



Queen's University
Belfast

Centre for
Educational Development

June 2012

REFLECTIONS

About *Reflections*

Reflections is published once a semester by the **Centre for Educational Development** and provides a forum for discussing learning and teaching initiatives in Queen's. We aim to balance articles from the various support units within Queen's with contributions from academic staff and guest writers.

We lead this time with an article by Dr Josephine Boland from the National University of Ireland, Galway, focusing on ways to develop the curriculum to engage students in the community. Dr Boland gave a talk on this topic in the Queen's Guest Speaker Series in February. We also have an article by Annette Mac Artain Kerr on a new way of supporting postgraduate research students through personal effectiveness consultancy. Two members of academic staff, Dr Brian Kelly and Colin O'Hare detail innovations in their respective areas and there is an update on the Estates project to further student-centred timetabling.

Several very interesting placement and employability opportunities for students are highlighted by Careers staff, including the new alumni mentoring scheme and examples of innovations in using technology for teaching and learning are provided by CED, Information Services, LDS and Medical Education staff members.

Contributing to the next *Reflections*

We would very much welcome contributions for our next issue of Reflections to be published in Autumn 2012. Contributions can take several forms:

- **Articles** on an aspect of teaching and learning or student support (generally 500 – 1,000 words);
- **Shorter "newsflash"** items, e.g. reporting on a recent event or advertising a new venture or up-coming event (100 -200 words);
- **Responses** to previous articles or to recent developments in H.E.

Contributions can be submitted via e-mail to Linda Carey, (l.carey@qub.ac.uk) or e.mcdowell@qub.ac.uk in the Centre for Educational Development.

Linda Carey,

Editor of *Reflections*.



We are exceptional

Embedding Public Engagement across the Curriculum

by Dr Josephine Boland, National University of Ireland, Galway

Public engagement: opportunities within higher education

Public, civic or community engagement has always featured as part of the role of higher education in society. Within the UK, the concept of 'public engagement' has gained growing prominence, with a focus on sharing the activity and benefits of higher education and research in a two-way process with the public, with the goal of generating mutual benefitⁱ. Opportunities for public engagement exist across the full spectrum of higher education's activities – teaching and learning, research and service – typically involving initiative and innovation on the part of staff and students and leadership by university management in terms of commitment and resources. Case studies offer a range of examples of good practice in Ireland and the UKⁱⁱ.

Embedding public engagement within the curriculum

One of the more effective – but arguably less 'public' – ways of practising engagement is by embedding it within the curriculum. The principles and practice of community based learning (CBL)ⁱⁱⁱ are well established in the literature and within a wide range of



Dr Josephine Boland

disciplines in higher education. The defining features of CBL are as follows:

- It is a credit-bearing element of an academic module/programme
- Students provide a 'service' to the not-for-profit/voluntary/community sector, in response to a need identified by the community partner
- Citizenship and engagement feature as core values and organising principles
- It involves the application of discipline-specific knowledge and skills and the integration of theory and practice
- The pedagogy is based on the principles of experiential learning where reflection features as a key element in the learning and assessment process

Close linkage with students' academic discipline and the award of academic credit for assessed learning is what distinguishes CBL from volunteering; it is well recognised that students are

strategic in their choices and that what contributes towards their degree counts for them. The focus on civic values and reciprocity distinguishes it from work-based learning. CBL students often engage in environments characterised by diversity and/or uncertainty. Within the practice of CBL, a continuum of models can be found. In those that are more transactional in nature, students provide a service in return for a valuable learning experience. These have a valuable role to play, especially in the early days of gaining experience in CBL. More transformative models seek to change students' attitudes and beliefs and/or question (or even change) the circumstances, conditions or values that lie at the root of community or societal needs. The nature of the community involvement and the vision of the academic/s are key factors influencing the position of a CBL initiative on a continuum from transactional to transformative.

CBL and Science Shop^{iv} share many features and practices. The former is more likely to feature in undergraduate programmes while the latter is more suited to (usually postgraduate) programmes with a dissertation/thesis component. The fact that many initiatives can be positioned somewhere on a continuum reflects the blurring of boundaries between 'learning' and 'research' in contemporary higher education. Science Shop is already well established in Queen's, providing a sound basis for embedding public engagement within the curriculum across all years of academic programmes.

Aligning with policy frameworks and generic competences

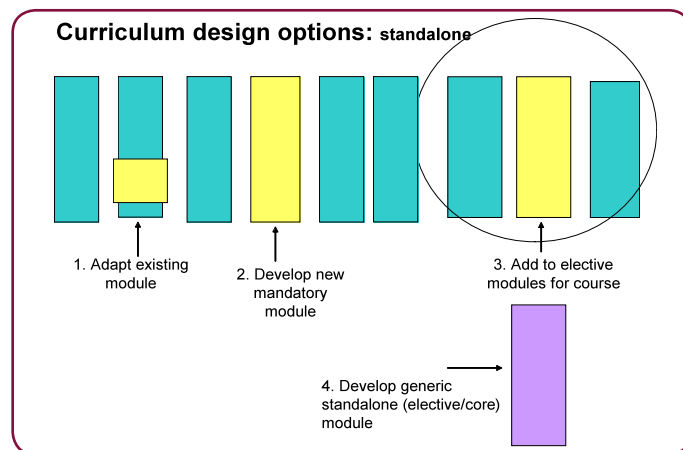
A number of opportunities exist to align, strategically, with broader higher education goals and policies at national and international level. Embedding public engagement within the curriculum aligns with the European Framework of Qualifications (EU), the Public Engagement Manifesto (UK) and the National Strategy for Higher Education (Irl). Institutional strategies in relation to teaching and learning offer other opportunities. The QUB Education Strategy 2011-2016, is one such example: "It is our business to produce graduates with discipline-specific knowledge and skills, distinctive attributes that are highly valued by employers and values of good citizenship, democracy and civic responsibility^v. CBL helps develop generic and transferable competences – identified by Tuning^{vi} – that prepare students for their future role in society in terms of employability and citizenship, including:

- Ability to apply knowledge in practical situations
- Appreciation of and respect for diversity and multiculturalism
- Ability to adapt to and act in new situations
- Ability to act on the basis of ethical reasoning
- Ability to act with social responsibility and civic awareness

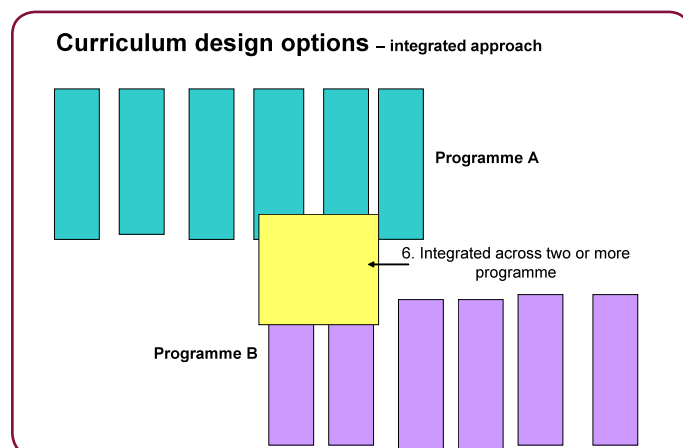
Curriculum design options for embedding public engagement

Curriculum planning for CBL is characterised by an organic, incremental and bottom-up approach where academics take the initiative, often with the support of staff with an explicit role to promote public engagement^{vii}. The existence of a point of contact – a 'Help Desk' for community organisations wishing to access university expertise – facilitates community-led initiatives^{viii}. Many academics introduce CBL by adapting an existing module, amending the site of learning and/or the mode of assessment and/or the assessment criteria as a way of ensuring that certain

outcomes (e.g. civic learning) and certain skills (e.g. reflection) are rewarded (1 below). The development of a stand-alone CBL module is often the next step, or even the preferred starting point, with a key decision as to whether it be mandatory (2) or optional (3). There are philosophical arguments and logistical considerations which may be critical in making such a determination. The development of a standalone generic module, taken by students across the college/institution is another option (4). This can present some challenges in ensuring the discipline-specific nature of learning which can be a key factor in ensuring its legitimacy (in the eyes of students and academics) and its sustainability within the institution.



With a growing emphasis on multi-disciplinary learning and calls for courses that encourage co-operative learning, CBL offers unparalleled opportunities. CBL opportunities have been effectively designed, in partnership with community, to combine the knowledge and skills of students (and staff) from more than one discipline with local community knowledge. While inevitably more challenging to organise, the rewards can be substantial for all concerned^{ix}.



Embeddedness and sustainability

Finally, the term 'embed' implies a degree of permanency and resilience – concerns for sustainability of CBL are not misplaced^x. Conceptions of 'embedded' CBL range from a focus on profile, esteem and legitimacy to a belief that a truly embedded pedagogy would be invisible, by virtue of being 'woven into the fabric' of the institution. From an institutional perspective the practice should be able to survive independently of individual academics. Public engagement needs to be conceived of as an aspect of the mission of the university which permeates all its activities and as a legitimate and valued part of the academics' role. Academic work load profiles and promotional processes need to reflect that^{xi}. While recognition, legitimacy and reward for CBL at institutional level is essential, there is acknowledgment that adopting and embedding CBL

Student Centred Timetabling – Phase 2

by Claire Baxter, Timetabling and Room Booking Unit

will remain entirely dependent on the initiative of individual enthusiastic, innovative academics. The challenge for the institution is how best to incentivise the kind of innovative practices and culture it seeks to promote.

Note: This piece is based on a workshop given by Dr. Boland in Queen's University Belfast 'Embedding public engagement and citizenship within the curriculum: rationale, strategies and practices', on 24 February 2012.

ⁱ See <http://www.publicengagement.ac.uk/what>

ⁱⁱ See: <http://www.campusengage.ie/>; <http://www.publicengagement.ac.uk/about/beacons>; <http://www.nuigalway.ie/community-engagement/>; <http://www.communitylinks.ie/slwc/>

ⁱⁱⁱ Also referred to as 'service learning', 'especially in the US.

^{iv} See: <http://www.qub.ac.uk/sites/ScienceShop/>

^v Prof Ellen Douglas-Cowie Pro-Vice Chancellor (Education and Students) 'Education Strategy 2011-2016' *QUB Reflections*, June 2011, pp 3-4

^{vi} See: http://www.enothe.eu/cop/Generice/Tuning_Compences.pdf

^{vii} Boland, J. (2008) Embedding a civic dimension within the higher education curriculum: a study of policy, process and practice in Ireland, EdD. thesis, University of Edinburgh.

^{viii} <http://www.brighton.ac.uk/cupp/whatwedo/research-helpdesk.html>

^{ix} See for example; <http://finglas4diversity.ie/home/working-with-dcu/dcu-outputs>

^x Boland, J. (2012) Orientations to civic engagement: insights into the sustainability of a challenging pedagogy *Studies in Higher Education* iFirst pp.1-16

^{xi} Boland, J. (2011) Positioning civic engagement on the higher education landscape: insights from a civically engaged pedagogy *Tertiary Education and Management* Vol 17. No. 2 pp 101-15

For many Queen's students, their academic interactions are their only interactions with University life, and, in these circumstances, the teaching timetable largely determines their entire student experience. In many cases, students are only required to be in attendance a few days a week and the proximity of 'home' appears to be a significant factor in lack of engagement and failure to take advantage of wider opportunities available to them.

In order to increase student interaction with the University and ensure students experience a five-day academic week, the University has approved a student centred approach to timetabling and room allocation which seeks to ensure that students will be taught 'close to home', increasing student interaction and creating a stronger sense of identification with their School. It aims to increase the use of School based general teaching accommodation, match accommodation better to activity type and ensure improved quality of accommodation. Better use of the Estate will also result in opportunities to convert less well used rooms for other purposes, such as group study.

The Student Centred Timetabling Project has gathered information from a variety of sources to inform changes to the way in which the timetable will be written for 2012-13. Phase 1 of the implementation schedule was undertaken in 2011 and involved:

- A consultation visit with each School to assess the 88 general teaching rooms and 83 specialist teaching rooms which are currently School managed;
- Preparation of the 2011-12 timetable making full use of general teaching rooms, with Schools being asked to

deliver 20% of teaching on a Friday and to utilise their own teaching accommodation before requesting a centrally bookable room;

- Obtaining a full picture of the non-teaching activities taking place in School managed general teaching accommodation.

Phase 1 resulted in a 5% increase in the use of School managed general teaching accommodation. However, surveys continue to show that they are used at half the frequency of centrally bookable rooms.

Phase 2 of the Project has involved a number of modelling exercises, designed to examine the quality of the existing timetable and to examine possibilities for the use of the Estate in the future.

In order to benchmark the current timetable against staff and student expectations, an Effective Zoning of Teaching exercise, similar to those conducted at other Russell Group Universities has been carried out. With input from each School, University buildings were rated on the following scale:

Green: rooms located in, or within the immediate vicinity of, the School's main buildings or deemed as essential to the School's teaching.

Amber: buildings preferred by the School if a Green zone room is not available.

Red: all other buildings.

The results of the exercise can be seen in Table 1 and showed that for the overall 2011-12 timetabling allocations, 85.1% of teaching was scheduled in Green zones, 7.8% in Amber and 6.7% in Red.

The analysis of the existing timetable was followed by a second exercise to determine how provision could be more fully aligned with student and staff expectations. The exercise used a model teaching estate, informed

by the outcomes of consultation visits with Schools and with all general teaching rooms under central management. The model takes into account the accommodation required on each campus by capacity band, Schools' particular needs, the desirability of providing locally based group study rooms and the removal of any accommodation no longer deemed fit for purpose.

A second Effective Zoning of Teaching analysis of the model data suggests that it is possible to increase teaching in Green zones to 92.4% and reduce teaching in Red zones to 1.3%. If Centrally Bookable PC labs are excluded, Green zone teaching further increases to 93.2% and Red zone teaching reduces to 0.5%. Utilisation of rooms previously under School management increases from 22% to 34%. The figures illustrate real potential to make better use

of the Estate if a more even spread of activities across teaching rooms can be achieved through central management.

Based on the findings of the Project, the 2012-2013 Academic Timetable will be written based on the methods used to model the timetable according to effective School zones. A designated set of teaching rooms, previously under School management, will be moved to central management from September 2012. Although priority will be given to 'home' Schools, these rooms will be available for use by other local Schools. A number of rooms will be prioritised for upgrade during summer 2012. The works vary

in scope from new furniture and AV equipment to major refurbishment and will continue to ensure a minimum standard across all teaching rooms.

Following the publication of the 2012-13 Academic Timetable, further analysis will be done to examine how successful it was in terms of zoning and travel times. The Timetabling and Room Booking Unit will run feedback sessions to identify where expectations have not been met or where further improvements could be made and the Student Centred Timetabling group will continue to use models to examine the impact of curriculum changes, student numbers or refurbishment on the quality of future Academic Timetables.

For more information about the Student Centred Timetabling Project, please contact claire.baxter@qub.ac.uk.

Table 1: Effective Zoning of Teaching Analysis – Actual 2011-12 Timetabling Allocations

School	Number of Activities 1112	Green	% Green	Amber	% Amber	Red	Red
School of Biological Sciences	367	307	83.7%	31	8.4%	29	7.9%
School of Creative Arts	224	212	94.6%	9	4.0%	3	1.3%
School of English	319	259	81.2%	60	18.8%	0	0.0%
School of Law	335	280	83.6%	35	10.4%	20	6.0%
School of History & Anthropology	438	324	74.0%	107	24.4%	7	1.6%
School of Politics, International Studies & Philosophy	319	304	95.3%	6	1.9%	9	2.8%
School of Management	629	545	86.6%	0	0.0%	84	13.4%
School of Sociology, Social Policy and Social Work	461	312	67.7%	103	22.3%	46	10.0%
School of Education	561	446	79.5%	21	3.7%	94	16.8%
School of Medicine, Dentistry & Biomedical Sciences	561	524	93.4%	16	2.9%	21	3.7%
School of Modern Languages	461	421	91.3%	33	7.2%	7	1.5%
School of Mechanical & Aerospace Engineering	242	229	94.6%	11	4.5%	2	0.8%
School of Planning, Architecture & Civil Engineering	314	264	84.1%	31	9.9%	19	6.1%
School of Electronics, Electrical Engineering and Computer Science	349	283	81.1%	35	10.0%	31	8.9%
School of Chemistry & Chemical Engineering	279	244	87.5%	15	5.4%	20	7.2%
School of Maths & Physics	479	461	96.2%	0	0.0%	18	3.8%
School of Geography, Archaeology & Palaeocology	274	253	92.3%	21	7.7%	0	0.0%
School of Psychology	242	242	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
School of Pharmacy	281	255	90.7%	22	7.8%	4	1.4%
School of Nursing & Midwifery	1283	1095	85.3%	136	10.6%	52	4.1%
Total	8418	7260	86.2%	692	8.2%	466	5.5%

Launch of an Alumni Career Mentoring Scheme at Queen's

by Eimear Gallagher, Careers, Employability and Skills

Careers, Employability and Skills (CES) and the Development and Alumni Relations Office (DARO) have a long and successful history of working together, with Schools, to provide our students with opportunities to engage with inspiring alumni who have achieved career success by utilising their degree at Queen's to help them get ahead. In 2011-2012, it was agreed that CES and colleagues in DARO would develop these opportunities further by piloting the Alumni Career Mentoring Scheme.

It is already common for high achieving alumni who are recognised experts in their fields to return to the University to share their experiences and motivations with students at a variety of events, including guest speakerships, career alumni information evenings and fast-track networking events etc. The pilot Alumni Career Mentoring Scheme offered one-to-one support for students, especially those in Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences who were open to considering some of the wider career options available to them in areas such as management, consultancy or other "any discipline" opportunities. Students are also able to use their participation in the Scheme as part of their evidence towards Degree Plus.

The pilot scheme is designed for undergraduates in Level 2, or above. Interested students and alumni make a formal application to the scheme and are provided with training before being "matched". During the mentoring process, matched mentors and mentees engage in a series of four positive and constructive conversations about the student's career and employability enhancement

plans. Twenty places were made available in the pilot scheme which proved attractive to some very ambitious and motivated students. There has been a generous response from our alumni with volunteer mentors coming forward from Northern Ireland, London, New York and Asia and demonstrating significant levels of experience and achievement that surpassed the expectations of participating students.

The Scheme is now in the mentoring stage with conversations currently in progress. Informal comments coming forward from students, to date, indicate that they are finding this to be a very valuable experience:

"I have completed two of my conversations with my mentor so far and they have been really useful. I am learning a lot from him and feel that the Scheme is a really valuable experience." (BA English Student)

"All going very, very well. On to about the 4th or 5th e-mail now. Lots of help being provided!!" (BSc Computer Science student)

"Just had a fantastic conversation with my mentor on the recruitment process and exactly what the accountancy firms are looking for." (BSc Accounting Student)

There will be a formal evaluation of the Scheme in May/June 2012. Depending on the outcomes of this, it is hoped to run the Scheme out more widely across the University in 2012-2013. An information website to support the pilot scheme has been set up in the CES webpages and can be accessed at www.qub.ac.uk/alumnicareermentoring. Anyone interested in hearing more about the scheme is also welcome to **contact Eimear Gallagher in Careers, Employability and Skills** (e.gallagher@qub.ac.uk)

Representative from Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (CIMA) with student



Representatives from Deloitte talk to Queen's students

Creating an Online Teaching Resource

by Dr Brian Kelly, Reader in the School of History and Anthropology



Dr Brian Kelly

The learning landscape in which university educators interact with our students has changed dramatically over the past decade. Just over ten years ago, when with others in the School of History I managed to secure a grant for the History Online Learning and Teaching Initiative (HOLTI), none of us had extensive experience teaching with the web, and some of our colleagues were deeply ambivalent about its pedagogical value. Queen's Online was in its early stages of development, and the University's link to JSTOR and other popular electronic resources was still a few years off. Some of our more technologically adventurous students were early and avid web surfers, but few of them would have made regular use of online materials in their coursework; even if they had been willing, high-quality online educational resources were few and far between.

Today much of that has changed. There may be a few holdouts in our ranks, but most university educators today regularly incorporate online resources into their teaching. Students too often begin their university careers lacking key writing and critical thinking skills, but most have been immersed in web technology from a young age, and have mastered the fundamentals before they arrive in our classrooms. The problem of scarcity of online resources has been turned on its head, and today the most daunting challenge facing teachers who want to combine thoughtful pedagogy and the best of the web is the almost infinite range of resources available online. Often the most urgent question educators confront in putting together a new syllabus is not whether to use the web, but how to help students discern the wheat from the chaff, so that they can identify and make use of websites that are both intellectually credible and aesthetically appealing.



The After Slavery Project, an international research collaboration directed from QUB, has over the past five years worked to fill a void in the online profile of one critical field in American history, and is beginning to have a demonstrable impact on classroom teaching in the US. The project website (www.afterslavery.com) grew out of a program of research undertaken by myself and two other scholars (Bruce Baker from University of London-Royal Holloway and Susan O'Donovan, formerly of Harvard and now at the University of Memphis). With a grant from the AHRC, we scoured several hundred collections in twenty archives across the US in an attempt to reconstruct at ground level the story of slave emancipation after the American Civil War. The project archive now includes tens of thousands of documents from freed slaves and their former masters, military and federal government officials, travellers, teachers, missionaries, newspaper editors, and others both sympathetic and hostile to the plight of former slaves. Queen's is now home to the most substantial microfilm collection on the topic anywhere in Europe.

An outdoor meeting on a Southern Plantation



For a Belfast-based research project focused on a critically important chapter in US history, an international web presence was essential. Scholarship on the rise and fall of American slavery has exploded in the post-civil rights era, and though there are excellent online resources for studying many aspects of that history, there was a striking absence of quality materials on the process of emancipation itself. We were struck by the paradox: one of the most vibrant and crowded sub-fields in US history barely registered on the web, and the After Slavery Project aimed in part to fill that void.

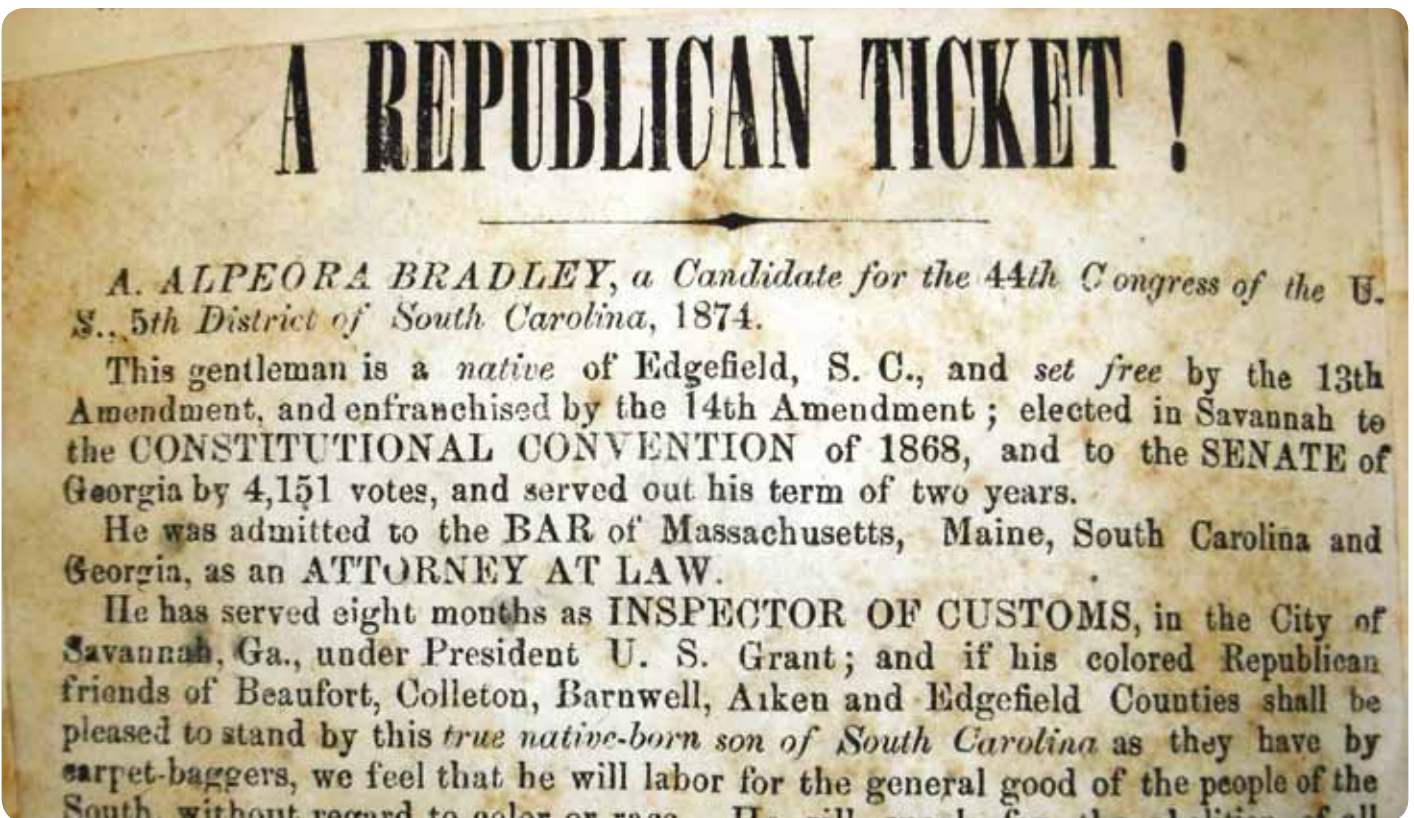
The core of the project website is its Online Classroom (OC), made up of ten Learning Units on topics ranging from "The Black Military Experience" to "Gender and the Politics of Freedom." In its first year,

the OC registered twenty thousand individual "hits" and was being used in university- and high school-level teaching across the US. Ann Claunch, Director of Curriculum for US National History Day credited the site with helping to reshape classroom teaching by "introducing cutting edge scholarship and well-chosen primary sources to bring voice to an untold story." MERLOT (the US-based 'Multimedia Educational Resources for Learning and Online Teaching') peer-reviewed the site, lauding After Slavery for offering "a model of the scholarship of teaching that can benefit faculty teaching and student learning around the world."

The project's significance has been enhanced by the upcoming sesquicentennial of US slave emancipation. The website has now found a permanent home with the

distinguished Lowcountry Digital Library at the College of Charleston, and project partners serve on the Steering Committee of the Jubilee Project, a Carolina-based initiative that brings together academic, cultural and community groups to plan a program of educational events to mark the upcoming anniversaries. In the short term the After Slavery Project will devote much of our energy to working with high-school and university educators to design an appropriate, web-based curriculum for marking these historic events. Over the longer term we want to enhance the interactive capacity of the website, with the ultimate aim of making it the essential online resource for teaching the remarkable story of American slave emancipation.

Election Handbill for former slave Aaron Bradey



Biological Science students making their mark internationally through the School Work Placement programme

By Mark Gallagher, (Work Placement and Careers Adviser) Biological Sciences

Studying a Bioscience degree offers students opportunities to work and study abroad due to the global relevance of the disciplines studied. Many of the issues we will face including food security, land use and management, loss of biodiversity and environmental management will seek global solutions. This year a number of students undertaking Work Placement within the School of Biological Sciences are gaining experience internationally and contributing to work in such areas.

Aimee Leslie

BSc Agricultural Technology



Salamaleck! (Greetings!) My name is Aimee-Louise Leslie and I am currently in the Asian land of Tajikistan for the work placement element of my Agricultural Technology degree.

I have always enjoyed travelling and Asia captured my interest a few years ago when I was on a hiking trip. Now I am looking forward to spending six months here to help with agricultural projects in this tiny mountainous country.

My main task will be the establishment of superior crop hybrids better suited to the extreme growing conditions! We may also introduce new crops such as

Quinoa! There will also be opportunity for me to investigate the processing of sugar beet and other projects. This will develop research and analytical skills which will increase my career knowledge and employability as I hope to work in the research when I graduate.

I know it will be a challenge and a great learning experience as I adapt to the foreign culture and learn about their agricultural techniques and hopefully impart some of my skills to create a better income for the local farmers.

Valerie Gibson

BSc Land use and Environmental Management



The job market today can be volatile and competitive for graduates. Not only will we be competing with graduates

from our own university, but also international graduates. For this reason I felt it was important to make my CV stand out and gain as much experience as possible.

I chose to work in China because after going on the Study China Program in August 2010, I realized that I had a passion for travelling and experiencing different cultures. China is also quickly becoming the leader in green technology and has an ever growing economy, so experiencing some of that will open my eyes to the world around me. Being a developing country, I felt that gaining work experience in China would greatly develop my understanding of how the country is vastly trying to change its perception as the world's most polluted country. I also felt it would put into perspective all of the theoretical knowledge I have gained in University. I felt that by staying in Northern Ireland to work, I wouldn't be grasping the opportunity to gain international experience and develop my professional skills, as well as taking the risk to adapt to a new working environment within a foreign country, learn a new language, network and learn the business etiquette of a different culture.

My first placement was arranged through CRCC Asia, in which I was

Students undertaking experience abroad can greatly enhance their employability through developing increased independence and confidence. Graduates now seek employment in an increasingly globalised market place and having international experience leaves students well positioned to compete. Here, three students tell us about their experiences and explain their motivations for undertaking experience abroad.

placed within a green technology company in Beijing, called the CIS STARS Foundation. From this I have been able to develop my knowledge of international NGOs, as well as get the opportunity to travel to various cities within China on business trips and build up a network of clients. As part of my second placement starting in September, I will be a part of a research team conducting a soil erosion project within Xiamen Institute of Urban Environment. This will allow me to gain invaluable knowledge of carrying out research abroad and working with such a diverse group of people.

I hope that by carrying out international work experience I will enhance many skills, such as my independence and adaptability skills, as well as show employers my willingness to enhance my career and most importantly, prepare myself for the future.

Sheila Beagan

BSc Zoology



I'm currently studying Zoology at Queen's and carried out Work Placement for the Atlantic Whale Foundation in 2011. The AWF studies whales, dolphins, orangutans, elephants and also help under privileged people and communities as part of the work they do. I wanted to carry out my work experience outside NI so that I could experience different cultures, work with a wide range of animals, meet a large number of people and actually see the sun during the summer!

I spent time on the boats researching bottle nose dolphins and short finned pilot whales. I also petitioned against whaling in Europe. The AWF has given me the opportunity to gain contacts throughout the world which will help in the future. This placement has developed my knowledge and interest in marine animals and communication skills which will be essential when I start looking for a job. I have been given the opportunity to use the knowledge that I have gained from university and apply it in everyday life.

My experience was amazing and I would really recommend work placement abroad because you meet so many people, and get to do what you love and apply some of the learning from your studies.

Washington Ireland Program

Developing Active Citizens – Building Leadership Skills – Creating a Shared Future

by Bryan Patten, Executive Director, Washington Ireland Programme



Class of 2012 and Queen's Alumni at Orientation

The Washington Ireland Program for Service and Leadership (WIP) invests in the skills of young leaders in Ireland and Northern Ireland. For the past 18 years we have been building a network of young leaders from all communities with the skills to address the societal issues of the past, and to create a new vision for both Ireland and Northern Ireland.

Each year WIP brings together a group of 30 outstanding young people from Universities across Ireland and Northern Ireland, who commit to a six-month programme of service and leadership development.

The students selected come from a diverse range of academic backgrounds, and in DC they have the opportunity to work with and learn from leaders in the fields of academia, business, civil society, government and politics.

Students who are chosen to participate have demonstrated leadership potential, a strong track record of service (locally or globally), and an

interest in working with a diverse mix of students from Ireland and Northern Ireland.

Having been founded in partnership with Queen's University, more than 170 Queen's students have participated on our programme. Another 280 students

have also participated, representing 24 universities throughout the UK and Ireland.

Seven Queen's students have been selected for the Class of 2012, representing the Schools of Law,

**The class of 2011 Queen's students outside the Capital
(L-R Conal O'Hare, Graham Scobie, Owen McMeel and Aaron Callan)**



Management, Medicine, Politics and Psychology.

Bryan Patten, WIP's Executive Director, says "This year's class are extremely accomplished, have a track record of community service and have demonstrated their capacity for leading in their communities. They truly exemplify the quality of our young people in Ireland and Northern Ireland. The Washington Ireland Program will give them the opportunity to work with those who are leading on a global stage. This experience will further hone their skills and help create a peaceful, stable and prosperous future for Northern Ireland and Ireland."

Central to the programme is an 8-week professional internship in Washington DC, the centre of American democracy and political power. In DC, participants are provided with an opportunity to learn and be challenged in a diverse range of professional internships including: Congressional offices,

government departments, media outlets, law firms, start-up companies, major corporations, non-profit organisations and diplomatic offices.

Along the way participants gain valuable exposure to key leadership challenges while gaining critical skills in communication, networking, management, planning and organising, and teamwork. Participants have the opportunity to meet and learn from leading political and social leaders in the US, Northern Ireland and Ireland, and are encouraged to think critically about their own role in society.

Working through challenges and seizing opportunities, many participants build life-long friendships with their peers and host families, and continue to tap into this powerful network.

Armed with new skills, a wide-ranging network, and a commitment to make a difference, WIP alumni have entered into professional life with enhanced understanding of the critical political,

economic and social issues facing Northern Ireland and Ireland today. Alumni are working in a wide spectrum of fields, from international finance to politics, from media to public sector, from Fortune 500 companies to entrepreneurial business and social causes with an eagerness to contribute and help make new leadership happen.

U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton says, "Many of WIP's 450 alumni are now emerging as a new generation of leaders committed to peace, stability and prosperity in both Northern Ireland and the Republic."

The programme is supported by the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister, the Irish Department of Education and Skills, the universities in Ireland and Northern Ireland and a broad number of corporate and individual donors. WIP is particularly eager to support students from disadvantaged backgrounds, and we work to ensure that finance is not a barrier for students participating in the programme.

We are looking for a diverse range of individuals who have the potential to make a difference and help to create a more positive, prosperous Ireland and Northern Ireland. We look forward to receiving applications for the 2013 Class.

Aaron Callan speaking at the US Senate Building



If you would like to find out more about WIP, the Queen's students on the Class of 2012 or how students can apply for the Class of 2013, please visit our website:

www.wipprogram.org

Systemic Practice in Higher Education: a systemic consultancy for postgraduate research students

by Annette Mac Artain Kerr, Postgraduate Student Support



Annette Mac Artain Kerr

This article describes briefly the Personal Effectiveness Consultancy service for postgraduate research (PGR) students set up in 2008 to provide academic support and aid retention throughout the doctoral research cycle. The service is based in systemic practice and I am a UKCP registered systemic therapist & consultant.

Background to the Higher Education sector

The university sector has changed considerably in recent decades. HE governance and Quality Assurance requirements alongside the Researcher Excellence Framework (REF) make for a hard working, pressurised environment for academic and other staff. It is important to understand this environment when working with postgraduate research students.

Rationale for setting up a 1-1 Personal Effectiveness Service for PGR students

Through previous experience in the counselling service at Queen's, and as a skills trainer for PGR students, I had heard PGR problem descriptions

which were complex and highly specific to the individual's settings. They often involved interpersonal relationships, for example within the supervisory team, the research cluster, or post doctoral staff and peers. Systemic practice is concerned with the interpersonal rather than the intrapsychic. In addition, a problem is seen as belonging to a system as a whole, rather than to one part of it (Carr 2000, Dallos & Draper, 2000). This can be analogous with an ecological system, with the assumption that each system is very likely to be a subsystem of something else (Rivett & Street, 2009). Thus the systemic consultancy works with individual postgraduate research students while seeing them as being embedded in many other systems within the university as a whole. As the experience of the PGR student is very different to that of other students, I believed that their difficulties required a different response, which a systemic service could provide.

Service Information

The personal effectiveness consultancy uses a collaborative approach with the idea of activating PGR students' resources to problem solve with the consultant. Many writers in systemic literature promote a collaborative approach, which includes the idea of "inviting clients to comment and participate in a meaningful way" (Jones & Asen, 2000), of 'not knowing' (Anderson 1987) and the idea of not having a preconceived outcome therefore suggesting an openness on all sides to what the session might bring. (Campbell et al, 1994). The service seeks to define and understand the problem in interpersonal terms and promotes robust, productive working relationships.

Within the total population of 1,500 postgraduate research students, only a small percentage is service users, for example in 2010-2011, 56 appointments were attended by 36 students. Students reported

a high level of satisfaction (100%) with the service in the most recent service evaluation (April 2011). They were asked to rate the problem they experienced before and after attending. The ratings, albeit done retrospectively and without testing for statistical significance, were as follows:

Average problem rating before using the service 6.5 (scale 1-8, 8 high)

Average problem rating after using the service 3.3

Typical student presentations include stress, motivation and problems with the supervisory relationship. It is important to state that the vast majority of postgraduate research students report satisfaction with the supervisory relationship; however, it is equally important to be able to provide a positive response to the small minority of students who do experience problems with it. The positive outcomes reported in the 1-1 systemic consultancy evaluation help to ensure that students who may be at risk of dropping out are supported in continuing their doctoral studies.

Systemic tools: assessment & context

In this section I will set out some of the systemic tools that I use in relation to PGR student situations. I will not discuss any specific cases; instead I will use recurring themes and examples.

One of the first tools I developed was an assessment, similar to a clinical assessment, divided into four sections: 1) PhD lifecycle information 2) map of context 3) map of key relationships 4) problem influence and 5) changes desired by client. Assessment is not simply information gathering, however, and I use these sections & maps in the same way one uses a genogram, as an intervention. (McGoldrick et al 1999).

The first section gathers information about the research area, stage of the lifecycle, PhD commitments and

referral outward, if necessary. The second is about context. I am using context in its widest meaning to be "the unique frame of reference within which events are understood". (Haslebo & Neilsen, 2000, p7). Haslebo (2000) says that context can be defined in various ways, and I have used a student meeting with a supervisor as an example. The meeting can be seen in various ways:

- As an educational or guidance experience by the student
- As an evaluation of the student's progress by the supervisor and
- As an essential part of the contract between student and supervisor by the university.

If a student reports difficulty with the supervisory relationship, this may have repercussions across all of these contexts. Haslebo (2000) goes on to suggest context involves understanding as well as action. My work therefore involves listening carefully to establish how the situation is understood by the student and how they think the supervisor might understand it. This process can provide a means for students to engage in reflection across contexts. The action phase might be a shift from the PGR student perceiving their role as a recipient of information or guidance to a more active one, where they take the initiative and make suggestions and/or decisions. As PGR students have to defend their thesis on their own at the Viva Voce Examination, it is essential that they are able to take the lead, when appropriate, in their research.

Working with typical student presentations

Sometimes problems can be multi-faceted. For example, a student near the end of the lifecycle describes problems with research direction – should they include an important new piece of research in their thesis even though they are under great pressure to finish? This pressure is linked to visa expiry and family transitions and is compounded by stress. Rather than trying to focus on every aspect of this situation, the systemic idea where the problem defines the system is helpful. And in defining the system to be used in consultation, one needs to make choices, which can later be changed, if required, to suit the circumstances of the client. (Haslebo & Neilsen, 2000). It is likely in the above example that the research student will use other services such as the International Office regarding visa considerations. However, they might well feel stuck

in relation to how these matters will impact on their research. It is part of the role of the consultant "to introduce new possibilities or meanings into a situation or system which has become stuck." (Campbell & Huffington, 2008). To generate more choice, Anderson (1987) promoted multiple perspectives using "both/and" as a format to mitigate against the limits introduced by "either/or" language, allowing more possibilities to emerge. Thus, despite the time and visa constraints above, using both/and thinking can introduce the possibility of achieving all of the client's goals. When the situation starts to appear less stuck, the research student is likely to have more space to generate potential solutions. They may decide to discuss how time constraints influence the research direction, considering options such as seeking an extension to add in the new research or completing without the new research with a decision to demonstrate awareness of it in the viva voce examination. The point is not so much the decision they take, as the ability to think calmly and clearly about the most professional approach to resolve the issue.

Conclusion

Academic thought has long had a tradition of vigorous opposition & incompatible viewpoints, with Freud and Jung providing an example in the mental health field. A refreshing perspective on this is provided through systemic work on positioning theory. Harre in the foreword to Campbell & Groenbaek's book "Taking Positions in the Organisation" (2006) praises "their insistence that formal contradiction is a prevailing feature of human life." This acceptance of conflict is in itself a useful perspective which, in my opinion, helps to de-dramatise the difficulties arising in the course of a PhD. Systemic ideas and approaches appear to have benefitted PGR students in the situations they have brought to consultation. I hope that they can continue to do so and I will seek ongoing ways of researching the effectiveness of the service so as to continually improve it.

References

- Anderson, Tom The Reflecting Team: Dialogue and Meta-dialogue in Clinical Work. *Family Process*, Vol 26, 415-428, 1987.
- Campbell, D, Coldicott, T and Kinsella, K, (1994) *Systemic Work with Organisations, A New Model For*

Managers And Change Agents Karnac Books

Campbell, D & Groenbaek, M. (2006) *Taking Positions in the Organisation*. Systemic Thinking & Practice Series (Work With Organisations) Series Editors Campbell, D. & Draper, R. Karnac Books London

Campbell, D & Huffington, C. (2008) *Organisations Connected, A Handbook of Systemic Consultation*. Systemic Thinking & Practice Series (Work With Organisations) Series Editors Campbell, D. & Draper, R. Karnac Books London

Carr, Alan (2000) *Family Therapy. Concepts, Process & Practice*. Wiley, Chichester, UK

Dallos, R & Draper, R, (2000) *An Introduction to Family Therapy*. Open University Maidenhead Philadelphia

Haslebo, G & Neilsen, K S. (2000) *Systems & Meaning, Consulting in Organisations*.

Translated by D H Silver. Systemic Thinking & Practice Series (Work With Organisations) Series Editors Campbell, D. & Draper, R. Karnac Books London

Jones, Elsa and Asen, Eia (2000) *Systemic couple therapy and depression*, Karnac

Rivett, M & Street, E (2009) *Family Therapy. 100 Key Points & Techniques*. 100 Key Points series. Series Editor: Windy Dryden. Routledge London & New York

McGoldrick, M, Gerson, R & Shellenberger, S. (1999) *Genograms, Assessment & Information*. W W Norton & Company, New York, London

Articles

Collini, Stefan, Learning for its own sake. *Guardian Review* 25 February 2012

McClaran, Anthony. The renewal of quality assurance in UK Higher Education. *Perspectives*, Volume 14, October 2010

Wright, Sue, Enhancing the Quality of Teaching in Universities: Through Coercive Managerialism or Organisational Democracy. *Learning & Teaching Support Network (LTSN) Generic*, February, 2003

Launch of SONIA in Northern Ireland

by Colin O'Hare, Queen's University Management School

Actuaries, and those with an interest in all matters actuarial, gathered together in Northern Ireland to launch the Society of Northern Ireland Actuaries (SONIA) in February 2012. SONIA is a society for actuarial professionals based in Northern Ireland and further afield and will encompass students training to become actuaries on the Queen's University Management School's Actuarial Science and Risk Management degree. The Society will, for the first time in Northern Ireland, offer actuaries and students training to be actuaries the opportunity to discuss and debate the latest issues in the delivery of actuarial services as well as issues surrounding the related professions. Generously funded by Invest NI, it will also offer a platform for local actuaries to provide their opinion on actuarial issues from pensions to investments and beyond. For students, it will offer an unrivalled opportunity for networking, professional development and engagement with industry and industry issues. It will allow students the opportunity to develop into more rounded professionals whilst studying the theory such that on graduation they will be able to engage with the issues immediately. Supported by the Institute and Faculty of Actuaries (IFA), the inaugural event included a presentation by the current President of the Actuarial Profession, Jane Curtis, on the new Education Strategy and the latest thinking on topics such as Enhanced Transfer Values. The idea of integrating undergraduates in actuarial science and practising actuaries along with other related professionals is one that the profession is keen to embrace and if this pilot is successful the intention is to encourage Societies across the world to follow this type of networking model.

Speaking about the motivation for SONIA, its President and Program Director for the Actuarial Science degree at Queen's, Mr Colin O'Hare said,

"The idea of establishing a Society that includes as its core membership professional actuaries and undergraduate students has never been tried before in the UK. I believe that it provides an opportunity for our students to develop the necessary softer skills and business awareness skills that are difficult to teach in the lecture theatre. It also offers employers the opportunity to engage with and learn from academics

who are working at the cutting edge of actuarial research. Northern Ireland has a small but strong and growing actuarial base and with the establishment of the actuarial degree four years ago, it now has the capacity to grow rapidly in the future. A further motivation for the development of SONIA is, therefore, to provide an actuarial visibility for Northern Ireland as it works to develop as a centre of excellence in actuarial science and risk management across the U.K."

Colin O'Hare (centre) with actuarial employer representatives at Riddel Hall



Actuarial science students, Emmet McGinley, Laura McAllister and Donnachadh Long with Jane Curtis, President of the IFA (left), Arlene Foster (centre) and Colin O'Hare (right) at the SONIA launch event.

The students' story: a medical student view of professionalism in practice

by Clare Thomson (c.thomson@qub.ac.uk), Dr Kieran McGlade (k.mcglade@qub.ac.uk), Dr Jenny Johnston (j.l.johnston@qub.ac.uk), Dr Mairead Corrigan (m.corrigan@qub.ac.uk)

A new project funded by the Higher Education Academy is underway in the Centre for Medical Education, engaging students both as researchers and research participants. The project has two aims; to use student experiences to build a peer teaching resource which promotes professionalism, and to study students' perspectives on professionalism from a social constructionist perspective.

Recent debate around medical professionalism reflects wider cultural changes within the profession and society. Contextual influences, such as the influence of role modelling, have a large part to play in students' professional development.^{1,2}

With this in mind, six medical students from first year and six from fourth year have been recruited as researchers. They will be conducting short video interviews with their peers and teachers who they perceive as being role models on a theme of professional development, as well as completing a reflective diary which demonstrates how the project has influenced their own professional development.

For preparation for their roles in the project the students have participated in three workshops. One was on the setup and use of the recording equipment and a second on filming techniques with particular emphasis on interview situations, both facilitated by Stephen Mullan from the Video Production Unit. The third consisted of an introduction to qualitative research and the narrative method specifically.

Students will spend the remainder of the semester conducting their interviews and a further workshop on analysing narrative interviews for all project members will be facilitated by the Higher Education Academy before the end of the academic year.

This project is designed to improve our understanding of how students construct the idea of professionalism. The perspectives of universities and professional bodies on this topic are clear; by using students to research students, we hope to obtain a unique perspective. In developing a teaching resource where students talk about professionalism and discuss strategies for coping with adversity, peer support can be offered to students starting out

in an attempt to counter the negative effects of the hidden curriculum.

Furthermore, in the reflexive aspect of student researchers themselves being researched, insight may be gained into how individuals have used the project to help them make sense of the concept of professionalism. Results will be disseminated during the first half of 2013.

Philip Ross and Rebecca O'Kane, two fourth year project members



References

- ¹ Hafler J, Ownby A, Thompson B et al. Decoding the Learning Environment of Medical Education: A Hidden Curriculum Perspective for Faculty Development. *Academic Medicine* 2011;86(4):440-444
- ² Karnieli-Miller O, Vu TR, Holtman MC et al. Medical Students' Professionalism Narratives: A Window on the Informal and Hidden Curriculum. *Academic Medicine* 2010;85 (1):124-133

An Interactive Guide to Academic Referencing



by Tim Crawford, Learning Development Service

According to Pears and Shields (2008, p18), academic referencing is a lifelong skill which involves learning how to represent what has been learned from earlier authors. It substantiates the evidence on which discussion or argument is based. Plagiarism within tertiary education has risen substantially over the past decade (Roberts, 2008; Terry, 2007, p58; Devlin, 2006), with students either deliberately or inadvertently presenting someone else's ideas as their own. Within Queen's, plagiarism is viewed as a serious offence and is explicitly highlighted within the University Regulations and module handbooks.

My current role as a Learning Development Tutor within Queen's has enabled me to identify academic referencing as an emergent concern. Students have lost marks in

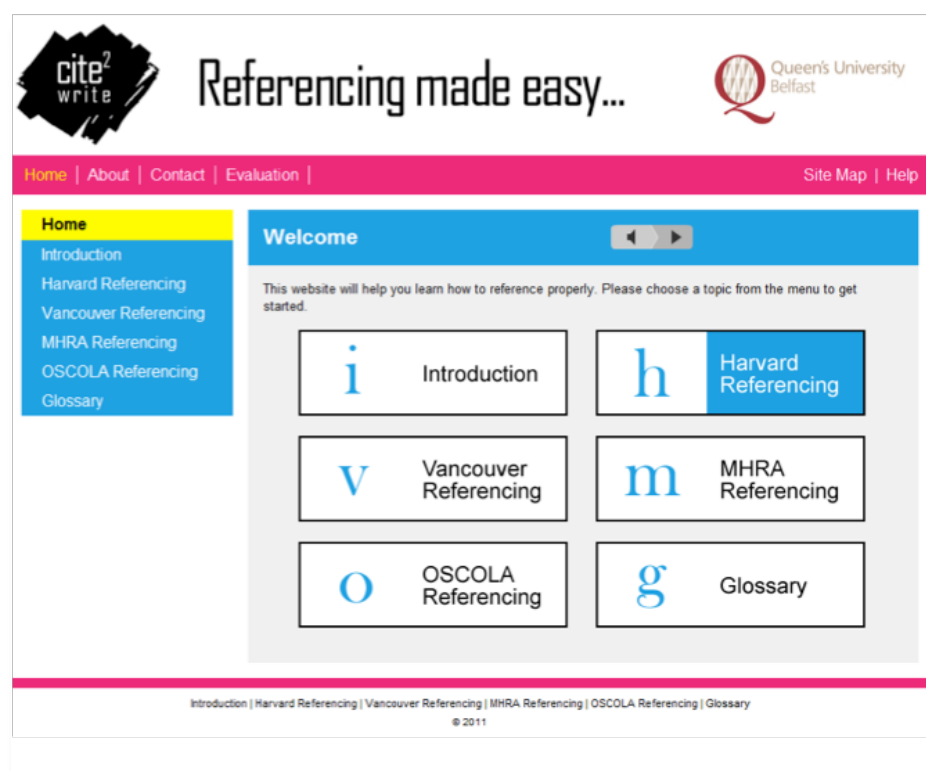
assignments due to inconsistent and erroneous referencing. The problem is particularly apparent amongst first year undergraduate students (Hart and Friesner, 2004), which Lefever and Currant (2010) argue is due to the transition from secondary level to university education. Another reason for this predicament is the absence of a universal referencing system. A plethora of referencing systems exist throughout higher education and these even vary within individual Schools and amongst academic teaching staff (Neville, 2007). Consequently it is not surprising that students are left confused.

Various HEIs host referencing materials online. However, they share many flaws between them. For example, the majority of sites are too text-heavy, static in nature and can be time-

consuming to use and consequently highly un-engaging. The few that instigate interactivity disappoint on their narrow focus on a single referencing system and fail to cover a wide range of references such as books, journals, website, multiple authors, secondary referencing etc.

The perceived lack of appropriate resources justified the need for a motivating, multimedia referencing resource. With £2500 funding from the Higher Education Academy's Learning and Teaching Enhancement Fund, I developed cite²write in July/August 2011 with the purpose of helping students learn citation skills to improve their academic writing. This project aimed to bring the topic of referencing at a level students could relate to. The resource incorporates text, graphics, animation, audio and video to teach the Harvard, MHRA, Vancouver (footnotes) and OSCOLA referencing systems to an undergraduate audience. Delivery is via the existing LDS website (www.qub.ac.uk/lDs) as this domain has an existing presence as the contact point for academic skills support within Queen's; the resource may also be accessed via a direct link: www.qub.ac.uk/cite2write.

The cite²write project has encouraged users to interact with learning technology by adopting a 'tutorial-style' methodology, whereby the learner may participate in drill and practice activities, multiple choice questions, drag and drop quizzes, and data input activities. By incorporating both formative and summative feedback on every attempted task, the learning technology implemented serves to stimulate attention, motivation, and ultimately confidence in the user's referencing skills, through scaffolding of the learning process.



Feedback from both staff and students has indicated that learners have found cite²write to be very helpful, enabling them to resolve referencing queries, avoid plagiarism and improve confidence in their academic writing. Furthermore, many academic staff have endorsed cite²write through recommendation to students via word of mouth, inclusion in module handbooks, Students' Union diary, and being used to assess* students' understanding of referencing.

The cite²write project exhibits an effective use of technology to improve educational outcomes. Accordingly, I was delighted to have been awarded a JISC RSCni Innovation in e-Learning Award in April 2012. The centralised, multi-disciplinary nature of the e-learning materials is relevant to staff and students alike, with a potential target audience in excess of 24000 users. The website statistics in figure 1 indicate the steady growth of and positive reaction towards the cite²write e-learning resource.

Figure 1

Month	Total Visits
August 2011	31
September 2011	554
October 2011	1,519
November 2011	4,100
December 2011	2,138
January 2012	2,359
February 2012	1,613
March 2012	4,413

By embedding multimedia e-learning projects cite²write within the curriculum, Queen's will endeavour to build on this foundation by developing innovative and pioneering e-mature resources.

Tim Crawford being presented with RSCni Innovation in e-Learning Award by Lady Salisbury



*<http://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/sgc/learning/AcademicSkills/Referencing/HarvardQuiz/>

Contact details: Tim Crawford
Learning Development Tutor

t: 028 9097 1452

e: tim.crawford@qub.ac.uk

w: www.qub.ac.uk/lds

References:

Devlin, M. (2006) 'Policy, preparation, and prevention: proactive minimization of student plagiarism', *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*, 28(1), pp. 45-58.

Hart, M. and Friesner, T. (2004) 'Plagiarism and poor academic practice – a threat to the extension of e-learning in higher education?', *Journal of eLearning*, 2(1), Available at: <http://www.ejel.org/volume-2/vol2-issue1/issue1-art25.htm> (Accessed: 24th April 2012).

Lefever, R. and Currant, B. (2010) *How can technology be used to improve the learner experience at points of transition?* Available at: <http://technologyenhancedlearning.net/files/2010/04/ELESIGliteraturereviewFINAL240210.pdf> (Accessed: 26th April 2012).

Neville, C. (2007) *The complete guide to referencing and avoiding plagiarism*, Maidenhead: Open Universities Press, pp. 95-109.

Pears, R. and Shields, G. (2008) *Cite them right: the essential referencing guide*, Durham: Pear Tree Books.

Roberts, T.S. (2008) *Student plagiarism in an online world: Problems and Solutions*, Hershey: IGI Publishing.

Terry, J. (2007) *Moving on – preparing for university & organising your studies*, Available at: <http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/sci/dcs/teaching/movingon/7.pdf> (Accessed: 24th April 2012).

Audio Feedback

by Gill Kelly, Centre for Educational Development

e-affect

e-assessment and feedback for effective course transformations

The use of audio feedback has been explored in a range of Higher Education projects in recent years. The ASEL Project at Bradford University noted that audio feedback was more personal and rich, that it could support different lecturer styles for giving feedback and it was well received by the students.

Use of screencasting tools which allow the recording of verbal and written comments associated with an onscreen copy of a document is a popular method of providing media-enhanced feedback, but there are two contexts in which the ease and immediacy of audio recordings can be an advantage:

(i) Generic Feedback

The use of audio to give generic feedback to the whole class after an assignment in a quick and timely fashion has been highlighted by Andrew Middleton of Sheffield Hallam University in his blog on educational podcasting. He states that generic feedback should :

- Be meaningful to all who receive it so they will use it and learn from it.
- Give an indication to the student of what to do with it ie "instructions about the use of the feedback should be embedded in the language of the feedback itself".
- Set up the expectation that the learner will respond, and each point is accompanied with a clear suggestion about how they could take action now and later.
- Encourage each student to engage with the feedback and think how it applies to them.

(ii) Non-written tasks

In her JISC funded AFAL project at Aberystwyth University, I-Chant Chiang concluded that audio recordings are particularly appropriate for non-written tasks eg presentations, role plays, clinical practicals etc. The advantage here is that a brief feedback summary can be generated soon after the task and immediately sent to the student.

Structuring Audio Feedback

Bob Rotherham of the JISC funded "Sounds Good" Project makes practical recommendations regarding the structure of a good piece of audio feedback. That it should:

- Have a length of up to 3 or 4 minutes (but longer for postgraduate theses)
- Make reference to the assessment details and assessment criteria as necessary
- Contain some summary comments (planned in advance)
- Be recorded in chunks (using the pause button for breaks) and mistakes should be edited out later
- Have a friendly introduction with reference to the assignment being addressed
- Contain an outline of the elements of the forthcoming comments
- Consist of a range of comments working through the essay
- Include an explanation of the thinking that led up to the mark awarded (where a mark is given)
- Contain a few reasonably attainable suggestions for improvement
- Have a friendly close

Finally, he recommends that if the mark is included at all (it might, for example, be made available separately or later) it would be good to give it at the end.

Recording audio feedback on your smart phone

Recordings can be made on a smart phone and saved in MP3 file format (which is easy for students to play). Android and iPhone instructions for this are available from Gill Kelly, CED g.m.kelly@qub.ac.uk .

Distributing Audio Feedback

Generic Feedback can be uploaded into the Resources area of your Queen's Online module for all your students to listen to. It is possible to distribute individual feedback to students through the Assignment tool in Queen's Online. If the files are saved with the student number contained in the filename they can be uploaded individually, or to save time be placed in a zipped folder which can be uploaded to the Assignment tool.

<http://aselproject.wordpress.com/2008/02/15/hello-world/>

<http://podcasting-for-lta.blogspot.co.uk/2010/09/why-all-academics-should-use-generic.html#links>

<http://sites.google.com/site/audiofeedbackuk/>

<http://sites.google.com/site/soundsgooduk/>

Three things you might not know about Queen's assessment and feedback

by Information Services, with the e-AFFECT project team.

...there is a new feedback tracking facility in the Assignment tool within the Queen's Online Virtual Learning Environment (VLE)

Recently, the Assignment tool has been enhanced to include a new feedback tracking facility. This facility enables teaching staff to check whether students have accessed their feedback files for a particular assignment or for all assignments. It is hoped that this information will be useful when assessing students. Similar to all other tracking data in the VLE, feedback tracking data can be exported to Excel for further analysis.

The Assignment tool in the VLE provides a quick and easy way of:

- Creating new assignments
- Modifying existing assignments
- Accessing completed assignments
- Providing marks and feedback
- Tracking assignment submissions

Feedback from colleagues who use the Assignment tool has been very positive. It has been described as effective, convenient, saving not only the teaching staff a huge amount of time, but also the School in administering student assignments (especially those with large numbers). It is also appealing for students to submit their assignments online at a time and place suitable to them.

Contact Nicola Ellis
n.ellis@qub.ac.uk for further details.

... there is now a new email address for booking PRS, the voting technology handsets

Handset bookings should be sent to prs@qub.ac.uk. The handsets are then made available for collection on the day of the booking from one of three venues; the McClay Library, the Bernard Crossland Building, or the library in the Medical Biology Centre.

Students using PRS in class



... in the Queen's Online Assessment Tool (QuestionMark) lecturers can now email their students a coaching report after test completion

During the teaching period of the semester, students are currently able to view a standard coaching report within the Assessment area of QOL on completion of an online test. This report includes the following information:

Question Level	Topic Level (provided question banks contain sub-topics)	For Comparison (where 10 or more students have completed the test)
Question number and text	Topic name	Participants score
Answer given	Topic description	Minimum score
Actual Score	Topic outcome label	Average score
Maximum score	Score in points and percentage	Maximum score



Centre for Educational Development 6th Annual Conference

Date: 28 June 2012

Venue: Canada Room and Council Chamber

Taught Masters: Differentiating the Students' Experience

Keynote Speakers:

Dr Paul Bennett, Higher Education Academy

Professor Sally Brown, Emerita Professor of Higher Education Diversity in Teaching and Learning at Leeds Metropolitan University

Speakers from Queen's:

Richard Millen, Postgraduate Student Centre

Professor Paul Simpson, School of English

Dr Jude Stephens, Gibson Institute for Land, Food and Environment

Dr Patricia Warke, School of Geography, Archaeology and Palaeoecology

Further details are available
from the CED website

[http://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/
AcademicStudentAffairs/
CentreforEducationalDevelopment/](http://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/AcademicStudentAffairs/CentreforEducationalDevelopment/)

Registration is via Queen's
Online using iTrent

<http://login.qol.qub.ac.uk/home/>

Topics:

- Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey – the national and institutional picture
- Assessing Masters students
- Developing employability skills within taught Masters programmes

All Ireland Society for Higher Education 8th International Conference

30th & 31st August 2012
Dublin City University, Ireland

Responding to Change: Effective Teaching and Learning in Higher Education



Teaching and Learning in the Changing World
of Higher Education www.aishe.org

