

PDP NEWSLETTER

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ISSUE 23

EDITORIAL: Rob Ward, CRA Director

Welcome to 2012, and to a bumper edition which draws upon the autumn CRA Residential Seminar and reflects a real and continuing commitment to sharing and collaboration at a time when the language of the market and of competition is threatening to challenge such commitment. The current context brings plenty of other challenges too, of course, but also opportunities. And we reflect some of this in the contributions which follow.

Harriet Barnes sets us going, going, pointing up changes in the 'quality



assurance environment' but also opportunities, both in terms of links to the enhancement agenda in Scotland and to the potential of stronger connectivity between the new Quality Code and additional information such as the PDP Guidelines. Andrea Tierney and Paula Baines at LJMU highlight the use of interactive card games to facilitate and stimulate reflective conversations. Andrea Raiker at Bedfordshire connects the capstone assignment with the key themes of learner development and graduate identity. She also raises issues of how students see such activities – as 'a hoop that has to be jumped through' - and hence to more integrative approaches to programme design and assessment activities. Jackie Adamson at Northumbria reports upon the use of cognitive behavioural approaches, within the curriculum. Whilst criticisms have

been made about the inclusion of frameworks derived from therapeutic contexts into the academic curriculum few would dispute that learning is an affective as well as a cognitive process, and that 'planning for success' in an uncertain world is a key activity with both affective and cognitive elements. And finally- for the curriculum element - Maria A. Rodriguez-Yborra and Mike Lawrence at Bolton approach the issue of 'expressing and planning professional development' from the perspective of different faculties, whilst also recognising the comment challenges of supporting student engagement and engendering the process of reflection – with staff as much as students. Plus staff engagement with technology is an important issue. So – a continuing and gradual process - though it is good to note that the technology can support approaches to recording and reflection which are congruent with discipline mind-sets.

And then to a wider view, and the engaging and personal contribution from Norman Jackson, a good friend and colleague who confirms that there is life after University, and reminds us of the central-

ity of the personal; perceptions, values and beliefs in all that we do for ourselves and with others. As so often with Norman's writing, personal commitment- epitomised in the view that If education is really about making a positive difference to students' lives then we have a moral and professional responsibility to prepare people for the lifetime of uncertainty, change, challenge and emergent or self-created opportunity that lies ahead of them leaps off the page.

Moving us into practice beyond the curriculum, Sarah Jeffries and Vicki Mann emphasise 'Skills Awards' both as a response to current circumstances and as a basis for promoting learning and assessment which puts personal reflection at its core. In a very real sense it is the process of undertaking the award - promoting learning and capability - that offers the real benefit to learners.

And that's pretty much it. Except for forthcoming attractions. And the revised layout of course. That's all thanks to [Daniel Brookes](#) - so if you like it please let him know. And if you want to contribute to the summer edition let us know! The deadline is 19th March.

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What's going on with QAA?... asks Harriet Barnes.

The word that best sums up the higher education quality assurance environment at the moment is probably 'busy'. There continues to be developments in all areas of QAA's work, and while there are still a lot of unknowns, a framework for the future is beginning to emerge.

In England and Northern Ireland, the new method of review for higher education institutions (IRENI) is now underway. The key changes from its predecessor (institutional audit) are the introduction of more clearly-worded judgments, now to be made in four areas (standards, quality, enhancement and information) and shorter, more accessible reports. QAA has also been involved in work related to Key Information Sets (KIS), which also aim to address demands for more explicit information about higher education. Initially developed for institutions in England, KIS will now be adopted in some form in all four nations of the UK. QAA's publication Explaining Contact Hours provides guidance for institutions in communicating the different types of teaching, learning and assessment activities.

A major area of new activity for QAA in England is the review of privately-funded col-

leges for educational oversight to enable them to admit students from overseas. This is bringing QAA into contact with a new group of providers of higher education who have not previously been familiar with our frameworks, which is presenting its own challenges on both sides.

We are also developing a new method of review for higher education delivered in further education, which will come into effect in the next academic year (replacing IQER). Of course, all this activity is taking place in the shadow of the White Paper and forthcoming higher education bill. In part, the White Paper confirmed the direction of travel for quality assurance already underway, but the proposal to move to a risk-based system will take some working through.

In Wales, the institutional review programme continues, with some adaptations to the method reflecting the introduction of IRENI. The restructuring of the sector, in terms of number and size of institutions, is being driven by the Welsh Assembly Government.

In Scotland, the review of the quality enhancement framework has been concluded and its findings will be reflected in the method used for the next

cycle of Enhancement-led institutional review (ELIR). Another element of the framework is the sector-wide Enhancement Themes; the current theme is Developing and Supporting the Curriculum, in which PDP of course has a considerable role to play.

Finally, across the whole UK, work is now well underway to develop and implement the UK Quality Code for Higher Education. The Quality Code forms the definitive reference point on academic standards and quality for UK higher education, and it incorporates and replaces what was previously known as the Academic Infrastructure. It has three parts: i. Standards, ii. quality and enhancement, and iii. information.

A programme of work for its development has been set out to Summer 2013, and as well as revising the existing elements, some new chapters are being produced. In addition, the new format allows stronger signposting of additional information, such as the PDP Guidelines. There will be a public consultation on each chapter (the timetable is available on the website). This has started with Part C: providing information about higher education provision, which closes on 24 February 2012.

"...the White Paper confirmed the direction of travel for quality assurance already underway, but the proposal to move to a risk-based system will take some working through."



QAA

www.qaa.ac.uk/

<http://discuss.bis.gov.uk/hereform/>

www.enhancementthemes.ac.uk/

Creating Conversations: Paula Baines and Angela Tierney of Liverpool John Moores University on the development of an interactive card game to initiate a reflective conversational journey for Personal Development Planning.

Personal Development Planning aspires to facilitate transitions and transformations in a student's self understanding and actions to promote personal growth and development. This is all well and good, but without a repertoire of phrases and an environment that supports the reflective process, how might these aspirations become a lived reality for students, especially in that transitional period to Higher Education and during the first year of study.

As personal development practitioners, we are always on the lookout for new and interactive resources to help support the reflective process. Having an interest in all things experiential, we were in the process of designing a card-based game to promote self-awareness through group reflection. Discussing our interest with Professor Colin Beard, we realised the potential for a collaborative project to develop an experiential card game to initiate a reflective conversational journey which

could be used to support the Personal Development Planning process.

We constructed the card game experience with a positive focus. We recognised that card games were essentially interactive in nature; within the context of Higher Education we felt that they would have the capacity to trigger complex conversational learning and learning through narrative creation and action outcome-orientated behaviours. Listening and learning from others helps students to reflect on their own learning and developmental needs. The idea of a learning conversation is based on the group reflective process, which many believe is a powerful vehicle for helping learners to develop new insights and as a result newer learning can emerge.

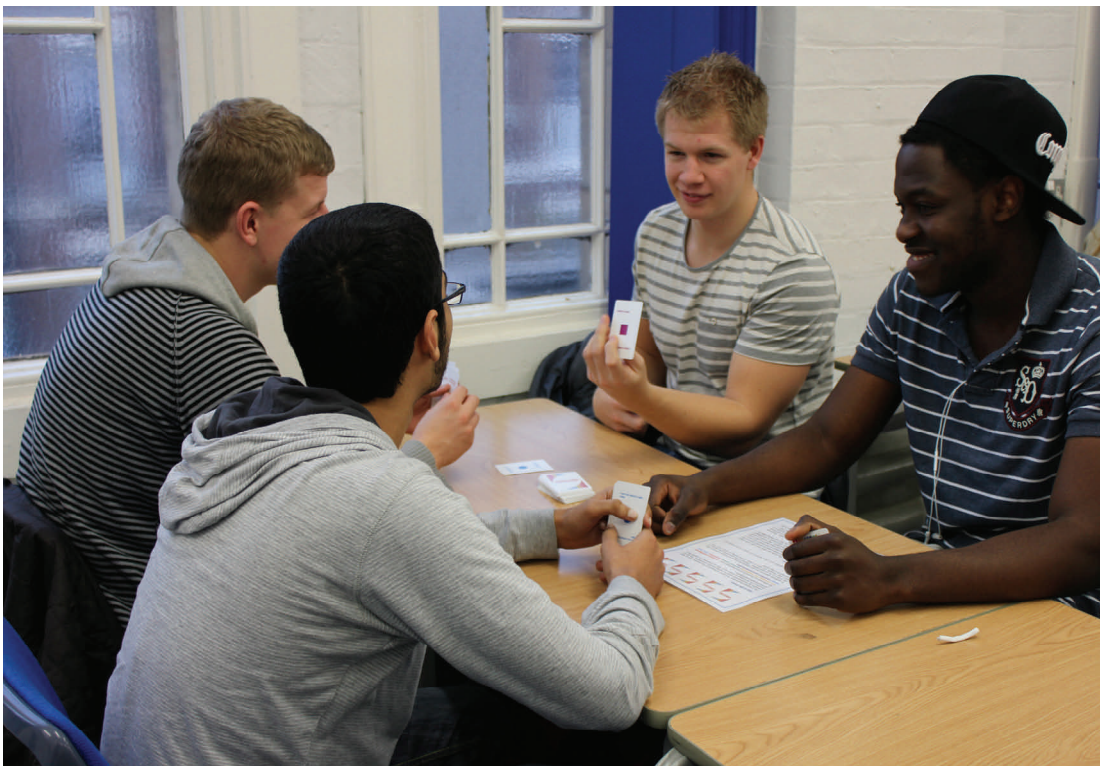
Our initial step was to review a wide range of personal development frameworks. As a result of our research we chose to base our experiential card game statements under the

following categories – emotional intelligence, own strengths and weaknesses, personal values, motivation, drive and energy and transition and transformation.

The card statements were piloted first with PDP practitioners, and then subsequently with LJMU students. Our aim was to develop a game which required very little facilitation and would enable students to question themselves and promote self reflection within a group setting. The final card statements have been colour- and shape-coded. Colour denotes the subject for discussion. Shape denotes the nature of the statement as either positive or developmental. Taking the form of the card game rummy, players select cards in turn to create a 'hand' that depicts themselves. This is done by discarding cards that are perceived by the player to be rejected character traits. A crucial element of the game is that it is played in a relaxed and non-judgemental atmosphere.

Subsequently, each group is then asked to present their Ideal student in the form a large drawing to the group through the process of creating a shared vision. The process encourages learners to defend elements that are important to them and dismiss areas that they do not care strongly about. If another group criticises another's group they are then put in a position where they defend their decisions.

We believe we have created a unique and interactive resource which promotes meaningful learning through conversation. The Creating Conversations card experience has been designed to support PDP in Higher Education. Learning through conversations (dialogue) and the creation of written material (reflective narratives) was the primary output; the card experience was secondary and merely applied as a facilitation process.



Reflection in action at Liverpool John Moores University.

The 'capstone assignment' tutorial as a PDP process in developing graduate identity, by Andrea Raiker.

This brief paper outlines the connections made between Hinchcliffe and Jolly's (2009) research into graduate identity and my research into the undergraduate dissertation tutorial as a Personal Development Planning (PDP) process to support learner development (2010). Awareness of the resonance of the two projects informed a briefing paper I have written on graduate identity as part of my work at the University's Centre for Learning Excellence. Amongst my colleagues there is clear understanding of the importance of student employability in

“...it would be unreasonable to expect supervisors to be wholly responsible for ensuring student awareness of this wider conception of employability.”

today's economic climate. It is also acknowledged that the established model of graduate employability, involving measurable competencies and attributes, is useful. However there is a shared sense that graduate identity is more than this. The findings of Hinchcliffe and Jolly's research have supported this sense.

My project, involving analysis of data collected from 56 students and 6 dissertation supervisors in the final year of a

Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) degree, investigated the reasons behind falling levels of achievement over a five year period. In the year prior to data collection, one third of the approximately 120 strong cohort were awarded D grades or failed. I focused on the dissertation as it is a 'capstone' assignment, the final assignment undertaken by most B.Ed students before they enter work. It is intended to encapsulate the key elements of learning acquired during the course of the degree. The grade awarded has substantial impact on degree classification and therefore on employers' perceptions of students' abilities. The dissertation is supervised, and its function reflects the Higher Education Academy's definition of PDP as being: '...a structured and supported process undertaken by an individual to reflect upon their own learning, performance and or achievement and to plan for their personal, educational and career development' (2009:1). Therefore, through the tutorial process, the supervisor could make explicit the value of the dissertation both in terms of undergraduate achievement and postgraduate potential for the workplace. A finding of the research was that most students did not value the dissertation in terms of informing their teaching career. Most did not take advantage of the five one-hour tutorials to which they were entitled. This may be due to another finding, that there was no clear under-

standing of the nature and purpose of the dissertation by students and supervisors. As one supervisor put it: "most of the students see it as something that has to be done, a hoop that has to be jumped through".

Hinchcliffe and Jolly's work, analysing responses from over 100 employers, demonstrates clearly that the expectations of employers for graduates on appointment are precisely those involved in the dissertation (e.g. honesty and integrity, ability to assimilate ideas quickly and to present ideas clearly in writing, management of time, demonstration of attention to detail and thoroughness, willingness to take responsibility for one's own work). So it can be argued that the role of the supervisor through the tutorial process includes supporting their students in perceive aspects of graduate identity afforded by the dissertation for their future employability. However, it would be unreasonable to expect supervisors to be wholly responsible for ensuring student awareness of this wider conception of employability, a conception that includes values as well as competencies. The dissertation, or any other 'capstone' project, is positioned at the apex of an underlying structure. For employer expectations to be firmly embedded in student knowledge and understanding, values and competencies should be fully integrated into undergraduate programmes and associated assessments.



Dr. Andrea Raiker

1. HE Academy (2009) *Personal Development Planning*. Available at: <http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/ourwork/learning/pdp> (accessed Jan 2012)
2. Hinchcliffe, G. And Jolly, A. (2009) *Employer Concepts of Graduate Employability*. York: HEA
3. Raiker, A. (2010) 'An investigation into the undergraduate dissertation tutorial as a Personal Development Planning process to support learner development' in *Journal of Learning Development in Higher Education: Special Edition Researching PDP Practice*, November 2010. ISSN1759-667X

What effects do Cognitive Behavioural Therapies have on the implementation of PDP in Higher Education?, asks Jackie Adamson.

According to the QAA (2004) Personal Development Planning (PDP) is a “structured and supported process undertaken by an individual to reflect upon their own learning, performance and/or achievement and to plan for their personal, educational and career development”. Subsequent critics question its place in Higher Education, speak of a ‘dumbing down’ of HE through endless therapeutic type activities (Ecclestone and Hayes 2009) seeking to identify student key skills and encourage reflection. Students themselves often regard it is a ‘waste of time’.

However, PDP is here to stay. The HE sector is charged with adopting and implementing PDP to satisfy employer and student needs but it seems that established degree programmes have no place for it. Strategists include PDP as part of university business plans, and educators need to embrace it.

How then can educators help students to ‘reflect upon their own learning’, and look at their ‘performance and achievements and plan for their personal, educational and career development’. What is the syllabus for this type of learning, and how can it be delivered effectively? Educators such as myself and others, have successfully designed and developed a number of tasks, activities and role-play, all of which seek to facilitate

self-awareness in this area utilising techniques found in Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT).

CBT is widely accepted as an intervention that seeks to help people overcome difficult situations in life, primarily through ‘talking’. (Proudfoot et al, 1997). Over time, measured changes can be visible through the modified actions and interactions of those affected individuals. As early as 1910 Edward L Thorndike published “The contribution of psychology to education”, and contemporary cognitive psychologists have pioneered research forming undisputable alliances between education and cognitive psychology. (Ausubel 1963, Dewey 1938, Lewin 1948).

CBT’s links with reflection began to appear from 2000 onwards influenced by Schon (1983), Kolb (1984), Boud, Keogh and Walker (1985) and the impact it could have on adult learning emerged. Subsequently, relevant aspects of learning theory were utilised within the mental health sector, and some CBT techniques came to be used within the HE sector to assist the successful delivery of PDP, employed as part of a model for teaching and learning.

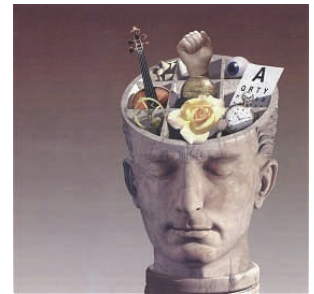
Some students coming to university are under immense stress to cope with changes in their environment, the expectations of family and self, and

sometimes their perception of the enormity of the degree programme. Measuring student success through the achievement of practical competencies in a series of graded tasks is a well-documented process within universities, but success for those same students engaging with the process of PDP, which could potentially expose student vulnerabilities in other areas, is more difficult to quantify.

In order to best meet the needs of these students, a number of CBT techniques can be utilised as part of the teaching approach to PDP – Collaborative Case Conceptualisation, ABCDEF Model, ‘The Bucket Theory’, REBT (Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy), to mention only a few.

At Northumbria University some of these techniques are present as part of a ‘Professional Skills Module’ specifically written for Information Systems (IS) undergraduate students (Level 4 and 5) that integrates PDP, but contextualises it within their specific degree programme.

The subjects being studied are delivered with an IS knowledge focus, yet the outcomes are primarily about self-awareness and engagement, and more importantly attempt to illustrate how to plan for success. However, The dissemination of this approach across the disciplines is largely dependent upon the skills and attitudes of the educator and the commitment made by the institution to PDP.



“Strategists include PDP as part of university business plans, and educators need to embrace it.”

E-PDP in Bolton: Dr. Maria A. Rodriguez-Yborra and Mike Lawrence examine the nature of a trans-disciplinary approach to PDP, highlighting the benefits of collaboration in action.

We are members of two Faculties, two philosophies and ways of looking at how to 'express' and plan professional development to enhance the employability opportunities for our student. One team trying to understand how things could work for multidisciplinary statements. Most importantly, an additional challenge is how to encourage student engagement? and more importantly, how to get long-standing traditional art, media, technology and engineering staff to buy into the new technology, if only to promote/support the students' future career potential?.

The Faculty of Art and Media Technologies (AMT) has been exploring in the past three years the best approach to develop a sound and efficient e-PDP model for a challenging multidisciplinary faculty, attempting to enrich the model with the variety of discipline background and good practice, as well as informing the University of Bolton (UoB), on the findings and outcomes. On the other hand, the Faculty of Advanced Engineering & Sciences (AE&S) is a newcomer to the implementation of e-PDP, and in the process of learning a lot from others' experiences along the way and it is already apparent that there are some identifiable positives along with some further challenges.

The University's Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) is Moodle and the software currently chosen for both faculties

to test the e-PDP in the past year is Mahara, which is accessed via the VLE. Mahara has numerous format similarities to Facebook, so many students get to grips with the social networking elements reasonably quickly. It is the reflective requirement element for PDP that provides the biggest challenge, not least with staff who are very happy in their comfort zones, being set in their ways and paper-friendly. Loads of staff development sessions have been organised to promote the use of the chosen e-PDP tool, but very low enthusiasm has been showed by academic staff. Staff are consumed with the day to day running of lecturing and some seem to have very little time to reflect!, or 'learn' a new e-Tool (Mahara). The challenge then requires two approaches: One approach to teach the software tools to both students and staff and another to get the STAFF to promote reflection while the students learn to reflect on their academic journey!

For engineering students, Mahara allows 'logic' sequences which appears to be intuitive for them. This is, the process back down into its individual logical blocks, the student's goal is to create their own Portfolio View (webpage) that captures their abilities, reflections and best working practices. This 'View' will be built up from their own images, reflections from their own thoughts, writings about their findings, their subject aware-

ness and using their individual creative flair to produce their own style in the webpage layout.

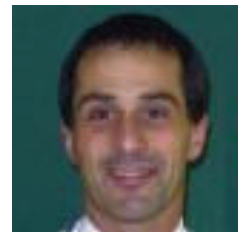
For students with 'arts' background, the approach is different. They consider their pieces of 'art' as their 'reflective' practice. They struggle to 'think in sequence' and progress professionally. Mahara allows to create reflective blogs that 'simulate' their traditional paper-based sketchbook journals.

Students 'reflective abilities' has to be nurtured and guided by the academic staff, and there is evidence that shows that the UoB academic staff are far from reaching any commonalities on what 'reflection' means and how to get the most of it from our students. The culture of e-PDP is slowly changing due to the greater involvement of students and staff with technology (both within and outside the university). Both faculties have started breaking down the barriers associated with the reflective requirement for PDP being the biggest challenge, not least with staff.

It is seen as key to revisit staff common understanding of what is 'reflective practice' and to engage staff and students with the available technology to document the reflective exercise. Students engagement with technology does not seem to be an issue.



Dr. Maria A. Rodriguez-Yborra



Mike Lawrence

“...faculties have started breaking down the barriers associated with the reflective requirement for PDP being the biggest challenge, not least with staff.”

1. Burkinshaw, S, (2005), University of Bolton, *PDP Framework*
2. <http://pierproject.edublogs.org/> (accessed on 4 December, 2011)

Lifewide Education: Norman Jackson takes us on the birth of a new educational adventure



Making the transition to 'retirement' is no easy matter. You work your socks off trying to create something which you believe in and then suddenly.. its thank you and goodbye.. This happened to me at the end of the project I led for five years at the University of Surrey' and it tipped me into something I was not at all prepared for.

We create the meaning of our lives through what we choose to do and how we do it and work is an important part of what we do and who we are. I have always tried to carry the ideas, values and beliefs I hold from one job to another and this transition to another life is no different. I have no intention of giving up on the ideas and practices we developed in SCEPTrE: ideas and practices that seem to me to be fundamental to living a productive, fulfilling and meaningful life in

the complex, turbulent and disruptive world we live in. Ideas that are also grounded in the beliefs I hold about the value to individuals of the self-regulated, action-oriented, experiential and reflective process of learning that lies at the heart of PDP. Effectively, what I did was to take my ideas and beliefs about PDP and embed them in the context of lifewide learning and education.

I recently came across an interesting online talk by Jane Fonda² who talks about our 'Lifes Third Act' the last three decades of life - a developmental stage of life that's as significant and different from adult mid-life as adolescence is to childhood. For those of us who are embarking on our third life she poses the important question, 'how should we use this time?' It's a good question and one that has

exercised me since I 'retired from fulltime employment' last April. My initial answer is to try to take the legacy of educational ideas and practices that was SCEPTrE's gift and create an enterprise to try to disseminate them and help others make use of them. This was how the Lifewide Education Community Interest Company has come into being. It's a not for profit social enterprise working for and with the communities of practitioners who care about students' development in a whole person, whole of life, self-actualising sense.

So what is this idea that fires my imagination in a way that the abstract idea of PDP never managed to do? It's a very simple idea. Lifewide learning adds important detail to the broad pattern of human development we call lifelong learning - all the learning and devel-

“For those of us who are embarking on our third act she poses the important question, 'how should we use this time?’”

1. The author was Director of the Surrey Centre for Excellence in Professional Training and Education (SCEPTrE)

2. [‘Life's Third Act', TED talk given by Jane Fonda](#)

Lifewide Education (continued)

opment we gain as we progress along the pathway of our life.

Lifewide learning recognises that most people, no matter what their age or circumstances, simultaneously inhabit a number of different spaces - like work or education, being a member of a family, being involved in clubs or societies, travelling and taking holidays and looking after their own wellbeing mentally, physically and spiritually. So the timeframes of lifelong learning and the spaces of lifewide learning will characteristically intermingle and who we are and who we are becoming are the consequences of this intermingling.

We live out our lives in these different spaces and, thanks to the society we live in, most of us have the freedom to choose which spaces we want to occupy and how we want to occupy them. In these spaces we make decisions about what to be involved in, we meet and interact with different people, have different sorts of relationships, adopt different roles and identities, and think, behave and communicate in different ways.

In these different spaces we encounter different sorts of challenges and problems, seize, create or miss opportunities, and aspire to live and achieve our ambitions. It is in these spaces that we create the meaning that is our life. The promise of lifewide education is that we can more fully appreciate and value our lives

for the potential they hold for enabling us to become the people we want and need to become. In other words, our everyday pathway to actualising ourselves. It seems to me that the practice of lifewide learning enables us to turn an abstract educational construct like personal development planning, into a living, personally relevant and meaningful process.

So, why should we take lifewide education seriously?

We live in a world where change is everywhere and we are helping young people prepare for jobs that don't yet exist, using technologies that have not yet been invented in order to solve problems that we don't know are problems yet. This is the optimistic view of change. For those people who are having to cope with the loss of their job during this economic crisis and deal with the turmoil of having to create a new life for themselves - change is a disruptive and destructive force requiring us to develop the resilience and fortitude to pick ourselves up and begin again. This world of constant change contrasts starkly to the low-risk stable world of formal education.

We also live in a world of diminishing resources yet our appetite for a 'better' and 'brighter' future is undiminished. There is an aspiration gap between the sort of world we would like to live in and our ability to create and sustain that world. We can only begin

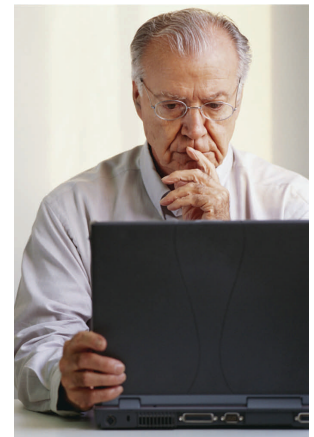
to close this gap if we create an altogether more inventive and resourceful society. This requires us not only to improve our current educational practices but to examine all other forms of education that will help us secure a better future for ourselves, our children and our grandchildren.

If education is really about making a positive difference to students' lives then we have a moral and professional responsibility to prepare people for the lifetime of uncertainty, change, challenge and emergent or self-created opportunity that lies ahead of them.

It may sound dramatic but the reality is that the majority of young people will have many jobs, and perhaps several careers; they will have to change organisations, roles and identities many times and be part of new organisations that they help to create or existing organisations that they help to transform.

Many will have to invent their own businesses in order to earn an income or create and juggle a portfolio of jobs requiring them to maintain several identities simultaneously. Preparing our students for a lifetime of working, learning and living in uncertain and unpredictable worlds that have yet to come into existence, is perhaps one of the greatest responsibilities and challenges confronting education systems all over the world.

Norman Jackson returns in Issue 24



“...change is a disruptive and destructive force requiring us to develop the resilience and fortitude to pick ourselves up and begin again.”



PDP NEWSLETTER

“AND THE AWARD GOES TO...” by Sarah Jeffries and Vicky Mann



“Awards must demonstrate they can provide added value.”

IN RECENT YEARS there has been an explosion in student Skills Awards being developed within the higher education community. Employers told universities: they wanted evidence that students had graduated University with more than just a degree; and further to this, they told us that “Employers...want students to be able to recognise and articulate their own achievements” (Burgess, 2007). The development of Awards was many institutions’ response to this demand. The purpose of Awards is to enable and encourage students to undertake development activities (e.g. extra-curricular activities, skills training etc.); but at the very heart of the Awards is an emphasis on **reflection**. This is the tool that underpins Awards, and enables students to articulate their skills and experiences effectively.

As a response to the development of Skills Awards, an AG-CAS (Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services) Skills Award Task Group was formed in 2010, with the mission to share practice and collaborate with external professional bodies and employers. Following previous research from SCEPTRe (Surrey Centre for Excellence in Professional Training in Education) we were aware of 50 Awards that existed in the UK. In order to assess the landscape of Awards, and identify future issues and considerations, we developed a survey to capture a picture of how Awards were structured; as-

essed; and resourced.

67 institutions responded to the survey, and we identified approximately 80 Awards overall. Whilst there were commonalities between Awards, there was a clear indicator that each Award had been tailored to its respective institution, including those modelled on another University’s structure (22.6%).

The majority of Awards have quality assurance procedures in place; and a group or body (e.g. Board of Studies or Steering Group) that oversees the strategic direction of the Award. This rigour is something that the Association of Graduate Recruiters noted when awarding two Skills Awards (the Universities of Birmingham and Nottingham) with their annual ‘Graduate Development Preparation in Higher Education Award’.

Perhaps one of the most interesting themes to arise out of the Skills Award survey was the findings on assessment. The vast majority of Awards were assessed utilising reflection exercises. A Skills Award is more than a list of activities: it provides students with structured opportunities for reflection, and a means to articulate that reflection in preparation for the graduate recruitment environment. The survey found the most common assessment elements included (several institutions utilised more than one): application form/CV (61.5%); interview (44.2%); portfolio/ journal (40.4%); and presentation

(30.8%). These means of assessment allow for personalisation. Each student’s submission is based on their particular reflections on their experiences; putting the student firmly at the heart of the experience.

The survey found that the top challenges for the future included scalability (52.8%), staff resource (49.1%) and academic buy-in (41.5%). In light of new fee structures, an increasingly competitive (globalised) marketplace and information provided to students through ‘KIS’, finding solutions to such challenges may become more pressing. Awards must demonstrate they can provide added value, a further mechanism for employer engagement, and a focus on reflection that can aid graduate personal and professional development.

Sharing practice across the sector, and collaboration with external partners, may assist us in how we tackle such issues. In January 2012, a conference organised by the Task Group (‘The Future of Skills Awards’) focused upon how impact evaluation, academic engagement and employer engagement may provide tools to aid future development.

Survey findings and case studies can be found online. In addition to a mailing list designed to allow colleagues to share practice, the Task Group will be working with the CRA to liaise on relevant issues including PDP and the HEAR.



WANT TO CONTRIBUTE TO A FUTURE ISSUE?

PDP24 SUBMISSION DEADLINE IS MARCH 19TH

EMAIL ROB@RECORDINGACHIEVEMENT.ORG

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WEBINAR



DR. GORDON JOYES
Associate Professor,
University of Nottingham.



LISA GRAY

JISC Executive

The e-Portfolio implementation toolkit

Led by Dr. Gordon Joyes (Univ. Notts) & Lisa Gray (JISC)

The session will introduce the e-portfolio implementation toolkit which is the output from a JISC-funded e-portfolio implementation study which ran from 2010–2011 and was led by the University of Nottingham. This toolkit is designed to support those involved in the implementation of e-portfolios in higher (HE) and further education (FE) and work based learning: practitioners planning to use e-portfolios in curriculum design and middle and senior managers addressing strategy and policy issues and

challenges relating to the introduction of technologies for learning. Although e-portfolio use is now widespread, embedding their use on a large scale is still relatively new. As a result the design and content of the toolkit have drawn on the experiences of its case study contributors: 12 UK, 4 Australian and 3 New Zealand partner institutions. It aims to:

- Identify salient messages from examples of large-scale e-portfolio implementations to help inform future practice and strategy;

- Articulate models of implementation.

- Support a range of users in identifying and addressing issues relevant to their context.

When?

27th March 2012, 1pm.

Location?

On-line Remote Access

Contact?

Email Cath Hewson
cath@recordingachievement.org

This webinar is free to CRA institutional members.