

**JISC Project Plan**

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| **Project Title**  |

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| 1st September 2011  |

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| JISC assessment and feedback programme  |

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 Project Overview

## 1.1 Project Summary

Since 2005, the National Student Survey (NSS) has exposed Assessment and Feedback as the lowest rated aspect of the student learning experience within Queen’s.  Improving this has been a University priority given its impact on student learning. Queen’s own First and Second Year Experience Surveys (introduced in 2007 and 2008) confirm that the problem exists at all levels.

Queen’s sought to address the challenge of assessment and feedback through a Higher Education Academy Enhancement Academy project. Five School-based projects developed practical solutions to enhancing practice. Bespoke online resources based on the Re-engineering Assessment Practices project (REAP) principles of good practice were developed which include exemplars from within the University. This was accompanied by an institution-wide feedback campaign led by the Students’ Union to enhance student understanding and use of feedback. Whilst institutionally there has been some improvement in NSS scores over the last two years from 3.4 to 3.6 in 2011 it is not consistent across all subject areas.  Indeed, in some areas it has either deteriorated or remained low. Barriers to change in assessment practices include concerns about work-load and losing personal contact with students.

e-AFFECT aims to build upon existing good practice and drive strategic change with respect to assessment and feedback at Queen’s. The project seeks to change processes and practices in Schools to improve the student experience of early formative feedback.  In particular, it will focus on timeliness of feedback, the quality of feedback, developing a dialogue between staff and students on feedback and the requirement to match student needs with staff workloads as well as engender greater student engagement with the feedback provided. This will be done by identifying opportunities to promote new behaviours in assessment and feedback supported by the use of appropriate tools. A flexible and responsive approach to variable needs will allow a choice of technologies that may be adopted to support institution-wide change in assessment and feedback process and practice.

## Objectives

The aim of the project is to transform staff and student experience of assessment and feedback across Queen’s University through the effective use of technology. All Schools will be offered the opportunity to engage with and begin to implement change in their practice by August 2014. Specific objectives for this 3 year period include:

* To identify effective and efficient practices in assessment and feedback for learning across the Institution, with a particular emphasis on the role of technology in enhancing these;
* To critically examine student and staff perceptions of assessment and feedback, in particular, learner approaches to using feedback to enhance learning, and the role of technology to enhance students’ understanding and use of assessment and feedback for learning;
* To develop an institution-wide framework to drive strategic change with respect to assessment and feedback for learning utilising relevant technology;
* To build capacity in use of assessment and feedback technologies
* To ensure that new practices are consistently applied across the institution in a way that makes the most efficient use of staff and student effort;
* To communicate project progress and outcomes to all stakeholder groups during the project and beyond.

## Anticipated Outputs and Outcomes

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| --- | --- |
| **Output / Outcome Type***(e.g. report, publication, software, knowledge built)* | **Brief Description** |
| **OUTPUTS** |  |
| Baseline report | A report of the key findings from the audit of assessment and feedback process and practice, including workload, across the four subject areas in Phase 1. Good practice will be highlighted. It will also include programme data, a description of University assessment and feedback processes and support for assessment and feedback. In addition, the experiences and perceptions of staff and students will be sought about accessibility of assessment and feedback practice and process. |
| Interim reports | Reporting progress of the project including an evaluation and outline of the impact of the piloted interventions, focussing on benefits to staff and students and providing a framework of effective practice to support institutional change. The number of subject areas reviewed will increase with each phase of the project. |
| Final report | A final report which will evaluate success in meeting the project aims, objectives and outcomes. The evaluation will also include an impact assessment of measures used to drive strategic change, and the implementation and effectiveness of new approaches to assessment and feedback adopted across the Institution |
| Project blog/wiki/website | This will describe our ongoing thoughts, activities and progress. |
| Practice-based website based on knowledge built | Website with resources to enhance student and staff experience of assessment and feedback, including digital evidence of project activity and outcomes. This will also include identification and implementation of good practice in the use of technology in assessment and feedback across the institution and ‘hot tips’ for others. |
| Tools for reviewing and effecting change at programme level | Assessment and feedback audit tool; a method for action planning that acknowledges different ‘states of readiness’ across the institution and beyond and offers different ‘boarding points’ |
| Programme Action Plans | Action plans at programme level for interventions in assessment and feedback |
| Assessment and feedback materials  | Development of assessment and feedback materials using appropriate technology |
| Briefing documents  | For critical friends and student facilitators |
| How to guides | For using technology in assessment and feedback |
| Assessment and Feedback case studies | Case study documents which outline the nature of “before” and “after” assessment and feedback: how and why the assessment was redesigned, what technological assistance was incorporated and how, staff and student views, resulting performance improvements  |
| Talking heads videos | Staff and students talking about their experiences of assessment and feedback through the project |
| Guidelines for Institutional Change in Assessment and Feedback | Guidelines for introducing institution-wide change in assessment and feedback; will include lessons learned |
| Dissemination events/activities | Internal and external: posters, articles, presentations, videos, workshops, surgeries, case studies |
|  |  |
|  |  |
| **OUTCOMES** |  |
| Effective and sustainable course transformation through e-assessment and feedback | See figure 1: enhanced student and staff understanding and experience of assessment and feedback in 12 degree programmes in first two phases of the project through:* Opportunity to question existing assumptions, practice and expectations to bring about sustainable change in practice and process
* A more constructively aligned curriculum
* Students demonstrably using the feedback they receive
* Increased student engagement in the assessment process
* Increased active participation in the process
* Improved student attainment
* Increased student satisfaction with assessment and feedback
* Improved retention
* Greater use of digital technology

A further eight Schools will commence the process in the third year of the project. |
| Micro-communities and critical friends to support ongoing change in assessment and feedback | Staff sharing practice and experience in an active fashion within cognate subject groups and across the institution. |
| More coordinated institutional approach to assessment and feedback  | Increased coordination between the needs of Schools with central services |
| Student facilitators | Students who will have worked with staff and other students to gather data, develop materials, provide training in digital; technology to staff and students |
| Model for change based on existing resources | Framework for driving strategic change with respect to assessment and feedback utilising relevant technology and within the constraints of existing staff resources |
| Consistent, high quality assessment and feedback practices  | These will be embedded and sustained beyond the life of the e-AFFECT project |

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## Overall Approach

The e-AFFECT project approach has been designed to address a range of challenges which Queen’s faces in setting out to achieve enterprise-wide, technology supported changes to assessment and feedback practice which seek to enhance student experience and satisfaction.

In this project we have sought to devise a three phase, piloted approach which includes all 20 of our Schools at programme level within the 36 month period specified. In order to meet this timescale we will draw on and refine established baselining, technological and methodological approaches which have been developed in projects across the sector. The development of each phase will be informed by the preceding one (see Figure 1). Evaluation and dissemination will be ongoing throughout the project and are detailed in later sections.



Figure 1: The Project Approach and Timescales

Our strategic priority of bringing about a more co-ordinated approach to planning, delivering and marking assessment and providing feedback (informed by evidence-based practice across the sector) should be balanced with the autonomy and independence that Schools, subject areas and the individual academics who work within these have in a traditional institution such as Queen’s. We have sought to build in positivity, a range of choices, and collegiality in our approach, which, with strong focus from senior management, should ensure the buy-in required. These include:

* the Appreciative Inquiry approach to planning;
* the introduction of Critical Friends;
* promotion of several alternative technologies supporting a range of assessment approaches and several alternative technologies supporting more standardised feedback practices
* establishment of micro-communities of practice and internal dissemination opportunities
* support from established processes such as the structured Personal Tutoring Scheme.

Introducing more technology assisted assessment and feedback practices will require greater support for development and maintenance of academic staff e-literacies and an effective dialogue between practitioners and support teams. We propose to establish micro-communities of practice around the technologies to facilitate this supported by, and feeding into, the development of materials and training. As a large institution with a small core of central staff supporting assessment and feedback related activities, we need to find a way to proactively increase our impact, reaching a higher proportion of academic staff and providing opportunities for them to hear the student voice directly.

We recognise that introducing technology into teaching and learning activities has the potential to raise barriers for students with disabilities. The e-AFFECT project will seek, from the outset, to engage with TechDis resources and the work of the University’s Inclusive Curriculum Working Group to ensure that all students are able to benefit from the development and implementation of enhanced assessment and feedback practices as they are rolled out across the institution.

We believe that these challenges are common to many institutions in the sector and that by documenting our approach, resultant developments, procedures and evaluation techniques we may provide a model and toolkit for others to follow and adapt to achieve institutional change.

**Phase 1: Early Adopters: (September 2011-August 2013)**

Four programme teams will participate in Phase 1 of the project. The teams have been selected on the basis that they represent a range of disciplines (English, Pharmacy, Civil Engineering and Psychology), deal with large groups of students, adopt a broad range of assessment and feedback methods, and are keen to explore how best to engage students with feedback.

A central support team from the Centre for Educational Development will work closely with these Programme Teams. The team will include an educational developer with expertise in assessment and feedback, who will be seconded full-time to the project, and specialists in e-Learning and evaluation of the student experience. This team will draw on a wider team of staff at key points in the project to ensure that the structure, resources or policies are in place to enable change to happen. This will include: Information Services to ensure that the opportunities offered by technology are maximised to support assessment and feedback processes; Student Services and Systems to ensure that changes to examination procedures may be supported; Disability Services to ensure that assessment and feedback developments are inclusive, accessible and fair for all students; Academic Affairs to ensure that the academic quality processes are adhered to and that the new practices identified are enabled through appropriate developments in policy. It is also expected that new practices emerging from the project inform the various programme review and development processes overseen by this unit, for example, Annual Programme Review and the Educational Enhancement Process.

Programme teams will be supported to engage fully with the possibilities offered by different technologies and to implement them.

Building on our previous successful partnerships with students and the experience of other projects (e.g JISC INTEGRATE project), students from Schools and the Queen’s Students’ Union (QUSU) will be key partners in the project. Student bursaries will be offered to enable some students to work in depth with programme teams engaging in all key activities, from review of current practice to the development and implementation of action plans and the evaluation of pilots. Training will be provided to these students and they will be able to gain Degree Plus accreditation (University accreditation for extracurricular skills development) through their involvement in the project.

*Activity 1: Baseline review of Assessment and Feedback (September-December 2011)*

Drawing on methods we have previously used, the Assessment for Teaching and Learning Audit Benchmark (ATLAB) approach developed by the Open University (Whitelock and Cross 2011), which includes the REAP principles, and the RSCni Transformational Matrix, the central support team will work with each programme team to review and map current assessment and feedback activities, including the use of technology, across the individual programmes for all levels. The mapping exercise will include the timing, frequency, purpose and nature of all current assessment and feedback activities across each programme, using the JISC ESCAPE project’s timeline approach. This will include a review of institutional policy and process of assessment and feedback as well as support for assessment and feedback. Programme statistics will be extracted against which to measure any change in student performance.

A key element of the review will be to gather information on the student experiences of assessment and feedback through questionnaires based on an adapted version of the Assessment Experience Questionnaire and ATLAB. The review will provide a rich picture of current assessment and feedback practices, the use of technology to support assessment and feedback, staff and student views of the experience, culture and assessment ethos in each of the programmes.

*Activity 2: Action Planning using Appreciative Inquiry Approach (January-early April 2012)*

Drawing on this information, and using the Appreciative Inquiry approach programme teams will then identify what they are doing well, set out their vision for assessment and feedback across the programme, and develop an action plan for revised assessment and feedback activities across the programme (with explicit milestones and deadlines for bringing about agreed changes in the academic year 2012-13).

These activities will be supported by evidence-based practical examples using a range of mechanisms, as appropriate to the needs of the programme team. These include resources currently available on the University website which are based around the REAP principles, examples within the programmes identified during the review, showcase events involving staff from across the University known to be applying effective approaches. In the formative stages of this activity, the programme teams from across the Schools will share their visions and plan outlines with each other in an Exchange Session (Early March 2012).

*Activity 3: Development supporting programme action plans (April-September 2012)*

The wider support team will review the action plans of the programme teams to identify institutional actions required at the policy, administrative and technical levels to achieve implementation. These might include technological developments such as incorporating tools in the VLE and production of their associated guides for staff and students or administrative developments such as changes in process to better support online examinations. Where required, such developments will need endorsement from the Steering Group and will be brought to the appropriate committee for approval eg technological enhancements will be brought to the e-learning sub group of the Education Strategy Implementation Group.

The central support team will work with programme teams and their student helpers to implement action plans for the academic year 2012-13. This could include: preparation of materials to support formative assessments, production of new assessments, benchmarking of assessment criteria, materials to support peer assessment, online feedback, provision of appropriate environments etc as required, materials to support the use of new technologies. Micro-communities or communities of practice centred upon particular assessment and feedback approaches or particular technologies will be formed from members across the programmes and support staff from Information Services and Academic and Student Affairs. As their activities progress, they will be encouraged to share their learning and outputs to help to maximise efficiencies. These interactions will encourage reflection on, and refinement of, activities – an internal evaluation process.

*Activity 4: Pilot Interventions (September 2012-Jan 2013)*

In each of the two semesters of academic year 2012-13, there will be a pilot intervention of the new assessment and feedback activities. Regular meetings of the micro-communities will take place to reflect on the activities as they progress, examining common outcomes and issues. At the end of the semester, interventions will be evaluated from the perspective of all stakeholders in the assessment process, considering both the educational benefits and efficiencies. These findings will be fed forward (see information flows in fig 1). Evaluation findings from the first semester will identify any essential immediate revisions for semester 2, and the planning stage of phase 2. The overall findings from this first phase will inform ongoing activities of participant Schools and development and implementation in phase 2 as well as phase 3.

Further details on evaluation are provided later in the project plan.

**Phase 2: Wider Adoption: (Early September 2012-August 2014)**

Phase 2 of the project will incorporate a further six to eight programme teams who will be primarily from different Schools to those of the Phase 1. Although some of these programmes teams have to be identified, a number will be drawn from the following areas: Education, Nursing and Midwifery, and Computer Science.

Projects in Phase 2 will have the benefit of support from academic staff engaged in Phase 1, some of whom will act as Critical Friends joining the programme support teams to provide advice, guidance and mentoring as appropriate. The Critical Friends will bring an external dimension to the programme teams and will help to foster sharing and collaboration. The Critical Friends will work with cognate disciplines within their Faculty Groupings or, where a School encompasses several disciplines, there will be an opportunity for the expertise gained in Phase 1 to be transferred within Schools. In this second phase, funding will be used to buy out the time of these academic Critical Friends.

The programme teams will broadly follow the approach Phase 1 (see fig. 1 and work packages) with revisions incorporated based on the lessons learned in Phase 1, the ongoing experience of the Pilots and the micro-communities of practice.

**Phase 3: Towards Enterprise-wide Adoption and Embedding (September 2013-August 2014)**

In the third year, up to eight more Schools and/or programme teams will join the project. Whilst some of these might be self selecting, others will have come forward as a result of the embedding of the model within the University’s educational review processes (Educational Enhancement Process and Programme Review). The e-AFFECT project approach and model (in its third iteration) will be followed. Critical Friends from proximate disciplines, drawn from Phases 1 and 2, will help to support the feedback and assessment development plans for this Phase.

It is anticipated that in the third year, the level of experience of the project, the development of the supporting environment, and a wider range of centrally-embedded e-tools, policies and practices resulting from the previous two years of e-AFFECT will bring associated efficiencies allowing quality assessment and feedback for students to be mainstreamed.

Through the project we will seek to gain insights into the critical success factors, particularly through the evaluation activities planned.  At this point, we have identified the following four critical success factors

1. Effective and sustained visible leadership from Senior managers
2. Suitable workload balancing for staff to engage in the process
3. Student support and engagement
4. Effective engagement and support for the project from central services

## Anticipated Impact

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| **Impact Area** | **Anticipated Impact Description** |
| Excellence in learning and teaching | * Enhanced student and staff experience of assessment and feedback
* Improved student learning and retention
* Enhanced dialogue and sharing of good assessment and feedback practice in Schools and across the institution
 |
| Future technology needs | * Effective adoption of assessment and feedback technologies
* Increased functionality with more options for delivering assessment and feedback
* Cultural shift toward technology use in assessment and feedback
* Improved interoperability between IT systems
 |
| Effectiveness and efficiency | * More effective and efficient assessment and feedback processes
* Improves business processes to support new assessment and feedback approaches
 |

## Stakeholder Analysis

An initial analysis has identified the following stakeholders:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Stakeholder** | **Interest / stake** | **Importance (H/M/L)** |
| Students on programmes in the project | Opportunity to engage with a more dynamic teaching and learning environment through effective assessment and feedback. | High |
| Students with disabilities | Ability to engage with new technologies used to enhance assessment and feedback practice | High |
| Programme teams  | Opportunity to transform assessment and feedback and to reduce time on marking/administration.  | High  |
| Students working with programme teams  | Opportunity to influence design and delivery of assessment and feedback on their programme and enhance employability through Degree Plus accreditation;  | High  |
| PVC for Education and Students  | Improvement in student experience and satisfaction as measured by ratings of assessment and feedback (e.g NSS)  | High  |
| Senior Manager of project Schools  | Improvement in student experience and satisfaction as measured by ratings of assessment and feedback (e.g NSS)  | High  |
| Other School staff  | Observe progress and outcomes of developments and opportunity to adopt practice developed through the project.  | High  |
| Central Support Services  | Furthering University policies to enhance assessment and feedback and embed technology enhanced learning; Opportunity to enhance and streamline assessment processes.  | Medium  |
| Centre for Educational Development  | Opportunity to work with Schools to bring about change, to test a framework that will achieve institutional change, to demonstrate breadth and depth of skill sets within the unit.  | High  |
| Wider HE Community including other projects  | Awareness of project; opportunities for sharing of good practice, dialogue and collaboration.  | Medium  |
| Future Alumni | Opportunity to benefit from the project in terms of graduate/professional competencies | Medium |

## Related Projects

**Within Queen’s**

Higher Education Academy e-Learning Research Grants (2006) Evaluation of generic, open-source, web-based marking tools with regard to their support for criterion-referenced marking and the generation of student feedback

Higher Education Academy (2009) Enhancement Academy: Assessment and feedback

**External projects**

REAP - Strathclyde

ESCAPE – Hertfordshire

INTEGRATE - Exeter

e-Reflect - Westminster

STAF Project - Keele

Assessment Matters – Cardiff

Audio Feedback Assisted Learning (AFAL) – Aberystwyth

ASEL - Bradford and Hertfordshire

ASSET – Reading

PEER – Strathclyde

## Constraints

* Willingness of programme teams who have indicated a wish to participate to engage fully with the project team
* Willingness of programme teams in Phases 2 and 3 (as yet not committed) to engage fully with the project.
* Culture within the University to assessment and feedback.
* Current climate in Higher Education and the pressure of research responsibilities.

## Assumptions

Assumptions on which the project is run include:

* That the students’ use and view of assessment and feedback experiences are related to the practice in the institution
* That programme teams who have indicated a wish to participate to engage with the project team will engage
* That programme teams in Phases 2 and 3 (as yet not committed) to engage with the project team will engage
* The institution’s strategic priorities will not change over the three year period.

## Risk Analysis

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| **Risk Description** | **Probability (P)****1 – 5** **(1 = low** **5 = high)** | **Severity (S)****1 – 5** **(1 = low** **5 = high)** | **Risk Score****(PxS)** | **Detail of action to be taken**(mitigation / reduction / transfer / acceptance) |
| Loss or unavailability of project staff | 2 | 3 | 6 | All staff are currently in place and there is scope to second other staff into the project should staff be unavailable due to sickness or resignation. |
| Difficulty in engaging staff in the project | 3 | 4 | 12 | Strong links have already been established and the Schools identified in Phases 1 and 2 strongly support this proposal. The project has the full support of University senior managers and is closely linked with the institutional education strategy and key performance indicators. |
| Difficulty in engaging students in the project | 2 | 3 | 6 | This project builds on relationships already established with the Students’ Union; they and Staff Student Consultative Committees will help to raise awareness of the project’s benefits amongst the student body |
| Programme teams failing to implement plans | 2 | 3 | 6 | The project team will work carefully to develop realistic and well thought out action plans which should reduce the likelihood of failure.  |
| Programme teams from wider Schools unwilling to engage with Phase 3 | 3 | 4 | 12 | Project team will seek to disseminate the project work and outcomes to the wider staff group using a range of mechanism including the University Directors of Education forum. In addition, the use of academic staff as critical friends and the establishment of micro- communities are mechanisms which seek to support academic staff engagement with the work.  |
| Central support slow to respond to School action plans | 2 | 3 | 6 | Project team has established relationships with relevant services who have given commitment to the project at a senior level. Project aims are aligned with goals for each service. |
| Lack of senior support for project | 2 | 3 | 6 | The project has the known enthusiastic and full support of all relevant senior managers who will be provided with regular updates to ensure ongoing commitment. |
| Project aims and objectives not met  | 1 | 4 | 4 | Strong project management together with a strong commitment from key senior managers and Schools should ensure that the project is successful. |
| Lack of availability of desired technologies within the timeframe. | 2 | 3 | 6 | Information Services have committed to supporting both the integration and development of appropriate solutions |

## Technical Development

We anticipate that much of the work for our Information Services team will involve embedding and tailoring existing tools and documenting approaches to using these tools to support specific purposes within the assessment and feedback process. These will include:

Queen’s Online (Sharepoint-based VLE) Assignment Tool - this tool facilitates electronic submission and delivery of online feedback (text, audio or video based). For example, enhancements to track student viewing of feedback or to expand with the facility to add student reflection on feedback might be considered.

Questionmark Perception Version 5 – there will be greater exploration of the formative assessment and feedback facilities offered in this tool, which is primarily used at present for summative assessment. There will also be an exploration of the ease of importing questions from publishers and shared question banks for reuse within the institution.

TurningPoint electronic voting system – there will be an exploration of how the enhanced features for TurningPoint may be used to provide formative assessment and informal feedback to learners in conjunction with scenarios, case studies etc.

MS Office – we will encourage utilisation and customisation of features in MS Office which could be useful in marking and feedback process eg Quickparts, Building Blocks and Macros, incorporation of audio etc.

Queen’s PDP e-folio – there will be an exploration of the best ways to facilitate student reflection on feedback within the tool.

Queen’s e-Learning templates developed in CMS - these templates offer the online facility for a student to enter an answer and compare it against a model answer, take part in simple quizzes with feedback etc alongside the delivery of online content. We will explore their use in the assessment and feedback process but also to substitute for content delivery in contact time to allow for contact time to be used for feedback, if required.

Turnitin – Queen’s has an established history of the formative use of the Originality checking tool. A number of previous projects both external and our own HE Academy funded marking project have used the Grademark tool in Turnitin for feedback. We will explore if there is a need to pilot this product, considering the facilities it provides against the cost for an institution of our size.

Audacity – We anticipate an exploration of how to efficiently reuse and edit together recorded comments as part of our increased use of this tool.

Jing – there will be further promotion of use of this tool in the feedback process.

If none of the tools currently adopted meet a particular need, Queen’s will identify appropriate new technologies and explore their introduction in relation to needs of the Schools involved in each phase of the project. For example, we may take on PeerWise to support assessment and feedback for peer learning tasks.

Reusability and repurposing will be important principles and the approach will be to build on outputs from previous work (eg the STAF project on marking tools from Keele University and Assessment Matters from Cardiff University). New technologies will, where possible, be open standards based.

## Standards

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Name of standard or specification** | **Version** | **Notes** |
| MS Office 2010 & PDF |  | Documents hosted on the e-AFFECT website and blog will be in MSOffice or PDF format |
| JPEG |  | Any images used will conform to JPEG standards |
| Multimedia - FLASH |  | Any multimedia content produced will use the multimedia standards based on FLASH |
| Mp3 |  | Audio files for dissemination will be mp3 format |
| Advanced Profile MPEG-4 AVI |  | Videos collectedwill be in AVI format |
| Scanned Images capture resolution |  | A default capture resolution of 600dpi will be employed and varied as appropriate for larger/smaller objects. |

Good practice in relation to accessibility standards will be followed in the development of any assessment and feedback resources.

## Intellectual Property Rights

The IPR for all outputs from the project will be held by Queen’s University Belfast.

The project outputs will be made available to the UK HE and FE community and they may be disseminated widely in partnership with the JISC.

IPR for any journal articles and research papers drawing on project findings, that are not project deliverables, will rest with authors and Queen’s as appropriate.

# Project Resources

## 2.1 Project Partners

The project is being completely run by Queen’s University Belfast.

## Project Management

The project is being led by Maria Lee, the Head of Educational and Skills Development, with the support of a Senior Educational Developer from the Centre for Educational Development and an Educational Developer has been seconded full-time to the project. This group will form the core project team that will organize the day-to-day running and maintenance of the project, adhering to JISC’s Project Management Guidelines. Other members of the project team are two Educational Developers accounting for 0.75 of a post.

The project will be supported by a Steering Group comprising representatives from the University. The remit of the existing Supporting Student Attainment Action Group has been widened to include this role. The Steering Group will meet at least once during each project phase and will review progress in terms of meeting milestones and outputs and ensuring project sustainability after the funding period. The Steering Group will be chaired by Professor Ellen Douglas-Cowie, the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Education and Students and will include Senior Institutional Managers, the Students’ Union Vice-President (Education) and members of the team supporting implementation of the project.

## Project Roles

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Team Member Name** | **Role** | **Contact Details** | **Days per week to be spent on the project** |
| Ms Maria Lee | Project Leader | Queen’s University Belfast, Educational and Skills Development, 02890971448, m.lee@qub.ac.uk | 0.5 |
| Mrs Linda Ryles,  | Project Manager | Queen’s University Belfast, Centre for Educational Development, 02890971343 l.ryles@qub.ac.uk | 0.5 |
| Dr Anne Jones,  | Project Developer | Queen’s University Belfast, Centre for Educational Development, 02890971450 a.m.jones@qub.ac.uk | 5 |
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## Programme Support

Advice and guidance will be sought from the Programme Manager and JISC services, such as TechDis, as required. In addition, the team believes that the project will be enhanced by forming connections and synergies with other projects within the strand and that participation in the face-to-face programme meetings, events and programme activities will facilitate this.

# Detailed Project Planning

## 3.1 Evaluation Plan

The approach to evaluation has been informed by the ATLAB tool, the RSCNI Transformational Matrix and Nicol and Draper’s (2009) approach to evaluating transformational change with respect to assessment and feedback using digital technology which was developed through the REAP project. In particular the evaluation will move forward from an identified baseline, and collect data directly relevant to the change process alongside learner gains, student satisfaction, staff perceptions and practices. The evaluation is formative in nature and will be developed and enhanced on the basis of information gathered at each stage beginning with the November 2012 collection period and will build upon the ATLAB baseline. The table below outlines the initial approach which will provide information through which to enhance subsequent phases within the evaluative process.

Building upon Nicol and Draper’s (2009) approach to evaluation and taking account of key evidence gathered through the baseline activities, the evaluation process will consist of six key strands:

1. The baseline activities will determine current student perceptions and experience of assessment and feedback using a modified Assessment Experience Questionnaire, together with Assessment for Teaching and Learning Audit. Staff perceptions and experience will be determined using a modified Assessment for Teaching and Learning Audit and interviews. There will also be a review of current programme data, institutional policy and process for assessment and feedback and a review of support offered for assessment and feedback.
2. Consideration of institutional performance through key indicators including levels of student satisfaction with assessment and feedback as measured through indicators already in use within the institution drawn from the NSS, FYE, and SYE. Consideration of changes to retention through institutional KPIs.
3. The exploration of student experience of assessment and feedback interventions
4. The exploration of staff experience of assessment and feedback interventions
5. The exploration of the strategic management response
6. Measures of institutional change with respect to approaches to assessment and feedback and levels of uptake of digital technology.

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| **Timing** | **Factor to Evaluate** | **Questions to Address** | **Method(s)** | **Measure of Success** |
| Oct-Dec 2011/ 2012/2013Oct-Dec 2011Oct-Dec 2011Oct-Dec 2011 | Staff and student experiences of assessment and feedbackStudent performanceCurrent assessment and feedback processes within the institutionCurrent levels of retention (trend over last 5 years)Levels of support provided for assessment and feedback within the institution  | What are the current perceptions of assessment and feedback, including the use of technology?How are students currently performing on modules prior to interventions?What are the current processes involved with assessment and feedback?What are the current levels of retention?What levels of support are currently provided for assessment and feedback? | Surveys and interviewsData collection from QsisReview of process documentsData from Planning OfficeReview of support offered | Baseline report developed |
| Nov 2012Feb 2013Aug 2013Nov 2013Feb 2014Aug 2014 | Student Experience of Assessment and Feedback Interventions | Student perceptions of interventionChallengesOpportunitiesBenefitsWays in which students have used feedback to enhance learningStudent perceptions of technologyRecommendations for maintenance or change of key elementsDisciplinary differences in both the delivery and use of assessment and feedback. | Online survey with one to one follow up | Enhanced experience of assessment and feedbackKey information through which to enhance Phase, 1,2,3Improved student learning |
| Nov 2012Feb 2013Aug 2013Nov 2013Feb 2014Aug 2014 | Staff experience of Assessment and Feedback Interventions | Staff input or time spent on projectProcess or key changes in assessment and feedback approaches and staff interactionOutput measures (attainment levels on key modules)Staff perceptions of interventionsChallengesOpportunitiesBenefitsStaff perceptions of technologyDisciplinary differences in both the delivery and use of assessment and feedback. | Online survey and focus groupsDisciplinary Case Studies | Evidence of more efficient approaches to assessment and feedbackEnhanced methods of communication within and across disciplines with respect to assessment and feedbackImproved student learningKey information through which to enhance Phase, 1,2,3Identification of best practice |
| Nov 2012Feb 2013Aug 2013Nov 2013Feb 2014Aug 2014 | Strategic Management Response | Review of approach to assessment and feedback at the strategic level | One to one interviews | Evidence of a more co-ordinated strategy drawing upon evidence from interventions |
| Aug 2013Aug 2014 | Institutional Change | Institutional Audit of Assessment and Feedback Practice | Online SurveyLevel of uptake and use of technology by staff and students | Evidence of practice change based upon project lessons and informationEvidence of enhanced uptake of digital interventions |
| Aug 2013Aug 2014 | Student Satisfaction with Assessment and Feedback | Impact of interventions | Analysis of FYE, SYE and NSS | Improved Student Satisfaction |
| Aug 2013Aug 2014 | Retention | Impact of interventions | Analysis of Retention Rates | Improved retention |

## Quality Assurance

Quality assurance and progress data will be collected and reported to the Steering Group on a regular basis to facilitate achievement of project aims.

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| **Output / Outcome Name** | **Project Management including Project Proposal, interim reports and final report** |
| **When will QA be carried out?** | **Who will carry out the QA work?** | **What QA methods / measures will be used?** |
| Ongoing | Project TeamSteering Group | Formal review of project plans and reports |
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| **Output / Outcome Name** | **Baseline report: there will be a baseline report of assessment and feedback process and practice for each phase of the project including student experiences** |
| **When will QA be carried out?** | **Who will carry out the QA work?** | **What QA methods / measures will be used?** |
| December 2011 and ongoing | Project TeamAcademic and student stakeholdersSteering Group | Formal review of report |
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| **Output / Outcome Name** | **Project website Blog/wiki to inform wider community about e-AFFECT’s aims, objectives and achievements. Website hosts project outputs as and when they are available** |
| **When will QA be carried out?** | **Who will carry out the QA work?** | **What QA methods / measures will be used?** |
| Ongoing | Project TeamAcademic stakeholders | Website content, blog/wiki postings made by team members are reviewed by other team members  |
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| **Output / Outcome Name** | **Practice-based website** |
| **When will QA be carried out?** | **Who will carry out the QA work?** | **What QA methods / measures will be used?** |
| Ongoing | Project TeamAcademic stakeholders  | User testing with test script and feedback suggests website is fit for purpose |
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| **Output / Outcome Name** | **Tools for reviewing and effecting change at programme level** |
| **When will QA be carried out?** | **Who will carry out the QA work?** | **What QA methods / measures will be used?** |
| Ongoing | Project TeamAcademic and student stakeholders  | User testing and feedback suggests tools/methods are fit for use |
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| **Output / Outcome Name** | **Programme action plans** |
| **When will QA be carried out?** | **Who will carry out the QA work?** | **What QA methods / measures will be used?** |
| Ongoing | Project TeamAcademic and student stakeholders Steering Group | Formal review of action plans |
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| **Output / Outcome Name** | **Development of interventions: assessment and feedback materials with appropriate technology** |
| **When will QA be carried out?** | **Who will carry out the QA work?** | **What QA methods / measures will be used?** |
| Ongoing | Project TeamAcademic and student stakeholders Information Services | Assessment and feedback interventions fit for purpose – evaluated against criteriaUser testing with test script and feedback |
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| **Output / Outcome Name** | **Briefing documents** |
| **When will QA be carried out?** | **Who will carry out the QA work?** | **What QA methods / measures will be used?** |
| Ongoing  | Project TeamCritical FriendsStudent Facilitators | Formal review and user testing |
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| **Output / Outcome Name** | **How to guides** |
| **When will QA be carried out?** | **Who will carry out the QA work?** | **What QA methods / measures will be used?** |
| Ongoing  | Project TeamAcademic staffStudents | Formal review and user testing |
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| **Output / Outcome Name** | **Talking heads videos** |
| **When will QA be carried out?** | **Who will carry out the QA work?** | **What QA methods / measures will be used?** |
| Ongoing  | Project TeamAcademic staff Students | Formal review  |
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| **Output / Outcome Name** | **Guidance for Institutional Change in Assessment and Feedback** |
| **When will QA be carried out?** | **Who will carry out the QA work?** | **What QA methods / measures will be used?** |
| Ongoing  | Project TeamSteering GroupAcademic AffairsInformation ServicesStudent Records | Formal review  |
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| **Output / Outcome Name** | **Dissemination activities** |
| **When will QA be carried out?** | **Who will carry out the QA work?** | **What QA methods / measures will be used?** |
| Ongoing | Project TeamAcademic and student stakeholders Steering Group | Review of materials before publication/presentationFeedback from participants at events |
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| **Output / Outcome Name** | **Effective and sustainable course transformation through e-assessment and feedback** |
| **When will QA be carried out?** | **Who will carry out the QA work?** | **What QA methods / measures will be used?** |
| Ongoing | Project TeamSteering Group | Findings, interventions from e-AFFECT project will have influenced University policies and practice across the institution. |
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| **Output / Outcome Name** | **Assessment and feedback micro-communities** |
| **When will QA be carried out?** | **Who will carry out the QA work?** | **What QA methods / measures will be used?** |
| Ongoing  | Project Team | Agenda, minutes, events/activities  |
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| **Output / Outcome Name** | **Trained student facilitators** |
| **When will QA be carried out?** | **Who will carry out the QA work?** | **What QA methods / measures will be used?** |
| Ongoing | Project TeamStudent stakeholders | Successful sessions run by student facilitators – useable data/information |
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| **Output / Outcome Name** | **Evaluation plans** |
| **When will QA be carried out?** | **Who will carry out the QA work?** | **What QA methods / measures will be used?** |
| Ongoing | Project TeamAcademic and student stakeholders Steering Group | Formal review of action plans |
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## Dissemination Plan

A dissemination strategy will be developed addressing internal and external dissemination. Internal dissemination will target both staff and students and will draw on a range of mechanisms currently available at School and institutional level. These include:

1. *Within Schools*: School Board meetings (regular meetings of School staff), other School meetings including Education Committees and staff-student consultative committees;
2. *Institutionally for staff*: current Lunch time forums, Faculty-based road shows and workshops to demonstrate new developments, share experiences and pass on lessons learned. The in-house Learning and Teaching publication, produced twice a year and distributed to all teaching staff will have a section devoted to the project and will include an Assessment and Feedback inset at the end of each phase. Project web-site which will include resources to support effective interventions will be developed throughout.
3. *Institutionally for students:* we will work with the Queen’s Students’ Union to identify mechanisms to disseminate directly to the wider student body. The University Student Gateway (website), Academic Board (institutional level staff student consultative committee) and the Student Council will receive regular updates.
4. *Beyond the institution:* through JISC programme meetings, webinars, CAMEL meetings – virtual and face to face, attendance and participation in other academy events including paper and poster presentations at appropriate conferences.

Regular updates will be provided to the Directors of Education Forum and Academic Board, both of which are chaired by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Education and Students. These are key forums that can facilitate dissemination to wider staff and students but will also provide a means of feedback on developments from the wider university. Updates will also be provided to key institutional committees.

At the start of the project, we will work closely with JISC to ensure that a sector-wide dissemination strategy for the project is agreed and that web-based project outputs and other project materials are made freely available to the JISC community in line with the timetable for the project and its deliverables.

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| **Timing** | **Dissemination Activity** | **Audience** | **Purpose** | **Key Message** |
| September 2011 | Page on JISC website | JISC community; external education community | Project dissemination | Project summary, aims and objectives |
| September 2011 and ongoing | Website in Queen’s University Belfast domain established | Internal and external education community | Project dissemination | Project activity and outputs |
| October 2011 | Start up meeting | Other projects in programme | Introduce project to wider programme | This is what we plan to do |
| January 2012  | Baseline report | JISC community |  To provide the basis for future work and evaluations |  What we do now, how,and why. How it is experienced  |
| October 2012 | Programme meeting | JISC community; other projects in programme | Awareness raising and sharing experience | What we did, with whom and what we found; how we are progressing |
| May/June 2013 | Programme meeting | JISC community; other projects in programme | Awareness raising and sharing experience | What we did, with whom and what we found; how we are progressing |
| Monthly | Project working group meetings | Project colleagues | Awareness raising and sharing experience | What we did, with whom and what we found; how we are progressing |
| Twice a semester | Steering Group meetings |  | Awareness raising and sharing experience | What we did, with whom and what we found; how we are progressing |
| Twice a semester | Central Support Group meetings | Colleagues from relevant academic support units | Awareness raising and sharing experience.Problem solving if required. | What we did, with whom and what we found; how we are progressing |
| as agreed with other cluster members | Virtual and actual meetings with JISC project cluster | Project cluster | Awareness raising and sharing experience | What we did, with whom and what we found; how we are progressing |
| As opportunities present | Articles in ‘Reflections’ | QUB  | Awareness raising and sharing experience | What we did, with whom and what we found |
| As opportunities present | Articles in ‘Queen’s Now’ | QUB  | Awareness raising and sharing experience | What we did, with whom and what we found |
| As opportunities present | Presentations to Directors of Education Forum | QUB | Awareness raising and sharing experience | What we did, with whom and what we found |
| September & January each year | PGCHET  | QUB | Awareness raising and sharing experience | What we did, with whom and what we found |
| As opportunities present | CPD courses | Schools | Awareness raising and sharing experience | What we did, with whom and what we found |
| As opportunities present | Lunchtime Forums | QUB | Awareness raising and sharing experience | What we did, with whom and what we found; how to get involved |
|  | Micro community meetings | Programme teams IS and CED staff | Awareness raising and sharing experience | What we did, what we found, how we are progressing, what we need |
| March 2012 | Interim reports | JISC communityQueen’s Community | Project dissemination and reporting | How we are progressing |
| September 2012 | Interim reports | JISC communityQueen’s Community | Project dissemination and reporting | How we are progressing |
| March 2013 | Interim reports | JISC communityQueen’s Community | Project dissemination and reporting | How we are progressing |
|  | Show case events | Internal and external education community | Awareness raising and sharing experience | What we did, with whom and what we found |
|  | Articles | Education community | Awareness raising and sharing experience | What we did, with whom and what we found |
| As opportunities arise | Conference presentations  | Education community | Awareness raising and sharing experience | What we did, with whom and what we found |
| Towards the end of the project | Webinar about the project | Education Community | Awareness raising and sharing experience | What we did, with whom and what we found |

## 3.4 Exit and Embedding Plans

The framework for driving strategic change with respect to assessment and feedback utilising relevant technology will be documented along with case studies and implementation notes. These will be maintained by the Centre for Educational Development for use across the University and the sector and made available from the CED website.

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| **Project Outputs/Outcomes** | **Action for Take-up & Embedding** | **Action for Exit** |
| Framework with Guidelines and associated case studies | Dissemination of the framework and case study examples | Maintained and updated by CED |
| Website | Wide publication of the project and methodology | Maintained by CED at least until end 2017 and will be merged with CED assessment and feedback pages |
| Project blog | Available to all for three years after the end of the project | Maintained by CED at least until end 2017 and will be merged with CED assessment and feedback pages |
| Project reports |  | Archived on website |

## 3.5 Sustainability Plans

The approach adopted seeks to ensure its sustainability beyond the funding period:

1. The project’s aims are directly relevant to the University’s Education Strategy (2011-16) and key institutional targets with respect to student engagement, assessment and feedback, developing innovation and enrichment in technologically-enhanced teaching and learning opportunities.
2. The project has deliberately focussed on programme teams across a number of Schools in order to build a critical mass of engaged staff. Following the two-year funding period, it is expected that the project will continue to expand and work with new programme teams supported by a resilient network of people. It is expected that this network will become the norm, self-sustaining and a key means of taking this work forward.
3. A key goal of this project is to embed activities in the wider system of processes, resources and support which enhances sustainability. Outcomes of the project will be embedded within our Continued Professional Development programmes (including the University Postgraduate Certificate in Higher Education Teaching) and will inform our institutional quality processes such as Educational Enhancement Process and Annual Programme Review.

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| **Project Outputs** | **Why Sustainable** | **Scenarios for Taking Forward** | **Issues to Address** |
| Website | Supported until 2017 | Maintained by Centre for Educational Development | None |
| Blog | Supported until 2017 | Maintained by Centre for Educational Development | None |
|  |  |  |  |

# *4 References*

Nicol, D and Owen, C (2009) Re-engineering assessment practices: A matrix for curriculum and institutional change, SEDA, 10, 2: 5-10

Regional Support Centre Northern Ireland (2007) Embedding e-Learning IQ:RS Appendix B3: Demonstrating Transformation A Guide

Whitelock, D. & Cross, S. (2011). Assessment Benchmarking: Accumulating and accelerating institutional know-how for best practice. **International Journal of e-Assessment (IJEA), Vol 1. No. 1 available at** <http://journals.sfu.ca/ijea/index.php/journal/article/view/18>

# Appendices

## Appendix A. Project Budget

## Appendix B. Workpackages