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Contents

- 1 **A toolkit for evaluating educational development ventures**
David Baume FSEDA
- 7 **Tutoring the new tutors: training that works**
Ian Brailsford in conjunction with Julie Bartlett-Trafford, Meg Bates and Andrea Mead
- 11 **Abelard, Gutenberg, Humboldt and Feynman – Towards Professional Teaching in Higher Education**
A conversation between Lewis Elton and James Wisdom
- 14 **Professional development as a pilgrim journey** Tim Ling
- 16 **From co-ordinator to developer: a participant perspective on the Professional Development Framework Award: Staff and Educational Development**
John Canning
- 17 **Learning and Learning Spaces for the 21st Century** Paul Martin
- 20 **e-Learning Course Design Intensives: disrupting the norms of curriculum design**
Greg Benfield
- 23 **The Development of a Generic Work-based Learning Programme**
David Johnson
- 27 **News from the International Council for Educational Development** James Wisdom
- 28 **News from SEDA**

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A toolkit for evaluating educational development ventures

David Baume FSEDA, HE Consultant

Introduction

The main aims of this article are:

- To suggest that monitoring and evaluation are integral parts of good development practice
- To offer some particular approaches.

The article summarises my current evaluation toolkit. The toolkit has evolved over the years. It will continue to do so.

'Evaluation' (sometimes 'summative evaluation') is here used to mean review at the end of, or at defined intermediate points in, the life of a development venture. So, evaluation involves asking questions such as:

'How did it go? Did we succeed?'

And then:

'What do we learn from this that may be of use to others, or to us, in the future?'

'Monitoring' (sometimes 'formative evaluation') is used here to mean evidence-informed critical reflection on the venture as it is running, with a view to making any necessary immediate changes. So, monitoring involves first asking a question such as:

'How is it going? Are we succeeding?'

Followed by:

'So (how) should we change what we are doing?'

'Formative' and 'summative' evaluations are not so much different kinds of evaluation as different uses of the information and understanding developed through evaluation.

It is good practice to:

- Plan the monitoring and evaluation at the same time as the venture is planned
- Ensure that monitoring and evaluation methods will be able to monitor and evaluate how far the goals of the venture have been achieved
- If it becomes clear that monitoring and evaluation methods will *not* sufficiently evaluate how far the goals of the venture have been achieved, either develop more appropriate monitoring and evaluation methods or modify the goals of the venture to make them more readily evaluable. Unevaluated and unevaluable goals are not really goals – aspirations, perhaps.

Questions to ask:

'How did it go?'

'Did we succeed?'

'How should we change what we're doing?'

'What should we do differently next time?'

'What have we learned?'

How to approach an evaluation?

Saunders (2000) offers a series of questions, called RUFDATA, to be asked when planning and negotiating an evaluation:

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1. What are our **Reasons and purposes** for evaluation?
2. What will be our **Uses** of our evaluation?
3. What will be the **Foci** for our evaluations?
4. What will be our **Data and evidence** for our evaluations?
5. Who will be the **Audience** for our evaluations?
6. What will be the **Timing** for our evaluations?
7. Who should be the **Agency** conducting the evaluations?

This toolkit suggests approaches to answering some of the RUFDATA questions.

Why monitor and evaluate?

Chelimsky (1997) suggests three possible purposes for monitoring and evaluation, here adapted to the monitoring and evaluation of staff and educational development activities.

1. To *account*, or audit - to assure those who funded the venture that the venture has done, produced and achieved what it planned to do, produce and achieve; and done these things to an appropriate standard and in an appropriate way. This is summative evaluation.
2. To *improve*. 'Evaluation can be a form of consultancy and, as such, do a lot for enhancing the thinking and work of those being evaluated' (Knight, 2003) - evaluator as respected outsider or critical friend. This is formative evaluation.
3. To *know* or *understand* – what is working and what isn't, and how, and above all why, in order to improve the activity being evaluated. The crossing from evaluation to research is explored in Baume (2002). A fourth purpose for evaluation may be added:
4. To *build the evaluative capability* of the evaluand¹ (Baume, 2003). Evaluation, being very like research, is an appropriate academic function. The more members of the venture who are active in monitoring and evaluation, the better:

'We note that the greatest value appears to be gained where [Subject] Centres incorporate self-evaluation and corresponding data-gathering into regular operating activity across the Centre team, and where the outcomes of self-assessment feed directly back into operational and strategic planning.' (Oakleigh, 2008, p. 44)

Monitor and evaluate for:

- 1 Accountability
- 2 Improvement
- 3 Understanding
- 4 Increased evaluation capacity within the development venture

What might it mean for a development venture to be succeeding?

Succeeding can usefully mean *achieving goals*.

A development activity may specify its goals in terms of:

- What it will *do*; its activities – 'We shall run twenty workshops'
- What it will *produce*; its outputs – 'We shall produce six booklets and a website'
- What it intends to *achieve*; its outcomes – 'Lecturers and programme teams will be able to describe clear and appropriate learning outcomes of all their course units, and will achieve and assure the constructive alignment of learning outcomes, teaching and learning methods and assessment methods and criteria'.

Goals can include activities, products and outcomes.
Outcomes – changes to knowledge, to understanding and above all to practice – matter the most.

It is easy and necessary to describe, quantify and report on activities and products. But it is not enough. We undertake activities and deliver products in order to have effects: on the practices, and also on the knowledge and understanding and world-view, of lecturers, students, departments. Such outcomes are harder to define and to measure – though far from impossible.

Four levels of evaluation

Kirkpatrick (1994) suggests four levels of evaluation (here called K1-4). Originally developed for training, Kirkpatrick's model is adapted here to evaluating a wider range of development events and processes.

1. K1 – participants' immediate reactions to the event, often obtained with a 'happy sheet'.
2. K2 – what participants have learned from the event, perhaps also obtained with the end-of-event questionnaire
3. K3 – how and how far participants in the event have later used what they have learned
4. K4 – the big question – what has been the impact of changed practice on student learning?

A method for K3 and K4 is suggested in Table 2.

Four levels of evaluation:

- 1 Did people like it?
- 2 What have they learned from it?
- 3 Have they applied what they learned to their practice?
- 4 Have results improved?

The four levels of evaluation applied

If there could only be one evaluation question, it would surely be, 'Were the goals of this venture achieved?' This is actually a cluster of questions; ventures typically have several goals, and at different levels. For example, for a workshop on learning outcomes, and looking for now just at levels K1 and K2:

| Level | Sample goal |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| K1 – Immediate positive reactions | Participants will enjoy and value the workshop. |
| K2 – Things are learned at the event | By the end of the workshop, participants will be able to write, and plan how they will make good use of, active, comprehensible, appropriate, attainable and assessable learning outcomes. |

Table 1 – Sample goals for a workshop on learning outcomes at Kirkpatrick levels 1 and 2

What difficulties may we find in the use of outcomes, and how can these difficulties be addressed?

The possibility of failure

The first and most obvious danger with outcomes is the danger of failing to achieve them. It is easier to produce booklets than to achieve outcomes. Development projects seek to do and achieve new things. This is risky. The possibility of failure is lower when we understand how and why our development activities have the effects that they have. This is another reason to monitor and evaluate all our work as developers.

The problem of knowing what causes what

We still know less than we should like to know about what development activities lead to what outcomes. The chains and networks of influence and interaction connect, for example, policy makers, stakeholders, those designing and running the programme, programme participants and students. But rather than being scared by complexity we should map it out and analyse it. The situation may be less complex than we expect.

We already know a few useful things. For example, we know that people are more likely to change their practice when a variety of factors – policies, examples of good practice, encouragement and support from valued peer groups, a sound basis of research and evidence, and clear benefits from making the change – all pull in broadly the same direction. We can use this knowledge in our planning.

It is difficult to know what causes what. But not impossible.

How to report on what has been achieved? We might say, at the end of a development venture: 'This is how things were at the start... This is what we did... This is what participants did... This is what they learned... This is how they report making use of what they learned... This is how they report the effects of using what they learned... These are some other factors which may have had some effect on what participants learned.' And let readers draw what conclusions they choose to draw for their future action.

The problem of measurement

There is a romantic and at the same time defeatist notion that, with regard to outcomes, value and measurability are incompatible – for example, 'If you can measure it, it isn't it' (Race, 2002). Race was speaking of assessment, but a similar argument is sometimes applied to evaluation.

Such an argument is unacceptable. We always need to make a strong case for the continued value of our work. There is always competition for funds and attention. The procedure below for defining and refining outcomes shows a constructive relationship between outcomes and measurement:

To be valuable, outcomes must also be evaluable.

First, determine the particular differences we want to make. For example, in what particular ways do we want students to have different capabilities or qualities? In what ways do we want staff to teach differently?²

Next, ask and answer the question 'How shall we know if we have succeeded?'

Then, iterate between the intended outcome and ways to measure its attainment until we have an intended outcome that we value *and* whose attainment we can measure.

Of course we should also look out for serendipitous good outcomes, and celebrate them.

We can illustrate how this might be done with levels 3 and 4 of the workshop on learning outcomes:

| <i>Level</i> | <i>Intended outcome</i> | <i>Some possible ways to measure</i> | <i>Comments on measurement</i> |
|---|---|---|---|
| K3 – This learning (about how to write and use good learning outcomes) is applied to practice – teaching improves | Six months after the workshop, participants have written and are using good learning outcomes through the use of ideas and approaches learned and developed during the workshop. | Six months after the workshop, contact workshop participants and ask them whether and how they have written and made good use of learning outcomes, using ideas and approaches learned during the workshop. | Rust (1998) describes a validated methodology for doing this. |
| K4 – Student learning improves | Following good use by their lecturers of improved learning outcomes, students are engaging more actively with their learning and are achieving higher marks and grades whilst standards are maintained. | To take this outcome seriously, we need, not to ask students what they think, but to analyse the work that students produce for assessment. | This research is probably best done through local studies by individual lecturers. Particular improved learning outcomes could be introduced and used. The quality of subsequent work by students in attaining these outcomes could be assessed. These studies need not be elaborate, or a substantial burden on staff or students. Assessing students' attainment of learning outcomes is anyway good academic practice. |

Table 2 – Some possible ways to measure whether the outcomes of the workshop on learning outcomes at Kirkpatrick levels 3 and 4 were in fact achieved, with comments

The problem of measuring difference

A baseline study is an important early preparation for evaluation. A baseline study of what? Of whatever it is that the development venture is intending to change. Continuing with the workshop, this time at levels 1, 2 and 4:

In order to establish that a difference has been made, it is necessary to know how things were.

| <i>Level</i> | <i>Sample goal</i> | <i>Possible baselines</i> | <i>Comments on baselines and their use</i> |
|--------------------------|---|---|--|
| K1 – Immediate reactions | Participants will enjoy and value the workshop. | Participants reported enjoyment and valuing of previous workshops run as part of the development venture. | We might hope for a steady improvement over time. Two cautions. If participants don't like a workshop, the workshop is unlikely to be very productive. However, if the workshop is challenging and demanding, it may not immediately be liked as much as one giving a softer ride. |

| Level | Sample goal | Possible baselines | Comments on baselines and their use |
|--------------------------------------|---|--|---|
| K2 – Things are learned at the event | By the end of the workshop, participants will be able to write, and plan how they will use, active, comprehensible, appropriate, attainable and assessable learning outcomes | It would be legitimate and useful to ask participants to bring to the workshops learning outcomes that they had previously written, and accounts of how they use these for course planning, teaching, feedback and assessment. Participants could then critique these previous learning outcomes against the criteria for a good learning outcome that are used and developed during the workshop. | By comparing previously written outcomes brought to the workshop by participants, and accounts of their use, with those they produce during the workshop, participants and facilitators can measure the effect of the workshop. |
| K4 – Student learning improves | Following use by their lecturers of improved learning outcomes, students are engaging much more actively with their learning and are achieving higher marks and grades whilst standards are maintained. | Student engagement with learning and student attainment of learning outcomes need to be considered separately. Measures of engagement might include: time spent studying the topic; number of assignments completed; or something less tangible while still capable of being described and compared, if not actually measured, such as liveliness of seminar discussion on the topic. One possible baseline for attainment is the quality of students' work on this learning outcome in the previous year. | Hard, numeric data clearly provide a sound basis for baselines and thus for measuring movement. However, softer measures may still be much more useful than nothing, and may aid understanding in ways that numbers may not. |

Table 3 – Some possible baselines at K1, 2 and 4 for the outcomes of the workshop on learning outcomes, with comments on their measurement

The problem of timescale

The ultimate intended outcomes may not be achieved and become measurable until after the end of the venture, perhaps long after. How to deal with this?

We can use *proxies* for the actual intended outcome. For example, action plans expressed at the end of a well-run staff development workshop are a partially successful predictor that the planned actions will be undertaken (Rust, 1998). So, action plans produced by participants during a workshop are plausible, if partial, proxies for later action.

We can *decouple* the evaluation schedule from the venture schedule. The evaluation may need to be completed after the venture itself is done.

It may be necessary to break the evaluation into *parallel shorter sections*. Instead of trying to track cause and effect all through the chain, look at single links. Example, from a workshop on learning and teaching strategies: have new learning and teaching strategies led to the intended changes in teaching and learning practice? And as a parallel evaluation, do such changes in learning and teaching practice lead to demonstrable improvement in student learning, in student capabilities?

The problem of the continued appropriateness of goals

Are the outcomes still appropriate?

The environment in which the development venture is being undertaken will surely change, gradually or abruptly or both. We need to check – to monitor – the continued appropriateness of goals. And be prepared to change them.

Check that the original intended outcomes are still appropriate. Things change!

Here are some more sophisticated approaches to evaluation. Elements of all the methods in this toolkit can be combined.

A ten-step way

This is adapted from Baume and Baume (1995), in turn based on Nevo (1986). It is detailed, rich, and also time-consuming. I would now adapt it to pay more explicit attention to outcomes. This approach has some similarities with RUFDATA (Saunders, 2000).

Questions:

1. What are the *object(s) to be evaluated*?
2. Who are the main *stakeholders* in the objects(s) to be evaluated? For Weiss (1986), stakeholders are 'Members of group that are palpably affected by the [evaluand]'.
3. What are the *questions or concerns* of each major stakeholder or group? (A good way to identify stakeholders' questions or concerns is to ask them.)
4. What are stakeholders' *criteria for a satisfactory answer to their questions*? (Again, a good way to know is to ask.)
5. What evaluation *methods and instruments* will be used?

Actions:

6. Plan the evaluation
7. Seek always to *understand* the object(s) being evaluated, to make sense of why what was done had the effect that it had, not just to describe it and judge it
8. *Report to stakeholders* on answers to their questions and concerns
9. *Change staff and educational development practice* as appropriate
10. Periodically *review* and where necessary *change evaluation methods and processes*, to ensure that they remain fresh and appropriate and continue to earn their keep.

Seeking to illuminate

Parlett and Hamilton (1992) propose, and Miller and Parlett (1974) illustrate, 'illuminative evaluation', which aims '... to explore, describe, analyse, elucidate and portray – in other words to illuminate – the practices and processes of teaching and learning, broadly defined, as they occur in their national settings' (Miller and Parlett, 1974, p. 2).

Seeking the whole picture

'Above all, evaluation is the discernment of the good.' Robert Stake (2002) undertakes 'responsive evaluation'. Stake's 'holistic, thoughtful, experiential' evaluations give a rich picture of the setting, the people, the atmosphere and the environment as well as what is happening and why.

Seeking to appreciate

Ludema and colleagues (2000) also take a positive approach, even more so than Stake. They ask:

'Think of a time in your entire experience of this [development venture] when you have felt most excited, most engaged and most alive. What were the forces and factors that made it a great experience? What was it about you, others and your organisation that made it a peak experience for you?'

Negotiating evaluation

The evaluation plan and the evaluation process should be negotiated with the evaluand. This makes it more likely that the evaluation process and, later, the results of the evaluation will be acceptable.

The External Evaluator's roles...

...may include, separately or in combination:

- *Judge*, who makes pronouncements on the worth and attainments of the venture
- *Evaluation consultant*, who advises on evaluation process and may provide written guidance on evaluation practice
- *Evaluation capacity builder*, who provides training and development for the staff of the venture on evaluation
- *Trusted outsider* or critical friend
- *'External examiner'*, who, after the manner of an external examiner for a programme, samples self-evaluations by the venture and makes suggestions on process and on judgements
- *Research collaborator*, accepting that evaluation and research have many similarities of purpose, method and report.

Conclusion

Evaluation, like any academic endeavour, can be as rich and complex as we may wish or need it to be. But at its heart it remains a simple task – a search for evidence-informed understanding, of the effects of our work and of our successes (and otherwise) in achieving our negotiated goals as developers. If we do evaluation well, we also help our various clients to become better at evaluating and understanding the effects of their work, and thereby at improving their work. Everyone benefits.

Notes

¹ It is useful to have a generic term for anything which is being evaluated. I shall use the term 'evaluand'.

² It is better to answer the latter question in the negotiation with lecturers rather than through simply trying to impose ideas on them. However, in these negotiations we should express with appropriate confidence what we know from research about good practice in programme design, teaching, learning, assessment, etc.

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Tutoring the new tutors: training that works

Ian Brailsford in conjunction with **Julie Bartlett-Trafford**, **Meg Bates** and **Andrea Mead**, University of Auckland

Introduction

Part-time university tutors have been characterised as departmental 'donkeys' (Park and Ramos, 2002): over-worked and under-valued. New tutors are usually young graduate students with plenty of enthusiasm but no formal teaching experience. Yet they often bear the brunt of undergraduate teaching. At the University of Auckland they are typically allocated three or four tutorials per week of up to 30 students per class and usually have heavy marking loads too. Moreover, tutors are expected not only to help students with navigating their way through course content but also assist them with acquiring study skills and, at the first-year level, inducting them into the bewildering world of higher education. In sum, they do far more for students than they themselves may realise. They may be donkeys but they are also the friendly, fresh, human face of many otherwise forbidding university departments. Good tutors

are worth their weight in gold. If any teacher knows a student's first name on a crowded campus like ours, it will most likely be one of the student's tutors.

This article draws together the thoughts of an academic advisor and a student learning advisor (Ian and Julie), who together organise tutor training from within the university's Centre for Academic Development (CAD), and two senior tutors (Meg and Andrea) who run departmental training for new tutors in their respective disciplines (Politics and Psychology) with Ian and Julie. Together we attempt to prepare and support new tutors. What we want to share with you is what works here; most of it is practical, good sense grounded in active learning theory (Biggs, 2003), combining over 30 years' classroom experience between the four of us. A recent HERDSA conference paper (Kofod et al., 2008) posed the question: is tutor training worth it?

Well we think it definitely is worth it, but we would say that, wouldn't we?

Fundamentals

Departments and faculties need to be seen to be supporting tutors. This can take different forms: ordering pizza to round off training sessions; having the head of department welcome the new tutors in person; paying tutors to attend training sessions; organising morning teas where returning tutors can meet the new cohort; lecturers introducing the tutoring team to students at the first lecture. All of these make new tutors feel valued. Tutors also need practical training for facing their first classes and then require a senior tutor to go to for support and guidance as they cope with the first few weeks of teaching. New tutors need to know the basics of how to teach and how to teach in their department. The format that works is to organise first an induction session so that new tutors can familiarise themselves with the department. Most

tutors know the building from a student's perspective but now have to learn about how the department functions from an employee's standpoint. This is followed by the generic training offered in conjunction with CAD.

Function follows form....

Training comes to the tutors; not only are sessions run in the host departments but CAD's tutor trainers talk to senior tutors beforehand to find out which teaching skills are specific to the discipline. Ian and Julie speak to the generic tutoring skills and classroom management techniques while Meg and Andrea join the sessions as participant-observers. Workshop activities are discussed in advance ensuring they fit with the department's needs. The pre-workshop discussion clarifies how long the workshop will run for and a decision is made on the optimum date to bring the new tutors together. What we describe below is the full 'Introduction to Tutoring' workshop, which forms the core of our customised sessions.

Form follows function....

Our tutor training sessions are run by experienced tutors in real tutorial rooms, and new tutors are expected to participate as if it were a real tutorial. Tutors are asked beforehand to bring information about the course they will be tutoring. Enrolment information spells out the workshop's objectives in advance:

- Understand the key attributes of an effective university tutor
- Have a written teaching plan for at least their first tutorial
- Feel confident about meeting their students for the first time
- Anticipate likely problems in the classroom and have a set of solutions to use
- Have some ideas for things to do in tutorials that will get students involved in discussion.

Filing into a small teaching room reminds new tutors of what it is going to be like for their students, deciding where to sit, working out who else is

in the room and who they might already know, browsing through handouts, wondering what the marker pens and yellow post-it notes are going to be for. Trainers greet the new tutors as they arrive, checking names off the class roll and attempting to make small talk as the room gradually fills.

We begin by introducing ourselves and talking about our experiences of being trained many years ago. This helps build rapport and credibility. We run through the workshop objectives, describing it as our contract with the participants and pointing out that there are many facets to tutoring – such as assignment marking and teaching to diversity – which we cannot cover in one session; instead we are focusing explicitly on gearing them up for the first week.

Many new tutors vaguely know other people in the room but we still make them do an ice-breaker. Tutors are given three simple tasks: introduce themselves to the person next to them, find out what courses the other person is tutoring on and agree on a publication date for a quote from Andrew Bell's pamphlet *An Experiment in Education*, 'Tutors enable their pupils to keep pace with their classes' (cited in Goodlad, 1995: 2). They are pre-warned that when we go round the room they will have to introduce the other person as well as revealing their guess as to the date.

Once the ice-breaker is complete and the pair closest to the real date of 1797 congratulated, we stop and ask out loud: what time is it now? Participants are so engaged they lose track of time. Facilitators discuss the pros and cons of completing an ice-breaker. The usual consensus is that it eats up valuable time in the first meeting (possibly a third) but, if handled well, gets students talking, gives the nervous tutor time to draw breath and, as they are doing the round, gives the tutor an opportunity to learn names. Julie throws out a challenge that she will have learned every participant's name by the end of the workshop and she gives some of the tips she employs to recall names. Finally, Bell's quote forces tutors to

reflect on the historic role of the tutor and the present-day realities. The ice-breaker not only reinforces the idea that the training will be run like a real tutorial and puts the new tutor in the student's seat, it allows the facilitators to discuss content and process: this is what you did, this is why we made you do it and let's discuss the way it unfolded.

The next three activities continue the idea of practising tutorial activities, drawing from the tutors' existing ideas about tutoring. First, we get them to do a think-pair-share exercise around the question: what concerns might a new student have when they walk into your first tutorial? One person from each group is asked to report back in a plenary session. We write up the key points – usually students not knowing anyone, having worries about the coursework expectations, feeling uncomfortable about speaking in public, etc. – planting the notion that the tutor's task in the first meeting is to allay some of these worries.

Next we get tutors to write down one concern – we label it 'fears in the hat' – they have about tutoring on a post-it note, asking them to stick it on a 'confessional wall'. We then get them milling around looking at the other postings. Time and time again the same fears merge: being asked a question I can't answer; dealing with a difficult student; not knowing what to say; drying up; talking too much; and the all-time favourite, deathly silence when I ask a question to the tutorial and no one answers! We reassure the new tutors that the same fears crop up each year. Meg and Andrea address specific problem situations and how they would handle them.

The final activity in this section gets tutors reading what our university says about tutorials to prospective students. We hand out the description, asking tutors to read the text and circle the key words or phrases:

'Tutorials are classes where a tutor facilitates the learning of a smaller group of students. This is your chance to talk about the topics covered in lectures, ask questions and seek help in an informal setting.'

You will be able to express opinions and enjoy intellectual debate with others who share your interests. Tutorials are a great way to get to know your fellow classmates and your tutor.¹

Tutors often highlight ‘facilitate’ and point to the link between lectures and tutorials. We use this as an opportunity to remind tutors not to give a mini-lecture! How to create an informal learning environment is something we hope to model. The penultimate sentence occasionally draws hollow laughter: from their own undergraduate experience tutors know that a free exchange of ideas and opinions does not always occur. We emphasise the final sentence: this is the tutor’s greatest challenge. We wrap up the first part of the training by stating that if they can bring enthusiasm into the tutorial room, then this will go a long way in making them an effective tutor.

The workshop so far has been a tutorial about tutoring. Before they head off for a short break, we point out they have practised several classic tutoring activities (Baume and Baume, 1996; Dawson, 1998; Exley and Dennick, 2004; Race and Brown, 2005), making them active participants in the session, but there were only four specific parts to the workshop to date: the ice-breaker; creating the mind-map of student concerns; the tutors’ ‘fears in the hat’; and the quick reading of a text around the role of a tutor. One lesson is not to pack too much into their tutorials; most activities will take longer than they imagine. As facilitators we comment upon our own time-keeping so far and reveal how our plans for the day have worked out. We do this by showing them our written plan and approximate timings for the session and compare this with what has just happened in real time.

Practice makes perfect.....

The second phase of the workshop is self-explanatory: preparing for the first tutorial. Rather than telling them what to do, we hand out a short extract to read from a journal article, ‘Lower than a frosh: reflections as a first-year instructor’, by Andrea Lynn Penn. In

the opening section Penn recounts her first nervous encounter with a student; she is taken off guard when a ‘bright-eyed blonde girl dressed head to toe in Abercrombie and Fitch gear’ (Penn, 2006: 73) enters and mistakes Penn for another student. Suddenly Penn has to ‘act like a teacher’ for the first time. Tutors are requested to read the first two pages of the article, thinking as they read how they would have handled this first encounter; silence descends on the training session, occasionally broken by a few chortles of nervous laughter as participants relive Penn’s first haltering steps, her confidence shaken before she’s even started.

Before we get the tutors’ responses we discuss how long it took for them to read the extract. In the workshops we note some tutors finishing quickly with other readers still catching up. So the process of reading in class is shown to have its own problems. We also raise the issue of giving readers some kind of instruction or prompt to guide the reading. Two aspects of Penn’s account hit home: she is self-conscious of her youth and inexperience and although she has been on a training session and has a definite teaching philosophy of ‘de-centering’ her classroom, she has no practical strategies for how to do this.

Whoever is facilitating the workshop will talk about how this session was begun, how we arrived early, had name badges ready and did our best to welcome the new tutors and make small talk before the class began. We reveal our scoping out of the tutorial room beforehand, having handouts prepared several days in advance, ‘eye-balling’ the register and arriving at the venue about 20 minutes early ensuring we were there to greet the early arrivals.

We reinforce the importance of getting the first tutorial off to a good start, working on the logic that if the first one goes well – for both students and the tutor – the rest will follow suit. And to make this happen, tutors need to prepare. So we throw down the gauntlet: what exactly are you going to say when your very first tutorial is ready to start? How are you going to

introduce yourself to a classroom full of strangers who will be scrutinising you intently?

Tutors are paired up and given a simple task: write down a few notes about themselves that will form the basis of the first spoken words and then take it in turns to practise on each other. We encourage them to talk for about two or three minutes each. The listener gives constructive feedback – pace of delivery, appropriateness of personal and educational information revealed, clarity of speech etc. – and then swap roles. This exercise takes about 20 minutes. New tutors usually comment that it was helpful to rehearse their opening few sentences. We discuss some of the tried and tested formulas: tutor’s office location, their research topic, length of time at the university, interesting hobbies, and where they grew up and went to high school. We remind tutors that some new students have never had a tutor before and might assume that tutors were full-time university teachers; letting students know they are students too creates some level of solidarity and lets students know their tutors are not available 24/7. Most tutors have been undergraduate students in the department – some now tutoring courses they themselves have completed – and we stress the importance of telling students this: not only do you have subject knowledge but also the inside knowledge on how to succeed as a student in that department.

Once new tutors have worked on their opening spiels, they are given the final task of the workshop: planning their first tutorial. First we group together tutors who are either tutoring on the same course or have students at similar year stages. They are set three tasks: discuss what protocols or ground rules they want in their tutorials; outline the key features of the course they will be tutoring on (key learning outcomes, core course content, assessment, etc.) to other group members; and create a plan for the first class based on a set of objectives. Tutors are given half an hour to complete the exercise with the proviso that the written tutorial plan is

the most important item they will leave the workshop with. The group format allows tutors to share ideas, act as devil's advocates on each other's ground rules and tutorial objectives, and create a collegial environment of constructive criticism. Senior tutors from the department can offer their own observations of the different courses' peculiarities and personnel. They too can stress the importance of good working relations with course lecturers and departmental administration staff, and of calling upon the experience of senior tutors who can offer guidance and support. Of course the planning activity itself – working collectively, sharing ideas but working to create a solution that meets their own needs – models good small-group learning in action.

In the final part of the workshop we go back to the objectives we set ourselves. Have we managed to prepare tutors for what lies ahead? We go through the items one by one and ask tutors what might have been glossed over. In addition, we got back to the concerns from the 'fears in the hat' exercise and see what queries are still unresolved. We have a final round where tutors are asked to reflect on what has occurred during the session and share something positive they can take away with them. Julie tests herself on her promise to recall everyone's name. Tutors are informed that they will receive a formal evaluation sheet in a few days' time where they can give considered feedback as they put theory and practice into action. But in the meantime we ask them to write down one thing they are still unsure of about tutoring that can be fed back to the senior tutor and can give us suggestions for follow-up sessions. Again this models good practice and gives us instant feedback; we encourage tutors to find out from their students within the first few weeks of tutoring how things are going.

I knew I understood the subject when I had to teach it for the first time...

Having senior tutors close at hand means that progress is closely monitored. New tutors in the departments with good support

systems report on how the training has helped them cope with the first few weeks. The 'Introduction to Tutoring' is the end of the beginning. It is heartening to see the new tutors becoming effective teachers. Within a few weeks they become 'experienced' and by the following semester are called upon to induct the new cohort. We finish the training with the intriguing quote: 'The first time I really understood the subject was when I had to teach it' (Jones, 1995: 195). What we four observe are tutors not only gaining an enhanced understanding of their own disciplines (which enriches their own graduate research) but them becoming expert tutors of new tutors. Creating this virtuous cycle is worth it.

Notes

¹ University of Auckland website: http://www.auckland.ac.nz/uoa/for/prospective/learning/uni_study/programme_taught/programme_taught.cfm, accessed on 11 August 2008.

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Information for Contributors

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

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Abelard, Gutenberg, Humboldt and Feynman – Towards Professional Teaching in Higher Education

A conversation between **Professor Lewis Elton** and **James Wisdom**

In *Educational Developments* 9.1, Graham Gibbs explained how the initiative to create Teaching and Learning Strategies in the late 1990s had emerged from the government's and HEFCE's dissatisfaction that some major investment projects in Higher Education had not appeared to have led to the changes for which the funders had hoped. Knowing that Professor Lewis Elton had been one of the advisors in the Enterprise in Higher Education project, I asked him for an interview about this and also a wider consideration of the state of educational development – where we have been, where we are and where we are going.

While Lewis agreed that most of the attempts to improve teaching had not been very successful, he made a major exception for the Enterprise in Higher Education (EHE) initiative. He contended that this project had been a total success, citing as his evidence that the whole notion of developing graduate attributes as an intentional part of the curriculum was now so widespread in higher education that it was taken for granted.

The origins of the initiative in 1987 lay with Geoffrey Holland, then Permanent Secretary at the Department of Employment. Lewis was sure that most academics in universities in the early 1980s would have recognised that students needed to develop graduate attributes, but their prime educational purpose was to teach students to do well in their discipline. The growth of the person, their skills, character and capabilities, were thought of as an inevitable by-product of university life which happened anyway – 'it comes out of the walls'.

What Holland attempted to achieve, which was radical and new, was establishing as a deliberate part of the curriculum such mental abilities as, for instance, an enterprising attitude to work – although all connections with Thatcherism were discouraged. Considering that for 800 years university lecturers had simply taught their discipline, this was a revolutionary proposal. Just as revolutionary was the notion that the curriculum *could* be extended - by funding, argument, persuasion and expertise. It may be that EHE was the precursor to the extensive range of initiatives, strategies, policies and plans with which HE today seems to be fully occupied.

Holland did not use his Ministry to change universities directly. He gathered four groups together – from his



Henricus de Alemannia Lecturing on the 'Liber Ethicorum' (Laurentius de Voltolina c.1350).

ministerial staff, the universities, employers from industry and commerce and a number of HE advisers. This was an evolving model, a joint collaboration, in which it was eventually hard to tell which players came from the different backgrounds.

It soon emerged that the employers were at their most productive when they contributed people, not money. If they had been simply seen as providing funding, they would have constantly expected results and 'value for money' reports. By forming partnerships, by having to work out what all this was about together, good collaborations were formed.

Another unusual feature of EHE was the expectation that by the end of year three, only a good exit plan would lead to the final two years of funding. But in 1992 Employment and Education were merged to form one government department - a disaster, as Lewis puts it, because the new ministry was uninterested, and the project ended in that year.

Lewis himself persuaded the Provost of University College London to get interested in EHE – in general the Russell Group of universities had ignored the project. It was through this work that UCL appointed him as a Professor of Higher Education, and he was then able to take the first steps towards generating the team which became today's Centre for the Advancement of Learning and Teaching.

Was there a relationship between EHE and the growth of

educational development? Perhaps a little, but the central fact about the 1980s and much of the 1990s was that mainstream academics were not especially interested in improving teaching – and perhaps it is still a minority interest. There has been more movement in the polytechnics and in some universities, but the research-intensive institutions have been very slow to get engaged.

Lewis gave his inaugural professorial lecture at UCL around the question: 'Is university teaching researchable?' He verified that, as they came through the doors, a substantial proportion of his eminent audience thought the answer was a flat 'no'! But he reckons if he had asked the same question of university car parking they would have said 'yes', on the grounds that everything is researchable. He hopes the proportion had reduced by the end of the inaugural, but his point is that until a sufficient number of people from within the academic community believe that university teaching is a researchable subject – whether or not they do research in it themselves – and that it has its own background, its own development and its own discipline to which they can contribute, it is going to be hard to really improve university teaching.

Peter Abelard was a great lecturer, attracting students from all across medieval Europe to hear him – but Lewis is astonished at the influence on teaching he still has today. His method of teaching by lecturing survived Gutenberg and the invention of printing and it is still seen as the most prestigious part of university teaching. We teach as we were taught, perhaps in an unbroken line of descent from the past. Lewis also rejects the notion that one is either a first-class teacher (like Abelard) or one is not, and that there is nothing anyone can do to change this. His riposte is that, of course George Best was a brilliant footballer, but he still had to train!

But Lewis goes further. He is not interested in teaching people to do the same things better – he wants them to be able to do better things. He recognises that the majority of academics – while able to respond to external pressures such as more students or changes in funding – do not consider that change is needed in the fundamentals of the teaching process. He also recognises that some universities have thought and done more about this than others. But he thinks that the precondition for any further progress is the wider recognition that change is required.

He believes that universities need many of their staff to become professional educators and that we should acknowledge that it is difficult. Of course, people who are primarily researchers will not need to develop this aspect of professionalism, and some others might need it to a lesser degree. But Lewis is sure that teachers need a professional base to their work, one which enables research into practice. This is an area that needs more recognition. He finds it astonishing that in all other areas of professional practice training is required, while universities are unique in allowing amateurs to do it all!



Scholars at a Lecture (William Hogarth, 1736). The lecturer is thought to be William Fisher, the Registrar of Oxford University.

From this position, he then considers what sort of training and preparation is required for the professional teacher, and by extension for those who teach the teachers. At the very least he insists that they should acquire a higher degree, a substantial course of equal value to the higher degrees expected in the discipline. He himself has been involved in creating and externally examining such programmes, at UCL and at the University of Oxford, Dublin Institute of Technology and the University of Hong Kong. He agrees that the adoption of the Postgraduate Certificate courses is making an impact, but he notes there are still many powerful vice-chancellors from the traditional backgrounds who claim their universities are good at it, but who understand very little about professional teaching. He thinks their influence over the Higher Education Academy has restricted its ability to act. At the same time he thinks the influence of the student voice is limited, as so many accept the traditional approach to teaching because it is all they know, and they have already succeeded with it.

'If we are to do any work on this, it has got to come from SEDA. SEDA to me is the only organisation that is actually interested in improving teaching, changing teaching, finding a sound educational research base for it, and so on. There is nobody else as far as I know who does that. I am full of admiration for SEDA – it is unique in the world in being a totally independent organisation that does this kind of work.'

Lewis recalls that he and Pat Cryer made a determined effort in the 1980s to persuade the Society for Research into Higher Education to research into pedagogy and teaching development, and remembers that it was their Staff Development group which merged with the Standing Conference for Educational Development to form SEDA. As it is so important today to build up the discipline of pedagogic practice, Lewis mused that it might now be practicable for the two organisations to merge or at least work more closely together. In America the Carnegie Foundation is working in a similar direction to SEDA, although its impact on the most 'prestigious' universities is patchy. In its most elaborated form Lewis would hope to see the growth of a discipline of general pedagogic practice, which of course would look different within each subject discipline.

Lewis is slightly sceptical about the inevitability of the Postgraduate Certificates in the research-led universities creating a new and more favourable environment for improving teaching. He has seen too many young entrants become disheartened when they settle into their departments and realise that only research will establish their reputation and their career. He is much more interested in the lecturer in their forties and fifties, who may have gone beyond their enthusiasm for disciplinary research, who has a foundation of experience, and who is looking for a new challenge in their career. An enthusiasm for teaching and learning is greatly preferable to the massive amounts of unnecessary administration which often occupies their time.

Another area of Lewis's concern is the style of university management. He remembers one of the great VCs, Eric Ashby, noting that a wise VC would never announce a good idea and then try to implement it; they would feed it into the academic hierarchy at the lowest point and wait for it to rise up and emerge. He takes as his example the work of Wilhelm von Humboldt, whose foundation of the University of Berlin in 1810 still exerts a massive influence today. Although his aim was to rejuvenate Prussia, he considered that universities could best serve the state if they were left to themselves – to work in 'loneliness and freedom'; an early model of what we now call complexity theory. The university itself was run on a co-operative basis by all the staff – each Rector was elected for only a few years at a time.

But Humboldt's university was influential in another way as well. It was established around four classical faculties, but in the spirit of the enlightenment pioneered the introduction of many new scientific disciplines. Its basic pedagogic practice was teaching by lecture delivered by researchers, and as a model of a research university it has spread widely. Still today, in this model of university, undergraduates attend lectures and either learn or don't learn. Only as they progress may they gain opportunities for closer engagement with researchers.

For Lewis, the influential challenge to this model came from the great physicist Richard Feynman, who prepared a wonderful series of lectures (now published) for his first-year

undergraduates. Although the numbers attending stayed constant Feynman was horrified to discover that, no matter how simple, clear and structured were his sessions, the undergraduates were slipping away and being replaced by researchers, postgrads and faculty!

Lewis was the Head of the Physics Department at the University of Surrey. He started thinking that teaching was a researchable subject when he was around 45 and looking for a new and interesting career change. Early experiences – such as the value of residencies and the enthusiasm of those who were contributing to their own learning – confirmed he had made a good decision. They were the best students you can have! He was soon in contact with the few people around the world who were engaging in the same work, such as Jane Abercrombie, John Clift in New Zealand, Ruth Beard and W. J. McKeachie.

I asked him about his next big project, and his reply led back to his German family history. His father was a Professor of Ancient History in the German University of Prague, and the family was helped by the British Society for the Protection of Science and Learning to leave Czechoslovakia only a few weeks before Hitler's invasion, allowing Lewis to complete his school education in Wales. Lewis now serves on the Board of Management of its successor body, CARA (the Council for Assisting Refugee Academics). In 2000, Lewis donated 33 archive boxes of papers, photographs and other materials to the Centre for German/Jewish Studies at the University of Sussex, where the web site now shows some of the highlights. The Elton/Ehrenberg Papers cover the period from the Enlightenment to the late twentieth century, relating to a network of families who were politically and culturally prominent in German/Jewish life. His mother wrote fiction and translations and maintained an extensive correspondence with many eminent people. Amongst her papers are memoirs and reminiscences, which Lewis is now translating – a struggle, he says, because she wrote beautifully and his training in physics did not equip him with the literary skills he thinks he needs. We calculated that Lewis was now in his fourth 'retirement', and – true to form – working in a wholly new area.

James Wisdom is an independent consultant and Vice Chair of SEDA.

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Professional development as a pilgrim journey

Tim Ling, Church House, Westminster

A response to Julie Hall's article 'Time to develop my career? That's a fantasy!' in Educational Developments 9.1, February 2008

Educational Developments welcomes pieces from colleagues, such as Tim, who have an educational development role in other contexts.

I really enjoyed Julie Hall's article 'Time to develop my career?', so much so that I shared it at a recent national meeting of our developers' network. However, I was also struck by her comment about reflective practice: "'Teaching the poor to eat with a fork is all very well...but what good does it do if they have not the food'" (Goldman, 1931). Reflective practice and time spring to mind!' (Hall, 2008). She could easily have said asking people to make bricks without straw (Exodus 5.18) is a more explicitly exploitative form of paternalism!

Whilst I think the 'time' issue is an important one, I also believe it is one that we should be looking at more consciously in relation to the idea of 'career'. This is a pressing issue for the Church of England's clergy for three interrelated reasons, which I believe may resonate with more mainstream professional developers.

1. *Legislation.* The Church's General Synod has just voted to introduce Terms of Service legislation for clergy, partly in response to Section 23 of the 1999 Employment Relations Act, which gave the government power to turn 'office holders' into employees. This legislation will make development review and continuing ministerial education (what the Church of England calls Continuing Professional Development) mandatory (Synod 2008).
2. *Managerialism.* There is a suspicion, shared with academics (Hall, 2008, quoting Havnes and Stensaker, 2006, et al.), of 'initiatives which

can smack of compliance, accountability and performativity' and 'institutional agenda-setting and managerialist discourse'. This is particularly evident in the recent contributions to a special edition of the journal *Studies in Christian Ethics* dedicated to the topic of 'Managerialism in the Church', Vol. 21, No.1 (2008).

3. *Role confusion.* The clergy's professional identity in the context of late modernity is one that is characterised by role confusion. A role that could once be located at the centre of society now finds both an absence of society and an experience of profound liminality (Roxburgh, 1997). It has become a contested identity and this has led, in places, to attempts to reassert status through credentials and certification.

Richard Sennett in his recent book *The Craftsman* draws attention to the roots in old English of the words 'job' and 'career'. The former meant simply a 'lump of coal' or 'pile of wood' that could be moved around at will. The latter is derived from 'a well laid road'. I find this an instructive picture when reflecting on issues of professional development in our present contexts. A similar contrast has been made by Richard Roberts (following Bauman, 1987, and Turner and Turner, 1978) who contrasts the 'pilgrim' with the 'vagabond'. A pilgrim is distinct from the vagabond in that whilst both may be subject to the vagaries of inhospitable climate (broadly conceived) the pilgrim has a destination and will travel in company. My fear is that if academics, or other vocationally orientated professionals, do not become more intentionally articulate about the nature of their 'pilgrimage', they indeed won't have time to develop their careers. This will not be for a lack of time but rather for lack of a 'career'. They will simply be vagabonds with jobs at the mercy of others' agenda, or (potentially just as

invidious) driven by their own inner demons. My hope is that it is possible to help highly autonomous vocationally orientated professionals to become more intentionally articulate, and 'time' is not the key issue, rather it is a presenting issue which points to the challenge of contested vocational identities.

Part of the reason for my hope lies in some research I carried out in 2005 into how clergy perceived their ministry and its development (unpublished internal report for the Canterbury diocese). This research focused on the outcomes of annual developmental review. One of the significant findings was the overwhelming and consistent emphasis on 'time'. In a similar way to Julie Hall's article, both the qualitative and quantitative analysis pointed to an anxiety in relation to 'time'. However, rather than this being a case of 'bricks without straw' it was for the clergy a presenting issue. The clergy, like all professions in society, academics, doctors, lawyers, etc. are striving to come to terms with their contested vocational identities (Wilson, 2001). This has resulted in a loss of confidence and an increasing degree of complexity with a myriad of competing voices expecting them to perform. Responses to this situation range from attempts to construct a new more easily defended order, naïve hope that somehow there will be a return to halcyon days, and denial (van der Ven, 1998).

The development strategy which we adopted to address this 'time anxiety' was threefold. Firstly, getting the senior management, i.e. bishops, to address the issue with the clergy and reflect with them on our theological resources. In addition, the consultants who conducted the clergy's annual development reviews were briefed to reflect with them on this issue. Secondly, we ran a series of away days with accompanying spiritual direction for clergy to help them intentionally

reconnect with their vocation. For readers for whom this may sound alien, the programme was perhaps analogous to some form of action learning and mentoring. Finally, we offered some time-management training, which addressed both personal and professional realms. I followed up my research in 2006 and 2007 looking at the quantitative data to see if it was possible to discern any effect. 'Time' ceased to be the major reporting issue it had been in 2005. Which of the interventions produced the result, if any? I don't have formal data to say, only that less than 10% completed the formal training element, e.g. time management.

I believe that helping professionals to become more articulate about their purpose and roles is key to addressing the time issue. Perhaps a strategy of well-executed professional development frameworks does have merit and we should advocate them with greater confidence, thus my enthusiasm for Julie's article! Indeed, Friedman and Greenhaus (2000), writing about the 'time-bind' cited in work/life balance literature have argued that the more challenging problem is not 'time' *per se* but the psychological interference of competing demands and expectations (see also Friedman 2008). When psychological interference is reduced this enables a greater focus on what

matters, when it matters. Knowing one's destination and travelling in company with a wise guide are key to reducing this psychological interference. It provides a space in which individuals may cultivate a habit of repeated, purposeful and focused attention and the capacity to become intentionally articulate, which in turn helps to address time anxiety. It is also at the heart of personal and organisational learning (Rock and Swartz, 2006). Personal and professional development is not a zero-sum game with a profit and loss account on time. Rather, at its heart, it's a pilgrim journey.

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'Supporting Educational Change' Awards

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

Sue Beckingham, Sheffield Hallam University

Rosemary Cooper, Dublin Institute of Technology

Graham Lewis, Aberystwyth University

Richard Lynch, Sheffield Hallam University

Jo Norris, Charles Darwin University (Australia)

Tina O'Donnell, City College Brighton and Hove

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

From co-ordinator to developer: a participant perspective on the Professional Development Framework Award: Staff and Educational Development

John Canning, University of Southampton

'So what is the career path of someone who works in a subject centre?' asked a fellow delegate at a conference – perhaps this question has not been asked as much as it ought to be. 'Umm, I could work in an educational development unit, maybe?' I fumbled, as if answering the question about a job done by somebody else. Anyway, when in autumn 2006 I was offered a chance to enrol on 'SEDA Professional Development Framework: Staff and Educational Development (SEDA-PDF)', I jumped at the opportunity. First, I thought it would be a good way to acquire knowledge and skills that could help my career development. My second (and possibly greater) motivation was to make the things I had been doing for the previous three-and-a-half years in some sense 'official' – if I had a certificate or accreditation of some kind it might help me make sense of my work and help 'legitimise' my work to others.

Why such a precarious beginning to an article about a staff development course? In common with many (most?) other subject centre staff I find my role difficult enough to explain to colleagues teaching in universities, let alone to friends, family, acquaintances, insurance companies (and other officialdom that requires that I state my occupation). I work at the University of Southampton; I have a University of Southampton library card and my pay slip has the University of Southampton logo on it. However, my role is to serve our disciplinary communities UK-wide and not just in one institution. I find that I am defined by who I am not: I am not an academic (according to Human Resources); I am not a researcher (though I do research); I am not a lecturer (though I do teach); and I am not an administrator or manager (though I organise conferences, workshops and manage projects). I am not an experienced teacher passing on years of wisdom and experience to others – I joined LLAS soon after finishing my PhD thesis and resist the suggestion that I 'teach teachers'. My colleagues and I do not teach accredited programmes for higher education teaching staff, but see our role as promoting and sharing good practice in the subject community; in this sense we differ from our colleagues in teaching and learning centres who 'assess' and 'approve' (new) academic staff through Postgraduate Certificate courses, etc.

Back to the subject of the SEDA-PDF award: I learnt a lot from my tutor Lawrie Phipps, my fellow students and from myself as I compiled my portfolio. The online discussions with Lawrie and fellow participants were lively and

invigorating. I found that I was not alone in having questions about measuring the impact of projects, wondering why some small-scale pedagogic research projects have a major impact institutionally and nationally whilst others, which seemed to promise so much when funded, deliver little. Should we fund researchers with a strong track record who are guaranteed to deliver in their particular area of expertise? And/or should we fund those with important 'big questions'? In my experience, it is those with little research experience and little knowledge of the existing literature who apply for tiny amounts of funding to answer these bigger questions. Previously, I judged the success or failure of a project on the potential impact the project made on wider practice in the subject community. Now I think of the projects as a development process for the researchers – a radical departure from my prior thinking.

In view of this sense of 'otherness' the course helped me to identify myself as an educational developer for the first time. The sixth SEDA value, 'Developing people and processes', was an especially challenging one. I had never thought of myself as someone who 'developed people', and I was (and remain) slightly resistant to the idea. However, the course helped me to acquire a greater appreciation for the skills and experiences I had before I joined LLAS and those which I have developed since. These skills have enabled me to contribute directly and indirectly to the development of colleagues. For example, I co-teach workshops on research methods for people wishing to start their own pedagogic research – many practitioners in our subject areas have little experience and knowledge of using social science research methods, but I had not seen this as 'developing people and processes'.

Seeing myself as an educational developer has enabled me to get a better sense of my possible career path and potentially opens up many opportunities. My SEDA membership has raised my awareness of a wide and diverse community of practice. I would highly recommend the course to others who are relatively new to educational development and wish to gain knowledge and recognition in this growing field.

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Learning and Learning Spaces for the 21st Century

Dr Paul Martin, University of Brighton

This paper reflects on the experiences of the University of Brighton Creativity Centre as a learning environment in the context of Higher Education's responses to the pressures for change from society, government and business.

Since the 1950s in the United Kingdom there has been an 'elite to mass' change in the numbers of people entering higher education, driven by the twin ideals of creating a fairer society and increasing capital for the economy. As the number and diversity of students has increased, so too has what Toffler (1970) called the increasingly 'rapid obsolescence of knowledge'. Alongside this the government has called for greater efficiency within HE and this pressure together with the development of a business ethic has led to the commodification of education within the sector.

The responses to these pressures for change within Higher Education are many and varied including: changes in teaching methods, the increased use of technology, the expansion of distance and blended learning approaches and the development of new buildings and learning spaces and environments.

Learning environments

There is a danger that learning spaces are only perceived as a physical space yet the 'learning space' can be conceptualised as comprising a 'physical space', a 'virtual space' and a 'personal psychological space' and even a 'biological space'. All these 'spaces' may impact on the individual's ability to learn.

The *physical space* is the environment in which learning activity takes place. This may vary in nature dependent on personal preference or need or



University of Brighton Creativity Centre with third-year degree students in a workshop

chosen discipline from writer, artist, designer or engineer. It is important that the physical space supports the learning process and does not obstruct it in the way that fixed lecture theatres can inhibit learner participation.

The *psychological space* for learning is shaped by many characteristics of the individual and by the contexts in which they live, work, socialise and learn. A learner's personal values, beliefs and perceptions arise from cultural influences of family, friends, religion, society, gender, profession, discipline and biographical experiences. These form the basis of the filters through which learners decide how, or even if, to engage in learning activities or creative processes. Further perceptions surrounding attitudes and expectations of fellow learners and teachers or employers, even one's emotional state, may also positively or negatively affect the outcomes of engagement in learning.

The *virtual space* encompasses not only connections between individuals and groups locally but also to the wider community through the worldwide web. Opportunities for

learners can be provided in various interactive forms, but also the learner has greater freedom to make connections and to trace interests and interest groups in the virtual environment. In addition, the potential to collaborate with other institutions both in the UK and in other countries is far greater through communication in the virtual space than it could ever be in the physical space. There are, however, barriers to the use of e-learning technologies that need to be better understood.

Finally, the *biological space* can be characterised by the individual's physical and mental ability to engage with learning. The neuroscientist Susan Greenfield (2008) even states that depending on the type of training the brain receives, it creates and strengthens certain synapses or pathways and this can increase the individual's tendency to react to input in an almost pre-determined way, thus limiting learning potential.

Physical Learning Spaces

Education institutions have been modernising their buildings and learning spaces to support the perceived shift in learner requirements, pedagogic approaches

and the effect of new technology. Although there is much anecdotal evidence from education practitioners that learning spaces can affect the learning process, there is surprisingly little hard evidence as yet to support the premise that improvements in the learning environment improve learning. In their literature review 'The Impact of School Environments' for the Design Council in 2005, the researchers found that, 'It is extremely difficult to come to firm conclusions about the impact of learning environments because of the multi-faceted nature of environments and the subsequent diverse and disconnected nature of research literature'. Both this and the 'Spaces for Learning' (2006) review of learning spaces in further and higher education for the Scottish Funding Council agree that there is evidence that poor ventilation or noise can have negative effects on staff and learners. However, the positive effects on learning are less clear when learning environments come up to the minimum standards, though there is some evidence that staff and students respond positively to enhanced buildings and landscaping.

The University of Brighton Creativity Centre

It was against this background that 'InQbate', the Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL), received funding to build a creative space in each of the partner universities, namely Sussex and Brighton. Brighton's 'Creativity Centre' (www.brighton.ac.uk/creativity) was launched in March 2007; its mission is to 'enhance creativity in learning', 'enhance creativity in facilitating learning' and to 'enhance the creative process'.

The physical presence or environment comprises two technology-enhanced spaces and offices for centre staff. The main space called 'Leonardo' is approximately 10 x 13 metres in size with a capacity of 60 seated comfortably but ideally no more than 30-40 for workshops. It is a re-configurable space that can be left empty to allow free movement or, with the aid of the write-on-able moving wall panels, can be easily

divided into a variety of smaller areas for group work. The environmental controls include temperature controls, coloured lights, a sound system and a range of aromas that can be altered to help create or change mood. The space has a five-metre stereo curved back projection screen and a three-sided cell that can create total immersion for groups or individuals. It also has seven ceiling-mounted projectors controllable centrally or from individual wall sockets and the space has E connectivity throughout.

The smaller space named 'Galileo' can seat 40 and has 3D projection capability and the technology to observe what is going on in Leonardo. A wide variety of technical and facilitative back-up is available in the centre to help programming of the local environment and support learning activities.

The centre staff are all experienced educationalists with a variety of backgrounds and are available to help users plan or even deliver sessions.

Insights and Issues

After the first year of operation there are already findings emerging from observations and evaluations of sessions held in the centre. Activities have already been wide-ranging

including student presentations/assessments, brainstorming sessions for industry, a writers' retreat, a product design day, several e-learning days, blogging, research and environmental conferences, planning sessions for various university units, etc.

The strongest finding to emerge so far has been an almost unanimous agreement from facilitators and learners alike that the flexibility of the space has had a very positive effect on the learning process. The main factors include: the easily re-configurable space made possible by the moveable wall panels and the ability to write on those panels; the versatility of the projection system; the mood changes available through the lighting and sound systems; the e-learning facilities. The flexibility of the physical spaces alone has enabled the use of more creative approaches to learning, allowing, for example, a group to split into small groups, move between bases and reform into the large group easily.

Observations have also reinforced the team's views that the quality of teaching/facilitation is core to the success or failure of the learning or creativity that may take place. Sessions where the facilitators are more learner-focused and who have



University of Brighton Creativity Centre with moveable write-on-able walls in action - and bean bags

familiarised themselves with the centre's possibilities and planned with the help of the centre staff, have been generally more successful. It is also apparent that teachers who take a more didactic approach are less inclined to visit and plan sessions with the centre staff beforehand and this limits the potential outcomes for learners.

Sometimes both learners and teachers seem reluctant to move around or reconfigure the space and use it creatively, using the space as a traditional lecture room. This appears to be a combination of a lack of facilitative skills and fear of leaving the comfort zone of traditional teacher control on the one side, and learners' nervousness or lack of understanding as to how to actively engage in the learning or creative process on the other. From the learner perspective, transformational learning and creativity need a safe environment in which to be fostered and whilst the space may be 'nice' to be in, facilitators need to actively develop a safe psychological space and adopt techniques that encourage the necessary risks inherent in the creative process.

Learning, learning spaces and education philosophy

If one views the post-modern world as Bauman (2000) sees it, as in a state of 'liquid modernity', then the theory of learning which correlates with this world-view is 'social constructivism', in which meaning and knowledge are created and re-created within each individual through social interaction. If we view learning as meaning making, it requires a fluid state of possibilities where the elements are essentially uncertain and a corresponding facilitative approach to learning becomes a necessity. Erica McWilliam (2007) in her paper 'Unlearning how to teach' argues that a shift from 'sage on the stage' to 'guide on the side' has enabled focus to shift from teacher- to learner-centred education. However, to address present and future needs of learners she proposes a change of the teacher to 'meddler-in-the-middle' or even to co-creator. In this view of the learning/teaching process, the learner and teacher make a joint inquiry into



University of Sussex Creativity Centre

the process of learning.

If, as Jarvis (1992) states, education is 'frequently regarded as a humanistic process', then this is in conflict when '...the very nature of society in which education occurs emphasises the having mode and expects repetitive action and non-reflective learning so that it can produce people who can rehearse what they have acquired'. This view is reflected in Feinberg's (cited by Carr in Wellington, 1993) two paradigms of the social function of education. In the first, he sees education as mainly economic and vocational and concerned mainly with '...the transmission of technically exploitable knowledge'. In the second, he sees education as mainly political and cultural and intended to '...further social participation... through the development of interpretive understanding'. Nussbaum (1997) sees the two philosophical agenda underlying modern liberal education as similar to those in ancient Rome. The older one was an education to initiate the elite into the time-honoured traditions of their own society, seeking continuity and discouraging critical reflection. The 'new' idea, favoured by Seneca, however '...interprets the word *liberalis* differently. An education is truly "fitted for freedom" only if it is such as to produce free citizens, citizens who are free not because of wealth or birth, but because they can call their minds their own' (Nussbaum,

1997, 293).

Message to educators

For educators, education managers and politicians alike, their philosophy of learning underpins their approach to teaching and the environments where that happens. If we want an open, free, developing, democratic society, then we as educators need to ensure that learners have the skills to enquire and make their own decisions and are enabled to live Socrates' 'examined life'. From our researches in the Creativity Centre our advice to HE to enable this is:

- Stop building lecture theatres and non-reconfigurable classrooms
- Develop more open flexible learning spaces (beanbags optional)
- Develop and support staff to move away from lecture mode towards more learner-centred approaches which empower the learners to make their own meaning.

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e-Learning Course Design Intensives: disrupting the norms of curriculum design

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At one level, this article is about a type of intervention to support e-learning, the Course Design Intensives (CDIs) at Oxford Brookes University. It might also be read at another level, as a recommendation to transform 'business as usual' in the curriculum design process in our institutions. The paper focuses on drawing out some lessons from five years of implementing and evaluating CDIs at Oxford Brookes University, relates the CDIs to similar interventions in two other UK universities, and discusses the 'transferability' of the format.

Introduction

We seem to be caught in a conundrum. In a relatively short time the institutional Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) has proliferated and become mission critical in UK Higher Education (Jenkins *et al.*, 2005). Now, a new wave of excitement about the transformative potential of technology accompanies the rise of Web 2.0 – blogs, wikis, social networks, social bookmarks. Yet, so far, the potential of e-learning to foster innovation in pedagogy has not been realised (Hedberg, 2006).

On the plus side, there is evidence that macro-level interventions can make a difference. The Pew Grant programme in course redesign in the USA showed that systematic, institution-level course redesign activities can generate real benefits in how technology is used in higher education. Twigg (2005) cites enhanced quality of learning, improved retention, diversifying access to higher education learning opportunities, increasing capacity (student numbers) and reducing costs in US universities and colleges as results of the Pew Grant programme. In the UK the HEFCE-funded e-learning Benchmarking and Pathfinder programme (see <http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/ourwork/learning/elearning/pathfinder>) is a similar, macro-level intervention. Differences in the penetration of e-learning in the US and UK mean that Pathfinder 'aimed at building the capacity to produce the kind of proposals that Pew Grant funded' (Mayes and Morrison 2008, p 8). This programme has just drawn to a close and it will likely be some time before the impacts of the exercise become clear.

What is clear is that in thinking about mainstreaming e-learning many Pathfinder institutions were thinking hard about course redesign. 'Most of the Pathfinder pilot projects can be regarded as in some sense raising awareness of e-learning in the course design process', and fully one third of them 'trialled new methods for working directly with course teams across the institution' (Mayes and Morrison, 2008, p. 11).

This suggests that an approach that can help to unlock the paradox of widespread use of technology and low levels of transformative pedagogy is to transform *how* we do

curriculum development. 'Course design is complicated, and often remains a private, tacit process' say Sharpe and Oliver (2007, p. 43). Yet the literature is replete with recommendations for multi-professional course team approaches to e-learning development (see, for example, Laurillard, 1993; American Productivity and Quality Centre, 1999; Calvert, 2001). More than ten years ago an evaluation of the Teaching and Learning Technology Programme (TLTP) noted that expanded, multi-professional design teams could be associated with success in e-learning development (HEFCE, 1996).

This echoes with a recent review of UK undergraduate blended e-learning which identified course redesign as a key success factor for blended e-learning. The report (Sharpe *et al.*, 2006b, p. 4) noted that:

'...the valuable features of course redesign were identified as: undertaking an analysis of the current course, collecting and making use of student feedback, undertaking the design as a team, designs which make explicit their underlying principles, and developing the course iteratively over a number of years.'

The Oxford Brookes University CDIs are an example of a meso-level intervention that aims to disrupt the 'norms' of privacy and tacitness associated with curriculum design, making the process more public, explicit, and team-based. The CDIs do not address how to mainstream e-learning. That requires other levers, like institutional learning, teaching and assessment strategies. CDIs are for course teams who have *already* decided to design e-learning into their courses. They are about changing business as usual in the process of course design and they aim to facilitate the creation of transformative designs.

Evaluating three team-based course design intervention formats

We have been evaluating and modifying our CDIs since their inception in 2003. In that time almost 140 staff from around 30 course teams in three institutions have participated in CDIs. Our evaluation data includes regular end-of-event surveys of participants and short, informal group interviews of selected participants in some events. An interview-based evaluation of the impact of the CDIs on past participants' e-learning design behaviours and their teams' e-learning developments is on-going and should be completed by the end of autumn 2008.

In 2008, the Oxford Centre for Staff and Learning Development (OCSLD) was a partner in two HEA-funded Pathfinder continuation projects, enabling us to experience and to some extent evaluate the principles and methods used in three team-based course design workshop formats.

The Cheetah project involved delivery of the University of Leicester's Carpe Diem format (see Armellini and Jones, 2008), developed by Gilly Salmon, at six Pathfinder institutions. Cheetah included reciprocal delivery of Carpe Diem and CDIs at Brookes and Leicester respectively, enabling both sides to experience and evaluate each other's workshop format.

The CABLE Transfer project involved the delivery of the University of Hertfordshire's CABLE process, a format based on the Higher Education Academy's (HEA) Change Academy model (see Anderson *et al.*, 2008), to four Pathfinder institutions. OCSLD is the external evaluator of CABLE Transfer, investigating 'institutional readiness' factors for CABLE and its impact on the departments engaged with it.

Finally, during academic year 2007-8 OCSLD worked on a CDI transfer project with the University of Brighton as part of their Pathfinder project. OCSLD consultants worked closely with Brighton's Centre for Learning and Teaching (CLT) and Learning Technology Group (LTG) on the project. We co-delivered three sets of CDIs for over a dozen course teams at Brighton, aiming to gradually shift 'ownership' of the format to Brighton. Over the course of these events we handed over all the workshop materials and Brighton personnel eventually took over facilitating their own events.

Team-based course design

A briefing paper (see Benfield 2008) explains in more detail than is possible here how the CDIs work. A wiki site (see <https://mw.brookes.ac.uk/display/CDIs/Home>) shows examples of the structure of events, materials used in them and the outputs that teams produce.

The original idea for the Brookes CDI format is unashamedly borrowed from Gilly Salmon's Carpe Diem and so the two formats strongly resemble each other. The CDIs came about and were nurtured by an institutional e-learning strategy (see Sharpe *et al.*, 2006a). Essentially the format involves bringing several course teams together in one place for two days. The teams are expanded, multi-professional teams that include the academic teaching staff, educational developers, learning technologists, subject librarians and, where possible, course administrators. On the first day teams work largely without computers, reviewing their primary objectives, making explicit their reasons for adopting e-learning and mapping out a top-level 'blueprint' of the programme. This is very similar to day one of the Carpe Diem workshop.

However, unlike Carpe Diem, which involves just one team, the Brookes CDIs usually involve multiple course teams from a variety of disciplines. Partly because of this multi-disciplinarity, the CDIs tend to offer more input than Carpe Diems. We present a range of examples of e-learning applications, design models and techniques, aiming to inspire participants with at least some of these and challenging them to think afresh about how their course might run. The notion of *challenge*, in a supportive, collegial environment, underpins the whole CDI process.

On the second CDI day, like Carpe Diem the design work includes building one or more e-learning activities in their chosen technology/software environment. Participants work

in their teams for much of the time. However, where Carpe Diems bring in a 'critical friend' on day two to review and feedback on designs, the CDIs involve more frequent peer review on both days. Each team acts as critical friends to other teams. A common feature of all three formats is making designs/plans *explicit* and sharing them with colleagues for review.

Our sense of the CABLE approach is that it has many similarities with these two formats, but tends to focus in more depth on team building and longer-term planning for change at departmental level. Like CDI and Carpe Diem, CABLE involves a two-day main workshop event, but unlike its cousins the CABLE one is residential. Like Carpe Diem and the CDIs, it involves a pre-workshop planning process and post-event follow-up and support, although the specific nature of these varies across the three formats.

An important difference between CABLE and its cousins is that CABLE seems to have formalised student involvement. Both CDI and Carpe Diem facilitators are keen to normalise student involvement in the design process as well. Experience has shown that when students are involved they generate rich insights into the appropriateness of designs.

What have we learned?

A resounding refrain of our evaluations is, as one participant put it, that these events provide a 'fantastic opportunity to have three days! (unheard of) to work with like-minded colleagues'. As another participant put it, the CDI gave them 'time to think, plan and explore in greater depth'. All three events described here – CDIs, Carpe Diems, CABLE – deliver on this benefit and are effective at changing 'business as usual' in course design.

Beyond these essential elements – working in extended teams, intensively for at least two days, aiming to produce real outputs – it is not clear that any particular aspects of the workshop formats need to be invariant when they are transferred to other institutions. At Brookes we have been adaptable, promiscuous even, with the CDI format, adjusting it to suit special requests or requirements by course teams. We have been asked to run a CDI for just one team, to extend the format to three days or compress it to one, and we have never said 'no'. Our first priority as developers is to make connections with course teams so that we can support them in the longer term. Our impression is that our Leicester colleagues are less likely to adapt the Carpe Diem format, although materials and activities from it may well be used in other development activities that are adapted to specific teams or individuals.

We have seen considerable success in transferring all three formats from their parent institutions to others. It is too early to elaborate specific institutional readiness factors – reports will be published in due course – but it is clear that whichever format is adopted, a 'fit' needs to be found with the institutional context, especially internal organisational structures, learning and teaching and e-learning strategies, and in particular with the specific institution's key e-learning support people and the technologies they use. A good part of our University of Brighton colleagues' successful adaptation of the CDIs appears to have involved refining

tactics for identifying suitable candidate teams and adapting their facilitation methods to match where those teams are at in their e-learning journeys.

We have found that the CDIs – and Carpe Diems and CABLE in their host institutions – are an important plank within a portfolio of available e-learning development activities for institutions moving into large-scale e-learning redesign work. The presence of CDIs within our portfolio of staff development activities allows us to capitalise on serendipitous connections with teams or individuals seeking new ways to address educational issues or problems. The CDIs are not a self-contained package; they are more the beginning of a process. The model explicitly involves the promise of follow-up support to course teams for the longer term, with expectations of regular consultation and feedback indefinitely. Our evaluation project is showing that this perception is usually shared by CDI participants. The aim is to build trust between developers and academic and support staff and to support the model of longer-term, iterative improvements to course designs mentioned above.

CDI-like processes may provide quick wins – an early Brookes CDI participant team succeeded in virtually overnight (well, six months anyway!) moving their whole academic school from low levels of e-learning to almost every undergraduate student being engaged in interactive e-learning. Nevertheless, the real benefits accrue when the institutional commitment to CDI-like interventions is long term. With the best will in the world, course teams might be prevented from meeting their objectives by events beyond their control, like sudden losses of staff, funding or markets for courses. For example, a Brookes programme team participated in two CDIs, *four years apart*, before they brought their new, online MA to fruition.

A real advantage of the Brookes CDIs has been that involving educational developers at a very early stage of course design/redesign tends to facilitate evaluation being built into the design. In some cases this means curriculum teams engage developers as external evaluators of the course. As we have noted elsewhere (Sharpe *et al.*, 2006b), the more impressive examples of e-learning designs, those that are sustainable and make real impact on the student experience, tend to involve several years of iterative development drawing heavily on student feedback.

In conclusion, expanded, multi-professional, team-based course design is not 'business as usual'. The approach needs institutional commitment. A problem that CDI-like formats face is making it possible for multi-professional course teams to find two or more days to come together. Moving to team-based curriculum development requires explicit institutional resourcing, not because it is expensive of resources – it isn't necessarily and may offer efficiency gains – but because current institutional processes rarely acknowledge, facilitate or accept this way of working.

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The Development of a Generic Work-based Learning Programme

Dr David Johnson, Independent Consultant

Introduction

This piece sets out the design considerations for a generic work-based learning programme. It is based upon work carried out for a lifelong learning network and the author's own knowledge and experience of work-based learning as a student, course designer, programme manager, and external examiner.

Most of us working in Further or Higher Education are probably aware of the strong emphasis being placed by employers and the Government on the development of high levels of skills within the workforce. The latest attempt to address this is the 2006 Leitch Report, which made a number of recommendations designed to:

- Increase adult skills across all levels
- Strengthen the employer voice
- Increase employer engagement and investment in skills
- Improve engagement between employers and universities.

Leitch also advocates any provision being demand-led by employers. This is probably as much of a challenge for employers as it is for education providers. In any event, it serves as yet another driver for colleges and universities to recognise the need to engage with workforce development, chiefly through the provision of work-based learning programmes that are recognised as equivalent to – yet different from – traditional academic programmes. It is also a theme identified by the Higher Education Academy; in 2008 it stated that: 'There will be some benefits for universities in this approach, with regard to generating new and potentially high-volume markets, particularly at a time of demographic downturn among young people in the 18-20 age bracket.'

This piece draws on a consultancy project undertaken in early 2008 to

design a generic work-based learning programme leading to a series of awards – Certificate, Diploma, Certificate in HE, Diploma in HE, Foundation Degree, BA/Sc/Eng, BA Hons, Pg Certificate, Pg Diploma, Master's and Professional Doctorate. The project was carried out on behalf of a lifelong learning network and I believe it represents an innovative approach to curriculum development. The learning and teaching is focused on the workplace and the learner's personal and professional practice thereby changing the focus from the abstract nature of theory to the real nature of practice.

The challenge was to provide a work-based learning pathway through Higher Education with clear progression opportunities that establish parity between work-based learning and academic learning, operating within the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications.

Why a generic programme? Firstly, it overcomes the costs involved in designing bespoke programmes on a case-by-case basis. Such programmes may only ever be taken by one cohort. A second reason for a generic design was to allow for a quicker response to demands from employers and learners for an appropriate work-based programme.

This paper, then, offers a practical 'how to' guide to designing a generic work-based learning programme, setting out the issues that need to be considered. The aim is to enable practitioners, charged with the design of new programmes, to decide the extent to which it could be adopted in its entirety or which parts will need to be left out, given the context of their institutions and their regulatory frameworks. This contextualisation would be achieved through a combination of:

- The focus of the learner's study
- The use of contextualised material for particular groups of learners
- The use of guest speakers and master classes
- The involvement of tutors and practitioners with expertise in that particular field as part of the course team
- Action-learning sets facilitated by individuals with expertise in that particular field.

The programme had to comply with the QAA's Code of Practice for Work-based and Placement Learning (September 2007).

Glossary of terms

Given below are a set of definitions for the key terms and components of a work-based learning programme.

APEL/APCL

Learning that takes place before entry to the programme. APCL is accredited prior certificated learning while APEL is accredited prior experiential learning that can be mapped against specified or generic level descriptors and learning outcomes that can be counted towards the current course of study.

Learning contract

This is prepared by the student and defines, in a stage-by-stage way, the programme of study to be followed. This would be signed by the student (to signify that it meets their personal and professional needs), the University (to signify that it meets the academic requirements of the programme), and, where appropriate, the employer (to signify that it agrees to and will support the proposed programme of study).

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| <p>Negotiated modules</p> <p>Modules that are defined by the student and agreed to by the university and, where appropriate, the employer. These may be work-based or subject-based modules.</p> |
| <p>Student or employer defined programmes</p> <p>A programme of learning that meets certain University expectations for an award but is focused around a learning situation set out by the learner and the employer.</p> |
| <p>Work-based learning</p> <p>Encompasses all activities that represent independent enquiry and achievement (research, development, design, technology transfer, and other forms of cognate endeavour) that take place in the workplace.</p> |
| <p>Work-based learning unit</p> <p>The Board of Study within the University responsible for the approval and management of students on work-based programmes of study.</p> |
| <p>Workplace</p> <p>Exists outside of formal educational structures or designated teaching spaces, and also at times outside of formal employment.</p> |

Key considerations

In developing the programme, employers and employer-related organisations would be encouraged to participate in the design or choice of any specialist modules, periodic review, delivery of the programme, and learner assessment. For many years programmes have been designed in conjunction with employers, but that has tended to be the limit of their involvement.

Learners would be permitted, as appropriate, to determine their award title through the focus of the learning

undertaken. This focus would be demonstrated through a combination of the modules taken, their work-based assignments, and any work-based projects submitted. For example, a student, who may be a curriculum head in an FE College, studying for a Pg Certificate in Management, may, through the focus of their learning, prefer to receive the award of Pg Certificate in Further Education Management or Pg Certificate in Management (Further Education).

Learners would be required to submit their case for any variation to the basic award title to the appropriate Board of Study and demonstrate that their particular focus amounts to at least 60% of the programme's curriculum.

In designing the programme, account was taken of the content and operation of work-based learning programmes at other institutions. This has enabled the design of the programme to take account of good practice elsewhere and to highlight potential obstacles and their resolution.

The following are examples of where good practice and useful experience can be found: National Centre for Work-based Learning, Middlesex University; University of Brighton; University of Portsmouth; University College of Chester; De Montfort University; University of Derby; Coventry University.

I will now move on to consider the design principles of the programme in more detail.

Programme Structure and Content

Modules

The programme should have a suite of modules from which learners can make their own selection in order to construct a programme of study. Some of these modules will be generic modules that can be used at each level of study and for varying amounts of credit. The following modules should be included:

- Learning contract

- Recognition and Accreditation of Prior Learning. (This module will need to be an optional module as not all learners will want or be able to make a claim.)
- Negotiated Work-based Projects
- Action Learning
- Negotiated Independent Study (Negotiated independent study can take a number of forms but the rationale for this will be covered in the learning contract. Where appropriate, learners can, for example, enrol on a taught module within the University, undertake the study of a topic area that will support their work-based project(s) or workplace needs, or attend an external training course. As appropriate, the University may develop specific taught modules for a particular employer or employer body.)
- Reflective Learning.

Pattern of delivery

The programme should support flexible delivery modes and study patterns to facilitate the needs of learners from a variety of backgrounds through the design and organisation of the programme. This will enable the programme to be available to students who are located locally, regionally, nationally and internationally, or who have to move locations during the course of their studies.

The programmes should utilise some, all, or a combination of, group work, short residentials, workshops, discussion forums, online delivery of materials, action-learning sets (actual and virtual) and master classes as appropriate. Learners on this programme should be able, as part of any independent negotiated study, to enrol on an existing, taught University module if it is appropriate to their programme of study.

Attendance at master classes should be open to practitioners in that particular field as a continuous professional development activity. This will also serve as an introduction to the college or university and the programme, and provide a further example of their engagement with workforce development.

Learning contracts

Each learner's programme of study should start with the development of a learning contract which will define their programme of learning and therefore serves the same purpose as a programme specification or curriculum for a conventional academic course. It will allow the learner to create a programme of study that directly relates to their own unique set of personal, vocational, professional or educational interests, needs and circumstances.

This should be a credit-bearing module, since this is what drives the learning, and the effort required in constructing a learning contract. The learner should be provided with a template setting out the format of the learning contract.

The learning contract should be negotiated by the learner with their designated tutor, and should be approved by the University and, where appropriate, the employer, to meet a set of pre-defined learning outcomes which are based upon QAA generic level indicators. The Learning contract should be an organic document that learners will be able to re-negotiate in the light of any changing circumstances.

Recognition and Accreditation of Prior Learning

The programme should have a Recognition and Accreditation module that will allow learners at whatever level to claim credit up to the maximum allowed under a university's regulations. Any shortfall between what learners can successfully claim and the requirements of the programme will be met from the remaining modules.

The module will require the learner to submit a portfolio, typically of 2-3000 words equivalence, that includes a reflective summary of areas of prior learning linked to the appropriate level indicators, with signposting to the evidence provided.

This will allow students to claim for small amounts of learning equivalent to at least five credits, which can then be assessed individually or assembled

with other small learning episodes for assessment to meet the learning outcomes/level descriptors of a specified module. The rationale for this is that significant learning can derive from seemingly small-scale activity. Not all learners will be in a position to undertake large-scale activities that equate to the requirements of a single, double or treble module.

These small amounts of learning may derive from:

- Small, work-based projects
- In-house staff development training courses
- External training courses
- Development work
- Publication of an article in an in-company journal or trade publication
- Production of an artefact
- Work-based activities.

The academic credits that are then awarded will be for demonstrating the achievement of intended learning outcomes and not for having undertaken a particular activity.

A successful claim must demonstrate:

- Acceptability – is there an appropriate match between the evidence presented and the learning being demonstrated? Is the evidence valid and reliable?
- Sufficiency – is there sufficient evidence to demonstrate fully the achievement of the learning claimed?
- Authenticity – is the evidence clearly related to the learner's own efforts and achievements?
- Currency – does the evidence relate to current learning?

Where an APEL/APCL claim is made, it should conform to the QAA Guidelines on the Accreditation of Prior Learning and to the following set of basic principles, namely:

- All credit awarded is based on learning, not experience. Experience is valuable as a source of learning but it is the learning itself that is assessed and therefore accredited

- All learning must be expressed in the form of a set, or sets, of learning outcomes or statements. This enables the learning to be described and allows assessment
- The APL process is learner-led. Tutor and documentary support is part of the process but the onus is on the learner to define and provide the evidence of their own learning
- APL is a staged procedure that includes a planning and reflection process, an evidence-gathering process, and an assessment process where the evidence is assessed and credit is awarded as appropriate.

In dealing with APEL/APCL in this way, the effect will be to see it as very much part of the learning process rather than as a means of avoiding or reducing the amount of study involved.

Additionally, locating the recognition and accreditation of prior learning within a module will also have the effect of allowing the University to levy a module fee and therefore derive income from what may otherwise have been a no-income-producing and therefore unattractive activity.

The module will have a module leader and this together with the process outlined above will help ensure that the process of assessment will be transparent, consistent and auditable.

Reflective Learning

The programme should include provision for reflective learning as there is a clear link between being a reflective practitioner and an effective practitioner. The development of learners as reflective practitioners will help with the promotion of independent and lifelong learning. Learners will be required to keep reflective learning journals and/or reflect on their learning as part of each assignment.

Entry Requirements

Recruitment

The programme should have clear entry routes, including APCL/APEL, to promote increased access and participation.

It has to be recognised that work-based learning will not suit all learners and it would be doing them and their employers a disservice if they were enrolled on a programme that did not meet their learning needs. It will be important, therefore, that as a programme is developed with an employer, provision is made for opportunities to talk to prospective learners, as a group or individually, to ensure they have as much information as possible as to what is involved so that they can make an informed decision, and to draw their attention to alternatives.

Teaching, Learning and Assessment

The programme should be based upon good practice and/or innovations in learning and teaching and should use a wide range of approaches to learning, teaching and assessment.

The learning and teaching strategy of this programme should be based on an approach that values professional effectiveness over content coverage. The aim should be to equip learners with the skills and attributes of an autonomous, lifelong, professional learner and the pedagogy underpinning this programme should place emphasis on the:

- Discovery, critical understanding and use of academic models appropriate to personal and professional development. (Content)
- Incorporation of a blend of theory and practice into a body of self-awareness and knowledge constructed by each group of learners and the wider community of practice. (Knowledge construction)
- Reflection and consolidation of the learning through contemplation, discussion and other group processes. (Reflection and consolidation)

The programme should support flexible delivery modes and study patterns to facilitate the needs of learners from a variety of backgrounds through the design and organisation of the programme.

The programme should use appropriate and relevant assessment methods for work-based learning including:

- Assignments
- Projects
- Portfolios
- Production of artefacts
- Group Projects
- Student Conferences
- Presentations.

The learner should have increasing degrees of autonomy according to the level of award sought, to negotiate their own content, assessments, and to define appropriate assessment criteria. This will be facilitated by members of the course team concerned and formalised within the Learning contract.

The programme should encourage employers to participate in, or contribute to, the assessment process. The employer should be invited to provide formative feedback on the work undertaken by a learner which may then be taken into account by the tutors concerned when awarding the mark or grade. It needs to be recognised that there may be instances where the employer may be best placed to make the summative assessment, and in those cases the course team will need to carry out development activities such as assessment workshops to help ensure quality and standards.

Programme Resources

There is a debate to be had about where such a programme should be located within a college or university. Should it be located in a school or in a centre? Clearly different institutions have their own views on this, but my own view is that this programme should be approved and located in a centre or unit with appropriate administrative provision to track students on what potentially will be a complex programme.

There should be core academic provision within the unit for programme managers. The aim of this is to ensure that each level of the programme provides a suitable learning experience and that academic

standards are maintained. This core provision, along with the associates appointed, will provide pastoral support to students and act as liaison with employer partners.

Tutors for the programme could be recruited in a number of ways: permanent appointments, secondments and the use of associates. The use of associates is particularly attractive as they will bring not only academic but also practitioner knowledge to the learning process. Over time it is likely that some associates will be individuals who have completed a work-based learning programme and will have familiarity with this form of study.

Associates appointed by the centre or unit are appointed through the usual college or university policies and practices. It is particularly relevant for our work that appropriate developmental arrangements are in place. Associates should attend staff development sessions, observe the work of more experienced course team members, and be encouraged to attend relevant courses and workshops.

Employer partners should be supported through the process of identifying and, where necessary, training their staff who will be coaching and mentoring learners on the programme. Consideration could then be given by the college or university to introducing a Certificate in Coaching or Mentoring Learners in the Workplace as part of this.

External examiners should be appointed who can comment on the academic standards of the programme and also the practitioner aspects. It is unlikely that both aspects can be covered by the same person, meaning that more than one external examiner will need to be appointed.

In my experience the 'academic' external examiner does not have to be necessarily a work-based learning practitioner. There is a lot to be said for having a traditional academic take on the role because it is very satisfying for a course team to convince such a person and to gain their endorsement.

Conclusion

Work-based learning provides an alternative to traditional academic learning, enabling colleges and universities to widen their portfolio of courses and engage with workforce development.

It cannot be stressed enough that work-based learning is equivalent to, although different from, traditional academic learning, and as an approach to learning it will not suit all learners and therefore it provides an

alternative pathway helping to widen participation.

This paper has shared some of the design considerations for a generic work-based learning programme that should help those charged with, or motivated to, design such a programme, and those who support them and their programme team.

David Johnson is an independent Education and Management Consultant. He previously worked in the public

sector and Coventry Business School as subject head for Management and Organisational Behaviour. Since 1996 he has been involved in work-based learning as a student (he was awarded a professional doctorate from Middlesex University in 2005) and as a designer of work-based learning courses. He has researched and published in the field of work-based learning. David can be contacted via e-mail at: davejohnson1212@hotmail.co.uk.

News from the International Council for Educational Development

James Wisdom, SEDA Vice Chair

This year's Council was held around the biannual conference at Salt Lake City in June. Representatives from 17 of the 20+ networks were able to attend the meetings, in the Fort Douglas Officers' Club at the University of Utah.

One of the main functions of the Council is to enable the sharing of experience, and time is set aside for a country-by-country description of each national network. These can be anything from loose, informal networks to properly constituted charities (like SEDA). One trend was that some of the informal networks were moving towards a more formal structure. Another was that the increase in workload was pushing some networks towards paying for administrative support. The shift towards (semi-)compulsory teacher training was making an impact on some networks, and in the case of Thailand, causing one to come into existence. More details will be found on the ICED web site at www.osds.uwa.edu.au/iced.

Perhaps the most significant feature of this meeting was that it finally endorsed a formal, written constitution. Since its creation, ICED itself has been a loose network, but one which holds conferences, supports the journal *International Journal for Academic Development* (IJAD), and pays for an administration. This work is all derived from income from conferences (since IJAD no longer covers its costs) and in recent years Kristine Mason O'Connor has acted as ICED's Treasurer, with an account held at the Association of Commonwealth Universities.

The worldwide growth of educational development is leading to the formation of new networks. Estonia joined last year, Thailand this year, and new networks are being formed

in Japan, China, Malaysia and possibly Turkey. ICED needs to be able to handle this process of growth.

At the same time, the demands on ICED are growing – for example, many existing networks want to be able to support emerging networks or networks in developing countries, but working in partnership across the world needs funding.

IJAD is expanding. Now at three issues a year, it is hoping to move to four, while maintaining the same submission rate. It uses an international 'pool' of reviewers and is now the journal of choice for international academic development. In discussions with the publisher about revenue, we learnt of the growth and financial importance of single article downloads. All the details, and subscription rates, can be viewed at www.tandf.co.uk/journals/routledge/1360144X.html.

275 delegates from 42 countries attended the ICED Conference *Towards a Global Scholarship of Educational Development* at the University of Utah, immaculately organised by Lynn Sorenson and her team from Brigham Young University. The papers and proposals can be viewed at www.iced2008.org.

Joan Rue Domingo, from Spain's network RED-U, offered Barcelona as the venue for the 2010 Conference, partly in the hope that ICED may be a catalyst for the support of educational development in Spanish-speaking Latin America.

James Wisdom is an independent consultant and Vice Chair of SEDA.

News from SEDA

Committees update

SEDA is pleased to welcome three new members to its Executive Committee: Simon Ball from TechDis, John Lea from Canterbury Christ Church University and Ann Rumpus from the University of Westminster.

Frances Deepwell from Oxford Brookes University has taken over from Ranald Macdonald as Chair of the Scholarship, Research and Evaluation Committee.

SEDA Roll of Honour

Many congratulations to Liz Beaty who has recently been awarded a place on the SEDA Roll of Honour. The SEDA Roll of Honour recognises those who have made an exceptional contribution to the work of SEDA or to staff and educational development generally.

New Associate Fellowship Holders

Congratulations to Anne Oxley and Jacqueline Potter who have recently been awarded Associate Fellowship of SEDA.

Professional Development Framework (SEDA-PDF)

SEDA is pleased to report that Napier University has been recognised as a provider of SEDA-PDF. This brings the total number of recognised institutions to 20.

In addition a brand new named award, 'Responding to Change in Higher Education', has recently been launched.

New publication

SEDA Special 24: Supporting Academic Writing Among Students and Academics
Edited by Sarah Moore. Price: £12.00

Download an order form from
<http://www.seda.ac.uk/publications.htm>

Forthcoming events

Enhancing the Experience of International Students

Thursday 5 February 2009, London

SEDA Fellowship Briefing and Development Day

Monday 30 March 2009, London

SEDA Spring Learning Teaching and Assessment Conference 2009: Underpinning Academic Practice with Research and Scholarship

Thursday 7 - Friday 8 May 2009,
Thistle Hotel, Brighton

SEDA Summer School 2009: Supporting Educational Change

Tuesday 21 - Friday 23 July 2009
Cumberland Lodge, Windsor Great Park

2009 course details announced

SEDA will be running its suite of courses and professional qualifications in supporting and leading educational change again in 2009. Details, in brief, are as follows:

Supporting Educational Change (Introductory Online Course)

2 February - 13 March 2009

Leading Educational Change (Introductory Online Course)

19 January - 27 February 2009

Supporting Educational Change (Professional Qualification Course)

13 April - 6 July 2009

Leading Educational Change (Professional Qualification Course)

16 March - 8 June 2009

Further details, including registration forms, are available at: <http://www.seda.ac.uk/fellowship/supportingandleading.htm>