

EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

The Magazine of the Staff and Educational Development Association Ltd (SEDA)



Issue 13.2

June 2012 ISSN 1469-3267

£8.50 Cover price (UK only)

Contents

- 1 **Ten years of technology in education: what have we really learned?**
Helen Beetham
- 6 **Digital Literacy and Fluency: SEDA initiatives supporting an enlightened approach to Academic Development in the field**
David Baume
- 11 **Appreciatively Inquiring into the Internationalised Curriculum – A model for CPD**
Viv Caruana
- 16 **Book Review**
- 17 **The HEAR is here: but how can we make it work for our institution and our graduates?**
Lysandre de la Haye and Elizabeth Cleaver
- 22 **What Now for Student-Led Teaching Awards?**
Oliver Williams
- 23 **'How do you know if anyone is there?' Questions from teachers new to virtual classrooms**
Sarah Cornelius and Darren Gash
- 26 **New PDF Award: Leading Programmes**
Jenny Eland
- 26 **Book Review**
- 28 **SEDA@20: a year of Celebrations**
Sally Brown and Liz Shrives

SEDA Ltd

Woburn House,
20 - 24 Tavistock Square
London WC1H 9HF
Tel 020 7380 6767
Fax 020 7387 2655
Email office@seda.ac.uk

More information about SEDA's activities can be found on our website:

www.seda.ac.uk

Registered in England, No. 3709481. Registered in England and Wales as a charity, No.1089537

Ten years of technology in education: what have we really learned?

Helen Beetham, JISC and the University of Exeter

Helen was invited to give a keynote address to the 16th Annual SEDA Conference 2011: 'Using Technology to Enhance Learning'

Ten or twelve years ago I was sitting at the back of my first SEDA conference, listening in awe to some of the people in front of me today, and wondering for the first time how I was going to navigate the connection between technology and education. I certainly never imagined that one day I would be up here at the front, supposedly an expert on that connection. And if my professional journey in that time has been from the back of the room to the front, in some ways the journey of technology has been in reverse, from the front of the room to the back, where no doubt this talk is already being tweeted, blogged and commented upon – if you aren't all checking your email. We are no longer interested in how to augment our capabilities as lecturers, so much as we are interested in what learners can do with the technologies in their hands.

What qualifies me to talk from the front today is only that I've been along that journey, in various roles and means of employment. And since there are people in the room who have employed me, and even some who might want to employ me again, I had better emphasise that I am speaking about my personal journey, and in a personal capacity. The drug you see pictured here – there will be a lot of 1950s images in this talk, partly because I like that aesthetic but mainly because they are copyright-free – the drug is commonly known as the truth drug or truth serum. And I find that being asked to do a keynote is like a shot of truth serum, and it's usually best to get the disclaimers in first before the drug takes hold.

So when I was asked to talk on this subject, the first thing I did of course was to look online for a suitable timeline. This is one of the first hits you will get from Google if you look for an educational technology timeline. It's nice that it goes all the way back to the discovery or invention of writing in 3500 BC, and in fact you have to get through a lot of entries before you even arrive at moveable type in 1453. If we look at the part of the timeline that's most relevant to my keynote today, we have online field trips, text books, there are virtual learning environments of course. But what I find interesting is that even when they're supposed to be talking about the past, learning technologists can't resist looking into the future – there are entries here for 2024 when apparently all learning and work will be completed at home, and 2030 (that long, really?) when computers will have replaced books. Enthusiasts for the latest technology tend to imagine that they have a better claim on the future than those of us who are still quite excited about the arrival of moveable type.

SEDA Supporting and Leading Educational Change

Editorial Committee

Dr Vivienne Caruana
Leeds Metropolitan University

Dr Helen Gale
University of Wolverhampton

Elizabeth Grant
University College London

Debby McVitty
National Union of Students

Steve Outram
The Higher Education Academy

Anne Oxley
Independent Educational Consultant

Dr David Ross
University of the West of Scotland

Professor Lorraine Stefani
FSEDA
Auckland University, NZ

Professor James Wisdom
Higher Education Consultant

2012 (Vol.13) Annual Subscription Rates

Individual subscriptions are £34 sterling per year (4 issues) within the UK. Overseas subscribers should add £5 sterling postage and packing for delivery within the EU or £8 sterling for the rest of the world.

Packs of 10 copies (each copy containing 4 issues) are available for £260 sterling.

All orders should be sent to the SEDA Office, either with payment or official order.

NB SEDA members automatically receive copies of *Educational Developments*.

Stories about technology have always been stories about the future. And I'm interested in the history of the future, or the history of the stories we tell about the future. For example, in the 1950s, futurists could imagine mind-to-mind communication and airborne railways – I don't think we have those yet, do we? They are more than 50 years behind schedule. But they could not imagine profound changes in the relationships between men and women. That should alert us to the kind of things that can get ignored when stories about technology dominate our vision of the future.

Here are some of the stories about the future I have heard in the last twelve years of working in educational technology. And let's be clear, I really like these stories. They have been powerful stories – allowing us to question existing ideas and practices in education – because stories are not only powerful because they are true:

- Technology will make learning more interactive
- Technology will make learning more personal
- Technology will make learning more engaging
- Technology will make learning more collaborative
- Technology will make you more productive as a learner/teacher
- Technology will undo all the effects of educational disadvantage.

There is also a strong democratic impulse behind many of the stories that have been told about technology. For example, here is the DfES in 2003:

'E-learning is important because it can contribute to all the government's objectives for education – to raising standards, improving quality, removing barriers to learning, and, ultimately, ensuring that every learner achieves their full potential.' (DfES, 2003)

And who would not want to buy into a future in which all learners achieve their full potential, a story about the future as tantalising as that?

But I think there is also a dangerous technological determinism at work here that as educators we must resist. Learners learn, teachers teach, the interaction is a profoundly human one – perhaps one of the most profoundly human relationships we know. All animals learn, but only social animals teach, and only human beings seem to have such strong, intrinsic impulses towards the learning of the other. Technologies are designed human artefacts, that also have designs on us as users, and whether they are designed for learning or adopted for learning, it is how they enter into those relationships that matters and not what they are capable of in themselves.

So technology is a story about the future, about one imagined future in which this designed object will have its use, will help its users to a better life. In a quieter and less insistent way, perhaps, education is also a story about the future, about the kinds of futures learners will need to be prepared for, and of how they can be successful there. And we can be equally determinist in our imaginings. I'd like to suggest that societies invest in formal education to the extent that they expect the younger generation to face a different kind of life from the generation before. When things change very little, people learn fine through imitation, observation and enculturation, perhaps various forms of informal apprenticeship. In Western Europe, formal education really got going during the Reformation, and public formal education at the start of the industrial revolution. Mechanical print, and its capacity to spread ideas quickly, was of course the key technology.

The curriculum may be something we offer students as proof against the future – and perhaps to shore up our own anxieties about uncertainty and change. Or it may be how we help students become more resilient in the face of a range of possible futures. By the way, those two options have quite profound implications for the kind of experiences we would want students to have.

So if technology is a story about the future – and the kind of uses we might have for it – and education is a story about the future – and the kind of capabilities that might be needed there – what story has e-learning or technology-enhanced learning been telling about the future?

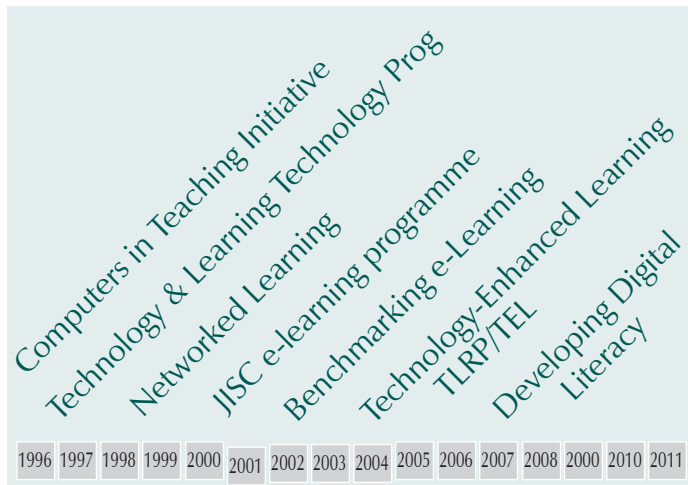


Figure 1 Mapping the story of Technology Enhanced Learning in UK HE

You may be relieved to see here (Figure 1) the kind of timeline you were probably expecting at the start of my talk, the story of the future told through the lens of centrally funded initiatives in UK HE, many of which I have been lucky enough to be involved in. As you progress through those years you will notice a number of changes in how the future is imagined. First of all, from individual computers to networks, to environments in which technology is ubiquitously and seamlessly integrated. Computer technology is not located in time and place, it is endemic; it is implicated in everything we do. The focus has moved, as I said earlier, from teachers to learners and especially the technologies they have in their hands.

And the scale and significance of TEL has expanded exponentially. In my introduction to this talk I described the pioneers and geeks and mavericks that we used to work with twelve years ago – I was one of them. People would turn up with a strange new device in their hands, full of wonder at what it might do for their teaching. Now those people head up large departments and services and research initiatives – in some cases they lead whole Universities – and the Universities themselves have been profoundly changed by the strange devices, which are themselves expanded to the scale of institutional business systems and whole environments in which the business of academic life goes on. None of the core business of a university – teaching, learning research, public communication of knowledge, administration – can be carried on without computer systems. Even if a University aspired for some reason to exist entirely outside of the digital age, the meaning of that University would be determined by the digital opportunities that exist, by the ubiquity of the digital in every other place of study. Let's pause for a minute to consider how the availability of learning technology transforms what it means to be a University.

The educational developer in me wants to get out the post-it notes at this point, but I will refrain. Some of the things you might have thought about are on this slide: global reach – borderless participation – international branding – more contractual relationships with students – profound changes in what the University invests in and how it manifests its value – core business processes designed around learner and course-related information – competition from diverse other providers – Universities no longer being the undisputed or even the main site of valued knowledge in society.

Here is an image of the Bodleian library at Oxford – apparently a bastion of tradition. Here is an alternative image of a University – the OERu. It relies on free content developed by other universities which have the cultural and fiscal capital to do so – universities like Oxford, which, through OpenSpires and other projects, has for several years been releasing its teaching materials openly to the world, in digital form. At the moment accreditation at the OERu university is through its partner institutions such as Athabasca in Canada. But a more radical model may well emerge from within the OERu foundation in which open accreditation frameworks and standards allow students simply to map OER learning outcomes to the competencies that they want to demonstrate.

In fact students who can afford it continue to vote with their feet for the space, place and time that is a 'traditional' university experience – enhanced by technology, of course. Technology-based vs. technology-enhanced may be one of the criteria along which our universities will distinguish themselves in the stratification that is surely coming.

But no university, however traditional, remains untouched, if only because for its students, TEL is always and ever-presently an option. The technology is in their hands – the learning is out there – the meaning of the University cannot be the same.

Something I wrote back in 2007, which I still think we are struggling to fully appreciate: 'we are not rethinking some part or aspect of learning, we are rethinking all of learning in these new digital contexts' (Beetham, 2007).

Now this is by way of a spoiler alert. I asked the twitterverse last night what SEDA folks would think if I introduced some politics this morning, and I had several tweets back along the lines of 'you can't be too political for us!' But for those of you who don't want politics mixed into conference keynotes – or only the kind of politics that masquerades as something else (good business sense for example) – well, you can look away now. Everything will be happily on message again in a few minutes time.

My personal belief is that, if digital technology is systemic in the ways I have described, then it is also implicated in the crisis of legitimacy of public higher education that we witness at the present time. I mean that in quite specific ways. We should not forget that it was the last government that tied technology in higher education securely to a change in the meaning and purpose of that education, putting

universities in with business and ‘innovation’ and describing its aim as ‘higher level skills for the knowledge economy’. A government that saw technology-based services as ushering in ‘a consumer revolution for students’ at the same time as they asked students to begin paying like customers for the privilege. By the way, for a trenchant critique of the reality of the ‘knowledge economy’, I strongly recommend reports commissioned by the ‘Beyond Current Horizons’ project, and summarised in this interview with Keri Facer: <http://www.jisc.ac.uk/news/stories/2010/11/podcast116kerifacer.aspx>.

While I’m not arguing that technology itself is a force acting in any one political direction, I do want to draw attention to the fact that, although it can enhance access and opportunity, it has been co-opted for other agenda. For a more managerial approach to the core activities of our institutions, for example, because it allows for better surveillance and rational planning. For a shift towards evidence-based, benchmarked, and then standardised practices, simply because computer systems record and manage information in standardised ways. What is lost, I wonder, when practices are valued only insofar as they can be digitised, compared, normativised and assessed? As I have said, digital technology and technologists have been at least complicit in the discourse of consumer benefit and the delivery of educational services as the highest purpose of our sector. In telling hopeful stories about the technological future, we must not ignore the educational crisis in front of us, or pretend that technology is a panacea for bad politics, inequality of opportunity, or diminished resources.

OK, it is safe to come out now. Because, of course, I do also want to talk about the hopeful signs that I see emerging from the proliferation of technologies and networks in education. Any of these could be a conference in itself. For my part, I am wedded to the view that computer technologies are revolutionary, as writing or moveable type were revolutionary. They are the products of our extraordinary human ingenuity, and they have the potential to revolutionise human practices in specific ways. Some of the specific opportunities arise from:

- the sheer speed, scale and interconnectedness of computer operations
- new ways of capturing experiences, in rich media and in immediate context
- leading to new forms of public and private memory
- a democratisation of access to knowledge, through its cheap or free reproduction and sharing
- a blurring of the boundaries between information and communication
- ‘the power of the crowd’ – emergent properties of highly interconnected groups.

Just one of these opportunities was summed up for me by a PhD student in English studies, who is an intern on a project I am managing at the University of Exeter. She described how she took the entire published works of a particular English poet into an archive with her, on her laptop. She was allocated just a few hours to look at the originals. When she

found a particular change he had made in drafting a poem, she was able almost instantly to trace the new image across the rest of his work, written before and since. That search, she said, ‘would have been my whole PhD, 20 years ago’. I have picked out three hopeful stories to tell, in the remainder of my talk:

- The new means of knowledge production: open content and open educational practices
- The new critical being: digital literacy beyond ECDL
- Education/al/development for an uncertain future.

Open content and open educational practices

I have written recently about open educational resources as being a symptom of a wider set of open practices in education, for example:

- Using public/open content in teaching contexts
- Releasing and reusing open research data
- Open publication
- Supporting public access to knowledge
- Using open source tools in education
- Open peer comment and review.

You can see this wealth of practices encompassed in the Capetown Declaration on Open Content – what a wonderfully 19th-century idea, to publish a Declaration! It says:

‘We encourage educators and learners to actively participate in the emerging open education movement... creating, using, adapting and improving open educational resources; embracing educational practices built around collaboration, discovery and the creation of knowledge; and inviting peers and colleagues to get involved.’

There is the potential here for universities to re-situate themselves – as the University Presses allowed them to do in the 19th century – as sites for the generation and distribution of public knowledge. Many so-called ‘open’ educational practices and values are in fact simply extensions of academic practices and values into a space of digital knowledge production. The scale of public access to the internet allows these values and practices to be shared on a much wider scale even than print.

Humbox is for me an excellent example of a community of academics sharing openly, committing themselves not only to publication but to commenting on, reviewing and enriching the resources of others.

However, open content is really only open to those who already have both the digital and the educational capital to use it. For me the OER movement has its exact counterpart in the movement towards greater digital literacy.

The new critical being: digital literacy beyond ECDL

Digital literacy is of course not only the province of Universities. At European level it is declared a human right, along with text literacy, numeracy, and other foundational capabilities without which an individual is deprived of

many lifelong, lifewide benefits. The European Computer Driving Licence did good work of defining what some of the basic skills might be. But Universities must have a role to play beyond catching up those who have not developed the basics in other ways. It must be to do with developing advanced and specialised capabilities, developing individuals who will thrive in different professions and subject specialisms and niches of the digital age. And it must have to do with those attitudes we as educational developers have always strived for: critical, reflective attitudes to knowledge; the capacity to create and innovate rather than simply to consume and replicate; and a self-conscious responsibility for the development of oneself and others.

Those capabilities are even becoming enshrined in graduate attribute statements, institutionally sanctioned ideals of what it means to have a successful higher education experience. For example:

- *a confident, agile adopter of a range of technologies for personal, academic and professional use* (Oxford Brookes University)
- *our graduates will be confident users of advanced technologies; they will lead others, challenging convention by exploiting the rich sources of connectivity digital working allows* (Wolverhampton University)
- *to be effective global citizens and interact in a networked society* (Leeds Metropolitan University).

And it's not far from these aspirations to develop creative, confident, pioneering citizens of a global world, to the idea of a critical techno-literacy that equips us to ask profound questions about the purposes of technology in our world, including the world of education:

'Technoliteracies must become reflective and critical, aware of the educational, social, and political assumptions involved in the restructuring of education, technology, and society currently under way.'
(Kahn and Kellner, 2005, p. 246)

This is reminiscent of Argyris and Schön's double-loop learning, reminding us not just to be critical readers of messages in digital media, not just to be wise consumers of technology products, but to question the purposes for which technologies offer themselves so persuasively as the means.

Education/al/development for an uncertain future

So far, so aspirational. The big question is how we embed such capabilities in practice into the curriculum. Of course there are a thousand answers, and dozens of them will be found here, at this conference. Without wanting to privilege any, some developments that have excited me recently are these.

MOOCs or massively open online courses – such as the Connectivism and Connected Knowledge MOOC organised by the University of California – are courses in which participants and non-participants blur. Materials, discussions and activities are distributed around the web, some securely

anchored to the home site, others amplified across unrelated blogs and social forums using the CCK tag. There is a rough timeline followed by all participants, but again the timeframe of the course becomes baggier as new discussions and activity groups spin off. MOOCs are seen by their champions as evidence that informal learning in groups can replace formal modes of participation, but to date the evidence has mainly derived from communities that have extremely high levels of both digital and academic capital.

Something that does not depend on either is The Space Project at the Really Open University. This is a simultaneously online and offline space – occupying spare rooms at the University – that has been opened up by students and staff at the University of Leeds. The idea is to share learning and activism opportunities with one another and with local people who do not usually benefit from the opportunities on offer at the University.

And at the University of Exeter, a series of projects has involved students as agents of digital change, describing the kinds of digital experience that are meaningful to them and working with staff to incorporate them into taught programmes. According to the student coordinator of one such project, 'Integrate': 'if institutions can embrace passionate student advocates, they will be in a good position to drive forward innovation.'

E-learning has come a long way since SEDA was brave enough to devote its main conference, ten years ago, to what was then an emerging issue. I have tried to sketch some of that journey, and taken a modest peep into the future. I'd like to finish with a quote from John Dewey:

'The great advance of electrical science in the last generation was closely associated... with the application of electric agencies to means of communication, transportation, lighting of cities and houses, and more economical production of goods. These are social ends, and if they are too closely associated with notions of private profit, it is not because of anything in them, but because they have been deflected to private uses: a fact which puts upon the school the responsibility of restoring their connection in the mind of the coming generation, with public scientific and social interests.'
(Dewey, 1916)

References

- Beetham, H. (2007) 'Learners' experiences of e-learning', JISC.
- Dewey, John (1916). *Democracy and Education: an introduction to the philosophy of Education*, Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press.
- DfES (2003) 'Towards a unified e-learning strategy' (tinyurl.com/3fve8sz).
- Kahn, R. and Kellner, D. (2005) 'Reconstructing technoliteracy: a multiple literacies approach, *E-Learning*, Volume 2, Number 3, 2005.

Helen Beetham is a consultant working in the field of e-learning, principally for the JISC Curriculum Design and Developing Digital Literacies programmes. She also manages the Cascade project at the University of Exeter.

Digital Literacy and Fluency: SEDA initiatives supporting an enlightened approach to Academic Development in the field

David Baume, Higher Education Consultant

Approaches to Digital Literacies and Digital Fluency for Academic Developers – from ‘empty shells’ to ‘contextual accounts’

‘Digital literacy defines those capabilities which fit an individual for living, learning and working in a digital society.’ (Beetham, 2010)

This is a widely-used definition of digital literacies. It has both the advantage and the disadvantage of being an ‘empty shell’ account, albeit a shell with three compartments – the capabilities for ‘living’, ‘learning’ and ‘working’ – waiting to be filled. Both its advantage and its disadvantage is that it needs to be developed before it can be applied to policy, strategy and practice for course design, teaching, learning and assessment.

This account of digital literacy follows in the tradition of Mantz Yorke’s account of employability as:

‘A set of achievements – skills, understandings and personal attributes – that make graduates more likely to gain employment and be successful in their chosen occupations, which benefits themselves, the workforce, the community and the economy.’ (Yorke, 2006)

Yorke’s account of employability offers a three-dimensional empty shell, with three intersecting sets of compartments: ‘skills, understandings and personal attributes’; ‘gain employment’ and ‘be successful in employment’ and finally, benefiting ‘self’, ‘workforce’, ‘community’ and ‘economy’.

Anyone wishing to use an empty shell definition – for example lecturer,

student, academic developer, student developer, learning technologist or manager – first needs either to populate the shell or to offer up a process for populating the shell. In other words they need either to answer or to devise a process for answering the question ‘which capabilities?’ A structured empty shell definition is productive when it prompts lots of good questions, questions that generate constructive debate among stakeholder groups, questions that lead to decisions that can be acted on and whose effects can be reviewed. The aim, of course, should not be to produce a static account of the capabilities since the particular capabilities change, and will continue to change, almost by the month. I shall return to the dynamic

Digital literacies and digital fluency

Without getting unproductively deep into definitions, we may consider that any kind of ‘literacy’ suggests a rather basic set of abilities.

We may or may not feel comfortable talking about the literacy or literacies of students. But I am not sure we or our colleagues will feel comfortable talking about our own or their ‘literacy’.

Furthermore, we would hope that academics and other professionals go beyond literacy.

I here use the term ‘digital fluency’. I feel this better captures a more integrated and sophisticated use of digital technologies, to which students and members of a discipline or profession may aspire.

A still more advanced term may be needed to describe the ability to devise or adapt, as well as select and use, digital technologies.

nature of digital literacies and digital fluency later.

Can the account of digital literacies offered at the start of this article be made more productive, then? An alternative is possibly:

I am digitally literate (or perhaps digitally fluent (see the box ‘Digital literacies and digital fluency’) when I confidently, critically and appropriately select, and skilfully use, digital technologies to achieve my goals.

This alternative individual account can be useful in several ways. Firstly, it provides structure enabling each of us, and those with whom we work, to generate a personal account of our current and future digital literacies or fluency. It invites the question, at successive intervals, ‘Which digital technologies do I need to be able to use?’ The question remains valid, although the answers will change as time passes and our circumstances change. The question also invites one to ask again, repeatedly, ‘What am I trying to achieve here?’, a question which is a productive, if not always welcome or comfortable one.

Secondly, the account prompts further productive questions about our use of digital technologies which can be addressed at a range of levels, from the individual to the institution and beyond. For example:

- What are the indicators, the promoters and the impeters of the *confident* use of digital technologies?
- What does a *critical* approach mean, in my and our particular settings? Again, what promotes and impedes the development

and use of a critical approach?

- How would we recognise the appropriate selection of digital technologies for particular purposes? Again we need to know what promotes and impedes making appropriate selections. Beyond that, we might want to support those with whom we work to develop, use, test and refine their own criteria for what is an appropriate digital technology, in a particular setting, for a particular purpose.

Thirdly, the individual account of digital literacy can usefully be adapted and extended beyond the domain of the individual, for example:

A module/programme/School/University is digitally literate when it expects and supports its staff and students to confidently, critically and appropriately select, and skilfully use, digital technologies to achieve their and its goals.

This immediately suggests approaches to module and programme design and operation, and to School and University policy and strategy for curriculum, for learning and teaching, for e-learning, for learning resources. It suggests a set of outcomes towards which we can plan. These outcomes can also be used to test plans and to evaluate implementations:

Are members of the institution – whether working alone or in teams – confidently, critically and appropriately selecting, and skilfully using, digital technologies to achieve the institution's and their own individual goals?

Fourthly, on a wider stage, we can also adapt the account to inquire as to whether disciplines and professions are in this broader sense digitally literate. In this context the account might read as follows:

A discipline or profession is digitally literate when it expects and supports its aspiring and current members and practitioners to confidently, critically and

appropriately select, and skilfully use, digital technologies to achieve their disciplinary or professional goals.

Key questions arising from SEDA initiatives: negotiating accounts and assuring quality for the future

The aim of the new SEDA Technology-Enhanced Learning and Development Special Interest Group (with the rather unwieldy acronym SEDA TELD SIG), and the SEDA project within the JISC Developing Digital Literacies Programme (all outlined later in this article), is to support academic development in becoming a still more digitally literate profession in this 'productive' sense.

Experience within these projects has shown that whether engaging at individual, institutional, disciplinary or professional level (or anywhere in between), some wide-ranging and high-level questions about digital literacies need to be addressed from the outset. These questions include:

- By what processes, and by whom, should accounts of digital literacies be negotiated and agreed?

Hopefully, the disciplines and professions for which universities prepare their students will be constantly developing accounts of the capabilities required to join and practise effectively in the discipline or profession. Beyond that, universities, schools, programmes and module teams can develop their own accounts, to additionally reflect local priorities and views. Every time a course is designed, a teaching and learning method planned and used, an assignment or assessment set, decisions are being made – albeit sometimes tacitly – about the technologies to be employed. There is merit in making these decisions and the reasons for them explicit.

- Given that what is digitally possible changes with great frequency, and what is digitally necessary changes almost as often, how do we deal with the

very dynamic nature of digital literacies and their implications for Quality Assurance (QA)?

There is a long paper to be written about the idea of the dynamic curriculum and about the challenges that fast-changing knowledge and skills pose for course design, approval and review processes. Many years ago I had to use an institutional quality assurance handbook that said 'Justify any changes you are proposing to make to the course'. Today we might equally be confronted by the opposite challenge – 'Justify any features that you do *not* propose to change'.

Importantly, this is not just an administrative issue – it is a pedagogic issue and perhaps even an epistemological issue. Courses often aspire to teach the basics, the fundamentals, of the discipline. We teach these basics in the confident hope that our graduates will be able to apply them in settings and to challenges and questions which are currently unforeseen. But at least some of these basics are themselves liable to change over time. This is very clearly demonstrated in matters digital and the study of the rapid evolution of digital literacies may show us what to look for in other disciplines, helping us to develop new approaches to defining and assuring quality that do not rely on a static account of the (alleged) basics.

Whilst we need to continue to protect standards from attrition, and to ensure that students are not confronted with too much uncertainty or unreasonable demands, academic developers may find it useful to work with institutional QA staff towards:

- A definition of quality which explicitly includes both responsiveness to and anticipation of changes which should affect the course, year by year or even more frequently
- Course outcomes which describe high-level capabilities and are less dependent on particular content and skills
- Greater flexibility and less demanding procedures for yearly changes to curriculum and to

learning, teaching and perhaps also assessment methods

- The approval of less detailed descriptions of courses that include criteria against which changes can be made during each year of operation of the course.

Undoubtedly such changes would make it easier for courses to stay digitally current. However, graduates who study the degree courses we design and run today and who have joined straight from school are likely still to be in some form of paid employment in the year 2060, and productively active to 2080 and beyond. Ensuring that these graduates are fluent in Office 2010 rather than Office 2007, will not alone equip them adequately for their digital futures. So one of the most important things we can do for our current students may be to help them to become capable, versatile, enthusiastic learners, both alone and in collaboration with others. Within this broader goal, and for us all, our greatest and most important digital fluency may be the ability and the commitment to updating – confidently, critically and appropriately – our own digital literacies.

Case studies

An important element of SEDA's work on this project will be case studies of work by SEDA members on and around the development of digital literacies.

Please contact us with ideas for such case studies.

SEDA supporting Academic Development for Digital Literacies: the SEDA Developing Digital Literacies (DDL) Project

SEDA has a major role in supporting its members to initiate, support and lead changes to practice in higher education. A growing part of this role involves ensuring that innovations in information and learning technologies are effective in improving student learning and the support of learning. The Association has established the

Learning technologies and digital technologies

ALT says: 'Learning technology is the broad range of communication, information and related technologies that can be used to support learning, teaching and assessment.'

'Digital technologies' as used here has a much wider meaning – the whole range of digital computing and communications devices, systems, programmes and processes which we encounter and use throughout our lives.

Developing Digital Literacies (DDL) project which is part of the wider JISC *Developing Digital Literacies* programme whose aim is '...to promote the development of coherent, inclusive and holistic institutional strategies and organisational approaches for developing digital literacies for all staff and students in UK further and higher education' (<http://www.jisc.ac.uk/developingdigitalliteracies>).

The JISC programme supports twelve institution-based projects at Reading, Oxford Brookes, Plymouth, Greenwich, Exeter and Bath Universities and at the University of the Arts London, Institute of Education, University of London, University College London, Worcester College of Technology and Coleg Llandrillo Cymru. An innovative feature of the programme is the involvement of professional associations as supporters for the projects and as routes for the wider and more effective dissemination of project and programme outcomes to professional communities. Our SEDA-based project is therefore accompanied by ten other projects, supported separately by the Association for Learning Development in Higher Education (ALDinHE), the Association for Learning Technology (ALT), the Association of University Administrators (AUA), the Heads of Educational Development Group (HEDG), the Learning and Skills Improvement Service (LSIS), the Organisational Development in Higher Education Group (ODHE), the Standing Conference on Academic Practice (SCAP), the Staff Development

Forum (SDF), the Society of College, National and University Libraries (SCONUL) and Vitae (the researcher development organisation). Resources being prepared across the programme are available. Go to the JISC Design Studio, then search on Developing Digital Literacies.

The concept of digital literacies as articulated earlier in this paper is central to the JISC programme and SEDA's DDL project within it, since it moves attention beyond the particular information or learning technology. Rather it encourages academic developers to work closely with academics and learning technologists to ensure that learning rather than technology leads. Attention is focused more broadly on the digital world which both students and staff increasingly inhabit, and on the learning which is necessary to function effectively in that world. In its DDL work, SEDA is committed to:

- Building on productive working relations already established with the other professional associations including ALDinHE and HEDG
- Using the consensual, negotiating, values-based approach which has long been core to SEDA's work, and more broadly to the work of academic developers
- Acknowledging the limited effectiveness of generic solutions and models, and supporting the development of locally appropriate approaches, which nonetheless embody common core ideas
- Using SEDA's many channels for dissemination and engagement.

Particular activities are planned to include a wide range of events and outputs including: one-day events on current hot topics; articles in *Educational Developments*; papers submitted to IETI; one or more SEDA Papers/Specials; use of the SEDA Jiscmail lists; work on the SEDA-PDF qualifications framework; and the 2012 SEDA Summer School on Academic Development for the Digital University.

The Project Director is SEDA Co-Chair Julie Hall (julie.hall@roehampton.ac.uk). The Project Officer is David Baume (adbaume@aol.com).

SEDA supporting technology-enhanced learning and development – the Special Interest Group

The new SEDA Technology-Enhanced Learning and Development Special Interest Group approved by SEDA Executive in December 2011 and currently being established, supports the activities of SEDA's *Developing Digital Literacies (DDL)* project, although in essence this initiative reflects a broader range of factors including:

- The large attendance at, and excellent reception given to, the November 2011 SEDA Conference 'Using Technologies to Enhance Learning'
- The JISC award to SEDA for the Embedding Work-With-IT project
- The growing incidence of the use of technologies, in learning and beyond, in both working and personal life, nationally and internationally.

Key principles informing the SIG include:

- Providing a lively online community and personal learning network, using a variety of social media
- Working across SEDA
- Welcoming and communicating with SEDA members and the wider SEDA community
- Supporting co-operation between academic developers and learning technologists
- Co-operation with other organisations and agencies.

The SIG aims to have some form of engagement with each SEDA committee. Negotiations are under way with SEDA Committees to achieve this. This engagement will assist committees in promoting further appropriate attention to technology-enhanced learning and development

Learning technologies and digital technologies

ALT says: 'Learning technology is the broad range of communication, information and related technologies that can be used to support learning, teaching, and assessment.'

'Digital technologies' as used here has a much wider meaning – the whole range of digital computing and communications devices, systems, programmes and processes which we encounter and use throughout our lives.

right across SEDA – in conferences and events, *Educational Developments*, IETI journal articles and papers, SEDA-PDF, Scholarship, Research and Evaluation, and Services and Enterprise. SIG representation will also support committees to further the appropriate use of technologies in their particular activities. Committees are already making increased use of online meetings. Future possibilities include print on demand and e-publishing for SEDA papers.

The new SIG is planned to function only for a few years. Why? Because hopefully within that time SEDA will have developed and embedded appropriate approaches to the uses of digital technologies in a variety of contexts. This does not mean that SEDA will stop paying attention to the uses of digital technologies, and stop asking questions – but it is anticipated that such questions and approaches will be part of our fabric, in much the same way that the SEDA Values are (hopefully) embedded in our current and future practice.

For further information about the SIG, and to become involved with it, please contact David Baume (adbaume@aol.com).

A self-assessment tool: How digitally fluent are you?

The following self-assessment tool is derived from five main sources – i.e. the account provided in this article, of a digitally fluent person as someone who confidently, critically

and appropriately selects, and skilfully uses, digital technologies to achieve their goals; and from responses to four surveys conducted variously via Twitter and the SEDA Jiscmail, which variously attracted some 20, 70, 100 and 120 responses, over 90% of which were from academic developers or learning technologists in UK higher education.

This tool therefore allows you to compare your digital fluency with what your peers would consider comprises digital fluency and, in questions 1-7, with their own self-reported digital fluency. No marks, no scores, no prizes, just a tool to help you know yourself digitally a little better and, perhaps, a tool which you can adapt and use to prompt useful conversations with your own colleagues and students.

1. How many digital devices do you routinely use?
(Mean response: 5.8)
2. For how long each day?
(For most of the working day)
3. How many systems, programmes etc. do you routinely use on your main digital device?
(Mean response ~10)
4. The last digital device you adopted was...
(Most often a tablet computer, followed by smartphone and e-reader)
5. The last system, programme etc. you adopted was...
(Most often Twitter, followed by online meetings and document-sharing)
6. How did you learn about the last digital device, or the last system, programme etc., that you adopted?
(Most often through word of mouth)
7. How did you learn to use it?
(Most often by self-teaching, trial and error and/or 'just using it')

For the next 5 questions, you may find it useful to go beyond 'yes'/'sometimes'/'no' and ask supplementary questions such as 'Why do I give that answer?' and 'Does my answer vary from technology to technology?' and, when you are

feeling brave, 'What shall I do about my answers?'

8. Are you confident in your use of digital technologies?
9. Do you take a critical approach to using digital technologies?
10. Do you select the appropriate digital tool for each job?
11. Do you use digital tools skillfully?
12. Does your use of digital tools help you achieve your goals?

The final 9 questions use developers' accounts of a digitally fluent person. Again each question suggests its own supplementaries. So, with respect to digital technologies:

13. Are you enthusiastic?
14. Are you an early adopter?
15. Do you know whom to ask for help?
16. Do people ask you for help?
17. Are you versatile?
18. Do you learn quickly?
19. Do you use social media?
20. Do the digital technologies make your work more effective?
21. Do you integrate the digital technologies into your working life?

Some implications of digital technologies for academic development

Prominent features of recent and current developments in digital technologies include:

- The fast-growing variety of digital technologies available
- The shallower and shorter learning curve of many of the newer digital technologies
- The increasingly short life/disposable nature of particular digital technologies
- The newer digital technologies being learned *in* use rather than *for* (possible later) use
- Irrespective of the 'digital natives/digital immigrants' debate, the somewhat different though overlapping digital skill-sets of academics and incoming students
- The strong social/community dimensions to:
 - The technologies themselves

- Learning of the existence of the technologies
- Learning to use the technologies.

The corollary of these features for academic development to support the development of digital literacies and fluency (and probably much more broadly?) perhaps suggests, among other things:

- Course-based training for digital technologies may have had its day
- An information-rich and conversation-rich environment is likely to achieve more positive and sustainable development than any single development strategy or method, for staff and for students
- The development of digital fluency may be enhanced when staff and students experience the University as clusters of overlapping communities, rather than as one silo beyond which there are dragons, digital or otherwise.

Postscript: The eReflect tool – Making Assessment Count

The JISC-funded project Making Assessment Count (MAC) had two main aims – to align staff and student perceptions of effective feedback, and to support the use of feed-forward strategies through a tool called *eReflect*. The project had been developed because staff reported that students did not make strategic use of the feedback they received, while students reported that feedback is often less than helpful. The MAC process is based on a student-centred, three-stage model of feedback: *Subject specific, Operational and Strategic* (the SOS model, see Figure 1).

The student uses the subject assessor's feedback on an assignment to complete an online self-review questionnaire via the *e-Reflect* tool which, in turn, generates a feedback report. Within this personalised report are graphical representations of performance, time management and other operational feedback. Informed by this, the student composes an entry in their online learning journal. This

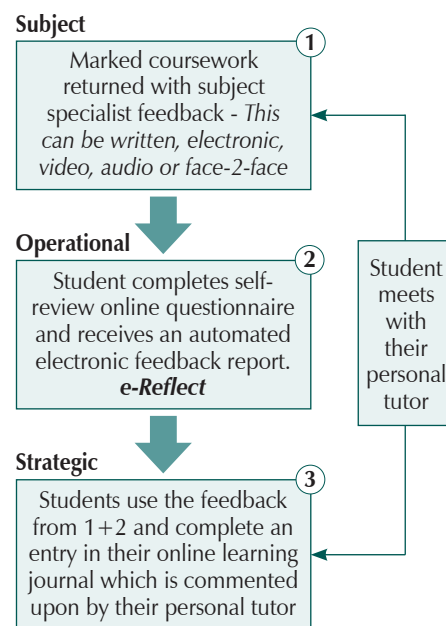


Figure 1 SOS Model used in eReflect

is shared with and commented upon by their personal tutor to support the tutorial process and the student's PDP. An evaluation of the eReflect process can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/c9rxjwn>.

The project (Kerrigan *et al.*, 2011) has received further funding from JISC to work with six institutions within the UK. The new work will reinforce the business case already made for MAC. It will expand the work to take into account different subject areas and other institutional contexts, and develop variations of the MAC model. More information can be found here: <http://macplus.pbworks.com>.

References

Beetham, H. (2010) 'Developing digital literacies: briefing paper in support of JISC Grant Funding' (<http://tinyurl.com/7lb64pc>).

Kerrigan, M. *et al.* (2011) 'The Making Assessment Count (MAC) consortium – maximising assessment and feedback design by working together', Proceedings of ALT-C conference 2011 (<http://repository.alt.ac.uk/2176/>).

Yorke, Mantz (2006) 'Employability in higher education: what it is – what it is not', ESECT and HEA (tinyurl.com/88h2ggj).

David Baume is a higher education consultant. He is project manager for the SEDA /JISC Developing Digital Literacies project and critical friend and evaluation consultant to the JISC Transformations programme (david@davidbaume.com).

Appreciatively Inquiring into the Internationalised Curriculum – A model for CPD

Viv Caruana, Leeds Metropolitan University

Internationalisation, international students and the internationalised curriculum – from ‘technical observance’ to ‘relational participation’

Internationalisation of Higher Education (HE) has long been associated with international mobility of both students and staff. In recent years, the forces of globalisation and an attendant marketisation discourse, which heightens institutional consciousness of the threat of international competition coupled with institutional shortfalls, have fuelled a global drive to recruit ever-growing numbers of international students. It has been commonly assumed that investment of resources in support measures which enable international students to develop their English language proficiency, academic study skills etc., will suffice in order to deliver the ‘quality learning experience’. The reality is however, that international student recruitment creates additional layers of diversity among – what in many institutions is already – a highly diverse student body. The very discourse of internationalisation in this context has a tendency to create tensions in all aspects of the student experience, from the impression conveyed by marketing materials, through teaching, learning and assessment practices to support structures and the informal campus and wider community environment. Providing a quality learning experience for *all* students suggests the need to manage diversity in a learning environment which goes far beyond any deficit-assimilationist model of support and to challenge traditional modes of teaching, learning and assessment, a challenge which strikes at the very root of attitudes, values and beliefs about what constitutes a ‘quality learning experience’ and how the curriculum should be re-shaped to acknowledge ever-increasing diversity among student cohorts (Caruana and Ploner, 2010).

For some colleagues the re-shaping process is complex and multi-faceted. Participants in recent research exploring the synergies between Internationalisation and Equality and Diversity defined the internationalised curriculum as:

- *culturally relevant* and *empowering* for international and other ethnically diverse students, whilst at the same time enhancing the global dimension of learning for all students
- taking account of and *building on students’ diverse backgrounds* and prior learning experiences whilst providing curriculum space to discuss and reflect on transitions
- enabling students to appreciate their position within a globalised world, and to develop as *global citizens* with global perspectives and cross-cultural capabilities

- embracing both ‘internationalisation abroad’ and ‘internationalisation at home’ with opportunities for staff and students to experience education, work placements etc. in other countries, being complemented by *pedagogies which nurture new cultural experience on the home campus* through sharing international teaching, learning, research and even life experience in multicultural classrooms (Caruana and Ploner, 2010)

Exploring notions of the internationalised curriculum therefore suggest that internationalisation of HE in the context of the 21st-century globalised knowledge economy and learning society is most definitely about more than mobility, acculturation and international content which can be characterised as ‘symbolic internationalisation’. Rather it requires a ‘transformative’ approach which develops dispositions, skills and other capabilities which enable graduates to challenge culture-bound knowledge and to produce new knowledge in a global context (Appadurai, 2001 as cited in Caruana, 2010).

In light of the current drive to recruit international students it is equally important to acknowledge that internationalisation is a social practice which takes time to put into effect and will occur at different levels of engagement on a developmental continuum from what might be termed ‘*technical observance*’ to ‘*relational participation*’.

Technical observance emphasises technical practices such as: the recruitment of international students and international staff; use of international examples in curricula; support services tailored to help students to survive and to assimilate; remedial support to deal with poor English as a clinical condition. Technical observance tends to perpetuate a primarily university-centred approach to internationalisation based on ‘old style’ conceptions where the global dimension of learning is an ‘add-on’ and students are generally expected to change to meet the expectations of the University.

‘*Relational participation*’ on the other hand, is more specifically focused on the learning experience and the student life-cycle. It is therefore student centred and in turn capable of accommodating the multiple, yet complementary perspectives, that represent the internationalised curriculum across a multitude of disciplines. Of course, as part of their academic development university students will engage in cultural reproduction of knowledge, but the principle of relational participation goes beyond this, encouraging engagement in cultural production as well, through a dialectical relationship between text and learner, teacher and

taught, student and milieu that re-creates globalisation in the form of social practices, confronting homogenisation and building new forms of *trans-cultural existence* (McTaggart, 2003 as cited in Caruana and Hanstock, 2008).

In effect *technical observance* offers little by way of any systematic, self-reflexive and critical challenge to entrenched norms and pedagogical practices. Nonetheless, a focus on technical practices has legitimacy as a *preparatory* stage in a process of internationalisation that would ultimately find institutions progressively moving towards *relational participation* and *authentic* views of themselves as internationalised and multicultural educational institutions (Caruana and Hanstock, 2008). A key consideration is, however, what kind of continuing professional development (CPD) for those engaged in teaching, learning, assessment and support of diverse student cohorts, will promote progression from a state of *technical observance* to one of *relational participation*?

Academic dispositions towards the internationalised curriculum – ideology, discipline and uncertainty

A factor to be considered in designing CPD to support staff in developing the internationalised curriculum is academics' disposition towards the concept, which is dependent upon their beliefs about their role in disciplinary contexts. Warren and Fangharel (2005) suggest that academics generally tend to assume one of three ideological dispositions towards the idea of multicultural education which determines their goals, engagement and practice. 'Cultural restorationists' seek to preserve traditional values and academic standards, 'modernisers' see the main function of education as producing the workforce to enable employers to compete globally, and 'progressives' stand for the cause of social justice, viewing education as a means for creating and supporting social development. Such ideological positions have their equivalence in how the internationalised curriculum is viewed, with the restorationists espousing assimilationist models, the modernisers supporting the notion of generic graduate attributes and global perspectives for graduate employability, and progressives tending to view the curriculum as a vehicle for developing 'graduates as global citizens'.

On the face of it this classification may seem a rather simplistic over-generalisation and individual dispositions may manifest as a complex interplay of all three positions depending on role and context at any given time. For example, among the 'progressives' there may be a distinct tendency towards liberal and left-liberal notions of multiculturalism, viewing society as a 'forum of consensus' and culture as a 'soothing balm' to gloss over issues of power and privilege, conflict and domination. Equally, it might be legitimate to assume that all academics espouse criticality and empathy, therefore certainly there will be those among the 'modernisers' and possibly even the 'cultural restorationists' who are willing to challenge cultural interpretations of social, scientific, or technological applications of knowledge (particularly those which are divisive and inequitable) and

to encourage their students to analyse the construction of knowledge and cultural practices within their discipline (Caruana, 2010).

These shifting and fluid ideological stances will no doubt influence dispositions towards the internationalised curriculum but perhaps more significant is a perceived conflict between the requirements of internationalisation and those of the discipline. Academics as teachers of their discipline may implicitly value content over other curricular and pedagogical considerations. In some disciplines the goals of the subject may be fortuitously synonymous with those of internationalisation and in this case curriculum change may occur in the absence of any broader notion of generic cross-cultural capability for all students irrespective of their field of study. In other disciplines a strategy of avoiding high levels of integration of the international or multicultural within the mainstream curriculum may be confounded by a fundamental resistance to multiple perspectives born of a 'conserving orientation' not towards academic standards *per se*, but towards the very construction of knowledge itself.

Furthermore, a traditional orientation towards learning in Higher Education underpinned by the concept of teacher as 'knowledge giver' may represent something of a 'comfort zone', affording an element of control in the multicultural classroom which can be viewed as potentially a site of chaos and misunderstanding rather than learning. Even within those disciplines which boast a global outlook, a traditional orientation to teaching in HE can effectively stifle progress and those who immerse themselves in international teaching and programmes can come to constitute 'tribes' – acting within separate domains as distinct clans isolated from other colleagues who regard internationalisation as irrelevant. Thus the international and intercultural dimension of learning, teaching and assessment remains a fragmented and parallel concept (Caruana, 2009).

A traditional orientation towards internationalisation is often reflected in how academics perceive their students' views on the necessity or otherwise of an international and multicultural dimension in their learning. It is often claimed that students themselves have a very limited perception of internationalisation focused on international mobility and diversity of content designed essentially to enhance the employability of graduates who want to compete in an increasingly global labour marketplace (Caruana, 2010). This relatively negative perception may have some sound basis in reality. Higher-order learning is undoubtedly associated with intellectual openness and the ability to adopt a critical perspective on one's own, as well as others' beliefs, values and positions. Perceived student attitudes may reflect a measure of ethnocentrism where denial of cultural difference manifests in a disinterest in international affairs which don't impinge on oneself. It may also be the case that many students come to university at an intellectual stage of personal growth and development where their own fairly single-minded view of the world is generally accepted as a true representation. However, internationalising the curriculum is about enabling them to see that this is in fact a particularised view conditioned by their historical period,

culture and place in nature (Bennett, 1986; Engberg, 2004; Gerdes, 2002).

At the end of the day it seems that within any single group of academics (or indeed students) irrespective of their discipline, there will be those who readily acknowledge the merit of a curriculum that encourages the capacity to empathise with people of different backgrounds through open-mindedness and sensitivity to diverse perspectives, and they may seek to develop (and indeed their students might welcome) the ability to feel at home anywhere. Others may even go so far as to aspire to provide a learning environment that involves challenging single-minded views of the world through teaching and learning strategies which encourage multicultural criticality, enabling students to firmly grasp the cultural bias in knowledge construction within their own discipline and undergo a process of transformation in the global context. 'Willing converts' can indeed often share an acute clarity of aim and purpose which blends pragmatic and ideological rationales for internationalisation. However, attempts to operationalise these strategies in terms of learning outcomes and differentiating between different levels of cognitive, behavioural and affective engagement can be dogged by feelings of uncertainty and a lack of confidence when academics perceive themselves as *struggling* against an inadequate knowledge base in this context. Frequently, colleagues readily understand the internationalised curriculum as a distant, objective phenomenon, but struggle with the concept in the more proximate, subjective territory of their own learning, teaching and assessment practice (Caruana, 2010; Vavrus, 2002).

CPD for internationalising the curriculum – the possibilities of Appreciative Inquiry (AI)

The impact of staff development catering for the CPD needs of individuals within the context of institutional strategies and objectives cascaded, interpreted and re-interpreted through various organisational levels, is often fractured and unsystematic, appealing to a small number of willing converts or 'champions' who can be already overwhelmed with the complex and competing demands of their roles. If the 'internationalised curriculum' is to become a reality, there is an imperative to think less *rationally* and more *relationally*, and a 'diffusionist' model of change management as defined by Rogers (1995) may be effective in moving practice towards a position of *relational participation*. Rogers defines the model thus: '...the process by which an innovation is communicated through certain channels over time among members of a social system.'

In terms of CPD for the internationalised curriculum what this suggests is an essentially holistic approach which:

- seeks to appeal to shared values and local ingenuity in the context of 'modernisers', 'progressives' and 'cultural restorationists'.
- challenges the perceived consensus among teachers and their students based on a traditional and conservative view of internationalisation (mobility, content, employability).
- nurtures a seamless relationship between the aims of

the discipline and those of internationalisation and multicultural education enabling teaching staff to develop new skills, knowledge, attitudes and values in a holistic way.

- challenges preoccupation with content coverage and encourages a willingness to take risks in developing the multicultural classroom as a space to share multicultural perspectives. In the digital age where knowledge itself has a short 'shelf life', CPD needs to support a 'mind change' in self-perception, relinquishing the safe space of knowledge transmission and replacing it with a safe space to enable learners to construct their own knowledge, through engaging multiple perspectives and crossing cultural borders.
- avoids 'burdensome prescription' of practices and 'knowledge-giving' creating an intellectual space which engages the internationalised curriculum as 'an idea' or a construct rather than a set of 'best practices'. In this sense CPD should acknowledge that development processes are often emergent and unconnected, iterative if not incremental
- provides – rather than a 'best-practice, check-list' approach – the foundation for a research-informed and evidence-based approach which enables practitioners to explore their practice across disciplinary boundaries and imagine alternatives.

An Appreciative Inquiry (AI) approach offers the potential to fulfil these requirements. AI as a theory was first introduced by David Cooperrider and Suresh Srivastva in 1986 in response to Gergen's 1978 paper, 'Toward Generative Theory', in which he argued that many assumptions of scientific inquiry could not be successfully applied to the study of human systems. Gergen proposed that, instead, researchers should aim to create a social science focused on its generative capacity, the 'capacity to challenge the guiding assumptions of the culture, to raise fundamental questions regarding contemporary social life, to foster reconsideration of that which is "taken for granted" and thereby furnish new alternatives for social actions' (Gergen, 1978, p. 1346).

Since the 1980s, AI has been developed as an approach to personal and organisational change. Its impact derives from the creation of new ideas, perceptions, metaphors, images and theories which provide better alternatives for organisational actions. The two essential principles of AI are positivity and generativity, principles reflected in descriptions of AI as the study of 'what gives life to human systems when they work at their best' and 'action research through a positive lens'. The prerequisite qualities of participants in AI include exploration, curiosity, willingness to learn and an optimistic mindset attuned to discovery. The transformational potential of AI arises from dialogue about strengths, successes, values, hopes, dreams – the 'peak experiences' or 'positive stories', 'ideal images' and 'positive emotions' – which affirms what works, what you want more of.

However, transformation also requires generativity – compelling new ideas which change how people think and shift the discourse resulting in new sense-making which can support new actions. Like action research AI provides a

context for people to be heard and included in challenging times and promotes self-organising change processes. However, its focus on the positive and the generative may well enhance its impact through the creation of a new kind of conversation among people as they work together to improve a group or organisation (Bushe, 2010).

The AI workshop format – trying it out!

Initial experience of the AI approach was as a participant in a Staff Development Day hosted by the Institute of Education, University of Worcester. The theme of the day was *'Discovering Pathways for inclusion: a focus on learning for diversity'*. I had been asked to deliver a keynote *'Internationalisation and diversity: Exploding myths and making connections'*, which was followed by a workshop delivered by Karima Kadi-Hanifi, *'An Appreciative Inquiry Approach to Internationalisation and Diversity'*. In effect the day had been organised so that the keynote became something of a scene-setter for a raft of activities which were to follow. The day was so successful and enjoyable that I resolved to try out Karima's approach myself at the earliest opportunity.

This section outlines the format of an AI workshop which has been delivered at three different universities in the UK and Australia. Although internationalisation has been the common topic there have been slight variations in theme including: *'Internationalisation, Diversity and the University Challenge: Becoming a Multicultural University'*; *'Sustainable Internationalisation: Taking the agenda forward in business education'* and finally *'The Internationalisation of Higher Education: recruiting international students for competitive advantage or harnessing student diversity for global perspectives?'* In the most recent iteration of the workshop *'Sustainable Internationalisation'*, delivered in April 2012, the workshop was supported by a pre- and post-event blog space designed to enable participants to share thoughts and developments into the future.

Participants are introduced to the essential focus of the workshop with a 30-45 minute presentation which is followed by a short outline of the concept, rationale and process of Appreciative Inquiry. The workshop then proceeds through the various phases of AI including *discovery*, *dream* or envisioning, *design* or identifying principles and *destiny* – establishing priorities and determining parameters. The introductory Powerpoint presentation for *'The Internationalisation of Higher Education'*, for example, examined different approaches to internationalisation – ethos, international mobility, content and graduate attributes or competencies – contemporary conceptualisations of internationalisation and how they relate to diversity, integration and the intercultural or global dimensions of learning in post-compulsory education. The presentation also outlined the key parameters of the internationalised curriculum including: inclusion (moving from a position where no one should be disadvantaged to designing curriculum and pedagogy which will assist all students to succeed); multiple perspectives (moving from acknowledging 'other' cultural perspectives to embracing multiple ways

of knowing, living, doing, being and becoming) and cross-cultural capability (developing intercultural awareness – particularly of 'self' rather than simply focusing on 'other' – and the necessary skills and dispositions to communicate across cultural boundaries with ease).

A central theme of this introduction was how teachers create a 'safe space' which acknowledges that communicating and interacting with cultural difference is psychologically intense and conflict is a legitimate part of the process of developing intercultural understanding and cross-cultural capability. Teachers' dispositions, particularly issues around confidence and knowledge, were discussed in a context of the possibilities of harnessing the strengths of students' different experiences as a way of developing confidence in designing appropriate learning that encourages cross-cultural communication. Student journeys were explored – the variety of motivations for being at university, the kinds of tensions and challenges they had encountered and the coping strategies they had adopted to develop greater resilience and to turn challenges into opportunities. The presentation finished noting the common areas of concern in delivering the internationalised curriculum such as the complexity of assessing cross-cultural capability and mismatched expectations (not only between different peer groups within cohorts but also between peer groups and teachers).

Following the short outline of the concept, rationale and process of Appreciative Inquiry, participants are guided through and engage in structured activities within each of the AI phases of development as follows:

Discovery Phase (30 minutes)

- Individually consider something positive which you have come across (it could be in your own practice or research, it could have been prompted by reading or a conversation, it could be something which has come to you during this workshop!) with regard to internationalisation in your context of practice
- Individually record on the post-it slips provided the adjectives you would use to describe the internationalised student experience, attach to flip-chart paper (all post-it slips produced by workshop participants are gathered together by the facilitator to be reproduced as a 'wordle' after the workshop)



Figure 1 Wordle

- Develop your list of adjectives into three propositional statements about the internationalised student experience or internationalised graduate (attach to flip-chart paper).

Dream Phase/Envisioning (60 minutes)

- Discuss your propositional statements within your group of four or five and produce a group poster picture which represents your ideal internationalised university/department/school/student experience (30 minutes)



Producing a poster

- Each group to share poster picture with the plenary (30 minutes).



Working with the ideas

Design Phase/Principles (30 minutes)

Complete flip-chart which has been prepared with two headings for final outcome:

1. Principles and values of internationalisation
2. Definition of good internationalisation practice.

Use the following questions to help you with determining the two areas above:

- What would be our 4 or 5 guiding principles if we were this perfect internationalised university?
- What is our working definition of internationalisation?
- What makes internationalisation work for colleagues and students?
- What matters to us about being 'international'?
- What are the factors that enhance the potentials for internationalisation in my context?

Destiny Phase part 1: Establishing priorities (30 minutes)

In pairs/individuals record on the post-its provided:

- Personal priorities (these will be posted to you if you place them in envelopes provided addressed to yourself)
- Department/school priorities (attach these to the large Department/School sheet on the wall)
- University priorities (attach these to the large University sheet on the wall)
- Personal priorities (as above) to be actioned immediately (envelope reminders will be sent in a few months' time, just in case!).

Destiny Phase part 2: Determining parameters (30 minutes)

Area of work	Start date
Action	End date
Who responsible?	Budget

The potential of an AI approach to CPD for the internationalised curriculum

As stated earlier the AI format has been deployed on three separate occasions at three different institutions so far. To date no formal evaluation of the approach has been conducted. However, anecdotal feedback from participants suggests that they have found the approach initially challenging, but ultimately refreshing, reinvigorating and enjoyable. As with any team work endeavour there has been an initial point where the facilitator has felt that the session might degenerate into chaos when confronted with a tide of questions about what participants are being expected to do and why! However, on each of the three occasions initial uncertainty has readily given way to enthusiastic participation – the groups have taken charge of their own learning and meaningful conversations among groups of participants (with little or no facilitator involvement) have emerged as they explore meanings, articulate successes and develop plans to take these forward in new contexts. At the end of the workshop participants generally say they feel exhausted yet excited, fired with new ideas and perceptions which they aim to pursue with colleagues within their various schools and disciplines.

De Wit (2008) argues that as one of the drivers of change in higher education internationalisation requires a new research agenda to help universities shape this innovation. In particular, there are few qualitative studies exploring teachers' and students' perspectives, their experience of internationalisation in all its guises, and how they interpret various aspects of the process in relation to their educational contexts. A shift in research focus is favoured from an overall external (institutional, national, European, international) perspective to a relational, experience and context-based one, to enable us to understand how internationalisation (and all that implies for global perspectives, global citizenship and multiculturalism) in higher education is developed in practice. It has been argued that adopting this perspective is essential to shed light on issues of meaning-making in learning and to unpack both academics' and students' understanding of 'key phrases, code words and concepts' (Wihlborg, 2009). This article contends that the AI approach to CPD makes a valuable contribution to this agenda and to

developing the internationalised curriculum. As a team-based approach underpinned by a 'diffusionist' model of change management which encompasses 'the bringing together of faculty [and students] for discussion of processes' in the spirit of collaboration, insider perspectives and authentic engagement (Campbell, 2007; Caruana and Hanstock, 2008; Chang *et al.*, 2004), it represents a starting point for what Alderson (1996) has described as:

'...a journey which at each stage requires exploration and negotiation of understandings, re-examining of currently held beliefs, reflection on current practice, gathering and learning information from a variety of sources, and opportunities for social construction of knowledge.'

References

- Alderson, A. (1996) 'Internationalisation and academic staff development', Paper presented at *Educational Research: Building New Partnerships*, the Joint ERA-AARE Conference, Singapore, 25-29 November.
- Appadurai, A. (2001) (ed.) *Globalization*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Bennett, M. J. (1986) 'A developmental approach to training for intercultural sensitivity', *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 10 (2), pp. 179-9.
- Bushe, G. R. (2010) 'Generativity and the transformational potential of Appreciative Inquiry', in Zandee, D. Cooperrider, D. L. and Avital, M. (eds.) *Organisational Generativity: advances in Appreciative Inquiry*, Vol. 3, Bingley, UK: Emerald.
- Campbell, F. (2007) 'Hearing the student voice: enhancing academic professional development through the involvement of students', *Educational Developments* 8.1: pp. 4-8.
- Caruana, V. (2009) 'The internationalisation of UK higher education: from "technical observance" to "relational participation", the road to CAPRI', *Enhancing Learning in the Social Sciences* 2(1), summer, 2009 (available at: <http://tinyurl.com/c79t2oj>).
- Caruana, V. (2010) 'The relevance of the internationalised curriculum to graduate capability: the role of new lecturers' attitudes in shaping the "student voice"', in Jones, E. (ed.) *Internationalisation and the Student Voice: higher education perspectives*, London: Routledge.
- Caruana, V. and Hanstock, J. (2008) 'Internationalising the curriculum: from rhetoric to reality at the University of Salford', in McKenzie, A. and Shiel, C., *The Global University: the role of senior managers*, London: Development Education Association (DEA) (available at: <http://tinyurl.com/cwlvhumx>).
- Caruana, V. and Ploner, J. (2010) 'Internationalisation and equality and diversity in higher education: merging identities', Report on a research project commissioned by the Equality Challenge Unit (ECU), UK (available at: <http://tinyurl.com/4ungtaw>).
- Chang, R., Wahr, F., De Pew, D., Gray, K., Jansz-Senn, A., and Radloff, A. (2004) 'Knowledge, wisdom and a holistic approach: a case study of change management in academic development' (available at: <http://tinyurl.com/d5mcc7v>).
- De Wit, H. (2008) 'A research agenda on globalisation and internationalisation in higher education' as cited in 'Internationalisation: a research agenda', *University World News* (0049) 19 October, 2008.
- Engberg, M. (2004) 'Using the intercultural development inventory to assess liberal arts outcomes', Center of Inquiry in the Liberal Arts: Wabash IN (available at: <http://tinyurl.com/d48o7b3>).
- Gerdes, E. P. (2002) 'Disciplinary dangers', *Liberal Education*, 88(3), pp. 48-53.
- Gergen, K. (1978) 'Toward generative theory', *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 36, pp. 1344-1360.
- McTaggart, R. (2003) 'Internationalisation of the curriculum: a discussion paper' (available at: <http://tinyurl.com/2c3m46>).
- Rogers, E. M. (1995) *Diffusion of Innovations*, Free Press, New York.
- Vavrus, M. J. (2002) *Transforming the Multicultural Education of Teachers*, New York: Teachers' College Press.
- Warren, D. and Fangharel, J. (2005) 'Approaches to the challenge of student cultural diversity: learning from scholarship and practice', in Warren, D. and Fangharel, J. (eds.) (2005) *International Conference on the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning: Proceedings 2003 and 2004*, London: Education Development Centre, City University.
- Wihlborg, M. (2009) 'The pedagogical dimension of internationalisation? A challenging quality issue in higher education for the twenty-first century', *European Education Journal*, 8(1), pp. 117-132.

Note: The illustrations have been taken from workshops in the UK and Australia.

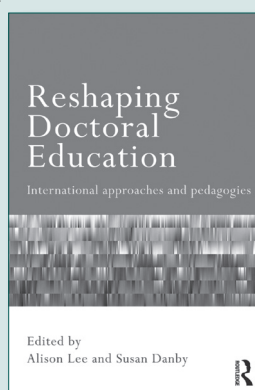
Vivienne Caruana is Reader in Internationalisation of HE at Leeds Metropolitan University (V.Caruana@leedsmet.ac.uk).

Book Review

Reshaping Doctoral Education

Edited by
Alison Lee
and
Susan
Danby

Abingdon,
Routledge,
2012



This book is written in the context of a doubling of the number of doctorates being awarded around the world. It aims to address the changing nature of doctoral education, and offer views on doctoral pedagogies, disciplinary specificity, the relationship between pedagogy and knowledge generation and issues of transdisciplinarity.

The contributors include academics and doctoral researchers from Australasia, Scandinavia and the UK. Perspectives from North America, South Africa and China are also included, so the book can correctly be called 'international'. Australian writers

are particularly well represented, and much good work on the doctorate has taken place there in the last decade. It is difficult to make a coherent book when so many have contributed to it (33 are listed, including the editors), and inevitably the 15 chapters include some outstanding contributions and some rather more baffling.

There is a very good chapter on 'learning from the literature' by David Boote in the College of Education at the University of Central Florida. It critiques different approaches to the literature review and could give both supervisors and students a sound basis

for forming their own assessment rubric. In my experience this is an area that benefits from greater explication for doctoral students, and the suggestions of using Venn diagrams or t-charts to summarise literature could be particularly helpful for some students. For me, as a consultant working on supervisor development programmes, this was the most useful section of the book.

The editors frame doctoral pedagogy in two ways: design and action. This automatically limits some of the questions that could be asked: for example there is little discussion about whether the doctorate has a liberating or controlling purpose, is a social or cognitive process, an organisational or an individual activity. The cultural differences and educational imperatives that must be experienced by authors from so many countries, remain sadly hidden. Questions about and examples of identity development during the doctoral process do arise, but they are almost written in asides. Exploring these could have created a rich resource, but the aim

of the book seems to have been to look at other generic trends in doctoral education through a series of case studies.

There are more links that could have been made between the chapters. For example, there is an interesting potential link between the final chapter on 'Indigenous students undertaking doctoral education' where the authors write about the 'Te Kupenga o MAI programme' of pastoral, cultural and academic support, and the chapter on 'Doctoral Summer Schools as transformative pedagogies' (a good title, but it never really answers the question 'why are they transformative?').

Future trends are highlighted in two ways: the chapter on 'doctoralnet' describes an international multidisciplinary network of doctoral students hosted by Linköping University. The authors of this chapter claim that this raises the issue of international collaboration on research – however they do not discuss some of the more practical issues that arise,

in particular funding of international research and the copyright issues that might occur when sharing 'work in progress'.

The second major trend that is highlighted is the transdisciplinary doctorate. The issue is worth exploring, but early definitions of what the authors mean by transdisciplinary, interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary would have helped me place this work more usefully.

So who will find this book useful? It is a rich resource of case studies, with some theorising. It is not practical enough for individual supervisors, nor theorised sufficiently to be a programme text. However, for those doing further research or given the responsibility of creating programmes for supervisors, it could be an additional resource to have on the shelf.

Dr Anne Lee is an Independent Academic Developer and Qualitative Researcher (www.drannelee.wordpress.com).

The HEAR is here: but how can we make it work for our institution and our graduates?

Lysandre de la Haye and Elizabeth Cleaver, Newman University College

Background

The report of the Burgess Group into the suitability of degree classifications in the 21st century (Burgess, 2007) highlighted the need for a richer, more holistic picture of graduates' achievements than current UK degree classifications could offer. With the momentum of the Bologna Process gathering pace, the inclusion of agreed Bologna Diploma Supplement information was also recommended. To this end, the Higher Education Achievement Report (HEAR) was proposed with the aim of developing a single document which could both provide information on the basic marks that make up a graduate's degree and give a richer picture of graduate's achievements during their period of study.

However, before such a major change could be implemented across the sector, an initial trial commenced in September 2008, with 17 institutions (see Figure 1).



Figure 1 HEAR initial trial process

The trial included a range of institutions, including Professor Sir Bob Burgess' University of Leicester, and Newman University College. As one of the smallest institutions, Newman provided a useful benchmark in terms of how to manage and develop the HEAR with very limited resources (working on the theory that if we can do it, anyone can).

The trial aimed to use a few carefully chosen subject areas, but as we did not offer the selected subjects as single Honours, it was agreed that Newman would trial Combined Honours subjects and would also look at other programmes such as Foundation Degrees and Initial Teacher Education undergraduate programmes.

The trial began in early 2009 and once the initial institutions had reported back, further institutions were invited to join phase two (taking those involved up to 30), expanding the scope to encompass other programmes and more subject areas.

Frequent meetings were held and ideas and issues fed in at all stages, with advice and guidance on the shape and contents of the HEAR hotly debated. Of particular concern were whether failed modules or academic offences should be detailed in the HEAR, and the level of detail to be included in module descriptions and transcripts.

The first go at producing an internal HEAR was undertaken by several of the trial members, including Newman University College, for those graduating in summer 2010. This proved very useful in terms of highlighting key issues and technical 'glitches'.

Summer 2011 saw a small number of the trial institutions providing HEARs to their outgoing graduates. Newman University College was the only institution nationally to provide HEARs for all graduates, as well as Foundation Degree graduates, PGCE programmes and some masters level programmes.

So what does a HEAR look like?

The Final release guidance in the Integrated HEAR starter pack states that:

'The Higher Education Achievement Report (HEAR) will provide a single comprehensive record of a learner's achievement as recommended by the Measuring and Recording Student Achievement Steering Group (Burgess Group)...It will adhere to a template, incorporating the Diploma Supplement (DS), and be verified by the Academic Registrar or equivalent officer. It may be accessed at any time during a student's career with the institution and afterwards.'

The HEAR collates and details information required by the Bologna Agreement for the Bologna Diploma Supplement which includes:

- the results of this study (including information on both the weighting of elements of assessment and the types of assessment which the graduate has experienced)

- the final Degree classification achieved
- the entry requirements for the programme taken
- details of access to further study to which the qualification provides access
- details on the UK Higher Education System to contextualise the HEAR.

In addition, the HEAR provides a summary of the programme studied, aimed primarily at assisting employers, and a rich overview of each student's life at university under three distinct headings:

- Additional Awards (accredited performance in non-academic contexts)
- Additional recognised activities undertaken by students which demonstrate achievement
- University, Professional and Departmental prizes.

This means that for the first time employers have verification available from the university about the additional activities (such as Chair of a Society, Student Staff Consultative Committee representative) that the graduate has included in their job application or CV.

Issues, early difficulties and how we overcame them

Our first step with developing the Newman HEAR was the creation of a working group which incorporated representatives from both academic and support areas (especially from IT) together with colleagues from our Students' Union.

We considered the resources needed to make it happen (temporal, technical and human) and the information and processes already in place to assist us with development. The following headings provide details of some of the areas where we experienced initial difficulties.

Information sources and the HEAR

We already held much of what would be detailed in the HEAR, including information identifying the student, Programme Title and assessment records (see Figure 2). We also had the advantage of having already incorporated the necessary Diploma Supplement requirements into the transcripts issued to all students annually before the process began.

We knew that the contextual information, being standard, could be incorporated with our transcripts to form the outline of the HEAR, but the challenge for us was how best to incorporate the Programme summary information. A further issue was whether the programme information we already held for Validation and Quality Assurance purposes was necessarily appropriate for the HEAR.

We agreed that, as the format of the programme aims produced for Programme Specifications varied and contained differing levels of information, a new 'fit for purpose' summary would be requested from each head of subject or Programme. This was tested by academic members of the

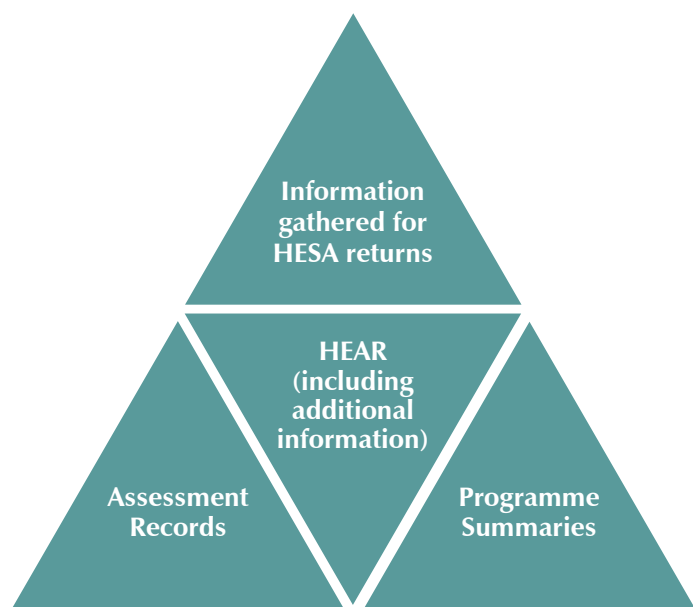


Figure 2 Existing Information Sources at Newman

working group who were also responsible for developing the guidelines for summaries. We explained the need for the information, produced clear guidance, outlined basic requirements and set a deadline. We received the summaries within a six-week period, covering over 200 combined honours routes as well as a range of Foundation level, Masters, Initial Teacher Education and Single Honours programmes.

Meanwhile our colleagues from central Management Information Systems had identified fields on our Student Information System (which is used to produce the annual transcripts) where the information could be harvested for the HEAR. For convenience, it was essential to be able to 'paste' the information directly into the field identified on the students' records system.

Having received all current programme summaries we have built the inclusion of a programme summary into our validation processes. The work of our Management Information Systems colleague was essential in this process, by ensuring that Word files could be easily pasted into student records fields.

Module results

A further area of work involved the module results. These were already held and produced on annual transcripts, but the weighting of each element and the type of assessment were not included. Considerable testing was undertaken to produce a report which included the information and was readable and digestible in hard copy format.

The inclusion of the number of attempts taken to complete a module also gave rise to considerable discussion amongst academics. However, it is interesting to note that students who were consulted did not feel this was a problem.

As details of weightings and assessment type were already held on our students' records system, the challenge was finding the necessary human resources to ensure the

information held matched that held in the Quality Assurance documents. This was undertaken using funding (a small sum) supplied by the HEAR project Steering Group to the trial institutions. In undertaking this we recognised the need to change our overall processes, with colleagues from the Quality Office agreeing to update the details held on the students' records system directly, rather than passing them to other colleagues to enter. Whilst this change necessitated some training, it has ensured that changes to modules and programmes are now recorded on the student records system in a consistent manner.

Section 6.1

This section can be argued to be one of the most important sections of the HEAR as it provides additional information relating to student achievement. The information which is included under the three headings (additional awards; additional recognised activities; University, Professional and Departmental prizes) provided a particular area of concern for us because we are an institution that does not provide such prizes as a matter of principle (reflecting the values at the heart of our Catholic Mission and Ethos).

While the final guidance for institutions provided by Universities UK does allow for institutions to indicate that they do not offer this opportunity, we did not feel it appropriate to leave this heading blank. So we have decided to include the following in all Newman HEARs:

'It is not the policy of the University College to award individual prizes.'

We also felt that the inclusion of verifiable activities was problematic, particularly for those students who due to particular circumstances (i.e. the need to maintain a significant part-time job or to fulfil caring responsibilities) may be less able to engage with some of the extra verifiable activities often associated with full-time study. Discussions with other members of the trial group were an extremely useful resource in this area as most of them were also facing these questions.

As part of the solution to this issue the trial group agreed that they would insert institutional statements around graduate attributes. At Newman this was taken from our Learning Teaching and Assessment Strategy to demonstrate to future employers what, in addition to the taught components of their degrees, makes a Newman University College graduate:

'Newman students and graduates are equipped to be independent life-long and life-wide learners who are keen and able to work in partnership with others. They are aware of and attentive to their citizenship responsibilities, are comfortable with uncertainty and are able to address many of the emerging social and environmental challenges facing contemporary societies.'

For those students with additional activities to verify (such as Students' Union and volunteering activities) it was agreed to consider what could be verified, how it could be verified and how best to include this in the HEAR.

The range of activities and the different subsystems in which the information was held proved a major consideration, as did the requirement, for Section 6.1 only, that students could seek the removal of any item. The need to create the minimum amount of additional workload, whilst maintaining and supporting the spirit of the section, required considerable negotiation. For a small institution this meant agreeing to a central contact inputting the relevant data into an agreed field on the students' records system. This has worked well for the initial HEARs, but we are considering training those managers responsible for providing the information for this section to be able to input it directly. For larger institutions, this may work better as the role is likely to be devolved to a faculty or school level.

The working group considered those activities which could be included and it was agreed to highlight those which are paid and those which are unpaid. A series of simple statements, which clarified the role(s) undertaken, was agreed as exemplified by the following:

- Captain of Sports Club
- Secretary/Vice Captain of Sports Club
- Chair of Students' Union Club or Society
- Secretary of Students' Union Club or Society
- Student Union Officer
- Student Union Executive
- Member of University College Working Group
- Member of University College Validation panel
- Student Ambassador
- Non-Medical helper
- Guardian Angel.

We agreed not to include the name of any Students' Union Clubs or Societies, to prevent any potential bias from employers relating to a particular club or society focus.

Electronic and Paper Copies

Having agreed to produce both paper and electronic copies of the HEAR, there were a number of considerations to be taken into account. For electronic versions in particular, these included both the security and storage of the HEAR following graduation. The use of a digital storage system can pose problems of cost (particularly for smaller institutions or those who devolve responsibility for the HEAR to the faculty or school level) and the issue of the potential proliferation of different storage sites as each becomes full. A number of the trial institutions, including Newman University College, have paused their considerations of these issues for the present to await the results of a series of parallel projects and in particular DARE (Digital Academic Records Exchange) are looking at the issue of shared digital storage, keeping in mind the need to provide secure access both to graduates and potential employers.

In considering a hard copy version, institutions were instructed:

'The overall length of any paper document should not be more than six pages.'

As the paper copy has to include all contextual information, together with the generic information on UK qualifications and a full-page diagram, the space left for Sections 4, 5 and 6 becomes limited to around three pages. How the information can be presented, whilst remaining legible, has required considerable efforts of testing, programming and discussion. It has also meant considering exactly what should be included, particularly with regard to module results, and this has led our institution to include only those modules that directly contribute to the award (for honours Degrees this had meant only including modules at levels 5 and 6).

Initially, our major concerns related to the resources required to incorporate the HEAR into our Student Information Systems. As a smaller institution we did not have the financial resource available to buy in the necessary software options, and the idea of sequestering staff to undertake manual input of large amounts of data was not an option. In early trials we estimated that the amount of time and human resources required each year was not possible. However, we wanted to make it work and have been fortunate in that the dedication of colleagues within the working group and the expertise provided from our Management Information Systems area have ensured that the issues could be overcome.

Why do it?

The drivers for the HEAR come from the National Union of Students, the Burgess Report and the Government (White Paper 2011):

'There has long been a view that the summary model of degree classification, using first, 2.1, 2.2 and third as descriptors, is inadequate to show potential employers what an individual student has done and can do. Overseen by a group led by Professor Sir Bob Burgess, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Leicester, the higher education sector has been developing the Higher Education Achievement Report (HEAR) to provide a richer description of student achievement, including information about module marks, academic credit and other achievements that can be verified by their institution...With on-going support for institutions from the HE Academy over the next year, we expect to see most institutions developing HEARs for all their undergraduate students from September 2012.'
(White Paper, 2011, para 3.44)

Expectations are that a HEAR or its equivalent for all graduates is now evidenced in UK national quality assurance systems. The new QAA UK Quality Code Part C: 'Indicators of sound practice', states:

'Indicator 6: When students leave their programme of study, higher education providers issue to them a detailed record of their studies, which gives evidence to others of the students' achievement in their academic programme.' (p.10)

As part of our own implementation process Newman also carried out two surveys with around 30 employers: one in the early stages to ensure that local and regional employers

felt that the HEAR would contain useful information and then one at a later stage when the template for the HEAR had been finalised.

Both surveys found that employers were most interested in the Programme Summary information, the breakdown of results, but also felt that the section on other achievements helped to provide a more detailed picture of the graduate as a job candidate. Interestingly, the element that employers judged to be least necessary was the actual classification. However it is important to stress that this was a small-scale survey of employers with connections to Newman and may not therefore reflect the national picture.

What did our graduates think?

Certainly, the enthusiasm of students who were involved in the trial, as members of focus groups and the main university College working group, has shown its importance. They were clear that it provides a richer picture of their academic attainment and, most importantly, provides verification of previously unrecorded achievements.

However, we also wished to find out whether an actual HEAR was as useful as we all hoped and to this end a short two-page survey was undertaken with graduates who received their HEAR from the University College in 2011. The Survey was sent out, together with the Destination of Leavers Survey, and graduates were able to return both surveys together. The survey aimed to gather basic descriptive information about graduates' perception and use of the HEAR. Tables 1-3 below provide an overview of graduates' perceptions of its utility.

Question	Yes	No
Have you looked at your HEAR?	87%	13%
Have you shown it to anyone?	33%	67%
Are you happy with the level of detail of your HEAR?	95%	5%
Is it important and valuable to employers to have this level of detail?	80%	20%

Table 1 Responses to binary forced choice questions around perceptions and use of the HEAR (n = 101)

Where you have shown it to anyone, have you used it for?		
Job application	72%	
CV	15%	
Interview	8%	
Further study application	5%	

Table 2 Current Uses of the HEAR (n = 34)

How useful will your HEAR be to help you find employment?		
Very/Quite	61%	
Not very/Not at all	39%	

Table 3 Perceptions of usefulness of the HEAR (n = 101)

Whilst we were limited in the number of questions that we could pose, our survey indicates that graduates are viewing the HEAR as both important and useful. Future surveys will follow up our initial survey to monitor whether initial interest and perceptions of utility change over time as the HEAR becomes the norm for the sector.

Top Tips for successful implementation of the HEAR

With the current policy emphasis being placed on the HEAR and the interest and support from students, graduates and employers, it is quite clear that it is here to stay. For colleagues at the beginning of their journey towards introducing the HEAR institution-wide, or those considering how to take it forward, we hope that the following 'Top Tips' may be of help to you. Many may seem axiomatic, but from our experience it is easy, when in the process of change, to overlook the most obvious of considerations:

- Tip 1: Obtain support from the most senior managers within your institution.
- Tip 2: Ensure congruence of the HEAR with the institutional agenda.
- Tip 3: Ensure that those implementing the change have a mandate to take decisions.
- Tip 4: Communicate often and clearly about the HEAR both up and down.
- Tip 5: Ensure a working/steering group/committee/sub-committee with sufficient representation for institutional 'buy in', but also a named lead.
- Tip 6: Make your Students' Union or Guild and IT Services/Management Information Systems your new best friends.

Further advice and detailed case studies from seven of the institutions, including Newman University College, can be obtained from the Centre for Recording Achievement which is working with Universities UK to monitor and support the move towards sector-wide take up of the HEAR.

Materials

Integrated HEAR Starter Pack (Universities UK) (tinyurl.com/7xnwr85).
Centre for Recording Achievement: <http://www.recordingachievement.org/>

References

- Burgess, B. (2007) 'Beyond the honours degree – the Burgess Group final report', Universities UK (tinyurl.com/4xdwzb4).
- QAA UK Quality Code Part C (tinyurl.com/cm9y6rp).
- White Paper (2011) 'Students at the heart of the system', BIS (tinyurl.com/7tqtche).

Lysandre de la Haye is Director of Quality, and **Elizabeth Cleaver** is Head of the Learning Development Unit, at Newman University College.

What Now for Student-Led Teaching Awards?

Oliver Williams, National Union of Students

Student-led teaching awards are a great way for students to recognise and reward great lecturers and tutors at their universities. They raise the profile and prestige of teaching, while making students feel that their opinions are being valued. People often assume that student-led teaching awards are, in themselves, a means to enhance the quality of teaching and learning at higher education institutions.

Teaching is in need of a bit of a profile boost. Teaching ability is hardly ever a criterion for lecturer promotion. While institutions' research outputs and abilities are rigorously assessed and highly prized in league tables, teaching is relegated to a distant second place. The current gap between those that prioritise teaching and those that concentrate on research is starkly highlighted by David Kernohan's recent analysis (Kernohan, 2012) of the allocation of margin places to universities against the research funding they receive. The places, awarded on criteria of quality, demand and cost, went almost entirely to institutions in receipt of no research funding whatsoever. His analysis highlights the assumption that excellent research automatically translates into outstanding teaching. This is a dangerous trap to fall into when, in reality, NSS scores for student satisfaction with teaching are often higher at new universities. An entire article could be dedicated to whether the NSS is an accurate measure of teaching quality, but it certainly suggests that innovation and student satisfaction are not the preserve of the ancients and civics.

But do student-led teaching awards enhance teaching quality by themselves? We can all, including NUS, be guilty of conflating the aesthetic benefits of running awards with the nitty-gritty business of

improving teaching and learning, when in fact they are two quite separate undertakings. Making lecturers and students feel warm and fuzzy is not the same as improving teaching across the institution, and you always run the standard risk of investing significant resource and effort in preaching to the choir.

There needs to be an intermediate step between running the awards and improving teaching. What that step might be, though, is very much up for discussion. Certainly, student-led teaching awards generate a rich body of data on students' perceptions of excellence in teaching. But it is how that data might be put to use that needs to be examined.

Traditional methods of mass student engagement, typically surveys and module feedback questionnaires, tend to encourage students to pick out what they like least about their teaching and learning experience. Student-led teaching awards shift the paradigm in a way that gets students thinking about what they value most from the teaching they receive. Broadening the spectrum of the student voice can only be a good thing; with the forthcoming QAA student engagement chapter, the need for meaningful partnership will become even more pressing.

There are many challenges and questions for institutions and unions wanting to make the most of information gathered from student-led teaching awards. Do students actually know what is good for them? Or will they just pick out teachers that make them laugh, let them finish early on Fridays or take them to Wetherspoons? The furore over contact hours, for example, shows that students can on occasion be guilty of conflating the quantity of teaching they receive with its quality.

Students' unions have an important role to play in moderating these and like opinions and in supporting students to articulate what they think is excellence in teaching. Thoughtful award criteria, for example, can provoke students into more considered responses that really recognise what excellent teaching looks like.

Across the UK, unions and institutions are already harnessing their student-led teaching awards to reap benefits to quality enhancement. Edinburgh, for example, stages a learning and teaching conference each year that is based on students' views. Very well attended, the conference is based on the perceptions of excellence brought out in the previous year's student-led teaching awards, and brings together student and institutional voices to find the common ground in beliefs about good teaching. Kent Union have made good use of their data by producing a report for each department on their students' views of excellence. Heriot-Watt have taken their data and worked with their institution to have it inform their Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice.

These initiatives are all fantastic, yet we believe more good ideas are out there ripe for dissemination. There has never been a more important time to proliferate the ways in which universities engage with the student voice in learning and teaching enhancement. Student-led teaching awards are a fantastic point of departure, but must not be mistaken for an end in themselves.

References

Kernohan, D. (2012) 'MarginCore – the binary divide' (WonkHE.com).

Oliver Williams is a Project Officer for student-led teaching awards at the National Union of Students.

'How do you know if anyone is there?'

Questions from teachers new to virtual classrooms

Sarah Cornelius, University of Aberdeen and Darren Gash, London Metropolitan University

Introduction

How do you know if anyone is there? How do you know if learners are paying attention? Do you need two tutors to avoid overload? Does the need for careful preparation inhibit spontaneity? These are just some of the questions raised during staff development events and workshops facilitated by the authors (e.g. Cornelius and Gash, 2011) by people embarking on teaching in virtual classrooms. This article outlines the tools available in a virtual classroom and addresses some of the questions raised about their use, drawing on evidence from research undertaken by the authors, experiences from their own institutions and other sources.

Virtual classrooms are online learning spaces that use web conferencing technology to enable real-time interaction and collaboration between teachers and learners. Products such as Blackboard Collaborate, Adobe Connect, Wimba Classroom and Elluminate are used across Higher Education to provide support for distance learners, reduce travel costs for faculty and students and provide a more flexible and diverse portfolio of study modes (e.g. Bowler and Raiker, 2011; Cunningham *et al.*, 2010).

The technology aims to emulate a 'classroom-like' experience, offering a range of communication tools such as audio, video and text chat, and interaction tools such as whiteboards, polling, screen sharing and 'breakout rooms' (Chatterton, 2010). In many institutions initial enthusiasts worked out how to use the systems through a process of trial and error. Now, their experience has cascaded down to a wider range of users, many of whom lack experience as virtual learners and need time and support to learn the art of facilitation in this new environment.

Whatever their background, teachers new to virtual classroom technologies may be concerned about what it will be like to teach online in real time. Manuals and training materials tend to focus more on technical and operational matters rather than educational competencies, although attempts to develop appropriate pedagogical models and frameworks for virtual classrooms are ongoing (e.g. De Freitas and Neumann, 2009; Bowler and Raiker, 2011). In this article we attempt to answer some of the practical questions we feel are inadequately covered by existing resources.

How do you know if anyone is there? Encouraging interaction

Even though you can see that all your learners are logged into your virtual classroom, how do you know they are actually

engaged with your learning activities and not checking email, reading online news or playing unrelated games? How do you know they are 'with you', that they are keeping up and understand what is required of them?

If a virtual classroom session includes a lengthy presentation element, the experience for learners can be akin to watching a television programme. Chatterton (2010, p. 5) suggests that 'there is a tendency for those with limited experience of Elluminate to treat it as a "broadcast" system and therefore miss out on its full potential for promoting engagement amongst users'. If this is the case, learners can be easily distracted. Both authors of this article, for example, freely admit that they have checked their email whilst participating in a web conferencing session, and research has found that 86% of mobile internet users use their mobile devices whilst watching TV (Yahoo Advertising Solutions, 2011).

Multitasking with technology is common, particularly amongst younger people (Ofcom, 2010) and engaging learners using technology at a distance is a challenge, particularly if the experience is overly passive. Using the tools provided by virtual classrooms to encourage interaction on a regular basis is, therefore, an important strategy to keep learners on board (Chatterton, 2010; Onlignment, no date), and it is widely acknowledged that learning is enhanced when students are actively engaged in the learning process. In a virtual classroom the tutor can encourage participants to respond to questions using 'yes' or 'no' buttons, to give visual feedback using emoticons, take part in brainstorm activities using text chat, ask questions or give presentations using voice.

Sampson and Shepherd (2010) suggest that opportunities for meaningful interaction should be provided every five to six minutes to encourage engagement. The notion of 'meaningful' interaction is important here – interaction should be beneficial for learners as well as for the teacher. Repeated requests from the teacher for a response that serves to simply confirm that participants can hear may be helpful for the teacher but distracting for the students. Meaningful interaction can be achieved by using the available tools to do things that would be difficult or impossible in a physical classroom – for example using polling tools or questions that elicit a useful set of responses in the text box. Such strategies may also compensate for the lack of body language online; in general, strategies which represent good practice in any teaching and learning context through interaction are the most effective. Engaging virtual classroom sessions are interesting, varied and relevant to learners.

Can preparation inhibit spontaneity? Being flexible in a virtual classroom

Chatterton (2010, p. 5) notes that 'it is not unusual for those running an Elluminate session to prepare insufficiently, [the] structure and plan [for] their session'. It is more than just preparing materials – both learners and teachers need to prepare their environment to ensure they are ready for learning and teaching. In a traditional classroom, the mere fact of walking in helps both learner and teacher settle into their roles. However, when logging into a virtual classroom the physical surroundings may hinder this readiness. A survey of a cohort of distance learners at the University of Aberdeen (Cornelius, 2011) found that the majority preferred to participate in virtual classroom sessions from home, although some opted to log in at work despite distractions such as phones ringing and people talking, primarily because technical support was available.

Learners may face technical difficulties trying to engage whilst on the move, for example from airports or internet cafes. Some locations make it difficult for participants to engage. For example, they may feel inhibited when making verbal contributions if others in a room can overhear them, particularly if those contributions are of a reflective or personal nature. It is therefore important to ensure learners know what is expected from them and to encourage them to find an appropriate learning space, somewhere that promotes motivation and engagement. Activities at the beginning of a session such as informal icebreakers or team-building tasks can 'settle' learners into the virtual environment, helping them put aside the distractions of their physical surroundings and focus their attention in the virtual classroom.

Learners also need to develop their technological capabilities as well as understand the etiquette of communication in the new environment. This can be addressed during preparatory sessions, and careful design of activities can help learners develop and practise these skills. For example, during an introductory activity learners can experiment with the whiteboard's drawing tools in order to familiarise themselves before applying them to a more substantive activity later on. Since learners generally make use of virtual classroom tools infrequently, any opportunity to practise and develop skills will be useful.

Learners need to be aware that it is difficult for the teacher to know when they want to speak. For small online groups a naturally free-flowing conversation is possible, however larger groups may need to adhere to clear protocols or guidelines. For example, participants may be asked to use the 'hand raising' function to indicate they wish to say something, or be required to use the text chat to ask questions without interrupting the conversation. Guidelines should be systematically implemented and periodically revisited to ensure learners' needs and preferences are being met and that they are not just there for the teacher's convenience.

Some learners may have anxieties about using web conferencing technology, and if they are worried about which buttons to press to make a contribution they are

unlikely to be focusing on preparing an appropriate and meaningful response to a discussion question. Grant and Cheon (2007) identify learners' and teachers' proficiency with the technology as a critical factor when implementing synchronous conferencing; helping learners develop operational skills will therefore help them develop a sense of control and autonomy in virtual classrooms and to be as comfortable as they would be in a familiar, physical classroom.

For new teachers, careful planning of session structure and content helps provide the reassurance that everything will run smoothly during the session. However, over-planning and rigid adherence to a plan can hinder the flexibility and spontaneity that is characteristic of experienced teachers who are able to adapt and respond to learners' changing needs in a face-to-face session. With experience and practice comes the ability to use virtual classroom tools to achieve the same flexibility: for example, by providing on-the-fly polls to check if learners have understood an important concept, or changing the format of an activity to enable group discussion and prevent an individual dominating a whole group plenary. For a new virtual classroom teacher it may be unsettling to be in an environment in which their full repertoire of teaching and learning strategies is initially not so easy to draw on, but as confidence in the virtual classroom reaches a stage where they are able to spontaneously digress from their plan it can become a rewarding and satisfying experience.

Are two teachers necessary? Providing effective support

The ability to use the virtual classroom tools and multi-task (for example to monitor simultaneous audio and text contributions), plus the need for careful planning means that an effective strategy for new virtual teachers can be to work alongside another facilitator. For example, when a participant faces a technical problem this can be addressed by one facilitator whilst the other continues to engage with the other participants. The use of more than one voice can also be an effective way of structuring a session, for example by adopting an interview-style approach to present content (Sampson and Shepherd, 2010). Alternatively, one facilitator may focus on managing oral contributions whilst the other deals with the questions in the text chat. Adopting a team teaching approach can also be a very effective way of mentoring new facilitators to develop their virtual classroom skills.

Factors such as timetabling and staff costs may of course render the use of two facilitators uneconomical or impractical. However, as teachers become more experienced they will eventually be comfortable enough to go solo. They may also find running virtual sessions easier if learners are also experienced and comfortable in the virtual classroom environment, so it is important that steps are taken to develop learners' skills and confidence with the technology so they can solve their own or each other's problems. Learners need to be aware of the kinds of problems that can arise and develop strategies to deal with them. Communication in this regard is vital – to be left in the 'ether' with no way of getting in touch can create unnecessary

stress for learners, so alternative ways of getting in touch via email or phone are also useful, although this does add to the number of media the teacher is required to monitor.

Some of the strategies common to face-to-face situations may also help develop learners' skills and confidence. It is important they come together as a learning community who can work together productively. Icebreaker activities can help build relationships if participants do not already know each other. It is also vital that learners retain a sense of control; for example, although it is easy to randomly distribute participants into virtual 'breakout rooms' with the click of a button, it may be preferable to give them the opportunity to decide how groups should be formed. This may avoid feelings of confusion and disempowerment that can arise when participants are 'picked up' and moved into separate rooms against their will. Such strategies will also help create a more learner-centred environment and move away from a teacher-led 'classroom' which can be a feature of synchronous instruction (Murphy *et al.*, 2011).

A more equitable learning environment will be created where everyone expects to interact and contribute rather than just relying on the teacher. Handing over power and responsibility to learners in an environment where they themselves are not at ease is challenging for many facilitators, but is worth striving for as it will reduce stress levels for both learners and teachers, making the virtual classroom a welcoming and familiar learning environment, rather than a passive experience akin to watching television. Teachers may also benefit from the 'reverse impact' phenomenon whereby the experience of teaching in virtual classrooms has the effect of improving practice in face-to-face classrooms (Royler *et al.*, 2009).

Implications for staff development

Having discussed issues raised by those new to virtual classrooms we suggest three areas for consideration by teachers and staff developers:

- the importance of being prepared, not just in terms of lesson planning but also in helping learners create a physical space conducive to study
- the importance of practice and the development of appropriate technical skills, as confidence with the technology will lead to a feeling of control and comfort in the environment for both learners and teachers, increasing opportunities for flexibility and spontaneity to address learners' needs
- the importance of support during initial experiences in the virtual classroom and strategies that help both learners and teachers develop autonomy in a complex and demanding technical environment.

Teachers taking on the challenge of virtual classrooms should be prepared to be unsettled by the experience; they need to be ready to question and reflect on their practice; they will also benefit from having experience as a learner as well as a teacher in a virtual classroom. To stay in control of a complex

and demanding environment may push some individuals initially towards a more teacher-centred approach. But encouraging interaction through meaningful activity and providing opportunities for learners to develop their own skills and autonomy will result in a more learner-centred experience. Working with other teachers, sharing questions and reflecting on practice are all essential strategies for teachers developing their skills in the virtual classroom. There is still a lot to learn about teaching in virtual classrooms, and we need to consider both the questions of newcomers and reflections from experienced users to help develop appropriate strategies and identify relevant pedagogical competencies.

References

- Bowler, M. and Raiker, A. (2011) 'Learning to "chat": developing a pedagogical framework for facilitating online synchronous tutorial discussion', *The Journal of Pedagogic Development*, Vol. 1, no. 1, pp. 6-15.
- Chatterton, P. (2010) 'Designing for participant engagement with Elluminate Live' (tinyurl.com/38e87x8).
- Cornelius, S. (2011) 'Convenience and community?: An exploratory investigation into learners' experiences of web conferencing', in T. Bastiaens and M. Ebner (eds.) *Proceedings of World Conference on Educational Multimedia, Hypermedia and Telecommunications 2011*, American Association for Computing in Education, Chesapeake, VA, pp. 2696-2704.
- Cornelius, S. and Gash, D. (2011) 'Supporting the transition from the physical to the virtual classroom', Workshop session at SEDA Spring Conference, May 2011, Edinburgh.
- Cunningham, U., Beers Fagersten, K. and Holmsten, E. (2010) '"Can you hear me Hanoi?" Compensatory mechanisms employed in synchronous net-based English language learning', *International Review of Research in Open and Distance Learning*, 11(1), pp. 161-177.
- De Freitas, S. and Neumann, T. (2009) 'Pedagogic strategies supporting the use of synchronous audiographic conferencing: a review of the literature', *British Journal of Educational Technology*, 46(6), pp. 980-998.
- Grant, M. M. and Cheon, J. (2007) 'The value of using synchronous conferencing for instruction and students', *Journal of Interactive Online Learning*, 6(3), pp. 211-226
- Murphy, E., Rodriguez-Manzanares, M. A. and Barbour, M. (2011) 'Asynchronous and synchronous online teaching: perspectives of Canadian high school distance education teachers', *British Journal of Educational Technology*, 42(4), pp. 583-591.
- Ofcom (2010) 'Consumers spend almost half of their waking hours using media and communications', August 19 2010 (tinyurl.com/33pzbba).
- Onlignmt (no date) 'Live online learning: a facilitator's guide' (tinyurl.com/3ypgzj).
- Royler, M. D., Porter, M., Bielefeldt, T., Donaldson, M. B. (2009) '"Teaching online made me a better teacher": studying the impact of virtual course experiences on teachers' face-to-face practice', *Journal of Computing and Teaching in Education*, 25(4), pp. 121-126.
- Sampson, B. and Shepherd, C. (2010) 'How to run a virtual classroom session', ALT Webinar recording (tinyurl.co/3crdv2j).
- Yahoo Advertising Solutions (2011) 'Mobile shopping framework: the role of mobile devices in the shopping process', White Paper by Yahoo and Neilson (tinyurl.com/69mwfn5).

Sarah Cornelius is a Senior Lecturer in the School of Education at the University of Aberdeen (s.cornelius@abdn.ac.uk).

Darren Gash is a Learning Technology Advisor in the London Metropolitan University Business School (d.gash@londonmet.ac.uk).

New PDF Award: Leading Programmes

Jenny Eland, Birmingham City University

As we all know, Programme Leaders (also known as directors of study, course directors, pathway leaders and other titles too numerous to mention here) have a pivotal role within Higher and Further Education provision. They are expected to lead teams in effective curriculum design and development; to interpret and navigate fast-changing disciplinary, institutional, regional, national and global contexts; to influence colleagues, support staff and managers; to understand and effectively implement quality enhancement frameworks; to timetable effectively making the best use of resources (fight for room allocations) and to ensure an excellent student learning experience – the list is probably endless. In most cases this often comes without clearly defined responsibilities, without the official authority of a line management role and as a first step into HE leadership. Many learn their role through trial and error and some form of knowledge osmosis. The future may be uncertain but what we do know is that change is undeniable and Programme Leaders are faced with a range of new situations which will require complex decision-making and inspirational leadership.

This new PDF award has been designed to meet these challenges. Its central purpose is to stimulate and develop participants' leadership knowledge, skills, understanding and application

in order to help them lead their programme teams to produce an outstanding student learning experience. It will be of particular relevance to colleagues who are in, or aspire to be in, a programme or course leadership position. The award aims to enable participants to reflect critically on, and develop further, a creative capacity to work with colleagues and to further enhance programmes and courses in their setting. Attention will be given to the role of the Programme Leader in relation to curriculum design, learning and teaching, quality enhancement and subject mastery.

The aims of the award are:

- To support individuals in their professional development as educational leaders
- To support and recognise individual progress, practice and professional achievement
- To enhance curriculum development and, hence, the student learning experience
- To promote the development of professionals with the knowledge, skills and attributes to effectively lead, nurture and guide educational change and development in the sector.

In addition to the core outcomes and values common to all SEDA PDF awards there are five Specialist Outcomes:

- Reflect critically on the nature of programme leadership and its relationship to context, including influences beyond the course, discipline and institution
- Reflect on appropriate leadership theory in order to enhance practice as a programme leader
- Evaluate models of team effectiveness and consider strategies to lead, influence and enhance team performance
- Evaluate appropriate curriculum design, development and evaluation strategies and consider their application in order to facilitate an excellent student learning experience
- Inform their role with relevant strategy, policy and quality considerations.

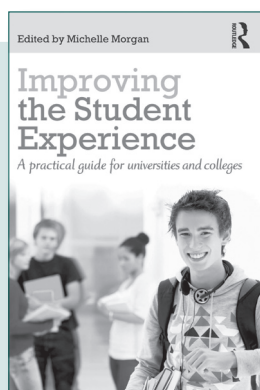
This is an exciting and challenging (and possibly overdue) addition to the PDF framework that we hope will enhance the development of you, your colleagues and your institutions. For further information visit the SEDA PDF link (http://www.seda.ac.uk/?p=3_1) or contact Jenny Eland (jenny.eland@bcu.ac.uk).

Jenny Eland is Programme Leaders Award Coordinator at Birmingham City University.

Book Review

Improving the Student Experience: a practical guide for universities and colleges

Edited by
Michelle Morgan



On first glancing through this book I was a little overwhelmed by its apparent density and the vast amount of case studies. However, on a second, and more in-depth viewing, it proves to be a useful insight for all interested in developing a coherent and effective approach to the student experience. The book is divided into three parts. Part one consists of chapters outlining the higher education landscape and, importantly, Morgan's Student Experience Practitioner Model. Part two has chapters that contain three or four case studies outlining ways in which each stage of the model can be practically applied. Each chapter is bookended with a short opening essay from an expert practitioner and is a short

conclusion. Part three continues in a similar vein to part two, with chapters containing a short essay, case studies and a conclusion, but this time the chapters focus on the interlinking themes Morgan identifies in part one. The book concludes with an insightful, and brief, chapter looking at future developments in higher education and a very useful further reading list for those wishing to pursue particular topics in more depth.

While it is possible to use this book purely for generating quick ideas to fix specific problems, its real potential can only be properly understood by reading it through. Morgan introduces a new model for approaching the student experience, and central to the success of this model is her conceptualisation of approaching the student experience in a holistic, joined-up way.

The Practitioner Model, in essence, is a more developed and more detailed version of the student life-cycle, which according to Morgan, is not advanced enough to deliver for students on a mass scale. This, I can see sense in. As participation in higher education expands, it is useful for practitioners to have tools that address the student experience in practical and manageable ways. However, as with any model, readers should be aware of the dangers of becoming too bogged down in the separate stages and their definitions. The case studies provide good examples of how the principles of the model can be applied to

different groups of students, and it must be remembered that in our diverse student bodies, one size can never fit all. The model is a useful conceptual tool for framing thoughts and an overall approach to delivering an improved student experience – I found the differentiation between orientation and induction particularly insightful. If practitioners become too welded to analysing the model, then they will miss the key point of it – that the student should be the driving force for activity.

The rest of the book is devoted to a wide array of different case studies, international as well as UK based. The short introductions into each area are helpful for focusing the reader onto the specific issues, whilst not being too dense. The case studies are useful, although vary in detail and information. However, as a set, especially when viewed through the frame of the Practitioner Model, the case studies are very useful at a practical level, hopefully inspiring similar innovation and approaches in institutions around the UK and further afield.

Overall, I found that the book gave a useful framework for the reader to think about how they approach delivering an excellent student experience and provided good worked examples of how to go about achieving it.

Bethan Payne is Higher Education Policy Advisor at the National Union of Students.

... Continued from page 28

educational development during SEDA's lifetime. Looking at the work of figures like, for example, Royce Sadler, Gilly Salmon, Graham Gibbs, Marcia Mentkowski and David Boud, a 'celebrant' will introduce the work of the key influencer and invite two or more discussants to add perspectives about the impact of the work, then the discussion will be opened up to the floor for wider debate. We intend to video the symposium and make the outputs available on the SEDA website, enabling text responses to follow over the rest of the year, perhaps even with inputs from the key influencers themselves!

We are very keen to invite nominations for the seminal thinkers on whom we will focus, together with volunteers to be celebrants and discussants. Please contact sally@sally-brown.net with your ideas and offers.

Gala dinner

On the night of Saturday 18 May the SEDA@20 Gala dinner will be held

at the Marriott hotel in Leeds: this will be a glitzy occasion at which everyone attending is invited to dress up and celebrate with us. There will be music, dancing, awards, entertainment and surprises with a strong focus on student inputs, for example as musicians. Ideas for the event have been developed to date by Event Management students from Leeds Met working with Sally Brown and Carole Baume, and we aim to use students to help with as many aspects of the event as possible.

Sunday social options for those staying over are likely to include visits to the Yorkshire Sculpture Park, the Hockney exhibition at Saltaire and historic walks round York and Leeds.

Helping us celebrate

We are very keen to involve SEDA members (old, current and forthcoming) in our celebratory year. Please do try to make some or all of our events, and if you know former members who might be interested in coming along, particularly to the

Gala dinner, please let them know about our plans. We are also keen to build the SEDA archives, so if you have photos or videos of SEDA events and people, or documents or artefacts you think we might not have access to, please let the SEDA office know about them.

Fiona Campbell (F.Campbell@napier.ac.uk) would also like to hear about your personal recollections and reminiscences in text or video form to include within the showcase.

In planning the celebrations, many of us are recognising the significant impact SEDA has had on our lives and we very much hope to mark the occasion of our twentieth birthday with style, energy and purpose, reviewing our achievements but also looking to the future of the organisation too. Join us if you can!

For further suggestions, proposals and ideas, please contact **Sally Brown** (sally@sally-brown.net) and **Liz Shrives** (liz.shrives@btinternet.com)

SEDA@20: a year of Celebrations

Sally Brown and Liz Shrives, SEDA Executive Committee

Many of us who are members of SEDA are proud to have been involved in a learning and social community that has nurtured and supported us well over the years, so it is hard sometimes to believe it is only twenty years old. SEDA came into being on 18 May 1993, following the merger of the Standing Conference of Educational Developers (SCED) and the Staff Development group of the Society for Research in Higher Education (SRHE). Few at the time envisaged how influential the organisation would be, both on us as individuals but also on national developments – leading and supporting the educational development community as the professional association for educational academic and staff developers in higher education. The activities we are planning for the twentieth anniversary celebrations are designed to recognise the impact of our publications (SEDA papers, the SEDA series of books, and IETI, our journal *Innovations in Education and Teaching International*), our conferences and events, our pioneering work in professional recognition of the importance of accreditation in learning and teaching, our Fellowships and perhaps most importantly, the important role SEDA has had in the development of those who have engaged with it.

Purposes of the SEDA@20 activities

In celebrating this landmark year, we are keen to provide a historical context for our work and to provide evidence of our impact. We wish to raise the profile of SEDA in the UK and internationally and celebrate SEDA's work and values. We want to spread the word about the value we add to the learning and teaching community and to increase the status of SEDA as a professional body, securing our long-term sustainability through encouraging new people to work with us. We are also keen to develop cooperation with other development communities and organisations.

What's it all about?

To celebrate our twenty-year history (and looking forward to the next twenty years) we will be holding a range of events and activities throughout 2013 to celebrate the unique impact SEDA has had on the wider higher education community. These will include:

- a high profile Anniversary lecture in January focusing on the role of Educational Development in changing practice in higher education, looking forward to future developments
- the SEDA@20 conference – 17-18 May in Leeds – which will incorporate a unique symposium on leading thinking in educational development and a celebratory Gala dinner
- Regional SEDA events to take the celebrations out to our members
- SEDA@20 awards in two strands which will both recognise outstanding contributions to SEDA in the past twenty years and also provide small awards to enable recipients to explore challenges in future years
- A special edition of the SEDA journal, *Innovations in Education and Teaching International*, which will include both review articles and blue-skies thinking about the future of the field. Gina Wisker (g.wisker@brighton.ac.uk) is the journal editor
- SEDA@20 Special publications which may include Papers on Evaluation in Educational Development (edited by Roni Bamber), Supporting Educational Change (edited by Ranald McDonald) and the impact of SEDA's Small Grants scheme (edited by Jan Smith)
- A history of SEDA to be written by James Wisdom, Pam Parker and John Lea
- A SEDA showcase on the revamped SEDA website to include accounts

of the impact SEDA has had on individual lives, communities and institutions.

SEDA members are invited to contact Liz Shrives (liz.shrives@btinternet.com) if you would like to propose further ideas for events, publications and pop-up activities.

The SEDA celebratory conference

To enable the maximum number of SEDA members and friends as well as those new to SEDA to participate, the SEDA May conference at the Marriott hotel in Leeds in 2013 will have a different format from usual, with the diverse elements separately bookable.

Delegates arriving on Thursday 16 May will be able to take part in a SEDA Fellowship event where those interested in becoming Fellows and Senior Fellows of SEDA will be able to meet those who have achieved this status to discuss the processes involved and the benefits of doing so. We will also be making recommendations for evening activities in Leeds.

Friday 17 May will comprise a conference day in our normal SEDA conference format, with a keynote address and refereed parallel sessions around the generic theme of values. An early evening poster session and buffet will provide opportunities for discussion and networking. Delegates will again be provided with suggestions of interesting things to do in Leeds, including theatre, social activities and the best Pakistani cuisine in Yorkshire!

Saturday 18 May will be a celebratory symposium, convened by Sally Brown and Fiona Campbell. The premise is to explore some of the seminal thinkers of the last twenty years who have influenced

Continued on page 27 ...