

GOOD PRACTICE GUIDE

2014 Survey of Technology Enhanced Learning: case studies



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Introduction

This publication presents a series of case studies on institutional approaches to the management of Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) services and is intended to serve as a companion report to the 2014 UCISA Technology Enhanced Learning Survey Report¹, which captures TEL developments across the UK Higher Education (HE) sector. This publication builds on the series of case study interviews which accompanied the last two UCISA TEL Survey reports in 2010 and 2012².

The rationale for conducting the interviews is based on feedback which we received for the 2008 TEL Survey Report, which highlighted the need for clearer lines of interpretation for certain areas of the data that we were presenting on. The case studies enable us to probe themes in the data and shed light on TEL trends through the eyes of representative institutions, offering context to the findings. The interviews also enable us to explore themes which cannot be captured effectively through responses to survey questions, such as organisational structure and cultural approaches to TEL developments.

About the sample

Upon completion of the 2014 TEL Survey instrument, responding institutions were invited to volunteer as case study institutions to share their approaches to TEL developments and support provision. Out of an initial list of 27 volunteer institutions (from a population of 96 which completed the 2014 TEL Survey), 13 institutions were selected for interviews.

The sample group is broadly representative of the UK HE population, with all institutional types (Pre-92; Post-92; HE College) covered, although we acknowledge that no institutions from Northern Ireland or members of the Russell Group are represented. Two of the selected institutions (City University London and Edinburgh Napier University) were also the subject of case studies in 2012 and 2010, and their continuing presence is intentional in order to present a longitudinal narrative to TEL developments.

Institution	Type	Country	Mission group
City College Norwich	HE College	England	Unclassified
City University London	Pre-92	England	Unclassified
Coventry University	Post-92	England	University Alliance
Edge Hill University	Post-92	England	Unclassified
Edinburgh Napier University	Post-92	Scotland	Million+
Glasgow Caledonian University	Post-92	Scotland	University Alliance
Sheffield Hallam University	Post-92	England	University Alliance
Southampton Solent University	Post-92	England	GuildHE
Sussex Downs College	HE College	England	Unclassified
University of Derby	Post-92	England	Unclassified
University of Northampton	Post-92	England	Unclassified
University of Reading	Pre-92	England	Unclassified
University of South Wales	Post-92	Wales	University Alliance

- 1 Walker, R., Voce J., Nicholls, J., Swift, E., Ahmed, J., Horrigan, S., and Vincent P. (2014). 2014 Survey of Technology Enhanced Learning for higher education in the UK. Universities and Colleges Information Systems Association, Oxford, UK. Available at: <http://www.ucisa.ac.uk/tel>
- 2 The 2012 case study interviews are presented in the following publication:
UCISA Report (2012). 2012 Survey of Technology Enhanced Learning: case studies. Universities and Colleges Information Systems Association, Oxford, UK.
The 2010 case study interviews appear in Appendix D of the 2010 TEL Survey Report: Browne, T., Hewitt, R., Jenkins, M., Voce, J., Walker, R. and Yip, H. (2010). 2010 Survey of Technology Enhanced Learning For Higher Education in the UK. A JISC/UCISA funded survey.
Both publications are available at: <http://www.ucisa.ac.uk/tel>

Case study questions and format

We are most grateful to members of the UK Heads of e-Learning Forum (HeLF)³ for reviewing the question-set for the 2014 TEL Survey and for suggesting areas for further questioning – a focus for the follow-up case study interviews. In response to these recommendations, the case study interviews addressed the new themes of staff digital literacies and student engagement in the development of TEL services. However, the main question themes were retained from 2012 and 2010 to enable comparisons with previous years. These questions focused on the institutional context for technology management, looking at TEL strategy and TEL governance models, as well as provision for quality management of TEL services to staff and students. Following on from 2012 the provision of services in support of Bring Your Own Devices (BYOD) was also explored, as well as distance learning provision and support for the development and sharing of open educational resources.

Each interview was based on a common template of questions, which is set out in the Appendix to this document. The interviews were conducted between July and September 2014 by members of the UCISA Academic Support Group, and the questioning was therefore informed by the key findings of the 2014 TEL Survey Report, which were first presented to the Heads of e-Learning Forum at a meeting in May 2014.

Executive summary

The case studies looked at the following key areas of TEL support development and explored future challenges for institutions.

TEL strategy

The 2014 TEL Survey data revealed that there has been little change across the sector with regard to the role of dedicated TEL strategies. Dedicated strategies have become less common since the high watermark of the 2008 TEL Survey, when the majority of HE institutions had developed one and they now generally tend to be found amongst Pre-92 institutions. The case studies reflect this trend and shed light on three different approaches to TEL strategy development. Institutions such as City College Norwich and Southampton Solent have never had a formal TEL strategy and in Norwich's case have deliberately avoided setting common standards for TEL adoption across the institution, due to the diverse range of teaching that they are delivering. A second group of institutions have either developed stand alone strategies or action plans for TEL implementation, and these have subsequently been embedded within overarching Learning, Teaching and Assessment strategies. Coventry, Edge Hill, Edinburgh Napier and Northampton have all embedded their TEL implementation plans across a range of institutional strategies and Glasgow Caledonian has focused on establishing an operational blended road map to drive the adoption of TEL tools and services. A third approach focuses on the development of a TEL strategy for a specific change management purpose. This approach is exemplified by Reading and Sheffield Hallam which have both developed a dedicated TEL strategy to highlight specific TEL goals and actions for stakeholders to undertake, although in Sheffield Hallam's case, this document is still embedded as a sub-strategy within the overarching Learning, Teaching and Assessment strategy.

The 2014 TEL Survey and all previous reports dating back to 2003 have highlighted meeting student expectations as a key driver for TEL development within institutions, and it comes as no surprise to see the enhancement of the student experience featuring prominently in the case studies. In this respect, City College Norwich has committed to providing flexible learning opportunities for its students, where technology is used to support electronic submission of assessed work, as well as online access to course resources. Coventry has committed to a swift turnaround of marks and feedback on summative assessment and is moving towards the full implementation of electronic assessment management. Glasgow Caledonian is seeking to enrich the student experience by providing students with a more consistent experience, realised through the use of technology across teaching programmes. Edinburgh Napier views technology as a way of increasing student autonomy in learning tasks and Sheffield Hallam views it as a way of increasing student employability.

The key change though since 2012 is in the level of senior management engagement with TEL development. The 2014 case studies reveal that senior managers are now driving TEL development and are setting expectations for the adoption of tools by teaching staff. Edge Hill, Derby, Northampton and Reading are all aiming for a broader adoption of TEL tools and services across their teaching programmes and Glasgow Caledonian recognises blended

3 The Heads of e-Learning Forum (HeLF) is a network of senior staff in institutions engaged in promoting, supporting and developing technology enhanced learning across the UK HE sector. For further details on HeLF, please see their webpages at: <http://helfuk.blogspot.co.uk/>

learning as an essential element of its teaching approach, with all staff expected to engage with technology usage. Edinburgh Napier's management team has made a deeper commitment to create a digitally integrated university and has established a Digital Futures Working Group to help realise this vision in the period leading up to academic year 2019–20.

TEL provision

In terms of centrally provided tools, all of the case study institutions have a centrally managed VLE platform, which is based on either Blackboard or Moodle software. Turnitin is also frequently referenced in the case studies as an institutional plagiarism checking service. These findings fit neatly with the results of the 2014 TEL Survey where 100% of institutions reported the presence of an institutional VLE and 95% provided a plagiarism detection system. 63% of responding institutions to the Survey reported that they had a lecture capture solution in place, and this is reflected in the case studies with a range of solutions in use including Panopto (Derby; South Wales), Camtasia Relay (Edinburgh Napier) and Echo 360 (City University London; Coventry). Web conferencing and voting systems are also commonly referenced as part of the central tool set.

One notable change in 2014 is the more frequent mention by institutions of cloud based hosted services. City College Norwich and Edinburgh Napier are both using Microsoft 365 as their email provider, with Napier staff also provided with access to a cloud based MS Word service. Northampton and Glasgow Caledonian have taken the decision to opt for outsourced provision of their VLE platform, reducing the level of central technology support that is needed to run their centrally supported systems.

TEL governance and structures

The case study institutions tend to have a central team supporting TEL, although there is no uniformity over where that team is located within the organisational structure, with some teams positioned in Learning Enhancement and Development (e.g. City University London; South Wales), others in combined service divisions such as Learning Information Service (Southampton Solent) or Human Resources (Sussex Downs). There are some outlier organisational models in practice. Edinburgh Napier operates without a central unit and embeds TEL support provision across three different areas of its support services, although this structure is currently under review. Coventry divides its TEL support across two main service units, with academic development located in Human Resources and learning systems support in IT Services. City College Norwich's team actually sits outside the College, with staff line managed by Norfolk Educational Services to support TEL services across a group of institutions.

The number of staff FTE supporting TEL services ranges from two support analysts at City College Norwich to 18 FTE at City University London and covers a variety of roles, such as learning technologists, educational developers, multimedia support staff and academics. Local support is either provided by faculty/school facing central learning technologists or faculty/school based learning technologists. Sheffield Hallam, Edge Hill and Glasgow Caledonian all base their support on hub and spokes models, where a central e-learning team helps to coordinate learning technology provision, linking up with school based learning technologists. Edinburgh Napier has embedded learning technology support in a different way, appointing teaching fellows within their schools, who serve as champions for the adoption of TEL tools as part of their course delivery.

Quality assurance

Institutional strategies for the quality assurance of TEL practice vary according to the emphasis placed on compliance or enhancement in the use of TEL tools and services. Coventry, Edge Hill, Sheffield Hallam and Southampton Solent all have developed statements on minimum expectations that their teaching staff should meet in the adoption and use of TEL tools, and Sussex Downs College has developed a way of auditing VLE usage through a medal schema. In contrast to this approach, City University London and Glasgow Caledonian have no institutional policies on staff adoption of TEL tools and services, although some schools have developed their own minimum standards for their staff to follow. Edinburgh Napier has taken a considered view not to focus on dedicated guidance, but instead focuses on minimum suggestions for teaching rather than minimum requirements, with pedagogic choices informed through the University's 3E Framework. City College Norwich has firmly adopted a quality enhancement stance, auditing VLE module sites as a way of identifying good teaching practice and innovative uses of its learning platform, for which staff receive Blackboard course awards.

Methods for tracking the student experience in the use of learning technologies do though follow a more common pattern. Programme and module evaluations are most frequently mentioned, as well as monitoring through faculty forums and faculty TEL steering groups. Some institutions such as Edge Hill also run a dedicated student e-learning survey to track user perceptions on technology and learning spaces.

Support for devices

The 2014 TEL Survey reported that mobile/Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) provision tops the list of recent and prospective developments in technology that are placing the most demand on TEL support teams. In response to this challenge, institutions have invested in increasing the capacity of their wireless networks, although the volume of student access to networks is obliging some institutions such as Sussex Downs College to review their existing Wifi provision. There has also been work conducted on the management of mobile devices, with Edinburgh Napier's mobile device management project looking at the secure management of university data on personally owned devices and Sheffield Hallam's initiative, which focuses on the pre-loading of tablets and smartphones with profiles of software.

The case studies reveal that while institutions commonly lack a mobile learning strategy, they do actively encourage students to bring their devices on campus to connect to university web services. To this end, institutions such as Edinburgh Napier, Edge Hill and the University of South Wales have developed institutional apps to support access to key services, and Glasgow Caledonian has invested in the Blackboard app to facilitate access to its VLE platform. The University of South Wales stands alone amongst the case study institutions in having a switch on policy to formally encourage the use of mobile devices in the classroom. However, steps are being taken by the other institutions to support mobile access to learning and teaching resources. For example, Edge Hill and City College Norwich have recognised the need to develop mobile friendly content resources and to purchase online journal subscriptions and licences for e-books. Edinburgh Napier has supported projects focusing on the use of iPads and Northampton has run a series of projects under the banner of its Mobile Access to Learning and Teaching initiative.

Support for BYOD tends to be managed on a best endeavours basis, but at City University London a dedicated team has been set up to support BYOD and to evaluate its use within dedicated learning spaces, and at Coventry support is offered by IT Services to staff and students who are experiencing problems with their own devices. Southampton Solent has focused on a different approach, offering educational support to staff through the provision of lunch time show and tell sessions on apps for learning and teaching.

Student engagement as partners

Feedback from students topped the list of factors encouraging the development of TEL in the 2014 Survey results, and the case studies provide illustrations of how this feedback is being solicited and applied by institutions. For example, students at City College Norwich are actively encouraged to engage in curriculum design activities and are represented at Executive and Governor levels within the institution. At Edge Hill University there is a specific call for students to present on their use of technology for learning at the annual Solstice e-learning conference and at Reading a scheme called Partnerships in Learning and Teaching has been established to encourage staff and students to develop ideas for collaborative projects.

Staff-student partnerships in technology development also appear to be well embedded in institutional practice. At City University London the central e-learning team has employed a Student Engagement Project Officer, who was previously the Student Union Vice President for Education, to continue pursuing a students as partners agenda, and Reading's TEL team has created a graduate intern post for the former Students Union Vice President for Education to help provide a student perspective on TEL workshops and resources. Indeed, both the e-learning teams at Sheffield Hallam and Southampton Solent employ students and recent graduates for specific project work to support academics in a variety of TEL initiatives.

Staff digital literacies

All institutions acknowledge the need to develop the digital literacies of their teaching staff, but the case studies reveal different approaches to this challenge. City College Norwich expects staff to develop a basic level of competence to support their teaching activities, and they are supported through compulsory continuing professional development (CPD) workshops as well as drop in sessions. Southampton Solent requires all new staff to complete the Postgraduate Certificate programme within two years of service as a contractual requirement, with this programme containing a strong element of learning technology. City University London focuses instead on programme teams rather than individuals, emphasising programme level work as a way of ensuring consistency in practice. Northampton tasks its Schools with developing action plans on digital literacies and at the University of South Wales faculty based Learning, Teaching and Assessment committees identify the training and education needs of teaching staff.

Common to all case studies is the provision of training programmes and one to one support. Edge Hill offers a Developing Digital Excellence programme, whilst Glasgow Caledonian offers at elbow support for its teaching staff, along with embedded support resources on the Help tab of its institutional VLE.

Institutions are also using staff engagement strategies to work with their teaching staff. South Wales has set up a networking hub to enable staff to share their practice online. Sheffield Hallam has developed a menu approach, showcasing the pedagogic approaches and tools that staff could use to enhance their teaching. Other institutions are looking at accreditation and awards to engage their staff in professional development. Derby is encouraging lecturers to seek Higher Education Academy (HEA) Fellowship accreditation, demonstrating the value of learning technology in

their teaching practice in the process, whilst Southampton Solent offers staff the opportunity to enrol on a Master's in Education, which addresses the theory and practice of learning technology usage.

Distance learning and Open Educational Resources (OER)

The 2014 TEL Survey results confirm that there has been little change in the delivery of fully online courses, which remain a niche activity across the sector, and this finding is reflected by and large in the case studies. For institutions such as City College Norwich and Sheffield Hallam, the institutional focus is much more on delivering flexible learning opportunities to campus-based students and those on placements, rather than offering fully online courses. Although there has been some organic and opportunistic development of new programmes at Edge Hill and City University London centring around health sciences programmes, this activity is still conducted on a small scale. However, not all institutions conform to this model. At the other end of the spectrum, Glasgow Caledonian and the University of Derby are committing to larger scale delivery of distance learning programmes, with Derby having already established its own online school for over 3,000 enrolled students.

In terms of open educational resources, with the exception of Edinburgh Napier, Northampton and South Wales, none of the case study institutions has a formal policy on OER, and the open education activities that are going on tend to be small in scale and often project based. Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) activity does not appear to have radically altered that picture: institutions are keeping a watching brief with some very small scale experimentation, but there is no big push in this area at present. Glasgow Caledonian ran a pilot event associated with the Commonwealth Games, Edge Hill has run a MOOC on vampire fiction and Sheffield Hallam is running a pilot via their PebblePad platform. The University of Reading represents the exception to this rule; through its participation in the FutureLearn consortium it has already run a series of MOOC courses. Northampton is also starting to engage in MOOC delivery through its own Open Northampton project – delivering three MOOC programmes to date.

Future challenges

The evolution of technology and the rapid pace of change pose challenges for TEL managers in determining how to develop their service provision. Mobile provision features prominently in this respect, with Sheffield Hallam and Glasgow Caledonian prioritising the need to develop policies and provision for BYOD, whilst City College Norwich is committed to improving mobile access to teaching resources. Southampton Solent is focusing on a different set of services, including a review of their online submission provision, as well as the development of lecture capture and video hosting provision. Reading has a similar focus with ambitions to develop lecture recording services and online submission for summative assessment. Another key theme in the case studies is the resourcing of TEL service provision, supporting the expansion of services in an environment of high demand when budgets are under close scrutiny. The blurring of service boundaries also features in the case studies, with institutions such as Edge Hill looking at how best to coordinate TEL support for virtual and physical classrooms.

Echoing the results of the 2014 TEL Survey, institutions also face a common challenge in raising the awareness of teaching staff to the range of learning technology tools and services that they support. Finding ways for staff to attend TEL training and development activities is one challenge, but there appears to be a deeper cultural issue in encouraging staff to develop their digital skills and consider new approaches to teaching delivery through the use of TEL tools. Finally, institutions such as Edge Hill and Glasgow Caledonian are grappling with the issue of how to evidence the impact of their TEL services on the student learning experience; the use of learning analytics facilitated through the mining of 'meaningful information' from learning systems is viewed by Glasgow Caledonian as one way of tackling this challenge.

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City College Norwich

Interview with: Chris Boon, Senior TEL Support Analyst

Overview

City College Norwich was founded in 1891 and is one of the largest further education (FE) and higher education (HE) colleges in England. The College's main campus is located close to the centre of Norwich, with a separate site in the heart of Norwich where higher education courses are delivered. The College is part of the **TEN Group**, a group of institutions which includes four Academies, one junior school, and a University Technical College which will be opening in September 2014.

The bulk of the College's provision is dedicated to the delivery of FE courses for learners aged between 16 and 18 years old who are mostly enrolled on BTEC courses. However, the College also has a large Higher Education School which offers access courses, foundation degrees and honours degrees, which are awarded by the University of East Anglia, with whom the College enjoys Associate College Status.

The College employs around 800 staff, roughly equally split between teaching and support staff, and between 10,000 and 12,000 students are enrolled on its courses. The Higher Education School has over 1,500 students enrolled on higher education degree programmes and there are approximately 75 teaching staff working in the School. All support staff are employed by Norfolk Educational Services (NES), and provide support across the different institutions in the TEN Group.

TEL strategy and drivers for TEL

The Director of Teaching, Learning and Assessment leads the TEL agenda, working closely with staff from IT Services on technology developments. Whilst there is no formal TEL strategy in existence at the College, the Director is responsible for highlighting TEL issues for discussion at senior management meetings involving Heads of Schools.

There is no formal requirement for teaching staff to use TEL tools, with the exception of an in house developed Achievement Tracking System, which is used across the Higher Education School to manage the electronic submission of assignments. As a general rule though the College has favoured a bottom up engagement strategy, in which staff opt in to using TEL tools to enhance their course delivery. This approach is necessary as College teaching spans an enormous breadth of provision from entry level one to postgraduate courses, and it is challenging to enforce uniformity in course delivery methods as a result. However, the College Principal has endorsed the use of Blackboard Course Awards to recognise staff who are using the institutional virtual learning environment in innovative ways to support student learning, and this reward mechanism may inspire other staff to engage with TEL tools.

Drivers for TEL usage

Students expect learning technology to be a feature of their study experience. The flexibility of submitting work electronically rather than in person is one such example of where technology is seen to enhance the student learning experience. Access to course resources and College services on their mobile devices is another. Students' expectations represent the principal driver for the adoption of TEL tools by teaching staff across the institution.

Time savings and administrative efficiencies also drive staff engagement with TEL tools. This has certainly been the case for FE lecturers, who are not required to use e-submission tools, but have done so to take advantage of enhancements to administration and marking workflows. Overall, there is strong buy-in from teaching staff to use the institutional to support their course delivery, and this helps to defend the existing level of provision when learning technology budgets are being reviewed by senior managers.

Engagement with TEL tools by the Higher Education School

The Higher Education School is responsible for delivering all degree programmes. Teaching across all programmes takes place in the same location in the centre of Norwich. The shared location has helped to bring together programme leaders to engage in joint training sessions, fostering a common culture of engagement with TEL tools across the disciplines.

All HE lecturers are required to make use of the Achievement Tracking System, which sits outside the College's centrally supported virtual learning environment (Blackboard Learn). In addition to this, most HE lecturers (approximately 90%) make use of the VLE to present learning resources to their students and there is also some use of discussion boards to support students. On balance though, FE lecturers tend to be making greater use of Blackboard's

interactive tools, with HE staff using the centrally supported VLE more for the release of content to students. This is partly due to FE lecturers' preferred use of Blackboard's assignment submission tool and the Grade Centre to release marks and feedback to students, which has introduced them to Blackboard and led many to go on and look at the wider tool set and incorporate these tools in their teaching practice.

TEL provision

The main focus of the College's TEL provision is the centrally supported VLE – Blackboard Learn – comprising the community system, learning management system and content management system. A video system provided by Planet eStream allows lecturers to upload and share videos, and record television programmes from free-to-air channels, while deep integration with Blackboard enables the videos to be embedded into courses with ease. The College also has a registered Google Apps for Education domain, and Google tools are made available on a case by case basis for staff who are interested in using them. Microsoft Office365 is the centrally supported email solution and the College has also invested in SharePoint, which may become the preferred solution for the sharing of policy documents and procedures in the near future, replacing Blackboard's content management system, which is currently used as the central storage point for non-academic resources.

There is not yet a culture of sharing learning and teaching resources across courses through the Blackboard content management system, with staff choosing instead to upload resources directly to course sites. The College has though switched on Blackboard's cloud based social media tools and there is a lot of interest in their use as social spaces for clubs and societies, enabling students to develop online communities to support these types of activities. Academic managers are also keen to exploit the value of these tools.

In terms of home grown tools, in addition to the Achievement Tracking system which handles all assignment submissions, the College also supports individual learning plans, which enable tutors to review a student's progress and set targets for a student to meet in terms of their academic engagement with the course that they are following (e.g. attendance targets for class sessions).

Individual Schools also develop their own bespoke software solutions. The Employer Responsive Delivery Unit supports a Smart Assessor e-portfolio solution which is used to record student learning activities within the workplace. Free tools such as Blogger are also used by the Media School for blogging and personal portfolio development.

TEL governance and structures

The College's virtual learning environment is supported by a dedicated learning technology team of two FTE in IT Services – the Senior TEL Support Analyst and the TEL Support Analyst – who both deal with all second line support issues (systems and technical back end issues), as well as training activities and liaison with academic colleagues. First line support for staff and students is offered through a combined service IT help desk. Training activities involve close liaison activities with the College's Teaching Development Unit, which delivers the Diploma of Teaching that all teaching staff must take as part of their pedagogic and professional development. Learning technology training is addressed as part of this staff development programme.

The learning technology team is not directly line managed by the College and sits within Norfolk Educational Services, which has a broader remit to deliver TEL support for all the institutions across the TEN group. Currently though, there is no conflict in terms of support commitments across the group, with the majority of the learning technology team's time devoted to TEL support at City College. The TEN group's academies are not actively using a virtual learning environment, but Microsoft Office 365 is currently being rolled out to them, and other TEL provision will be made available to them in the future. To improve the coordination of services across the group, the learning technology team are looking to establish an eLearning network drawing on representatives from each TEN Group institution to facilitate cross institution collaboration and to foster greater engagement with learning technology.

Whilst there is no direct line management relationship between the College's management and the learning technology team, communication lines are well established. The Senior TEL Support Analyst works closely with the College's Director of Teaching, Learning and Assessment to discuss TEL related issues. This provides an opportunity for the Senior TEL Support Analyst to share new Blackboard or TEL related ideas or projects, and often provides the impetus for a demonstration or presentation at Academic Management Team meetings that are attended by all Heads of School.

Quality assurance

Given the diversity of course delivery from Entry Level 1 foundation courses to postgraduate teaching, the College has decided against mandating the use of TEL tools and there are no formal expectations or requirements for teaching staff to meet. Instead, the College has placed a strong focus on encouraging good practice in the use of TEL tools as a way of fostering staff engagement. The key mechanism for encouraging this good practice has been through the annual Blackboard course awards, which have been running at the College over the past three years.

Both the College Principal and Director of Teaching, Learning and Assessment have enthusiastically supported the Blackboard Course Awards, which are awarded on an annual basis for Blackboard courses attracting the highest student activity, or demonstrating an innovative use of TEL tools or a neat way of embedding online learning with class based teaching. Badges are attached to the courses, the staff are congratulated, and an intranet page is created showing the awards for each year. Examples of courses that have been recognised this year include:

- BTEC Level 3 in Health and Social Care, and Health Studies – a very large course with multiple groups that uses a large Blackboard course to share resources, makes extensive use of electronic submission.
- Children and Young Peoples Workforce Level 3 – a course in which the lecturer has put a significant amount of effort into making the Blackboard course site attractive, with clear labelling and supporting imagery to ensure the students have a positive user experience.
- Access HE Diploma in Humanities and Social Science – a well structured and organised course site that has achieved a very high level of student usage.

The Director of Teaching, Learning and Assessment has set herself targets to increase the number of awards year on year, and reports this progress to the Principal and Governors.

Evaluation of the student experience

The College does not have a dedicated survey tool to investigate TEL developments, but has added specific questions on this theme to the standard end of module evaluation form. Students are invited to comment on uses of technology in their courses. There are plans in the future for a dedicated survey on the Blackboard VLE.

Support for devices

The College actively encourages students to bring their mobile devices on campus and has invested in its wifi network to support connectivity to College services. The College has invested in e-books and subscriptions to online journals and also offers a range of study skills tutorials that are mobile friendly. The development of mobile accessible services is a necessary step, given the high ownership of smart phones and devices by students. In a recent survey (May 2014), 89.1% of students surveyed possessed a smart phone, an increase from 84.8% recorded in May 2013. However, the College has not yet established a switch on policy for use of mobile phones in the classroom, and is mindful of classroom management issues, as well as the readiness of teaching staff to embrace the use of these devices in their teaching.

Student engagement as partners

Students are actively encouraged to engage in curriculum design activities. The Students Union is represented at Executive and Governor levels and contributions are fed back via the School Council and Parliament forums.

Staff digital literacies

Staff are expected to develop a basic level of digital literacies to support their teaching activities. To this end, the Teaching Development Unit offers a range of support provision, including drop in sessions over lunchtimes and in the evenings, as well as compulsory CPD workshops. The key challenge is in finding the time for staff to engage in training and development activities beyond any compulsory whole School training sessions. In recognising this challenge the learning technology team have sought to exploit the staff newsletter as a channel for disseminating ideas about the value of different TEL tools, publishing short articles with links to videos of no more than two minutes, which show how these tools can be put to effective use by staff. This has proven to be an effective way of raising interest and signposting where follow up support resides within the College.

Distance Learning and OER provision

Distance learning courses are not a feature of the College's teaching portfolio, although the College remains committed to providing flexible learning opportunities and support for students on work placements – particularly students on work based apprenticeship schemes.

There is currently no development of open educational resources, with the focus very much on the delivery of the College's existing campus based courses.

Future challenges

One of the key challenges that the learning technology team face each year is in justifying the cost of the annual licence renewal for the institutional Blackboard VLE to senior management. The learning technology team work closely with the Director of Learning, Teaching and Assessment to get TEL issues on to the agenda for senior managers to help build the case for continued investment in the platform. The Blackboard course awards are extremely helpful in this respect in demonstrating evidence of effective usage of the system in support of the student learning experience – and were specifically referenced by the College Principal in her end of year newsletter.

Another challenge relates to the limited time that teaching staff can devote to training and development activities, enabling them to explore the use of different TEL tools. The intention is to train up a critical mass of staff who will then engage in peer to peer support. There has already been progress in this respect with over half of College teaching staff now making use of e-submission tools as part of their teaching practice.

Finally, the continuing development of technology and the pace of change can leave staff behind. Institutionally, more work needs to be done on mobile access to learning and teaching resources. The College's single sign on web authentication has not worked smoothly with the Blackboard Mobile Learn building block, which has prevented the College from being able to technically access this additional service, but work is being done to enable mobile access to occur in the near future. More generally, central support staff will maintain an external focus on TEL by attending conferences, ensuring that the College can keep on top of the latest sector developments in TEL support provision.

City University London

Interview with: Anise Bullimore and Annemarie Cancienne, joint Heads of Technology Enhanced Learning

Overview

City University London is a research and teaching institution with 19,000 students in five schools, located across multiple sites in central London.

TEL strategy and drivers for TEL

City doesn't currently have a specific TEL strategy; rather TEL forms part of their Education Strategy which is currently being developed. Their work is also driven by the main Institutional strategy and their Estates strategy.

Previously, City's TEL work was guided by a Strategic Learning Environment Vision. This underpinned a change in VLE (from Blackboard to Moodle) and expansion from a central e-learning team to recruiting school based educational technologists.

The drivers for TEL use have been numerous including student expectation and demand, competition, innovation, professional body requirements, consistency and standardisation, curriculum design, collaboration, quality.

Departmental culture impacts on adoption of different technologies and practices and each school has a different focus and approach. For example, the Law School is interested in widespread use of lecture capture, the Maths, Computing and Engineering School is developing flipped learning, the School of Health Sciences has always worked with multimedia learning objects, and the Cass Business School has a history of online/distance courses.

TEL provision

The University has a centralised model for the provision of learning technologies, which are managed by the Educational Technology Team. The range of supported tools is wide and includes:

- Moodle
- Lecture capture (Echo 360)
- Edublogs
- Adobe Connect – services for web meetings and webinars
- Adobe Presenter
- Kaltura – video platform for the creation of video resources, presentations and assessments on Moodle
- ULCC podcasting service – for audio podcasts
- iTunes U – for public-facing educational video and audio on iTunes
- Turnitin
- Clickers
- Pods (standardised computer set up in lecture rooms)
- Variety of multimedia
- Loan of equipment

The University also supports or has subscriptions to the following services:

- BoB (Box of Broadcasts)
- JISC MediaHub
- TRILT (Television and Radio Index for Learning and Teaching)
- Bristol Online Surveys
- Qualtrics
- Microsoft Lync
- Talis Aspire

TEL governance and structures

The Educational Technology Team (ETT) is part of Learning Enhancement and Development (LEaD) which comprises ETT, academics, a support team, Learning Success, and Mental Health and Counselling. The team comes under the remit of the Deputy Vice Chancellor who also has marketing in his portfolio. Information Services (IS) and Library come under a different portfolio.

There are 20 staff within the ETT (18 FTE). There are two Heads of Educational Technology, each working 0.6 FTE, eight Senior Educational Technologists and ten Educational Technologists. The team is organised into three themes of blended learning, multimedia and learning spaces, and everyone does project work within a particular theme as well as support and development work within a specified school. Day to day support provided includes a helpdesk service, professional development, school liaison work and equipment loan, while bigger work is managed as a project spread across the team.

Within Information Services there is an Education, Research and Enterprise Service Manager with a team comprising three Moodle Developers (one of these is part time) and a Business Analyst. This team supports and administers the educational technology systems and undertakes system upgrades and offers technical support.

In terms of governance, the work of the ETT feeds into Learning Development Advisory Board that connects to the Education Committee. Educational technology previously also reported to a Strategy and Governance group which may be resurrected in some form this year. This changed when the department was restructured last year.

The structure has significantly changed over the last year following a restructure, in which the five school based TEL departments and one central department were combined and housed in the centre. The resulting structure, of a combination of theme-based project work and school based support and development work, was planned and implemented over a course of months.

Quality assurance

There are no TEL specific quality assurance policies, but there are some minimum standards at programme or school level. In terms of the student experience of TEL, there are currently no standard TEL questions on module feedback forms. Instead, the student experience of TEL is fed through staff student liaison committees and input from the union, as well as through evaluations specifically targeting a project area (e.g. exploration of the technology that students use within lecture rooms).

Support for devices

A section of the team is now dedicated to learning spaces that include support for Bring Your Own Devices (BYOD) provision. This restructure was implemented towards the end of 2013 and is now fully in place. The team works closely with IS, Properties and Facilities and academics to pilot and evaluate BYOD and design new spaces.

There is no clear trend in increased mobile learning, but the ubiquity of and ability to use different tools e.g. online research, use of Moodle, and ability to generate content/video is noticeable. A number of pilots have been run with a variety of devices. There are iPad carts, and iPads are loaned to academics. Wifi and power sockets are now required features of new spaces.

Student engagement as partners

The ETT works with students and the Student Union on specific evaluations and projects. A Student Engagement Project Officer, will be working with the ETT from August (he was previously the Student Union VP for Education), to continue pursuing the students as partners agenda.

Staff digital literacies

There is an acknowledgement that there will always be pockets of difficulty, and there is a shift toward focusing on programme level work to bring greater involvement and consistency where it can make the most impact. The ETT offers online guidance, professional development sessions on a one to one or group basis, bespoke support and a Technology Enabled Academic Practice module on the Master's in Academic Practice.

Distance Learning and OER provision

There has been a slight increase in the use of distance learning, notably for high fee paying schools offering more provision online. There is also increased interest in the School of Health Sciences. There are some small examples of open resources, but there are no significant plans to alter this.

Future challenges

The main short and medium term challenges in supporting TEL services are:

- How to support TEL sustainably in an environment of high demand and expectations with ever reducing resources.
- Being in a permanent state of change and able to thrive in that scenario.
- Competing priorities for academic staff and limited time to engage with TEL development. Pressured academics with a focus on research rather than teaching.

Approaches to addressing these challenges are:

- Working creatively and positively! Focusing on relationships.
- Introducing a new project management process focused on managing resources effectively, working sustainably and collaboratively.
- Ongoing professional development and collaboration and evaluation.
- Pushing the education agenda wherever possible.

Coventry University

Interview with: Martin Jenkins, Academic Developer (Digital Literacy)

Overview

Coventry University has a long tradition in education dating back to 1843 with the founding of Coventry College of Design. The institution has had a number of name changes since that time, gaining its current name following the Further and Higher Education Act 1992, which allowed polytechnics to become universities.

The University has four faculties. These are: the Faculty of Business, Environment and Society; the Coventry School of Art and Design; the Faculty of Engineering and Computing; and the Faculty of Health and Life Sciences. Collectively they offer over 280 undergraduate and postgraduate courses.

More than 27,000 FTE students (including over 5,000 international students) from more than 130 countries study at Coventry University. There are two campuses, one of which is situated in Coventry city centre and the other one is in London (Coventry University London Campus – CULC). In addition to these sites, there is also Coventry University College (CUC), which is also located in Coventry. The University mostly focuses on campus based face to face teaching, with a small element of entirely online delivery. Traditionally an applied research university, in 2014 Coventry launched a new Research Strategy (Excellence with Impact – <http://www.coventry.ac.uk/research/excellence-with-impact/>) with significant supporting investment.

TEL strategy and drivers for TEL

Coventry University does not have a dedicated Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) strategy; instead TEL related issues are embedded and reflected within other institutional strategies, such as the [Teaching and Learning \(TL\) strategy 2011–15](#) which is reviewed annually, and the [Corporate Plan 2010–2015](#). Both strategies have students' experience and satisfaction as core aims.

The Teaching and Learning Strategy covers five key themes/areas, which are:

1. Students' academic experience;
2. Research informed teaching;
3. Internationalisation;
4. Digital literacy;
5. Employability.

From the early days of TEL developments, when the University was using WebCT (1990s), the view was taken that TEL issues should be incorporated into the wider Teaching and Learning strategy. In addition, there was a University view to minimise the number of strategies, something that has been carried on to today. The Teaching and Learning Strategy has a strong focus on digital literacies and how courses develop digital literacies and use TEL is monitored through the Course Quality Enhancement and Monitoring (CQEM) process. The above activity is under the responsibility of the DVC Student Experience.

Disruptive Media Learning Lab

Current TEL initiatives at the University include the establishment of the Disruptive Media Learning Lab (DMLL) which is due to open at the end of September 2014. This represents a significant investment in teaching and learning. The lab will occupy a dedicated floor in the Library, providing student learning spaces and innovative teaching spaces. The DMLL will support projects that are disruptive; the DMLL aims to create a space (physical and virtual) that brings together staff across the institution (students, academics, academic developers, support staff etc.), to try out new things out, and support the research and evaluation of new approaches to teaching and learning.

The physical learning space in the DMLL will provide opportunities for student/staff collaboration and the opportunity to use various technologies. Within this space, delineated areas will provide a range of spaces, for example one of them described as a hill where people can go to relax, while also working on projects etc.

Drivers for TEL usage

Currently drivers for TEL usage are linked to the Corporate Strategy aims, focusing on employability, the student experience and internationalisation. The Disruptive Media Learning Lab has been specifically tasked with investigating the flipped classroom, open education and MOOCs.

In relation to the student experience, assessment has been an important focus for the University. In 2012, the University introduced the policy of a 10 day turnaround for marking and feedback of summative assessments to final year undergraduate and postgraduate students, and a 15 day turnaround for everyone else. This quick turnaround, compared to a lot of other institutions, has had a big impact on the student learning experience as reflected through NSS results. The University is moving toward full implementation of electronic assessment management, requiring electronic submission and electronic return of marks. The next phase will be to implement electronic marking and feedback.

Internationalisation is another important driver for TEL usage. Coventry University has the largest number of international students on campus or overseas compared with any other UK university. The University launched a new International Strategy in 2014, which seeks to increase further the numbers of international students (to be based either on campus or overseas).

TEL provision

Coventry University provides a range of centrally supported TEL tools. These include:

- Moodle (CUOnline Moodle) – the University’s virtual learning environment on <https://cumoodle.coventry.ac.uk/>
- Mahara – e-portfolio solution
- Equella – the digital repository to house teaching and learning content
- Helix – media streaming
- WordPress – for University blogging solution
- Sharepoint (intranet) – institutional collaboration
- Echo360 – lecture capture system
- TurningPoint – personal response system
- Talis Aspire – reading lists
- Big Blue Button – a virtual classroom for teaching students online
- Turnitin – plagiarism prevention and e-assessment

Academic staff can and do use other non-centrally supported tools. However, it is recognised that there is a need for better guidance on how to use and engage with these tools, making staff aware of risks, benefits and challenges (for example, developing social media guidelines for teaching and learning). It is also apparent that there is a need to raise awareness of the centrally supported tools and their potential.

It is the University’s expectation that any text based assessment is submitted via Turnitin. The emphasis is currently more towards policing poor academic practice than developmental.

TEL governance and structures

Responsibility for TEL at Coventry University is divided across central and faculty based teams. In total, four central teams, in addition to faculty based teams take the lead on TEL developments:

Central teams

- Academic Development Team – support for the design and development of pedagogical approaches to the use of technology enhanced learning. Team delivers the Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice in Higher Education.
- Learning Systems – system administration support.
- Flying Squad – support for queries regarding access, passwords.
- Library – provide support for Helix media server.

Faculty based support

Each Faculty has local learning technology support. Points of contact in each Faculty are:

- Business, Environment and Society
 - Learning Enhancement Unit
- Health and Life Sciences
 - Centre of Excellence in Learning Enhancement
- Engineering and Computing
 - Local learning technologists
- Coventry School of Art and Design
 - Local learning technologist
- Coventry University London Campus (CULC)
 - Local learning technologist
- Coventry University College (CUC)
 - Local learning technologist

Faculty based staff are managed by their respective faculties. However, centrally based teams are located across various departments. The Academic Development Team is located within Organisational Development and Learning in Human Resources. The Learning Systems and the Flying squad teams are located in IT Services.

The Academic Development Team is responsible for the delivery of the central Academic Professional Development programme; including the Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice in Higher Education undertaken by all new academic staff. About 120 new staff will join the programme in 2014–15. Faculty-based learning technologists provide local support and training.

The University moved to the above model of central and faculty based support in 2012. The change to the current structure is a mixture of organic and planned development. Prior to 2012 the University has a large central team and the devolution to faculties aimed to ensure closer support for academic staff. This has been successful, if uneven, across the University. However, the devolution left a gap in coordination and sharing of practices among faculties. In response to this, the support provided through the Academic Development Team was increased in 2013. In addition, a Learning Technologists Network (LTN) was established, coordinated through the Academic Development team, with the aim to bring together central and faculty based teams, and improve coordination and sharing.

There is no formal TEL committee in the University. Responsibility for TEL decisions are shared between the two Deputy Vice Chancellors (DVC – Student Experience and the DVC – Academic).

Quality assurance

An important element of Coventry University's quality enhancement and assurance processes is the annual Course Quality Enhancement and Monitoring (C-QEM) activity. It is the key process for collecting information about courses. Each course has to report developments and issues against the five strands of the Teaching and Learning strategy, namely:

- i) Student academic experience;
- ii) Research informed learning;
- iii) Internationalisation of the curriculum;
- iv) Digital literacy, and;
- v) Employability, employment, enterprise and entrepreneurship.

TEL issues are addressed under the digital literacy strand. Some of the questions asked include: the use of minimum standards of Moodle usage, mid-module survey feedback through Moodle, use of open courseware, access to learning technology support, use of mobile technology, use of videoconferencing and use of social media in courses to enhance and enrich teaching.

The Course Quality Enhancement and Monitoring (C-QEM) process is aligned to the QAA Quality Code for Higher Education as well as the Learning and Teaching strategy. Reports are completed in late summer, after which Faculty reviews and action plans are taken to the Quality in Learning and Teaching committee (QuiLT).

Minimum standards for the use of CUOnline Moodle have been in place since 2006. The aim is to ensure a consistent Moodle presence for course and module information. Consequently, advice is directed to course guides, links to specific resources, assessment methods and policies. Ownership and responsibility for VLE courses lies with Course Directors and the Course Teams. A Moodle site is established for each module; in addition Course Moodle sites are established to provide course level information.

Evaluation of the student experience

Aspects of the student experience are captured through the CQEM process. This process is informed by a data pack of information that pulls together module and course evaluation information and NSS scores to help inform course teams' deliberations.

In early 2014, a Digital Literacy Survey was undertaken by the Academic Development Team. Whilst attracting a low response rate, its findings did seem to be in line with other published research. The results indicated that while Coventry students have a high personal use and ownership of technology, their use is focused on information acquisition. However, the survey did also show that students are bringing their mobile devices on to campus with an expectation that they will be used to support their learning. Results of the survey are available at: <http://cuacdev.wordpress.com/2014/08/13/coventry-university-student-and-staff-digital-literacy-surveys/>

Support for devices

In the past 12 months, the University has made major investments to improve wifi infrastructure. Through IT Services provision, support is now available to staff and students who experience problems with any of their own devices. Under this arrangement staff and students can bring to IT Services any of their devices they are facing challenges with.

The University does not have a dedicated mobile or BYOD strategy. However this has been considered, including whether this should be a Choose Your Own Device (CYOD) policy, having an established set of devices that can be used. The University has experienced issues with the use of older devices – in particular old Apple devices connecting to the network and use of these is limited.

There is some local investment in the use of mobile devices. The Business, Environment and Society Faculty is launching a large scale pilot of the use of tablets in 2014–15. Elsewhere individual staff are engaging students in the use of their own devices; for example, use of Twitter to support the sharing of information and encourage wider engagement, and language students are using mobile devices to undertake quizzes and question trails.

Additionally, the University runs the Promises initiative, which was introduced at the time of the introduction of tuition fees. Under this scheme, the University provides students with the essential equipment or essential resources that they will need for their studies. That can vary and, even though in most cases it is textbooks, there are cases where laptops are offered (e.g. for Design students) and tablets (for Computing students). E-books are being piloted by Computing on the tablet as part of the above Promises initiative.

Student engagement as partners

Students are actively engaged in the CQEM process, through the module and course evaluations and through staff/student liaison committees. Students are represented on Course Committees and so contribute throughout the CQEM process.

Staff digital literacies

Staff digital literacies are an emerging challenge for Coventry University. A recent staff Digital Literacies survey highlights that while staff have access to technology, their use is primarily driven by information access. It is recognised that there is a need to raise awareness of what tools are available and how they might be used. (<http://cuacdev.wordpress.com/2014/08/13/coventry-university-student-and-staff-digital-literacy-surveys/>)

Moreover, the recent Student Digital Literacies Survey revealed students' expectation to use their own devices to support their learning. However, there is a significant percentage of teaching staff that discourage use of students' devices in the classroom.

Distance Learning and OER provision

Online distance learning courses are not a priority of the University's teaching agenda; there are a small number of courses delivered entirely online. The University is committed to providing opportunities for students to engage in learning activities that support internationalisation. Every course is expected to offer some aspect of the international experience. The Online International Learning (OIL) team helps academic staff in the delivery and facilitation of online international activities. These activities vary in type and size from course to course (i.e. video conferencing, online communication, group projects or study abroad). Courses report on how internationalisation opportunities are provided through the C-QEM process.

New distance learning developments are planned; for example the Business, Environment and Society Faculty will launch an online MBA course in 2015. Bottom up initiatives are indicative of the responsibility devolved to faculties.

OER provision

The University's Teaching and Learning Strategy encourages the use of open educational resources. Use of open educational resources is reported and evaluated through the C-QEM process. The University does not have any institutional policies or statements on the production/use of open educational resources. Coventry has had some successful open education initiatives. An example is the BA Hons Photography course (Phonar), which made a version of the class freely available online. The aim was to improve the student experience and employment prospects while raising the international profile of the course. The open version of the course ran on WordPress, and the feedback has been very positive and encouraging. Moreover, recruitment to the course increased significantly. The course is licensed under a creative commons licence.

The full story is available on [JISC Open education – case studies \(Coventry University\)](#), which reports that "At its peak, the course's second iteration attracted over 10,000 visitors during one four week period, with a record 900 students attending one class".

Future challenges

One of the key challenges around TEL usage is managing expectations, as well as learning how best to raise awareness amongst academic staff of the tools available to support their teaching. Even though accredited routes, such as the Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice in Higher Education, the Professional Development (PD) programme and various other strategic initiatives provide opportunities to promote the use of TEL, more work is required to reduce the gap and join up institutional activities.

Another challenge relates to communication and dissemination. The Learning Technologists Network has enhanced communication across this group, with faculty teams sharing information and collaborating. Strong faculty structures do though hinder communication and dissemination of practice across the University. The annual Teaching and Learning Conference offers the opportunity for wider/cross institutional dissemination of initiatives.

Finally, any increase in online distance learning will come with the challenges around staff capabilities, such as being an effective online tutor and/or ensuring the right tools are used depending on course needs.

Edge Hill University

Interview with: Lindsey Martin, Assistant Head (Learning, ICT and Media Technologies) and Meg Juss, Learning Technology Development Manager

Overview

Edge Hill University is based in the North West of England employing around 500 academic staff and with around 11,000 FTE students. The main campus is at Ormskirk, Lancashire, with four further satellite sites in the North West and a number of partner colleges both in the UK and abroad. The University is composed of three faculties – Arts and Sciences, Education, Health and Social Care, as well as a Graduate School.

TEL strategy and drivers for TEL

Edge Hill used to have a separate TEL strategy. However, following the 2005 institutional audit by the QAA, TEL was incorporated into the main [Learning and Teaching Strategy](#), which is refreshed on an annual basis and accompanied by an action plan. The [University's strategic plan](#) runs from 2013–2020 and references learning and teaching within this.

In terms of drivers, the institutional audit in 2005 recommended a more strategic approach to the roll out of the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). As a result of this recommendation the institution implemented a minimum baseline for the VLE which increased uptake from early adopter use to mainstream within a short period of time. It has been necessary to persuade some departments that this baseline is not about a one size fits all approach, but about providing a consistent baseline for the student experience. Beyond the baseline there is some flexibility for departments to cater to their specific needs.

Another key driver comes from student expectations and feedback, in particular via The Student e-Learning Survey, which was introduced in 2008/9 to gather student feedback on use of the VLE and other technologies. The results were used to drive conversations and stimulate interest in TEL, which then informed business cases for further investment (e.g. mobile) and gained commitment from academic departments to develop their TEL practice. Where new services have been deployed there is a drive to ensure value for money through tracking systems and user perceptions.

In addition, student feedback has prompted the institution to develop minimum expectations for online submissions which state that students should be allowed to submit online, where possible, and that all feedback should be typed, which allows some flexibility in interpretation.

TEL provision

Edge Hill provides a [centrally supported suite of tools](#) under the banner Learning Edge, which includes:

- Blackboard Learn (including Community Engagement and Mobile Learn)
- Blackboard Collaborate
- Turnitin
- eShare – digital content repository
- Bristol Online Surveys
- PebblePad
- CampusPack

Departments are expected to use the centrally provided solutions. However, there is some flexibility in which tools they use, for example, for online submission, departments can choose whether they want to use Turnitin or Blackboard. At a programme level, there must be a consistent use of only one tool.

In addition, there are some Moodle instances for external programme delivery that fall outside of the core Blackboard licence conditions. For example, the Faculty of Health has an enterprise team that provides self-paced learning courses for staff working with the Health sector.

TEL governance and structures

TEL support structures

TEL is primarily supported by [Learning Technology Development \(LTD\)](#), a central department based in [Learning Services \(LS\)](#). LS also includes the Library, Academic Skills, support for students with a specific learning difficulty, media development/production (classroom AV support and a TV studio) ICT and Customer Services (including a Student Helpdesk).

LTD has nine members of staff:

- LTD Manager
- LTD Operations Coordinator (0.6)
- LTD Systems Officer
- Six LTD Officers (one employed 0.5 on a Faculty contract)

LTD manages and provides supports for the Learning Edge suite of technologies and other technologies such as content development tools (e.g. iSpring, Camtasia, YouTube), clickers (e.g. TurningPoint, Optivote) and web tools (e.g. Twitter, Facebook). The team also carry out upgrades and testing of TEL systems.

For staff, LTD produces a comprehensive set of guides, runs a series of training courses and provides hot desks with tools such as iSpring, so they can support staff with content development activities. In addition, they run a staff helpdesk, which receives around 2,000 learning technology enquiries a year.

In terms of student support, student requests are initially dealt with via a central LS help desk which deals with all students enquiries ranging from Library requests to issues with technology. Support requests for TEL are escalated to LTD who act as the second line support. The team also develop student guidance documents.

A key challenge for LTD is that the ratio of Learning Technologists to academic staff has remained the same over the past ten years, despite the growth of TEL from one system used by 5% of the institution to a range of systems in mainstream use across the institution.

In addition to the central team, there are local learning technologists in the Faculty of Education and the Faculty of Health and Social Care. These roles used to be managed within LTD but are now managed within each Faculty.

From 2005–2010, Edge Hill ran the [SOLSTICE CETL](#), which was jointly managed between Learning Services and the [Centre for Teaching and Learning \(CTL\)](#). This helped to develop good relationships between LTD and CTL and these have continued on an informal basis. LTD assists with the Postgraduate Certificate course for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education.

TEL Governance

In terms of governance for TEL, the Dean of Learning Services is responsible at a strategic level working with colleagues from the institution's senior management team. The institution works in a collegial manner through various committees and so there are multiple strands driving TEL development.

At a faculty level, TEL is driven by the Faculty Associate Deans for Learning and Teaching and Faculty Senior Solstice Fellows, whose role is to understand their Faculty's requirements for TEL and agree priorities through regular Faculty steering group meetings. The steering groups consist of faculty champions and learning technologists. Each faculty provides an annual action plan to describe how it will deliver against the Learning and Teaching Strategy, which feeds into the Autumn and Spring planning rounds, which, in turn, feed into budgets and annual monitoring. LS then provides a planning document that responds to the Faculty plans.

TEL governance structures have emerged over time; for example, as part of the VLE review process faculty groups were created which have now become the Faculty TEL steering groups. In addition, LS was re-organised in 2012 such that responsibility for Media Development and Classroom AV support now falls under the remit of the Assistant Head (Learning, ICT and Media Technologies), bringing all the technology side of LS under one area. This was timely, as the physical and virtual classroom and expectations of support are becoming increasingly blurred, in particular with lecture recording and use of clickers.

Quality assurance

Establishing minimum requirements

Edge Hill introduced an institutional minimum requirements/baseline in 2008, which was based on an audit of VLE usage and working with each Faculty to determine the individual components relevant to their needs. The aim was to have the whole institution applying the baseline within three years, and this was achieved within two years. This was assisted by the move from Blackboard CE8 to Blackboard Learn, which provided programme teams with the opportunity to spring clean their approach through structured conversations with LTD.

Following calls from the Student Union for electronic submission and typed feedback, new standards were introduced in 2012. There are now further discussions via Faculty TEL steering groups regarding raising the baseline to address the changing environment and expectations of students – e.g. mobile compatible course design. In addition, the institution is now looking to move away from the term baseline, which represents a deficit model, instead they will be focusing on minimum standards and considering how to establish the added extra for staff who want to go beyond the minimum.

Evaluating the student experience

As mentioned previously, Edge Hill started running a [student e-learning survey](#) in 2008/9. The survey considers student use and perceptions of both technology and learning spaces; questions have been adapted over time, for example, to include questions relating to mobile devices, and the results have been used to guide the development of information and guidance given to both students and staff. The survey was repeated annually for five years. However, in 2014, it was felt that whilst there were noticeable trends over time, there was a lack of discernible change in student expectations on an annual basis and they are now looking to reduce this to a biennial survey. In addition, a staff survey, which will also be biennial, was launched in 2014 to look at staff perceptions and engagement with technology.

Programme and module evaluations are also used to evaluate the student experience, however there is no standard form used across all programmes. The student experience is also discussed at student/staff consultative committees.

During the autumn planning phase, the Academic Quality and Development Unit, with the Dean of Learning and Teaching, have organised student focus groups, which include questions about the use of technology.

Termly reports from the Faculty TEL steering groups are structured to identify what's working well, what the challenges are, what staff development is required and what their future plans are. These reports and the conversations they generate, have been useful for LTD to identify what areas to promote and where efforts need to be focussed to help departments with specific needs.

Finally, staff are encouraged by LTD to review their courses based on the form and rubrics used by the Blackboard Exemplary Course Programme (ECP). This could then lead to a submission to Blackboard and, in the past few years, around 5–10 courses have chosen to do this and have received valuable feedback from the Blackboard ECP committee. In conjunction with LTD, there is also a staff development opportunity for staff to critique other courses using the rubric, which in turn can lead to them reviewing their own courses.

Support for devices

The [Learning Services' mobile strategy](#) encourages the use and support of mobile technologies and has established a culture to provide mobile access to learning materials and systems. This led to the introduction of the Edge Hill Central app, which provides access to the Library, PC availability, Blackboard Learn, maps, contacts and news (which can be filtered by department). In addition, some departments have created their own apps for students.

To encourage students' use of the [Blackboard Mobile Learn app](#), LS runs a Get Connected Roadshow during the Freshers' period and, at regular points throughout the academic year, to provide useful information to students about what apps are available, how to connect to Eduroam, how to access e-books, etc., as well as technical assistance to get their devices connected.

Through the student e-learning survey, LTD has identified increased device ownership and use of mobile devices, as well as increased expectations for mobile content. A key area of improvement came from tracking satisfaction with access to the VLE and there was a noticeable trend of issues emerging in relation to on campus access to the wireless network. This access issue was traced to a problem with devices disconnecting from the wifi network as students moved across campus and led to the promotion of Eduroam as the main institutional wifi network and the decommissioning of the other wifi network.

When it comes to digital content, all conversations with staff now focus on how to produce and deliver mobile friendly materials. In terms of e-books, the institution provides access to over 80,000 e-books for download, however it has been difficult to track take up of e-books as this depends on individual publishers providing statistics. Informal evidence from conversations at the Get Connected Roadshows has identified that e-books are popular amongst students and prospective students.

Student engagement as partners

There are few examples of initiatives involving students as partners in curriculum design. However, there was one example cited from the Faculty of Education (Primary Curriculum), whereby second year students were involved in the design of their third year modules. The primary driver for this was a newly validated programme in its first iteration and which provided an opportunity to develop the course with students. In general, feedback from students is taken into consideration through student-staff consultative committees.

In the Faculty of Health and Social Care, the Senior SOLSTICE Fellow and the Faculty Learning Technologist carry out a skills audit during the student induction for nursing students. This provides useful feedback on student use of the systems.

Within LS, Student Assistants have undertaken a market research role to find out more about the current technology challenges facing students. In addition, LS have commissioned media students to produce a marketing video.

The Computing Department have developed an enterprise wing for entrepreneurial students who want to seek commissions to develop things and this has proved to be a useful way of getting small innovations developed.

As part of the annual SOLSTICE conference, there is a call for students to present on their use of technology for learning which is linked to a student award.

Staff digital literacies

In terms of academic staff knowledge, this has been improving over the years. However, the main challenge is not the technology itself, but how it is used by the academics (e.g. not using file management or version control appropriately, or not knowing how to use certain tools), and this is evidenced in the feedback from students. Staff skills are being addressed through the LS [Developing Digital Excellence programme](#), which provides a comprehensive set of courses and webinars covering topics from basics to emerging technologies. Under the banner of Digital Practitioner, LTD run workshops on the use of technology in teaching, learning and assessment and these face to face activities are supported via a course on Blackboard which models good practice in the use of the VLE.

Increasingly, LTD are receiving requests for provision of personalised support and bespoke training, in particular, at a programme level, which has enabled teams to progress their use of technology together. One of the key challenges for staff, is finding the time and support for engaging with TEL.

Evidence from the staff survey, about where staff locate digital content for use in their courses, has highlighted a general lack of awareness about copyright, IPR and quality. The main sources of content cited were YouTube, Google and Google Images prompting the key question – whose role is it to support staff with advice on copyright? Should it be Learning Technologists or Librarians, or both? This is also a challenge for other support demands, as it can be difficult to know where to go for help because of the myriad different roles and teams within the institution. A recent LS project looking at support for student technical enquiries found that, from the student perspective, the main consideration for most appeared to be the nearest support will do, prompting improvements to signposting and marketing of LS support services.

Another challenge for staff is knowing what is possible with technology, and this has been realised through examples from practitioners on the [Learning Edge blog](#).

Distance Learning and OER provision

Edge Hill has run [online courses](#) for over ten years, with the longest standing programme being the Postgraduate Certificate in Work-Based Clinical Education. There is also an online Midwifery course which runs in parallel with a face to face cohort. The growth of online learning has generally been quite organic and opportunistic with the institution tending to favour the provision of flexible programmes, not necessarily wholly online or distance, and the majority of online courses have at least one face to face kick off meeting.

The institution has dipped a toe into the domain of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) through the [MOOC in Vampire Fiction](#) run by the Faculty of Arts and Sciences.

In terms of open educational resources (OER), the institution does not have an OER policy and there has been limited interest in OER across the institution. The staff survey indicated a lot of reuse of web based materials via YouTube or Google, but there was little use of repositories such as Jorum. The [eShare repository](#) is used for sharing materials internally and can be used for making materials available more widely, but to date there has not been a particular drive to use eShare for OER.

Future challenges

One of the key challenges for the future is the changing roles and remits of staff supporting TEL, in particular the blurring of the physical and virtual classrooms and the blurring of roles between central and local teams with varying remits. To help respond to this, LTD track and analyse the enquiries that come in, in particular the types of topics, in order to identify pinch points, which can then be used to upskill Help Desk teams. The aim is to provide a more joined up support experience for staff and students such that they don't get passed from one team to another, or have to know exactly who to contact in order to do something.

Other challenges include:

- Staff development – how to get staff through the doors to attend training and how to go about raising the baseline.
- Staff resource for supporting the technology – the learning technologists now spend a lot of time on testing new systems for upgrades which impacts on the time they can spend assisting staff to make better use of the technology.
- Scalable content development models, with a view to enabling staff to create the content themselves, rather than providing a content development service. One step towards this has been the [iSpring project](#) to trial the use of the iSpring plugin for PowerPoint to enable to incorporation of audio/video and to convert files for mobile friendly delivery.
- Evidencing impact – how to use analytic capabilities to get better access to usage data to demonstrate to the institution that they are providing value for money and enhancing the student experience.

Edinburgh Napier University

Interview with: Stephen Bruce, Academic Advisor, Information Services and Julia Fotheringham, Senior Lecturer and Senior Teaching Fellow – Programme Leader for the PG Cert in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education Office of the Vice Principal (Academic)

Overview

Edinburgh Napier University is a Post-92 institution with roughly 10,000 full time and 3,000 part-time students who study on campus, with a further 1,000 distance learning students. The University has an additional 5,000 students who attend an overseas partner institution in Hong Kong, India, Singapore and mainland China. The University has around 500 FTE academic staff, who are located on the three separate campuses in Edinburgh.

The University has three faculties (Engineering, Computing and Creative Industries; Health, Life and Social Sciences; and the Business School) with two schools associated with the Faculty of Health, Life and Social Sciences, and three with each of the other faculties – making up eight schools in total. There are also several Professional Service departments including the Academic Professional Development, Student Affairs, Information Services, in addition to the Office of the Vice Principal (Academic), which leads on strategy.

The University predominantly focuses on campus based teaching, with around 80% of enrolled students attending classes on campus; a blended approach to the use of learning technology in supporting learning, teaching and assessment provision is central to the students' learning experience. However, in recent years, an increasing number of online programmes have been established at Masters level and there has been growth in the development of short CPD courses, offering greater choice and flexible learning opportunities to working professionals, which has extended the University's distance learning provision and consequently the take up of TEL services.

Edinburgh Napier University is Hong Kong's largest UK provider of higher education where around 3,200 students are enrolled on courses accredited by the University. The University is planning to increase its overseas partnerships, where the established teaching model will continue through faculty fly-outs to Hong Kong, India, mainland China and Singapore for intensive teaching blocks, which are then followed up through online teaching and through support for local tutors who teach accredited course materials.

Edinburgh Napier does not have a dedicated TEL strategy but instead TEL issues are embedded within a range of institutional strategies such as the [University Strategy](#), [IT Strategy](#), [Learning Teaching and Assessment Strategy](#) and [EnRoute](#) – the CPD framework for staff engaged in teaching and the support of learning. These strategies are reviewed every five years.

The current [Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy](#) was established in 2010 and will run up until 2015. It has helped to guide recent TEL developments, including the introduction of an institutional [Benchmark for the Use of Technology in Modules](#), which is underpinned by the 3E Framework (Enhance, Extend, Empower). The Benchmark aims to help teaching staff to think about the ways in which they can introduce technology enhanced opportunities in their course delivery, with a view to increasing student autonomy in learning activities. It is a non-prescriptive framework that emphasises that every module should at least support the active engagement of students in learning, teaching and assessment activities at the Enhance level, but allows space for academics to determine the level of engagement and the technologies that they will adopt to support their chosen activities.

Most recently in March 2013, the Vice Principal (Academic) established a cross-service and cross-Faculty [Digital Futures Working Group](#) to explore the use of current and emerging technologies in supporting the student and staff experience at the University. The Working Group has been investigating, through a series of consultation exercises and meetings with staff and students, how Edinburgh Napier can become a "digitally integrated university, within which digital access, digitally enhanced practice, and our digital provision underpins and enables a dynamic, integrated experience for our students and for our staff". The Group has now reported back, making a series of recommendations on short term priorities and initiatives in support of support digital practice, as well as recommendations for developments leading up to academic year 2019–2020.

TEL strategy and drivers for TEL

TEL issues have always been reflected within key institutional strategies, such as the Learning, Teaching and Assessment (LTA) strategy, rather than through a stand alone e-learning strategy document. There has been a strong level of senior management support for TEL development across the institution.

The revised LTA strategy (2010–2015), launched through a staff conference in January 2011, has a strong focus on the use of learning technology in learning, teaching and assessment activities, addressing TEL on three levels:

- Level 1: outlining key principles for TEL usage within LTA approaches;
- Level 2: articulating 10 key framing statements – for which Schools are required to respond with their own statements on learning, teaching and assessment practices which take account of TEL approaches;
- Level 3: creation of an online LTA Resource Bank of searchable exemplars, resources and case studies which outline effective approaches to LTA including TEL.

Staff from the office of the Vice Principal (Academic) and the Academic Professional Development team actively engage in promoting the LTA Resource Bank, inviting contributions from staff and encouraging its use. Case studies within the Resource Bank are also being cross referenced with staff development sessions and with the dimensions of the UK Professional Standards Framework (PSF) to create an integrated provision to support effective LTA practice.

There are, of course, other key strategies that address TEL concerns. The University Library's strategy includes an e-learning strategy, which sets out their pedagogic approach to the provision and delivery of electronic products and services, and identifies what is good practice in this area, and how to bring this to bear on current and future work. Information Services has also published its own IT strategy which includes a dedicated teaching and learning and research strand, with direct relevance to TEL provision, as well as related areas such as digital scholarship, outreach activities and infrastructure. The Information Systems Development Committee is the governing body for all university wide academic and business information systems, and will play a coordinating role in the implementation of a wide range of projects relating to the Digital Futures institutional agenda. An academic forum will also be set up to help prioritise projects, which will lead to service improvements, as will explore some of the themes of digital scholarship and literacy identified by the Digital Futures Working Group.

TEL issues are also being addressed in other ways through the actions of senior managers. The Vice Principal (Academic) is currently leading an initiative to place a greater focus on programme design, with the goal of building a closer linkage between individual modules and the overarching programme philosophy, which should be guiding the student learning experience. At the heart of this initiative is a commitment to establish greater synergy in learning and teaching methods, which inevitably touches on the way that technology is leveraged by academics to support learning, teaching and assessment activities. The Digital Futures Working Group has highlighted the theme of consistency in its short term recommendations, calling for a formal requirement for all modules to adhere to the University's Benchmark for the Use of Technology in Modules, which would align with the stance taken by other institutions, such as York St John University, who have based their TEL Quality Strategy on the 3E Framework.

Another key development is the preparatory work towards the drafting of a new 2020 Corporate Strategy, which is being led by the University's Principal, Professor Andrea Nolan. One of the key objectives under discussion is the commitment of the University to offer each student an excellent personalised learning experience. Technology will have a part to play in the operational planning for this objective. The University is also looking to expand its overseas teaching provision, with TEL support provision underpinning this endeavour, and there is also a broader commitment for the University to increase the number of international partners it works with.

Drivers for TEL usage

Current drivers for TEL usage are linked to the ambition to create a digitally integrated university. Edinburgh Napier is also keen to offer a wider portfolio of Masters and distance learning programmes, and these types of programmes tend to make greater use of learning technologies. Specific targets include the development of a global MBA programme and the creation of nursing and business programmes at Masters Level, which will be delivered to students based in Hong Kong and Singapore.

Engagement by Faculties and Schools

The University does not provide a statement on how technology should be employed in teaching and strongly encourages a bottom up culture in which Faculties and Schools determine their own approaches to the use of TEL tools. Each Faculty and service area within the University reviews its learning and teaching and assessment strategy in the light of the revised institutional LTA strategy, responding to the Level 2 framing statements with their own approach to how TEL tools will be used in programme delivery. Level 2 statements vary from Faculty to Faculty, based on the nature of the disciplines, size of the courses and the different pedagogic practices being employed. The essence of the LTA strategy is that it is not prescriptive and takes account of the different contexts in which the Faculties work.

The development of Level 2 statements is an ongoing and organic process rather than a one off response to the publication of the LTA strategy, with TEL approaches continuing to be refined and embedded in programme delivery. The LTA strategy is in this way intended to be iterative, inspirational and interactive, ensuring that strategies towards TEL implementation are kept fresh and upto date. Staff are strongly encouraged to reflect on their practice in using TEL tools in their teaching and to contribute cases to the University's LTA resource bank, which are organised around the University's Benchmark for the Use of Technology in Modules.

TEL provision

Edinburgh Napier provides a centrally supported service for TEL tools – there is no devolved service within Schools as such. In addition to centrally provided tools, academic staff make use of external web tools including Facebook groups and Google+, and the University has provided guidance on how to engage with these types of tools, making staff aware of the benefits and challenges of Web 2.0. This guidance covers key points on data protection, intellectual property rights (IPR) and archiving issues.

Central provision for TEL is reflected through support for the following tools:

- Moodle as the University's online learning environment
- Mahara as an e-portfolio solution
- Camtasia Relay for video recording
- WebEx as the virtual classroom/meeting room solution, with some limited use of Blackboard Collaborate (soon to be phased out)
- Turnitin®UK as a text matching software to deter plagiarism and promote academic integrity
- TurningPoint® as a classroom voting system
- Audacity to support the delivery of audio feedback to students
- Microsoft Office 365 for student email storage and cloud-based access to Microsoft Word

The migration away from a Blackboard WebCT Vista platform to Moodle, as Edinburgh Napier's institutional virtual learning environment, has now been completed. Online teaching activities are hosted on three different Moodle platforms. The main platform hosts standard taught modules. The community server hosts courses which do not fit the standard course model and are used for students without an official Edinburgh Napier IT account – and this is a suitable delivery channel for MOOCs. A third instance of Moodle is used to support outreach and transition to higher education activities, with students able to self-register on to courses hosted on this system.

Mahara has just been launched as the University's e-portfolio system and is being piloted with modules that have a specific personal development plan (PDP) requirement to meet, driven by academic use cases. One pilot project is looking at the transition from paper based to electronic portfolios in fulfilment of a PDP activity for a Child Health Nurses programme.

The University has also recently invested in video capture through the purchase of a Camtasia Relay licence. The emphasis on video rather than lecture capture is intentional as the University is not planning to fit out lecture rooms with equipment to support scheduled recording of lectures. Instead, Camtasia Relay is available to all academics to record on the fly, and this approach is consistent with the opt in policy to lecture recording that the University is currently supporting. Camtasia Relay also offers additional benefits in enabling students to submit video files for assessment through the Moodle platform and to receive audio/video feedback. Other recent developments include the deployment of WebEx as the University's virtual meeting room and virtual classroom solution, which can be used in stand alone mode or as an integrated tool with Moodle. The University has also rolled out a virtual desktop service, providing staff and students with access to a standardised desktop and networked applications on any device that can be accessed both on and off campus.

Looking to the future, the University is about to deploy Microsoft Office 365 as an enterprise solution for student email storage and access to cloud services such as online Microsoft Office. In response to feedback about the student experience, the University is upgrading its social and learning spaces with a range of technologies including display screens, multi-touch screens and devices, and furniture with inbuilt technology and access points. This will allow the University to communicate with students more effectively, to ensure that students' devices are connecting to the University network, to give students audio visual experience which will help with their employability, and to create space which students would wish to remain and relax in for periods of time, i.e. between lectures.

TEL governance and structures

Central support structures

There is currently no dedicated home for TEL services within the University's organisational structure, as responsibility for TEL is embedded across a range of service units and is just one element of what a support service might offer to staff and students. In total, three central teams take a lead on TEL developments:

- The Academic Practice team within the Office of the Vice Principal (Academic)
- The Academic Professional Development team within Human Resources and Development
- Information Services comprising both the IT and the Library

Academic Practice is responsible for taking the lead on strategic projects related to the LTA strategy, such as steps towards the further development of the 3E Framework. The team is also responsible for delivering two accredited staff programmes that relate to and are partially or fully delivered through online education, namely the MSc Blended and Online Education and the Postgraduate (PG) Certificate Teaching and Learning in Higher Education. The latter programme is undertaken by all new lecturers at the University as part of their induction period. It covers key aspects of technology enhanced education in specific modules, and through being delivered in a blended learning mode with a good level of online activity allows participants the opportunity to experience the VLE as a student. In addition, the third module of the PG Cert is project based and many of those on the programme have opted to undertake projects that focus in part or in full on the use of TEL in teaching.

The [MSc Blended and Online Education \(BOE\)](#) is a fully online distance learning programme for Edinburgh Napier staff and external participants from FE, HE and other areas of educational practice. It is aimed at experienced educators who are new to technology enhanced learning and teaching, or who want to take what they are already doing even further. The programme emphasises individual and collaborative activity, as part of an immersive developmental experience that allows participants to develop strong pedagogical knowledge alongside the development of key online tutoring skills. The MSc BOE has three core modules. The first focuses on theoretical underpinnings and drivers for change relating to approaches to blended and online education. The second module is dedicated to issues in supporting the blended and online student experience, including inclusivity and equivalence of experience. The third module is based on curriculum design and development models and approaches for blended and online courses. These three core modules have been accredited by the Staff and Educational Association (SEDA), meaning that all three exit awards (PG Cert, PG Dip and the full MSc BOE) merit a SEDA award for Embedding Learning Technologies, for all successful completers. A route through the certificate, known as the HE Pathway, has been devised and recognized by the HEA. This enables participants who are eligible to follow this route (generally those teaching in Higher Education) to achieve recognition as Fellows of the HEA.

Academic Practice also delivers Write-TEL (Writing for Publication in Technology Enhanced Learning) – a fully online short course comprising online workshops, collaborative activities and one to one support for educators interested in exploring TEL in their own professional practice. The programme was developed as an extension to the MSc BOE and was conceived as a way of strengthening pedagogic research activity and research teaching linkages internally, as well as disseminating good practice in TEL within the institution and beyond. The programme is open to interested colleagues beyond Edinburgh Napier and the MSc BOE programme⁴.

Academic Professional Development (APD) aims to enhance academic and research development through support, challenge and innovation. In conjunction with the APD programme of events, the team also offers tailored development and support to meet the particular needs and priorities of Faculties, Schools and particular academic roles. They facilitate the sharing of good practice across the University, and their team includes an Academic Developer to champion TEL and support staff in their use. The team also organises the annual university wide [Academic Professional Development programme](#) of conferences, workshops, seminars and online opportunities which includes a technology enhanced learning strand that focusses specific learning technologies, such as TurningPoint, Webex/Bb Collaborate, and Turnitin/GradeMark. These sessions – and other bespoke development to meet an identified learning need – are also available on a tailored basis to schools or groups of staff such as programme teams.

Information Services combines IT Services and the University Library, and is responsible for managing the technical infrastructure and provision of resources for TEL services. The Academic and Business Liaison (AB&L) team regularly consults with academic staff and students in the development and delivery of IT services, such as the previously mentioned social spaces project. AB&L supports TEL projects, such as the iPads for Learning project, which is in the early pilot stages in the School of Life, Sport and Social Sciences to enhance the laboratory and classroom experience for students. AB&L worked closely with the Application Systems Development team to manage the migration of the University's centrally supported VLE from a Blackboard WebCT Vista platform to Moodle. This development team

4 For further details on the Write-TEL programme, please view the UCISA best practice case study #10 (pp52–58), which is available at: <http://www.ucisa.ac.uk/~media/Files/publications/case studies/SSGASG Engaging>

maintain and develop the Moodle service, support the institutional portal and video streaming services, and work directly with academics to develop a range of bespoke web applications that support learning and teaching.

Devolved support

At a local level each Faculty has a dedicated Learning Technologist whose role is to develop and support academic staff in their use of Moodle and related technologies. They work closely with Information Services, in the continual development of the Moodle service and piloting related technologies within their Faculties. Some schools also have administrative staff who provide Moodle support for specific programmes.

Looking to the future

The Digital Futures Working Group has observed that the current organisational structure of TEL support provision – without a natural home at the centre of the University – can lead to service provision being fragmented with staff unclear about the range of support provision available to them. To address this issue the Working Group has recommended the creation of a virtual hub that provides one online place for staff to access the various guides and resources that exist across the University, as well as to identify where to get further support from colleagues in the Faculties or Professional Services. The Group has also mooted the possibility of establishing a physical hub for support in technology enhanced learning, teaching and assessment that is either located centrally or coordinated from one central point. To complement these initiatives, the Working Group has also recommended that a representative cross departmental group be established, involving academics, Faculty learning technologists, students and Professional Service staff, who can guide and oversee TEL and related developments (including digital scholarship), ensuring the sharing of best practice across the University, and to ensure better coordination of TEL provision for students and staff.

Quality assurance

The University has formed a view that a dedicated guidance policy on the use and application of TEL tools in teaching and learning is not required, and the focus should instead be on minimum suggestions rather than minimum requirements for teaching practice. The University continues to promote the 3E Framework, which provides a benchmark for the use of technology to enhance the learning, teaching and assessment experience across all modules. Guidance on aspects of quality is subsumed within this framework, as well as within other staff resources such as the University's assessment handbook. Staff are expected to follow this guidance and there is a close scrutiny on new module and programme proposals as part of the module and programme validation process to see how TEL is being embedded, and affording opportunities for flexible learning provision.

Evaluation of the student experience

Aspects of quality in the use of TEL for course delivery are tracked in a number of ways. The standard end of module questionnaire has been a key instrument for collecting feedback on the student experience. All modules must use the questionnaire (consisting of 11 multiple choice and four free text items, with a dedicated question on the use of technology), although schools are free to add their own questions to the form; the School of Nursing has been particularly active in this respect in adding questions on its use of learning technologies.

The University's IT Strategy was developed after a wide ranging consultation that took place in order to seek the views of all our stakeholders and this has informed the key themes. Over 80 students on all campuses were interviewed to seek their opinion directly, as well as including feedback contained in a separate Student Closeness Survey conducted by Planning and Business Intelligence.

The University also solicits student feedback when major changes are introduced to TEL services, such as the recent migration to the Moodle VLE platform. In addition to these measures, Teaching Fellows also conduct evaluation projects within their own disciplinary areas, reviewing the impact of particular TEL initiatives. The MSc Blended and Online Education, the PG Cert Teaching and Learning in Higher Education and Write-TEL programmes are also helping to promote a culture of evaluation on technology developments through their coursework activities and discussion of evaluation techniques and approaches, addressing evaluation through support for scholarship.

Support for devices

Edinburgh Napier is a three campus institution and wireless provision is more or less pervasive across all campus sites. The University does not have a dedicated mobile strategy and roadmap, but does encourage students to bring their devices on campus and connect to the University wifi service. Most recently the University has established a mobile devices management (MDM) project to securely control and manage university owned smart mobile and tablet devices, and to provide a secure method of allowing users to manage university data on personally owned devices

without interfering with the devices' original data or settings. Whilst the University does develop dedicated apps for the my Napier student portal, the development of web services is based around responsive design to facilitate access through a variety of mobile devices. IT Services are also working with the Faculty of Health, Life and Social Sciences on an iPad project to support students in their lab work, under the governance of the MDM service.

In terms of pedagogic support for mobile learning, the Academic Professional Development Programme delivers a dedicated workshop on teaching with iPads. The iPads project in the Faculty of Health, Life and Social Sciences is one of a series of pilot projects which will be exploring how to make effective use of these tools, and there are plans to use Fuse – the mobile version of Camtasia Relay – to support the recording and sharing of video files in the clinical skills suite.

Student engagement as partners

There is no formal scheme supporting the engagement of students as partners in curriculum design activities. The Napier Students' Association (NSA) contributes feedback through the network of programme representatives and in recent years there has been an increased visibility of the reps amongst the study body. The NSA has been consulted directly on the development of my Napier student portal.

Staff digital literacies

There is no central university plan to tackle staff digital literacies, although there is awareness that this is an emerging challenge. This is being looked at indirectly through the Vice Principal (Academic)'s initiative in strengthening the focus on programmes in Napier's portfolio of academic provision, and the recommendations from the recent Digital Futures Working Group. Information Services have recently created a Community Moodle course, entitled En:compass – Navigating the Digital World, which is intended as a starting point for staff, students and researchers introducing key concepts relating to online identity, ownership of information and digital sharing.

Distance Learning and OER provision

Distance learning as a delivery approach is becoming more important to Edinburgh Napier. In 2010, the University offered three fully online programmes at Masters level, which were either already available to students at the time or about to be launched. This provision has now increased to ten live or in development online programmes at Masters level. These are being offered as credit bearing programmes to part time students and reflect the University's commitment to providing continuing professional development (CPD) for working professionals. New programmes have been targeted at the creative industries, for journalists and for entrepreneurs. There has also been recent growth in the number of CPD short courses, which are being offered to professionals.

As previously noted, the University is also keen to expand its overseas teaching provision, with TEL services supporting this initiative. The School of Nursing, Midwifery and Social Care and the Business School currently deliver undergraduate and postgraduate programme overseas with faculty flying out to initiate the delivery of modules in Hong Kong and Singapore, which are then supported through a combination of local support and online teaching undertaken by the module leaders in Edinburgh.

OER provision

The University has made a commitment to open education by ensuring that all case studies submitted to the LTA Resource Bank are licensed under Creative Commons and are, therefore, available for reuse. The cases are tagged with a number of descriptors and linked to the JORUM repository. The 3E Framework is also licensed under Creative Commons and has been adopted by other institutions and adapted for their purposes; for example, York St. John University has developed its own quality framework for TEL tools based on the 3E Framework.

The University has also taken steps towards offering open access courses, with the Write-TEL programme representing the first course of this genre with external participants engaging through webinars. The second Write-TEL programme was delivered by a cross-institutional team drawing on teaching staff from Edinburgh Napier, Manchester Metropolitan University, Aston University and the University of Salford.

The [Edinburgh Napier Educational Exchange](#) has also been set up as an academic social networking platform, supporting collaboration between Edinburgh Napier staff and with external contributors. The choice of Elgg as the platform was intentional in this respect, facilitating the opening up of this open space to support collaboration with external contributors. Health professionals represent one category of external users who have engaged with Edinburgh Napier staff on the Exchange site to share insights on professional development.

Future challenges

The key challenge that the TEL and Library support services are facing is how best to raise the awareness of academic staff in terms of the range of tools and services that are available to support their teaching. This is particularly important for staff who have, so far, not engaged with central services. Recognition of staff engagement with TEL is already a feature of the institutional CPD scheme ENRoute, which aligns with the sector owned UK Professional Standards Framework accredited by the Higher Education Academy (HEA). The Framework specifically addresses the use and value of appropriate learning technologies as core knowledge for higher education staff engaged in teaching and supporting learning. Both the accredited and bespoke routes to recognition as an HEA Fellow at a range of levels provide opportunities for participants to develop, reflect on and enhance their TEL practice. The aim is for all teaching staff to reflect on their teaching and use of TEL tools, and to go on to receive professional accreditation from the HEA.

Glasgow Caledonian University

Interview with: Professor Linda Creanor, Head of Blended Learning

Overview

Glasgow Caledonian University (GCU) is a Post-92 institution in West Central Scotland. The University was formally instituted in 1993 and, whilst primarily being teaching focused, GCU has a growing research profile, which is reflected in the recent establishment of three research institutes engaged in cross-disciplinary research (aligned with the University's academic schools) – The Institute of Applied Health Research, The Institute for Sustainable Engineering and Technology and The Institute for Society and Social Justice Research. The Caledonian Academy is a specialist research centre focusing on technology enhanced and professional learning. The strategic implementation of TEL is led by a team within GCU LEAD (Learning Enhancement and Academic Development).

GCU has approximately 16,000 students of which 77% are full time and 23% part time. The University is committed to widening participation with 34% of its undergraduate students coming from disadvantaged backgrounds – compared against the sector average of 26%.

The University's main campus is located in Glasgow, with postgraduate provision offered at a satellite campus in London (GCU London) and executive education offered at a new campus in New York (GCU New York). The University is in the process of applying for a licence that will enable GCU New York to run accredited degree programmes.

TEL strategy and drivers for TEL

GCU does not have a separate TEL strategy. Instead, the institution's ambitions relating to the use of technology in learning and teaching are integrated within the institution's overarching Strategy for Learning (2013–20). This new strategy builds upon the institution's previous Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy, and contains a set of approved design principles underpinned by key enablers, one of which is digital learning. This Strategy for Learning is a high level document and is supported by an implementation plan, including a blended learning roadmap, which outlines key activities for the year ahead. The next iteration of the roadmap has been extended to cover a two year time frame as the one year planning cycle has been identified as being too short. The implementation of the Strategy for Learning is regularly monitored with quarterly reports required by the Academic Policy Committee on progress against key performance indicators (KPIs).

The institution has never pursued the development of a separate TEL strategy believing that TEL should be embedded within learning, teaching and assessment processes. The PVC for Learning and Teaching is the owner of the Strategy for learning and its associated implementation plan but the management of the collation of information on progress and effectiveness of the implementation falls to GCU LEAD (Learning Enhancement and Academic Development).

Increasingly, drivers for the use and enhanced integration of TEL are coming from students who, in particular, have expressed a desire for the more consistent use of technology across programmes. Another significant driver for TEL has been the growing expectations of the University's Senior Management Team, with KPIs in the Strategy for Learning, which make clear that blended learning is essential and that all staff are expected to engage, which in turn stems from growing expectations of employers and external bodies of graduate digital capabilities. It is also recognised that TEL has an important role in defining how the University is perceived and markets itself through social media, which is important for student recruitment. A new project is under way to develop a framework to define GCU's identity as a digital university.

The use of technology within learning and teaching varies across schools, with noticeable differences across discipline areas due to disciplinary cultures. Examples include Health and Life Sciences, a school which values teaching highly and, therefore, engages well with TEL. Engineering and Built Environment make extensive use of specialised applications and have developed a school level baseline for use of the University's virtual learning environment (VLE). In the Glasgow School for Business and Society, patterns of use are mixed, but in certain subject areas, e.g. Media Journalism and Business Management, technology figures strongly.

TEL provision

Blackboard is at the heart of GCU's learning technology provision, with the platform licensed on a managed hosting basis (i.e. externally hosted by Blackboard technical services). Central technology support is minimal (even though most learning and teaching applications are now centralised) and is handled by Information Services (IS). Other core

systems supported by IS include Turnitin, Campus Pack for blogs and wikis, as well as a limited licence for Adobe Connect. The Blended Learning Team (located within GCU LEAD) facilitates interaction between IS, Schools, other professional departments and software vendors. IS prefers to have control of all main software applications across the university and devolved software licensing/management is discouraged.

TEL governance and structures

GCU's three schools each have one or more dedicated learning technologists (eight learning technologists in total) who liaise with the GCU Lead Blended Learning Team. The current model emerged in 2011 following a major institutional restructure – the result of which saw school based learning technologist roles formalised following a proposal to the University. Learning Technologists report to Associate Deans (Learning, Teaching and Quality) within the Schools and all Schools have their own ambitions in relation to TEL (aligned to the priorities within the Strategy for Learning). Most schools have now extended support in the area of blended learning by creation of Blended Learning Academic Leads (champions of TEL) who are identified as such within each School. In one School there are three Blended Learning Academic Leads and a Blended Learning group has been formed.

The GCU Blended Learning Team performs a coordination role for learning technology across the institution – holding monthly meetings with School Learning Technologists and similar meetings with colleagues from IS. Close links with the University's student association (in particular the Vice-President Education) are also maintained to ensure the student voice is effectively represented in decision making processes. The Blended Learning Team are represented on different institutional committees, most notably the Learning and Teaching Sub-Committee, which reports to the Academic Policy Committee. Input is currently being provided by the Blended Learning Team into two major University initiatives. The Heart of the Campus working group is exploring opportunities to enhance existing learning spaces and make flexible use of teaching rooms, while a major piece of work is underway, to enhance provision of student feedback on assessment.

Quality assurance

There are no explicit policies as such for TEL beyond the KPIs in the University's Strategy for Learning. GCU doesn't have a University wide set of minimum requirements – and there is some concern that this could result in a box ticking exercise, although it is recognised that such standards can be useful in the validation of new programmes or the revalidation of existing programmes, as they can be used to check whether they have been taken into account in the adopted learning and teaching approaches. One School (Engineering and Built Environment) has developed a baseline for staff to follow in their use of the VLE.

Evaluation of the student experience

The student experience is mainly evaluated through module evaluation questionnaires where additional questions about experience of technology are often included. The University has been discouraged from undertaking additional central surveys as the Student Association indicated that the student body were suffering survey fatigue. It was also thought that by reducing the number of centrally administered surveys this might also help increase National Student Survey (NSS) completion rates.

Issues relating to TEL are increasingly figuring during programme validations and enhancement led subject reviews and this is perceived as an indicator of the increasing importance of TEL. These issues are reported back to the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) and this ensures a level of scrutiny.

Support for devices

There is a sense that GCU is running to keep up as students are using mobile devices more and more. The University has recorded a notable increase in student access to VLE in the last year via mobile devices. The University has licensed the Blackboard Mobile app, which has proven very popular with students. The University has identified a need to make staff aware that the learning resources they create need to be flexible, as they have to be accessible via mobile devices as well as standard PCs. Focused efforts are being made to ensure the University's website is mobile responsive but it is recognised that, in terms of materials stored on the VLE, there is some way to go.

GCU does not, at present, have a Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) Policy but this is a high priority. The Blended Learning Team are working with staff to encourage them to incorporate use of mobile devices into their learning and teaching and, while quite a number of them are doing that, there are no guidelines in place as to what is acceptable use. The absence of these guidelines means that some staff are reluctant to engage as they are not sure what is okay and what is not. The University has developed a set of social media guidelines for learning and teaching which provides a

framework around what is an acceptable use of social media and what staff members need to be aware of in terms of data protection. However, no broader policy around use of mobile devices for learning and teaching currently exists, although there are plans to address this in the next academic year.

Student engagement as partners

The Student Association is included in discussions around TEL development and has been actively involved in the production of the Blended Learning Annual Report and roadmap.

The University has recently initiated a student engagement project (broader focus than purely TEL), and the Blended Learning Team are working with colleagues to see how TEL could be incorporated in some way – with particular consideration to approaches at other universities, such as the [Southampton Digichamps](#) initiative. GCU is trying to identify where students can be brought in to help with curriculum development and digital literacy skills, though nothing formal is in place yet.

Staff digital literacies

The need to enhance the digital literacy skills of GCU staff has been identified as a significant challenge by the University. The institution is currently trying to tackle this via help resources for staff under the Help tab on the Blackboard VLE, whilst the learning technologists in the Schools are providing at elbow help for staff – this initiative, in particular, has had a positive benefit and has been a big encouragement to those more reluctant staff members who feel more comfortable discussing ideas with a colleague from their own School. The University is also looking at developing more online options for staff so they can try things out themselves before they use them with students. TEL guidance is also incorporated within the University's PG Certificate programme for new academic staff and this is very much welcomed by participants. There has been evidence of many of the approaches introduced on the PG Cert. programme being taken forward and implemented in their own modules.

The Caledonian Scholars and Associates initiative provides internal funding for staff to take forward innovative projects in learning and teaching. The scheme, which offers successful applicants £2000 of funding over two years, has been running since 2008 and, while there is no stipulation to use TEL, most projects incorporate technology in some way. The initiative seeks to encourage scholarship in learning and teaching. The staff who undertake these projects have to become ambassadors for innovation. They are expected to adopt an action research approach to implementing some new form of teaching approach and are also expected to provide internal reports and produce conference/journal papers as an output of the process. The Head of Blended Learning hosts regular meetings with those leading projects and a form of community development takes place when people from across schools are brought together to discuss their projects with a cross-fertilization of ideas.

Distance Learning and OER provision

Distance learning has not been important to GCU to date. A few distance learning programmes exist at postgraduate level across the whole institution and, of those, only a small number are delivered online. Most programmes are delivered in a blended approach.

GCU now has a strategic objective as part of the Strategy for Learning which asks that all Schools create at least two online distance learning programmes by 2015 to gradually increase the University's portfolio. These new programmes will be delivered online through Blackboard. To support these new developments, the University is committed to providing more opportunities for staff to learn online as a student, to provide insight into what it is to be an online learner.

The University is continuing to explore its response to the Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) phenomenon. There is an awareness that it is quite expensive to develop MOOCs but there are ongoing discussions about how GCU might develop something that is relevant to the institution's identity (to the common good) and builds on areas of expertise. In July, 2014 the Blended Learning Team ran a pilot online event around the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games (GCU Games On) and was the first university to make use of Blackboard's new Open Education platform. This experience will help to inform further developments in open education at GCU.

GCU have developed a policy on open education resources – a collaboration between the Blended Learning Team and the Library – which is going forward to Academic Policy Committee for approval. When approved, GCU will be the first university in Scotland to implement such a policy. The University's Library will host materials in a repository of shared resources and staff will be encouraged to badge new material as creative commons and contribute.

Future challenges

The development of a mobile/Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) policy is identified as a major priority to be dealt with in the short term, and as part of that, making sure resources for learning and teaching are mobile friendly is another priority.

The institution is, like the rest of the sector, very interested in learning analytics and the Blended Learning Team are currently in discussions with Information Services colleagues to see if they can mine more meaningful information from learning systems. This data would inform internal plans, particularly relating to how systems are being used by students, what the student journey is like, how the University can better support them and to inform future TEL developments.

Sheffield Hallam University

Interview with: Brian Irwin, Head of Technology Enhanced Learning

Overview

Sheffield Hallam is a Post-92 University. It is a member of the University Alliance mission group with a large population of approximately 37,000 students, including 28,500 undergraduate, 8600 postgraduate and a small but significant proportion of overseas students. With 18 departments, split over four faculties it has in the region of 2,100 academic members of staff.

TEL strategy and drivers for TEL

Up until three years ago the University had embedded TEL within its Learning, Teaching and Assessment (LTA) Strategy, as the institution saw value in bringing the two together. Three years ago, Sheffield Hallam created a separate TEL Strategy, which was a sub-strategy of the LTA Strategy. This was developed to highlight specific TEL goals and pieces of work. In the TEL Strategy, explicit links were made to the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy objectives, which in turn linked to those in the wider Corporate Plan. Having a TEL Strategy allowed the institution to highlight specific areas of action, but the biggest gain came from the implementation plan for the strategy, which defined actions and responsibilities for various stakeholders (including the LTA development unit, IT and faculty TEL teams).

The University has recently released a new University Strategy and is developing implementation plans with specific actions to meet that strategy. Therefore, TEL activities will be represented in a wider LTA-themed implementation plan, rather than continuing as a separate sub-strategy.

Drivers for TEL usage

Key drivers in developing Sheffield Hallam's strategic approach to TEL have been the potential for enhancing existing teaching and learning methods, exploring new ways of teaching enabled by technology, enhancing students' employability, meeting students' expectations about technology, and improving the administration of teaching activities.

The institutional approach to TEL has been bottom up, with the student voice informing developments. Sheffield Hallam recognises that it has previously been perceived as an innovator in the use of TEL, but now other HEIs have invested heavily in this area as well.

There are pockets of the University where uptake of TEL is not as strong. Research into why some staff do not engage as fully with TEL has identified some key factors, including confidence, staff self perceptions of their own role and the time needed to develop teaching innovations.

TEL provision

Sheffield Hallam has a centralised model for TEL provision with very few devolved tools or services at departmental level. It has Blackboard as its central VLE, which is used for content provision, collaborative activities, and return of marks. Turnitin is integrated with Blackboard, but only used as a text matching service, rather than as a marking and feedback tool. About a third of staff use the VLE for the submission of assessments and returning feedback, and an institutional project is underway to make this standard practice. More recently, the institution has been using PebblePad as its ePortfolio tool, as well Blackboard Collaborate, for virtual classrooms. In addition, all staff and students have access to Google Apps for Education, which will shortly be integrated with the VLE. There is a mobile version of Blackboard available through Blackboard's mobile application, Blackboard Mobile Learn, along with the use of Mosaic as a campus app. MyKnowledgeMap is being explored to support students on placement with meeting professional competencies. There is no institutional system for lecture capture, though the largest theatres are equipped with lecture capture facilities and Blackboard Collaborate is also used for lecture capture by some academics.

For classroom based TEL, Sheffield Hallam provides access to TurningPoint voting systems and some staff are also using Socrative as a voting system using student mobile devices. There is wifi throughout both campuses and several flexible teaching spaces with multiple screens and student breakaway areas are being developed currently. Each faculty also has a classroom set of centrally managed tablet devices available for use and laptops can be borrowed by students on an individual basis at the library.

TEL governance and structures

Support

Staff support for TEL is provided through a distributed model, with support in various teams. Institutional development and direction is provided by the Technology Enhanced Learning team which is part of Quality Enhancement and Student Success, consisting of a head, three academic posts and a researcher, plus two student assistants. Faculties have local TEL support which has grown over the years according to each Faculty's needs and priorities. This support consists of one to three TEL advisers and a TEL lead, depending on the Faculty. Faculty teams provide support and guidance locally, contextualised to the needs of the faculty. While local and central TEL support work in collaboration there is no formal line management relationship.

TEL system administration is supported by the central IT department, and another section of the IT department provides a first line helpdesk that answers a range of queries, including TEL ones.

Links with Library services are via relevant operational groups and the TALIS Aspire Resource Management system is integrated with the VLE.

Recognising the impact of estates on TEL, including timetabling, the central TEL team at Sheffield Hallam are currently developing relationships with the central facilities team to better understand how they work and to input to future developments.

Governance

In terms of governance, TEL plans are endorsed by the Academic Quality, Standards and Enhancement Committee. A report is produced for the committee annually reporting back on the TEL Strategy implementation plan.

A TEL Strategy Group meets monthly. It consists of the University Head of TEL, Faculty TEL leads, a Student Union officer and the Head of Corporate Systems in IT. This Group gathers input from faculties in order to shape decisions, priorities and the overall direction of travel. It is consulted for significant operational decisions as well.

The TEL Operational Group meets every two weeks and has representation from each Faculty, IT and the Library. The Group then forms specific Task and Finish Groups to focus on particular projects.

Quality assurance

The institution has a set of minimum expectations in relation to e-learning, but nothing embedded in policy, though this is currently being considered. There is a review currently underway to look at uptake of the minimum expectations of e-learning with the aim of informing any future policy decisions and updating the expectations.

There is some quality assurance support for distance learning courses at approval stage but nothing additional is required at the approval stage for campus based courses. Evaluating the student experience of TEL is currently incorporated into the general course review or studies of specific issues.

Evaluation of the student experience

For the last four years, the Student Barometer survey has polled first and second year students annually. It includes questions regarding TEL and the findings from this survey help inform future developments. In addition, a variety of formal investigations have been performed over the years to help improve the TEL experience for students. This includes research projects into feedback and assessments, studies to understand student expectations upon entry and research to evaluate particular programmes or interventions.

Support for devices

Sheffield Hallam recognises some of the challenges that Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) brings and is currently looking further at this particular area. Some of the challenges that the University is facing include supporting multiple platforms, how to teach differently in the classrooms, i.e. projection in the classrooms, and the management of mobile technology at a time when there are pressures on staff resource.

The University makes use of Airwatch for pre-loading tablets and smartphones with different profiles of software, but how devices are provisioned and loaned out in some areas is still being discussed. The cost issue of providing mobile devices such as tablets remains a challenge as well.

Sheffield Hallam has been active in working with sector special interest groups to explore the issues around BYOD.

Overall, there is more significant work to be done in this area to understand needs, applications and how the institution could harness the full potential of mobile technology.

Student engagement as partners

The central team employs student e-learning assistants and draws on these students to support academics in a variety of TEL initiatives. The TEL team have run events with the Student Union but it is challenging to get student engagement at times. Often connection with students is via specific research or development projects where students help with a particular issue.

The Student Union Education Officer is involved with the TEL Strategy group and student reps in the Faculties often bring up TEL issues at course and Faculty forums.

Staff digital literacies

There is a recognition that digital literacies take different forms and that staff need time not only to develop their technical knowledge in terms of how to use TEL, but often to develop more general pedagogical knowledge and skills.

Motivation is an important factor in engaging staff. Sheffield Hallam is trying to increase motivation through a menu approach, which gets staff to consider different teaching approaches that they could use and how TEL can enhance teaching delivery.

Distance Learning and OER provision

Neither distance nor open learning are major parts of Sheffield Hallam's course offering with provision very much based on campus. However, there is recognition that teaching at a distance is growing in importance for their courses.

Overall, the institution is taking a cautious approach to Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs). The University is piloting a MOOC via PebblePad and a range of other tools. In the future, the University might consider the use of the Blackboard MOOC platform as well, since staff are familiar with it and content can be moved between the two systems easily.

Sheffield Hallam recognises that any MOOC they run needs to be done in the same way as an accredited taught course if they want to encourage students on the MOOC to come to the University.

There is no promotion of OER teaching materials other than the Library directing staff to relevant resources. There is some resistance to the re-use of certain types of resources, e.g. PowerPoints, created by others but this is partially a cultural issue. Some materials for staff and student development are released openly, but OER is not currently a priority for development at Sheffield Hallam University.

Future challenges

Short term challenges are around ensuring there is alignment of TEL priorities, support and provision with the new University Strategy and how this will fit together. Another challenge is how the variance in institutional structures affects institutional initiatives.

Medium term challenges include Digital Literacy and how to ensure that staff are well supported in all aspects of this, but especially TEL. There is a concern about the growing gap in ability between those staff comfortable with TEL and those who are not engaging. In addition, it is recognised that the area of mobile technologies, including BYOD, needs further development. Accompanying the changes that mobile technologies afford, Sheffield Hallam is considering whether the focus of TEL may need to become more centred on the use of TEL in the classroom.

Southampton Solent University

Interview with: Roger Emery, Learning Technologies Development Manager

Overview

Southampton Solent University is a Post-92 teaching focused university based primarily on a city centre campus on the south coast of England. The University has around 11,000 FTE students. However, a large percentage of students are part time and, therefore, the total number of students is around 17–18,000. The University is split into three Faculties: Business, Sport and Enterprise; Creative Industries; and Maritime and Technology, which includes the world renowned Warsash Maritime Academy, based on a separate campus. While the primary focus for the University is on teaching, the institution's research capacity is an area for growth, and the institution is currently investigating research degree awarding powers.

TEL strategy and drivers for TEL

The University has a long history of TEL dating back to the late 1990s with the provision of course websites providing learning materials. TEL was originally developed by the Academic Development Service which was responsible for implementing the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) in 2000. Since then, uptake has grown to the extent that TEL is now fairly well embedded across the institution; where there used to be individual champions at a departmental level, the institution has seen pockets of good practice grow to the extent that there are now champions at the level of individual course teams.

TEL has, therefore, developed as part of the teaching and learning portfolio and, as such, Southampton Solent has never had a dedicated TEL strategy: strategic reference to TEL has always been embedded in the Teaching and Learning strategy. TEL is considered to be just another teaching tool and part of good teaching practice, as Roger points out, "we never had a pen and paper strategy".

TEL provision

Centrally, the institution provides a suite of tools under the myCourse banner, that are based around the Moodle VLE (see Figure 1).

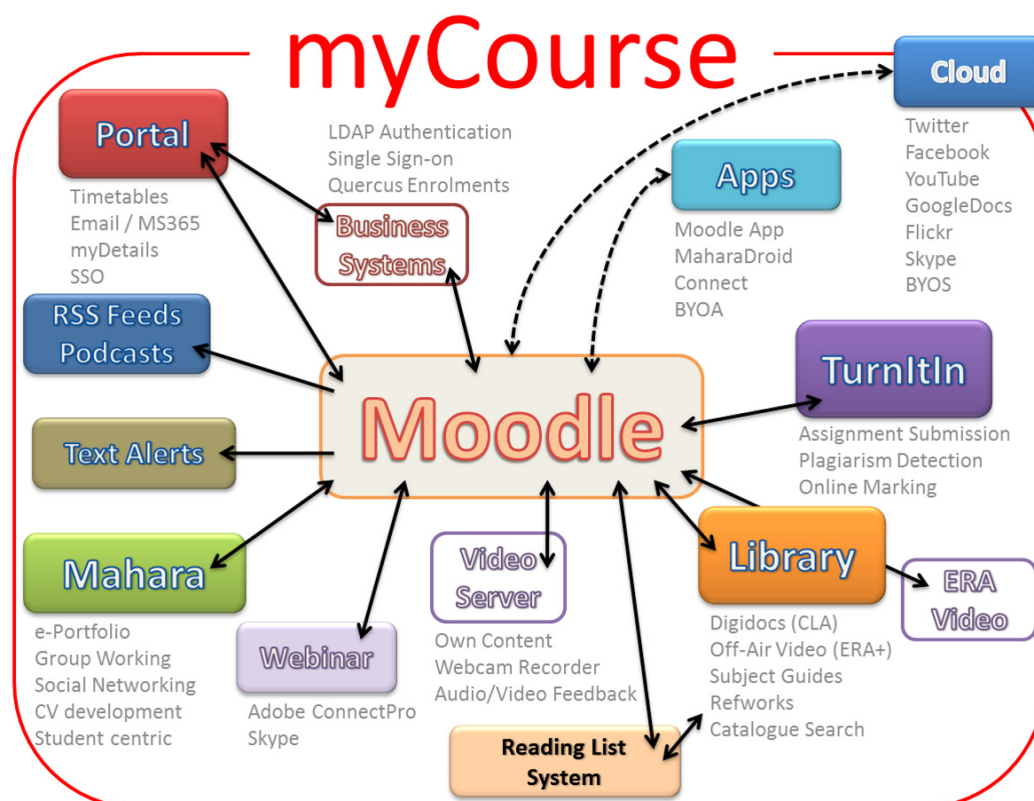


Figure 1 – Diagram showing technologies used by Southampton Solent University

These tools are also used to support distance and blended learning, under the banner of Solent Online Learning.

In terms of locally run systems, some subject areas have their own tools or online resources, but these are very subject specific. For example, computer gaming and media students have access to locally run servers and some departments provide their own web based collections of resources. The central VLE is used as an electronic baseroom, so all local materials and tools are linked to from there.

TEL governance and structures

For TEL the main strategic steer and oversight comes from the Learning and Teaching sub-committee, which is chaired by the Dean of the Learning Information Service and includes representatives from the Library, from Academic Services, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Learning and Teaching and the Head of Learning Technologies. In addition, Academic Services provide some steer and governance through the development of the academic handbook, in particular, in the area of e-submission and use of Turnitin.

Historically TEL was supported by the e-Development Centre, which consisted of the web development team and a small learning systems team. The Learning Technology Unit grew as a result of HEFCE funding and became a separate unit. The team grew again through HEFCE strategic development funding in 2009/10 for a three year project to develop the Solent Online Learning service. At the end of the project the web, and LTU teams were re-merged to form Learning Technologies (LT). LT provides central support for TEL and contains the following members of staff:

- e-Learning Support Officers – providing support for the learning technology systems.
- Learning Technologists – providing support and advice on use of technology for teaching.
- Instructional Developers – designing and developing course materials.
- Multimedia Production – production of video and other multimedia items.
- Learning Technology Development team – application support and development for learning technology systems.
- Learning and Teaching Coordinator – oversees Teaching and Learning Fellows who are based in the Faculties and organises TEL related events.

LT sits within the [Learning Information Service](#) (LIS) alongside Student Services, Employability and Enterprise and the Library and is overseen by the Dean of LIS. This means that the Learning Technologies team works very closely with the Library, which has further boosted the take up of technology; for example, through a collaborative project to roll out online reading lists, over 50% of courses now have online reading lists and this in turn has resulted in a better take up of learning technology systems, such as the VLE. Roger described the interface between the two departments as “the Library have the e-resources, we have the shop window”.

In terms of the relationship with the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) department, ICT used to be part of LIS, but, a few years ago, became a separate department. Learning Technologies interface with ICT via weekly operational meetings, regular Heads of Department meetings and through collaborative projects. As a result, the departments have developed good working relationships, and have successfully negotiated the grey lines as to who looks after which parts of the learning technology systems: e.g. the application side of Moodle is looked after by LT whilst ICT look after the servers.

LT also work closely with the Education team in the Business Faculty, who are responsible for teaching the Postgraduate Certificate (PGCert) in Learning and Teaching and a Masters in Professional Development (MProf). One of the Learning Technologists from LT is a guest lecturer on the PG Certificate programme.

There is also a [TEL community of practice](#) with three strands driven by LT, the Head of Library and others in the Faculties. The three strands are classroom and mobile technologies, online pedagogies and digital literacy.

Quality assurance

There is a minimum content expectation for every taught unit delivered online, which was established several years ago, and it has been reviewed and updated recently. The establishment of these minimum expectations was originally driven by the Associate Dean for Operations in one of the Faculties, and the Student Union, based on student feedback. Details about the minimum content expectations are provided in the Academic Handbook, which is maintained by Academic Services.

Evaluation of the student experience

In terms of evaluating the student experience of TEL, LT use several mechanisms:

- Student Unit Evaluation (SUE) – over the years one of the interesting changes in the responses relating to TEL has been a change from quantity (e.g. I want all my courses to have a VLE component) to quality (e.g. I wish all VLE courses were as good as Tutor X's).
- Faculty forums – these are held several times a year and act like a set of market stalls where student reps can talk with staff from central services. These forums can generate a lot of good feedback from students.
- Focus groups –LT work closely with the Student Union's Vice President for Education to run focus groups on the various technologies, e.g. to discuss Moodle and Mahara upgrades.
- STAR Awards – [Student led teaching awards](#), where students can recognise and reward outstanding teaching and the provision of support, including an award for supporting learning through technology.

In addition, several years ago, the Dean of the Business School led a project called Great Unit Leaders to identify what makes a great unit leader. This looked at feedback from internal surveys, and the National Student Survey, grades as well as staff use of the VLE. The top ten unit leaders were those who made the best use of the VLE and other classroom technologies.

Support for devices

There are no specific policies regarding use of mobile devices. However, the IT policy is to provide support on a best endeavours basis. Bring Your Own Device is driving activities to enable better facilities for use of devices, for example, the Library make use of QR codes and the already extensive wifi network is being upgraded over the Summer. Part of the Moodle upgrade is to include an e-book download feature to cater for students who require offline access to resources, such as those out at sea for long periods of time. In addition, there is a focus on web app delivery and responsive design.

As part of the TEL community of practice the Learning Technologies team runs an event called Get Appy, which is a lunchtime show and tell session for apps, ranging from commonly used apps, such as Evernote, to more specialist apps. The aim of the session is to encouraging sharing of good practice. There is some support for staff wanting to use apps and details of the apps demonstrated during the session are made available online. They have also investigated an app recommender tool for students to recommend apps to each other. Formal support is provided for apps which accompany centrally supported tools, such as Turnitin, Office 365 and the Mahara Droid app (for offline syncing of content).

In terms of providing mobile devices, this is done through specific funded projects. For example, the [Learning on the go project](#), which provided iPod Touch devices to students. The Library runs a laptop loan scheme with laptops available in electronic lockers that are issued via a student's ID card. Also, the Faculty of Creative Industries loans out digital cameras and audio and video equipment.

E-books have been a key focus in recent years and the Library flag up the availability of e-books both via the online reading list system, as well as using a physical placeholder on the shelf with a QR code to the book.

Student engagement as partners

Students and recent graduates are employed by the Learning Technologies team to assist with projects. For example, employing a graduate associate to produce multimedia and a student, via Campus Jobs, to analyse use of the Succeed@solent study skills package. These students also provide valuable feedback on what students want in terms of TEL provision.

Staff digital literacies

The institution secured funding from the [Changing the Learning Landscape](#) programme, with support from Helen Beetham, to run five days of workshops with students and staff around digital literacies. In addition, they run a number of events throughout the year to demonstrate new technologies and share best practice. This includes a biannual event for associate (hourly paid) lecturers. LT run a very comprehensive training programme from basic skills to more advanced, as well as providing one to one sessions. They also attend course away days with whole course teams, which has proven to be a great way to get staff engaged with TEL.

The key barrier, however, is staff time. Whilst some staff will attend one off events, on a day to day basis most staff say they don't have the time for TEL. The key challenge is how to help academic staff to find the time and help them to make TEL a priority.

In terms of qualifications for staff, the Postgraduate Certificate in Learning and Teaching is a contractual obligation for new academic staff to complete within the first two years of employment, and it makes good use of TEL tools. For example, half of the assessments on this programme are submitted through Mahara. The programme is also supported by one of the Learning Technologists. The institution also used to run a Postgraduate Certificate in Blended Learning, which was aimed at staff with existing teaching qualifications who wanted to develop expertise in Blended Learning. Academic staff can also study towards a Master's in Education, whilst staff supporting teaching and Learning are encouraged to study for the Masters in Professional Practice.

Distance Learning and OER provision

As part of the institution's strategic plan for 2008–13, there was a commitment to the pursuit of inclusive and flexible forms of higher education. This has resulted in the development of several online courses through Solent Online Learning (SOL). One of the key courses is the MSc in Shipping Operations, which is fully online and students only come to the University for graduation. The main demographic is professionals in the shipping industry, some of whom have never been to university and have not been in education for a while. In addition, they have a limited experience of online learning and use of the web, due to being based at sea. The first cohort of students graduated last year and this has been a big success, but took a lot of time/effort, in particular supporting staff, who were not used to teaching online. There is now a move to make other courses fully online or blended.

One of the advantages of SOL has been the trickling down of good practice to on campus teaching through the application of the *Solent Online Learning standard* (Figure 2).

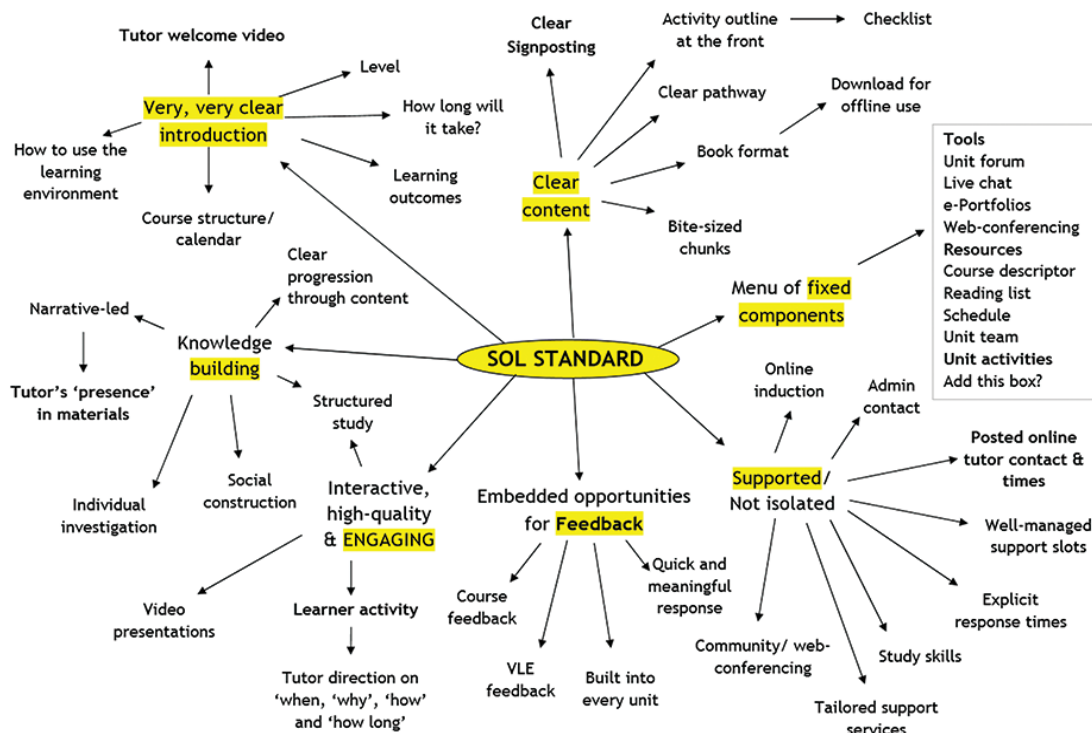


Figure 2 – Solent Online Learning standard

In addition to SOL, the online learning provision includes a selection of online Professional Development units. Considering the MOOC movement, the institution is keeping an eye on MOOC developments, but hasn't yet delivered its own course.

In terms of Open Educational Resources (OER), there isn't a formal policy about production and use of OER. However, the institution has put a number of resources online: for example, the *Succeed@solent* course is all creative commons and the *Solent Electronic Archive* hosts dissertations, research papers and some teaching resources. The Learning Technologies team are also looking at registering all staff and student VLE help resources under a creative commons licence, as they often receive requests from other institutions to use the materials. In addition, funding from the OER Phase 3 project was used to produce *video-based OERs for business and enterprise*, primarily to target students transitioning from further to higher education.

Future challenges

The main challenges are keeping pace with the technology and managing the expectations of students and staff. Upcoming activities include:

- Online submission – Since 2011, there has been a policy in place requiring all text-based submissions for undergraduate and taught Masters courses (except for Masters dissertations) to be submitted online. There is a growing demand from students who want to be able to submit online, so the next steps are to review the processes for online submission, in particular:
 - The use of electronic cover sheets;
 - The types of submission included in the policy;
 - How to deal with courses that want to upload large amounts of data, e.g. computer gaming submissions, especially as the new computers on campus no longer have digital drives for creating DVDs;
 - How to submit e-portfolios easily; these are currently exported and uploaded.
- Lecture capture – Currently there is no lecture capture system in place, so this is being piloted next year. They will also be exploring the benefit of using the lecture capture system for recording student presentations.
- Video hosting provision – Currently using Planet E-stream for off air recordings and will be reviewing this as the hardware is now end of life. In addition, looking at other ways to host videos produced by the departments or individual lecturers, as well as student videos.
- Lynda.com – Currently piloting Lynda.com training materials with specific courses, for example Adobe materials for courses in the Faculty of Creative Industries, and for staff development.
- Solent.Open – The provision of a separate platform to allow the publishing of OER and provide public access to open access courses and material (not necessarily MOOCs).
- New Teaching Building – with capacity for over 2000 students will be equipped with superfast wifi, hi-res LED touch panels and communal collaborative study areas.

A key challenge is how to deliver blended and distance learning in a cost effective manner. Experience with SOL has identified that producing blended and distance courses require time and effort, especially up front to develop the resources. In addition, they are reviewing other staffing models for blended and distance, whereby senior staff are involved in the curriculum and development of the course. Then teaching assistants act as online tutors to do the day to day course maintenance and moderation, similar to the model used by the Open University.

Finally, a new Vice Chancellor is starting in August, so this may bring new ideas and new ways of doing things, which could influence TEL activities.

Sussex Downs College

Interview with: Kevin Jones, Senior Learning Technology Development Advisor

Overview

Sussex Downs College is a further education (FE) institution located in East Sussex with campuses in Lewes, Eastbourne and Newhaven. The College is a member of the [157 Group of Colleges](#) – a consortium of the UK's largest FE providers. The College has an approximate total enrolment of 5,000 students aged between 16 and 19, with 7,000 full time equivalent. The majority of full time learners are aged 16–18 and are drawn from within the broad Sussex geographic area, but with some students from as far afield as Kent and Croydon.

Sussex Downs offers a wide portfolio of academic and vocational subjects (from entry level foundation learning qualification to degrees) alongside apprenticeships. Core provision is within the 16–19 area including GCSEs, A Levels and BTEC qualifications. Different courses are offered across the College's campuses.

Following a recent Ofsted inspection in 2014 the College was judged to be good (Grade 2) for Overall Effectiveness, with the report highlighting that the teachers across the College make effective use of technology and the College's virtual learning environment iLearn (which is based on Moodle).

TEL strategy and drivers for TEL

A Learning Technology Strategy and Development plan was first developed and approved by the College Management Team (CMT) outlining the key principles and learning technology behaviours the College aims to support, which are linked to a detailed development plan. Established by the College's Head of Professional Development and Learning Technology Development Advisor, the Strategy links in with the College's Teaching and Learning Strategy, but primarily the College's IT Strategy, which has a strong infrastructure focus. This close relationship to the IT Strategy is a reflection of the institution's priority to enhance the underpinning provision (e.g. wifi, VLE) recognising that these services underpin wider strategic development aspirations and priorities around improving awareness, usage and staff competencies with learning technologies.

The Learning Technology Strategy is designed to be a working document and is set out to a short to medium term (12–18 month) timescale, recognising the fast moving nature of the field. The Strategy clearly identifies planned activities, intended outcomes and the individuals with lead responsibility for implementation. The Strategy was recently refreshed and reapproved by the College's Management Team in March 2014.

The primary driver behind TEL usage across the College is a general awareness that technology can improve reach and the effectiveness of teaching by staff, as well as enriching the student learning experience. TEL developments are neither driven strategically from the bottom up nor top down in a concerted way. Direction has, to date, primarily been driven via the College's learning technology and professional development staff. A new structure is currently in the process of being implemented, and a new Head of Learning Technology and Innovation post is being created. The postholder will have responsibility for the strategic development of TEL at a senior level. The Further Education Learning Technology Action Group (FELTAG) published in March 2014 (<http://feltag.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/FELTAG-REPORT-FINAL.pdf>) has increased attention on learning technology within the College with senior management requesting more information on plans in relation to online learning. Concerns about funding implications and an increasingly competitive marketplace are likely to drive further focus and investment in TEL services, with a view emerging that the College needs to become a leading provider for technology enhanced learning. Online learning is seen as a way of making the most of a reduced set of resources.

TEL provision

Sussex Downs College offers a core set of centrally supported TEL tools. The institution's iLearn virtual learning environment, based on Moodle, forms the focus of provision with Planet e-Stream adopted for delivering video and supporting the recording of television programmes for use within courses. The College makes extensive use of MyDay – a Sharepoint service, which provides students with access to a variety of aggregated course related information, including their timetable and details of library loans. All students are provided with an account and access to Office 365 from point of enrolment.

TEL governance and structures

TEL services currently sit within Professional Development, which is part of Human Resources. Staffing comprises a Senior Learning Technology Development Advisor (0.5 FTE) and two e-Learning Developers (0.2 FTE). There are no formal links with any wider College services, but there is a desire to work more closely with the Library around digital literacy initiatives, to increase staff capabilities to identify and source high quality digital/open education resources. The existing structure has developed organically. However, there is a planned restructure which will take place, and the new Head of Learning Technology and Innovation has a remit to extend existing reach, looking at what role learning technology can play inside and outside of the College (specifically around opportunities to enhance the College's external offer through online provision).

Quality assurance

The College has no formal quality assurance policies governing TEL provision. Whilst there is a requirement that all teaching staff must be observed, there are no similar requirements to look at online learning resources and activities, and no formal institutional TEL benchmarks.

A set of VLE minimum standards has recently been developed and approved with an associated medal system (gold, silver, bronze, minimum baseline and under development) launched. The criteria for these medals were written using case studies from other colleges, including Southampton, who developed a Moodle plugin that displays the medal (similar to a digital badge but without the criteria for the award displayed) within the course. The College ran an internal campaign inviting staff to submit courses for review by the Senior Learning Technology Development Advisor, who assessed and awarded medals in line with the criteria. The Learning Technology team hoped this would actively encourage greater student feedback and, in turn, stimulate a greater focus on course design among staff. An additional plugin has been acquired, which will enable students to rate their courses, and there are plans to deploy this as a means of increasing student engagement and feedback, giving students a voice in determining which medal their course receives.

The student experience is formally evaluated in week 6 by means of an induction survey with questions exploring whether learners understand College systems and, specifically, how the VLE works. The data from this survey is aggregated at the College level and presents a holistic view of the student experience at that early stage. A further College wide survey is conducted at the end of year across all courses, providing more detailed course level feedback.

Support for devices

Mobile technologies are presenting significant infrastructure problems for the College, with student devices placing a strain on existing wifi provision, with students complaining that they cannot connect to the network in certain rooms. Similar challenges exist in relation to student access to power sockets to charge their devices, with charging points largely unavailable. The College is working to improve its provision, particular the capacity of the wireless network, but there is a finite budget and future resourcing is uncertain. Sussex Downs College is moving more to cloud based systems and services wherever possible to enable staff and students to access resources off campus at point of need.

iPads are increasingly popular among College staff, though particular challenges were encountered in relation to printing. However, a College wide solution will be in place from August 2014. Issues remain with regard to the purchasing of apps from the Apple Store (this is viewed as difficult to manage) and the management of app distribution. As a result, the College has identified android devices as the preferred device for staff to use. This decision is in part due to android devices representing a more cost effective solution, but also because the College feels there is a great opportunity to harness the benefits from the openness and ecosystem around android devices.

Student engagement as partners

Whilst the College places great importance on student feedback in the area of TEL, this does not drive policy or institutional decision making, as the data captured is not sufficiently granular to help inform approaches. Recognising these limitations, the College is in the process of launching an initiative that will increase student engagement by involving a group of students directly in developing digital resources and enhancing existing provision. In Summer 2014, a total of 15 student eLearning Developers will initially be appointed to paid roles (hourly rate), and tasked with helping with the development of online quizzes and improving the usability of courses on the College's VLE iLearn platform. It is believed that this new capacity will enable the College to support a pent up demand among staff, who face severe constraints on their time, to change existing processes and achieve efficiencies.

Staff digital literacies

Staff would like to be able to work with technology but their limited availability to participate in staff development activities is a barrier. The Learning Technology Support Team have tried various approaches to enhance staff digital literacies, including the provision of one to one support, back to back courses during development days (three per year) and Wednesday afternoon IT skills training sessions for staff (of all IT levels), which were well attended initially but then tailed off. Even where turnout has been good it is felt that, if that training is not applied soon after, it is forgotten and the benefits are lost. It is hoped that the new Student e-Learning Developer initiative will represent a more effective model for increasing staff engagement and skills.

Distance Learning and OER provision

Distance Learning is not currently part of the College's core provision (outside of apprenticeships which are completed with employers) but are seen as a key growth market. Sussex Downs College does not currently offer any open courses though MOOCs are of some interest (potentially for international initiatives or the College's Summer School) – though primarily as a vehicle for marketing and student recruitment purposes. The College does not make any of its materials or resources available as open educational resources.

Future challenges

Staff awareness of TEL, the development of their digital skills and willingness to change existing teaching practices to take advantage of learning technologies are identified as the primary challenges facing the College. Whilst various initiatives have sought to develop a culture of innovation, sharing and responsible risk taking in relation to the use of technology in teaching and learning, success has been limited. There is a genuine concern that, in the medium term, other providers may emerge in the market who offer a more technologically rich learning experience for students.

University of Derby

Interview with: Simon Birkett, Technology Enhanced Learning Manager

Overview

The University of Derby is a Post-92 institution situated in the East Midlands. It comprises two campuses, one of which is in the centre of the city of Derby; the other is at Buxton, which also hosts its further education college. It also has a separate establishment, University of Derby Online, which provides its fully online provision for distance learning courses. Its total student population is approximately 29,000 consisting of 20,000 undergraduates and 3,700 postgraduates. It is organised into seven Colleges and 18 academic departments.

TEL strategy and drivers for TEL

Previously, TEL was covered as part of the institution's Learning and Teaching Strategy, with an accompanying TEL Roadmap with a three year horizon. This has recently been replaced with a TEL Framework, still aligned to the Learning and Teaching Strategy, and also to the Corporate Plan. As a new university, the centralised approach, common in Post-92 universities, is reflected in the central Learning and Teaching Strategy. For example, the Learning Space Initiative has an implementation plan which the University Executive measure progress against.

The Learning and Teaching strategy feeds into the overarching corporate plan, and this incorporates the three key principles of Inspire, Innovate and Impact, linked to themes such as the delivery of an Exceptional Student Experience.

Drivers for TEL Usage

In terms of drivers, there has always been a core of TEL enthusiasts amongst the teaching staff, but over the last four to five years there has been an increasing recognition of the benefits and opportunities that TEL can bring. Another strategic driver from the University Executive has been the move to fully online submission with online feedback, which was achieved in 2011.

The challenge for the institution, and one of the reasons for the TEL Framework, is to move away from pockets of innovation to a broader adoption of TEL across the institution. There is a degree of resistance from a departmental perspective, typical of the sector, which was further highlighted and addressed with the e-submission project. This is about changing culture and winning hearts and minds, by being transparent about the benefits to academics and making sure there is the right support in place.

The University also launched University of Derby Online (UDOL), two years ago, as a project to develop a fully online provision. Separate to the main campus provision, it has been incredibly successful in the two years that it has been running, over recruiting with approximately 3,000 learners.

There is a dedicated team, who support UDOL and all the online tutors, including assisting with content creation, quality assurance and delivery. It is a rapidly expanding part of the University and is seen as an institutional priority.

TEL provision

Overall, the institutional philosophy is to offer a range of tools to support engagement with TEL; all of these tools should be centrally provided with no devolved TEL systems in the Faculties or Schools.

The institution currently self hosts Blackboard, which is linked with the student record system. The University also runs Blackboard Collaborate, and there is an institutional site wide license for PebblePad. Blogging is available via WordPress, as well as via the blogging tools available in the VLE.

Derby has had a lot of success with its lecture capture system Panopto. The introduction of this has been aligned with the Learning Space Initiative – a comprehensive design and refurbishment of teaching spaces. There has been a threefold increase in views with students sharing the videos, acting as a driver in terms of uptake.

Whilst the University has a license for TurnItIn, including Grademark accessed through the VLE, the current issues that have been experienced with TurnItIn are prompting investigations into Blackboard SafeAssign. Staff make use of Blackboard Quizzes for formative and summative assessment, and the University is currently reviewing whether to switch on MyGrades. In the near future, it is planning to investigate Blackboard's Learning Repository and Learning Analytics services.

TEL governance and structures

Governance

There is a Blackboard User Group, though attendance can be erratic. This group reports to the Learning and Teaching Enhancement Sub Committee. A Blackboard Admin Group, which is comprised of members of the central and system admin team, meets and discusses operational issues. These structures are currently under review as the University wishes to encourage a greater level of staff engagement more generally.

Support

Learning Enhancement has overall responsibility for TEL services, as part of Learning and Teaching, as well as Quality Assurance and Library Services. The central TEL team consists of five Learning Technology Advisers (LTA) with one senior advisor. The team provides an enquiry based service for colleges and departments. Advisors have areas of responsibility as outlined in the TEL Framework and they try and work with individuals or teams.

There is also a small media production team as well as the Learning Systems teams, which has the equivalent of eight full time posts, including developers. IT Services provides TEL system administration.

Quality assurance

The University currently has threshold standards but is moving forward to an enhancement approach. This is based on the provision of in built help guides to ensure support is more focused. Last year, the institution conducted an internal TEL survey, which was perceived as useful in informing ongoing conversations. It also prompted the adoption of a template approach to the construction of modules within Blackboard.

There has been no explicit evaluation of the student learning experience in relation to TEL provision. However, the institution is looking to implement this across the board. Currently Learning Technology Advisors are invited to school meetings, where learning and teaching and quality issues are discussed. In the future it is hoped that students will be involved in the curriculum design process.

There is no annual review of TEL processes; rather, there is a best endeavour approach to resolve issues. Some of these are captured through existing quality assurance processes. However, the main focus of quality assurance in the last two years has been the move to 20 credit modules.

Support for devices

The focus for mobile technologies has been around developing apps via the development team. They have developed a range of specialist apps for iPads which are loaned out to staff. The institution recognises that there is a strong link here with digital literacies.

The University has a good wireless network and is now looking at IT procurement in relation to Bring Your Own Device (BYOD), as well as developing an IT policy. The BYOD approach has been considered when designing informal learning spaces, including the incorporation of wireless applications such as DisplayNote. There is a growing recognition that students often come with several devices, all requiring charging or power outlets and this, therefore, requires more work on the estate provision. Support for BYOD issues is handled via the IT Service Desk.

Student engagement as partners

This is currently not a substantive part of the University's approach nor a strong driver in relation to TEL. However, the institution is planning to address this in the future.

Staff digital literacies

When considering staff digital literacies, the University recognises that a lack of staff knowledge and confidence generally means that there is a lack of innovation. There is a significant project being scoped to address this issue over the next academic year.

A primary focus, in terms of staff development, has been supporting staff in attaining accreditation at Higher Education Academy Fellowship level, utilising the need to demonstrate the value and use of learning technologies as a core area of knowledge.

In addition, all new staff undertake the PG Certificate in Higher Education which the central learning technology team contribute to. This provides an opportunity to make new contacts. Annual Peer Observation of Teaching also incorporates TEL as part of the observation process.

Distance Learning and OER provision

As previously noted, the University established University of Derby Online (UDOL) two years ago to offer fully online provision to students. Separate to the main campus provision, it has been incredibly successful in the two years that it has been running, over recruiting with approximately 3,000 learners.

The University does support open learning and has previously been involved in several JISC OER projects. It is looking to introduce a learning repository as part of its OER support and, through that, utilise Blackboard Xplor, a learning object repository.

Future challenges

In the short to medium term, the institution sees digital literacy, staff skills and confidence in using TEL as a key challenge. This is part of its overall strategy to engage more with staff and sees this as part of winning hearts and minds.

Beyond this, there is a substantial amount of change occurring, and supporting the volume of work as more staff become engaged with TEL within existing resources will be an ongoing challenge.

University of Northampton

Interview with: Rob Howe, Head of Learning Technology

Overview

The University of Northampton is a Post-92 institution with approximately 14,000 full time students and 500 FTE academic staff, located on two separate campuses in Northampton.

The University has six academic schools, each specialising in a particular area of study. These comprise the Northampton Business School, the School of Education, the School of Health, the School of Science and Technology, the School of Social Sciences and the School of Arts. There are several Professional Service departments supporting the academic schools including:

- Business Intelligence and Management Information
- Institute of Learning and Teaching
- Library and Learning Services
- Quality and Academic Partnerships
- Student Administration and Student Services
- The University Centre for Employability and Enterprise

The University of Northampton mainly focuses on campus based teaching, although it also works with partner institutions, Education with Others (EWO), at locations that include those based overseas.

TEL strategy and drivers for TEL

Up until five years ago the University had a separate TEL strategy, but this is no longer the case. There is now one main strategy for the institution called Raising the Bar from which other operational plans flow – including one for the area in which TEL is supported. The overall aim is that TEL is embedded across the main strategy in multiple areas. This approach was brought in by the new Vice Chancellor, Nick Petford, in a bid to reduce potential conflicts between strategic aims – providing staff with clarity in terms of institutional priorities. Operational plans, such as the Learning and Teaching Plan, are supported by the main Student Experience Committee that reports directly to Senate.

As part of the drive towards greater clarity, the committee structure, by which governance takes place, has also been rationalised. There is now a main Tier 1 committee – Senate (that ratifies all main decisions). There are two streams below Senate – Academic Quality and Standards Committee (AQSC) and Student Experiences Committee (SEC), forming Tier 2. TEL feeds into the Student Experience committee. Below that, there are more specifically focused committees, such as a working/steering group looking at submission and grading electronically (SaGE Project) and a distance learning group. Interestingly the distance learning group felt that it may be ignoring some off site activities, which were not traditionally classed as distance learning but had similarities to the way in which they were run. As a result, this group has now had its name changed to become the Flexible and Off-site Working Group, which is more inclusive to departments across the institution, e.g. School of Education and School of Health, who worked with institutions across the UK, but not based on the main two campuses. When the group was formed it became clear that the institution's list of distance learners (based on the QAA definition of distance learning) did not cover all students. For example, those working off site – and it turned out that there were lots of hidden numbers.

Drivers for TEL usage

A change in leadership, with the arrival of a new Vice Chancellor, has had a positive impact on the use of TEL across the whole institution. Initiatives, such as the cross-institutional [TIGER project](#), have reinforced the importance of TEL for the institution and, together with the generally positive feedback received on existing TEL services, have helped to raise its profile at a senior level within the institution. As such, a very good level of support has been maintained for TEL, which helps when applying for further internal funding.

Additionally, the University itself is defined by [AshokaU](#), the world's leading network of social entrepreneurs, as a Changemaker campus; Northampton is the first university in the UK and Europe to gain that distinction. As a result of this, the University has established seven key social enterprise initiatives, which further drive TEL usage and provision, namely:

- a unique student experience that builds on the University's Changemaker Campus commitment – enabling all students to develop the skills required to stand out in the employment market and to be the change leaders of the future;
- the integration of social enterprise with teaching and research – all of the University's courses, research opportunities and extracurricular activities focus on students developing social enterprise and innovation competence, as well as offering them competitive degree qualifications;
- nationwide support for social enterprise – the University's [Inspire2Enterprise](#) service provides comprehensive customer focused and market driven support to new and existing social entrepreneurs and enterprises;
- investment in social enterprises – where the institution identifies social enterprise activities that provide both exceptional placement opportunities for students and make life better and fairer, the University will invest in them;
- evolution of University support functions to social enterprises – the University examines each of the support services, and, where possible, runs them as social enterprises, providing services to the University community on a commercial basis while also fulfilling a clear social purpose;
- creating a fairer society for all – working with a wide range of partners the institution commits to developing socially innovative ways of transforming the lives of everyone for the better – whether that is through influencing the private sector, transforming public sector service delivery or building capacity in the social enterprise sector;
- influencing policy and practice – using the University's knowledge and experience staff will influence the policy and practice of social enterprise in the UK and beyond.

A change to the configuration of the physical campus is also driving TEL. The institution is moving from having two separate campuses to one, purpose built campus based in the city centre by 2018. This will necessarily change the way that Northampton delivers its services, and the Learning Technology Team have been able to influence the new design and feed ideas into the Steering Committee for the new build project. It isn't just changes to physical learning spaces which are driving change. Three Learning Designers have just been recruited with the role of enhancing delivery. They are focusing on priority programmes and are linked with the Institute of Learning and Teaching. The roles are funded by the Institute but based in TEL, which further demonstrates the trust and close working relationships between the various parts of the institution.

TEL provision

The main institutional tools provided for the purposes of technology enhanced learning are hosted within Blackboard Learn (known locally as NILE – Northampton University's Integrated Learning Environment). TEL tools are generally classified into four categories:

1. Core, where the systems and training are provided and staff are expected to use them;
2. Arranged, where tools are set up, integrated and training materials provided, but staff can choose whether to use them;
3. Recommended, where staff set up and fund the tool, and assistance with training and integration with core tools is provided;
4. Recognised, where staff set up and fund the tools, and the Learning Technology Team watches their use and looks for technology to recommend more widely. Tools fit into these categories in the following way:
 - Core – NILE
 - Arranged – Kaltura, Xerte, Panopto, Edublogs, ActivInspire, Smart, Wiziq, Turnitin
 - Recommended – Slideshare, Twitter, Skype, PebblePad, YouTube, MyProgress
 - Recognised – Facebook, Google Apps, Mobile Apps

There is some variation with the use of tools across the wider institution. For example, within the School of Health there is some PebblePad usage and My Progress is increasingly being used as an ePortfolio tool within the School of Education. All Schools use NILE, although there is a Moodle instance within the Business School for limited external activity – the official position is still that there is just one main VLE. In terms of collaborative tools, Office 365 is due imminently and Microsoft Lync has been installed. However, these are IT projects rather than TEL projects, so how they will be used for learning and teaching purposes is yet to be determined.

By default, TEL tools are normally hosted externally for reasons of reliability and robustness of service.

TEL governance and structures

Governance

The TEL team is given a huge amount of autonomy in terms of determining what is needed for the institution, and they are also given the authority to make changes. If money is required for projects, then such requests will go to the University Executive as a bid for funding, but there is general support for TEL and their drive of change processes, so approval is only sought where necessary.

There is no TEL committee at the institution, instead the Learning Technology Team work closely with the Director of the Institute for Learning and Teaching, and both report to the same Tier 2 committee, the Student Experience committee. Sub-groups are formed as and when changes are coming through. For example, when there is a system upgrade due or for particular projects. In the past, there have been issues with people's availability to attend routine meetings, so the use of focus groups, which are brought together when needed, identifying key stakeholders as necessary, has been more effective. This is not to say, however, that groups do not evolve. For example, the SaGE (Submission and Grading Electronically) group has turned from a short term group solving technical problems into one which is more forward looking and explores, instead, how tools can be used more effectively. Major decisions from sub-groups are reported to the Student Experience committee and ratified as appropriate.

Central support

The centrally based TEL team has gone through a recent period of expansion at the University of Northampton. The team now consists of the following roles: a Head of Learning Technology; five (FTE) centrally funded Learning Technologists; two school funded Learning Technologists; three Learning Designers and one VLE administrator. The role of the VLE administrator is currently at the institution on a rolling contract basis. This latter role is attempting to get systems working better together, especially between student records and manually inputted data from academics, in order to discover what information is missing and to automate processes. The role is also responsible for making sure that courses are properly set up on the VLE and for supporting staff to do this.

Overall, the team has a lot of contact with academic staff, primarily through staff training, which has allowed good working relationships to be built. The team itself is based within Library and Learning Services and this has facilitated the development of links with academics who already have a good relationship with the Library. It has also allowed the team to be more connected to work done with students through the Centre for Achievement and Performance. The co-location of key support areas within the Library has also strengthened working relationships and opportunities for collaboration across the service, helping decisions to be made and getting projects progressed. Learning Technologists are also invited to the student experience committees for each of the Schools, or an academic librarian will attend and represent TEL. Communication within Schools can be more variable as it takes place via a cascading information flow and, although there is a Learning and Teaching Coordinator in charge of communication, making sure that things are communicated effectively is an ongoing area of development.

The physical location of the team also helps to embed it within the institution. It is based in the centre of the main campus with the academic Schools surrounding it. There is a Learning Technologist assigned to each School, and there are Learning Designers attached to programmes delivered on that campus. Staff are also encouraged to engage with curriculum development through the C@N-DO CPD scheme, which is mapped to the Higher Education Academy's UK Professional Standards Framework.

The University went to a hosted service with Blackboard, in 2007, and this has meant that departments know they can depend on the VLE to be reliably in service. The reputation of the VLE has, therefore, stabilised and, if it is down for a few seconds, this tends to be more to do with IT authentication systems or the network rather than the VLE itself. The IT department's role in supporting TEL is therefore minimised, other than for authentication, integration with key MIS systems and the general network.

Quality assurance

In March 2012, the University brought in what has been called a Foundation Standard for all modules on Blackboard. The standard itself was developed from focus groups/student experience groups with students having significant input into what they expected to see on their Blackboard sites. The standard itself has been developed in a way such as it could be used as a simple tick list of things that should be present in the VLE. Since then, a 10% sample against the standard has been completed to monitor adherence and to inform changes to the Blackboard template. In general, the standard has been perceived as being quite helpful, as it provides a structure to Blackboard – and no one has said that they want it removed. There is a continuous survey – Rate My NILE – that runs on Blackboard to allow students to leave feedback at any point. This feedback goes straight to the TEL team, and has been really helpful in driving change and student satisfaction has risen as a result.

While the Foundation standard has been accepted and integrated in quality assurance and enhancement processes for the University with rolling action plans (even a course team is expected to review its Blackboard sites against the standard), the institution is now looking at higher level engagement (see: <http://blogs.northampton.ac.uk/learntech/2014/04/01/nile-design-targets-2014/>).

Quality enhancement

The CAleRO (Creating Aligned Interactive educational Resource Opportunities) – curriculum development process – which is based on Carpe Diem from the University of Leicester – has been accepted as the main curriculum development/redevelopment process for the University for anything going through validation or review. This has had mixed blessings. It is an effective way of improving curriculum design and quality but resourcing the process is a challenge, especially in terms of providing staff to support academic colleagues as they go through a CAleRO over a period of one to three days. This is not sustainable across each of the programmes at the University. However, it does put TEL at the centre of the design process, allowing all pedagogic mechanisms to be discussed and then overlaid by technology, which helps the process flow. The process itself has proved a big success with over 95% of people who have been through a CAleRO indicating that it has had real value for them. The acceptance of CAleRO has occurred over a period of two years, starting in the School of Health, then Business and, finally, across all Schools, winning significant support from senior colleagues, who value its structured approach. Student satisfaction ratings have also improved, and while it is difficult to be precise about the specific impact of CAleRO in the statistics, it is positive to see this overall impact.

Support for devices

There are several different ways in which mobile computing is having an impact at the University of Northampton. This has been through projects, through equipment loan services and through infrastructure changes. For example, the MALT project – Mobile Access to Learning and Teaching – looked at trends relating to the use of students' own devices, and was started before the introduction of a student app, with the aim of understanding usage and assisting the institution with planning for the future. The survey captures data on rates of device ownership (see: <http://blogs.northampton.ac.uk/learntech/2014/01/21/2014-mobile-survey-response-and-actions/>), and has done so for the past four years, which means that, overall, the University has a good feel for where their students are in relation to mobile usage and can use the longitudinal data to establish trends.

Bring Your Own Device (BYOD)

There is still a debate about Bring Your Own Device across the institution. Small scale trials with voting/in class engagement tools have taken place using mixed approaches, sometimes with devices being provided and, on other occasions, students have used their own devices. Generally, work has been focused on scenarios where students have had devices provided for them, rather than using their own. In terms of infrastructure, wireless has improved for the students, but there have been problems with the way in which students authenticate to the network, and this has not been of a sufficient standard to provide an always on connection which would allow for true engagement. Students are logged out frequently and the use of secure passwords makes the process of getting online inefficient. However, where it has worked, it has worked well and students have benefited, although it is still too early to say what is the best approach.

The Library provides a loan service where students can borrow laptops on a short term basis. It is a very heavily used service, offering loans for an hour to half a day/overnight. For academic staff, provision of devices is on a departmental rather than institutional basis and is dependent on departmental budgetary decisions. For staff with tablet devices, there is an App Cafe run by the TEL team where staff are assisted with mobile technology. The App Cafe takes place once a month and any member of staff is welcome to come along and share – it's not about training, more about conversations and sharing ideas.

Student engagement as partners

Over the past few years engagement with the Students Union at the University has really improved. Students are now represented throughout the governance structures and formal committees always include students and, for informal committees, students are included where possible.

Students have input into the curriculum design process and are actively encouraged to be part of shaping the delivery of their modules (see <http://youtu.be/m4nfmJ7mezs>). Students are also encouraged to act as researchers through the URB@N project (Undergraduate Research Bursaries at Northampton – <http://www.northampton.ac.uk/Pages/undergraduateresearchbursariesurbn-2845.aspx>) – whereby departments and academic schools can bid for money for a student researcher to work with them on particular projects. Through doing this, students get to learn about research but, importantly, their perspective can be heard throughout the projects on which they are working, which further increases their engagement as partners in academic processes. Additionally, students have worked with external examiners, and it is here that TEL is essential for this, especially for distance learners.

Staff digital literacies

In December 2013, a survey was run with each of the academic schools to find out where they were in terms of digital literacy. The survey was based on digital literacy work from JISC, but modified by combining it with tools offered by the University of Northampton and exploring the real experiences of staff. The outcome of the survey is that it has generated reports with action points for each School to work into an action plan. In this way, digital literacy is being addressed by working with each School – getting engagement at a local level. The local nature of this has been beneficial in addressing digital literacy, but it is dependent on each School's engagement with the notion of digital literacy and how much emphasis is placed on working towards improving digital literacy.

Distance Learning and OER provision

In 2012 the Open Northampton project (see: <http://blogs.northampton.ac.uk/learntech/2013/01/21/open-northampton-gathers-pace/> for details) was started, running under the Higher Education Academy's Changing the Learning Landscape programme and owned, institutionally, by the Institute of Learning and Teaching. The project looked at what it means to become more open and achieved a moderate level of success (additional academic engagement would have further enhanced the degree of success of the project). Departments and Schools were challenged to provide open content following this exploratory work and, as of June 2014, they had made 39 items available in JORUM (with a further seven almost ready for release), as well as developing three Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs). The three MOOCs (at the time of this report) are Study Skills for Academic Success; International Law Open Online Course; and a Gateway MBA MOOC entitled Critical Issues in Business. A fourth course is being developed by the University Centre for Engagement and Employability, but that has not been delivered yet.

At the moment, all of the MOOCs are run on Blackboard CourseSites, but they will be moving to the new Blackboard MOOC platform after it has been tested. Although it is currently early days, the analytics for each MOOC will be explored. The drivers for the MOOCs were as follows:

1. Requests to scale already successful courses (and in the process move them from being supported to being self supporting);
2. They were seen as a feeder into more formal courses (and whether or not this does convert into additional student numbers will be explored);
3. Part of a drive to brand the university name as being more open;
4. Part of a drive to increase quality – using existing courses as the basis for the four MOOCs has provided an opportunity for pragmatic redevelopment and for sound pedagogic reasons.

There has not been an additional budget provided for the creation of MOOCs – it has been driven by staff who wanted to open up their practice and – with these intrinsically motivated staff – a high quality product has been produced with a real sense of academic ownership over the MOOCs. They weren't produced because they had to be produced, but because academics wanted them – which potentially gives them a different feel to other larger scale MOOC production projects.

Future challenges

In the short term, ensuring effective communication, both generally and at a local academic School level, is a real priority for the institution. It has been behind the move to a single university strategy, behind rationalising the committee structure and runs as a thread through all projects. Additionally, the provision of stable technology platforms is a short term challenge which the Learning Technology team are working on. For example, services that have not proved reliable are being addressed and the provision of a robust tool set for colleagues across the institution continues to be a key goal.

In the slightly longer term, the pace of change within technology enhanced learning continues to be a challenge – how to respond to this, which direction to move in, what technologies and pedagogies to focus on etc. Associated with this is the challenge of the necessary cultural change required to embed technology within learning and teaching practice and the related issues of staff engagement. The institutional restructure and move from two campuses to a single campus will provide both an opportunity for change and significant challenges too.

And finally, the fact that, when it comes to truly disruptive technologies and developments, no one can really have any certainty about what's coming. Remaining flexible, open and agile in response to this uncertainty helps, but doesn't negate the fact that it is a real challenge for everyone working in TEL and across the wider University.

University of Reading

Interview with: Vicki Holmes, Deputy Head of the Centre for Quality Support and Development

Overview

Established in 1892, the [University of Reading](#) was awarded its charter in 1926. Ranked by the Times Higher Education in 2012–13 as in the top 1% of world universities, it has gained an international reputation and promotes itself as being research intensive with nearly 90% of research deemed to be of international standing in the UK research assessment exercise of 2008. The University is developing a new strategy with its vision for 2026 that “the University of Reading will be ... significantly larger in terms of students, global reach and presence, and revenue”.

It is situated in and around the city of Reading, and is comprised of three campuses: the main Whiteknights campus, the London Road campus and the Greenlands campus at Henley. It has approximately 17,500 students and 4,000 members of staff. Further information can be found on the institutional website <http://www.reading.ac.uk/about/about.aspx>.

TEL strategy and drivers for TEL

The Technology Enhanced Learning Strategy Group reports to the University Board for Teaching and Learning (UBRL) and its sub-committee – Delivery and Enhancement of Learning and Teaching (DELT). The TEL Vision details all educational technology matters (see: <http://www.reading.ac.uk/nmsruntime/saveasdialog.aspx?IID=93154&slD=9341>) and makes direct reference to the University’s Learning and Teaching Strategy (see: <http://www.reading.ac.uk/about/about-policies.aspx>). Both of these strategies are overseen by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (PVC) for Teaching and Learning Professor Gavin Brooks, who is an academic with a strong interest in technology. The PVC also chairs the TEL Strategy Group and is heavily involved in its work. Very positively, the PVC is keen to involve expertise from across the University, and devolves and delegates to other people to take things forward.

The University of Reading was part of the [Changing Learning Landscape](#) programme, which proved invaluable in terms of providing an external driver and formal structure to develop the TEL vision and strategy.

There had been discussion as to whether the University should have a separate TEL Vision or if it should be incorporated into the University’s Learning and Teaching Strategy. Since a key aim of the University has been to focus on the development of TEL, it was decided that it would be beneficial to have a separate dedicated vision. It may be combined in the future, but for the moment it is considered to work better as something separate.

Although difficult to compare TEL teams across institutions because of their differing structures and focus, a benchmarking exercise performed by the University of Reading, found that the majority of its competitors had teams of between 8 and 14 people, compared to only three posts at Reading. This finding put into perspective why TEL activity was not as widespread across the institution as was wished. More resources needed to be allocated and a greater understanding developed as to what was required to move things forward. Following this work, decisions were made about the kind of structures that the University of Reading would want to put in place to take TEL forward and ensure it became an institutional priority.

The University of Reading has now reached a turning point. Senior management has made a significant commitment, and the University now finds itself in a good position to take things forward. This has been especially welcome for staff and enthusiasts, who have at times struggled to innovate and develop TEL due to lack of tools or resource. There is a real sense of excitement and interest growing as more people start to talk about TEL. Rather than the University undergoing a gradual progression with TEL, the expectation is that there will be a sudden leap in capability. A key aspect will be managing people’s expectations while maintaining this excitement and enthusiasm, and ensuring developments are driven by a clear educational rationale and business needs.

The latest news on progress with TEL can be found in the CQSD’s newsletter on Teaching and Learning at Reading (see: http://www.reading.ac.uk/web/FILES/cqsd/B10144_TL_Reading_issue_5_-_Final_Copy.pdf).

Drivers for TEL usage

Prompted by local, national and international developments, the University of Reading found itself at a formative stage as it undertook a radical review of its TEL provision. Engaging with TEL is key to the University’s success and sustainability as a higher education institution, as businesses and society in general are becoming more reliant on digital technologies. With more students arriving at the University with tablets/smartphones and expecting to use

them as part of their learning, the University needs to be able to deliver on these expectations. More specifically, TEL will enable the growth of online learning and distance learning programmes in support of the University's overseas and transnational education ambitions.

The realisation was that the University was not as advanced in its TEL provision as comparator institutions and that significant investment was needed to deliver on these ambitions. With limited resource and support available, opportunities to engage staff and students were also limited. The aspiration of the University is to learn from others and expand its TEL activities, putting itself in a position where it can lead. The University is investing a significant amount of resource in TEL, with £400K being allocated in 2014/2015 to build up new teams and invest in open online courses, as well as additional resource being put into infrastructure and TEL systems. Active steps are being taken to engage more with staff and students.

The benchmarking exercise looked at the range of centrally supported technologies on offer, the size of the team in place enabling TEL provision and organisational structures. In addition, useful feedback was also gathered through the University of Reading's JISC [Digitally Ready project](#) about what university staff would and would not like to see in place. A significant finding was that the range of centrally supported technologies in the University was not as extensive when compared to other institutions: some of the tools and services which are becoming standard at most institutions (e.g. e-voting capability and lecture capture) were not in place at Reading.

E-assessment

E-assessment has been identified as a key area by the University. Since this area is so broad and complex the University is focusing on e-submission in the first instance. An e-assessment working group has been set up to look at online submission for summative assessment and to consider policy, process and support issue prior to widespread implementation.

Increase in the use of e-submission will lead to the next opportunity which is online marking and feedback. This in turn has prompted discussion about the future use of TurnItIn and Grademark. There are concerns about fully committing to TurnItIn, and providing it as a core service, because of recent problems with availability and reliability. It is anticipated that some work will be done to identify and consider viable alternatives and to explore what the sector, as a whole, is considering before making a final decision.

Open online courses

Open Online Courses are also a key part of the institutional TEL vision. The University joined the [FutureLearn](#) initiative and has already run several very popular and successful massive open online courses (MOOCs), often cited as exemplars of excellent practice. Since Autumn 2013, the University has run four courses, with more in the pipeline. The MOOCs have attracted over 100,000 enrolments, with topics such as *Begin Programming: build your first mobile game* and *Obesity: causes and consequences*. There continues to be a lot of interest amongst teaching staff, with significant numbers continuing to come onboard and wishing to develop MOOCs.

MOOC activity is driven by a small team of developers and a project lead who have responsibility for preparing and delivering the MOOCs. The MOOC team has been funded for another two years and, from August 2014, this team was incorporated into the TEL team. Engaging in MOOCs has allowed the University to discover a great deal about teaching large numbers online. The University is exploring how MOOCs fit into the wider whole educational portfolio, and research is being undertaken to find out how they are helping to attract more students to study at Reading. It is also possible that MOOCs could form part of its formal credit bearing offerings in the future.

Campus wide wifi

Ubiquitous campus wide wifi is also an important aspect of the TEL vision, as it was recognised that students expect wifi to be in place, not only in teaching spaces, but in all spaces they use. Within a short timescale, the necessary infrastructure was put in place and is now complete. It has ensured wifi access in all lecture theatres and social spaces, as well as in areas of green space.

Once wifi is in the classrooms it enables more to be done to exploit the potential of mobile technologies. The University is looking to enable mobile voting and needs to ensure there is the network capacity to cope with this development. It will also be important to take into account that students will want to connect with multiple devices. Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) will likely result in large numbers of students wanting to connect through 1+ device, and it is important that the infrastructure can handle this before learning and teaching through mobile technologies is widely promoted.

Core systems integration

The University recognises that it needs to focus on how its core systems interface and integrate with data being used across multiple systems. A new initiative called The Student Journey is working to track the student life cycle from the first time a potential student approaches the University through to becoming an alumnus. Part of this work is to look at all the interactions and systems that a student would have on this journey. The TEL team is involved with this as TEL systems will play their role in this holistic provision.

Engagement by Faculties and Schools

The University has recently undergone a re-organisation of its management of IT services. Where previously some IT staff were managed locally in Schools, they are now part of a centrally managed IT service. This will allow improved awareness, understanding and efficiency with regard to IT provision and support within Schools. It will also help with identifying School needs for TEL and paint a broader picture of trends and priorities.

A key goal of the TEL Strategy is to engender a culture of TEL throughout the institution. Like many institutions, there are early adopters and TEL champions. There are some Schools that have worked to establish a common approach. For example, one of the Schools has its own TEL strategy, using the University's TEL strategy as its reference point and carefully thinking through what the University wants to achieve, but at the same time taking into consideration what its subject area requires. In other Schools, there are individual champions in place, but also staff who are currently less engaged. The new TEL team, once in place, will work more closely, and in partnership with Schools, to gain a better understanding of their priorities, ambitions and support needs.

The vision is that TEL permeates throughout University business and activities. For example, being embedded within recruitment processes so staff are recruited who are IT literate and enthusiastic about TEL. It should be something embedded within staff reviews and promotional criteria. The TEL Strategy Group does not underestimate the complexity of this vision but believes it is a vital ambition.

TEL provision

Virtual Learning Environment

The University's current Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) is Blackboard, but the University is open to the possibility of alternatives, if they better meet emerging needs. In the context of the University's five year strategy (2013–2018) development, and support will increase to ensure that teaching staff can make the most of Blackboard, and that its full functionality is being used by all the people who could possibly use it. Considering the costs incurred in provisioning a VLE, it makes sense to ensure that the University is getting a good return for its investment.

Lecture capture

Lecture capture (both classroom capture and personal capture) has also been identified as a high priority. The TEL Strategy Group is keen to see high take up of lecture capture, and work is needed to find out the best way to achieve this. A lecture capture feasibility group has been proposed, which will have representation from many areas, including the TEL team, IT, Estates and Facilities to investigate requirements and look at all the different issues involved, considering the technology, physical environment and pedagogical issues. Visits to other institutions have already taken place, and the views of many people with different vested interests have been sought.

The next step is to map out the University's ambition and approach to lecture capture. It is likely that this will be an incremental approach, phased in conjunction with other estate projects. In particular, careful thought needs to be given to the relationship timetabling has to lecture capture. One possible approach will be to stimulate interest and enthusiasm, and then, at a later point, build towards a whole enterprise solution with automation through timetabling. Whatever the approach, the TEL team will promote uptake on the basis of a sound educational rationale for its use. The belief is that more meaningful and longer lasting engagement is likely from adopting this approach. If educators are motivated and committed to using lecture capture, it will be used well and produce useful learning resources. The expectation is that early adopters will blaze a trail enabling others and will help spread the word.

TEL governance and structures

Central support structures

IT

Over the last year, there has been significant and rapid re-organisation at the University of Reading, including substantive changes to IT service management, that are operational from September 2014. As part of the IT reorganisation, a dedicated TEL/audio visual support team has been created for setting up systems, configuring and providing technical support services for technologies such as Blackboard and lecture capture. The Team Leader reports to the Assistant Director for Applications Development and Support.

TEL Team

The Centre for Quality Support and Development (CQSD) was formed in 2013 from three previously existing units, and continues to grow and change with the continued expansion of TEL. The Centre (<http://www.reading.ac.uk/cqsd/>) provides integrated expertise, support and guidance for all aspects of teaching and learning enhancement, quality assurance, professional academic development and TEL. There is a strong relationship between the TEL activities and academic teaching development practice activities within CQSD.

A new post of Head of TEL was created, with the post holder starting in November 2014. The incumbent Head of TEL has been creating additional posts in order to establish a larger team with both pedagogical and educational expertise, who will have the capacity and knowledge to drive and support the University's TEL ambitions once they are in post.

The TEL team collaborates with the Library and Study Advice through various avenues. For example, there is a staff member from the Library on the TEL Strategy Group. There is also a representative from Study Advice on the E-Assessment working group and a plan has been scoped for the TEL team to collaborate with Study Advice to develop resources when supporting TurnItIn, referencing skills and issues concerning academic integrity. The TEL team and IT also work closely with the Student Information Technology System (SITS) team to achieve integration with the VLE.

Devolved support

One of the principal themes of the new University Strategy concerns efficiency and effectiveness. In relation to TEL, this will mean considering university wide solutions that have maximum benefit and impact. It requires moving away from the cottage industries approach and, instead, identifying how to conflate resources to meet more holistic and integrated aspirations of the institution. It will be important to develop a more systematic way of working, so that Schools can register their requirements, and to provide central solutions that meet the needs of the Schools.

Quality assurance

Currently, quality assurance for TEL is included within the University's standard QA policies. A Working Group has recently been created to explore QA procedures for non-credit bearing courses such as MOOCs.

A minimum requirements specification has been drafted for use of the University's VLE, but has not yet been adopted, as it was felt prudent to make improvements to the VLE before encouraging or mandating more extensive use. Evaluating the student experience of TEL is currently embedded within standard review processes but it is hoped that, with the expanded team and the Graduate Intern (see below), more specific TEL evaluations can be undertaken in future.

Support for devices

Bring Your Own Device

Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) has been relatively straightforward to support at the University for students who gain access via Eduroam. There have been more issues around BYOD for staff, with issues such as payment of apps and storage of corporate data on personal devices. A BYOD policy for staff is being considered.

Student engagement as partners

The Vice President for Education (2012/2013) from RUSU (Reading University Students Union) was heavily involved in developing the University's TEL vision. The vision document was drafted by the VP Education, the Deputy Head of CQSD and an Associate Dean Learning and Teaching from one of the Schools as part of the Changing the Learning Landscape programme. The VP was extremely capable and enthusiastic, and ultimately became a member of the TEL team as a summer intern. She performed a significant amount of work, establishing student needs in relation to Turnitin and lecture capture. This experience has prompted the University to create a graduate intern role within the TEL team for the forthcoming academic year. It is recognised that students leaving the University, who have been through the whole experience of using technology, have much to offer and feed back. The aim is for the graduate intern post to work with current students and find out more about what they would like from TEL, as well as providing a student perspective on TEL workshops and resources.

Historically, at the University of Reading, students have been given a lot of responsibility and free rein to become involved. For example, students were actively involved in a number of Digitally Ready projects. A new scheme has now been started called PLaNT – Partnerships in Learning and Teaching – where a student and a member of staff can put forward an idea for a project to work on together. Either the student can come up with the idea and approach a member of staff or vice versa. This has resulted in some excellent small projects, and the scheme is growing in popularity. The scheme has had the full backing and support of the PVC, who has funded the initiative. It was felt important to give a distinctive name to the initiative as this helps to promote it and gain recognition.

Staff digital literacies

The JISC funded Digitally Ready project made significant steps towards the development of student and staff digital literacies through a number of local projects. The next step is to take this forward into a more institution wide approach and to look at the roles that the TEL team, IT staff and Librarians can contribute. People do not always readily appreciate why something might be better performed by a librarian, as opposed to an IT person, and vice versa. Many institutions are struggling to define what information and digital literacies are, and working to avoid reducing it to a mere tick list, which ultimately becomes meaningless. The distinction is important to explain, and for educators to understand, but it is very easy to lose the subtleties when communicating about it.

Staff development

The HEA has recently accredited the University's FLAIR (Facilitating Learning and Teaching Individual Recognition) Framework, which comprises two routes: a taught route, the new Academic Practice Programme (the APP), and a non-taught CPD route for experienced staff. Members of the TEL team contribute to the APP by identifying how can TEL help to deliver the APP programme and also, with regard to TEL, as part of the content of the APP. The CPD route was launched as a pilot in May 2014, with a member of staff recruited to run the pilot and plan for a full launch of the in January 2015. It is noticeable that staff participating on the pilot have become more conscious of their own development, with more staff volunteering to run sessions and workshops, because they can see there is something to gain from sharing their practice. This is creating a rich and collaborative environment which will support sharing of TEL practice.

CQSD have also been exploring their approaches to providing professional development opportunities in order to sustain engagement and help people put what they have learnt into practice. The aim is to encourage further development of the ideas presented at events and to capitalise on the enthusiasm generated. For example, an inspirational external speaker on Team Based Learning led to a number of interested staff attending a follow on externally run workshop, charged with the brief to bring back and share the knowledge gained. This was supported and funded by the PVC Teaching and Learning. This approach has stimulated spin offs, with staff returning to their Schools to run events and form their own TBL interest groups. It has resulted in more networking and better knowledge dissemination.

A future ambition is to develop a stronger culture of just in time self help, particularly where basic TEL queries and problems are concerned. Through encouraging more ownership and responsibility to solve problems, the hope is that staff will develop more self reliance confidence in their own skills. Face to face opportunities can then be used for more meaningful and motivational engagement.

Distance Learning and OER provision

The University already has a number of distance learning programmes, run through various Schools. Support for developing these has been both within the particular Schools and from central groups such as CQSD. The University has ambitions to increase the number of postgraduate students studying at the University and, clearly, not all will be able to attend full time courses so distance and blended learning will increase. In addition, the University is increasing the number of international partnerships and building a campus in Malaysia (opening 2015) that will necessitate further distance learning. The University's portfolio of Open Online Courses is also helping to develop knowledge and approaches for supporting distance learners.

Open educational resources are not widely used at Reading and there have not been high levels of request for support in using them.

Future challenges

As the University's international collaborations increase and numbers of distance/blended learners grow, a challenge will be to ensure that these students have an equitable (not necessarily identical) learning experience as the students based at the main University campus in Reading. This poses many challenges for access to technology, integration of corporate systems and provision of support. These challenges cannot be solved by one part of the institution alone, and will require cross-university collaboration.

University of South Wales

Interview with: Haydn Blackey, Director of the Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT)

Overview

On 11th April 2013, the University of Wales, Newport and the University of Glamorgan were merged to create the [University of South Wales](#). Since then, effort has focused on establishing the new University's senior management team and formulating its new strategy. There was agreement at the point of merger that the new University would run in the first year as if it had not merged. This meant that the September 2013 intake of students took exactly the same courses under the same regulations and campuses as specified in the original prospectuses.

The new University strategy was officially approved in March 2014 and became operational from Sept 2014. The primary focus has been to merge and reform structures, and to develop sub-plans for learning and teaching, Human Resources, etc. Providing a mix of full time, part time and further education, the University has now become one of the largest in the UK with over 30,000 students, of which 4,500 are international students.

Sited on five campuses across South Wales: Cardiff, Newport, Treforest, Glyntaff and Caerleon, the University consists of fourteen schools grouped into four faculties. The University forms part of the University of South Wales Group with wholly owned subsidiaries of Merthyr Tydfil College and The Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama.

TEL strategy and drivers for TEL

Prior to the merger, two Learning and Teaching and Widening Access strategies for the same period existed for each of the Universities. These have now been re-worked in the context of the University's new strategic plan to produce a unified Academic Plan, published in September 2014. The new plan has a number of targets, but, currently, reporting is to the internal executive committee and the University governors. There is work underway to refine reporting procedures so that they are not too onerous.

Prior to the merger, institutional Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategies had targets for TEL up to 2017. The new University did not have to start from scratch, as many of the themes initiated four years ago were still considered to be relevant and valid. As of September 2014, detailed action plans have yet to be determined. There will be action planning around select areas, such as academic staff development. This will detail such measures as how many staff are making use of technology for learning and the number of staff who are Fellows and Senior Fellows of the HEA. It is unlikely that there will be faculty specific plans, as the University aims to monitor faculty achievements against the institutional plan.

In May 2014, the University of Glamorgan's Centre for Excellence in Learning and Technology (CELT) and University of Wales, Newport, Centre for Digitally Enhanced Learning (CDEL) were merged. The new University adopted the HEFCW strategy phrase enhancing learning through technology to create the title for the new team. The manager of the newly formed Enhancing Learning through Technology (ELT) team reports to the Director of CELT (<http://celt.southwales.ac.uk/does/tel/>). The team is comprised of four learning technologists with complementary knowledge and skills. Some staff are more student focused whilst others are more oriented to academic staff support. They work in collaboration with a team in IT Services, who are responsible for configuring and administering learning systems and the technical aspects of course development.

The University has a TEL steering group chaired by the Director of CELT. This is comprised of the Heads of Information Technology Services, Student Success and Library Services, along with staff responsible for managing the sub-units within CELT and IT Services. The Student Union sabbatical officer also sits on the Learning Technology Enhancement committee. An external critical friend to the University, Paul Bacsich, attends these meetings three times a year – providing useful insight into what the rest of the sector are doing.

The Library Service also has input to TEL, but for the more obvious things, such as e-books, online catalogue and reading lists. These librarians are line managed by the Library, but their contribution to enhancing learning through technology is monitored by CELT. In response to requests made by academics, librarians digitise content in line with the copyright act. To ensure that resource is not being misallocated the ELT team monitor the amount of content being developed and the number of modules it is being used in.

There are many other staff and teams throughout the University who contribute to the student experience of TEL. For example, staff in the education drop in centre, managed by the Library, who are concerned with student training and the development of information and digital literacies. In CELT, there are specialist staff involved with the more pedagogical aspects of learning, teaching and TEL, who work alongside those dealing with academic staff development. All these teams link back to the TEL steering group so that the overall direction of travel can be monitored.

Engagement by Faculties and Schools

A member of staff in each faculty acts as Head of Student Experience. They are line managed by their Faculty Dean or Associate Dean, but report on operational matters through the Director of CELT. On a monthly basis they meet to discuss an agenda that is informed by the higher level Learning and Teaching Enhancement Committee agenda.

Some faculty staff perform a similar role to that of the central TEL team. The aim is always to get the enthusiasts on board first. This has resulted in every faculty having a number of school champions for enhancing learning through technology. They are members of what is referred to as the USW Academy. They are academics, not engaged in a full time support role, but provide specialist expertise and support for other academics, as and when needed, in the school and faculty. There is no allocation on their workload for that role, although they do get recognition for their involvement and contribution.

TEL provision

Lecture capture

The University has invested in the lecture capture system Panopto. This project started four years ago. The majority of teaching staff accept it and there is regular use, with eleven recordings taking place each teaching day. The University has not quite managed to install it in 100% of teaching spaces, but all large lecture theatres and about a half of 30 seat teaching spaces have it in place. This has resulted in a significant increase in student use of video resources around revision and exam time. Very positive feedback has been received from international students. Videos of lectures have enabled increasingly flexible models of delivery. For example, when an academic is away on a research trip to China they are able to record their lectures in advance and have them broadcasted with questions and answers at the appropriate time.

There have been no issues with reduction in attendance at lectures. In fact, since recording began, there has been an increase in attendance. It has prompted about 30 staff to adopt a flipped approach to their teaching. This is more common with teaching of international students, so that they can spend additional time understanding content before participating in face to face conversations.

The TEL team have responsibility for editing the recorded videos to create open educational resources (OERs). A dedicated member of staff performs most of the OER showcase work for the Higher Education Wales OER project. They liaise with IT Services and conduct very specific editing functions, such as front-ending and back-ending the video with branded graphics, and advising staff on the use of licensed media. What ends up being put onto iTunesU has often been created using Panopto, having been edited, and copyright and license checked.

The facilities are built into Panopto to enable lecturers to do the editing themselves. Some staff choose to do so because they want to use the material for promoting themselves and to create resources that can be uploaded to their subject networks. A copyright librarian reviews any media being uploaded to the VLE and provides staff development sessions on what media educators can and cannot use.

VLE

Prior to merger the University of Wales, Newport was running Moodle as its VLE and the University of Glamorgan was using Blackboard. One of the key outcomes the new institutional strategy wished to establish was a single VLE platform to be used across the merged institutions. Just prior to the merger taking place a learning environment review was undertaken. A review conducted at the University of Glamorgan three years previously also generated data that helped to inform this investigation.

Over a period of four months, interviews, focus groups and online questionnaires were conducted to identify user requirements for a common platform. Both academic staff and students were consulted. A special piece of work was conducted using student partners to obtain feedback from as many students as possible across all five campuses. At the same time six alternative VLEs were considered and consultations undertaken with known UK HE and FE institutions using Sakai, Desire2Learn, Moodle, Blackboard, FirstClass, and Canvas Instructure. Future investment in the VLE was based on the outcome of this work.

The final outcome was that the University decided to opt for Blackboard as its VLE for the foreseeable future. Although the review indicated a majority preference across the University for Moodle, when the options were mapped against the financial consequences to the University, the decision was made to adopt Blackboard. A calculation of the costs that would be incurred to implement Moodle, and to maintain the same quality of service as currently achieved with Blackboard, revealed that an extra 12 support staff would be required. The University judged that this was not affordable. Looking to the future, every enrolled student at the University of South Wales will now be using the Blackboard VLE.

Until three years ago, prior to the merger at the University of Glamorgan, two separate VLEs were being run. Moodle was in use by staff running a course on English as a Foreign Language. This was because their students were not directly registered with the University. This area of teaching has now been dropped and outsourced. However, the new University will continue to run a Moodle environment to support its open education resource partnership with the OERu, and for hosting the Higher Education Wales OER content repository, and Moodle will continue to be used to support the University's partnership working with other organisations. For example, the OER project is an all Wales initiative, and there are some Welsh institutions that do not have Blackboard licences. Therefore, it is not possible to share open resources via Blackboard.

TEL governance and structures

At merger, the new University management structure was designed to have as few layers of governance as possible, to ensure key voices reach the top table and to make the organisation as agile and responsive as possible. The outcome of this is that the Director of CELT reports directly to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor.

The merger resulted in similar teams being brought together to create the Learning and Teaching Enhancement unit. This allowed time to review roles, responsibilities and the breadth of knowledge and skills available. As part of the merger process the Welsh Government funded a generous voluntary severance scheme. So where there were two people doing the same job, if one of them put forward for voluntary severance they obtained it without issue.

The emphasis is on TEL project based delivery, with individuals in teams receiving clear direction and steer for the operation of the project, but with individual line management taking place through the organisational structure.

The TEL team is comprised mainly of academics with experience of technology. This is seen as a distinct advantage when it comes to facilitating communication between educators and technologists. Most IT Services staff do not come from an academic background, so the TEL team work closely with them in order that they do not become too distant from teaching staff. That is an important reason why the job title learning technologist has not been used. The belief is that educators assume they are primarily focused on the technology, which is not true. The team expect to be able to talk and work with academics to find out how they have been using technology for learning and teaching, and then they disseminate their work out to the wider community.

There are separate teams within CELT that are concerned with staff development and policy matters. There is a small group who work solely on educational policy development linking in directly to the Director of CELT to address funding council matters, strategic direction and action planning. Another team delivers the Postgraduate Certificate in Learning and Teaching course. The TEL team is kept informed of what each of the other teams are doing. Between the Director and Deputy Director of CELT all matters are brought together and communicated across the institution, including interfacing with the Faculties and IT Services.

Quality assurance

With regard to quality assurance procedures on educational technology related matters, the University is now on its seventh iteration of an approval process for intensive online learning. This work has been informed through the University's Quality Assurance/Quality Enhancement special interest group, and facilitated by Peter Chatterton, as part of a Higher Education Academy Sponsored Pathfinder Project⁵.

Years ago teaching staff were unsure and unconfident about the quality of the technology delivered resources and activities they were providing; because of this very specific and detailed guidance was provided to them. When the University had a major project in 2000 to deliver to Enterprise College Wales, the quality approval regime became highly onerous, down to a level detailing the specifics of text editing. People were required to go through many stages and tick box activities to achieve approval for every bit of online content.

Gradually, as the University has become more experienced and the HE sector as a whole as has matured in this area, the quality regime has become less bureaucratic and fastidious. Now academics are referred to guidance when transitioning courses from face to face to online teaching. The expectation is that the quality of what is provisioned for distance learning should be no worse than the quality of what is being provided for face to face delivery. So, the practice that was in place in the early 2000s has been replaced with the current model, where TEL related quality approval is an integral part of the standard quality processes the University applies. It has become an embedded part of the University's business.

⁵ Please see the following link for a report by Peter Chatterton on Pathfinder projects, including the one undertaken with the University of Wales: <http://tinyurl.com/Chatterton-report> [pdf]

There remains a slightly separate quality assurance process for fully online learning delivery. This is because approval is required to deliver courses in that way, and the TEL team makes some interventions in ensuring that the digital resources for the course are of an acceptable standard.

Support for devices

Bring Your Own Device

In parallel with the initial release of Blackboard mobile for students, the University started a learning and teaching innovation project looking at BYOD. The University has now moved to a BYOD model, where staff expect students to bring their mobile devices to class. All supporting content for students has been revised, so that it is accessible on mobile devices, and all websites have been made responsive.

The University has developed a number of bespoke mobile apps. One of these is an in house app called UniLife that functions as a student focused portal. There is also a promotional app called UniBox that has been created to allow students to share their experiences and this has been used for open days. This particular app has been enthusiastically received by those responsible for marketing in the University, with significant time and resources having been dedicated to promoting the University through it. The apps work well on an iPad, enabling students to see all course content and search by subject. It has become a key portal for the University's promotional activities, used a lot for video and images, and it also provides a channel for pushing information out to students. However, the UniLife portal has proven to be the most popular and is accessible via an app or a responsive web page.

Wifi access was upgraded to cater for BYOD. The University invested in this so that everywhere across the three campuses at Glamorgan there would be good wifi enabled access. There would need to be around 70% of all of the institution's students logged in at the same time before a capacity issue might emerge.

The aim is to encourage academics to consider mobile learning applications from the time they start creating their courses. BYOD also means that staff and students can bring their own apps as well. The University has a policy that states that unless someone tells you that you cannot use an app, it is acceptable to do so for learning and teaching activities. There is active promotion of third party technologies, but it is not insisted upon. For example, in Psychology they are making extensive use of Dropbox and Prezi. The advice to staff is to use the apps that students already have. Since students are already using Gmail, the TEL team tends to promote the use of Google Drive and other Google apps as what will be created will look good across devices.

Mobile

Mobile has been a key theme for the University. It was also a key demand coming out of the learning environment review. Interestingly, people are not so concerned about how the content looks, but are more interested in how and when it can be accessed. A PhD student recently undertook research in this area. A detailed analysis was performed of what did and did not work in the Blackboard environment. Previously, the University turned Blackboard mobile on for students but they had to pay for it. The original reasoning for not promoting mobile access to Blackboard was that nothing had been done to help staff improve their design and accessibility of Blackboard content for a mobile environment. There was concern that students would feed back that things did not look right. However, given the uptake and growing expectations of students, it has since been decided to make it freely available – the Blackboard mobile licence comes into operation in September – and the University has just started now to put a process in place to help staff produce quality content for mobile devices.

Student engagement as partners

As part of the learning environment review, a special piece of work was conducted using student partners to obtain feedback from as many students as possible across all five campuses. The Student Union sabbatical officer sits on the Learning Technology Enhancement committee. The ongoing process is an annual review, but whenever CELT has got a project on student involvement may be solicited.

Staff digital literacies

Staff development occurs in two separate ways. A seminar series provides the main source of continuous professional development for existing staff and a Postgraduate Certificate in Learning and Teaching course is also available. An education development team is directly responsible for running this course, which includes sessions on curriculum design, inclusive curriculum, assessment and feedback.

Each academic year around forty seminars are run on various topics that emerge from the practice of teaching staff. The training and education needs of teaching staff emerge through the faculty based Learning, Teaching and Assessment committees. Along with staff members from each school, CELT also has representatives on these faculty committees. The output of these meetings also feed into the institutional level Learning, Teaching and Assessment committee.

The Faculty Head of Student Experience is the person that teaching staff go to and ask whether a training course exists on a particular topic. CELT is responsible for managing this overall process. They would either be directed to someone known to be running an event or CELT would organise a session. The staff development unit within CELT tends to aim these seminars at faculty level, but if there is sufficient demand an event would be set up and run for the whole of the University, which has recently been the case for assessment and feedback practices.

There are two different ways staff can share information and communicate about their practice. There is the established formal route of reporting via committees – necessary for audit and QAA purposes – and there is a brand new intranet system, called The Hub, purchased post-merger from Intellect. This enables staff networking and online sharing of practice. The University intends to use this system to help promote and engage people in new services, such as the recently purchased licences for Blackboard Mobile, Blackboard Collaborate and the Blackboard Content Management System. Early adopters and enthusiasts will be encouraged to share their experience and practices by contributing case studies to be cascaded out through The Hub to the rest of the University.

Distance Learning and OER provision

The University has made extensive use of TEL to underpin distance and online learning courses. This works across the whole institution including all subsidiary colleges. Until recently, the University had been responsive rather than proactive where distance learning was concerned. In the last six months things have become much more proactive. There is now a more strategic view of distance learning provision, and it is part of the Academic Portfolio plan, which sits alongside the Learning, Teaching and Assessment plan.

Previously, in order to set up and run a course, educators were required to bid for resources. This is now managed through a team of people led by the Deputy Vice Chancellor. This approach has now ensured that CELT has sufficient resources to provide support for any new course that emerges. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor and the Head of CELT liaise with Faculty Deans to identify the subject areas they wish to promote. Consultation identifies whether any distance courses are planned for the next three years.

The University has a business plan for the next five years, which includes re-investment in staff to develop and run distance learning, but it is entirely dependent on successful recruitment of the first three programmes that go online. The aim is to see significant student numbers emerge over the next 18 months to two years before the University takes steps to re-invest in staff to further develop this area.

OER provision

The sector as a whole in Wales is committed to developing the provision of OERs. In this context, an institution wide approach at the University of South Wales actively promotes engagement with OER (<http://teach.southwales.ac.uk/oer/>). In terms of the direction of travel, the consensus is that open is the right way to go and the content of all distance and online courses will be OER. The OER initiative is viewed as an alternative model to running MOOCs, which is understood to be more about accreditation than about content.

There is strong encouragement for academics to consider OER. A policy is in place requiring staff to inform the CELT of any educational resource being developed. This makes it possible to find out whether it is something that can be made openly available, and also enables people to be encouraged to investigate what is already freely available. More content has emerged in the last two years compared to the previous three. But filtering for copyright and seeking licensing approval continues to be an overhead and challenge to the process.

The University's main external facing provision is through its own open education resource repository in Moodle. This will continue as part of our partnership with the OERu. Resources are also made available through iTunesU (<http://itunes.southwales.ac.uk/>).

Future challenges

The emphasis of the University is not necessarily on being the first mover but on being a fast follower. Some early lessons were learnt. For example, in academic year 2000–2001, alongside the Open University, the University of Glamorgan was working to provide fully online distance courses. In hindsight, this was about 10 years too early. Students had to rent modems in order to participate. They were not able to purchase them and, at the time, this fundamentally undermined the approach.

The University also has a half time staff member in IT Services, who is responsible for technology related horizon scanning, with the other half of his role concerned with technology to inform learning and teaching. They are looking at such things as how the University might exploit tools such as Google Glass.

Appendix: Case study questions

For each of the thirteen interviews conducted, a common question template was used to structure the interview, addressing the themes and question areas as outlined below.

TEL theme	Interview questions
Background about institution	Status of institution (research based; teaching based..?); size of institution (# of students; # of departments etc.); campus based (one site or multiple sites; overseas campus?)
1. Understanding of TEL strategy	<p>Do you have a TEL strategy? (How is TEL addressed in your institutional strategies – as a stand alone planning document or embedded across a range of strategies? What is the time horizon for TEL planning; e.g. 3–5 years?)</p> <p>Can you explain the reasons/history for your current position re. a TEL strategy? [need to know if have one or not]</p> <p>What have been the drivers for TEL use in this institution?</p> <p>To what extent does departmental or institutional culture affect uptake?</p>
2. Overview of TEL provision	What TEL tools are centrally supported? Does your institution support a mix of central and devolved tools provision and if so, why?
3. Governance and structures	<p>How are TEL services organised and supported within your institution? How does TEL support relate organisationally to IT/Library/Information Management support to Educational Development?</p> <p>Please explain the roles of the different TEL units within your institution; what systems do they support?; how are they supported?; what are the roles of the different staff?</p> <p>What governance structures are in place for TEL? (Who provides strategic steer/ oversight for TEL services?)</p> <p>How did the current organisational structure for TEL services emerge? (Was it deliberately planned or has it emerged organically over recent years. Have there been any significant changes in organisational structure over the last two years – since the last TEL Survey in Feb 2012?)</p>
4. Quality assurance	<p>Does your institution have any TELspecific quality assurance policies in place? Do you have minimum requirements for the adoption and use of TEL tools in learning and teaching activities?</p> <p>Is the student experience of TEL assessed explicitly through dedicated studies or is it embedded within general course review (e.g. as an additional question to a survey)?</p>
5. Support for devices	<p>What impact is the move to BYOD and mobile computing having on your institution and on the responsibilities for the teams supporting TEL? Is the provision of digital content (e.g. eBooks) or course specific digital resources increasing the significance of mobile learning within your institution?</p> <p>Has your institution developed any approaches to providing, managing or supporting devices?</p>
6. Student engagement	Feedback from students was listed in the survey as the leading encourager for TEL development. How are you drawing on student feedback to develop your services (e.g. students as partner/curriculum design internships)?
7. Staff digital literacies	Lack of academic staff knowledge was second in the list of barriers to TEL development. Do you perceive this to be a challenge in your institution, and if so, how are you tackling it? What provision have you made to address staff digital literacies in your training and support activities?

TEL theme	Interview questions
8. Distance and open learning	<p>How important is distance learning to your institution? Has its importance changed recently (in light of the changing economic climate)?</p> <p>Does your institution provide any free or open educational resources? If not, is the institutional position likely to change in the near future?</p> <p>If it does, does your institution have any policies or policy statements on the production/use of open educational resources?</p>
9. And finally ...	<p>What do you see as your main short and medium term challenges in supporting TEL services for your institution?</p> <p>How are you planning to address them?</p>