Shortly after the launch of *Higher Ambitions* the government also published the National Skills Strategy: *Skills for Growth.* In this, the debate moves from the role of universities to the nature of the employment market and the skills needed. The strategy emphasises:

> *'As we emerge from the banking crisis and rebuild the British economy, the skills system needs a stronger focus towards strategic skills, businesses need to contribute more to shaping demand for skills, and learners need to be able to choose where they train and what they study to drive competition and improve courses.'* (BIS, 2009a)

The case study outlined here might almost be seen as anticipating the publication of these two documents and while we don't make that claim, these trends add impetus for the principles and practices we describe. They may be relevant for other professions and at other levels of education.

We describe a strategy to extend employer engagement to a deeper level than is usual in higher education, through the development of a masters programme focused on work-based learning where the practitioners do all the teaching. Universities are used to inviting leading practitioners to give guest lectures. In this case, the University of Surrey invited practitioners to consistently engage in Higher Education in a way that the authors have not seen elsewhere in engineering. We review the preparation and delivery over the first three years and comment on an initial evaluation of problems and successes.

The key stakeholders in this process, apart from the practitioners actually involved in the teaching, are no different to many other vocationally oriented programmes, but greater prominence than usual is given to the role of employer organisations. The stakeholders include:
- The university as an organisation, and individual staff involved
- The employer organisations and their staff who provide the specialist expertise
- Part-time students on the programme (often sponsored by the participating employers)
- Full-time students seeking employment on the basis of their new skills
- Customers of the employers who benefit from better service provided by skilled staff.

Conceptual development

The idea of a practitioner-led programme in transport planning was proposed by Surrey County Council staff in 2003 – soon after the transport planning profession had reported

a skills shortage in several journals (Richards, 2002; Harman and Lyons, 2003). Figure 1 shows the main features of the concept.

Staff from the University of Surrey then invited representatives from consultancy firms and local authorities to join a Steering Group whose role was to:
- Set out the needs and expectations of industry
- Guide the scope and content of the programme
- Encourage able graduates to participate in the programme
- Put forward suitable staff to become practitioner teachers.

Surrey County Council staff with experience in both higher education and the industry acted as an initial bridge between the two and guided the early development of the programme; subsequently, the university took over the responsibility for leading the development as well as for the detailed administration.

Early work of the steering group included reviewing the needs of industry and examining the scope and content of current masters programmes in transport planning; it decided that the new programme should complement existing programmes rather than compete with them. This led to the conclusion that the initial focus should be on current practice rather than theory.

The steering group agreed some overall objectives which were to:
- Encourage graduates from a range of backgrounds (economics, geography, engineering *etc.*) into transport planning
- Allow staff already working with Local Authorities, regional government or consultants to study part-time and to have their achievements in the workplace recognised as contributing towards the qualification
- Maximise the use of workplace projects and schemes in the training process by recognising the

academic value of aspects of professional work
- Equip graduates from diverse backgrounds with the knowledge and skills required to work on planning, design or delivery of transport schemes
- Introduce students to the principles of transport planning and other transport topics.

Additionally the objectives of the initiative were to:
- Develop a new industry model of higher education
- Enhance the relevance of the programme through use of senior industry-based practitioners as associate lecturers and project managers
- Provide continuing professional development for staff involved in delivering the modules
- Promote the profession and guide people to professional qualifications
- Make research facilities and results more readily available to industry
- Strengthen links between industry and universities
- Provide a forum for sharing good practice.

An early decision by the Steering Group was that the programme should

be consistent with other postgraduate programmes and build using:
- four core modules in transport planning – leading to a Certificate in Higher Education
- four optional modules in related subjects – leading to a Diploma in Higher Education
- a research project equivalent to four more modules – leading to the full MSc.

A key principle was to maximise the element of *work-based learning.* With one optional module being work based as well as the research project, it is possible for a student to obtain the full MSc on the basis of just seven modules studied on campus.

Enabling *distance learning* was important so that students could reduce their attendance on campus to a minimum and this created a significant opportunity for students from further afield, including international students, to enrol.

Preparatory work
As well as guiding the development of the programme, industrial partners took responsibility for leading each of the specialist transport planning modules.

The university nevertheless oversaw the development of material and provided quality control on the overall process for delivery, assessment and presentation of material.

The next main task was to prepare detailed programme documentation for programme validation. This involved following standard university procedures for quality assurance and included drafting validation documents to set out the rationale for the programme, identifying the resources needed, refining the learning outcomes to match university descriptors for level M modules, and drafting a student handbook.

The programme was successfully validated in January 2006. The preparation of detailed learning material was then taken on by each module leader together with other practitioners. Each team drafted:
- Module notes which would be appropriate as distance learning material
- Summative and formative assessments
- A session plan for the sections they were responsible for delivering.

All the practitioners were highly qualified, experienced and up to date in their specialist fields. Some had teaching experience but most did not. Their role was not that of a typical associate lecturer – they were expected to set learning objectives, prepare teaching material, deliver the material, assess progress and give feedback to students about their performance.

Training the practitioners to work as academic lecturers lies at the heart of this study of employer engagement, and to ensure that they would be effective in these new roles a special training course was devised by the Centre for Educational and Academic Development. The course was delivered over four separate days and covered: identifying appropriate level descriptors, writing learning outcomes, designing learning activities, giving feedback, designing assessment and marking. A separate session introduced the practitioners to ULearn,
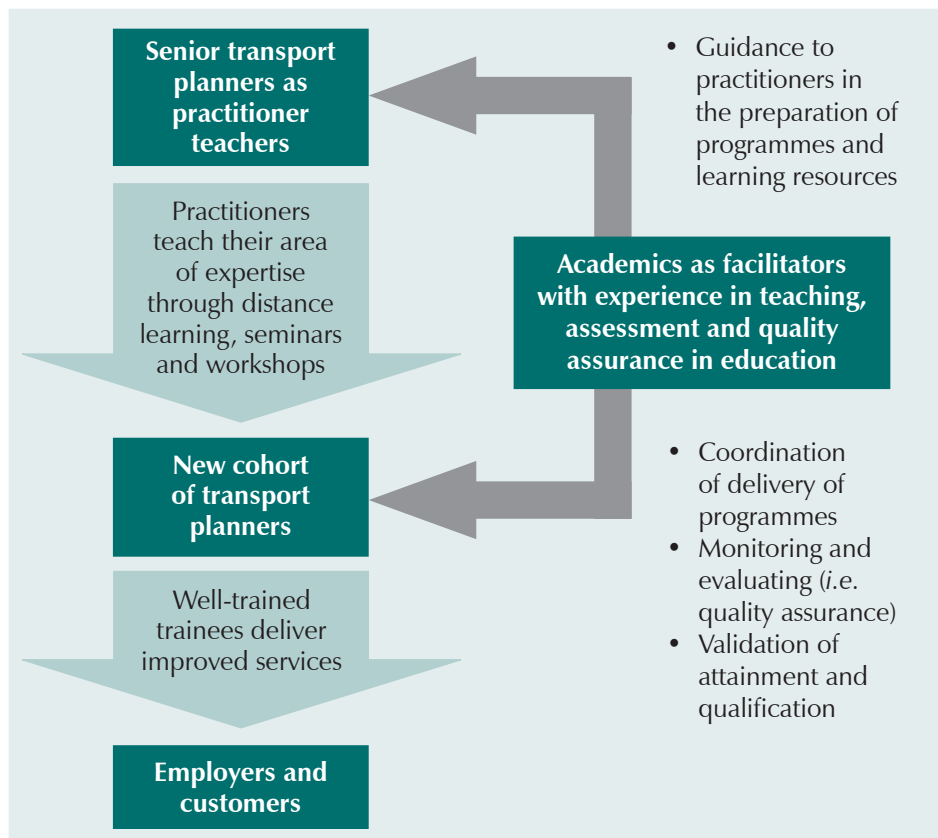

Figure 1 Overview of practitioner-led teaching

the university's web-based learning management software.

Programme delivery

The pattern adopted for teaching core modules was an afternoon and evening on alternate weeks. Part-time students taking two modules at a time would then need to be out of the office for just half a day each week. At that rate they would complete in two years.

The University arranged to spread the teaching load so that no one company had too onerous a task. With about ten companies involved and some providing two or three staff, the total number of staff was significantly higher than is usual, with some teaching just one half-day session.

The use of ULearn was a crucial component in the delivery of the programme to all students – both campus based and distance learning. ULearn allowed access to all learning material, provided the mechanism for submitting assessments and encouraged communication between students when away from the campus.

A typical half-day teaching session included a formal lecture, discussion and tutorial exercises. Some modules included practical work to collect field data or investigate examples of transport infrastructure, and others used ICT facilities to familiarise

students with key transport planning software.

Evaluation

Evaluation of the new programme has been ongoing with review and discussion in the steering group, the student liaison committee and meetings with external examiners. Also, after three years of delivering the programme, there was a formal evaluation through the University Review and Validation process.

Several issues that emerged concerned learning and teaching:
- Academic level. Is the level of learning at M level and consistent? How can we ensure consistently high quality feedback at a masters level? How can traditional academic requirements (e.g. use of academic journals) be reconciled with the programme focus on current practice?
- Maths and English requirements. What level of mathematics can be expected from students of different professional backgrounds? Should harder maths be limited to optional modules? What level of written or oral communication should be expected?
- Distance learning. How effective was the programme for distance learning and what support and resources are needed? How should distance learning be developed

to run in parallel with the contact sessions?
- Programme structure. The learning outcomes and syllabus formed a complex matrix. Further mapping is needed to show links between topics and where topics are covered in different places but with different contexts and emphasis.

Some issues related to student experience:
- Associate lecturers. How do students respond to the number of different lecturers and their work being set and marked by practitioners? Would they have realistic expectations? Would they be fair and consistent?
- Part-time and full-time students. How do the abilities and expectations of each group differ and how can the differences be managed?
- Student support. Was there sufficient support available for different groups of students?
- Are the roles of student, teacher and practitioner as clear cut as they used to be? How can the contribution of experienced students be integrated?

The university was well aware of potential difficulties for students, and ensured that the Programme Director was a focal point and was available to liaise. Student feedback from student liaison committees and the university course assessment process revealed a high level of satisfaction. They liked the variety and, most importantly, they appreciated that they were being taught by senior professionals who were up to date, experienced and in touch with the industry.

In addition, there were issues relating to the practitioners:
- How could the large number of associate lecturers be managed effectively?
- How effective was the limited training in enabling practitioners to become associate lecturers in a limited time and for limited input?
- How could they juggle priorities of teaching with the day job?
- How could practitioners be properly reimbursed for their input?

Matt Smith (Surrey County Council) teaching the unit on road safety, with Dr Bob Griffiths (Programme Director, University of Surrey).

The experience of practitioners as associate lecturers was gleaned primarily from informal feedback when they came to the university for training, teaching or meetings. Most who participated were self-selecting and enthusiastic. In general they had very high standards and were sometimes disappointed to find that students did not respond as a junior member of staff would be expected to! They were grateful for the training provided and also saw the value of this within their organisations.

Issues relating to the University are summarised in Table 1 below together with comments on how issues were resolved.

Conclusions

Whilst there are areas for further development, the overall successes were recognised as substantial. This had been an ambitious project from the start, bringing in a group of commercial and local government organisations and their employees and introducing them to the *raison d'etre* and some of the processes of higher education, to enable the introduction of leading-edge professional practices for students. Professional bodies accredited the programme, and students and practitioners reported largely enjoyable and satisfactory experiences. The ultimate goal of providing a new pool of experts in this field is well on its way to being achieved.

There have been many challenges over the six years and some of them will be familiar to Programme Leaders everywhere; many have been met by good planning, appropriate contact and good administrative support by the University. The key to success is the desire and determination from the management group (which should include all partner companies) being passed on to all contributors to enable an understanding of each partner's specific needs and difficulties.

This study confirms that, amongst the practitioners in any organisation, there are some very able teachers. It is also true that amongst academics, there are some very able practitioners and

University group	Priorities	Comment
Programme director and colleagues	Administration	Both demand a lot of time and energy especially at the start. Tasks include administering contracts for practitioners, liaison with students and practitioners and liaising within the university
	Programme development including preparation of further transport-related options	
	Recruitment of a cohort of suitably qualified students (mainly part-time). What is the best strategy?	Largely through the industrial partners though there is a much wider market including international students
	Timing issues especially for exam preparation and marking and availabilities of lecturers	Requires good planning and more lead-in time but industry works well to deadlines. Three-year contracts place responsibilities on companies which have been respected
University administration	Teaching quality	The quality assurance process at the time of programme validation led to commitment to train practitioners
	Income and resources	Successful recruitment ensured an income stream sufficient to cover costs of contracts with partner organisations
University Centre for Academic and Educational Development (CEAD)	Supporting practitioners to be able to teach at a masters level and to meet (some of) the conceptual demands of working at this level	The content of a traditional PG Cert programme cannot be covered in a four-day short course where time for research and reflection is limited. There is a danger of reductionism, but the enthusiasm and subject knowledge of practitioners helps to compensate for this
External examiner	Ensuring that learning and assessment are at M level	Learning outcomes were modified to ensure standards were sufficiently high
	Evidence that students are required to refer to academic journals	Much of the expert knowledge needed comes through government guidance as this is where the current practice is set out

Table 1 How University issues were resolved

we would like to argue for greater flexibility so that practitioners and academics could move more easily between these two roles.

If the role of practitioners in higher education were to expand, what would the academic contribution need to be? Readers will have recognised that input by academics in this model is essential, but the conventional roles of research, administration and lecturing change. Direct responsibility for lecturing is reduced whilst knowledge, experience, project management skills and contacts in these fields are used to guide the involvement of practitioner teachers.

We hope this article encourages employers and universities to explore further how to harness the skills of both practitioners and academics. Perhaps the model of practitioner involvement in teaching as exemplified in Table 2 could be explored by other groups of employers and educationalists?

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John Pitt was Principal Transport Planner for Surrey County Council; **Anne Lee** is the Senior Academic Development Adviser, and **Robert Griffiths** was the Programme Director of the MSc in Transport Planning and Practice, both at the University of Surrey.

Role of academics when practitioners teach	Potential application of the 'practitioner as teacher' model
• Programme development and leadership • Project management, and coordination • Ensuring appropriate pedagogical development • Experts in assessment • Quality Assurance • Research and research methods • Mentoring students	• Other vocational courses in colleges and universities • Development of higher education in the private sector • Skills training by employers • International markets

Table 2   Practioner involvement in teaching model

University Challenge: Learning to Work with Employer Engagement

Barbara Workman, Middlesex University

A number of reports have emerged from government and business recently which have set the employer engagement agenda for the HE sector. It is not my intention in this article to discuss the individual reports (a list of key ones are to be found at the end), but to draw on some common themes and identify some issues for those who are tasked with making HE programmes employer and academia friendly. It will outline some issues raised for universities by the employer engagement and workforce development agenda and the consequent impact upon programmes and work-based learning (WBL) opportunities.

Key drivers

Working with employers is not new, and in this time of recession, effective collaboration between HE, business and government sectors is considered to be critical in achieving economic recovery and international competitiveness. Some HEIs are more effective at engagement than others and there are currently a variety of working models, practices and demonstrator projects (HERDA, 2009). The recent CBI report *Stronger Together* (2009a) makes it very clear

that funding HE is not the prerogative of the government alone, but that businesses should be developing reciprocal partnerships with HE and contribute work placements and sponsorship to develop the workforce of the future, particularly in Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM). *Higher Ambitions,* from the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS, 2009), makes it clear that the government is expecting a cultural shift between the HE and business sectors to (amongst other things): widen access and opportunity; include more learning for and at work to contribute to economic recovery and growth; shorten degree courses from three to two years whilst retaining standards and enhance employability; and strengthen the research capacity of universities to contribute to the economy and community. Much of this is expected to happen through meaningful and productive partnerships between businesses and HE, which will involve not just funding but also programme development for both sectors.

Organisational and business development needs of the future have been identified as needing 'higher level' skills which

are those graduate skills at level 4 and above (FE/HE NQF), and include the academic skills that all graduates should have, such as the ability to analyse, problem solve, evaluate information, research, investigate and manage complexity and variable contexts. However, the employability skills of graduates are also of concern, as these are transferable attributes that enable individuals to work in a variety of industries whether or not in their initial subject discipline, but enable effective functioning within a work environment. The CBI (2009b: 8) defines employability as: 'a set of attributes, skills and knowledge that all labour market participants should possess to ensure they have the capability of being effective in the workplace – to the benefit of themselves, their employer and the wider economy.' These attributes include communication, literacy and numeracy, business and customer awareness, understanding the context of the working environment, self management, team working, problem solving *etc.* The reports argue that if businesses want certain attributes, then a contribution is expected in return, not least in provision of work experience, placements and internships, but also in funding, sponsorship and investment in education. Ideally, employers from all sectors and of organisational sizes are expected to be willing to contribute to an educational process that prepares their future workforce.

In addition, staff development for the current workforce through HE is considered to be under-utilised by organisations. Much occurs in-house, and has been recognised as being more effective than other staff development approaches, although usually delivered through private and other training providers (CIHE, 2008). Organisations spend large sums each year on staff development, but there is little structured and considered evaluation of effective outcomes or value for money, and HE is rarely seen as a potential provider of such development, so it is anticipated that there is a large untapped HE market in higher skills development, particularly at management level. Increasingly, HEIs are responding to this by offering academic accreditation of in-house programmes, which is regarded by organisations as a way of rewarding staff development and commitment. Additionally, it can be a valuable route into Foundation Degrees and other short awards equivalent to HE level, thereby promoting progression into HE by widening access and participation by non-traditional students.

Types of work-based learning

Incorporated into this is the notion that types of WBL have a significant contribution to make to the employer engagement agenda. There are a number of modes of WBL, for example: vocational placements and courses; internships; sandwich years; or general work experience from part-time or seasonal work, where the learner is primarily a student, with such work experience contributing to their general employability attributes. However, WBL is not only vocational, but can also contribute to professional practice development where, for example, the learner is employed and studying part-time. These learners may undertake qualifications such as Foundation degrees or NVQs where the employer specifies the content in order to prepare the worker for a specific organisational role. Full-time workers often undertake post-

qualifying study that is relevant to their role, such as MBAs, teaching certificates or advanced professional courses. Another form of WBL includes the learner negotiating their own programme, with work itself becoming the focus of learning and inquiry.

Boud and Solomon (2001) identify the negotiated programme as one which involves partnership between HE and the organisation, and which recognises both formal and informal learning. It usually involves a negotiated learning contract acknowledging the learner's needs and experience as well as the organisation's needs, but the programme is designed with the learner as the central starting point, and recognises and values their prior learning. It often involves significant work-place projects which contribute to the intellectual and human capital of the learner and the organisation (Garnett *et al.,* 2009). The values that HE ascribes are the validation framework and quality assurance processes which support the framework and are the unique selling point of HE. This model is one which is used by Middlesex University's Employer Engagement project involving the Institute of Work Based Learning (IWBL). Other modes of WBL are used within other subject disciplines.

What employers want

Whatever form of WBL approach is taken, employers want their workforce development to meet specific criteria. Improved performance of both individuals and the organisation is a primary driver, as well as retention of a high-level skilled workforce. Some organisations express concern that staff development will result in staff leaving, but our experience is that workers become re-motivated and contribute more effectively, as well as growing in confidence and skill. Flexible accredited short courses are also popular with employees, particularly if credits can be accrued towards an HE award such as a Foundation Degree or postgraduate award. Accreditation on in-house courses can be particularly challenging to universities as experience has shown that accreditation documentation is written for and by academics, using academic jargon with unrealistic expectations of organisational training departments. Additionally, HE expect that their validation processes will be understood by businesses, which themselves are used to responding to sudden changes in market forces and are totally unprepared for the convoluted processes associated with HE (HEA, 2008). This leads to a mismatch of expectations which can be an area for disenchantment in the relationship. Conversely, speed and responsiveness are expected of HE, so the accreditation process has to be flexible enough to satisfy university requirements as well as business expectations. Accreditation of in-house programmes cannot be managed in the same way as validation of university programmes, and processes have to be designed to reflect the extra flexibility and responsiveness required.

Credibility in practice

Employers also want bespoke courses, not recycled modules that are the academic's pet subjects, together with on-site delivery, often outside the academic calendar, usually with assessments that ensure practice is safe and effective. The content needs to be relevant to work

practices, and if it carries professional body recognition, that too adds credibility. Universities that can meet some of these challenges have also had to make changes in their expectations, particularly in academic practices. New knowledge that has to be tried and tested in the workplace within twenty-four hours of being taught adds immediacy and connectedness to practice that traditional academia rarely offers, but which can prove invigorating for academics and learners alike. Academics with recent experience in the workplace in certain disciplines can adapt speedily, and when recruiting academics for a link role between business and HE, their relevant work experience is extremely valuable, together with their insights as to transferability of knowledge, for example from a range of module options and combinations. The right individual can lend considerable weight and influence from HE through his or her credibility in the workplace.

Accreditation of prior learning

Another form of accreditation which employers and employees value is APEL (Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning), as it reduces duplication of learning time. This has been mainly used in mainstream HE as a mode of advanced entry into standard programmes, but is often perceived as cumbersome and time-consuming to do, costly to assess, and not necessarily equivalent to HE. It has also been used extensively as a tool for social justice in some countries (Andersson and Harris, 2006). With the current government agenda seeking to widen access for organisational learning, revisiting APEL processes and practices within HEIs will offer an alternative learning route for some, but facilitation and assessment practices may need to be streamlined to improve efficiency. Ingenious ways of using APEL in employer-facing programmes may make a significant contribution to employer engagement projects, by reducing learning time towards university awards and incorporating experiential learning into programmes.

Assessment

Assessment is another area that requires a different perspective in employer engagement. For example, HEIs may use exams, but organisations usually want evidence of new knowledge being embedded into effective performance. As academics know, assessment tends to define the student's learning activities, and exams do not extend and embed knowledge as effectively as other qualitative assessments. Consequently, joint discussions regarding outcome expectations, required changes in performance and competence can result in a variety of creative assessment activities. Assessment failure within the workplace may have more dire consequences than in HE, as being unable to meet competencies has implications for a job role, which employers may need to anticipate and accommodate within work teams. Undertaking projects within the workplace can benefit both HE and the organisation as many employees are already working on these, thereby using them for both academic and work purposes, with the academic contribution strengthening the project knowledge content and activities. Other examples of assessment can include case studies, simulations, presentations, orals, audits, portfolios and competency frameworks. All these approaches

are also available for students who have work experience, placements, or internships incorporated into their programmes, but the purpose of the learning should be clear. The inclusion of a credit-rated, assessed and focused work placement during summer vacations could make a significant contribution to reducing the length of a degree programme without compromising the quality of the programme, whilst enhancing the employability component.

David Boud (www.assessmentfutures.com) is developing assessment approaches that enable learners to develop the capacity to judge their own work, and are designed to be sustainable by focusing on higher order knowledge and skills within the context of learning, thereby contributing to future evaluations of practice, both for individuals and with peers. This approach can be used within the university as well as within a work place and therefore has transferability to either context and strengthens future evaluative skills.

Working in partnership

Effective engagement with employers means developing sustainable partnerships, which requires time, effort, resources and continuing commitment. A vital resource is that of 'translator' who is able to understand and interpret the language from both communities and who can liaise and manage the relationship. Specific contact points within the university and organisation can save hours of frustration trying to find the right person to talk to, so someone with networking skills, who understands HE processes and procedures, has skills in customer care and understands the particular sector, is invaluable. These skilled individuals can be hard to find and develop and may need careful nurturing. Most health departments in HEIs have extensive experience of managing external contracts and placement areas, where supervisors and mentors require training and development in order to facilitate learners effectively, and these principles could be transferred and adapted to different organisational sectors.

Work placements and experience can be extremely valuable for students and are effective in building relationships with organisations and offering staff development opportunities. However, experience suggests that not all programmes really consider how to maximise learning opportunities. Increasingly, work placements have credit values attached to them, but this is not yet common practice. More worrying is the practice of including a work placement in a programme, but with little preparation or guidance for the students as to the purpose of the placement, the learning opportunities, what is expected of them and how it will contribute to their potential employability. One of the CEWBL projects has sponsored the development of a model called MYSAKE (Frame and Haddock, 2009), which facilitates the articulation of the knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviour that come from any type of work experience, whether vocational or part-time work, and this type of approach can be incorporated into any work experience to add value.

Teaching styles

Working in partnership and teaching employees require adaptation to teaching styles, catering for distance and

blended learning approaches, possibly sharing content delivery with in-house trainers, and can be challenging for a traditional academic. The focus is definitely on the needs of the business and local culture. The learners too are different: they may have had difficult and de-motivating previous educational experiences, their academic and study skills may be undeveloped and they may need a lot of support. If their education was a number of years ago, the idea of becoming an autonomous learner may be completely new, and will require investment of considerable time and effort to develop academic conventions and study skills. On the other hand, they are hungry for knowledge, eager to learn and highly rewarding to teach as they are ready to be intellectually stretched and stimulated, particularly as the input should be highly relevant to their practice. Dormant learning difficulties may emerge and the teacher needs to be alert to recognise learners who normally function effectively as employees but struggle with academic work because they have unrecognised dyslexia or similar learning disabilities. Knowledge of university learning support systems and processes will be invaluable in such cases, and can help a mature learner come to terms with and conquer fears and inadequacies from the past. The teacher in these partnerships has to use facilitation and customer care skills in order to maintain the relationship with the organisation and the learners, to build trust and enable learners to acquire the skills of 'learning to learn' which will extend their learning for life. This means that resource capacity needs to be developed within the HEI that can respond to a business model, and manage university student systems and assessment and accreditation procedures for non-traditional students, and develop staff as links between work and HE.

Opportunities and benefits to HE
Targeting the right sort of employers to work with may be straightforward, depending on the HEI's reputation and location, but opportunities for programme development may arise from sectors not previously considered. For example, the voluntary sector may be well represented locally and be eligible for alternative funding streams. This could provide part-time learners who become additional student numbers (ASNs) for the university, as well as offering work experience for current full-time students. Volunteer work at museums, charities, or internally, can have learning captured and recorded which can improve employability. If such learning is credit rated, then university systems need to be able to include it within the overall award structure, if possible.

The types of programme development that suit local SMEs may present an exciting challenge to work with an industrial or professional body not previously considered. Links with local Chambers of Commerce or Sector Skills Councils may provide opportunities to develop staff which then provide routes into other departments for staff training in mentorship for work experience of HE students. Eraut (2009) cites research that shows managers are key to developing the workforce within their departments, which has a significant impact on the performance of an organisation as a whole. Crucial investment in mentoring and coaching skills pays dividends for the organisation, and many universities have

appropriate expertise to offer. Organisations may initially approach an HEI with a research request, which can lead to partnerships in work placements, but must serve both partners. One of the biggest hurdles to overcome is the lack of understanding by business as to what HEIs can offer. Universities are not good at talking the language of the working world, and are still perceived by many to be ivory towers; so being able to communicate what is on offer is crucial to building the partnership. If HE is to change that perception and fulfil government requirements and develop new streams of learning and consultancy, then a significant cultural shift has to happen for both parties, but it is one that could lead to exciting new practices and knowledge. Deeper understanding of employers' needs for new recruits will assist in future course design with the onus on the employers to provide experiences that also contribute to the kind of graduates they are willing to employ. It should be a win-win relationship.

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A SEDA Work-based Learning and Employer Engagement Award for Developers

Tony Brand, Independent Educational Consultant

Introduction

The concepts of employer engagement, employability and work-based learning are not new. Indeed, over the last forty years governments of various political persuasions have established many projects to draw the post-compulsory sector together with business and industry. In the 1980s, there were crude and failed attempts at Manpower Planning, constraining university recruitment in certain areas with expansion in others. Many would correctly claim that work-based learning is a far from new concept since it has been embraced in a number of professional disciplines for decades. Perhaps a new addition to the vocabulary is the concept of work-related learning. It is even possible to conjecture that the ancient universities were founded on a concept of vocational learning.

In 2007, the QAA released the second edition of the *Code of Practice, Section 9: Work-based and placement learning*. At the time, I felt that there was a lot to commend in the publication since it realistically and clearly enunciated the key issues and aspects associated with the students' experiences of engaging in work-based learning. However, as the person responsible, at that time, for devising an institution's policy on work-based learning and employer engagement, I had lingering doubts about implementation and affordability. Notwithstanding our institutions' quality systems, what would be the realities associated with employers engaging in mentoring, supervision and assessment?

And yet the experiences of the last forty years have brought forth a range of Centres for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETLs) including a number which focus entirely upon Employer Engagement. A survey of the CETLs reveals that fifty-six out of the seventy-four make specific reference to the engagement themes outlined in this article. Here is a selection of the phrases used to describe the core outcomes of the various projects:

'Work-related learning in the creative industries and Personal Development Planning; (students) enter the creative industries with a portfolio of skills and completed projects that have been shaped, developed and assessed in the context of the marketplace; "bridge back" to students' prior experiences and "bridge forward" to their future career ambitions; interdisciplinary mental health programmes within higher education and the mental health sector; learning partnership between a university and health and social care sector employers; will work with a range of industry and education partners to design and develop innovative ways of studying media practice; a unique interface with industry professionals and increased opportunities to train within cutting-edge theatre practices and technologies; programmes of visiting scholars, internships and links with the creative industries; make their experiences more relevant to industry; students working in public services; employer-linked activities; enhancing students' connections with professional practice; produce highly employable graduates; perform confidently and competently at the start of their professional careers; enhance students' vocational, leadership and entrepreneurial skills; students will learn professionalism; embedding the skills associated with employability and entrepreneurship more firmly; employability is a key issue for today's graduates; promote coherent, incremental professional skills acquisition.'

One of the outcomes of the SEDA Seminar on 14 January this year was, while reviewing the HE Framework and the plans for the new Quality Assurance arrangements, the recognition that – for some institutions – work-based learning and employer engagement have become more significant. This in turn will require some educational developers to improve their expertise in these areas. The question arose – how could SEDA help?

We put around the JISC mail list the suggestion that we might develop an existing award which was also one of the courses SEDA currently delivers to support the community of developers. The proposal was that the 'Leading Educational Change (LEC)' course was a suitable vehicle. The LEC course is an on-line course with a weekly programme, substantial participant interaction, expert tutors and assessment by a portfolio. The proposal attracted support.

The way forward

SEDA will offer a specialist SEDA PDF award-bearing course in Work-based Learning/Employer Engagement. This is in response to national challenges and initiatives in higher education, and in doing so, SEDA is seeking to support the community of educational developers.

The current government has recently given strong encouragement to the development of flexible modes of delivery to enhance higher education's contribution to economic growth. BIS (2009) makes it clear that all universities will be expected to explain how they will improve graduates' career opportunities and to educate students in workplace skills and that:

'the next phase of expansion in higher education will hinge on providing opportunities for different types of people to study

in a wider range of ways than in the past. The focus will therefore be on a greater diversity of models of learning: part-time, work-based, foundation degrees, and studying whilst at home.' (BIS, 2009, p. 4)

In *Higher Ambitions* the government has also made it clear that engagement with employers should be one of the areas for contested funding (BIS, 2009, p. 4).

The SEDA course will be based upon the successful Leading Educational Change award, delivered wholly online over a period of twelve weeks this autumn. It will not only explore and exchange ideas about practical development encouraging discussion around the different approaches to curriculum and pedagogy implied by a 'professional' education, but it will also engage in debate about such issues as demand-led rather than supply-led HE when, for example, 'employer engagement' can mean 'employer-commissioned' programmes. SEDA is expecting that the participants will be already working in this area and will take the course as part of their continuing professional development (CPD).

SEDA award courses are multi-faceted, providing development opportunities as well as professional recognition. Successful completion enables

participants to become members of the SEDA Fellowship scheme.

Run totally online over a twelve-week period, participants will be engaging in a structured Tutor and peer supported development of a professional portfolio. Specialist resources linked with work-based learning and employer engagement will be made available throughout the course. The experience of participation will inevitably be highly interactive and include the sharing of knowledge, experiences and issues. All of the SEDA award courses share a common development feature which enables participants to review their current roles, skills and attributes leading to an action plan for CPD. The Specialist Outcomes for the LEC award are:

• *Contribute to the development and delivery of institutional strategy for educational change*
• *Identify the overall goals for the development activities and processes, and make associated plans*
• *Help development colleagues to identify local goals and to plan appropriate methods within broad organisational and strategic contexts*
• *Ensure that colleagues carry out, monitor and evaluate the agreed development process and provide appropriate support*
• *Support colleagues in identifying with the client appropriate follow-up development activity.*

In satisfying these, the core element of the portfolio will be a case study based upon each participant's role and experiences of working at an institutional level with either work-based learning and/or employer engagement.

Further details and dates will be released in the near future.

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Theorising resistance to engagement with the Professional Standards Framework

Julie Hall, Roehampton University

Aims
Like a number of others in the educational development community (Haggis, 2009; IJAD, 2007), I have been keen to promote a critical dialogue in educational development about the professional development of academic staff in the UK with a specific focus on the UK Professional Standards Framework. The SEDA grant allowed me to:
• build upon the action research I conducted in 2007 into academic staff perspectives on teaching standards
• take up the challenge of Haggis and others to go beyond the epistemological frameworks which have been traditionally privileged in educational development research.

To move beyond the *application* of the UKPSF to explore the social processes inherent in academics' engagement (or more precisely lack of engagement) with the standards is crucial, and it has been my feeling that such theorisation has been rather weak. This is important if our community is to move beyond sharing difficulties and possible solutions to implementation of the standards and respond to criticism that we work in opposition to the academic community, 'othering' them and that we work in an 'under theorised' way.

My research questions were:
1. How have those researching CPD in schools, universities

and in adult education conceptualised notions of engagement and of becoming professional?

2. Are there particular theoretical perspectives around professional learning, community and the structuring of work in this period which might help us in understanding the reluctance of some academics to engage with the UKPSF?

Outcomes

The SEDA grant provided an opportunity to spend two days on a desk-based literature search. The grant resulted in:

1. A chapter provided for the SEDA Paper *Embedding CPD in Higher Education,* by Laycock, M. and Shrives, L. (2009)

2. A positively evaluated workshop at the November 2009 SEDA conference on ideology, epistemology and educational development.

Ideas and issues raised by the literature search and explored in the November 2009 workshop

In trying to understand reluctance to engage with the standards, it could be argued that the educational development community has tended to reify certain theoretical perspectives (such as 'communities of practice'), constraining our collective activity and limiting our reflexivity. The SEDA grant has allowed me to go beyond my traditional research base to explore how other academic and professional communities conceptualise notions of professional development and engagement with 'standards' and the social processes which underpin such engagement. It has led me in particular to return to my discipline origins in educational sociology and explore the school sector and the work of Ball, Habermas, Fullan, Deleuze and Bourdieu. In my former life as a sociology lecturer, it was common to describe oneself in relation to one's preferred theoretical perspective – the feminist sociologist, the Marxist and so on. In doing this, one was specifically highlighting that the world was viewed through a particular theoretical lens. It has struck me over the years that we do not do this overtly in educational development and this work may perhaps be seen as an attempt to prompt others within our community to 'come out' and explain through which particular theoretical lens we conceptualise our work. Professor Glynis Cousin exhorted us to do this at the SEDA conference in Liverpool in 2007.

In examining engagement with the standards, I have explored the following:
• notions of dialogue
• 'becoming' a lecturer in higher education
• power, privilege and control in higher education
• engagement and sustainability.

Literature search results

1. Dialogic approaches

A number of colleagues have suggested the importance of dialogue in aiding academic staff in reflecting upon their professional development. There are, I have discovered, a number of contemporary artists and art collectives that

have defined their practice precisely around the facilitation of dialogue among diverse communities in a similar way to the practice of some educational developers like myself. Parting from the traditions of object-making, these artists have adopted a performative, process-based approach. They are 'context providers' rather than 'content providers', in the words of British artist Peter Dunn, whose work involves the creative orchestration of collaborative encounters and conversations well beyond the institutional boundaries of the gallery or museum. These exchanges can catalyse surprisingly powerful transformations in the consciousness of their participants.

The questions that are raised by these projects clearly have a broader cultural and political resonance and provide an interesting perspective for educational developers. How do we form collective or communal identities without scapegoating those who are excluded from them? Is it possible to develop a cross-cultural dialogue without sacrificing the unique identities of individual speakers?

What unites this disparate network of artists and arts collectives is a series of provocative assumptions about the relationship between art and the broader social and political world, and about the kinds of knowledge that aesthetic experience is capable of producing. UK-based artists/organisers Ian Hunter and Celia Larner employ the term 'Littoral' art, to evoke the hybrid or in-between nature of these practices. French critic Nicolas Bourriaud has coined the term 'relational aesthetic' to describe works based around communication and exchange. Homi K. Bhabha writes of 'conversational art', and Tom Finkelpearl refers to 'dialogue-based public art' (Kester, 2004). As Kester explains, the concept of a dialogical art practice is derived from the Russian literary theorist Mikhail Bakhtin who argued that the work of art can be viewed as a kind of conversation, a *locus* of differing meanings, interpretations and points of view. He goes on to add, 'If, as I am suggesting, the evaluative framework for these projects is no longer centered on the physical object, then what is the new *locus* of judgment? I would contend that it resides in the condition and character of dialogical exchange itself.'

This is an area that I would argue has huge potential for exploration by educational developers keen to examine the condition and character of the kind of dialogical exchange which can be effective in educational development. Others such as the critical pedagogy special interest group of CSAP (http://tinyurl.com/CritPed) are also exploring these ideas. I found the podcasts from Coventry helpful in this regard (http://tinyurl.com/CritPedPodcasts).

2. Theorising our perspectives

My search took me beyond traditional educational development theory to that which is beginning to gain currency. For Deleuze and Guattari (1980) the term 'rhizome' is helpful to describe theory and research that allows for multiple, non-hierarchical entry and exit points in data representation and interpretation. In *A Thousand Plateaus* they explain that a rhizome works with horizontal

and trans-species connections, while an arborescent model works with vertical and linear connections. Rhizome theory has gained currency in the educational field (Cousin, 2005) where it is has been used to critique the idea of the expert in pedagogic planning and the loss of the canon. The rhizomatic conception of learning involves negotiation; it is a social and personal creative act and can have multiple goals. It could be argued that the rhizome metaphor is particularly apt for educational development knowledge because it reaches out to and has its roots in a number of different disciplines and the knowledge we create is itself a moving target.

The French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu, working with various colleagues, developed the concept of cultural capital in the early 1960s in order to help address a particular empirical problem – namely, the fact that 'economic obstacles are not sufficient to explain' disparities in the educational attainment of children from different social classes (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1979 [1964], 8). Bourdieu argued that, above and beyond economic factors, 'cultural habits and…dispositions inherited from' the family are fundamentally important to school success (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1979 [1964],14). In doing so, he broke sharply with traditional sociological conceptions of culture, which tended to view it primarily as a source of shared norms and values, or as a vehicle of collective expression. Instead, Bourdieu maintained that culture shares many of the properties that are characteristic of economic capital. In particular, he asserted that cultural 'habits and dispositions' comprise a resource capable of generating 'profits'; they are potentially subject to *monopolisation* by individuals and groups; and, under appropriate conditions, they can be transmitted from one generation to the next.

Bourdieu further argued that cultural capital exists in three distinct forms. In its 'embodied' form, cultural capital is a 'competence' or skill that cannot be separated from its 'bearer' (that is, the person who 'holds' it). As such, the acquisition of cultural capital necessarily presupposes the investment of time devoted to learning and/or training. For example, a college student who studies art history has gained a competence which, because it is highly valued in some institutional settings, becomes an embodied form of cultural capital. Additionally, Bourdieu suggests that the objects themselves may function as a form of cultural capital, in so far as their use or consumption presupposes a certain amount of embodied cultural capital. For example, a philosophy text is an 'objectified' form of cultural capital since it requires prior training in philosophy to be understood. Finally, in societies with a system of formal education, cultural capital exists in an 'institutionalised' form. This is to say that when the school certifies individuals' competencies and skills by issuing credentials, their embodied cultural capital takes on an objective value. Thus, for example, since persons with the same credentials have a roughly equivalent worth on the labour market, educational degrees can be seen as a distinct form of cultural capital. Because they render

individuals interchangeable in this fashion, Bourdieu suggests that institutionalisation performs a function for cultural capital analogous to that performed by money in the case of economic capital. I have found these ideas very interesting in relation to further understanding the cultural capital associated with gaining recognition through UKPSF or of rejecting UKPSF as irrelevant.

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Exchanges and visits as CPD for educational developers

Celia Popovic, University of Central England

Background

In 2009, I was awarded a SEDA small grant to explore the use of exchanges and visits by educational developers. The basis for this research was a belief that exchanges and visits are valuable means of professional development. Participants at SEDA conferences and one-day events almost invariably mention the value of meeting with others and discussing shared concerns. In an increasingly stringent financial climate, we may find it harder to seek out these opportunities to share ideas, and to see our familiar landscape from a new perspective. Exchanges and visits may be a way of building on the benefits identified at conferences; however, they can also go much further in enabling participants to engage in activities in a new culture, leading to enhanced learning and development.

What I did

I identified seven participants for the study. They were from the UK, Canada, New Zealand and Australia, and between them had taken part in exchanges or visits to North America, Europe (including the UK), Australasia and the Far East. I interviewed most of the participants using Skype – a free-to-use system, which combined with Call Graph software, enabled me to see as well as speak to the participants and to record the conversations. These were later transcribed. The results of all seven interviews were analysed to identify key themes.

Following the interviews, I sent a questionnaire to selected people in the host and the home institution. The survey recipients were suggested by the participants. This was a short questionnaire asking about the effect on them of the visit or exchange and whether there were any problems or benefits to them or the institution.

What I found

In brief there were many benefits, few disadvantages, and several issues were raised which should be considered by anyone embarking on this activity.

Benefits for the individuals:

- Opportunity for adventure, fun and a chance to recharge one's batteries
- Professional development – how to do things better in your own place by seeing them done differently elsewhere
- A chance to work on specific projects – the opportunity to have the time and space away from the 'day job'.

Benefits for the host institutions:

- Injection of ideas, inspiration, approaches, as well as a means to effect professional development for people in the host institution
- Workshops and events that are run by a visitor tend to attract more participation than the same event run in-house
- Opportunity to develop specific projects and/or resources
- A cost-effective way to get an extra member of staff
- The credibility is raised for the department and for the institution as a whole.

Benefits for the home institutions:

- Inspiration, ideas, approaches
- Specific projects and/or resource development that the participant brings back with them
- Access to the host institution for future collaboration
- Opportunity for the rest of the team at the home institution to take on the participant's role
- Participant returns refreshed and invigorated – although in two cases

this led to them finding alternative employment and a third claimed the effects wore off quickly!
- Credibility of the home institution is enhanced.

Issues

The *home institution* has to find cover for the participant if the visit is for more than a couple of weeks. This entails costs both directly in recruiting and training, but also indirectly as the replacement is unlikely to cover the whole of the participant's absence, or to be immediately up to speed and able to perform at the same level as the participant had they stayed.

The *host institution* takes a risk by taking on the visitor as they may not know beforehand whether they will fit into the team or share the host's ethos.

It may be difficult for the host to continue an initiative started or led by the visitor after they leave, partly because of lack of time and partly because of lack of expertise. It is important to plan the visit, both beforehand, and in terms of what will happen once the exchange or visit is over. Despite this it is likely that even with the best-planned visit, the first part will be slow and the last part hectic.

The individual will almost certainly experience some degree of loneliness, isolation and exhaustion. Depending on the location they may also face language barriers. Even where English was used for teaching and most staff at the host institution spoke English, if the main language was not English, then the participant was more likely to feel excluded at times. Participants also mentioned the danger of not knowing how best to make use of the available time and space.

Conclusions

Exchanges and visits are not new, but this may be the right time to start using them more than we have in the past as a way of invigorating home and host institutions, sharing good practice and developing networks. For individuals they offer the opportunity to refresh practice, to broaden the mind to new possibilities and to create the opportunity for future collaboration. As each of the participants in this study has shown, it is possible for an individual to make this happen on any scale from a couple of weeks or less, to as long as two years. Although the participants in this study all went overseas, it is not vital for these visits or exchanges to be on an international scale; it can be very enlightening to get 'under the skin' of another institution, even if in the same city.

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New approaches to doctoral supervision: implications for educational development

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When I was first invited to do some research to find ways of developing doctoral supervisors, I found that much of the literature about doctoral supervision has concentrated on describing the ever-lengthening lists of functions that must be carried out. This functional approach is necessary, but there was less exploration of a different paradigm, a conceptual approach towards research supervision which might make it easier for supervisors to look at the underlying themes of how they could approach different situations. This article reviews and updates a framework for supervision which aimed to fill this gap, and looks at some of the implications for applying it.

Models of supervision

There are a number of alternative models of supervision. Grant and others have used a small number of cases of masters and doctoral supervision, analysed the dialogue and described power dynamic of the Hegelian 'Master-Slave' or 'apprenticeship' models (Grant, 2005, 2008).

Another model applied to research supervision was created by Gatfield (2005) when he described a grid with two axes of 'support' and 'structure' based on the managerial Blake and Moulton model. He verified this through interviews with twelve supervisors. Where support and structure were low the academics' style was found to be laissez-faire, and where support and structure were high, there was a contractual style. A pastoral style would mean that the academic provided high personal support but left the student to manage the structure of their research project and the directorial style would do the reverse. Gatfield argues (as I do) that no one approach is right or wrong, it is about appropriateness and sharing expectations. This model provides a useful contrast, but it applies more clearly to research supervision than to postgraduate teaching, and a four-quadrant matrix is more limiting in terms of analysis. Murphy *et al.* (2007) produced another four-quadrant matrix from interviews with seventeen engineering supervisors and their students (34 participants in total) which looked at guiding and controlling on one axis and person and task focus on the other. Murphy and her colleagues also make the observation that supervision models are linked to beliefs about teaching, and this is something I begin to explore later in this article.

A third, frequently described, approach was created originally by Acker who looked at the 'technical rational model' (where the goal is either the creation of an independent researcher, scholarly creativity or speedy completion) and contrasted it with the 'negotiated order model', where there are 'many unspoken agendas operating throughout the research process and mutual expectations are subject to negotiation and change over time' (Acker, quoted in Wisker, 2005, p. 27). This approach problematises supervision and describes a goal-driven approach, but it does not explicitly link to other forms of postgraduate teaching and provide a simple tool for analysing problems.

A fourth conceptual approach to teaching and supervising at this level is to look at the practices implied by the model of 'communities of practice' (Lave and Wenger, 1991), which is, in effect, offering a decentralised version of the master/apprentice role. Lave and Wenger's work has had great impact in highlighting sociological issues implicit in teaching and learning, and they explore the way in which the student is helped (or not) to move through legitimate peripheral participation to an understanding and mastery of the tacit knowledge required to participate fully in an academic community. This element is explored further in the 'enculturation' approach to teaching and supervision.

One criticism of the framework proposed here is that it aims to create too much of a 'tidy reconciliation' of a process which is undeniably messy and individual. However, the original objective of the research project

was to identify the concepts which would make learning about supervision easier. The 'messiness' is still apparent when it comes to combining, blending and applying the different approaches to individual situations.

A new approach

I began the research by identifying and interviewing at some length supervisors in my own university who were recognised as 'excellent' by their peers and/or students. The sample grew to include supervisors at other UK universities and from the USA (where they call them advisors) and the research design is described elsewhere. A framework emerged from the analysis (Lee, 2008a and b) and it has been tested now with groups of supervisors at universities in the UK, Sweden, Denmark, South Africa and Estonia.

Findings

Five main approaches to supervision were identified. They intertwine in a complex manner and, although they are disentangled here to aid clarity, I do not maintain that they are independent of each other.

The framework is integrative in that it includes organisational, sociological, philosophical, psychological and emotional dimensions. Table 1 describes the original framework as it has been applied to doctoral supervision, looking at the supervisor's activities, knowledge and skills and hypothesising potential student reactions.

There are several relevant areas of literature which illuminate this framework:

Functional

This approach appears in a series of guides to effective supervision (Wisker, 2005; Eley and Jennings, 2005; Taylor and Beasley, 2005; Phillips and Pugh, 2005). They provide useful lists of tasks and vignettes, but they do not give supervisors a conceptual model to use in reflecting upon their beliefs about what supervision is about. Skills such as planning, directing, acquiring resources, getting the work done and monitoring are examples of features emphasised in this approach.

Enculturation

In this approach learning is seen as developing within a societal context (Lave and Wenger, 1991; Leonard, 2001; Delamont et al., 2000) and they describe the importance of becoming a member of a discipline. Indeed, Delamont et al. argued that academics identify themselves by their discipline first and by their university and department second. There are also frequent references to an apprenticeship model in this context. The research student needs to acquire a great deal of subtle professional and interpersonal knowledge about how research and academic life are conducted.

Critical thinking

Critical thinking is a western philosophical tradition that encourages analysis, looking for propositions and arguments for and against them. The roots of this approach to supervision are both dialectic and dialogic. Dialectical thinking pits various propositions or theories against each other. Dialogical thinking requires a discussion and synthesis of a series of propositions and encourages the student to look for a hidden logic. The ability to synthesise literature and make a coherent argument has been identified by thesis examiners as a key activity that the student must undertake (Holbrook et al., 2007).

Emancipation

Emancipation as a supervisory process implies both support and challenge. It is also a process which allows and supports personal transformation. Acquiring a PhD can be a transformative process; the prerequisites for transformative learning require critical reflection and a disorienting dilemma (Mezirow, 1991; Taylor, 2007).

PROFESSIONAL ⟶ PERSONAL

	Functional	Enculturation	Critical Thinking	Emancipation	Relationship Development
Supervisor's activity	Rational progression through tasks	Gatekeeping	Evaluation, challenge	Mentoring, supporting constructivism	Supervising by experience, developing a relationship/team
Supervisor's knowledge and skills	Directing, project management, negotiation	Diagnosis of deficiencies, coaching	Argument, analysis	Facilitation, reflection	Integrity, managing conflict, emotional intelligence
Possible student reaction	Obedience, Organised negotiation	Role modelling, apprenticeship	Constant inquiry, fight or flight	Personal growth, reframing	A good team member, emotional intelligence

Table 1 A framework of approaches to research supervision

Relationships

There is some evidence that poor relationships are blamed for poor completion rates (Taylor and Beasley, 2005, p. 69), and poor relationships can arise because of unarticulated and unmet expectations on both sides. Emotional intelligence has become a contested but popular phenomenon in this field (Salovey and Mayer, 1997).

Implications for educational developers

The first implication of this work relates to supervisor development. The argument is that supervisors who are aware of the strengths and weaknesses of all of these approaches to supervision, and who are able to combine approaches appropriately, will be better placed to develop their students. A typical workshop will include inviting supervisors to contribute case studies and will look at a range of potentially difficult situations, asking how a supervisor working from each approach might attempt to work through any problems and challenges. In practice a supervisor will blend approaches, but the framework helps them to do this from a knowledgeable base. This method also provides a neutral language for exploring differing expectations, both between supervisor and student and within supervisory teams.

There are universities with modular PGCerts and PGCAPs where whole modules are devoted to studying supervision, and in Sweden a higher education ordinance has ruled that all doctoral students have the right to have a trained supervisor. Consequently, Swedish universities have been running supervisor development programmes for some time, and this framework is now included in several of these types of programmes.

Secondly, we can review the framework in looking at one of the core elements of doctoral research: how does the framework encourage the development of original thinking? One analysis of how each approach might encourage creativity is shown below, and one of the more surprising elements to emerge is that the functional approach can also encourage creativity. An example of this arose in an interview with a supervisor who said:

'I think they find the direction difficult, that I have been so directive. I think they thought that they could swan in and wander around the literature for a bit and do what they liked...so I have insisted that they are here 9am-5pm five days a week. That is very hard for them...I am beginning to think the structure helps to make creativity, I would never have believed I would have said that. I think it is because people know where the boundaries are, they know what they have got to achieve and this helps in achieving that...they are putting up (creative ideas) on the wall...there is a sense of freedom in the structure I think.' (Supervisor: Soft Applied)

However, critical thinking can also create original thought, and another supervisor illustrated this approach when they said:

'I have one mature student who is a senior partner in (his organisation), and it is great being his supervisor, he is so on the ball. Part of me thinks "what on earth have I got to offer him?" Then it turns out that he is breaking new ground himself and he really wants somebody else who thinks in very bizarre ways, which is what I do.' (Supervisor: Soft Pure)

Many are used to juxtaposing the concepts of emancipation and creativity, but the reaction to constraints and criticism can also force the formation of new ideas. Table 2, below, illustrates how different approaches to supervision might encourage creativity.

A third impact of this work is to question the notion of research and teaching as separate but linked concepts. Research-led teaching is a concept which has been problematised in many ways (Jenkins, Healey and Zetter, 2007). If the five approaches can together create an holistic approach to supervision (and I accept that this is a big assumption), can the same five approaches be used to develop teaching and learning curricula for academic staff, and to evaluate the student experience of other groups of students, for example those taking a taught masters or research in undergraduate degrees? Table 3 looks at some elements of teaching masters students and maps them onto the framework.

There are some underlying assumptions about teaching and learning in this framework, and it would be interesting for academics to examine their own assumptions and core beliefs in the light of the issues presented in Table 4, where

Creativity as constraint focused ⟶					*Creativity as fulfilment focused*
	Functional	**Enculturation**	**Critical Thinking**	**Emancipation**	**Relationship Development**
Creativity might arise from **(see Kleiman, 2008)**	A reaction to or resistance to constraints	A process of incremental change	Purposeful exploitation of chance occurrences	Reacting to disorientation	Creation of something new that has personal value

Table 2 Applying the framework to engendering creativity

	Functional	Enculturation	Critical Thinking	Emancipation	Relationship Development
Some skills of teaching at masters level	Curriculum design Lecturing and small group teaching/tutoring skills Giving feedback and assessment Quality assurance	Induction of students Organising departmental seminars and conferences Finding and sharing examples of good practice in the discipline	Giving students the tools for self and peer assessment Comparing the criteria for validity in own subject with others Attending/ organising journal clubs	Introducing research in the curriculum Supporting enquiry-based learning Engaging with personal development planning Encouraging metacognition and reflection	Participating in and initiating social events Reflection on appropriate self-disclosure and boundaries Skills in managing conflict

Table 3 Applying the framework to the student experience for a taught masters programme

they are analysed a little further.

Fourthly, we need to ask questions about the broader impact of each of these approaches on student development, personal development planning, career development and employability. Under the Concordat (Vitae, 2008) and the Joint Skills Statement (Roberts, 2002), both in Europe and the UK, there is an expectation that universities will provide a broader education at this high level. So is it justifiable to ask, for example, whether an enculturation approach encourages students to stay within the discipline and seek work within academia?

Finally, we can ask on a broader level whether the university is meeting student needs – the supervisor cannot be the person responsible for meeting all student needs. However, the doctoral student's experience is coming more under

the microscope (HEA PRES surveys), so can this framework provide a tool for evaluating what we offer? There are two underlying questions. Are there needs and expectations that students bring to the university which do not fit into this framework? If this framework is acceptable, who are the people responsible for ensuring that students can meet all these different needs? Table 5, overleaf, illustrates the different expectations that students might have (and one student may have all these expectations at different times during their studies).

As this work was largely based on what supervisors said they did, there are likely to be differences between espoused theory and theory-in-use (Argyris and Schon, 1974), and employing mixed research methods in future projects would help to clarify this. For example, we could include: observation, recording supervision sessions, reviewing

	Functional	Enculturation	Critical Thinking	Emancipation	Relationship Development
Role of the lecture	Logical giving of information	Introduction of key texts and people	Explain how to evaluate, validate and challenge	Point to sources of information	Welcome, create learning partnerships
Underlying approaches to teaching	Prescriptive, possibly didactic	Inclusive, participatory, demonstrating good practice	Analytical, theoretical, conceptual	Enabling, empowering	Friendship, altruism, co-inquirer
Core benefits about learning and knowledge	Learning is about the accumulation of knowledge	Learning is engaging in academic/ professional disciplinary practices	Learning is about developing cognitive skills	Learning is about discovery	Learning is about shared development

Table 4 Applying the framework to elements of teaching and learning

	Functional	Enculturation	Critical Thinking	Emancipation	Relationship Development
What students might be seeking	Certainty Clear signposts Evidence of progress	Belonging Direction Career opportunities Role models	Ability to think in new ways Ability to analyse, to recognise flaws in arguments	Self awareness Autonomy Self actualisation	Friendship Nurturing Equality

Table 5 *Applying the framework to identifying student needs*

documentation, and asking students and supervisors to keep diaries.

Other areas for further study include disciplinary similarities and differences, the relationship between approaches to research supervision and other teaching and learning activities, gender issues and the effect of organisational initiatives on the quality of doctoral supervision.

Limitations to the framework

This framework can be seen as being reductionist, but the straight lines are really for analysis, and it is in the melding of different approaches to doctoral supervision that the supervisor creates a robust repertoire of supervisory skills.

The framework refers to the economic imperative primarily through looking at the functional approach. There are also broader economic issues relating to knowledge transfer and research as an activity for economic and societal well-being – these meta-perspectives are best addressed through a combination of perspectives, not just one.

An historical perspective is not explicitly included and for some academics it may be important to explore this. The whole framework is grounded in the language of a western culture, and other cultures may want to re-interpret this.

The blending of approaches is demonstrated in the following diagram (Figure 1) which describes how they may be interrelated in practice. The Venn-type diagram shows the functional approach as the background to all doctoral supervision because awards cannot be made outside an accrediting institution. The other approaches all overlap and can be blended in different ways according to the situation,

age and stage of both supervisor and student. There is some evidence from the interviews that over time supervisors move from working in a large relationship circle to giving the functional approach more prominence. Newer supervisors are more concerned about the quality of the relationship, but more experienced supervisors recognise the key stages and milestones that the research process will go through, and emphasise them.
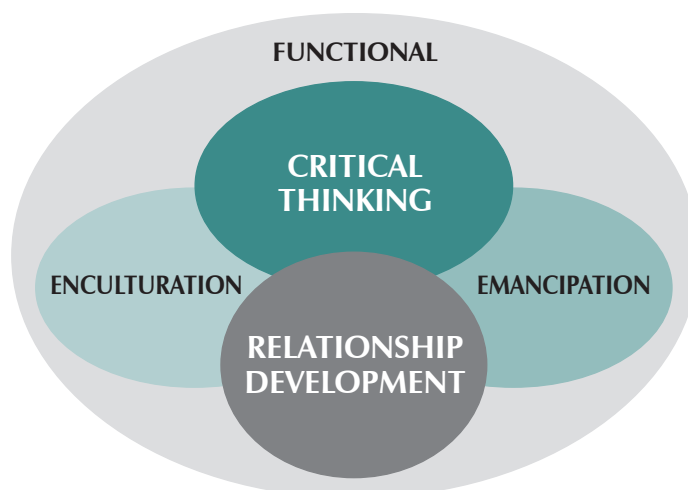

Figure 1 *The interrelationship between different approaches in practice*

Finally, it is recognised that supervision does not take place in isolation. Organisations (be they universities, research institutes, colleges, graduate schools or departments) can introduce many practices which will also have a significant impact on the doctoral student's progress. For example, some universities are becoming much more prescriptive about such issues as: who can supervise, the monitoring of student

	Functional	Enculturation	Critical Thinking	Emancipation	Relationship Development
Beliefs about how people learn	Structured goal-oriented process	Emulating, replicating	Theorising, analysing	Discovering, constructivism	Being affirmed
Values	Practical applicability	Belonging	Reason, rigour	Autonomy	Love, agape

Table 6 *Applying the framework to understanding core beliefs and values*

progress, the use of student satisfaction and exit surveys, cohort-based research methods, generic skills training, the opportunities for Graduate Teaching Assistants, and differing workload models. The framework reviewed in this article still places the relationship between the supervisor(s) and the students at the heart of the student's learning experience.

Conclusion

This article asks whether the fundamental values of being usable, belonging, rigorous reason, autonomy and agape are sufficient for the analysis of supervision, and potentially for the analysis of curricula and the student experience. If this framework proves to be robust, then we can move forward the teaching and learning experience with some confidence. Table 6, previous page, describes these values and aligns them to core beliefs about how people learn.

We are also left with the question of how to test this paradigm further. Longitudinal, multi-method studies could provide us with much more material with which to test the framework in different disciplines, gender partnerships, organisational frameworks and cultures. I would welcome comments on this.

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Reflecting on Academic Leadership

Richard Hill, University of Derby

As I approach a new role as a senior academic manager, I've been reflecting upon my time spent as an academic developer within a previous higher education institution. In particular, I have been considering what academic leadership means to me. This article is my opportunity to share that reflection.

In this new role, I notice a change in my thinking. I have to consider the size of the new challenges and think about how I can coordinate and delegate the tasks required to initiate changes in practice. I am resigned to the fact that these activities will take time. I need to win over new colleagues, and chase the progress of numerous projects. I will probably have to describe how the projects are conducted, so that they harmonise with my way of working. But I'm looking forward with a new-found invigoration. The challenges are achievable and energising, the prospects are enticing and enthusing.

I was thrust into the world of academic development during 2007 by applying for a Teaching Fellow secondment. As most new occupations unfold, there is much about the role that is unanticipated. The experience of this job was no different. There were responsibilities that were difficult to comprehend, and only two years to 'achieve results'.

As the figurehead for the HEFCE Research Informed Teaching initiative, for a Faculty that contains Art and Design, Computing, Engineering and the Sciences, I had two senior managers, and no staff to line manage. There was the prospect of not being able to achieve anything tangible and I was beginning to understand why other, similar roles appeared to produce very little in terms of long-lasting change.

One of my managers was quite keen on output and impact, since he was being measured in that way. My other manager was primarily interested in exploring ways of working and establishing a set of principles to work to. This was confusing. I had the apparent responsibility to report improvements within the Faculty resulting from my appointment. Although I could foresee activities that would demonstrate that positive change had taken place, I had no time to physically manage the change required.

I attribute the shift in my thinking to an improved understanding of what academic leadership means. My understanding (whilst still maturing) has developed as a result of being scholarly, but primarily it has come about through my experiences as an academic developer. What has been particularly interesting for me has been the way I have been encouraged to re-frame my view of academic development experiences, in a way that has provided scenarios for me to explore in a scholarly way. I have identified four key characteristics that have directly contributed to my own understanding of the leadership role:

- *Exposure to first-hand experience of being led* – Understanding traits of leadership and observing leadership practice at close quarters. Seeing what happens as a result of this practice and being critical about being led, improving my ability to recognise leadership behaviours in others
- *The creation of space in my work plan and the devotion of time to reflect* - My teaching workload was reduced by a nominal 20%, arguably insufficient time to do anything of any worth in a Faculty of 3000 students. But by adopting the approach of changing the world – or more importantly, changing the Faculty – one mind at a time, somehow my vision became a possibility. My vision was in some sense a translation of somebody else's, a reflection upon the University perspectives and how they related to operations in my Faculty. But it was also an opportunity for me to reflect and exercise my aspirations, and the realisation that this could take place, the first time in my academic career, became invigorating
- *Creating a local environment that rejects the tendency to react* – (not the quick hit/win as a result of a spreadsheet) and having the faith to wait expectantly for change to emerge (Seel, 2010)
- *A chance to network with colleagues in similar positions through a SEDA course* – Developing opportunities to empower colleagues with my own supportive behaviour; from listening, assistance with institutional processes, the fostering of new networks or just plain old effective conversation (Haigh, 2005).

Early on in the role I attended a conference to try and familiarise myself with the new context I had found myself in. Uncharacteristically, I returned with only one idea. I usually come back from conferences with many ideas. This idea, to launch an undergraduate student research journal, seemed the obvious thing to do. It fully supported my vision of staff and students working in a partnership of learning, and would provide sufficient visibility of the transformation that I believed needed to take place.

How my own practice has changed

Looking back I was led both explicitly and autocratically. More often than not, however, I was led surreptitiously, by being allowed the space to lead myself, whilst also supporting a common vision. As I worked with a Senior Academic member of staff, I was cajoled and manoeuvred into position. I felt frustration at being left to 'join the dots', but also experienced a deep-seated achievement when I reflected upon progress. The relationship never seemed to be tested, as the implicit trust communicated towards me fostered a communal loyalty to the vision. Ideas were planted in our conversations and mutual support was communicated through others.

So what did this mean for my own practice? My conversations have focus, and I am much more tolerant of their emergent outcomes. Conversation is now a recognised part of mine and others' development. I sow seeds of ideas through conversation. When

we actively concentrate upon the mechanisms of communication, especially those that deliver results, those seeds do germinate. This is not a formal approach to change management, where ideas are 'cascaded down' in an impersonal way. It is communication of a personal nature, local and relevant to the particular working context of an individual, where it matters. It is also recognising that some seeds will never sprout shoots. Alternatively, growth may be rapid, powerful and wild, and some tolerance of the uncertainty is necessary. But I have realised that the use of values to guide my actions empowers me to rest easier with uncertainty.

On the one hand, I have led autocratically when there has been a clear link between practice and policy. This has been particularly prevalent when there have been obvious tasks to complete to achieve an objective. On the other hand, I have been content to consult the opinions of those around me, to inform my perspective and support my future leadership activities. I am not sure that leaders exhibit traits in the way that the management literature describes. This may inform the interpretation of leadership that is required by industry. But I feel that academe is sufficiently different to warrant its own approach. The managerialist approach can serve to quash academic freedom, creativity and innovation. The desire to measure and benchmark the learning and teaching practices of academics can be detrimental to the overall experience of learners and staff.

I am now less concerned with detail; so often it serves to detract from the overall vision, and though it can provide comfort for those who feel content when they are busy, it can literally bury a change initiative. Contrast this with a lithe department that understands the need for quality assurance, but also realises that procedures and policy must be fit for purpose.

It also became evident that those people I involved in my work also had uncertainties, and to an extent they relied on my apparent steadfast approach to see them through. Of course, I didn't always know the

outcome, but my tolerance of the uncertainty allowed certain conditions to come into being, permitting real change to take place.

Styles of academic leadership

The secondment has served to reinforce my need for beliefs, since it is easy to get distracted by system failures or projects not going to plan. In such situations it is my reliance on some values that has kept me going. Research Informed Learning and Teaching is an abstract concept, and is seen as too ideological for many. But the understanding that I have developed has enabled me to relate operational activities to strategic aims, giving me the confidence to pursue projects that I believe will contribute towards the cause. Similarly, it has allowed me to be selective, so that I do not waver off course.

One of the differences in academia is that whilst some people are happy to be led, they still want to pursue something that interests them. I have achieved more when colleagues were enthused by what was essentially an operational task, when it was judged to give them something of value back – a publication for example. The fact that this also contributed towards the overall aim of creating a more scholarly community of staff and students was in some ways incidental to them, for the moment at least. Unlike a managerial view, I do not see this as a failure – I see it as an investment for future development.

As an organisation the university is extremely conservative. There is much talk of risk-taking, but in actuality my experience is that this is still frowned upon by senior managers. But as a senior manager in a new institution, I recognise that taking risks in the classroom and taking risks with developing colleagues need not be reckless. I have experienced positive outcomes from experiments that would not have taken place if I had not provided the support.

The systems of the university are regularly blamed for a whole host of problems and I have been and continue to be very critical of their implementation. My work with identical information systems in industry has made me intolerant of

deficiencies in the past, since I know that the processes could be executed better. However, since I took the stance to accept the current state, and view the limitations merely as constraints to manoeuvre within, I have been pleasantly surprised with the results. Over the past two years I have cultivated a relationship of trust with the Chair of the Quality Committee, meaning that my proposed changes now get rubber-stamped rather than debated at length. This was put to the test when my colleagues proposed replacing the Master's Dissertation component with a smaller alternative (15 CATS less). On top of this they were also proposing that the 15,000-word submission be replaced by a reflective portfolio of evidence. The successful ratification of this justified the time I had spent with them supporting and facilitating their discussion.

I see that my role has been multi-faceted, and it has not turned out quite as I would have expected. I understood that the secondment would require leadership; it would seem that academic leadership is quite distinct. There is definitely a managerial aspect to the role, in terms of planning and organising the operational activities to support a strategy. There is even a managerial aspect to planning the tactics, upon which to base the operations. But I have clear evidence of achieving change by also leaving people alone, in the sense that a principle has been communicated, but the conditions for that principle to be realised have been coordinated by my interactions with others.

If I am successful at communicating my intention, and I have autonomous individuals who can move other colleagues forward, then there is a much more collegial model of leadership in place than an autocratic, managerialist one. This aspect is probably the most effective in an academic environment where, relatively, most of the academics are empowered more than in industry. It has been challenging balancing the need to manage against the 'hands-off' need to lead, and on reflection I have led more in the last year than two years ago. But I do believe that trust is a key motivator, and the trust that has

been placed in me has been a lesson in how much it can motivate. My placing trust in others, to do a job, to innovate, to publish or to observe my teaching, has proved much more powerful than any line management authority.

Unwittingly, I was being led. All the times I was being listened to, suggestions were offered that posed questions for me to consider. Each next conversation was prompted by my own reflection on the previous conversation, together with any ensuing experience that had been attained with my colleagues. The conversations were not always directly with my line manager, either. Very often the seed of a conversation was planted with another colleague, who decided to initiate another conversation with me. I have moved on from seeing Seel's work as something that appears to be useful, towards having first-hand experience of interpreting it in my various academic contexts.

What is the legacy?

As the initiative formally draws to a close, a variety of other institutional changes is also occurring. Many of these appear to hinder further progress, or even seem to be backward steps. But looking deeper, there are new shoots of opportunity: quality committees that recognise the need for reduced bureaucracy, academic staff initiating mini-development projects of their

own choosing, and recognition that research and scholarship are key parts of an institutional framework for professional development. The inevitable changes in staff that result from reorganisation create the suitably 'chaotic' states that Tosey (2002) identifies as ripe for creativity. I can see why such an air can be the catalyst for leadership. A university is such a complicated beast that it is the aggregation of minutiae that gives it direction. The acceptance that such minutiae need not be micro-managed is liberating and empowering.

In essence, the key factors of the secondment were being able to create a context that facilitates change taking place, rather than looking for ways to engineer the change. This does not have to be the whole organisation, faculty or even department to have any recognisable success, though it is feasible that this will come given time. Certainly in two years, departmental changes have been observed. Seel offers some rationale for this, but the result of embracing this is not a set of strategies as such, more a set of values to hold and for others to subscribe to. Not being concerned with all of the detail, but knowing when to take charge and exercise authority to get a single objective fulfilled, is absolutely critical.

Having faith in the facilitation of an environment that can change is more beneficial then any perceived risks. The whole point is to move away from a situation that is shackled by control mechanisms. My acceptance of emergence and that with time and patience the right activities will emerge has supported a way of thinking that should enable the support of some of the managerialist agenda, without the excessive managerialist controls. Is this the route forward for academic leaders?

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Book Reviews

Teaching What You Don't Know Therese Huston Harvard (2009, 320 pages) ISBN: 978-0-674-03580-5	

So you've been assigned to teach the course that no one else in the department wants, and are faced with the prospect of standing in front of a class to teach content you know almost nothing about, terrified that one innocent question could reveal your quivering ignorance. Friends or colleagues reassure you dismissively with the advice 'All you have to do is stay one step ahead of the class'. But does that really help anyone in practice? *Teaching What You Don't Know* provides practical support and advice on how to teach as a content novice.

The author is Director of the Centre for Teaching and Learning at Seattle University, and with this book aims to 'end the silence' on the widespread anxieties associated with teaching outside of one's expertise. According to Huston, it is not only new lecturers who can find it difficult teaching a subject about which they know very little, but experienced staff too: success or failure, anxiety or confidence, lie more in the individual's approach to teaching than in years spent lecturing or the ability to cope with conflicting time demands. Yet in the author's experience, it is almost taboo for some staff to admit feeling out of their depth: to be an academic is to 'know stuff', and to be unsure about what to teach and how to teach it can be to undermine one's credibility, especially undesirable in times of temporary contracts becoming the norm. It is also at odds with a culture of research-led teaching excellence, as the introduction notes: 'Given the sacrifices many families make to send their children to college, parents might well be outraged to learn that their investments are in the hands of faculty who are tempted to buy *Statistics for Dummies'*.

The book strikes a good balance between discussion and concrete advice. The written style is informal and engaging (perhaps a little too informal given the audience), but scholarly nevertheless: relevant research is referenced even if the discourse is not couched in its terms, and anecdotes from interviews with teaching staff are given to exemplify both difficulties faced and suggested practice. Chapter 1 outlines the context (as the quotation above reveals, this is the US context, which makes some aspects of the book less relevant for UK staff), while the subsequent chapters provide support and reassurance, partly through the discourse itself exploring a hitherto taboo subject, but also through practical tips and strategies. Chapter 2 suggests that lack of knowledge may in fact be an advantage both to the teacher and student, suggesting general approaches such as not viewing oneself as a 'knowledge dispenser' but as a fellow learner. Chapter 3 can be read as a self-contained chapter focusing on practical strategies for course design. Chapter 4 shifts the focus to meeting students' expectations, from how to set the right atmosphere in the classroom right down to different ways of phrasing 'I don't know', while Chapter 5 develops this by presenting reasons for, and examples of, active learning. Chapters 6 and 7, while continuing to provide concrete advice, move somewhat away from the book's remit in that they focus respectively on understanding students (teaching who you don't know, perhaps) and collecting feedback. Chapter 8, finally, moves from an individual to an institutional perspective to suggest advice to administrators.

The book will be useful particularly to new academic staff and educational developers, but also to administrators and experienced teachers in its constructive and often inspirational approach to difficulties encountered when teaching. The strategies may not be new, and may seem to some to be re-treading old ground or stating the obvious, but the book's openness will do much to reassure those who perhaps do not always feel they can ask for – or find – the moral and practical support they need within their department, and its hands-on approach will at the least complement existing advice.
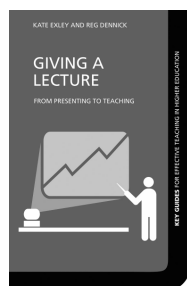
Dr Laura Hodsdon is an Adviser, Research and Evaluation, at the Higher Education Academy.

Giving a Lecture: from presenting to teaching

Kate Exley and Reg Dennick

Routledge (2009)

ISBN: 978-0-415-47140-4

As a relative newcomer to the world of higher education, but with six years' previous experience as a guest lecturer in a variety of professional environments, I would appear to be fairly representative of this book's target audience. The publication of the new edition is timely, given that professional training and qualification are becoming increasingly desirable and in many cases mandatory for teachers in higher educational institutions. Exley and Dennick

provide not only an accessible introduction to the body of established educational theory for those new to the field, but also a series of invaluable 'how to' chapters.

The authors begin by addressing the shortcomings of lecturing as a teaching method before outlining the strong and convincing case for curriculum planners to include it. When balanced with other methods and carried out in such a way as to incorporate opportunities for active and interactive learning within the session, it is argued that lecturing still has an important role to play in the achievement of higher levels of cognitive and skills development.

The book guides the lecturer through the various stages of lecturing from preparation through to delivery, achieving a perfect balance between the provision of practical tips and discussion of the underlying research-based theoretical framework that informs them. The authors address such issues as the structuring and sequencing of lectures, handling nerves, voice projection and confidence, before going on to provide useful advice on the specific ways in which the traditional lecture can be transformed into an interactive lecture session.

Not having read the original version, I am not in a position to make a comparative judgment, but the revised edition offers a good deal of new material, much of it covering the range of technology that has either been introduced or enhanced since original publication. Examples include podcasting, e-lecturing, the use of PowerPoint and interactive handsets. Diversity issues and problem-based learning are also now covered in greater depth.

Aimed at those new to teaching in higher education as well as those wishing further to develop their practice, this book is thought-provoking and informative but also accessible and presented in a well-illustrated and visually appealing format. The inclusion of a suggested further reading list is very welcome, and my only regret is not having had access to it as a complete beginner.

Dr Catherine Lee is an Assistant Lecturer at the University of Kent.

Forthcoming SEDA events

- **Workshop: Students Supporting Students**
  14 June 2010, Woburn House, London
- **Workshop: Creating a Profession – Building Careers in Educational Development**
  22 June 2010, University of Strathclyde, Glasgow
- **SEDA Summer School 2010: Supporting Educational Change**
  20-22 July 2010, Cumberland Lodge, Windsor Great Park
- **Refreshing PGCerts in Changing Times**
  9 November 2010, Woburn House, London
- **SEDA Annual Conference 2010**
  16-17 November 2010, Queen Hotel, Chester

Register for these events at: **www.seda.ac.uk**

SEDA News

Regular readers of *Educational Developments* will be aware that the SEDA Executive has been completing a number of reviews associated with areas of work and activities such as Fellowships, Membership, and Income Generation (including Project Management). At the most recent Executive meeting in February the framework for a revised and refreshed Fellowships Scheme was ratified. In the lead-up to the launch of the new Scheme later this year, members of the Executive Committee will have oversight of the transition arrangements.

SEDA functions relating to Membership, Income Generation and Project Management will become the responsibility of a newly formed Enterprise and Services Committee. The remit of the Committee will include nurturing and supporting fledgling enterprises plus being responsible for the growing set of SEDA Award Courses. Mindful of the needs of our community of developers and the direction of policy initiatives, SEDA will be running the Leading Educational Change professional award course later this year with a specific focus upon Work-based Learning and Employer Engagement. It is anticipated that the course will attract participants who hold an institutional brief for establishing and developing these areas of work. Fuller details of the proposed course are provided elsewhere in this edition of *Educational Developments*.

SEDA representatives continue to work with other national and international bodies associated with developing staff. We send our congratulations to James Wisdom who has been elected President of the International Consortium for Educational Developments (ICED) Council for the next two years. SEDA also continues to submit responses to government and other body consultations. Currently these include areas such as future arrangements for Quality Assurance, External Examining, and HE Funding and Student Finance.

SEDA has been commissioned by JISC to aid in the dissemination and implementation of a number of recommendations and examples of good practice, which come from a project JISC funded at Strathclyde University called WORK WITH IT. The project examined changing staff roles and skills in the light of enhanced use of technology. SEDA will play a brokering role in the current project to be called EMBED-IT. Resulting from gaining this commission, Lawrie Phipps resigned as SEDA Chair believing that a potential conflict of interests existed. Mike Laycock was elected as interim Chair and this was confirmed at the Spring AGM.

Executive Committee member John Lea has been tasked with setting up a short-life working group to explore the ways in which SEDA can support the community of practitioners working in further education corporations delivering higher education courses. It is now a national requirement that further education (lifelong learning) staff complete 30 hours of compulsory CPD each year. John will be investigating ways in which the SEDA PDF can be extended to provide suitable CPD opportunities.

Tony Brand

SEDA Fellowships

Many congratulations to **Liz Shrives** and **Julie Hall** who have recently been awarded the SEDA Fellowship.

SEDA Research and Development Small Grants 2009-2010

Congratulations to the following, who have been awarded SEDA small grants:

David Baume FSEDA
Project title: Researching and producing a SEDA paper for those new to academic development

Sally Bradley and **Sue Beckingham AFSEDA,** Sheffield Hallam University
Project title: Evaluation of learning, teaching and assessment orientation programme for associate lecturers and new teaching staff

Tony Churchill, Loughborough University
Project title: Promoting and evaluating collaborative technology-enhanced learning (TEL)

Martina Doolan, University of Hertfordshire
Project title: Dialogic assessment and feedback (DAF)

Anna Jones and **Harvey Wells,** King's College London
Project title: Learning as change: a framework for understanding teaching

Jo Peat, Roehampton University
Project title: Integrating the student voice into the PG Cert

Lyndsey Seddon and **Catherine Samiei,** York St John University
Project title: Making inclusive assessment a reality: an online resource to support staff in implementing assessment change

Joanne Smailes, Julie Crumbley, Bridget Major and **Martin Thomas,** Northumbria University
Project title: Virtual mentoring using social networking

Holly Smith, University College London
Project title: Academic identity: does the higher education teacher exist?

Rebecca Summers, University of Wolverhampton and **Paul Summers,** Birmingham City University
Project title: Reflections on enhancing the student experience with video feedback

New Publications

SEDA Special 27: Creating a Profession – Building Careers in Educational Development

Edited by Stuart Boon, Bob Matthew and Louisa Sheward

Price £12.00

Order this and other SEDA publications online at **www.seda.ac.uk.**