



The Learning, Teaching and Assessment Report

2008 edition

Looking forward, glancing back



Sheffield
Hallam University

SHARPENS YOUR THINKING

Contents

Foreword **1-2**

Learning, teaching and assessment themes

Digital Fluency **3-4**

Professional development **4-5**

Centres for Excellence in Teaching and Learning: Promoting Learning Autonomy and Embedding, Enhancing and Integrating Employability **6-7**

Research-informed teaching **8-9**

Embedding and enhancing e-learning **9-10**

Personal development planning **11-12**

Assessment for Learning **12-13**

Learning, teaching and assessment faculty highlights

Faculty of Arts, Computing, Engineering and Sciences (ACES) **14-15**

Faculty of Development and Society (DS) **16-17**

Faculty of Health and Wellbeing (HWB) **18-19**

Faculty of Organisation and Management (OM) **20-21**

Foreword

Welcome to the 2007-08 Annual Learning, Teaching and Assessment Report. This is the third annual report and, as before, it is a showcase of our achievements of the last 12 months and a glimpse of emerging developments.

2007-08 was the second year of the LTA Strategy with its three main themes of:

- vibrant and challenging learning opportunities
- assessment and feedback integrated into learning
- professional development framework for staff

You will find many examples of excellent practice in all of these areas in the pages that follow, but some are worth highlighting.

In July 2008, the new Adsetts Centre extension will open to students and it promises to be one of the most innovative learning spaces in the UK. The University is rightly proud of its existing learning environment and with several large scale new builds and refurbishments under way, it is important that we continue to experiment in creating learning spaces for the students of the future, and this new space will do just that.

During 2007-08, the University participated in the Higher Education Academy/Joint Information Systems Committee e-learning benchmarking exercise. The exercise included an extended process of internal review and collaboration with other institutions within our benchmarking club to share good practice. Sheffield Hallam's commitment to evaluating the impact of e-learning on the student experience and placing the student voice at the heart of the development agenda was considered to be exceptional and exemplary. The University was also commended for embedding e-learning within the LTA Strategy, the collective responsibility for achieving the goals of the LTA Strategy and the support structures for e-learning (both in terms of technological infrastructure and staff development).

shuspace, the University's personalised online learning environment continues to be developed to enhance the holistic student experience. This work is closely aligned with the development of the virtual learning environment as an online learning space that is consistent and comprehensive. Not only were students involved in every step of the shuspace development, they continue to suggest additional features and functionality.

TALI (The Assessment for Learning Initiative) has worked successfully with colleagues in faculties and departments to develop new assessment regulations. These are a great improvement on the existing regulations and bring the University in line with comparator institutions, maintain academic standards whilst reducing the assessment burden on students, and provide the flexibility that is needed for the design of assessment practices to support student learning. Appropriate systems and processes are in place for 2008-09 to enable further innovation in assessment and feedback.

The University's Assignment Handler is a custom development built by Blackboard to a Learning and Teaching Institute (LTI) design brief, to directly support the needs of students and staff at Sheffield Hallam. It is designed to support the delivery of grades and feedback online and, where appropriate, online submission of coursework. This highly innovative approach to technology-enabled assessment and feedback has attracted significant interest from other large institutions in the UK and is so highly regarded by Blackboard Inc that it may be integrated into the main product.

There is a well defined need for staff development in the broadest sense, both for new and existing staff. In 2008-09, the University can offer a comprehensive program for staff to improve their practice, whether it is the Postgraduate Certificate course in Learning and Teaching in Higher Education (the 'new staff course'), short online courses in e-learning, or academic leadership. Work is under way to develop and pilot an orientation program for new staff and to implement a rewards and recognition framework for LTA at the University.

There is so much to look forward to next year, notably changes to the student experience survey to ensure that it is telling us what we need to know, and a major piece of work on institutional readiness and the students of the future. Given that the next corporate plan will place the student experience at the forefront for the future of the University, 2008/2009 is promising to be a very interesting year indeed.

Professor Philip Garrahan
Pro Vice-Chancellor, Academic Development

Digital fluency

Learning for the digital age

As a forward thinking University, what expectations do our students have about the way we will prepare them for a world that is becoming increasingly e-permeated? What attributes should a Sheffield Hallam graduate possess that demonstrate their readiness for employment in a digitally infused world?

What is digital fluency?

Digital fluency is characterised by the necessity to *'live learn and work in the digital age'*. It recognises that the way in which organisations and individuals communicate has been transformed. This means that those who can understand and comfortably use digital tools and resources are significantly advantaged.

Digital fluency encompasses **information literacy, IT competencies, online interaction skills** and **critical thinking ability** which underpin the academic experience. The emergence of digital environments has blurred the boundaries between these literacies. We need to develop an approach that makes sense of this complexity.

Addressing our capability to develop these skills is likely to have a profound impact on the competitiveness of the University and the employability of our graduates. We aim, therefore, to raise the profile of digital fluency, to embed it as a core graduate attribute and a key element of professional development for all staff.

What we have learnt so far

The emphasis in the early stage of the digital fluency initiative has been to explore and understand our readiness as an institution to support our students in becoming digitally fluent. This has been through

dialogue with academic staff, students (past and present) and support staff. It has been through small scale pilots, for instance, examining students' critical awareness when engaging with digital resources, and by evaluating internal and external research findings relating to student expectations and competencies in this area. Some headline findings are

- with a diverse student body their digital fluency needs and abilities are widely spread, a one size fits all approach to supporting our incoming students is no longer effective
- there is a tendency to overestimate the broad digital competencies of younger students, who may have technical proficiency in some areas but lack the critical awareness necessary to adequately apply digital skills for academic purpose
- academic and support staff are unclear about the levels of competence and confidence we should expect of our students, or where and how the different digital literacies can best be developed
- in order to build a sound base for digital fluency it is important that all academic staff are able to identify their own needs and are supported in building their confidence in this area

Looking forward

For the 2008-09 academic year our focus will be on

- developing a means of identifying the digital competencies and development needs of incoming students
- working with academic staff groups across the faculties to understand their digital fluency development needs
- exploring ways of providing more coherent and pervasive support (drawing on central and faculty based expertise) that are clearly focused on developing the capabilities of all our students and staff to meet their individual needs
- creating easy entry points/access to self help support for digital fluency
- defining our graduate attributes in relation to digital fluency

For further information please contact
Kay Moore, Digital Fluency, LTI

Professional development

Background and developments

The last academic year, 2006-07, saw the approval of the Sheffield Hallam University professional development framework for academic and learning support staff, based on the sector wide UK Professional Standards Framework for teaching and supporting learning in higher education (i). This was introduced in February 2006. This year involved the development of pilots and evaluation at Sheffield Hallam.

Sheffield Hallam University offers a wide range of opportunities from taught, credit bearing courses such as the Postgraduate Certificate in Learning and Teaching (PGCert) in Higher Education, to informal seminars. During this academic year, the PGCert had three cohorts, with a total of 85 attendees; and the associate lecturer short, non credit bearing course had 25 attendees during semester one. A programme of lunchtime seminars, themed around the UK Professional Standards Framework, was attended by 160 members of staff during semester one. A key contributing factor to their success was because they were practitioner led and practitioner focused, encouraging cross faculty conversations. Sessions have ranged from recruitment and retention, to assessment and widening participation. Other development activities have included 'In conversation' with Alan Jenkins (ii) on **enhancing the links between research and teaching** and Jack Whitehead (iii) on **action research**. All these activities are supported by the professional development staff intranet pages (iv); the home page receiving 1492 hits during semester one.

We currently have 189 fellows of the Higher Education Academy and one Associate; with 20 members of learning and teaching support staff engaged in the reflective route to fellow or associate. In December 2007 the Higher Education Academy announced the newly created **senior fellows**. This prestigious award was given to Professor Mike Bramhall and Professor Anthony Rosie, 2 out of the 14 awards made nationally. Professor Mike Bramhall was also awarded a **National Teaching Fellowship** bringing Sheffield Hallam's total to six achieving this status since the scheme's inception in 2000.

Looking forward

2008-09 brings new activities for professional development through

- a pilot **LTA orientation** to the University for new staff involved with learning and teaching support. This provides an insight into the ethos and culture of learning and teaching, what makes the University distinctive and how students and staff are supported in their learning and teaching experience
- an online **associate lecturer course**, delivered and supported through shuspace, to enable part-time staff to achieve registered practitioner status of the Higher Education Academy
- a new structured programme of **LTA seminars**, linked to the institutional LTA Strategy and faculty plans, to be held on Thursday mornings, including updates and discussion of topical academic papers related to the LTA themes replacing the current LTI seminar series. The practitioner led Wednesday sessions will continue to complement, but not duplicate, this seminar series
- a structured programme of events for subject based LTA Co-ordinators in the Faculty of Development and Society which is under development
- research into staff perspectives relating to their professional development, in particular dual professionals and recently appointed staff

For further information please visit <https://staff.shu.ac.uk/ita/pdfframework.asp>
or contact Sally Bradley, Curriculum and Professional Development, LTI

- (i) <http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/assets/York/documents/ourwork/professional/ProfessionalStandardsFramework.pdf>
- (ii) Alan Jenkins is one of the authors of 'Linking teaching and research in disciplines and departments' www.heacademy.ac.uk/assets/york/documents/linkingteachingandresearch_April07.pdf and 'Institutional strategies to link teaching and research' www.heacademy.ac.uk/assets/York/documents/resources/resourcedatabase/id585_institutional_strategies_to_link_teaching_and_research.pdf.
- (iii) Further information about Jack Whitehead's work in Action Research is available at www.jackwhitehead.com/jack/jwlvivthyorkstjohn2.htm and <http://www.actionresearch.net>
- (iv) Sheffield Hallam Professional Development staff intranet home page <https://staff.shu.ac.uk/ita/pdfframework.asp>

Centres for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETLs): Promoting Learning Autonomy (CPLA) and Embedding, Enhancing and Integrating Employability (e3i)

CPLA and e3i: A new direction with greater rewards

The strategy for the first two and a half years of the Centre for Promoting Learning Autonomy (CPLA) focused on recognising and rewarding excellence and on developing new areas of excellent practice. As we move into the second phase of our work, we are preparing to move into output mode. Our new director, Ivan Moore, has developed our new strategy which will disseminate and embed excellent practices and grow a community of practice in developing learner autonomy.

The Centre for Embedding, Enhancing and Integrating Employability (e3i) has continued to support colleagues in embedding the employability agenda in a number of ways. These include

- staff development events, such as the Faculty of Health and Wellbeing undergraduate revalidation away day, led by John Cleak and Bridget Winwood
- meetings with course planning chairs, dissemination events and activities including conferences and workshops
- the University employability case studies featured on the e3i website, and via the CETLs newsletter
- the production and distribution of resources, for example, the personal development plan (PDP) card game

We have continued to support initiatives that directly impact upon the student experience and enhance employability, for example, support has been provided for journalism students to attend a work experience programme as part of the 2008 Beijing Olympics.

CPLA has already identified a core team of expert practitioners, who have become CPLA associate directors. These include Mike Bramhall, Roger Lloyd-Jones, Randal Macdonald, and Christine O'Leary. To this distinguished list, we have now added Richard Lynch and Anne-Florence Dujardin as leaders in research, scholarship and evaluation and Liz Barratt, Kay Moore and Cal Weatherald as conveners of our leadership teams in strategic topics in learner autonomy.

Jeff Waldo has joined the e3i core team, as teaching fellow for employability in ACES, and Ester Ehiyazaryan has joined as a researcher. These appointments add to the capacity of e3i to support colleagues over the next two years.

Looking forward

Over the next two years in CPLA we plan to expand and embed our work in learner autonomy through several strands of our strategy

- 1 we have recently issued a University-wide invitation to staff to bid for project funding and support to develop innovative approaches in enhancing learner autonomy
- 2 we have introduced a major project in learner autonomy in each of our faculties. These flagship projects will embed learner autonomy and will identify and reward certain key academic staff as project leaders
- 3 we are in the process of introducing six Scholarship Teams in Autonomy Research (STARs). These teams will work over the next two years to identify good practices and to provide advice and guidelines in each of the six scholarship areas: **developing a conceptual stance to higher education; motivation and engagement; developing information skills; managing and organising your learning; enquiry based learning; and student partnerships**

In these ways, we plan to have a significant impact on a substantial proportion of the University in ways that will enhance our capacity to support learners in becoming more autonomous.

Key activities for e3i next year include plans to publicise a reviewed Sheffield Hallam University employability framework, to consult on the notion of the University's employability guarantee and to gain more feedback from employers on the University's approach to employability. We will continue to support staff initiatives that aim to enhance the employability of students, and disseminate these practices both within and outside the University.

For further information please visit <http://extra.shu.ac.uk/cet/>
or contact Ivan Moore, Centre for Promoting Learner Autonomy (CPLA)
Dave Laughton, Centre for Embedding, Enhancing and Integrating Employability, (e3i)

Research-informed teaching (RIT)

Enhancing the links between research, learning and teaching: implementing HEFCE's Research-informed teaching initiative

Research-informed teaching was introduced by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) in its funding for the Teaching Quality Enhancement Funds (TQEF) for 2006-07 to 2008-09 as one of the national strategic priorities for learning and teaching in higher education. The central notion is that teaching should be 'informed and enriched by research'.

At Sheffield Hallam University for 2007-09 we have adopted an approach to enhancing the links between research, learning and teaching which addresses four themes as set out in the LTA Strategy 2006-10:

Research will impact on student learning in a number of ways:

- the integration of discipline research into the curriculum
- learning and teaching research to inform practice
- students doing their own research and engaging with the research of others
- policy and strategy research and evaluation (LTA Strategy, theme 3, page 6)

During 2006-07, funds were allocated to faculties together with other TQEF monies to develop various approaches to research-informed teaching. A cross-faculty initiative was the Higher Education Research Network (HERN) which ran regular reading groups, seminars and conferences with that in 2007 attracting over 90 participants. Two other faculty-based examples of activity are the setting-up of the Centre for Pedagogic Research and Innovation in Organisation and Management and the very

successful Research Conference in Development and Society. These activities focused greater attention on the importance of research in the academic profile as well as the need for continuing pedagogic research in order to understand and enhance learning and teaching across the University.

Looking forward

In 2007 we moved to a more co-ordinated approach through the appointment of secondees in each faculty with more clearly articulated action plans and outcomes. For 2008 the emphasis will be on developing and embedding approaches, ensuring sustainability and promoting a culture of learning as enquiry – something already well established in many parts of the University. The success of the initiative will be seen through the learning experiences of students as evidenced by course documentation and evaluation; greater awareness of different approaches to enquiry in learning; visible artefacts such as student journals, wikis and conference papers; and a successful conference bringing together those with an interest in research, learning and teaching.

There cannot be a 'one size fits all' approach across the University and we expect to see distinct approaches at subject group, programme and faculty levels. Of particular importance and significance will be the way RIT activities are seen as part of the professional development initiative across the University and how it links with the Employability (e3i) and Learner Autonomy (CPLA) CETLs and The Assessment for Learning Initiative (TALI).

The RIT team comprises four faculty 0.2 secondees – David Crowther (HWB), Richard Hill (ACES), Richard Lynch (D&S) and Chris Wroe (O&M) – together with Lindsay Ackroyd, Sally Bradley, Chris Glover and Ranald Macdonald from the LTI.

The team was recently successful in being awarded a £4,000 development grant from the ESCalate Higher Education Academy Subject Centre to promote the 'professional development for those leading quality enhancement initiatives'.

For further information please contact Ranald Macdonald, Academic Practice, LTI

Embedding and enhancing e-learning

Vibrant and challenging learning opportunities

Placing the student voice at the heart of the e-learning development agenda

More than 95 per cent of students are engaging with e-learning opportunities through Blackboard and associated technologies. Whilst they value the e-learning opportunities offered where these are appropriate to the module, feedback indicates a wish to see less variability in Blackboard site navigation and naming conventions. To address this we have provided targeted support for subject groups and programme teams and, with the support of faculty-based e-learning advisers and student e-learning assistants, have reviewed and refreshed Blackboard site navigation for over 500 modules. This work will continue during 2008-09.

Evaluating students' expectations and experiences of e-learning

Over the past five years we have surveyed new and returning students' expectations of technology to support learning. This year a summary of the findings has been shared with colleagues in the faculties. During 2007-08 we have undertaken a diary-based research study into students' experiences of e-learning and its inter-relationship with other aspects of their learning. The outcomes of this study are being disseminated across the sector and, most importantly, will continue to inform policy and practice within the University.

Providing robust and effective support structures and staff development

It is important that we continually refresh e-learning support for staff to ensure it is appropriate and meaningful. This year this has included issuing e-learning starter packs to all academic staff, building a comprehensive knowledge base and 24/7 support centre (located within the Bb-support tab in shuspace), and offering the 'integrated e-learning course' (now offered as three different iterations: general, online facilitation and distance learning) to programme teams and subject groups.

Looking forward

Targeted staff development and guidance materials will support further adoption of Blackboard Gradebook and the University's Assignment Handler to deliver grades and feedback to students. We will also be undertaking research into staff and student experiences of e-supported assessment processes including exploring the impact of using technology in this way upon students' engagement with their feedback.

We anticipate further growth in the use of institutionally-hosted blogs and wikis to support reflective learning, peer review and collaborative writing activities. These may be within Blackboard module sites or through Expo LX, which enables individuals and self-defining groups to set up their own collections of blogs and wikis outside module sites, supporting student-owned personal development portfolios, collaborative groupwork and informal cross-disciplinary communities.

In addition, we will continue to explore the application of other web2.0 technologies where appropriate, and how their 'social, participatory, collaborative and user-classified' qualities can be applied to support e-learning opportunities that are authentic to disciplinary or professional contexts; for example, integration of real world resources, processes of role-play and simulation, and development and sharing of student-generated learning resources.

Finally we will be preparing for the introduction of the '**next generation**' Blackboard learning environment in summer 2009. This will build on the existing platform, introducing additional functionality, greater flexibility and a more intuitive user interface as appropriate to a learning environment that will take us into the next decade. There will be opportunities for staff to explore this new environment from spring 2009.

For further information please contact:
Louise Thorpe, Academic Innovation, LTI

Personal development planning (PDP)

The current context

There is a diversity of approaches to PDP across the University according to local context, disciplinary style and personal preference. A selection of tools and resources is available to all disciplines including skills materials and an e-PDP resource in Blackboard. Also, the career management and employability dimensions of the PDP process continue to be supported by the Careers and Employment Service.

In 2006, faculties took on responsibility for embedding PDP and have maintained a dialogue with central departments. The new support for PDP at Level 4 in O&M is an example where collaboration between local and core support, and between pedagogic and e-learning expertise, has had major impact with 14,000 students introduced to a template-assisted approach to building a PDP portfolio. There has also been a range of research and dissemination activities around PDP, for example

- in 2006-07, the PDP Special Interest Group (SIG) provided a forum for sharing practice, and initiated a staff survey on PDP which targeted course leaders across all faculties. Of the 138 that responded (14 per cent of those surveyed) 75 per cent were using some form of PDP. The survey demonstrated a diversity of viewpoints and issues about all aspects of PDP: its relevance; how well it is embedded and supported; and the role of academic assessment in relation to the PDP process
- the ongoing National Coalition for Electronic Portfolio Research (NCEPR) project based in D&S exploring the effectiveness of reflective portfolios in supporting reflection found the portfolios of value in allowing students to build a more holistic picture of their learning, integrate feedback, and reflect on their transition to higher education. However, there was a need to encourage and strengthen how students undertake action planning
- in May 2007, ACES hosted a Higher Education Academy sponsored event to share practice in the use of electronic PDPs in art, design and media courses

Looking forward – revisiting PDP

The coming year will see a combination of ongoing development work and also a revisiting of PDP in the light of recent initiatives, evidence and e-learning opportunities.

Work to embed PDP in the faculties will continue, for example, in O&M, the strategy for extending PDP is via a joined-up approach with other initiatives such as employability, mentoring and the 'Flying Start' widening participation project. In ACES, a web-based system, currently used in maths by approximately 250 students, will be offered to other subject areas. Students use the system to regularly reflect on progress and development, and staff can respond quickly to problems identified.

The PDP SIG will continue as a community of practice to discuss and disseminate suggestions and changes. A smaller cross-faculty group is currently being set up, bringing together key faculty individuals with responsibility for PDP, to facilitate high-level sharing of progress, and address issues identified in the 2006-07 PDP survey and University Quality and Standards Profile.

New approaches to PDP will be informed by the Learner Autonomy and Employability initiatives, and by an awareness of the growing opportunities of educational gaming and online tools for personal authorship and collaboration.

The aim is to use participatory game-based developments to help students experience how reflection and intentional planning impact on personal progress. These approaches will be developed in partnership with student input, and may combine both virtual and physical domains.

For further information please contact
Susannah Diamond, Academic Innovation, LTI

Assessment for learning

Glancing back...

Since it was established, the focus for **The Assessment for Learning Initiative** (TALI) has been to initiate, co-ordinate and support the deliberate steps needed to move towards an integrated approach to assessment which will ensure maximum impact on and benefits for, students and staff. Much of the activity over the last year has been to support the development of student focused **standard assessment regulations** which will result in significant benefits to students and staff including

- the re-introduction of compensation to support attainment and progression
- changes to the honours degree calculations to bring the University in line with competitor institutions
- limitation of re-registration to address the significant issues that have arisen around the numbers of students carrying re-registration
- an emphasis on the design of module assessment strategies
- the introduction of in-module retrieval following successful implementation in the modules in the faculties of D&S and ACES to support progression and reduce referral rates

In addition, TALI has been involved in a wide range of University-wide activities, supported by a network of staff with roles in assessment development

- D&S: Alison Hramiak has developed a good practice guide for feedback and is working closely with Lucy Davies (LTI) on an ESCalate (the HEA Subject Centre for Education) supported project into prior student experiences of assessment and feedback with local schools and colleges

- O&M – Christine O’Leary and Kiefer Lee have focused on supporting staff in changing module assessment strategies
- ACES – Anne Nortcliffe has focused on working with subject groups on their approach to assessment and furthering her expertise in the use of audio feedback to enhance the student and staff experience
- HWB – Rob Wilson and Elaine Stringer, together with Bridget Winwood and Neil McKay have focused on support for the upcoming validation of professional health courses. To assist this, Chris Glover (LTI) has been seconded to HWB to support the development of guidance materials and facilitate staff development activities
- LTI – Stuart Hepplestone has been part seconded to TALI to continue his work in promoting the use of learning technologies (Gradebook, Assignment Handler, Feedback Wizard) to enhance assessment and feedback processes to students
- creation of opportunities for meaningful staff/student dialogue on enhancing the student experience of feedback across the institution, starting with a shared event with Sheffield Hallam Union on 10 June 2008
- a University wide campaign to raise student awareness of the different types of feedback they receive
- the development of resources for staff and students on feedback, combined with staff development opportunities across each faculty and the University
- further development and promotion of learning technologies to support the provision of timely and useful feedback
- further research into the student experience of feedback, focusing on the role of learning technologies in supporting the delivery of timely and effective feedback
- the production of good practice guides and support materials to promote approaches to learning and teaching that enhance feedback; for example, self and peer assessment and enquiry based learning

Looking forward...

Integrated assessment

In addition to changes in the regulations, next academic year will bring a University wide focus on **the enhancement of feedback to students** especially in relation to the National Student Survey including

- supported by a new assessment and feedback policy, course planning and validation will be changed to reflect a much stronger emphasis on the role of feedback in supporting learning

For further information please contact
Graham Holden, Academic Practice, LTI

Faculty of Arts, Computing, Engineering and Sciences LTA highlights

In 2007-08 the faculty has established three new teaching fellow roles in assessment, research-informed teaching and employability and these roles have already made significant contributions in these areas

- **assessment** – the teaching fellow for assessment has facilitated workshops in ‘good assessment practice’ and in particular in the assessment of ‘group working’, via the faculty implementation team for assessment
- **research-informed teaching (RIT)** – bids were invited from staff for projects which would develop and advocate the use of research to inform teaching and learning practice. Successful proposals will present their findings to the faculty at an RIT event to be held later this year
- **employability** – stronger links with the employability CETL, and the formation of an ‘employability group’ within the faculty

The outputs from the **assessment working group** have included an assessment handbook providing rich theoretical and practical guidelines on good practice; the success of the profile assessment pilot has seen new subject areas adopt this as a successful method of assessment. The **retention working group** has enabled initiatives such as mobile phone texting to be implemented across the faculty, monitoring student attendance and drop in sessions run by portfolio managers.

In January 2008 we held the third successful mid year conference which is aimed at associate lecturers (ALs) and recently appointed staff. A new associate lecturer handbook was produced and issued to all of our ALs.

Over the year we have used Teaching Quality Enhancement Funding (TQEF) to support staff development activities identified through our **supported change programme**; smaller development projects have also been funded. There have been subject group away days to drive forward local priorities in LTA. There have also been grants to support the successful RIT projects and case studies.

In preparation for the **move from Psalter Lane to City Campus**, working groups have been implemented to manage the processes of change. Workshops with both academic and technical staff have been used to explore the use of shared spaces and the different approaches which can be developed in relation to LTA.

The faculty has implemented initiatives for our students which include a new **maths and writing skills programme pilot** to develop skills in these areas for students starting on their degree as well as mentoring programmes which have prepared students for placement or have been more subject specific; for example, programming support, the introduction of a **peer assisted learning pilot** and an extended international student support programme which included both social events and a variety of workshops to help develop skills in areas such as critical reflection, report writing and how to find and use electronic resources.

For the third year running, in partnership with the Students' Union, we took away our faculty reps for a weekend retreat which included team building exercises, an opportunity to develop existing skills and a forum for them to identify areas where the student experience could be enhanced. This included an action plan to take these forward.

The forthcoming end of year **ACES LTA Conference** (11 July 2008) will provide an opportunity to showcase projects from across the faculty and will this year provide a major focus on assessment, research-informed teaching and employability.

Looking forward

In autumn 2008 the faculty will see the opening of its new Furnival Building and the move of all staff and students from Psalter Lane to City Campus. There are going to be excellent new facilities and opportunities for both staff and students to engage in enhanced activities. A major learner autonomy CETL project on **enquiry based learning** will be launched across the faculty to help the engagement and collaboration of staff and students across subject boundaries. Over the coming academic year the ACES LTA team will continue to use the **supported change programme** and TQEF to link subject group needs with CETL development activities, to both enhance practice but also to improve student achievement and retention. The faculty is also looking to continue its developments in enhancing **assessment and feedback** practice as a major priority.

For further information please contact

Mike Bramhall, faculty head of LTA, Arts, Computing, Engineering and Sciences

Faculty of Development and Society LTA highlights

A key priority for the faculty in 2007-08 has been the further development of close working relationships with subject groups to implement their own LTA action plans, which have been aligned with key faculty priorities. These plans also provided an opportunity for subject groups to nominate individual teaching staff, or groups of staff, for an award that recognises and rewards innovative practice.

We have developed an effective and inclusive LTA dissemination and communication strategy this year, with our first faculty newsletter being published in October 2007 and our second to be published in mid 2008. The faculty LTA intranet pages are also being substantially revised and have been re-launched in April 2008. The faculty forum on 'Enhancing Student Experiences' took place in January 2008 and was another major opportunity for staff and students to share practice, ideas and to have conversations about LTA. The event attracted around 300 academic and support staff and was a great success.

Other key highlights for 2007-08 include

- Rob Sykes was appointed as teaching fellow for **internationalisation of LTA**. This development programme will encompass both internationalisation of the curriculum, and development of student and staff international mobility to enrich the learning experience of students in all the faculty's study programmes
- the teaching fellow for **employability**, Gary Taylor, has been working to identify where work experience opportunities for students can be developed in the faculty and where best practice can be shared and embedded in course structures
- a number of the subject group LTA action plans this year have focused upon how they can improve **assessment and feedback**. Alison Hramniak has been working with staff to encourage subject groups to examine practice and look at ways in which they can enhance feedback methods to students
- dedicated **administrative support for LTA** is provided by Harriet Ellis and Laura Ainscough, who are part of the quality support team in the faculty. They work closely with the head of LTA, teaching fellows and subject groups
- Richard Lynch has worked on the University **research-informed teaching** initiative within the faculty and his work will enhance the links between research, learning and teaching to develop the student and staff experience
- the **two pilot learning hubs** were established in September 2007. John Inns (Arundel Hub, City Campus) and Julie Evans and Emma Heron (Southbourne Hub, Collegiate Campus) are now involved in a number of faculty and University initiatives including: the digital fluency initiative, the faculty staff development programme, the research-informed teaching initiative, and the Aimhigher/transitions conference

- Richard Pountney has led the e-learning development team. This was established in September 2007. This work has involved supporting the LTA development plans of 10 of the 16, faculty subject groups. This has involved embedding professional development planning through the use of e-portfolio, assessing and feeding back via the use of Gradebook and electronic submission, developing learning content and the use of rich and multimedia (web based audio and video) and developing the use of the online environment for learning through Blackboard. Notable in this work is the development of electronic resources to help shape understanding of social and moral responsibility (active learning, active citizenship project), promoting excellence in practice and professional learning in the workplace (continuing professional development portal project) and support for learner autonomy and professional development (e-portfolio research project). In addition a programme of staff development in e-learning led by the team has been offered
- Serena Bufton has carried out an audit of current practice in the area of **personal development planning/ePDP** to ascertain subject group needs in this area and has compiled a report for the faculty which: charts PDP/ePDP activities; identifies issues and development needs in relation to PDP/ePDP; evaluates the benefits and costs of moving to ePDP/e-portfolio; and makes recommendations for the adoption of ePDP/e-portfolio tools. Following the audit, a number of subject groups have requested a demonstration of PebblePad, which is currently being used by around 840 students and 30 tutors. Activity in this area for the remainder of the academic year will include working with subject groups to develop PDP/e-PDP

Looking forward

The faculty's LTA strategic plans for 2008-09 will continue to provide opportunities for staff from across the faculty to **share excellent practice and embed this within course structures**. We will build upon our current key strategic areas and **establish core implementation groups** to help facilitate this. In April 2008 the Southbourne **learning hub** will have undergone a major refurbishment of learning and teaching space and we will share and disseminate the student and staff experience of these new facilities. We intend to launch at least one more learning hub in 2008-09. Along with colleagues in ACES, a major learner autonomy CETL project on **enquiry based learning** will be launched in September 2008 across the faculty to help the engagement and collaboration of staff and students across subject boundaries. From September 2008, a new stream of '**opportunity funding**' will be made available for colleagues across the faculty to provide support for them to make external bids for LTA projects (HEA subject centres, professional bodies).

For further information please contact
Malcolm Todd, faculty head of LTA, Development and Society

Faculty of Health and Wellbeing LTA highlights

The LTA structure was enlarged for 2008 with an additional faculty LTA coordinator, teaching fellows in assessment, e- and distance learning and an additional, assessment for learning funded assessment fellowship. A development role in research-informed teaching completed the top level LTA team. This enlarged support team is now working with subject groups, validation and course teams to develop, evaluate and embed high quality LTA across the faculty.

The development of **assessment and feedback** has continued to be a major priority within the faculty as part of a faculty focus on enhancing the student experience. Continuing programmes of staff development have included workshops, subject group support and support for validation teams. Examples of good assessment practice have also been collated and widely disseminated. Faculty staff have also played a key role within TALi and have encouraged the embedding of the principles of assessment for learning in academic practice.

Supporting staff has remained a high priority in **e-learning**. Blackboard induction sessions and a programme of 'Getting Started' workshops have introduced the core functionality of Blackboard to new and existing staff. A series of lunchtime training sessions have been provided on a range of applications including online portfolios, web 2.0 applications and online role play. Seminars based on new and emerging technologies have included Internet Protocol TV (IPTV), electronic voting systems, haptic and immersive technologies.

In addition to a range of smaller projects, the LTA team are developing a faculty-wide project in **learner autonomy**. This exciting project aims to develop a better understanding of the development needs of undergraduate students and a series of appropriate examples of effective learner support. The focus on employability has been enhanced through the development of practice guidelines, targeted workshops and the formation of specific interest groups that are beginning to increase awareness and embed best practice. The excellent developments in **personal development planning (PDP)** are being disseminated to course planning teams for inclusion in the next generation of courses. A continuing emphasis on supporting international students is being taken forward via a special interest group and the dissemination of best practice. A rewarding collaboration with the Enterprise Centre has provided opportunities for students to develop their entrepreneurial skills.

Centre for Interprofessional e-Learning (CIPeL)

The work of the CIPeL has made a positive impact on the **inter-professional** focus of the faculty. The centre has supported a significant number of staff to develop e-learning skills, producing an excellent standard of e-materials that have enhanced the student experience. Colleagues have presented the results of their work at national venues and through publication. Strong partnerships have been developed with institutions in Europe, Canada, Australia and Taiwan.

Looking forward

The implementation strategy for the introduction of the new assessment regulations, work on improving the student experience, the faculty's learner autonomy project and the enhancement of e- and distance learning, will continue at pace throughout next session. Faculty support for the University's **digital fluency** initiative will continue next session, exploring how learning spaces can be developed to enhance the opportunities for technology-supported, student-centred and collaborative learning. The existing programme of LTA support for the major revalidation of pre-registration courses in health and social care will intensify as the December 2008 validation date approaches.

Plans for 2008-09 are well in hand for extending the activities of the CIPeL. The team will be supporting the **revalidation processes** in the Faculty of Health and Wellbeing and we will further e-enhance the student experience. This will include developing games for learning and producing authentic on-line scenarios that feature the workplace to support both learner autonomy and the employability of our students. We expect to extend our activities with colleagues from other faculties and other universities and training establishments in and out of the UK, working in partnership to produce interprofessional e-learning opportunities for students across disciplines.

For further information please contact

Dave Crutchley, faculty head of LTA, Health and Wellbeing

Faculty of Organisation and Management LTA highlights

In the Faculty of Organisation and Management we have used the University's LTA Strategy as the key reference point for our LTA development work. This academic year has seen the continuation of some of the work started previously. Examples of this include continued implementation of the new framework for the undergraduate programme, developing an LTA Strategy for postgraduate provision, and investment in new senior academic posts to support the LTA agenda.

Additionally we have invested resources in devising and implementing some new, exciting and innovative initiatives. These are

- 1 **Employability** – the employability 'pathway' at level 5 has been designed, focusing upon placement preparation, interviewing and interpersonal skills
- 2 **e-learning** – a large scale pilot, using podcasting and voice files at level 5 has been led by June Clarke
- 3 **HND courses** – a full scale review cross-faculty of how to best support and retain our HND students, with particular reference to LTA practices, has been led by Carol Webb. This has involved applying quality methodologies to LTA
- 4 **Assessment** – the implementation of the new University assessment regulations has been used as an opportunity to encourage module leaders within the faculty to engage with the assessment for learning initiative, led by Christine O'Leary and Kiefer Lee
- 5 **The Centre for Pedagogic Innovation and Research** – led by Kevin Nield, has been active in supporting research and staff development within the faculty, has established a number of special interest groups and funded pedagogic research. Research allowances have been awarded to colleagues to support research into pedagogy. These include
 - Jeanette Baker for her work on 'role of teaching 'bites' in helping international students develop their subject understanding and English'
 - Chris Wroe for his work on 'autonomous learning and skills development'
 - Jim Chandler for his research into 'student motivation for self learning: a case study based on CPI and business ethics modules'
 - June Clarke who is engaged with 'the net generation's engagement with and expectations of Web 2.0 technologies during HE studies - case studies at undergraduate level in the Faculty of O&M'
 - John Darwin who is 'investigating the use of narrative in teaching and learning'
 - Trevor Hassall who is looking into 'casual factors of communication apprehension in accounting students'
 - John Joyce and his investigation into 'a study of accounting students motives, expectations and preparedness in accounting students'

We look forward to the successful conclusion of these projects. The main findings will be presented at this year's faculty LTA conference on 11 July 2008

Three members of the centre have been entered into the next round of research assessment exercise (RAE) submissions

6 Colin Beard and Christine O'Leary were appointed to **teaching fellow** posts and the faculty established a full-time academic e-learning advisor post

7 **Postgraduate LTA Strategy** – David Laughton led the development of this, in the context of the formulation of a framework for postgraduate provision. This will be used to guide the design of postgraduate provision within the faculty

8 We have reviewed the system of **academic coaches**, personal development planning and peer mentoring on the new undergraduate programme, all of which contribute to student support for transition into higher education at level 4, and have planned changes for 2008-09 to further strengthen and augment our provision

Looking forward

We have started to plan for the coming academic year. In 2008-09 we intend to focus on defining what a business class experience means in LTA terms for our students and clients, deepening the use of Blackboard, specifically in the areas of voice files and the use of the Gradebook facility, the development of the employability 'pathway' at level 6, which will focus on transition from Higher Education into work, enhanced support for our new lecturers, and a review of the impact of the changes to assessment practices on student satisfaction and performance.

For further information please contact

Dave Laughton, faculty head of LTA, Organisation and Management

Further contact details

For further information about anything you have read in this report, or if you'd like a more general discussion about Learning, Teaching and Assessment, please do contact the named authors in this report.

Professor Philip Garrahan

Pro Vice-Chancellor for Academic Development
p.garrahan@shu.ac.uk
0114 225 2043

Learning and Teaching Institute

Sally Bradley

Senior Lecturer in Curriculum and Professional Development
s.a.bradley@shu.ac.uk
0114 225 4749

Susannah Diamond

Lecturer in Creative Development
s.m.diamond@shu.ac.uk
0114 225 4727

Paul Helm

Head of Learning and Teaching Institute
p.a.helm@shu.ac.uk
0114 225 4752

Graham Holden

Head of Academic Practice
g.j.holden@shu.ac.uk
0114 225 3100

Ranald Macdonald

Head of Strategic Development
r.macdonald@shu.ac.uk
0114 225 4750

Ivan Moore

Director, Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, Centre for Promoting Learner Autonomy (CPLA)
i.moore@shu.ac.uk
0114 225 4735/6135

Kay Moore

Principal Lecturer in Digital Fluency
k.m.moore@shu.ac.uk
0114 225 3185

Louise Thorpe

Head of Academic Innovation
l.p.thorpe@shu.ac.uk
0114 225 2895

Faculty Heads of Learning Teaching and Assessment

Mike Bramhall

Faculty of Arts, Computing, Engineering and Sciences
m.d.bramhall@shu.ac.uk
0114 225 3377

Dave Crutchley

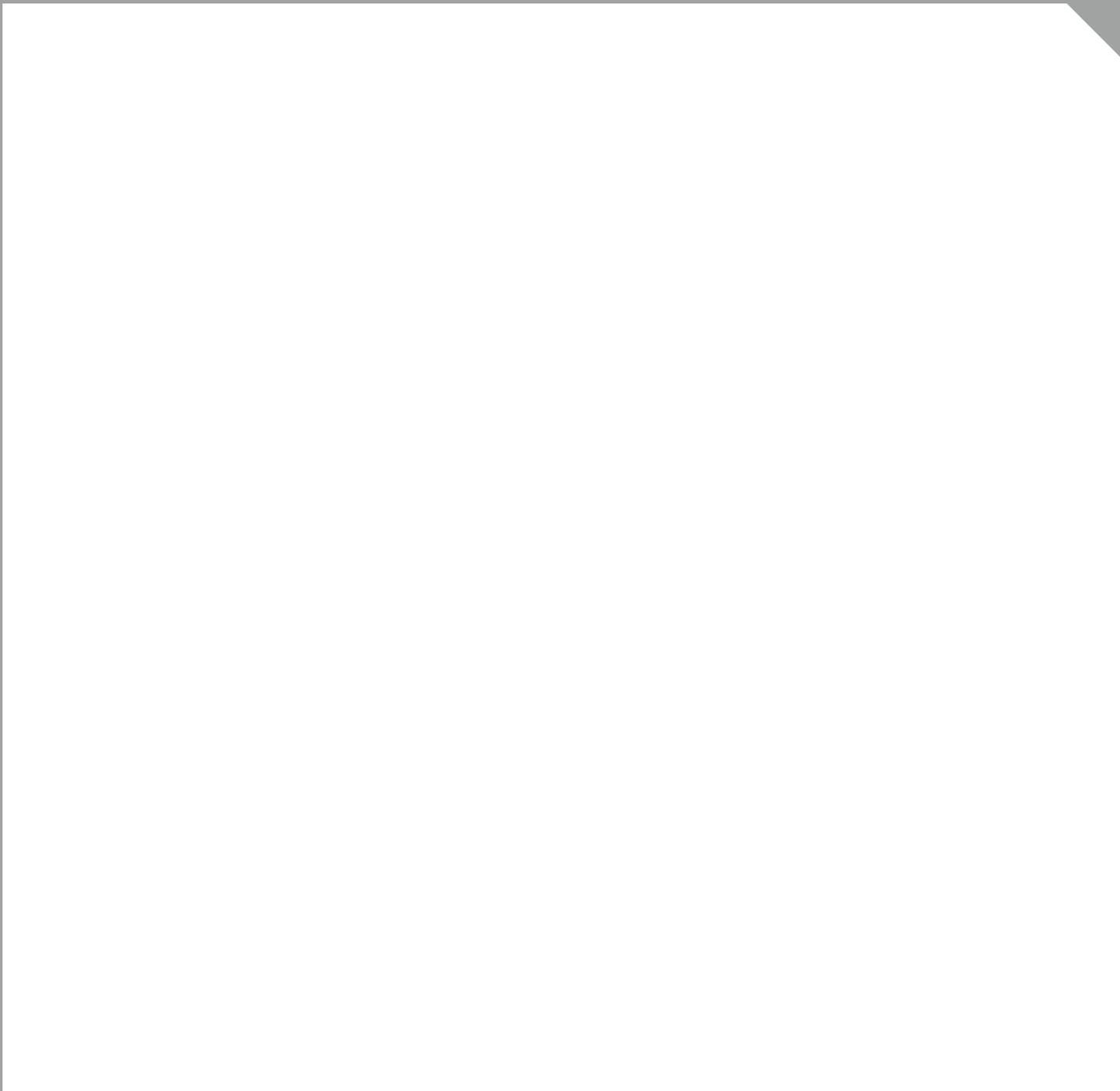
Faculty of Health and Wellbeing
d.h.crutchley@shu.ac.uk
0114 225 2354

Dave Laughton

Faculty of Organisation and Management
d.j.laughton@shu.ac.uk
0114 225 5118

Malcolm Todd

Faculty of Development and Society
m.j.todd@shu.ac.uk
0114 225 2415





This Learning, Teaching and Assessment Report is produced by
The Learning and Teaching Institute (LTI)
Learning and IT Services (LITS)
Sheffield Hallam University
Published June 2008

Further copies

If you would like further hard copies of this strategy, please contact

The Learning and Teaching Institute
Learning and IT Services (LITS)
Sheffield Hallam University
Level 7
Adsetts Centre
City Campus
Howard Street
Sheffield S1 1WB
Phone 0114 225 4724

An online version is available from <https://staff.shu.ac.uk/lta/>

