BEST PRACTICE GUIDE

2016 Survey of Technology Enhanced Learning: case studies

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Universities and Colleges
Information Systems Association

Contents

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 **2016 UCISA Technology Enhanced Learning Survey Report**[1], which captures TEL developments across the UK higher education (HE) sector. This publication builds on the series of case study interviews which accompanied the previous three UCISA TEL Survey Reports in 2010, 2012 and 2014[2].

The rationale for conducting the interviews is based on the feedback 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 2016 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 21 volunteer institutions (from a population of 110 which completed the 2016 TEL Survey), nine institutions were selected for interviews.

The sample group is broadly representative of the UK higher education population, with all institutional types (Pre-92; Post-92; Other HE providers) covered, although we acknowledge that no institutions from Northern Ireland are represented. Two of the selected institutions (Edge Hill University and Sheffield Hallam) were also the subject of case studies in 2014 and Edinburgh Napier has regularly featured in our case study publications dating back to 2010: their continuing presence is intentional in order to present a longitudinal narrative to TEL developments.

Institution	Type	Country	Mission group
Aberystwyth University	Pre-92	Wales	Unclassified
Edge Hill University	Post-92	England	Unclassified
Edinburgh Napier University	Post-92	Scotland	Million+
Queen Mary University of London	Pre-92	England	Russell Group
Ravensbourne	Other HE provider	England	GuildHE
Sheffield Hallam University	Post-92	England	University Alliance
Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance	Other HE provider	England	Unclassified
University of the Highlands and Islands	Post-92	Scotland	Million+
University of Sheffield	Pre-92	England	Russell Group

1   *Walker, R., Voce J., Swift, E., Ahmed, J., Jenkins, M., & Vincent P. (2016).* 2016 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 2014 case study interviews are presented in the following publication:*
    UCISA (2014). Good Practice Guide: 2014 Survey of Technology Enhanced Learning: case studies. *Universities and Colleges Information Systems Association, Oxford, UK. The 2012 case studies follow a similar format.*
    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. & Yip, H. (2010). 2010 Survey of Technology Enhanced Learning For Higher Education in the UK. *A JISC/UCISA funded survey.*
    All of these publications are available at: **https://www.ucisa.ac.uk/bestpractice/surveys/tel/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 2016 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 explored new themes, looking at institutional responses to the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) White Paper[4] and to recent consumer protection law advice for higher education students set out by the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA)[5]. However, the main question themes were retained from 2014, 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 of TEL services to staff and students. Following on from 2014 and 2012 the interviews also focused on distance and open learning provision, as well as 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 2016 by members of the UCISA Academic Support Group, and the questioning was therefore informed by the key findings of the 2016 TEL Survey Report, which were first presented to the UK higher education community at the Association for Learning Technology's annual conference in September 2016[6].

Executive summary

The case studies looked at the following key areas of TEL strategy and support development for institutions:

TEL strategy

The 2016 TEL Survey data revealed that there has been little change across the sector over the past two years with regard to the role of dedicated TEL strategies in shaping learning technology developments. Dedicated strategies have become less common since the high watermark of the 2008 TEL Survey, when the majority of higher education institutions had developed one; they now generally tend to be found amongst Pre-92 universities and most commonly amongst Russell Group institutions. The case studies show how TEL is being incorporated within broader institutional strategies as an enabling or component part of the institutional vision, rather than as a sole focus (e.g. as part of a capacity building initiative). This may reflect the maturing of TEL provision within institutions as learning technologies become an underlying feature of teaching and learning practices and course delivery.

Edinburgh Napier addresses TEL in its corporate plan and Ravensbourne commits to remaining at the *forefront of the creative exploitation of digital technology* in its overarching institutional strategy. The cases also demonstrate how TEL concerns are being embedded in Learning, Teaching and Assessment (LTA) strategies, as is the case at Aberystwyth, Edge Hill and the University of the Highlands and Islands (UHI), and as part of the Learning and Teaching plan at Trinity Laban, which identifies a pathway for TEL development. Other institutional strategies addressing TEL concerns that are mentioned in the case studies include the IT, Academic and Online and Transnational Education strategies at Edinburgh Napier, and the Student Experience, Teaching, Learning and Assessment (SETLA) strategy at Queen Mary. Of our sample of case study institutions, only Queen Mary is currently drafting a dedicated e-learning strategy to help define how they will grow their virtual presence to support new modes of teaching and learning. In contrast, Sheffield and Sheffield Hallam have moved in the opposite direction, abandoning a standalone strategy in favour of embedding TEL concerns across their core institutional strategies.

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/**

4   The UK Government's Department for Business, Innovation and Skills published a white paper for consultation on the proposed teaching excellence framework in November 2015. Further details are available at: **https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/higher-education-teaching-excellence-social-mobility-and-student-choice**

5   CMA's consumer protection law advice for higher education providers (2014–2016): **https://www.gov.uk/cma-cases/consumer-protection-review-of-higher-education**

6   Walker, R. (2016). Open and flexible learning opportunities for all? Findings from the 2016 UCISA TEL Survey on learning technology developments across UK HE. ALT-C 2016: Connect, Collaborate, Create. 6th September, University of Warwick. (**http://tinyurl.com/UCISASurvey PPTX**)

TEL drivers

The 2016 TEL Survey and all previous reports dating back to 2003 have highlighted *meeting student expectations* as a key driver for TEL development within institutions, with the student learning experience and engagement strategies now representing the second most commonly cited category of institutional strategy informing TEL development after the Teaching, Learning and Assessment strategy. It therefore comes as no surprise to see the enhancement of the student experience as a key driver for TEL development in the case studies, with senior managers outlining their expectations for the adoption of tools by teaching staff through minimum/threshold standards policies.

Pedagogic drivers also play a key role in supporting TEL adoption. The use of TEL tools is central to the teaching culture at Ravensbourne, which aspires to support collaborative working practices reflective of the media and design industries which their graduates will work in. Edinburgh Napier makes an explicit connection between its active learning strategy and the use of technology, by committing the University to establishing teaching spaces *enabled by innovative technology*. The University of Sheffield also identifies pedagogy as a driver for TEL development, with flipped learning design assuming a key part of their current thinking. More ambitiously, Queen Mary and Edinburgh Napier also view TEL development as a way of supporting growth in student numbers.

TEL provision

Institutional TEL provision is based around a virtual learning environment (VLE), with all case study institutions supporting such a system. The key change since the last TEL Survey appears to be the way in which these services are being managed, with a notable increase in the number of institutions outsourcing provision for their centrally managed VLE platforms. Queen Mary, Ravensbourne and Trinity Laban have all opted for an external hosting service for their Moodle platforms, with Edge Hill, UHI and Sheffield adopting a similar approach for their Blackboard systems. The shift towards external hosting also applies to other key learning and teaching services; for example, Queen Mary is in the process of migrating to a Software as a Service (SaaS) model for its Echo360 lecture capture service. Indeed, cloud-based services, such as Google Apps for Education and Microsoft Office365, are commonly being made available to staff and students to support learning and teaching activities.

The case studies also reflect the recent investment in mobile services and support for the use of students' devices on campus. Ravensbourne offers a bursary scheme to enable students to purchase licences for software to run on their own laptops. Trinity Laban has established its own Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) policy and students and staff at Aberystwyth are being actively encouraged to make use of tablet devices in learning and teaching activities. Institutions have also invested in improved wifi infrastructure and mobile ready services, with Sheffield using CampusM to support its own institutional mobile app.

There also appears to be a greater emphasis on central provision of TEL services, with staff and students encouraged to make use of centrally supported rather than local services. Both Aberystwyth and Edge Hill have clear positions in this regard, requiring departments to make use of centralised services, rather than run their own systems. Queen Mary bucks this trend, with faculties running a number of locally developed or licensed systems.

TEL governance and structures

Training and end user support for TEL services appears to be most commonly embedded within centrally managed learning and teaching units, with IT Services managing the technical running of these services. Queen Mary, Sheffield and Sheffield Hallam all follow this model and have the largest TEL teams with ten or more staff supporting TEL services within learning and teaching support units. Ravensbourne and Trinity Laban have adopted a similar approach, albeit with smaller teams. Ravensbourne's Learning and Teaching Research Centre has one dedicated learning technologist and one support officer, and Trinity Laban has just one learning technologist, although TEL responsibilities are shared out across its Learning Enhancement Unit.

Aberystwyth operates a different model with its E-Learning Group embedded within Information Services (IS). The Group Manager reports directly on TEL developments to the IS Head of Department, but also has a link to the Pro Vice Chancellor for Teaching and Learning, who chairs the University's TEL Steering Group.

Edinburgh Napier and UHI manage service provision across distinct service units. Napier's Department of Learning and Teaching Enhancement manages strategic TEL projects, whilst Information Services focuses on the provision of services and resources to staff and the management of the technical infrastructure. UHI has no single group with a remit for TEL, with responsibilities shared across several units including the Educational Development Unit and the recently established Learning and Teaching Academy.

In terms of governance, Aberystwyth, Queen Mary and Sheffield Hallam have all established their own E-Learning/TEL Strategy Groups to oversee technology developments across the institution and Sheffield has set up a Digital Learning group chaired by the Pro Vice Chancellor for Teaching and Learning. Edge Hill operates a two tiered governance model, with a central Learning and Teaching Strategic Leads Group, combined with faculty based committees which also monitor TEL developments and report on them to a Student Experience subcommittee and then up to the University's Learning and Teaching Committee. In contrast, Trinity Laban supports a devolved model with directors of faculties, heads of programmes and departments all sharing responsibility for TEL governance at a local level.

TEL-specific policies

Aberystwyth, Edge Hill, Edinburgh Napier, Ravensbourne and Sheffield Hallam all recognise the importance of ensuring consistency in the student experience by setting minimum standards for the presentation of VLE module sites and the submission of student work. UHI has provided staff with a Blended Learning Standards guide to direct academic practice with technology. Edinburgh Napier and Edge Hill offer frameworks which encourage their staff to go beyond the baseline standard in their adoption of TEL tools and services.

The case studies also confirm the importance of the electronic management of assessment (EMA) to institutional teaching and assessment practices. Aberystwyth, Edge Hill, UHI and Trinity Laban have established policies requiring student work to be submitted digitally, where it is appropriate to do so. Sheffield Hallam's *assessment journey programme* will lead towards a similar outcome with an expectation that submission and feedback on student work will be conducted online.

Other policy areas that are mentioned in the cases touch on lecture recording and open education. Aberystwyth's lecture capture policy requires all academic staff to manually record their lectures. The University of the Highlands and Islands is looking at the introduction of a policy on open educational practice, encouraging open sharing and repurposing of learning and teaching resources.

Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) strategy

This new theme for the 2016 TEL Survey and case study interviews focused on institutional responses to recent consumer protection law advice for higher education students, as set out by the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA). The TEL Survey revealed that only 4% of institutions had established an institutional strategy in this area that informed TEL development. The case studies show that the CMA has not had a great impact on TEL developments at this stage. Aberystwyth noted that the CMA has informed the wording of service level agreements for some TEL tools such as lecture capture in order to manage student expectations. In a similar vein UHI indicated that there had been a review of the institutional web presence, with some implications for TEL through linking the reading lists to modules. Both Edge Hill and Trinity Laban also mention the importance of service level agreements and provision of accurate information; however, in both cases, these actions are driven by institutional commitments to the student experience, rather than specific responses to the CMA.

Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF)

This was another new theme looking at institutional responses to the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) White Paper. Whilst the TEF will directly affect English higher education institutions, Welsh and Scottish higher education institutions may also choose to opt in to the framework to track the quality of their teaching practices. Aberystwyth, Edinburgh Napier and UHI are all monitoring developments with the proposed implementation of the TEF. In the case of Aberystwyth they are considering opting in to the framework, with the intention of using the TEF scores as a marketing tool to showcase the excellence of their teaching and the quality of their courses.

The interviews with English institutions revealed that whilst they are preparing for the introduction of the TEF, their actions may not be directly impacting on or involving TEL services at this stage. Ravensbourne, for example, has recruited staff centrally in data and planning roles. At Edge Hill, Sheffield Hallam and Queen Mary internal discussions are taking place and advisory groups are being established to guide on further actions that they will need to take to meet the requirements of the TEF. The University of Sheffield has adopted a different approach, taking the view that the TEF should not dictate how they teach and consequently they will develop their own definition of teaching excellence and monitor teaching delivery accordingly.

Distance learning and open learning

The 2016 TEL Survey results revealed that there has been increasing institutional engagement in the delivery of fully online courses since the last Survey, with over half of 2016 respondents now involved in some form of fully online delivery through their schools or departments. The case studies confirm this picture of increasing level of institutional engagement with fully online delivery.

Distance learning is of obvious importance to UHI given its regional context and the geographical reach of the institution. Of the other institutions, with the exception of Ravensbourne – currently without its own Taught Degree Awarding Powers – all have established some form of small scale distance learning provision. Sheffield Hallam has 550 distance learning students enrolled on its programmes, Edinburgh Napier has 700 students and Queen Mary has 600 students. Edge Hill and Aberystwyth also deliver a small number of strategic distance learning programmes. In Edge Hill's case these programmes have been running for over ten years and have a strong professional development focus.

Distance learning has been identified as a future growth area for Edinburgh Napier – an additional 5000 distance and transnational students have been targeted for enrolment by 2020 – and Queen Mary aims to double the number of their distance learning students. The University of the Highlands and Islands has identified the development of fully online courses, particularly postgraduate programmes, as a future area of interest. Trinity Laban is also considering growth in this area, as is Aberystwyth as a potential response to Brexit[7].

In contrast to these institutional visions, both Sheffield institutions do not view distance learning as a growth area for their teaching activities and have instead focused on the development of their blended learning provision. Sheffield Hallam is concentrating on mixed mode delivery in which online learning runs in parallel to class based teaching, whilst the University of Sheffield is investing in flipped learning delivery.

The TEL Survey findings revealed that less than half of the sector is actively pursuing open course delivery, and that Russell Group institutions are the most engaged in Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) delivery. The case study interviews confirm the mixed levels of engagement with open learning. The University of Sheffield is delivering ten FutureLearn MOOCs, some of which are now being linked to credit bearing courses and content is being shared with campus based provision. In contrast, Queen Mary – the other Russell Group institution in our case study sample – is not engaged with the delivery of MOOCs at all. Of the other institutions, Sheffield Hallam is delivering its own open online learning courses which are branded as *SHOOCs*, these courses have been delivered using PebblePad but are being migrated over to Blackboard's Open Education Platform. They are also starting to use badges as a way of recognising prior learning, in this way serving as a bridge between their SHOOCs and masters programmes. Edge Hill has delivered a couple of MOOCs and has established a devolved model for their development with non-credit bearing courses being approved at faculty level.

The case studies also provide a range of examples of how open education practices are being encouraged within higher education institutions. The University of the Highlands and Islands is exploring the development of a policy or framework for open education to support the sharing and repurposing of learning and teaching resources. The institution is currently active in open education, being a member of OERu[8], and is represented on the Open Education Practices Scotland Project. UHI will soon be launching a Digital Pedagogy Masters, which is designed to engage staff with open resources. At Aberystwyth staff are actively encouraged to develop open education resources and the institution is part of a regional initiative to share resources via the CADARN portal. Aberystwyth is also involved in developing and sharing Welsh language resources, a cause championed by the Welsh Assembly. Edinburgh Napier ensures that all resources submitted to their LTA Resource Bank have a Creative Commons licence. Finally at Queen Mary there is a local initiative where the School of Physics has opened all its Moodle courses up to the public.

Future challenges

Staff development was the leading challenge cited by institutions in the 2016 TEL Survey, and the University of the Highlands and Islands makes a special reference to this theme. The University has targeted the engagement of staff in TEL training and support within its dispersed organisational structure as a key objective. The sharing of practice across the UHI federation is one approach that has been prioritised to support staff development, and specifically the engagement of staff with TEL.

The ongoing challenge of providing TEL support is also identified by institutions in the case studies. The University of Sheffield highlights the challenge of scaling up TEL provision to meet institutional demands; Edge Hill notes the challenge of supporting mainstream TEL services with a small support team.

The 2016 TEL Survey Report revealed that after staff development, the electronic management of assessment (EMA) is now the second most commonly cited technology challenge that institutions are facing. The case studies confirm this picture, with assessment provision identified by Sheffield Hallam, Aberystwyth, Queen Mary and Edinburgh Napier as a future challenge. Sheffield Hallam identities its assessment policy as playing a key role in engaging staff in conversations about teaching practice and use of TEL tools to support student learning. Edinburgh Napier has established a new Programme Focused Approach to Assessment and Feedback (PFAAF) Project, which includes *e-Submission of Coursework and e-Receipting*. Through this project framework they will pilot e-submission across

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taught programmes over the 2016–17 academic year. Aberystwyth will also be actively engaged in supporting EMA developments. The University's E-Learning Group will seek to develop EMA practices across the institution, from providing e-submission support to students, to providing staff with support to mark online and offer digital feedback to students over the next academic year.

Other challenges that are mentioned in the case studies include the implementation of TEL threshold standards, support for lecture capture, video and mobile services and developing digital skills and literacies at scale for staff and students.

Acknowledgements

Aberystwyth University

Interview with: Kate Wright, E-Learning Manager

Overview

Aberystwyth University is a research and teaching institution with just under 10,000 students across its six academic institutes. The student population is comprised of approximately 8,500 undergraduates and 1,300 postgraduates. The University offers more than 300 undergraduate courses from Accounting and Finance to Welsh and Celtic Studies and also provides a range of postgraduate taught and research programmes, as well as three major distance learning programmes in Information Studies, Law and Criminology, and Sustainable and Efficient Food Production.

The University has also recently established a new overseas campus on Mauritius to support the delivery of a range of undergraduate and postgraduate degree courses.

TEL strategy and drivers for TEL

Aberystwyth does not currently have a specific TEL strategy; rather TEL forms part of their current Learning and Teaching Strategy (2012–17[9]). The University did have a separate TEL strategy ten years ago and eight years ago the University was part of the HEA benchmarking programme which led on to the Pathfinder Gwella programme for Wales (2008–11)[10].

Collaboration with other Welsh institutions has been a feature of university practice over the years. Indeed in December 2011 a strategic alliance was established with Bangor University[11], which resulted in a joint Learning and Teaching strategy being created.

Whilst the University now works to implement its own strategic learning and teaching objectives, there remains a strong commitment to collaborate with fellow Welsh higher education institutions on areas of common interest, such as lobbying for the translation of software to the Welsh language. This collaboration has proved successful in securing a Welsh language pack for the Blackboard Learn virtual learning environment.

Strategic thinking on TEL is shaped by the University's TEL Steering Group and this body oversees the action planning of the six academic institutes[12]. Each institute represents a cluster of cognate academic departments. The institute is responsible for developing an overarching TEL action plan for the departments, reporting on its implementation to the Steering Group on four occasions each year. It is recognised though that each department has its own teaching and learning approach and there are different starting points on the TEL implementation plan, with the adoption of TEL growing organically according to the requirements of each department and discipline.

There has been a drive by the Pro Vice Chancellor for Learning and Teaching in recent years to support greater consistency in the provision of administrative course information to students across online course sites. All module convenors are expected to make use of tools such as Talis Aspire for the creation and sharing of reading lists and from the next academic year (2016–17) all staff will be expected to use Panopto for the recording of their lectures which should be made available to students[13]. Academic staff are also expected to support student learning through their use of the institution's Blackboard virtual learning environment and are encouraged to do so through initiatives such as the institution's Exemplary Course Award scheme[14].

The student experience is the biggest driver for TEL adoption, and consistency in the use of TEL tools is one of the biggest requirements from students. The University is keen to promote and embed TEL tools across the curriculum, with a twin pronged strategy of encouraging innovation and creativity in teaching methods through the Exemplary Course Award scheme whilst supporting baseline standards in course administration, such as through the online submission of student work. Academic staff are required to receive, grade and return feedback to students via Turnitin for all text based English medium assignments, as approved by Senate in March 2015[15].

9   https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/media/departmental/aqro/learningandteachingstrategy/005b---learning-and-teaching-strategy-2012---2017.pdf

10   https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/sites/default/files/gwella_2011_200212_1547.pdf

11   http://aberbangorstrategicalliance.ac.uk/

12   https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/university/institutes/

13   *Lecture capture policy:* https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/is/regulations/lecture-capture-policy/

14   *Exemplary Course Award:* http://nexus.aber.ac.uk/xwiki/bin/view/Main/AU+Exemplary+Course+Award

15   *E-submission policy:* https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/academic/e-submission/

The minimum standards that VLE module sites should meet are outlined in the University's Required Minimum Presence (RMP) policy[16], which was approved by Senate in June 2013. These standards are publicised to students, so that they know what to expect to see in each VLE module site that they engage with. Guidelines on how to develop an Enhanced Presence through the use of the VLE are also available for staff to review, encouraging module convenors to go beyond minimum standards in providing their students with an excellent online learning experience.

TEL provision

There is a centralised e-learning group and centralised university model which supports the following technologies:

- AberLearn Blackboard – the Blackboard Learn virtual learning environment
- E-submission through AberLearn using Turnitin or Blackboard Learn's Assignment tool
- AberCast lecture capture through the use of Panopto software
- Helix media server and Box of Broadcasts for use of video in teaching
- QuestionMark Perception for online exams
- Qwizdom for interactive voting in class sessions, supported through the use of mobile devices
- STACK for computer-aided assessment for mathematics
- Xerte online toolkit for the creation of learning objects

Departments make use of centralised services and do not run their systems. The University does not have a Bring Your Own Device policy, but applications such as the Qwizdom voting system may be accessed through the use of mobile devices. Some departments are also making use of QR codes and encouraging mobile usage in this way.

The University is keen to see greater use of tablets in teaching and learning activities. Tablet usage has been the biggest growth area in terms of TEL adoption, and this is particularly the case for mathematics and science disciplines, with teaching staff preferring to use them as an alternative to writing on a blackboard. Three years ago in a revamping of teaching rooms across campus most blackboards were replaced by whiteboards and document cameras, enabling staff to make use of tablets and project the screens on to the whiteboards. A session on the use of tablets at a recent learning and teaching conference was very well received by staff.

TEL governance and structures

The E-Learning Group is responsible for managing TEL services and is located within Information Services, a department combining library and IT services. The E-Learning Group comprises the Manager and five staff members who undertake advisory services in support of academics focusing on teaching interventions and the pedagogic appropriateness of TEL tools, as well as providing technical guidance on tools to staff.

The Group Manager reports directly to the IS Head of Department and there is also a close relationship between the Group and the Pro Vice Chancellor for Teaching and Learning, who chairs the University's TEL Steering Group.

TEL-specific policies

The drive for consistency in the student learning experience has been supported by the Required Minimum Presence (RMP) policy and the e-submission policy which was introduced two years ago, requiring staff to receive, grade and return feedback to students via Turnitin for all text based English medium assignments.

The withdrawal of HEFCE funding for the Disabled Students' Allowances (DSA) in England, which comes into effect for the 2016–17 academic year, does not apply to higher education institutions in Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland, which have separate funding arrangements. However, the changes will have a direct impact on English students studying at Aberystwyth, who will be affected by these changes. The University has responded by drafting a new lecture capture policy, which will require academic staff to manually record their lectures using Panopto software and make these recordings available to all students across the university as a supplementary study resource to help mitigate the impact of these funding changes. An automated recording service supported by scheduled captures is under consideration but not available at present.

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16   *Good practice guides for the Required Minimum Presence and Enhanced Presence:* **http://nexus.aber.ac.uk/xwiki/bin/view/Main/ RMP+and+enhanced**

Each Institute at the University has a Director of Learning and Teaching or Director of Undergraduate Studies and it is their responsibility to ensure that VLE minimum standards and the lecture capture policy are being implemented correctly and consistently across taught programmes. Students will also play a part in ensuring that the implementation is a success and will be able to highlight any recordings which do not have adequate audio to accompany the capture.

The E-Learning Group will assist each Institute, as required, supplying statistics on VLE sites and lecture capture recordings and their availability to students. The Group also assists academic staff in training them to use the Panopto system, and approximately 50% of modules made use the software over the past academic year to record lectures. The Group have also recruited a graduate intern on a 10 months internship to help with the lecture capture rollout.

Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) strategy

The Head of Department (Information Services) is involved in discussions on the University's response to the Competition and Markets Authority and to recent consumer protection law advice for higher education students. There will be a direct impact on the wording of service level agreements for TEL tools such as lecture capture to manage student expectations and highlight the contingency measures that will be implemented when a lecture recording fails.

It is important to note though that CMA is not the principal driver for consistency in the provision and delivery of TEL services to students, and the University also takes note of internal student surveys and feedback to guide its service provision.

Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF)

The TEF White Paper which was published in May 2016 principally addresses English higher education institutions, but there are some references to the Welsh higher education sector. Whilst Welsh institutions will not be obliged to adopt the TEF, there is an opportunity for them to opt in to the scheme and use the TEF scores as a marketing tool to showcase teaching excellence and the quality of courses to attract students to the University. The TEF is currently under consideration at Aberystwyth.

The University has already taken steps to generate its own statistics on teaching and learning activities, including work on attendance monitoring for classes, and has been part of the Jisc initiative to support the development of a sector wide learning analytics solution, with the project due to be completed by the end of July 2017[17]. Academic staff are encouraged to draw on analytics from learning technology systems when applying for HEA fellowship accreditation, and to foreground excellence when making the case for exemplary course awards.

The E-Learning Group is currently looking at the range of data which is routinely collected on the student learning experience, including library data, statistics from Blackboard Learn and attendance monitoring systems. Preliminary discussions have been considering what an engaged student looks like, but the University is not looking at predictive modelling at this stage and there would of course be a number of ethical issues bound up with that.

The University has established attendance swipe points in classrooms to monitor attendance. The challenge though is to ensure that the correct procedures and policies are in place to deal with low attendance, if it is evident through the monitoring statistics. A working group is also considering the most appropriate remedial processes which should be established to assist students who are not attending classes and engaging with their course.

Distance and open learning

The University currently offers three major distance learning programmes in Information Studies, Law and Criminology, and Sustainable and Efficient Food Production. There is no active plan to expand distance learning provision beyond these current programmes, with current effort directed more to supporting the overseas campus in Mauritius, ensuring that it is a success. However, in the light of recent UK political changes with the Brexit vote, there may be consequences for higher education and student recruitment which will encourage the University to look again at distance learning provision.

The University encourages academic staff to create open education resources and is a member of a partnership of institutions in north and mid Wales which are collaborating to develop online and open resources, which are shared on the CADARN portal[18]. There has been a strong national interest in developing learning resources through the medium of Welsh – a cause which has been championed by former Welsh Minister for Children, Education and Lifelong

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17   *Jisc project (2015–2017): Effective learning analytics.* **https://www.jisc.ac.uk/rd/projects/effective-learning-analytics**

18   **https://www.cadarn.ac.uk/about**

Learning, Leighton Andrews – and the case has been made for collaboration and the sharing of resources across institutions. A pan Wales organisation has also produced the first Welsh language MOOC. Aberystwyth has not yet get engaged with the development of MOOCs, but this may be something for the future.

Future challenges

The main focus for the E-Learning Group is on the implementation of lecture capture across all courses over the next academic year, supporting staff in meeting the requirements of the new policy. The Group is also still actively engaged in helping staff with the e-submission policy. Initially support was directed at students, enabling them to submit all assessed work electronically, but now the focus is on staff, enabling them to mark work and deliver feedback electronically through the use of Turnitin and audio feedback tools. Departments such as Law and Psychology are now focusing on the delivery of project feedback electronically through the use of tablets, and the tablets will be a key focus for teaching and marking activities in the next academic year.

Another development area is the use by staff of media in teaching, exploiting the value of resources such as Box of Broadcasts to enhance student learning. The E-Learning Group will be running a project, managed by the E-learning Advisor, with two students on placements, tasked with looking at the most effective uses of technology, including video blogging. This project is consistent with the University's focus on seeking out student views and engaging in dialogue with them on learning and teaching provision. The E-Learning Group is starting to make greater use of student interns and placements to support the development of TEL service provision.

Edge Hill University

Interview with: Lindsey Martin, Assistant Head, Learning, ICT and Media Technologies

Overview

Edge Hill University is based in the North West of England employing just under 600 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. The University has three faculties – Arts and Sciences, Education, Health and Social Care, as well as a Graduate School.

TEL strategy

TEL is addressed within the main Learning and Teaching Strategy[19] and the corresponding action plan, which is updated on an annual basis. The University's strategic plan[20] runs until 2020 and references learning, teaching and technology within this. TEL planning, in terms of review and development of TEL used widely across programmes, is largely linked to the licence renewal cycles of key software such as the VLE.

Drivers for TEL

E-learning is now considered to be mainstream across the institution so in terms of drivers, a key focus has been on ensuring a more consistent student experience across the board. This links into the VLE baseline framework[21] that they have developed, which requires all taught modules to have a VLE module containing the minimum required items. This is discussed further in the section on TEL-specific policies.

Following on from this is a focus on learning analytics as part of the Jisc funded Effective Learning Analytics[22] co-design programme, where Edge Hill is one of the 50 participating institutions. This is discussed further in the section on the Teaching Excellence Framework.

Another driver links into Electronic Management of Assessment (EMA) where again the emphasis is on consistency, primarily in terms of the technology used so that each programme team agrees which technology will be used for submission, e.g. Blackboard or Turnitin. This is part of a *policy light* approach to TEL implementation, such that staff aren't forced to do things in a particular way, but are required to ensure consistency across a programme.

Finally, an emerging driver is demonstrating value for money; for example, Senior Management are keen to understand the value for money of Panopto as it moves from a pilot to being rolled out across the institution. There is a difficulty in showing full value for money for TEL in a monetary sense as the success factors primarily relate to whether the technology enhances the student learning experience. Edge Hill run a biennial survey, where students are asked how technology helps and what hinders them in their learning and to describe their ideal VLE. This student feedback has proved to be very useful in both driving changes in academic practice and demonstrating value.

Institutional culture

In terms of departmental culture, the Faculties are very different; for example in the Faculty of Education and the Faculty of Health and Social Care, which both typically include academics from professional backgrounds, it is often easier to get TEL adoption across the board due to the similarity of discipline within the Faculty. By contrast, the Faculty of Arts and Sciences has a wide range of different disciplines, such as Biology, Geography, Law and the Creative disciplines, so this presents challenges as *one size does not fit all*.

Edge Hill does not have a strongly managerial culture, which means academics enjoy a certain level of academic freedom. There are, however, institutional expectations around optimising student retention and progression. The institution is generally *policy light*, which enables them to be more agile when taking things forward, but which can on occasion inhibit step changes across the board.

19   https://www.edgehill.ac.uk/documents/learning-teaching-strategy/

20   https://www.edgehill.ac.uk/governance/board-of-governors/resources/section-b/strategic-plan/

21   http://www.eshare.edgehill.ac.uk/6892/5/LE_baseline_updated_Dec_15.pdf

22   https://analytics.jiscinvolve.org/wp/

TEL provision

Edge Hill provides a centrally supported suite of tools under the banner of *Learning Edge*, which includes:

- Blackboard Learn (including Community Engagement and Mobile Learn)
- Blackboard Collaborate
- Panopto
- Turnitin
- eShare – digital content repository
- Bristol Online Surveys
- CampusPack (integrated with Blackboard)
- Qwickly Attendance (integrated with Blackboard)
- Lynda.com (pilot, to be integrated with Blackboard)
- Rebus – reading list software

To ensure sustainable practices and manage expectations of central support, departments are expected to use the centrally provided solutions. The development of local tools is not encouraged. The IT Services strategy is to outsource provision where possible, so all TEL solutions, including Blackboard and Panopto, are externally hosted. In terms of TEL systems, IT Services are responsible for supporting their feeds and integrations; e.g. authentication and student data imports as well as the network infrastructure and comprehensive wifi availability. Even though the TEL systems are outsourced, there continues to be a need for system skills in house, in particular for the VLE, to sit between the Learning Technologists, the supplier and IT Services.

There isn't a written policy for Bring Your Own Device (BYOD), but the campus has been made BYOD *friendly* in terms of wifi availability and staff and student support. All TEL technologies are also mobile friendly.

Since the last case study in 2014, Edge Hill has discontinued use of the e-portfolio solution, PebblePad, in favour of Campus Pack, which provides e-portfolios in addition to wikis and blogs. PebblePad had originally been purchased by the Faculty of Education for management of professional competencies; however when considering supporting this centrally it was felt that Campus Pack better met the needs of the wider institution.

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 (including a broadcast quality TV studio), classroom Audio Visual support, Digital Capabilities staff development and Customer Services (including a Student Helpdesk).

LTD has nine members of staff:

- LTD Manager
- LTD Operations Coordinator (0.6 FTE)
- LTD Systems Officer
- Six LTD Officers (of which one employed 0.5 FTE)

LTD manages and provides support 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 as part of central staff development and also bespoke to the needs of programmes and departments. In addition, they run an online enquiry support service primarily for staff, which they closely monitor to identify service improvements. Through these improvements, the number of learning technology enquiries received annually has reduced year on year from 2,000 in 2013/14, to 1,224 in 2014/15 and 634 in 2015/16. In terms of student support, student requests are initially dealt with via a central LS help desk which deals with all student enquiries ranging from Library requests to issues with technology. Support requests for TEL are escalated to LTD which acts as the second line support. The team also develops student guidance documents.

In addition to the central team, there are local Learning Technologists in the Faculty of Education (1FTE) and the Faculty of Health and Social Care (0.5 FTE). These roles typically focus more on the content development side of things and undertake administrative duties relating to the specific programmes, which in both cases are for continuing postgraduate, professional development. These posts are funded by the respective faculties. The Learning Technologists within LTD are assigned to a Faculty so that the Faculty staff have a key contact within the central team and it is appreciated that academic staff would prefer to have learning technologists *embedded* within their departments. To this end, LTD has established an initiative whereby they run outreach activities within the departments; e.g. basing themselves in the departments, running drop in sessions, rather than making people come to the *centre*. This requires a lot of effort in terms of promoting when they will be in the department, but it has been effective and they would like to continue this on a more regular basis. This local outreach is helping to meet the needs of the Faculties and it makes the Learning Technologists more visible.

TEL governance

At the Pro Vice Chancellor level there is an expectation that the technology works and enhances the student experience. The Dean of Learning Services is responsible for the TEL systems and associated services at a strategic level, working with colleagues from the institution's senior management teams.

The institution works in a collegial manner through various committees and so there are multiple strands that TEL feeds into and which in turn drives TEL development. An Information Strategy Group with representation from the Faculties plus major departments around the University primarily discusses system (including TEL) developments. There is also an informal, but influential Learning and Teaching Strategic Leads Group that is chaired by the Dean of the Centre for Learning and Teaching. This group includes the Faculty Associate Deans for Learning and Teaching, and Quality, Dean of Learning Services, Assistant Head of Learning Services, and the Faculty Senior Learning and Teaching and Solstice Fellows. The group discusses possible developments to *take the temperature* and agree which things need to be taken forward. Faculty Learning and Teaching Committees feed into a Student Experience Sub Committee that in turn reports to the University's Learning and Teaching Committee.

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 TEL steering group meetings, which feed into the Faculty Learning and Teaching Committees. These TEL governance structures have emerged over time, as part of the VLE review process where faculty groups were created which have now become the Faculty TEL steering groups.

Any TEL developments are primarily discussed at local learning and teaching/TEL steering groups, then referred to the Information Strategy Group and the Student Experience Sub Committee/Learning and Teaching Committee for approval.

TEL-specific policies

Edge Hill has had a minimum standards policy in place since 2008 and this has recently been reviewed to develop a framework which goes beyond the baseline[23]. The framework approach was based on work done by University College London and has three levels: baseline, baseline+ and baseline++[24]. The new baseline was increased in 2015/16 from the original set of minimum standards and will be reviewed on an annual basis, to take into consideration changes in the technology and usage amongst academics. For example, the announcements tool became very popular with staff for announcing room changes and other key information, so this was added to the baseline. At the moment, it is not feasible to check that the VLE courses comply with the baseline due to the large number of Blackboard courses. Instead, they are exploring the potential of SQL to develop some more meaningful activity reports within Blackboard, following the University of East Anglia's approach to reviewing student engagement and identifying hot spots and cold spots of student activity against particular VLE tools. This would enable the team to target resources and support to those courses that are showing red (hot spots) and requiring more assistance in making better use of the VLE.

In terms of other policies, there are several mandates from the Academic Board regarding electronic management of assessment which state that:

- All students to be able to submit online where appropriate.
- All student feedback should be typed.
- The choice of submission tool (Turnitin or Blackboard) must be consistent across a programme.

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23   http://www.eshare.edgehill.ac.uk/11183/1/LTD3082.pdf

24   http://www.eshare.edgehill.ac.uk/6892/5/LE_baseline_updated_Dec_15.pdf

In addition, a set of expectations around the use of lecture capture is currently under development as part of the institutional roll out of Panopto. There is a retention and archiving policy for Blackboard courses and a retention policy will also be defined for lecture capture.

Withdrawal of Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA)

There has been a lot of work looking at inclusive curricula; in particular academic staff have been asked to complete a survey to evaluate their inclusive practices with respect to curriculum design. Within Learning Services, there is a team supporting students with specific learning difficulties and there have recently been two new student facing appointments within that team. The first will be responsible for managing assistive technologies and it is hoped they will be working closely with the LTD on accessibility. The second is a librarian role who will be developing services and support for students with specific learning difficulties, ensuring that they have a Support Plan in place.

Audio and/or video recording for educational purposes is one of the tools which can support the University's implementation of the Equality Act (2010) and meet its statutory duty to provide anticipatory reasonable adjustments. Following changes to the provision to disabled students allowances (DSA) from September 2016 there will be a shift in responsibility to the university to be the primary provider of an inclusive curriculum.

Panopto may be identified during a disabled student's needs assessment as a reasonable adjustment to note-taking and included in their Student Support Plan. However, it is recognised that it is not the *cure all* and where a recording is not suitable, the tutor should identify (and offer) a reasonable alternative means of support. They have been investigating the use of captioning, in particular how crowdsourcing software for captions may allow students to create the captions themselves.

Finally, the change to the DSA is driving a review of the accessibility of content in the VLE as well as on the website. In the past they have also reviewed the accessibility of the TEL systems themselves. However, they have found that the biggest challenge is around the development of accessible content.

Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) strategy

Edge Hill has appointed a Director of Legal and Governance Services who will have a focus on the requirements of the Competition and Marketing Authority (CMA), who will make sure that the claims made on behalf of the University are supported. To date, the main focus for the institution has been around student recruitment and student communication, so there hasn't yet been an impact on the academic and TEL side of things. They already have service descriptions for TEL services available on the staff intranet with clearly defined service levels, but are aware that they may need to do more in this area in the future.

Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF)

The Centre for Learning and Teaching staff are taking the lead in this area and have been running workshops to discuss the TEF. From a TEL perspective, there is a sense that discussions around the TEF are nudging institutions to consider using student activity data from TEL systems as indicators of *learning gain*, which in turn is prompting an investigation of learning analytics. As mentioned previously, Edge Hill is one of 50 institutions taking part in a Jisc codesign programme on learning analytics. Edge Hill will trial a personal tutor dashboard that will pull system data from the student record system and Blackboard (via a building block that will pull activity and grade centre data). In a personal tutor process review workshop run within this project, there was consensus from the academics present that attendance was the main indicator of issues with student engagement. Whilst currently outside the scope of the Blackboard building Block, this has led to the introduction of the third party Qwickly Attendance Tool[25], integrated with Blackboard, in order to capture student attendance data via the Grade Centre.

Staff have also identified training needs for data analysis and presenting data, e.g. in the form of infographics.

Distance and open learning

Edge Hill has run online courses for over ten years, for example the Postgraduate Certificate in Teaching and Learning in Clinical Practice, MA Clinical Practice, and an online Midwifery course which runs in parallel with a face to face cohort. However, this remains a fairly niche area, primarily focused on Professional Development. The University's view is that Edge Hill's unique selling point is its campus and face to face teaching experience, so there is no drive to make distance and open learning a mainstream activity.

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25   https://www.goqwickly.com/attendance/

The institution continues to dip a toe into the domain of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) and since the last case study in 2014, which highlighted a MOOC on Vampire Fiction, the Faculty of Health and Social Care has run a successful MOOC on Blackboard's Open Education platform, which focused on Cardiac problems for Podiatrists[26]. They are currently trialling a pre entry course for English and History students via Blackboard Open Education[27], as it is not yet possible for these students to get access to the institutional Blackboard platform in advance of starting at Edge Hill. Whilst there isn't a formal policy in place for MOOCs, academics are free to develop their own courses. Any non-credit bearing courses are required to gain approval from the Faculty's quality committee. All credit bearing courses would need to be approved centrally.

In terms of open educational resources (OER), the institution does not have an OER policy and there continues to be limited interest in OER across the institution. The Learning Services Academic Staff survey of TEL and Library Services indicated considerable reuse of web based materials via YouTube or Google, but little use of external repositories. The institution's 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

Now that TEL has been mainstreamed across the institution, there is a continued blurring of the physical and virtual classrooms. A key challenge is trying to do more with only a relatively small number of professional support staff. In addition, staff turnover within the University is low, so it can be difficult to reshape the teams supporting virtual and physical classrooms to adapt to changing practices and new developments.

An ongoing challenge is to work with students to improve the look and feel of the TEL systems as they upgrade and develop. However, this links back to the first challenge as this may require resources and skills that the current team does not have. Alongside this work they will be looking at tools, such as Xerte, for creating accessible, attractive and engaging content that staff can develop themselves.

Finally, a Lynda.com pilot is currently being rolled out and they will be looking at how this could be integrated within Blackboard for taught programmes, in particular, for creative courses such as animation, film and TV production, and sound production. It will also be used to underpin the staff development offer.

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26   https://www.edgehill.ac.uk/news/2015/02/world-first-podiatry-mooc/

27   https://openeducation.blackboard.com/mooc-catalog/courseDetails/view?course_id=_1079_1

Edinburgh Napier University

Interview with: Stephen Bruce, Academic Advisor, Information Services

Overview

Edinburgh Napier University is a Post-92 institution with roughly 18,000 students registered on its various study programmes. The student population is comprised of approximately 15,000 undergraduates and 3,000 postgraduates, with 13,000 students based in the UK, 700 students registered on online/distance learning programmes, and over 4,000 students registered on programmes delivered by overseas partner institutions in Hong Kong, India, Singapore and mainland China. The University has around 500 FTE academic staff, located on three separate campuses in Edinburgh.

The University has recently been reorganised from three Faculties (Engineering, Computing and Creative Industries; Health, Life and Social Sciences; and the Business School) to a new organisational structure based on six specialist schools. The Business School is the largest school, with others in the following areas: Arts and Creative Industries; Computing; Engineering and the Built Environment; Life, Applied Sciences; Health and Social Care. The removal of the faculty layer in this new structure is intended to give schools more autonomy in their decision making, enabling them to run their own quality and learning and teaching committees, and is seen as a way of helping to improve the flow of information within the University.

TEL strategy and drivers for TEL

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 2020[28], Academic Strategy 2020[29], IT Strategy 2013[30] (which is currently being updated), Learning Teaching and Assessment Strategy and the new corporate plan (2016–17)[31] which has just been published. The key deliverables in the corporate plan include to *Enhance engagement with, and expertise in, active learning by establishing a range of teaching spaces enabled by innovative technology and a move towards online coursework submission and receipting* (page 5).

The current Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy includes a commitment to raising the digital capabilities of staff and includes a requirement for a Moodle minimum presence, which all academic staff must meet in the presentation of their VLE course sites to students. This represents an attempt by the University to standardise the way that key information such as timetabling and assessment key dates is presented to students within a consistent place within VLE module sites and represents the minimum expectations for a repository model of VLE usage, touching on aspects such as module site layout, site maintenance and housekeeping (e.g. the removal of empty folders etc.).

In addition to these strategies the University recently finalised a new Online and Transnational Education Strategy 2020, which sets out a strategic approach to all the University's off campus credit bearing provision, which includes a commitment to grow student numbers by enrolling an additional 5,000 transnational and distance learning students on its programmes by 2020. This includes delivery through the University's Global Online Higher Education model and as an extension to this, a Global Online blended model with elements of delivery and student support provided through institutional partnerships.

28   *University Strategy 2020:* **http://staff.napier.ac.uk/services/principal/strategy2020/Documents/Strategy2020-summary.pdf**

29   *Academic Strategy 2020:* **http://www.napier.ac.uk/~/media/documents/corporate-documents/academic-strategy.pdf**

30   *IT Strategy 2013:* **http://staff.napier.ac.uk/services/cit/Documents/IT_Strategy2013FInal.pdf**

31   *Corporate Plan 2016–17:* **http://staff.napier.ac.uk/services/principal/strategy2020/Documents/Corporate%20Plan%2016%2017.pdf**

TEL provision

Edinburgh Napier provides a centrally supported service for TEL tools – there is no devolved service within Schools as such. The following tools are supported centrally:

- Moodle as the University's online learning environment
- Mahara as an e-portfolio solution
- Medial (formerly Helix) online video server
- Camtasia Relay for video recording
- WebEx as the virtual classroom/meeting room
- WebPA as a peer rating tool
- 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
- Adobe Creative Cloud for graphic design, video editing, web development, photography
- Microsoft Office 365 for student email storage and cloud-based access to MS Office

Most recently, the University has been investing strongly in active learning spaces and social and teaching technologies through the updating of classroom based technology. This has included the introduction of flexible furniture and smartboards to classrooms, with attention also to connection points for students' own devices. Some work has also been undertaken on social spaces with provision of charging points, multiuser desks and big screens.

TEL governance and 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. Two central teams take a lead on TEL developments:

- The **Department of Learning and Teaching Enhancement (DLTE)**
- **Information Services (IS)** comprising both the IT and the Library

The Department of Learning and Teaching Enhancement 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 to support the adoption of technology. An Academic Developer led the Moodle minimum standards, the development of a new online hub for learning technology support, and works with School Academic Leads to organise local LTA events to promote technology enhanced learning.

The Department 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 PG Certificate Teaching and Learning in Higher Education. The PG Certificate Teaching and Learning in Higher Education 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 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 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 recognised 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.

Information Services combines IT Services and the University Library, and is responsible for managing the technical infrastructure and the provision of resources for TEL services. The Academic and Business Liaison (A&BL) team regularly consults with academic staff and students in the development and delivery of IT services, such as the previously mentioned social spaces project. With the institutional reorganisation the three faculty learning technologists have remained at their local campuses but are now managed within the central A&BL team. This is enabling them to work closer together as a unit in the development and support of academic staff's use of Moodle and related technologies. The reorganisation also sees the Learning Technologists working more closely with the IS Academic Advisor, with the Moodle development team, and with the central and campus IT support services.

TEL-specific policies

The Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy includes a commitment to raising the digital capabilities of staff, and includes a requirement for a Moodle minimum standard[32]. This has been designed to guide academic staff in creating Moodle environments that are well considered, consistent and accessible to all students. The standards have been driven by student feedback and as a response to the National Student Survey, to the Enhancement-led Institutional Review (ELIR), and to a report from the University Auditors. Academic staff are encouraged to go beyond a minimum standards through an institutional Benchmark for the Use of Technology in Modules[33], which helps 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 nonprescriptive *3E* framework (Enhance – Extend – Empower) 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. A Moodle module is considered as Enhanced through the implementation of the minimum standards, and staff are further supported through an LTA resource bank of case studies[34], providing illustrations of ways in which technologies may be used to support learning and teaching activities.

A key element of the Online and Transnational Education Strategy is the adoption of a standardised, sustainable and scalable model for the delivery of online higher education. There is a requirement for adherence to a standardised, consistent approach, teaching and assessment framework and pedagogy, supported by a dedicated support team, and a flexible but robust VLE in which staff and students can engage with ease. All coursework assessments are submitted and graded (using Turnitin and GradeMark) to ensure timely feedback to online students.

The University has also initiated a project looking at the e-submission of coursework for full time students. The project is still in the early stages of scoping, but definitely will lead to change in the near future.

In terms of disability support provision, Scottish universities are unaffected by the withdrawal of the Disabled Students' Allowances (DSA) in England and there has not been any policy development around this area.

Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) strategy

There have been no major changes to TEL service provision so far in response to the Competition and Markets Authority and to recent consumer protection law advice for higher education students.

Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF)

The Teaching Excellence Framework has not led to any major changes to TEL provision at this stage – the University is waiting for the technical consultation to complete, after which point the impact on Scotland should be more clearly defined. The University is seeking to remain within the TEF process for Year One, and will maintain a watching brief on the Year Two developments, and will remain involved in shaping the response to the Scottish Higher Education sector.

32   http://staff.napier.ac.uk/services/dlte/resources/MoodleMinimumStandards/Pages/MoodleMinimumStandards.aspx

33   http://staff.napier.ac.uk/services/vice-principal-academic/academic/TEL/TechBenchmark/Pages/home.aspx

34   *LTA resource bank:* http://staff.napier.ac.uk/services/dlte/LTA/resources/Pages/resources.aspx

Distance and open learning

The Online and Transnational Education Strategy 2020 sets out a strategic approach to all the University's off campus credit bearing provision. This includes delivery through the University's Global Online Higher Education model and an extension to this, establishing a Global Online blended model with elements of delivery and student support provided through partnerships. The Strategy will include a commitment to grow student numbers by enrolling an additional 5,000 transnational and distance learning students on its programmes by 2020.

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 are 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.

Currently the University is not engaged in the delivery of MOOC courses. However, an open Moodle server (**http://open.napier.ac.uk/**) is being used to support prospective and current students and includes courses on dissertation support, as well as introduction to learning and teaching and pre arrival support.

Future challenges

The University has established a new Programme-Focused Approach to Assessment and Feedback (PFAAF) Project, which has 6 workstreams, one of which is *e-Submission of Coursework and e-Receipting*. Unless there are exceptions, all written coursework will be electronically submitted and electronically receipted. This workstream will pilot e-submission over the next academic year 16/17 and will draw on TEL support services.

Queen Mary University of London

Interview with: Stella Ekebuisi, Head of e-Learning and Deputy Director of the Centre for Academic and Professional Development

Overview

Queen Mary University of London (QMUL), a Russell Group member under the University of London federation, has a history dating back to 1887. Based across five sites in east and central London, QMUL is a research-intensive university with world renowned facilities and subject specialists. Comprised of three academic faculties – Humanities and Social Sciences (eight schools), Science and Engineering (five schools and two institutes), and Medicine and Dentistry (six institutes and a centre), the University offers 240+ undergraduate and postgraduate courses to over 21,000 students.

QMUL runs two joint, blended programmes for a growing number of students in China (currently, approximately 1,500): one based in the Beijing University of Posts and Telecommunications and the other in Nanchang University. These are not distance learners but are taught on campus in China by QMUL lecturers over two week intensive blocks of teaching, and supported outside of these sessions by online facilities.

There are plans to increase QMUL's distance learning provision. Currently about 600 students are enrolled on 25 specialist postgraduate programmes, primarily based in medicine and dentistry. In addition, an undergraduate law programme and a soon to be launched Global MBA are managed by the University of London's International Academy (UoLIA) and delivered by QMUL staff.

TEL strategy and drivers for TEL

QMUL's Student Experience, Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategy (SETLA) covers the period 2015–20[35]. Developed to support the overall institutional strategy, one of SETLA's five key objectives is to *grow our virtual presence to allow new modes of teaching and learning, notably by exploiting the potential of e-learning, while retaining the benefits of personal interactions between academic and student*.

Although limited reference is made about the opportunities afforded by Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) within SETLA, it does state that over the duration of the strategy the University *would expect greater use of technology to allow students, both on campus and at a distance, to access print, video, audio and lecture capture material when and where most suits them so that direct contact time can be for interactive sessions. Under the objective Ensuring a high quality learning experience for all students through the teaching and learning resources available to staff and students,* an indicator of progress is expected to be *Satisfaction on QMSS [QMUL's student survey] with the quality of the technology designed to support learning.*

In order to address the more strategic direction of TEL at QMUL and how it supports learning and teaching, the E-Learning Unit (ELU) has developed the University's first e-learning strategy in consultation with the QMUL e-Learning Steering and User Groups; at the time of writing, this strategy was in a draft form. Once launched, the strategy will cover the period 2016–20 to coincide with SETLA. The intention is for this to be an enabling strategy, which will be positioned underneath SETLA, since it will define how technology can support and achieve the objectives of SETLA. The four main areas of attention of the e-learning strategy are on:

- students
- staff
- enhancing and diversifying practice
- Infrastructure

At the same time, the institution is also developing an IT Strategy, with which the E-Learning Unit is heavily involved in terms of highlighting which technologies support learning and teaching. An institutionally agreed, published e-learning strategy will obviously be very important here as a complementary document.

Prior to the current SETLA strategy, e-learning had received a high profile reference within one of the top level strategic objectives of the previous institutional strategy, whereby 100% of QMUL programmes were expected to have substantial e-learning components. This meant tying all TEL activity to that one objective, which was quite challenging since a lot of the online learning work at QMUL is blended. Therefore, a more detailed, specific e-learning strategy is clearly now required.

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35   *QMUL's SETLA (Student Experience, Teaching, Learning and Assessment) Strategy:* **http://www.qmul.ac.uk/strategy/setla**

In addition to the strategic aims of the institution, other drivers for TEL at QMUL come from a number of areas. The previous Vice Principal for Learning and Teaching (who left in September 2015) was very keen on technology and supported the view that it can play an important role in improving and transforming students' learning and teaching experiences. The migration in 2012 from the old WebCT-based Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) to the current Moodle platform provided the opportunity to revitalise its use across the institution. The subsequent move to Moodle, which was well resourced by the university, proved to be a successful outcome and the pressure to maintain and continue to develop it remains high. Institutional investment of the then new VLE led to recognition of increased workload and enabled the recruitment of additional e-learning support staff. Finally, the *QMUL Model*, a teaching and learning initiative currently in development, will be a major driver in the use of e-portfolios, setting out how academic credits will be awarded to students for skills development activities and how the e-portfolio will be supported.

Within the academic departments of QMUL, there are some areas which are very keen on embedding the use of TEL, particularly those in competitive curriculum areas such as the Medical School. In the School of English and Drama, the high uptake of TEL came about as a result of an individual member of staff who had great enthusiasm for e-learning and who was subsequently promoted to a more senior status, enabling greater resourcing in this area; the e-learning culture in this School started with him, but has continued to grow. Where specific e-learning posts have been recruited in Schools (such as e-strategy managers), these tend to be more engaged and creative in their use of TEL. On the other hand, it is a challenge to change more sceptical, hostile attitudes that other Schools hold, which are not convinced by or keen on using technology to enhance learning and teaching, despite a few individuals who are willing.

TEL provision

The Moodle/Mahara platform (*QMplus*) and Echo360 (*Q-Review*) for lecture recording are the core, most relied-upon institutional technologies at QMUL and are centrally supported by the E-Learning Unit (ELU). In terms of providing video for use in teaching, specialist equipment is available for staff and supported by a dedicated part time member of the ELU team; hopefully in time a recording studio will be established to function as a self service facility. QMplus is externally hosted and Q-Review will likely be migrating to the Echo360 cloud hosted solution in the near future. Although there is no official outsourcing strategy or approach at QMUL, there has been an informal move towards the *Software as a Service* model.

TurningPoint clickers are available for departments to use during classes. During 2015–16, the institution was forced to migrate away from its media server MediaCore due to the supplier removing the product, and Kaltura was selected following a tendering process. Turnitin, which is integrated with the VLE, is also widely used across the University and supported by the ELU. Although not officially supported, other learning technologies such as Articulate are accessible for use and training is made available; laptops are loaned out if required.

In terms of non-centrally supported technology, the Faculty of Science and Engineering utilises a number of home grown systems developed specifically for them, such as tools for managing electronic assessment and supporting personal tutors. While these tools offer good functionality, it has proved challenging, due to lack of funding, to bring these together centrally so that the whole institution can benefit from them. The Medical School has bought in its own portfolio tool to serve as an NHS logbook. These tools are managed by different teams and are not integrated with centrally-supported services.

In terms of mobile accessibility, there is no clear policy yet at the University; this is partly due to the improvements that are currently being undertaken to address wifi capability. During 2016–17, it is hoped that the use of mobile devices for interactive teaching in classes will be possible and thus supported. The e-learning strategy in development will play a role here to help establish the funding commitments required for improved wifi. It will do this by articulating the benefits of mobile enhanced learning and how it can be achieved through the availability of good wifi coverage. The University does have an official mobile app (*My QMUL*), which is managed by the Marketing and Communications directorate, and provided by Ombiel. The ELU believes that Moodle's dedicated mobile app, which was specifically developed by external providers, is far superior to what the app currently offers in terms of Moodle support.

TEL governance and structures

The E-Learning Unit is positioned within the Centre for Academic and Professional Development (CAPD)[36], and the Head of the Unit is also the Deputy Director of CAPD. The ELU comprises ten members of staff: the Head of Unit, two senior learning technologists (who have responsibility for learning applications, and policy and change management respectively), three learning technologists (including one with specific responsibility for video and multimedia), two learning technology officers, an e-learning application support analyst and an e-learning support administrator.

36   QMUL's E-Learning Unit: **http://www.elearning.capd.qmul.ac.uk/about-us/**

The ELU team has grown over the past five years; with this growth, the main change has been the formalisation of specific roles, where previously all staff members did everything. These better defined roles have provided much more clarity over who does what in the team. However, over time, it has also meant that staff on lower grades tend to be those who manage support enquiries; this has been problematic for staff morale, as post holders aim to be promoted out of this particular role because it is the most junior position even though it is vitally important. The ELU team is divided into two broad functions, each overseen by a senior learning technologist:

1. Learning Applications – determining how these are tested, specified, developed supported and maintained.

2. Enhancements – looking outwards; getting the best use out of technology by offering consultancy, advising staff, mentoring students on production schemes, managing projects, and developing strategy and policies.

At other times, the ELU team will all come together on high stakes projects such as Moodle upgrades.

The Academic Applications team within IT Services looks after the infrastructural, technical side of QMUL's TEL provision, and meets weekly with the senior learning technologists in the ELU team. Across the university, ELU liaise closely with Student Services (Library, Careers and Learning Development), working together on collaborative projects.

An E-Learning User Group exists for each of the three academic faculties and another for Professional Services. The purpose of the groups is to *consider e-learning issues and priorities across e-learning at the faculty/professional services level*. These four groups report to the E-Learning Steering Group, which is chaired by the Head of ELU and comprises the Chairs of the four User Groups plus representatives from IT Services, the Student Union Education Sabbatical and the Head of Engagement, Retention and Success. The Steering Group has a remit to *review the progress of and provide direction for existing e-learning initiatives, as well as to prioritise requests for future e-learning projects*. Like the User Groups, the Steering Group meets four times a year and it reports to the Education Quality Board, with requests for development projects going to the IT Strategy Board.

A Governance Model (Figure 1) is in place to ensure a consistent approach to development is maintained[37]. The Learning Technologist Group, a community of staff members who support e-learning across the institution, meets monthly. The establishment of these Groups has been deemed a great success from the point of view of ELU's engagement with staff members and ability to embed e-learning throughout the institution. ELU produces a monthly internal e-newsletter for the e-learning practitioner network.
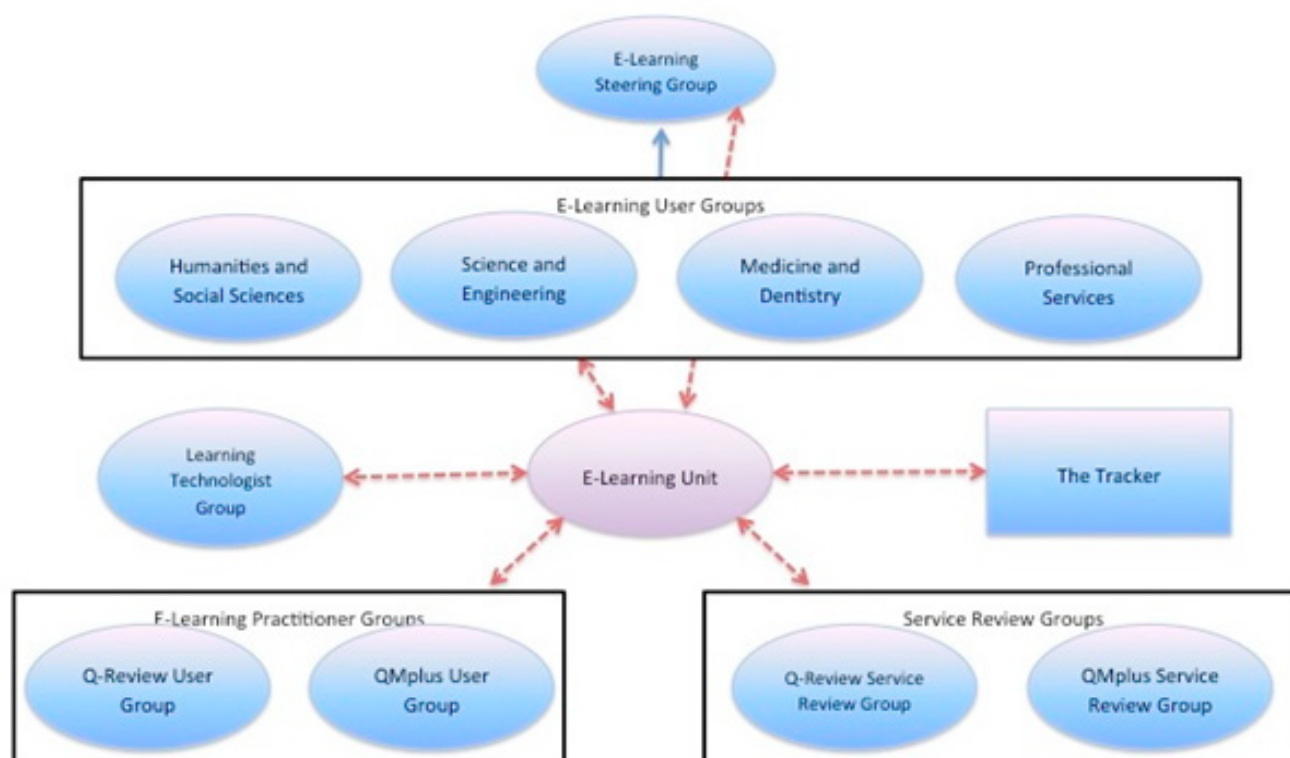

Figure 1: Governance Model for E-Learning at QMUL

TEL-specific policies

Current usage policies and guidelines are in on-going development for the key systems; where a policy is not already in place, the team is reactive and deals with any problematic issues as and when they arise. For example, a policy for creating user accounts for Mahara and a Moodle archiving policy were established as a result of a high number of enquiries in those areas. An online exams policy is also to be developed in 2016–17.

Closer to institutional strategy – and more broadly applied – is the policy for Q-Review, which was submitted and approved at the highest academic committee level (the Senate) to provide clarity on how the system operates (largely opt out) and what the responsibilities are on different users and Faculties. QMUL's Turnitin policy sets out how the tool is used and what the obligations are on staff members and Schools using it. All Schools are required to have a Turnitin statement to set out how it is used within the School, which would appear in school level handbook. Adherence to the Turnitin policy is yet be reviewed by ELU.

The Head of Disability and Dyslexia Services is managing the Disability Support Allowance (DSA) withdrawal, but is working closely with ELU over the promotion of lecture capture from a disability perspective. For example, the institution's access to recording policy determines the right of disabled students to have access to recordings of their lecturers. QMUL's fulfilment to meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act is therefore noted in the Q-Review policy, which the ELU team supports. The Student Opportunities Fund (overseen by the Disability and Dyslexia Service) also contributes to a number of Echo360 installations, although the majority is paid for by the institution. However, establishing this financial buy-in helps to highlight the importance of lecture capture across the university. Additional projects ELU is planning in order to support students with disabilities are an accessibility review of Moodle and a pilot of a closed captioning service, which is currently underway.

Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) strategy

This strategy is being overseen by Marketing and Communications and Academic Registry, and the current work in hand has not yet examined anything in relation to e-learning.

Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF)

At the time of writing, the ELU team was not yet involved in work at QMUL related to the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF). However, it is certain that e-learning will play an important role in demonstrating how technology is used in teaching across the institution.

The Vice Principal for Learning and Teaching is currently putting together an advisory board for the TEF, and the Head of ELU is expected to be a member of this or to contribute to it via the CAPD Director.

Distance and open learning

The provision of distance learning at QMUL is small at the moment, but there is a strategic aim within the institution to expand this to double the number of students studying online, thereby improving institutional finances. The Head of ELU sits on the Programme Approval Board for new distance learning programmes so she can direct programme directors to her team should help be required. Once courses have been approved, programme directors are encouraged to liaise with the ELU team to ensure that the courses are designed in a robust structure, make use of sound assessment methods, contain diverse content, clear communication routes with students are agreed and a detailed, explicit learning intention. For taught programmes, QMUL's Quality Assurance processes are much tighter. With respect to the expansion of the distance learning provision, QMUL is investigating a number of routes to identify the kick starter funding crucial to the expansion.

QMUL does not have an official, institutional stance on open learning. There was some previous interest in the potential of MOOCs for driving the initiative of a new cross disciplinary Faculty for Life Sciences. A MOOC in this area could have provided an initial opportunity to bring together academic staff from across faculties to work collaboratively on a blended course. However, the suggestion was not taken further due to a lack of support from senior management. As further requests for MOOCs start to come in, QMUL needs to agree on a position and develop an implementation plan for delivery if an affirmative response to MOOCs is made.

The School of Physics provides an example of open practice as it has opened up all of its Moodle based academic courses, so they are free for the public to access without logins.

Future challenges

It is expected that the developing QMUL Model will be implemented within an aggressive timeline and will require support from the E-Learning Unit. However, it is unclear right now exactly what will be required, so planning directly for it is not yet possible. In order to be as prepared as possible, the ELU team is planning to evaluate Mahara early in 2016–17 and be ready for the go ahead, as this will be a particularly high priority for the VP for Learning and Teaching.

Assessment and feedback processes have been an area requiring development for some time. Initial work commenced in January 2016 in terms of gathering user experiences using the Electronic Management of Assessment Lifecycle, developed by Manchester Metropolitan University, to frame the findings. No further funding has been assigned to this work, so the team will need to progress this as much as possible with little or no resourcing, starting with finalising the online exams policy.

Finally, evaluation of TEL services at QMUL will be a priority. In order to report to the institution how e-learning is progressing, staff and student surveys will be conducted to gauge satisfaction levels.

Ravensbourne

Interview with: Dr Rosemary Stott, Associate Dean, Learning Innovation/Department of Content

Overview

Ravensbourne is a higher education provider that specialises in digital media and design. It is a single site institution based on the Greenwich Peninsula in London. It moved to this purpose built building on the peninsula from Chislehurst, Kent in 2010. Ravensbourne delivers foundation, undergraduate and taught postgraduate programmes; its courses are validated by the University of the Arts London. Ravensbourne is currently seeking Teaching Degree Awarding Powers (TDAP). Current student numbers are 2,400. A large number of students are currently from the London area. There are two Schools within the institution, the School of Media and the School of Design. It has approximately 80 permanent academic staff plus sessional staff.

TEL strategy and drivers for TEL

When Ravensbourne moved to its new purpose designed building on the Greenwich Peninsula[38], there was a strategic decision to focus on *digital*. This focus required changes in the courses provided and in the learning environments available. The new building is largely open plan and is designed to encourage a collaborative environment reflective of the media and design industries. The new location was intended to continue to grow the industry links that Ravensbourne had successfully fostered.

The focus on digital approaches has helped to create a culture that embraces technology. As a consequence, there is not a separate technology enhanced learning (TEL) strategy. Also as a small specialist institution, there is not seen to be a need to have explicit strategies to enact and support TEL development. The scale means there are not distinct units, and TEL developments can be more easily acted upon and communication facilitated through the close integration of academic and professional services staff.

Ravensbourne is an example of where arts subjects have a high level of engagement with TEL. This can be linked back to the policy decision taken more than a decade ago to embrace digital practices as part of the planning to move to the new location; all courses therefore have a digital focus. This did mean some reduction in arts courses, but what they currently have as part of their portfolio is digitally focused.

Ravensbourne has a three year strategy cycle. Its current institutional strategy, *Futures in the Making*[39], covers the period 2015–2018. The first aim of this strategy is:

> To deliver academic excellence in the learning, teaching, research and knowledge exchange of design, media, communication and technology through the development of new educational models for HE and industry.

This includes an objective to *remain at the forefront of the creative exploitation of digital technology*.

TEL is embedded within the Teaching and Learning Strategy, which is aligned with the *Futures in the Making Strategy*. The institution has developed a Teaching and Learning Roadmap, which sets out the objectives and actions for teaching and learning to meet the institutional strategy, creating a work plan for action. Even within this roadmap, there is not a specific section on TEL; it permeates the document reflecting the culture and expectation for the use of technology in all teaching and learning activities.

Ravensbourne has encouraged approaches such as *flipped learning* with some success. The philosophy has been linked to a blended learning approach with the aim of reducing the amount of lecturing that is taking place; this is also a response to the challenges faced with the open plan design of the building.

TEL provision

Academic staff at Ravensbourne are practitioner-academics, the majority of whom are recruited from industry. They have strong links with industry and have an employability focus, which is seen as a strength for the institution; as such there is an expectation that staff will use the latest techniques and technologies in their discipline, as well as for learning and teaching. Staff are recruited on that basis and the institutional culture reflects that; there is a very open approach to the use of technology.

38   https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ravensbourne_(college)#/media/File:Ravensborne_College.jpg

39   http://www.ravensbourne.ac.uk/footer-menu/our-strategy

Ravensbourne has been using Moodle as its virtual learning environment (VLE) for a number of years and has recently taken the decision to outsource its hosting to Webanywhere. The rationale for this decision is related to issues of reliability, provision of additional support and server space.

The institution also provides Google Apps for Education as part of its core toolset to staff and students.

Ravensbourne is in the process of purchasing Nearpod. This purchase is an example of how staff are still adapting to working in the new building and also how Ravensbourne, as a small institution, can make quick decisions to bring in new technologies. With the majority of learning spaces being open plan, issues of noise when there are multiple classes in the same spaces (but only separated by screens) could occur. The use of Nearpod was trialled by a member of staff as a means of introducing more interactive sessions and being able to deliver content to students' own devices and it has quickly been taken forward as an institutional development.

Beyond these supported services, there are no other core tools. E-portfolios are seen as important for the creative industries. However, Ravensbourne does not provide an institutional e-portfolio. It is recognised that different tools, such as Tumblr, will be used more in different industries and so there is flexibility in application. This open approach to the use of social media tools is supported by the IT department, recognising the norms within particular creative industries.

All students are provided with Adobe Creative Suite and Office 365. Students receive the software as part of a bursary scheme, which ensures that all students are equipped with their own laptop (see BYOD Policy below).

TEL governance and structures

Ravensbourne's TEL governance and support structures are reflective of the size of the institution. The management of TEL is through Learning Innovation, which is overseen by the Associate Dean for Learning Innovation; although it should be noted that this is not a fulltime role as the Associate Dean is also responsible for managing a suite of courses in the Department of Content (School of Media). There are other Associate Dean roles within the institution that have some academic development responsibilities such as peer observation of teaching.

Until recently, Ravensbourne had one learning technologist located in the IT department. 18 months ago, a new support structure was put into place. There is now a Learning Technology Research Centre (LTRC), which reports to the Associate Dean Learning Innovation. The LTRC has four staff; it is led a by a Principal Fellow Researcher whose responsibility is to undertake research into the use of learning technologies and bring in funding for projects, such as EU projects. This team now has a Learning Technologist, whose role is focused on managing the systems available in the institution and who manages a Learning Technology Support Officer with a training focus. While the LTRC is managed through Learning Innovation, it is funded by the IT Department; a structure that works within the scale of the institution. The IT department currently has 15 staff.

Some generic training is provided to academic staff; all new academic staff are provided with a one to one session to assess their needs. In general, given that academic staff and learning technologists are co-located in the same open plan office, support is provided in a just in time way. Whilst it is recognised that this can be demanding on occasions. Ravensbourne also provides an e-learning hub with access to online resources.

Ravensbourne has a skills development framework for staff. This is included as part of the appraisal process; staff are monitored against this and set developmental objectives. TEL is included as part of the framework.

In terms of governance and decision making, there are different mechanisms in place. For resource decisions, these are taken between the Associate Dean Learning Innovation, LTRC and the IT Department. So, for example, the recent decisions on adopting Nearpod and on the outsourcing of the hosting of Moodle were taken in this way.

The Learning Curriculum and Student Experience Committee is the pathway for decision making on the adoption of policy and standards. This was the forum that approved the institution's Moodle minimum standards and would be the location for any updates to other related policies such as the Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) Policy.

TEL-specific policies

In the context of Ravensbourne's institutional culture and expectations, their BYOD policy is significant. Through this policy, bursaries are provided for students for the provision of their own laptops in addition to free access to the Adobe Creative Suite. The policy has been in place since moving to the new building. It was reflective of the desire to emphasise digital and the expectation was set that all students would have their own computer. Since the move into the new building, the bursary scheme has evolved from being prescriptive about the laptops provided to being more flexible to the needs of particular courses. Whilst work has been done with other mobile devices, it is laptops that have remained the focus for the bursary scheme. In its current form, the bursary scheme provides students with £300 toward their computer and payment for the balance can be managed by instalments. An example of how the scheme

has evolved to meet specific needs is that for some courses, students can wait to claim the bursary until their final year (e.g. BA in Animation), when there is a need to ensure that they have the most up to date computer for the work they are expected to undertake.

In addition to the BYOD policy, there are Moodle minimum standards, an IT Strategy, and Guidelines on the use of social media. The latter is also covered as part of student induction.

Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF)

The Teaching Excellence Framework is starting to have an impact on the institution. Staffing has been increased in other areas of the institution in preparation for data and planning. It is recognised that it might have implications for the use of the VLE, as a potential source of evidence for student engagement. Ravensbourne is not actively engaged at this time in the use of learning analytics.

Distance and open learning

As an institution that does not currently have taught-degree awarding powers, Ravensbourne does not offer any online learning. Staff are encouraged to share resources online and a range of platforms are used for sharing. Vimeo is used mainly by the School of Media. The institution does make extensive use of Lynda.com, to which all students have free access.

Future challenges

Receipt of Teaching Degree Awarding Powers will provide a catalyst for a redesign of courses, offering an opportunity to incorporate Ravensbourne's digital vision more strategically in line with the *Futures in the Making* strategy. They have now had five years in the new location on the Greenwich Peninsula and adaptations to working in the creative space they have available can also be accommodated. In addition, Ravensbourne is developing a suite of institutional graduate attributes, which will have a strong focus towards work ready graduates in the creative industries.

The strategy also sets targets for increasing student numbers and having a greater international perspective. All these will create challenges for how the institution will make effective use of TEL. In the context of a small specialist institution, maintaining staff capability, issues of time and sharing practice will be significant challenges.

Sheffield Hallam University

Interview with: Brian Irwin, Head of Digital Capability

Overview

Sheffield Hallam University is a large, teaching-focused institution with four faculties and 17 departments. It has 31,500 students, of whom nearly 78% are undergraduates and 22% postgraduates. There are 4,530 staff, of which 2,160 are academic staff.

There are two campuses in Sheffield, and there is some collaborative provision overseas, although there are no overseas campuses.

TEL strategy and drivers for TEL

There was a three year rolling TEL strategy – updated annually – between 2011 and 2014, but with a new University Strategy introduced in 2015, the University has sought to reduce the number of individual strategies, and TEL is now incorporated into the institutional Learning and Teaching strategy[40].

The plans in the strategy are structured around four main objectives:

1. Providing high quality and popular programmes.
2. Delivering outstanding teaching.
3. Developing a culture of continuous improvement.
4. Providing an excellent infrastructure to support our teaching and learning.

There is a strong emphasis on both virtual and physical learning environments in the fourth objective. TEL elements of the objective are:

- Mandating minimum threshold for TEL use (supported by guidance and resources to enhance practice);
- Adopting innovative technologies to support learner engagement;
- Supporting digital capabilities development for students and staff;
- Developing new flexible modes of delivery;
- Implementing technologies to support online submission and feedback; and
- Implementing learner analytic tools.

There is also a new Digital Learning Programme which is exploring working with departments to identify TEL practices that could best support them, including suggesting new possibilities for them and helping to build the digital capability of their staff and students.

The six main drivers for TEL use at Sheffield Hallam University are:

1. An educational experience that supports students' development to live, learn and work in the digital age
2. Flexibility to engage with learning materials, tutors and peers in a way that suits their increasingly busy lifestyles
3. Opportunities to extend interaction beyond the classroom, engaging with peers, tutors and experts across the globe
4. Authentic learning opportunities that draw on high quality learning resources, real world case studies and valid assessment tasks
5. Opportunities to take control of their own learning, enhancing engagement and improving attainment
6. Administrative convenience to support the wider student experience

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40 http://extra.shu.ac.uk/sas/quality/AcademicPoliciesDocuments/Learning%20and%20Teaching%20Strategy%202015-2020.pdf

Departmental culture has a strong influence on TEL uptake, engagement and consistency. In some departments there is top down support and prioritisation of TEL, meaning that TEL is a core part of academic practice; in others practice is more variable. Some faculties have pushed ahead in specific areas – for example the Faculty of Health and Wellbeing has been ahead of the rest of the University in online submission and feedback. Strong academic leadership and support resources have helped to make a difference for them.

TEL provision

Sheffield Hallam provides the following tools:

- Blackboard Learn VLE
- Blackboard Collaborate
- Turnitin – originality checking only
- PebblePad
- Office365
- Google Apps – used as a wiki as well
- Medial
- ScreencastermaticPro
- Talis Aspire resource list
- WordPress – staff only; students use PebblePad or the Blackboard blog tool
- TurningPoint – currently reviewing alternatives

The main systems – Blackboard Learn, WordPress and Medial – are locally hosted.

There is no explicit BYOD policy but wifi is ubiquitous, and there is also a remote desktop service. There are also software purchasing deals for Microsoft and Adobe allowing students to access these suites for free, or at reduced cost. The University offers a mobile app based on Blackboard Mosaic, but as this is no longer being developed they are considering alternatives.

TEL governance and structures

TEL support is led by the Digital Capabilities team, formerly the TEL team, which is located within Learning Enhancement and Academic Development. Sister teams within Learning Enhancement and Academic Development include Academic Quality and Standards, Academic Professional Development, and Academic Practice and Learning Innovation – as outlined in the organisational chart below. There is good cooperation and co-working across the groups, especially with Academic Practice and Learning Innovation which deals with curriculum development and innovation.

Figure 1: Learning Enhancement and Academic Development organisational chart

The Digital Capabilities team is led by the Head of Digital Capability and has three staff in lecturer/senior lecturer roles, two learning technologists, and three student learning assistants (full time students who work 7.5 hours per week). The remit of the group covers TEL and digital capabilities for students and academic staff, with a focus on strategy, policy and major projects. The structure of the group and of the wider directorate has been planned recently as part of a restructure.

There are also local TEL support teams in the faculties varying in size from one to four FTE. These faculty based teams typically have an academic lead; their structure and development has grown organically, responding to local needs.

Teams in the IT department which support TEL include the Service Desk for first line support, and the Web and Learning Environments team who run the VLE and related TEL services. There is a reorganisation of IT Services underway at the time of writing which is likely to affect TEL provision, but it is hoped that this will have a positive impact on the department's ability to prioritise and resource TEL developments.

Governance is provided through a TEL Strategy Group, chaired by the Head of Digital Capability, and a TEL Operational Group. The strategy group meets monthly and includes a representative from each of the faculty teams, a senior member of IT staff, and student representatives. It oversees major initiatives and staff development for the groups and for the institution. The operational group meets fortnightly and includes a representative from the Digital Capability team, each of the faculty teams, a member of Web and Learning Environments, a representative from the Library, and a member of the service desk.

Neither group reports to a committee, though proposed wider initiatives or projects typically would go from the strategic group to the Learning and Teaching Forum. The University Projects Board allocates funding for major initiatives; the IT department funds more routine hardware and software needs.

Online information

- Team pages for the former TEL team[41] (new ones are under development)
- FAQ-style support[42] is integrated into the VLE using EesySoft which displays help to the user based on what they are viewing in the VLE
- More guidance around TEL is in Teaching Essentials[43]

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41   https://blogs.shu.ac.uk/telteam

42   https://telhelp.shu.ac.uk/

43   https://go.shu.ac.uk/teachingessentials

TEL-specific policies

There is a minimum requirements or Threshold Standards policy. This has been well accepted in principle, although compliance is variable. An early review – before the threshold standards actually became policy – revealed that less than a fifth of courses fully met it, although 64% were very close. Simple changes such as adopting the Talis Aspire Resource list would enable a large number of courses to meet the standards. In future it is likely that a sample, rather than a full audit, will be used.

Threshold Standards for Supporting Learning with Technology Policy
These standards set out the minimum good practice for online support and delivery of all modules, whether delivered wholly online, face to face, or a combination of the two. Through consultation, they have been established to enable a consistent student experience, and create a high quality foundation for learning across SHU[1].

1. Every taught module has a Blackboard module site
To ensure a consistent student experience, every module should be supported by a Blackboard module site. Where other online tools are used to support learning activities, they should be integrated with or linked to from the Blackboard site.

2. Sites are easy to navigate and provide access to core information
Consistent approaches to the structure and presentation of module sites across courses help students and staff to engage with sites quickly and effectively. With this in mind:

- Check the site's main structure corresponds to the standard module site template.
- Name content areas, folders and items meaningfully, and organise for easy navigation.
- Ensure that essential module information (e.g. module descriptor, assessment schedule, etc.) is easy to locate.
- Upload learning materials such as lecture notes and hand-outs, preferably before each session.
- Link to the Resource List Online for the module.
- Keep resources and links up-to-date.

3. Communication is clear, and sets expectations for engagement
A successful and rewarding student learning experience is underpinned by an understanding of how to engage with the module online, its content and learning activities. Specifically:

- Use a welcome announcement to introduce the module and signpost

Figure 2: Excerpt from the Threshold Standards for Supporting Learning with Technology Policy[44]

There is also an *assessment journey programme*, which will lead towards universal online submission and feedback – relevant documents include:

⇨ Policy for Summative Assessment[45]

⇨ Implementation Principles and Procedures for Summative Assessment[46]

The Head of Digital Capability is one of the business leads for the programme and a colleague from Digital Capabilities is seconded to it full time.

Withdrawal of Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA)

The withdrawal of the DSA is leading to a move to empower students to take better notes themselves, in addition to continuing to pay for note takers where needed. The University is also looking into options to support students to make audio recordings of classes. There is also a video based capture system in the 12 largest rooms. As there is a need for potentially recording the screen and audio in any classroom, options for doing this with existing technologies are being considered, such as Google Hangouts on Air and Blackboard Collaborate, as well as exploring full lecture capture systems. However, there is an institutional ethos which is to reduce the dependence on the lecture as a pedagogy, meaning a full lecture capture system may not be desirable.

44   http://extra.shu.ac.uk/sas/quality/AcademicPoliciesDocuments/ThresholdStandardsforSupportingLearningwithTechnology.pdf

45   https://students.shu.ac.uk/regulations/assessment_awards/Policy%20for%20Summative%20Assessment.pdf

46   https://students.shu.ac.uk/regulations/assessment_awards/Implementation%20Principles%20and%20Procedures%20for%20Summative%20Assessment.pdf

Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) strategy

To date the Competition and Markets Authority is not having a significant effect on TEL service provision.

Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF)

The TEF is a topic of discussion within the institution, and the need to demonstrate impact, and what metrics to use, is a focus. The connection between the TEF and learning analytics remains unclear at present. Retention and achievement data will be important.

Additionally Sheffield Hallam University is one of the first institutions to be reviewed using HEFCE's revised operating model for Quality Assessment.

Distance and open learning

Distance and open learning are not major features of the institution's provision. There are around 550 distance students on 14 programmes and this level of activity is unlikely to change. However, there is more interest – through the Learning and Teaching Strategy – in mixed mode provision in which online learning is provided in parallel with face to face programmes using technologies such as Blackboard Collaborate.

There have been three SHOOCs – Sheffield Hallam Open Online Courses – delivered through PebblePad; they are about to run one on Blackboard's Open Education Platform. They are also using badges to certify recognition of prior learning and to provide a bridge between SHOOCs and online masters programmes. For one of the SHOOCs there is an option to transfer to a full master's programme after a few weeks of open study.

Future challenges

Staff engagement is a challenge as academic staff often have other priorities and demands on their time. The Threshold Standards and Assessment policies are seen as a route to reach staff and start conversations.

Development of digital capabilities at scale is another challenge, particularly in terms of resourcing.

Faculty teams are helpful in addressing these challenges, and the Digital Learning Programme is thought also to have potential here, as it will involve working with staff at grassroots level to review their practice and suggest different possibilities to them.

Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance

Interview with: Carol Howells, e-Learning Technologist and Louise Jackson, Head of Learning Enhancement

Overview

Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance was established through a merger that took place in 2005 between Trinity College of Music (founded in 1872) and Laban (founded in 1948). It is now one of nine conservatoires in the UK.

As a small, specialised higher education institution, Trinity Laban has two faculties – Music and Dance. Its 690 undergraduate and 270 postgraduate students study across four campuses in southeast London. The nature of the professional practice and its relationship to curriculum at the Conservatoire is such that many of the teaching staff are part time or hourly paid, and combine their teaching responsibilities with continuing artistic practice at the highest international level.

Although primarily a teaching based institution, research is of great importance at Trinity Laban as noted in its mission statement, and there is significant emphasis on professional artistic practice in all aspects of teaching. Postgraduate research degrees are offered and the Conservatoire supports a broad range of research based activity.

TEL strategy and drivers for TEL

The application of technology is positioned in Trinity Laban's vision for its learning and teaching culture[47]. In order to achieve its goals, the Conservatoire aims to produce graduates who are *confident in the creative use of technologies within their art form*.

The strategic priorities for Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) are fully embedded in the current Learning and Teaching Plan, which covers the period 2015–2019[48]. The implementation of the previous plan produced a number of achievements, which feed into the latest iteration. For example, a TEL project group acts as a discussion forum for a broad range of staff to explore the development of TEL. This was established as a sub group of the Learning and Teaching Board (LTB) that oversees the governance and development of Learning and Teaching.

The current Learning and Teaching Plan identifies that successful development of TEL requires a *bottom up approach working with individuals to develop a growing user rate and infrastructure*. Importantly, the aim has been to emphasise the pedagogy rather than the technology. The development of standards and expectations for Trinity Laban's Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), which is a Moodle platform, and other TEL activities feature clearly in the teacher and student engagement theme of the plan. Under the Curriculum Development theme, six key objectives are defined including the aim *to use technology effectively and when pedagogically appropriate to enhance the construction and delivery of programmes*. Achievement of the objectives includes the following:

- Investigating further opportunities for blended and distance learning. Increasing the use of digital platforms to offer a greater enhanced range of blended learning.

- Identifying, promoting and resourcing creative opportunities for TEL within the curriculum.

- Continuing to develop Moodle as the VLE and investing in improving its connectivity to other IT systems.

- Developing and resourcing flipped classroom and other types of technology enhanced platforms to support engagement with programmes of study.

- Further embedding TEL within the strategic planning of Curriculum Development in order for TEL to be used as a creative opportunity within Learning and Teaching.

The Learning and Teaching Plan for 2015–2019 outlines a pathway for Technology Enhanced Learning development; there is a shift away from the term *e-learning* and inclusion of a range of technologies, not just the VLE, is evident. Since introducing the VLE in 2011, the drivers have been related to practice and are curriculum specific. For example, students studying Dance Science have to learn how to use dedicated technology related to their subject and in Music programmes, students use specific applications to support their musicianship classes. In this way, the learning technology has to apply appropriately to the academic programmes.

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47   *Trinity Laban Vision:* **http://www.trinitylaban.ac.uk/about-us/governance/our-vision**

48   *Trinity Laban Learning and Teaching Plans 2015–19:* **http://www.trinitylaban.ac.uk/sites/default/files/trinity_laban_conservatoire_of_ music_and_dance_-_learning_and_teaching_plan_2015-19.pdf**

Finally, a driver common across the HE sector focuses on meeting student expectations and addressing different types of learners. Developing Trinity Laban's strategy for the electronic management of assessment, in order to improve the turnaround of providing feedback and grades, has been an additional but equally important development to enhance the student experience.

TEL provision

The institutional virtual learning environment Moodle is hosted externally and is centrally supported by the IT department and managed by the Learning Enhancement Unit. Since the previous Learning and Teaching Plan was implemented, significant work in *making Moodle more user friendly* has taken place. There has been increased use of Moodle, aided by the widespread adoption of online submission of assessed work.

Planet eStream, which integrates with Moodle, has been in place at Trinity Laban since 2013 to store digitised audio and video recordings as well as hosting an archive of older media content. The second most relied upon technology, it was first used by the Faculty of Dance but is now increasingly used by the Faculty of Music, which, for example, uses it to securely store copyrighted music, assessments and pieces recorded in class. The platform uses a permission based protocol to ensure appropriate access is provided accordingly. eStream is hosted internally and supported by the Audio Visual (AV) team.

The institution initially offered Mahara as its portfolio system when the VLE was introduced in 2011, as it had been included in the hosted Moodle package; this continued until 2013–14. Usage by students was limited as they found the platform clunky and old fashioned, despite encouragement from teaching staff. The platform was removed, as it was not suitably supporting learning and teaching and the types of curriculum delivered by the institution. Trinity Laban students are establishing *portfolio careers*, so they are strongly encouraged to maintain their own websites, and this focus is embedded within certain modules on their programmes. Ultimately, they will graduate using their own self-promotional method; however the Conservatoire aims to provide them with experiences that allow them to engage in developing this material. In the performing arts industry, professional looking websites are expected so engagement in how to establish one is a valuable educational activity. Students are taught to market themselves using *digital calling cards* ensuring they are able to develop and grow their digital presence. WordPress has been found to be somewhat complicated for this; Wix (a free website builder) is very popular amongst students with its *drag and drop* feature. The Conservatoire will continue to look at e-portfolios to support reflective practice within the programmes.

One of the distinctive issues for a conservatoire is the ability for students to book practice rooms and rehearsal spaces; they are able to do this via the CELCAT mobile application, which has been specifically customised for Trinity Laban. An institution wide mobile app has been explored but is not yet active. At the moment, Moodle is *mobile ready* and the eStream app allows upload from a device. Additional apps are available for the curriculum based software that is required by the programmes. A Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) policy is therefore in place for staff and students but it does come with common challenges faced in the HE sector: a burden and load on the wireless network. In a similar vein, there are also concerns around ensuring network security is up to date, sniffing software is in place and data leakage is protected against. An acceptable use policy is in place but it is a challenge to ensure the BYOD policy is kept up to date as reliance on the user is required and this is hard to oversee. Remote access and *working from home* are growing requirements and need to be suitably supported by the Conservatoire.

In addition to Moodle and eStream, which are the two key platforms managed at the Conservatoire, Microsoft Office365 is available to staff and students, although there are no plans yet to integrate with Moodle. Some common TEL provisions in other universities are not appropriate at Trinity Laban; for example, the IT department and the dance production team have looked at lecture capture and it was agreed there was no current pedagogical requirement to provide automatic recordings. This is, however, under review by the Teaching and Learning Board as there may be some small scale need for lecture capture for students with accessibility needs. This is due to the reduction in the Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA), which will require all institutions to look at how best to support students with additional requirements. Currently lectures or performances that are required to be recorded are filmed manually. In addition, the Conservatoire does not use Turnitin, due to the high number of practical assessments it employs.

TEL governance and structures

The Learning Enhancement Unit was formed in September 2014, and one of its roles is to support TEL development[49]. The unit consists of a Head of Learning Enhancement who manages the Learning Support Coordinator, Learning Support Tutor, Learning Enhancements Projects Manager, e-Learning Technologist, TEL Projects Developer and the Learning Enhancement Administrator.

The Learning Enhancement Unit has five aims in relation to supporting Technology Enhanced Learning:

- Promote the use of TEL
- To support staff in using and enhancing learning technology into their creative practices
- To draw on research and case studies
- To highlight good practice in the use of TEL
- To be the first point of contact for Moodle, including training for staff

The Directors of Faculties, Heads of Programmes and Departments all have delegated responsibility for the governance of TEL in their areas and influence its specific usage at a local level. Information and issues from the local level are fed into the Learning and Teaching Board and the Learning Enhancement Unit. The Unit is developing a Digital Literacy framework to support how they design and implement support activities that reflect the specific needs of teachers, researchers and students. In order to benchmark against the rest of the UK, module and annual programme evaluations are conducted and reflections on technology are embedded within these evaluations relating to the resourcing of the programmes. E-Learning itself is under review in 2016 to *ensure correlation between institutional aspirations and programme and practitioner usage* (taken from the Learning and Teaching Plan); this review will be concluded in 2017.

The two libraries, the AV team and the IT department also support TEL in their particular areas. Specialists and teaching staff located within the two faculties and departments support TEL. The Conservatoire has moved away from *e-learning champions* and instead promotes local level work driven by individual practitioners. Sharing good practice within departmental and faculty meetings has been implemented. This is managed by identifying examples of good practice, and feeding these back to faculty management groups and the Learning Enhancement Unit, which then compiles an annual report. A TEL User Group, established in 2014–15 across the Conservatoire, reports to both the TEL Project Group and the Learning and Teaching Board. It comprises teaching and support staff from across the Conservatoire.

TEL-specific policies

Since most of the teaching that takes place at Trinity Laban is practical, artistically and vocationally oriented, the Conservatoire does not implement a spurious number of TEL-related policies. The VLE is used for submitting written assessments and teaching staff rely on it to supplement and enhance what they are teaching. For example, the attention given to *flipping the classroom* in the HE sector over the last few years is not new at Trinity Laban; its teaching staff argue that they are already flipping.

A web accessibility standard is available for the VLE, but specific minimum standards for the VLE are felt to restrict usage of the system. There are, however, suggestions and guides that are made available and the Learning Enhancement Unit is exploring the development of course templates to ensure consistency in the future. These would be based on the pedagogic goals of the programmes to ensure parity, rather than an institutional model that does not respond to or respect the specific needs of the distinct nature of the different curricula.

Arts students are known to present much higher rates of dyslexia and dyspraxia, and this is reflected in the needs of the students at Trinity Laban. Student Services and Learning Support are well equipped in terms of preparing for the reduction to the Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA).

Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) strategy

Trinity Laban's response to the CMA is part of their continuing institutional commitment to provide students with appropriate and accurate information. Their approach to TEL has been holistic and therefore the focus is about the accuracy of information.

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49   Trinity Laban's Learning Enhancement Unit: **http://www.trinitylaban.ac.uk/about-us/learning-enhancement**

Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF)

In February 2016, HM Privy Council awarded Trinity Laban with indefinite Taught Degree Awarding Powers (TDAP). Up until then, its taught degrees were validated by City University. Additionally, HEFCE rated Trinity Laban in 2016 as a *world leading* teaching institution as part of their review of its Institution Specific Targeted Allocation. This is the extra funding that it awards to a few exceptional specialist institutions.

Like most HE institutions, Trinity Laban has participated in a variety of activities in preparing for the TEF. Due to the nature of teaching that takes place within the Conservatoire, learning analytics are not currently advanced enough to track the type of learning and teaching activities that are the foundation to practice based music and dance training.

Distance and open learning

Trinity Laban has a very small distance and blended learning provision, but the institution is investigating expanding this in the future. Currently, the Conservatoire offers a blended Specialist Diploma in Choreological Studies and a Masters programme, *The Teaching Musician* that is a combination of online learning and weekend workshops. A new programme (a *Certificate in the Practice of Music Making*), in collaboration with the Open University but led by Trinity Laban, will run from October 2016.

There is no specific policy on distance learning in the Conservatoire, but governance and quality assurance arrangements are managed by the Faculties and Registry to ensure appropriate compliance with the UK Quality Code. The Learning and Participation Departments in each Faculty have a key role in ensuring and supporting its ongoing development. There is also great enthusiasm amongst teaching staff for distance learning.

In terms of open education resources, the Laban Library and Archive is open to the public and both libraries have public access. The Research Department, in preparing for REF 2020, ensures that research outputs are disseminated publicly via a repository available on the institutional website. This was an example of cross institutional collaboration to develop a technology based mechanism that was appropriate for the needs of the institution and drew upon the expertise of a variety of individuals.

Future challenges

Short and medium challenges of Trinity Laban's TEL support services include, as with all HE institutions, the economic context within which they are working. The significant student expectation on mobile learning poses a challenge for encouraging teaching staff to create compatible content. The challenge of running a stable wireless network is ever prevalent as BYOD demand grows. The Conservatoire is planning to update its phone systems to offer Skype for Business; this will support the increasing requirement for staff to be able to work remotely.

A common, nontechnical challenge faced across the sector is to encourage staff to attend TEL training. The particular impacting factors at Trinity Laban are the high proportion of teaching staff who are engaged in creative practices external to the institution, and the complexity of timetables that are required to provide the specialised curriculum. Therefore, one to one, bite sized and online training sessions have been developed; where these sessions (particularly one to one training), are not always cost efficient, they can have a high impact on the development needs of individuals. Further training options will include sessions built into scheduled programme meetings, tailored to their specific needs. Inductions for new full and part time staff also present a good opportunity for training. Support packages provided by the Learning Enhancement Unit for teacher recognition by the Higher Education Academy also embed the importance of development in the use of technology in Learning and Teaching, as this is part of the UK Professional Standards Framework.

University of the Highlands and Islands

Interview with: Keith Smyth, Professor of Pedagogy and Leader of the Learning and Teaching Academy

Overview

The University of the Highlands and Islands (UHI) is a teaching focused university in Scotland and the United Kingdom's only federation model university. The University is made up of 13 academic partners which include further and higher education colleges and specialist research centres across the whole highlands and islands region. The University also comprises approaching 80 regional centres, which enable students to easily access education wherever they might be. UHI offer courses in a range of ways: local delivery within academic partners; on a networked basis where students can study their programme from anywhere in the UHI network; and through site specific programmes such as those offered by the Scottish Association for Marine Science (SAMS) in Oban where students would travel to that academic partner to take those programmes.

The University is organised into two faculties and six subject networks through which the curriculum is managed in the various discipline areas. UHI has around 42,000 students – approximately 7000 are on higher education students while the remaining 35,000 are studying further education awards. The University therefore has students undertaking qualifications ranging from apprenticeships all the way to postgraduate study. Of the total student number of students, approximately 4,300 HE students are studying full time and 3,000 part time. Around 85% of the University's students enrolled on FE awards are studying full time and 15% part time.

UHI prides itself as a University of the Highlands and Islands, in the Highlands and Islands and for the Highlands and Islands. UHI was partly founded to address the issues of students within the Highlands and Islands needing to leave the region to progress their education further afield, and has a broader mission around the University contributing to the economic and social development of the region. Within the broad range of courses it offers, the University harnesses the advantages of its geography to run unique programmes such as archaeology in Orkney, Marine Sciences in Oban or Adventure Tourism in Fort William.

TEL strategy and drivers for TEL

UHI is currently in the process of refreshing its Learning and Teaching Strategy. At present the use of, and values associated with, technology enhanced learning have been embedded within the previous iteration of the Learning and Teaching Strategy and in their Blended Learning Standards.

Whilst the University does not have a dedicated TEL strategy, the Blended Learning Standards provide guidance for colleagues to follow and adhere to when they are looking at the use of the VLE and other technologies. A recent Enhancement Led Institutional Review (ELIR) highlighted the usefulness of the Blended Learning Standards, which will be refreshed with the development of the new Learning and Teaching Strategy for implementation in the forthcoming academic year.

Underpinning service provision across UHI is an ICT Strategy linked to requirements in learning and teaching. The strategy addresses standards within the institutions ICT service and commitment to moving to cloud-based technologies. There is not a separate ICT strategy or policy relating specifically to learning and teaching. As the majority of teaching is blended in approach, there was a feeling that separating those strands out would be detrimental to the learning experience. The aim is to make use of technology as an inclusive part of the learning and teaching process.

UHI has an interest in developing more fully online programmes, and using technology to diversify the ways in which curricula are designed and delivered. A recent example includes an accelerated three year honours degree in Geography, delivered predominantly online.

The significant investments in infrastructure within the University mean that that no major changes in this area are required, with the current provision flexible and robust. Instead there is an opportunity and commitment to further exploiting the technologies UHI has at its disposal.

The new Learning and Teaching Strategy is at an early stage of development, but the values that will form the basis of the strategy have been approved. Those values place an emphasis on making more creative use of technology, developing open educational practices and an emphasis on connected learning experiences which has implications for the use of physical and digital learning spaces.

The drivers underpinning TEL development might broadly be classified as organisational and cultural. Organisationally the 13 academic partners that make up the University are spread across the Highlands and Islands region (a land mass equivalent approximately to the size of Belgium). The University therefore has dispersed staff and dispersed

expertise within and across local communities in the region. As in some local communities there may not be sufficient numbers to establish a course, it has been an essential part of UHI's mission to put in place technology that enables people to interact and engage collaboratively. In the early stages of the University's development this included largescale, strategic investment in video conferencing for the entire University network. UHI remains the largest user of videoconference technology within the higher education sector in Europe.

Videoconferencing was quickly supplemented with investment in a virtual learning environment (VLE) and other asynchronous forms of communication and delivery. It was, however, recognised as essential from day one to embrace some technologies to allow students to come together and allow staff to disseminate their expertise. While still a heavy user of videoconferencing, the University has now progressed to utilise richer collaborative tools alongside desktop conferencing. On the negative side, the University initially adopted some technologies that were not as flexible or as scalable as technologies that might be chosen if the decision was to be made now.

From a cultural point of view at the institutional level, a key challenge has been to come to a common place about what is meant by TEL and what effective TEL practices can look like within blended, online, and distributed learning and teaching contexts. Other issues important to the University, and which will be areas of increasing focus going forward, include open educational practice and further embedding the development of digital literacies. Whilst UHI is no different from other universities in this regard, it is more complex within the federation model of the university.

TEL provision

UHI has an extensive service catalogue of learning technologies including an externally hosted implementation of Blackboard, Blackboard Collaborate and Blackboard Mobile, as well as subscription to Turnitin and ClickView and an installation of the Mahara e-portfolio solution. Blackboard has been integrated with SITS for provisioning students and cohorts with just under 3,000 modules on the VLE and approximately 7,000 active students each semester. Uniquely as part of their VLE service, as well as making the VLE available to support the online activities of the University, UHI's Learning and Information Services also provides the technology to the further education (FE) component of the institution, tailoring the login experience for its different student groups. Students in higher education see a University VLE whilst students in FE are presented with a theme badged to reflect the academic partner the student is studying with. The decision to externally host the VLE, Collaborate and Mobile was taken to improve system availability for students.

Camtasia Relay has been implemented to support lecture capture and has been integrated with both the VLE and Medial – a solution to support rich media streaming which also gives students recording space. Video conferencing is used extensively across the partner network.

To facilitate podcasting UHI has built its own solution – PEPE – to address some accessibility issues. PEPE allows users to upload Microsoft Word documents which it uses to generate an audio file.

Beyond its core suite of learning technologies UHI also licenses Millennium as its Library Management System, runs Libguides and uses rebus:list to facilitate reading list management.

For any new service UHI will look at whether the system can be externally hosted or cloud hosted. UHI has taken a strategic decision to reduce its data footprint.

Wireless is running across all UHI's major campus sites and larger Learner Centres. The University is device agnostic in terms of device support with approximately 3,000 concurrent connections to the wireless network in any given day. Eduroam is available across the partner network while the University is soon to implement the Cloud as a public wifi service for visitors and guests.

UHI is highly active in environmental scanning looking at different technologies they may adopt. UHI has invested in a new Learning Lab space as part of the Learning and Teaching Academy. This is intended to support live research and development projects, partly for the purpose of exploring the potential of emerging technologies. The Learning Lab features functions and capabilities in augmented and virtual reality, 3D scanning and printing, networked learning, and games based learning. Supporting the development of remote lab working is of particular interest in the UHI context, given the geographically and digitally distributed nature of the institution.

TEL governance and structures

Technology Enhanced Learning is supported in a number of ways across UHI. Learning and Information Services support effective use of the VLE by staff and other centrally maintained technologies. Some of the larger academic partners will have their own dedicated learning technologist support provision within their own institution. UHI also has a very active Educational Development Unit (EDU) which has a remit to help produce materials and resources for blended and online delivery. The EDU works with programme teams to produce bespoke resources and provides a certain level of CPD around various technologies and digital resources. The Educational Development Unit's work in this area was recently recognised at the Herald Higher Education awards where they received an award for Academic Support Team of the Year.

The new Learning and Teaching Academy (LTA) is being developed as a hub for helping support and share educational practice and research. TEL is an important strand of this work, and the Academy has been offering various workshops, seminars and webinars around TEL. The Academy also has a rich programme of upcoming events being facilitated by external groups including the Open University's Open Educational Practices Scotland (OEPS) project team.

The Educational Development Unit has approximately 12 members of staff representing the largest central team within UHI who support TEL. In terms of service provision there are two technologists in Library and Information Services (LIS) looking after the VLE and other centrally supported systems, while three members of staff are employed to maintain the University's crucial video conferencing service. In addition to these staff, the team within LIS also comprises a full time Systems Librarian and an e-Resources Manager – roles recognised as being particularly important to ensuring an appropriate range of teaching, learning and research resources are available online to staff and students.

Within the University no single committee or group has a remit for TEL. The University's Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee is mainly responsible for reporting on and monitoring pedagogic practice, but does not steer what the University does in relation to the use of technology in teaching. There is also an increasingly close working relationship between LIS, EDU and the LTA around how technology practices are developed within the institution. Historically a lot of innovation was led by the introduction of technology. In recent years there has been a push away from that approach towards being more pedagogically and business driven.

TEL-specific policies

The University's Blended Learning Standards represent UHI's key policy for staff using technology in learning and teaching. These standards specify expectations around minimum presence in the VLE and good practice beyond this. The new Learning and Teaching Strategy will look to revisit the standards and update them to make them more forward facing towards issues such as use of open educational resources, and to potentially place more emphasis on co-creative approaches to the use of technology where learners have greater responsibility for the tools they use and for the production of digital artefacts in support of their learning.

The University envisages producing new policies to support more active use of technology and will in the future almost certainly have a policy or framework for open educational practice. The proposed development of a policy in this area is driven by recognition of developments in the sector around open education, and the recognition that the distributed nature of UHI means it makes sense to have a policy around the open sharing, use and repurposing of resources. UHI is also actively involved in the Open Educational Practices Scotland project as steering group members, and this has encouraged the institution to reflect on where they are with regard to this emerging area.

UHI has a policy on the use of Turnitin and digital submission; however, this applies only to HE students. In terms of digital submission, students are obliged to submit all summative assessment work using an institutionally approved mechanism such as the Assignment Tool in Blackboard and not via their personal email address or external drop boxes. In relation to use of Turnitin, students are required to sign at the start of the year to confirm they agree to use of this service.

Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) strategy

Recent changes implemented by the CMA have stimulated a review of UHI's web presence to check how the University presents and describes modules with regard to content, availability and who is teaching them. There have been some implications for TEL, for example around the linkage of reading lists to module databases. UHI is also conducting a check of all data provided to the web.

Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF)

UHI has been actively engaged in discussions at a senior level within the Scottish sector about what the implications of the TEF will be, and internally are considering their own position – in common with the other HEIs in Scotland. UHI is at an early but active stage of exploring learner analytics as an institution, but this is not linked to or being driven by the impending introduction of the TEF.

Distance and open learning

Distance learning is hugely important to UHI, particularly within a regional context. Whilst the University's teaching provision is not fully online, the University supports students in gaining online access to degree programmes from wherever they might be in the region. The development of fully online courses is of interest to UHI, particularly at postgraduate level. Supporting learning at a distance is essential in supporting the outreach of the University across the whole Highlands and Islands region. Due to the range of ways in which UHI delivers programmes across the region, the University's implementation of distance learning is different to what others in the sector might refer to as distance learning.

As indicated, the University is actively exploring where they might go with open education in the future and expects to adopt an institutional position on this in due course. The University is currently involved with OERu, as has representation on the steering group of OEPS. The institution's EDU is looking at *open* in terms of the projects they have developed in recent years, whilst a newly approved Master of Education course in Digital Pedagogy, which will run for the first time this academic year, is partly designed to engage staff with open resources and show colleagues how to use these resources in their teaching practice.

Future challenges

Looking to the future, the biggest challenge that the institution faces is staff development, in large part due to the dispersed nature of the institution. Irrespective of the range of technologies that are provided, getting staff to use those technologies effectively will be a priority.

Another future priority will be to bring to the surface and better share some of the good practice in TEL that exists across the partnership, an activity viewed as being both essential and complementary to the staff development actions that the University will take.

Finding ways and approaches which help the University to sustain and improve what it does as a distributed institution will be a challenge going forwards. Tied to this there will be a need to look at what the institution does to help students develop not just the generic digital skills and literacies they'll need but also the discipline specific digital skills as well.

The University of Sheffield

Interview with: Farzana Latif, Technology Enhanced Learning Manager and Patrice Panella, Head of Learning and Teaching Support

Overview

The University of Sheffield is a large Russell Group university with 27,230 students, of whom 19,000 are undergraduates, 2,800 are postgraduate research students and 5,300 are postgraduate taught students. 88% of students are full time and 12% part time. Its mission is to be a university *rooted in civic engagement*. The University has 40 departments in five faculties – Arts and Humanities; Engineering; Medicine, Dentistry and Health; Science; Social Sciences. There is also a sixth faculty in the city of Thessaloniki in Greece.

TEL strategy and drivers for TEL

Until this year there was a stand-alone strategy for e-learning (**https://www.shef.ac.uk/polopoly_fs/1.280231!/ file/e-learningstrategy2012-16.pdf**) but Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) is currently being embedded into the institutional Learning and Teaching Strategy **http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/als/strategy**. It is felt that having an embedded strategy is now the right way forward for the University.

There is greater engagement with digital learning and teaching within the institution than previously, and it is noted that the Pro Vice Chancellor for Learning and Teaching is overseeing some major TEL projects such as the review of the virtual learning environment (VLE) and a new media service. Consistency in the use of TEL has been an important theme. The institution is taking a programme level rather than module level view of planning to embed TEL. They are looking at different modes of study, with more online and flipped learning; the latter has been found to be very successful in large classes. However, fully distance education is less of a priority for the University.

Some of the drivers have been improving the learning experience in large classes through *flipping*. There is also a faculty challenge, *Achieve More* – which is a week long programme in which students from all departments in a faculty work together on a real world problem. In its first year, this has been run within individual faculties but in Year Two, they are planning to go beyond faculties. Another driver for TEL is the student experience – especially with regard to achieving more consistency in the use of TEL, but also in using technology to support administrative efficiency. Finally, the Disability Office is also driving TEL, leading to the introduction of an opt out policy for lecture capture.

It is noted that departments have different *personalities*, and that some faculties are more structured and systematic in their approach to TEL, for example in Engineering. There are no formal champions, but there are informal TEL champions in departments. Each of the learning technologists in the TEL team, and the Head of TEL, has a faculty facing element to their role; they attend faculty learning and teaching committees, and are a conduit for information and support.

TEL provision

The following technologies are supported by the TEL team:

- Blackboard VLE
- Turnitin
- TurningPoint Clickers
- Pebblepad
- Echo 360 for lecture capture
- Digital Media Hosting though Helix Media Player – under review
- Adobe Connect
- Respondus lock down browser
- Google Apps

In general, services are externally hosted, and open source solutions tend to be avoided; this works well for the institution and is unlikely to change.

There is a policy that everything should be mobile friendly, which presents a challenge for TEL tools. The Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) policy is that the Service Desk will endeavour to support any sort of student owned device; all Service Desk staff are trained to provide this support, and extra support is provided at the start of session. The University uses CampusM as its mobile app, which is known as iSheffield.

TEL governance and structures

Central support for TEL at the University of Sheffield is located within Corporate Information and Computing Services (CiCS), and has ten members of staff. The team was previously located within Academic and Learning Services but the new location is felt to work well, especially through the more direct links to IT support teams.

The full structure is at **http://cics.dept.shef.ac.uk/about/Organisation-Chart-2016.pdf** but is summarised below.
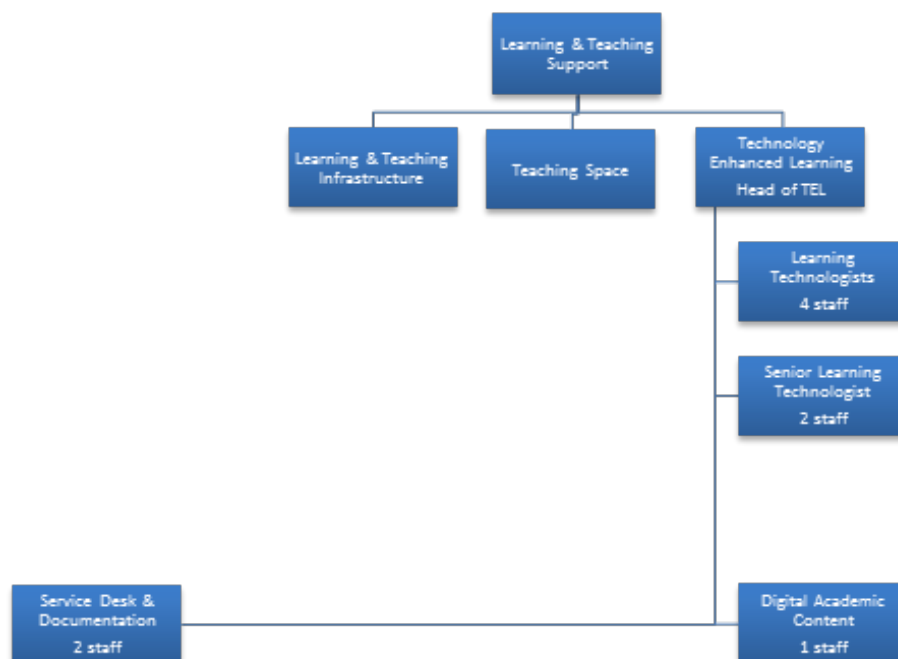
All of the learning technologists have a faculty facing role, which is helpful for identifying issues and requirements, and for following them up. There are also some faculty and department funded learning technologists in the faculties and departments, especially in those which run distance learning programmes.

Links to support pages provided by the TEL team are at:

- **http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/cics/learningandteaching**

- **http://tel.group.shef.ac.uk/**

and an example is shown here:

There is also an Online Learning Team in the Academic and Learning Services Group, which is part of Student Services (separate from CiCS). This team has six staff in media technology and educational development roles, who were appointed three years ago to support MOOC development and the University's ten FutureLearn MOOCs. They don't support mainstream distance learning programmes, although some of the MOOCs do link to credit-bearing programmes, and some of the content is also reused for other courses.

There is a new Pro Vice Chancellor for Teaching and Learning, along with two crosscutting Directors of Learning and Teaching at 0.5FTE each, who oversee digital learning; these roles are academic ones. They provide informal oversight rather than formal governance. More formal governance is provided through the Learning and Teaching Committee. There is a Digital Learning Group, chaired by the PVC for Learning and Teaching, which is formed with academic membership; this meets every two months. There is also a CiCS Strategy Board, which would be consulted in the event of any significant technological development.

TEL-specific policies

There is currently no specific TEL policy, although there is currently a major VLE review underway and policy development is one strand of this work. Interestingly staff as well as students are now starting to request a policy for minimum TEL provision. There is, however, an opt out policy for lecture capture, which is linked in part to the withdrawal of the Disability Support Allowance (DSA).

The University also has an *Exemplary Course Programme*, which is a developmental framework for course enhancement. Participants work with the TEL team, and with local learning technologists, to consider their own practice.

The Competition and Markets Authority is not having an impact on TEL provision.

Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF)

The University of Sheffield's stance is that the TEF should not dictate how they teach and that the institution will develop its own definition of excellence. The institution is reviewing the potential of learner analytics as part of the VLE review, but as yet no funding has been allocated to developing this as a service.

Distance and open learning

As already noted, there is a substantial MOOC support team but there is little mainstream distance learning activity or broader provision of open educational resources. This was felt to be unlikely to change.

Future challenges

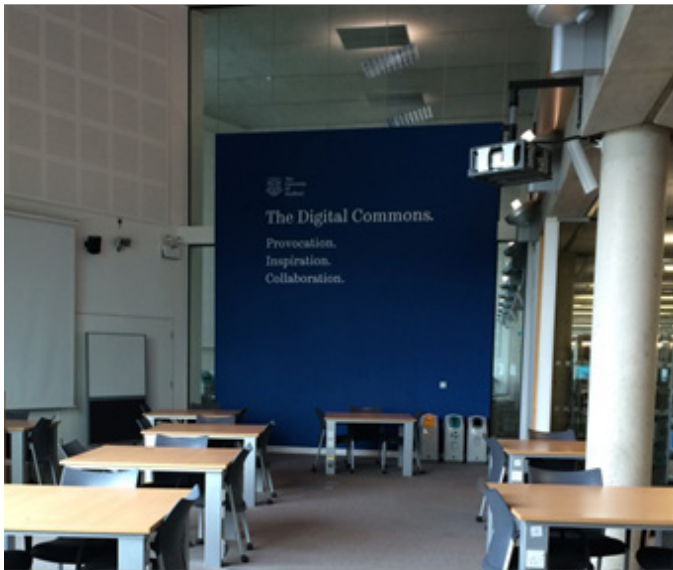The two main challenges in supporting TEL services centrally are:

- Scaling up support to meet the needs of a large and growing institution with a team that is unlikely to expand;
- Benchmarking and achieving consistency of quality use of TEL.

These are being addressed by working with local learning technologists where possible, and providing staff development to enable academics to achieve a reasonable baseline level of provision. Work is being done at the programme level to develop practice through Task Forces in which a group of academics engage in a two day *digital retreat*, facilitated by experienced colleagues, to make a change.

The University is conducting a VLE review at present. The review is involving students, looking at their perceptions of the use of TEL, and how they would ideally like it to be used. The outcome is not yet confirmed.

The TEL team ran a highly successful *TELFest*. This week long event enables them to publicise TEL, raise their brand awareness, and challenge the perception that TEL is predominantly technological rather than pedagogic.

There is also a Digital Commons space in the Information Commons building, which is used for events and staff development, and a Learning Lab in another academic building where staff are able to test out technologies before using them in the classroom.

Appendix: Case study questions

For each of the nine 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	Do you have a TEL strategy? (How is TEL addressed in your institutional strategies – as a standalone planning document or embedded across a range of strategies? What is the time horizon for TEL planning; e.g. 3–5 years?) Can you explain the reasons/history for your current position re. a TEL strategy? [need to know if have one or not] What have been the drivers for TEL use in this institution? To what extent does departmental or institutional culture affect uptake?
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? Do you locally host and manage these tools or are some/all of them outsourced and hosted by an external provider? Do you have an outsourcing strategy? To what extent are these tools accessible to mobile devices i.e. mobile ready? Do you have BYOD support provision in place for staff and students
3. Governance and structures	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? 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 What governance structures are in place for TEL? (Who provides strategic steer/oversight for TEL services?) 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 2014?)
4. TEL-specific policies	Does your institution have any TEL-specific policies in place? Do you have *minimum requirements* for the adoption and use of TEL tools in learning and teaching activities? If so, how is the policy implemented and monitored (enforced)? How is your institution responding to the withdrawal of the disability support allowance (DSA)? To what extent are TEL services being seen as a solution to this challenge? Is this driving greater investment in TEL services as a consequence, or simply highlighting the importance of existing services?

TEL theme	Interview questions
5. Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) strategy	What impact is the Competition and Markets Authority guidance having on your institution's stance on consumer rights for students (e.g. through definition of a student *compact* or contract agreement) and what consequences are there for TEL service provision? Is this acting as a driver for further investment in TEL services and standardisation of service provision across taught courses? What issues, if any, is the CMA throwing up in terms of programme delivery and staff engagement?
6. Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF)	How is your institution preparing for the introduction of the TEF and what implications, if any, are there for TEL services and academic support? To what extent is the TEF encouraging the adoption of learner analytics services within your institution, as a way of tracking teaching and learning activities and supporting better outcomes for students?
7. Distance and open learning	How important is distance learning to your institution? Has its importance changed over the past two years since the last Survey (in light of the changing economic climate and challenging context for student recruitment for campus based courses)? Does your institution provide any free or open educational resources? If not, is the institutional position likely to change in the near future? If it does, what is the relationship between open and distance learning delivery? Are the two activities linked in any way, in terms of central support provision (e.g. through supported course design and delivery approaches/ sharing of resources) and the pathway between open and accredited online courses? Does your institution have any policies or policy statements on the production/use of open educational resources?
8. And finally ...	What do you see as your main short and medium term challenges in supporting TEL services for your institution? How are you planning to address them? Are there any other important TEL developments within your institution which you would like to report on?