

RSC

Regional Support Centre
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RSCs – Stimulating and Supporting Innovation in Learning

E-LEARNING IN HE: STRATEGY AND PRACTICE



E-Learning in HE

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A collection of papers from contributors to the JISC Regional Support Centre for Yorkshire & Humber annual Higher Education event 2009

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The E-thics Game



The E-thics game is an interactive learning resource designed to be used in a range of educational contexts (whole class or individual access) with diverse groups of learners (level three and higher) accessing a variety of courses requiring the development of a high level of critical/ethical awareness.

The game takes its inspiration from a famous thought experiment proposed by the American philosopher John Rawls (1921-2002) in which he asked his students to imagine that they were waiting behind a 'veil of ignorance' (separating them from knowledge of their actual identities and social status) to be born into the real, human, world. Rawls hoped that, by these means, he could encourage participants to define certain 'principles of justice' which might form the basis of a universal consensus about the prerequisites of the good society.

The E-thics game begins from a similar premise to that of Rawls's 'original position' users of the E-thics game are asked to choose between and prioritise a range of ethical principles while attempting to apply them to a range of 'real world' problems and ethical dilemmas.

In practice the game might be used as preparation for further discussion, as a revision aid for students reviewing major ethical theories or as a whole class resource with progress being made on the basis of discussion in the group. The game replicates the interaction

between the tutor and student as they discuss and debate a topic (that it attempts to mimic a Socratic dialogue). In this way it provides a personalised learning experience which is self paced and self directed by the learner.

Technologically the game is created by the use of simple PowerPoint software and uses hyperlinks to facilitate student exploration of particular 'decision trees'. By these means implications of particular 'constitutional choices' are outlined and specific examples elaborated. This, readily available and accessible technology allows products, such as the E-thics game, to be easily created. The students' interaction with the game has some of the same features as discussion and dialogue with a tutor. The game contains resources designed to provoke critical discussion of the key ideas .

The presentation takes the form of an experiential session in which delegates can 'play' the ethics game in a group context followed by a general discussion and/or demonstration of the process of its development.

Phil Badger, Liz Bennett
University of Huddersfield

References

Rawls, J. A
(1972) **Theory of Justice**
Oxford University Press



Teaching Inclusively Using Technology



"If a teacher today is not technologically literate - and is unwilling to make the effort to learn more - it's equivalent to a teacher 30 years ago who didn't know how to read and write." (Fisch, 2007, winner 'Most Influential Blog Post, EduBlog Awards 2007).

It is vital for all staff to know how free technologies can be easily used in teaching to enhance the accessibility and inclusion of the material without requiring a great deal of technical expertise. JISC TechDis (www.techdis.ac.uk) have created a range of resources for practitioners to use to get started with podcasting and screen capture, using text-to-speech tools, creating accessible learning objects, and getting started with mobile learning.

These 'beginner's guides' are developed from, and supported by, a range of practical case studies undertaken by practitioners from a wide range of institutions across the UK. The MoleNet projects (www.molenet.org.uk)

were led by English FE colleges, chiefly in the learning and skills sector, and cover myriad uses of mobile technology to support learners in all areas. The JISC TechDis HEAT scheme (www.techdis.ac.uk/getheatscheme) has funded over 80 projects so far – it is open to any practitioner delivering HE to bid for technology with which they can develop or uncover an aspect of inclusive practice. Previous projects include investigating the use of Personal Digital Assistants to support dyslexic students on placements, and using comic strip production software with students. Current projects include the creation of a student usability testing suite and the use of digital visualisers in creative writing. The findings of these projects will be used to inform future staff development materials to help the sector move forward in its use of technology to support teaching and learning.

Simon Ball
JISC Techdis



Support for Scholarly Activity and its Impact on the Learner Experience



This presentation will consider how current and future practitioners of higher education programmes in Further Education Colleges could benefit from involvement with the Higher Education Academy Subject Centres and their support for scholarly activity and professional development.

Ian Lindsay
Higher Education Academy

Mobile Learning using Student Owned Devices

"...Mobile devices are seen as the next frontier for e-learning delivery..."

"...the benefits... will include greater engagement and improved quality of content..."



Mobile technologies are seen as the next frontier for e-learning delivery as the devices are becoming ever more sophisticated. A number of projects have sought to exploit the computing potential and multimedia features of mobile phone devices but many of these have selected specific fully-featured devices which can be issued to students and docked with material. This consistency is expensive and may not be necessary for formative material.

By exploring the java-based features in a mobile phone already owned by the student it should be possible to load the appropriate content for 'game-style' testing which can be accessed at the student's convenience without expensive network bills. The IMS QTI standard for MCQs can be utilised to deliver the same

questionbank across different systems without increasing dependence on expensive staff time. This work in progress is seeking to expand the disciplines that this type of testing can be used with and should appeal to many tutors who deliver formative assessment. The software is simple to download and install and should require little support from academic staff.

Brief details of other recent e-Learning activities and projects working with the UK Subject Centre for Bioscience, including those relating to the use of mobile devices, will also be described in addition to reports and guides.

Terry McAndrew
Centre for Bioscience, Higher
Education Academy

Moodle - a Virtual Research Environment



This paper outlines the additional use made by Bradford College of its VLE, Moodle. Noting the need to develop staff skills and confidence in the use of the VLE and associated technologies, the decision was taken to deploy Moodle at every opportunity. The benefits of doing this, we hope, will include greater engagement and improved quality of content, ultimately leading to an improved learning experience.

One example of this additional use of Moodle is as a virtual research environment; enhancing communications between researchers, sharing of good practice and collaborating on research papers. Furthermore we plan to use it to supplement primary source material for research activity.

The management approach to this "wider deployment"



is discussed together with a qualitative evaluation of its success based upon the observations of key players.

Having formed the basis and provided the content infrastructure for two externally funded projects, the Bradford College Moodle is interesting because it has been developed in different ways; in one instance its use has evolved in response to the needs of a group of early adopters, enthusiasts keen to explore all aspects of the technology. Almost conversely there has been a need, driven primarily by wider strategic goals of the organisation, to develop content in a highly controlled mechanistic fashion. A third, less well explored, yet highly important development path, has been to respond to the learners' needs, where the locus of control shifts in favour of the learner.

The substance of this paper gives a first-hand account of developing a virtual research environment and how scarce resources are deployed to accommodate a range of approaches while maintaining steady progress towards the realisation of enhanced pedagogy through using learning technology.

Ronan O'Beirne
Bradford College

Learning Technology - a Forward and Backward Look



Sometimes it feels as if we are standing in a pelting torrent of technologies, "cool tools", and initiatives relating to technology in teaching and learning.

This talk will help you to stand back a bit and to examine what is going on behind the scenes, and the underlying forces which are at work.

Seb Schmoller
Association for Learning Technology (ALT)

Challenges for Ensuring Originality in Student Work

This session will investigate the challenges facing teachers for ensuring authenticity of student work in a Web 2.0 environment.

Whilst not a new phenomenon plagiarism is a hot topic in educational institutions where, for many learners a cut and paste culture is the norm.

What are the challenges for safeguarding original work where digital cultures promote the sharing of resources and where boundaries of ownership are blurred?

Accordingly, does this e-learning culture also offer us opportunities for assessing students in new and innovative ways, which afford teachers a higher level of engagement with learners, and therefore encourage original work.

The session will consider these issues and participants will be encouraged to share and discuss good practice in their teaching.

Gill Rowell
JISC Plagiarism

Actual Experiences in a Virtual World: Collaborative Creation of e-Learning Materials with Service Users

During the last decade government initiatives have aimed to modernise the National Health Service (NHS), driving a cultural change that is aimed at delivering a genuinely patient centred approach to care (DOH 2006). The challenge is to translate these requirements into practice not just in service delivery but also in education, so that the principles for user involvement are adhered to at all levels of health care.

A virtual community, 'Bradton', has been developed by the University of Bradford, the COMENSUS project at the University of Central Lancashire and Advocacy in Action (Nottingham) in collaboration with service users and carers, creating an inter-professional learning and teaching resource that promotes insight into personal histories. Individual narratives relating to health and social care experiences have been used to develop media rich case scenarios sited in a virtual community 'Bradton'. This innovative project has provided a collaborative forum for educators in higher education, and service users, and an enhanced teaching and learning experience that can inform and develop new ways of working in health and social care. Issues are addressed relating to personal and professional

development, across a range of services and sectors, in areas such as communication, team working and professional practice. Development has been based on action research principles, hence is fully participatory, empowering service user and carer participants.

Student satisfaction questionnaire and nominal group technique data indicate a high level of satisfaction with the materials. Analysis reveals the main aims of the project were apparent to students, in particular the approach was perceived to be an effective pedagogical approach to simulate issues students will encounter in practice, through the promotion of student insight into the 'patient journey'. The virtual learning environment provides a "safe" environment for service users and carers to share their experiences, and the re-useable nature of the learning materials allows the student to reflect on and revisit those experiences. Service user reflections highlight the perceived value of legacy, i.e. creating a reusable resource of enduring utility that may make a difference to future practice, and provides a tangible opportunity to contribute to education

Jane Priestley
University of Bradford

Using Web 2.0 Technologies to Promote Student & Graduate Business Start-up



Learning about and experiencing enterprise at university can have several benefits. It gives you an alternative career option and the confidence that you can set up your own business or social enterprise. Regardless of career intention, enterprise education can encourage you to reflect on strengths, weaknesses, and key values. It can help address practical skills such as oral and written communication, and personal effectiveness skills such as being creative, being able to influence and negotiate, and being flexible and open-minded.

The Business Mine is a facility at the University of Huddersfield that helps students and recent graduates develop ideas into business start-up or self-employment. However, a recent Yorkshire Universities survey of the entrepreneurial intentions of students showed that the majority of respondents were unaware of business start-up services such as the Business Mine (Ward et al., 2008). To address this, we have recently begun to use a collection of linked Web 2.0 systems such as Facebook, Twitter, and Delicious as tools to promote enterprise to students. We have set up a Business Mine Group (soon to be

converted into a Page) where we publish news items and details of competitions and awards, upload photographs, and use the events tools to advertise our weekly events. We have also subscribed to University-related student and alumni groups where we post to the 'Wall' to spread news to new audiences. The Business Mine also has a Twitter feed where we put short messages out about our work and news of our student and graduate members. This presentation will demonstrate the pages and feeds we have set up, and give practical feedback on the lessons we have learned through the process.

Kelly Smith
University of Huddersfield

References

Ward, T., Robertson, M., and Holden, R. (2008) **Entrepreneurial Intentions Survey 2007/08**

Produced by the University of York Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning in Enterprise



"...the re-useable nature of the learning materials allows the student to reflect on and revisit experiences"

"we use a collection of linked Web 2.0 systems such as Facebook, Twitter, and Delicious as tools to promote enterprise to students..."

JISC RSC YH Support for those delivering HE Courses

The work of the JISC Regional Support Centre for Yorkshire & Humber includes support for HE within FE and HE colleges.

The HE support remit has been set out as follows:

- Develop effective contact with those responsible for HE in FE colleges in the region
- Scope and support the needs of small HEIs in the region, working with technical, library, learning and teaching and senior management staff, possibly via cross-regional activity or by building communities of practice
- Build and maintain a network of RSC HE contacts, enabling greater access to relevant RSC activities and services
- Mount at least one major HE-focused regional event per year

e-Learning in HE

This publication is a collection of short articles resulting from the flagship e-Learning in HE event held by the JISC Regional Support Centre for Yorkshire & Humber in 2008/09.

The 2009 event focused on e-learning strategy and practice in the HE and HE in FE sector.

If you would like to read or hear more about the work and ideas outlined in these articles, please contact the JISC Regional Support Centre for Yorkshire & Humber and we will seek to put you in contact with the author.

The event was put together by Deborah Judah, e-Learning Advisor (HE).

Deborah can be contacted at: d.judah@rsc-yh.ac.uk



Contact Details

JISC Regional Support Centre Yorkshire & Humber
University of Leeds
44 Clarendon Road
Leeds
West Yorkshire
LS2 9PJ

Tel: 0113 343 1000
Fax: 0113 343 4652
Email: support@rsc-yh.ac.uk
www.rsc-yh.ac.uk