



**Queen's University Belfast**

**School of Education**

**and**

**Centre for Educational Development**

**Postgraduate Certificate in Higher Education Teaching  
(PGCHET)**

**EDU 7261 - Teaching, Learning and Assessment in  
Disciplinary, Multidisciplinary and University Contexts**

**Module 2 Handbook**

**September 2015**

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## 1. Introduction

The Postgraduate Certificate in Higher Education Teaching (PGCHET) consists of three 20 credit M level modules. For your group, the dates are:

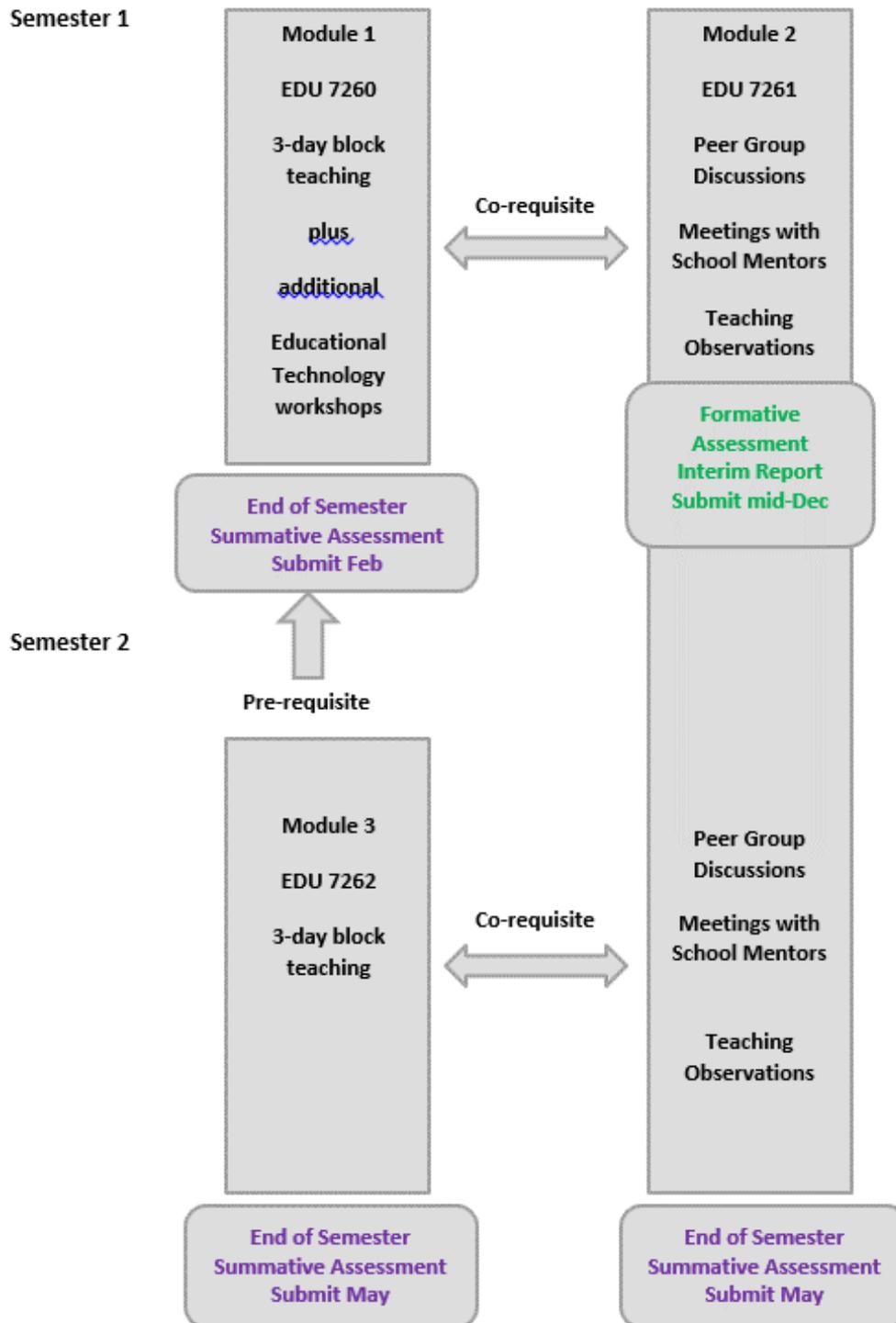
- **The Foundation Module (EDU 7260): an introduction to teaching, learning and assessment in higher education** (1<sup>st</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2015)
- **Module 2: Teaching, Learning and Assessment in Disciplinary, Multidisciplinary and University Contexts** (September 2015 – April 2016)
- **Module 3: Student Learning and Student Support in Higher Education** (12<sup>th</sup> -14<sup>th</sup> January 2016)

The curriculum is designed as a set of three 20-credit interlocking modules, two of which are taught in sequence, (one in Semester 1 and the other in Semester 2 for the September intake), and one is taught contemporaneously with the other two (stretching over both semesters).

The diagram below gives an overview of how the modules work together over the course of the academic year.

## 2. PGCHET Module Design Flow Diagram

(Assumes Semester Structure and Cohort beginning in September)



### 3. PGCHET Higher Education Contexts

The PGCHET is jointly organised by the School of Education, who accredit the course and the Centre for Educational Development. The course has recently been redesigned and revalidated by the University (2015) and the new structures have also been re-accredited by the Higher Education Academy which means that on successful completion of the course, participants are automatically eligible to become a Fellow of the Academy.

The course accreditation is based on a mapping with the Higher Education Academy's **UK Professional Standards Framework (UKPSF)**, Descriptor 2. The areas of activity, core knowledge and professional values of the UKPSF are listed below:

<b>UK Professional Standards Framework Descriptor 2</b>		
<b>Areas of Activity</b>	<b>Core Knowledge</b>	<b>Professional Values</b>
A1 Design and plan learning activities and/or programmes of study	K1 The subject material	V1 Respect individual learners and diverse learning communities
A2 Teach and/or support learning	K2 Appropriate methods for teaching, learning and assessing in the subject area and at the level of the academic programme	V2 Promote participation in higher education and equality of opportunity for learners
A3 Assess and give feedback to learners	K3 How students learn, both generally and within their subject/ disciplinary area(s)	V3 Use evidence-informed approaches and the outcomes from research, scholarship and continuing professional development
A4 Develop effective learning environments and approaches to student support and guidance	K4 The use and value of appropriate learning technologies	V4 Acknowledge the wider context in which higher education operates recognising the implications for professional practice
A5 Engage in continuing professional development in subjects/disciplines and their pedagogy, incorporating research, scholarship and the evaluation of professional practices	K5 Methods for evaluating the effectiveness of teaching	
	K6 The implications of quality assurance and quality enhancement for academic and professional practice with a particular focus on teaching	

The Certificate is primarily targeted at new or relatively new Queen's academic staff; other staff (e.g. research staff) with teaching responsibilities can be admitted if numbers and funding permit. Participants are normally expected to undertake the Foundation Module before Module 3 and concurrently with Module 2, except in exceptional circumstances.

Module 2 is worth 20 M-level credits. The dates for September 2015 are as follows:

**Friday 11<sup>th</sup> of September** (Module Launch Session) 9.30 a.m. –12.30 p.m.

**The venue** for this Module introduction session will normally be the School of Education.

You will be assigned into disciplinary/cognate disciplinary groups, based largely on Faculty groupings. These groups will then constitute Peer Discussion Groups and will meet three times during the year for two hour meetings. The meetings will be led by discipline-specific PGCHET tutors. You will be notified of the exact dates of the meetings which will normally be held on Wednesday afternoons.

Participants will be provided, through their Head of School or Academic Unit, with an agreed School-based Mentor who will support them during their studies. The role of the School-based Mentor is to act as a discipline-specific 'critical friend' for each participant, specifically, though not exclusively, to observe and to give formative feedback on his/her teaching. It is expected that four meetings with School-based Mentors will be held throughout the year of the programme

The timings of Individual meetings with School-based Mentors will be arranged between mentors and mentees, to follow the indicative timetable outlines below.

Participants are **normally expected to attend all scheduled sessions**. (Exceptions can only be made in unusual circumstances.) There is a **minimum attendance requirement of 75%** of the sessions, in line with School of Education guidelines. Attendance will be taken during the scheduled sessions and participants are asked to inform staff if they are unable to attend. Participants who fall below this requirement will not normally be eligible to pass the module, unless there are extenuating circumstances.

Adherence to the values of professionalism on the course is deemed very important by the School of Education. Participants are expected to participate and contribute positively to all teaching sessions in the PGCHET and not to act in any manner that may adversely affect the learning experience of other colleagues on the programme. Any undesirable behaviour may result in the participant being asked to leave with details of the incident forwarded to the appropriate Head of School and Personnel.

### **Module Team:**

#### **Coordinator:**

Dr Joe Allen, School of Education

[Joe.allen@qub.ac.uk](mailto:Joe.allen@qub.ac.uk)

**Guest tutors** from the School of Education, the Centre for Educational Development'  
**Disciplinary-specific tutors** from the wider University, and **School-based Mentors** from participants' own School/Academic Units.

#### **PGCHET secretary:**

Ruth McKittrick, School of Education

[r.mckittrick@qub.ac.uk](mailto:r.mckittrick@qub.ac.uk)

#### 4. Overall aims of the PGCHET programme

##### Aims of the Programme

- To provide a route for academic practitioners to meet the requirements of the *UK Professional Standards Framework* for teaching and supporting learning in higher education (Descriptor 2 );
- To develop competent and confident academic practitioners who can bring a critically reflective and evidence-based approach to their practice of teaching, learning and assessment in higher education;
- To create a learning environment for academic practitioners that contributes to their professional development in supporting excellence in higher education teaching and student learning;
- To provide opportunities for dialogue within and between disciplines across the university about the best practices for enhancing the learning environment;
- To promote core professional values related to evidence-based scholarship, respect for diversity, and commitment to continuous professional development.

## 5. Outline of Module 2

Module 2 is considered a 'long thin module' and will extend over both Semesters. Participants are grouped into three/four cognate disciplinary peer groups (e.g., Humanities and Social Sciences, Science, Maths and Engineering, Clinical and Health Sciences).

This module seeks to embed the participants' learning more thoroughly within a disciplinary perspective than was the case in the previous PGCHET, as well as to link the participants' learning activities within their ongoing school-related academic practices. The conceptual focus for the module is to provide opportunities for participants to analyse and compare generic approaches to teaching/learning/assessment in higher education and the emerging evidence base for disciplinary distinctive practices (e.g., signature pedagogies). The learning environment in which the participants meet will be devolved to discipline-specific peer discussion groups (defined loosely by Faculty) and will be led by more experienced colleagues with interests/experience/expertise in particular topics (e.g., teaching methods such as lab-based teaching, teaching about controversial issues, teaching statistics, assessing clinical skills). In addition, participants will be guided throughout this module, and consequently throughout the programme, by a more experienced colleague based in their own school/academic unit, who can support participants in their specific school-based context and, in particular, provide more disciplinary-oriented feedback about their teaching through peer observation and feedback. The module is thus characterised as a co-requisite for the other two modules in the sense that the learning in this module is co-dependent on the learning in the other two modules, and cannot be studied independently of the other modules that form the programme.

Each disciplinary-specific peer group will meet three times over the two semesters for two-hour meetings. In addition, each participant will have at least four individual meetings with their school-based mentor over the same period. The module is summatively assessed through the submission of one piece of coursework – a 'focus on the discipline' portfolio (see Assessment below), and participants receive substantial formative feedback about their teaching competence from their school-based mentors and from discussion with peers in their peer discussion groups. In addition, an interim report on one element of the portfolio, the literature review, will be formatively assessed. Assessment of their progress against dimensions of the UKPSF is included as an element in this portfolio also (see next page).

## 6. Learning Outcomes for Module 2 mapped to the UKPSF Descriptor 2

<b>UK Professional Standards Framework Descriptor Level 2</b>	<b>Learning Outcomes at Module Level</b> <b>PGCHET Module 2</b> <b>Teaching, Learning and Assessment in Disciplinary, Multidisciplinary, and University contexts</b> <b>(20 credits)</b>
<b>UKPSF Core Knowledge</b>	<b>Module 2 Core Knowledge Learning Outcomes</b>
K1 The subject material	K1 The subject material
K2 Appropriate methods for teaching, learning and assessing in the subject area and at the level of the academic programme	Drawing on the discipline specific educational literature and your own experience, analyse and reflect on any distinctive approaches to teaching, learning and assessment that are associated with your discipline or cognate disciplines.  Make connections between what are called generic approaches and discipline orientated approaches (e.g. signature pedagogies), and how that could be important for your teaching methods and assessment
K3 How students learn, both generally and within their subject / disciplinary area(s)	Develop your understanding of what is distinctive about teaching in your discipline with peers from cognate disciplines and any emerging issues related to disciplinary teaching, student learning and assessment.
K4 The use and value of appropriate learning technologies	Make connections between what are called generic approaches and discipline orientated approaches (e.g., signature pedagogies), including <i>the use of educational technology</i> ,  .
K5 Methods for evaluating the effectiveness of teaching	Consider the merits of different approaches to evaluating teaching and enhancing quality (e.g., peer observations, students' evaluation, external audit, accreditation visits) and how they apply in a specific school/disciplinary context.
K6 The implications of quality assurance and quality enhancement for academic and professional practice with a particular focus on teaching	Recognise the importance of evidence-based approaches, feedback from colleagues and students, and the role of reflection and self-evaluation for their own professional development, for quality assurance and quality enhancement  Recognise the role of the UKPSF in their own professional development
<b>UKPSF Areas of Activity</b>	<b>Module 2 Areas of Activity</b>
A1 Design and plan learning activities and/or programmes of study	Share connections between what are called generic approaches and discipline orientated approaches (e.g. signature pedagogies), and how that could be important for your planning, teaching methods and assessment
A4 Develop effective learning environments and approaches to student support and guidance	Identify a significant student learning or student support issue that is particularly relevant in your disciplinary context at this time.

	Conduct and report a review of the relevant disciplinary educational literature associated with the above issue, with the purpose of identifying a research question for your action research project in Module 3
A5 Engage in continuing professional development in subjects/disciplines and their pedagogy, incorporating research, scholarship and the evaluation of professional practices	<p>Reflect on the feedback you have received from peer observation sessions conducted with different colleagues (e.g., mentor or colleague on the PGCHET) and how you can use it, or have used it, to improve your practice.</p> <p>Provide written and oral feedback to a colleague on the strengths and weaknesses of a teaching session in the context of a peer observation.</p> <p>Reflect on the process of peer observation, the pros and cons of this approach to evaluating teaching, comparing it with other sources of evaluation such as student evaluation of teaching.</p> <p>Reflect on changes and developments in their teaching and evaluate their progress against the UKPSF Descriptor Level 2</p>
<b>UKPSF Professional Values</b>	<b>Professional Values</b>
V1 Respect individual learners and diverse learning communities	A respect for individual learners and for their development and empowerment
V2 Promote participation in higher education and equality of opportunity for learners	A respect for individual learners and for their development and empowerment
V3 Use evidence-informed approaches and the outcomes from research, scholarship and continuing professional development	A commitment to continued reflection and evaluation, and consequent improvement of their own academic practice
V4 Acknowledge the wider context in which higher education operates recognising the implications for professional practice	<p>A commitment to work with and learn from colleagues</p> <p>Recognise the importance of external benchmarks and standards frameworks to their own academic practice</p>



## 7. PGCHET Module 2 Proposed Timetable and Indicative Content

<b>Month</b>	<b>Launch Meeting by PGCHET Course Team plus Disciplinary Specific Peer Group Meetings</b>  (Three disciplinary groups will run simultaneously)	<b>Meetings with School-based Mentors</b>	<b>Peer Observations with PGCHET Colleagues</b>	<b>Indicative Content</b>  (precise topics and issues will depend on the composition of the peer groups in any year)
<b>Sept</b>	Launch Meeting (two hour)		Briefing on methods of peer observation	Outline of the module, expectations, logistics, briefing on assignment
<b>Oct</b>	Peer Group Meeting 1 Led by a PGCHET disciplinary tutor (two hours)		Reciprocal peer observation with colleague from the course  Preferably in Semester 1	Focus on distinctive disciplinary teaching methods (e.g., lab-based teaching, design and project-based teaching, teaching maths, statistics, controversial issues, clinical skills)
<b>Oct</b>		Mentor Meeting 1 Individual tutorial (as required but normally one hour)		Establish expectations and a plan, discuss emerging issues (e.g., forthcoming assignments)
<b>Nov</b>	Peer Group Meeting 2 simultaneously Led by a PGCHET disciplinary tutor (two hours)			Focus on disciplinary student learning issues (e.g., numeracy, academic writing, disciplinary 'threshold' concepts, ethical issues)
<b>Dec</b>		Mentor Meeting 2 Individual tutorial (normally 2 hours)		Mentor observing participant's teaching session Requiring pre-meeting, observation and feedback meeting
<b>Feb</b>		Mentor Meeting 3 Individual tutorial (2 hours)		Mentor observing participant's teaching session Requiring pre-meeting, observation and feedback meeting
<b>Mar</b>	Peer Group Meeting 3 Led by a PGCHET disciplinary tutor (two hours)			Focus on disciplinary assessment expectations and practices (e.g., crits, final year projects, setting exam questions)
<b>Apr</b>		Mentor Meeting 4 Individual tutorial (as required but normally one hour)		Follow up on any previous issues, advise on final assignments

## 8. Module 2 Assessment

The “Focus on the Discipline” Portfolio of evidence (3000 words in total, excluding references and appendices / supporting materials) for Module 2 includes:

1 A brief commentary on any distinctive approaches to teaching, learning and/or assessment that are associated with your discipline or cognate disciplines. In your on-line commentary make links to relevant disciplinary specific educational literature and any issues that arose in your disciplinary specific peer discussion groups. (500 words)

2 Identify an issue in student learning or student support in your disciplinary context that has recent relevance for you (that is, the issue identified during the course of Module 1 or Module 3). Conduct a review of the disciplinary-specific educational literature on the topic, with the purpose of identifying a specific research question that will be the basis for your action research project in Module 3. (1000 words)

*Note: Because of the interdependency of this literature review assignment and the action research project in Module 3, participants are required to submit a short interim report outlining indicative literature and the likely research question so that they can receive formative feedback before embarking on their action research project.*

3 During this module your teaching will have been observed at least three times, twice by your PGCHET mentor and once by a PGCHET colleague. You will have received both written and oral feedback on your teaching from these two different colleagues. You will also have observed your PGCHET colleague teaching and provided feedback to them. You may also have observed your mentor or other more experienced colleagues in your school teaching. In addition, you will have received student feedback from several modules that you teach.

For this part of the assignment, reflect on the feedback you have received about your teaching (from peer observation, from mentors, and students) and from what you have learned from observing colleagues. Identify strengths and areas for development in your teaching and, showing the ability to learn from this, plan out further actions accordingly. (Include the proforma feedback from two peer observations with your PGCHET mentor, and student feedback from at least one module that you teach on.)

Complete the assignment by evaluating how peer and mentor observation relates to student feedback as a means for improving teaching, making links to the educational literature. (1250 words)

**Note:**

*In this module, the feedback from the school-based PGCHET mentor plays a pivotal role in developing and guiding the participant's teaching skills, hence two peer observations are required to be presented, alongside feedback from at least one set of student evaluations. To pass the module, all three evaluations need to be considered as at least satisfactory. Consequently, mentors do have some flexibility and participants can receive feedback from additional teaching observations, if necessary, so that the assignment can be based on the two most positive peer observation feedbacks and the most positive available student feedback. Submitting the assignment can be delayed to allow these further additional peer observations and actions to take place.*

4 A reflection and evaluation on how you have progressed as an academic practitioner during this module, specifically with reference to the UK Professional Standards at Level 2. (250 words)

## 9. Criteria for Assessment of Assignment 2

The criteria used to assess the portfolio are as follows, mapped onto the three UKPSF dimensions. When you are evaluating how your learning has progressed during the module, you might find it useful to see how the marking criteria relate to the

<b>Module 2 Assessment: Focus on the Discipline and Portfolio of Evidence</b>			
<b>Assessment Criteria</b>	<b>UKPSF Dimensions</b>		
Provide evidence of critical reflection on the distinctiveness or otherwise of disciplinary teaching and learning in your context;	K2,K3, K6	A2	V1, V2, V3
Provide evidence of reading relevant educational literature related to your discipline and of identifying a student learning issue that will be further investigated in another module;	K2, K3, K4, K6	A4	V1, V2, V3
Include at least two satisfactory peer observation reports from your PGCHET mentor and at least one set of satisfactory student evaluations;	K5	A5	V3, V4
Show evidence of being able to respond appropriately to feedback in relation to teaching, show personal insights in relation to strengths and areas for development, show the steps you have taken to improve, indicating the progress you have made so far, and any plans for future actions;	K5, K6	A5	V3, V4
Provide evidence of considering the relative merits of peer feedback and student feedback methodologies for enhancing teaching, making appropriate links between theory and practice;	K5, K6	A5	V3
Include evidence of critical reflection with reference to the UK Professional Standards Level 2;	K6	A5	V4
Respect the word limit on the assignment which is 3000 words.			

## 10. Readings and Resources

### Readings on Signature Pedagogies:

Shulman, L.S. (2005) Signature pedagogies in the professions. *Daedalus*, 134(3), 52-59.

Gurung, R.A., Chick, N.L., Heynie, A. (Eds,) (2008) *Exploring Signature Pedagogies: Approaches to Teaching Disciplinary Habits of Mind*. Virginia, USA: Stylus.

Chick, N.L., Heynie, A., & Gurung, R.A. (Eds,) (2012). *Exploring More Signature Pedagogies: Approaches to Teaching Disciplinary Habits of Mind*. Virginia, USA: Stylus.

Donald, J.G. (2011) *Learning to think: Disciplinary perspectives*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Kreber, C. (Ed), (2009) *The University and its Disciplines: Teaching and learning within and beyond disciplinary boundaries*. New York: Routledge.

### HEA Subject Network websites (now archived):

Higher Education Academy Subject Network <http://www.heacademy.ac.uk>

Although now closed most of the sites have been archived and contain useful resources.

- [Art, Design and Media](#)
- [Bioscience](#)
- [Built Environment](#)
- [Business Management, Accountancy and Finance](#)
- [Economics](#)
- [Education \(ESCALATE\)](#)
- [Engineering](#)
- [English](#)
- [Geography, Earth and Environmental Sciences](#)
- [Health Sciences and Practice](#)
- [History, Classics and Archaeology](#)
- [Hospitality, Leisure, Sport and Tourism](#)
- [Information and Computer Sciences](#)
- [Languages, Linguistics and Area Studies](#)
- [Law \(UK Centre for Legal Education\)](#)
- [Materials \(UK Centre for Materials Education\)](#)
- [Maths, Stats & OR Network](#)
- [Medicine, Dentistry and Veterinary Medicine](#)
- [PALATINE - Dance, Drama and Music](#)
- [Philosophical and Religious Studies](#)
- [Physical Sciences](#)
- [Psychology](#)
- [Sociology, Anthropology and Politics](#)

## Social Policy and Social Work (SWAP)

### **Small group teaching: Recent discipline-specific case studies:**

(Taken from Vicky Gunn, Approaches to Small Group Teaching and Learning, 2007, Learning and Teaching Centre, University of Glasgow)

### **Humanities, Social Sciences, Education, Law, Accountancy & Business:**

Bonanno, H., Jones, J. & English, L. (1998) Improving group satisfaction: making groups work in a first year undergraduate course, *Teaching in Higher Education*, 3:3, pp. 365-382 (Accountancy)

Bunch, W.H. (2005) Changing moral judgement in divinity students, *Journal of Moral Education*, 34 (3) pp. 363-370.

Gunn, V.A. (2000) Transgressing the Traditional? Teaching and Learning Methods in a Medieval History Access Course, *Teaching in Higher Education*, 5:3, pp. 311-322.

Knights, B. (1995) Group Processes in Higher Education: The Uses of Theory. *Studies in Higher Education*, 20: 135-146. (English)

Le Brun, M. & Johnstone, R. (1994) Teaching Methods Which Promote Student Learning, in *The Quiet Revolution: Improving Student Learning in Law*, The Law Book Co., pp 255-311.

Macmillan, J. & MacLean, M. (2005) Making First Year Tutorials count operationalizing the assessment-learning connection, *Active Learning in Higher Education*, 6 (2), pp. 94-105. (History/Politics)

Timmins, G., Vernon, K. & Kinealy, C. (2005) Seminars and Groupwork, in *Teaching and Learning in History*, Sage (Teaching and Learning in the Humanities in Higher Education), pp. 146-152.

### **Sciences, Statistics and Mathematics, Engineering:**

Pedrosa de Jesus, H. et al. (2005) Organising the chemistry of question-based learning: a case study, *Research in Science & Technological Education*, 23(2), pp.179-193 (Chemistry)

Teixeira-Dias, J.J.C. (2005) Teaching for quality learning in chemistry, *International Journal of science education*, 27 (9), pp. 1123-1137. (Chemistry)

Perrenet, J.C. et al (2000) The Suitability of Problem-based Learning for Engineering Education: theory and practice, *Teaching in Higher Education*, 5:3, pp. 345-358. (Engineering)

Santhanam, E. et al (1998) Concept mapping: How should it be introduced, and is there evidence for long term benefit?, *Higher Education*, 35: 3, pp. 317 – 328 (Genetics)

Spronken-Smith, R. (2005) Implementing a problem-based learning approach for teaching research methods in geography, *Journal of Geography in Higher Education*, 29 (2), pp. 203-221. (*Geography*)

Brown, G.H. (1999) A Group-learning Approach to Academic and Transferable Skills Through an Exercise in the Global Positioning System, *Journal of Geography in Higher Education*, 23:3, Pages 291 –301.

Kinchin, I.M. et al. (2005) The evolution of a collaborative concept mapping activity for undergraduate microbiology students, *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, 29 (1) (*microbiology*)

<http://www.amstat.org/publications/jse/v1n1/garfield.html>  
paper on using small group teaching in *Statistics* (1993 publication)

### **Medicine, Vet. Medicine, Dentistry, and Nursing:**

Fryer-Edwards, K. et al (2006) Reflective Teaching Practices: An Approach to teaching communication skills in a Small Group Setting, *Academic Medicine*, 81:7, pp. 638-644.

Mifflin, B.(2004) Small groups and problem-based learning: are we singing from the same hymn sheet? *Medical Teacher*, 26 (5), pp. 444-450.

Moust, J.H.C. et al. (2005) Signs of Erosion: reflections on three decades of problem-based learning at Maastricht University, *Higher Education* 50 (4), pp. 665-683

Visschers-Pleijers, A. et al (2004) Exploration of a method to analyse group interactions in problem-based learning, *Medical Teacher*, 26 (5),pp 471-478.