

The Staff and Educational Development Association (SEDA) is the professional association committed to improving all aspects of learning, teaching and training in higher education through staff and educational development.

The theme of this year's annual report reflects SEDA's commitment and contribution to enabling staff, institutions and the sector to meet the fast changing demands of the external environment for the benefit of student learning. Over the past year SEDA has demonstrated strengths in a number of key areas.

### **SEDA's strengths**

- **Commitment of the membership**

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

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

SEDA has institutional members across the full range of Higher Education institutions – the specialist institutions, the colleges, and the pre and post 1992 universities – as well as some of the Further Education colleges in which Higher Education is delivered.

SEDA's individual members range from staff who are new to the sector to experienced and expert staff and educational developers with international reputations. The common factor is their commitment and passion to improving student learning and the student experience by developing and disseminating effective and innovative practice. *'SEDA will help all its members, whether staff and educational developers, teachers or learning staff, to enhance the quality of their capabilities in supporting learning'* (SEDA's Core Mission)

- **Independence**

SEDA's long standing independence as an organisation is a principal strength. SEDA is funded by the voluntary subscriptions of institutional and individual members and by its range of activities which include its Fellowship scheme, Professional Development Framework, conferences, events and publications.

SEDA's independence has proved invaluable in responding to national consultations on developments within the Higher Education sector.

*'SEDA will seek to influence the national debate on matters within its remit'* (SEDA's Core Mission)

- **Collaboration**

SEDA's independence enables it actively to collaborate from a position of strength with other organisations. In the past year SEDA has engaged in discussions with the Higher Education Academy and the Leadership Foundation. It has arranged joint events and a publication with the Enhancing Student Employability Skills Co-ordination Team (ESECT).

*'SEDA will develop and sustain links with other organisations committed to enhancing the quality of learning in higher education'* (SEDA's Core Mission)

- **Internationalism**

SEDA is the UK representative member of the International Consortium of Educational Development whose purpose is to promote educational and academic development in higher education world-wide. In April 2005 the Co-Chair of SEDA presented a paper to the Council meeting in Croatia on the development of professional standards for teaching in Higher Education. SEDA has benefited from the international perspective of Professor Nicky-Sinéad Gardner who has been a member of the SEDA Advisory Group for the past four years. SEDA is represented on the Editorial Board of the International Journal of Academic Development (ICED's refereed journal); its November 2004 issue addressed the Bologna Process. SEDA's own journal, Innovations in Education and Teaching International, has in the past year included international articles on problem-based learning and changes in postgraduate supervision. Institutions in Switzerland, Sri Lanka, Hong Kong and Saudi Arabia are currently working towards recognition of Professional Development Framework programmes.

- **Communication**

SEDA is committed to communicating and promoting communication among individuals and across the sector. Educational Developments is SEDA's magazine, published four times a year. It carries news and comment, book reviews and guides to materials on the internet. It prints articles of immediate and topical importance to SEDA members and is one of the main vehicles for the dissemination of new developments in practice. Articles are written in the style which most suits their content – from light, humorous or provocative pieces to fully-referenced and substantial accounts. Not only does it keep SEDA members informed, but distributing it is an ideal way of supporting the network of leaders in teaching and learning within an institution.

The SEDA Jisc list is becoming an important means of contributing to capacity building by promoting interaction, sharing ideas and involving the wider community in discussions about consultations.

Details of SEDA activity are available on <http://www.seda.ac.uk/>.

- **Thinking ahead and responding**

SEDA's combination of thinking ahead and responsiveness is illustrated by the work of all its committees. In its annual report to the Executive, the SEDA Papers Committee, for example, states, 'The seven titles published this year result from the attention members have paid to the voices of the FE and HE sector.... The two best sellers this year were concerned with Personal Development Planning and Reflective Practice. The proactivity associated with the production of SEDA Specials reflects our commitment to collaboration with colleagues and sharing expertise and excellence via publications grounded in practice that is proven to make a difference. Feedback indicates great satisfaction with the usefulness of the publications released in 2004-05.'

- **Researching our practice**

SEDA is committed to promoting evidence-based practice as illustrated by recent conferences and the work of the research committee. SEDA Awards are granted annually to support the costs of development-related activity which examines how we ensure that our practice as staff and educational developers is underpinned by good educational research and principles, that we appropriately evaluate and reflect on the impact of what we do, and that we review our practice in the light of the evidence we generate.

- **Value for Money**

As SEDA's members are practitioners with a real understanding of the position and the budget of the educational development agency within an HEI, it has created a range of services which strengthen and support that unit. The institutional subscription brings a range of services, materials and networks. It also guarantees the long-term presence of the one association which promotes the professional standing of staff and educational development work.

SEDA's range of services has been designed to enable the educational development unit in turn to strengthen its links with its growing internal network of colleagues who are taking on educational development responsibilities – perhaps Learning and Teaching Fellows, or directors of educational projects, or Departmental Learning and Teaching coordinators, or Library and IT staff who support student learning.

- **Activity**

SEDA's activities are clustered around five areas, each designed to support the professionalism of its members and others in Higher Education:

Professional Development  
Conferences and Events  
Publications

Research  
Services to members

SEDA Committees are responsible for promoting each aspect of this work. Volunteer colleagues from many different backgrounds and with widely varying experience give their time and expertise to support the association. Many see their engagement as one of the

most rewarding forms of personal and professional development they can experience. Where SEDA has been successful, it is from the strength and creativity of its committees.

Extracts from the committee reports are presented below: SEDA Professional Development Framework (PDF), SEDA Fellowships, IETI, Papers, Research, Conferences. They clearly illustrate the ways in which committee activities are aligned to build capacity for change among individuals, institutions and the sector.

‘ The SEDA-PDF has established an approach which enables institutions to gain recognition of their arrangements for professional development. It also helps them to describe and move towards their own standards for professional development. The framework has proved to be popular and feedback confirms that the recognition process is formative, supportive and developmental. Currently the number of named awards has increased to:

- Developing Leaders
- Developing Professional Practice
- Enhancing Academic Practice
- Enhancing Research Practice
- Embedding Learning Technologies
- Exploring Learning Technologies
- Learning, Teaching and Assessing
- Supervising Postgraduate Research
- Supporting Learning

The strengths of the SEDA-PDF approach come from: SEDA’s independence as an organisation whose activities are driven by institutional and individual members within HE: SEDA’s developmental approach to recognitions which enables institutions to gain access to support and advice from across higher education at an early stage in their planning.

*PDF Committee*

‘The SEDA Fellowships offer respected professional accreditation for staff and educational developers working in higher education. Fellowships are awarded on an individual basis.

The Summer School for new educational developers was held in Stratford-upon-Avon in July. Twenty three delegates participated - the summer school was over subscribed- and the event was seen to be very valuable.’

(Currently the Fellowships and PDF Committees are exploring how the ‘Supporting development’ and ‘Leading development’ named awards can provide steps on the way to achieving the Associate Fellowship and Fellowship)

*Fellowships Committee*

'The Journal continues to be international and we have specials (for example on problem based learning) as well as general papers from around the world. Four good issues have been published in the last year including a special on metalearning introduced by Norman Jackson from the Generic LTSN.

*IETI Committee*

'SEDA/SRHE network meeting 'Exploring the relationships between educational research and educational development' 27 April 2004'

'Establishment of a Reading Group which has met formally at Royal Holloway and the University of Central England'

'Managing the Awards Scheme – 12 applications, 7 awarded on the theme of 'Questioning the impact of staff and educational development'

*Research Committee*

'The SEDA papers committee has continued to respond to the expressed needs of Educational Developers by producing a range of publications in 2004. These include, Advances in Computer Aided Assessment; Assessing Group Practice; Employability: Learning through partnerships with employers; Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity: Curriculum Matters; Developing and Assessing Students' Oral Skills.

In 2004 we published "Enhancing Staff and Educational Development" edited by David Baume and Peter Kahn. It is one of the SEDA Series, published by RoutledgeFalmer. It accompanies "A Guide to Staff and Educational Development" edited by Peter Kahn and David Baume, published in the same series in 2003.

In 2005 we will be publishing "Educational Development and Leadership in Higher Education: Developing an effective institutional strategy", edited by Kym Fraser, also in the SEDA Series.

*Papers Committee*

'Two major successful conferences were organised in 2004, Linking Strategy and Students: making connections through Educational Development' (Cardiff) and the challengingly titled 'Questioning the Impact of Staff and Educational Development', the 9<sup>th</sup> SEDA Annual Conference held in Birmingham. Evaluations were generally positive 'Great conference, great people, well organised', 'Good and supportive atmosphere. Very high standard of sessions. A most stimulating and enjoyable conference.'

One day events included a workshop in January on SEDA and the Higher Education Academy.

*Conference Committee*

### **Jill Brookes Administration**

SEDA owes an incalculable debt to Jill Brookes and her team who have provided loyal, efficient and good humoured administrative support for over twenty years to SEDA and its predecessor. In 2004 Jill informed SEDA Executive that she would be closing Jill Brookes Administration in July 2005. In consequence the Executive published a tender for its administrative services and in February 2005 the tender was awarded to the Association of Commonwealth Universities, Gordon Square, London.

## **SEDA Executive 2004-05**

Dr Stephen Bostock FSEDA  
Professor Tony Brand  
Jill Brookes  
Professor Sally Brown FSEDA  
Dr Helen King AFSEDA  
Professor Barry Jackson  
Dr Ray Land FSEDA  
Mike Laycock  
Ranald Macdonald FSEDA  
Dr Kristine Mason O'Connor  
Dr John Peters  
Liz Shrives  
John Sweet FSEDA  
Jo Tait  
Maurice Teasdale  
Shân Wareing FSEDA  
James Wisdom  
Professor Gina Wisker FSEDA

## **SEDA Advisory Group**

Professor Liz Beaty FSEDA, HEFCE  
Professor Philip C Candy, NHSU  
Dr Paul Clark, The Open University  
Dr Liz Elvidge, University of Cambridge  
Professor Caroline Gipps, Kingston University  
Professor Nicky-Sinéad Gardner, Independent Consultant  
Mike Laycock, University of East London  
William Locke, Universities UK  
Dr Kristine Mason O'Connor, University of Gloucestershire  
Professor James Wisdom, Independent Consultant  
Professor Mantz Yorke, Liverpool John Moores University

## **Concluding comment**

This annual report shows the ways in which SEDA has contributed to capacity building in the past year for individuals, institutions and the sector. It is imperative that SEDA also further develops and maintains its own capacity and mission as an organisation. As well as sustaining its current membership SEDA needs to expand membership of individuals and institutions. This important subject will be a focus of SEDA strategic planning in the forthcoming year.

Details of SEDA activity are available on <http://www.seda.ac.uk/>