



Student Education Bulletin

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Leeds USEFs announced

Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Student Education) Vivien Jones announced the 2015/16 University Student Education Fellowship (USEF) awards at the Student Education Conference on Friday 8 January (see pp.6-8 for a full review of SEC/DigiFest 2016).

The USEF scheme is open to all staff who teach or support learning. Full fellowships are supported by project funding of £15,000 in total, with an annual honorarium of £1,000 for three years in addition. Developmental Fellowships are supported by project funding of £4,000 in total, with a one-off honorarium of £1,000 for one year.

Award winners are selected by a committee (chaired by Vivien Jones) of Faculty Pro-Deans for Student Education along with representatives from the Student Education Service. The committee always receives a large number of excellent applications from across the University, so selecting the award winners is always a difficult task. All who applied are congratulated on the excellent work they submitted for consideration.

This year full fellowships were awarded to: Richard Tunstall (LUBS) and Luke Burns (Environment).

Seven colleagues had fellowships increased from developmental to full awards: Charlotte Haigh (FBS); Karen Burland (PVAC); Lydia

Bleasdale-Hill (ESSL); Gary Morris (FMH); Charles Dannreuther (ESSL), Gina Koutsopoulou (Psychology); and Tess Hornsby-Smith (Arts).

Developmental fellowships were awarded to: Dan Pullinger (Library); Edward Venn (PVAC); Duncan Wheeler (Arts); Jacqueline Houghton (Environment); and Louisa Hill (LUBS).

Awards have been made to 151 staff since the Fellowship Scheme was first launched in 2001. To find out more about the scheme and award holders' project details, go to www.sddu.leeds.ac.uk/learning-teaching/reward-and-recognition/university-student-education-fellowships/

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Student perspectives

Melissa Owusu, LUU Education Officer

Freya Govus, LUU Welfare Officer



I have been continuing to work on the **Why is My Curriculum White** campaign by engaging students as co-constructors of their education. We have worked with the Library by asking students and staff to order books from diverse authors to encourage engagement with the campaign and to raise awareness. We have also recently launched a survey in which we are

trying to gauge the opinions of students surrounding the diversity of their curriculum and University – please encourage them to fill out this survey, it will only take them five minutes and can be found at <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/WIMCW>

The refresh of the Partnership is currently underway; there are focus groups going on all over the University with students, staff, academics and researchers – I can't wait to see what the outcome is. Nominations for the Partnership Awards closed just before this issue of the Bulletin went to press and the Awards themselves will take place on 25 April as part of Celebrate Week 2016.

Finally, the entire Exec team is launching a cost-of-living campaign through which we hope to identify all the areas of a student's life in which they can save money, and then help them do exactly that!



Over the exam period, LUU provided a place of calm for stressed students. We worked in partnership with Lumie to create a Light Café, alongside free breakfasts and a range of relaxation activities, all of which were warmly welcomed by participants. By the time you read this, we'll have hosted Mind Yourself, our first health and

wellbeing festival. We're working with loads of great wellbeing organisations to bring services to students and encourage students to think about their own wellbeing.

I'm also continuing to look at our approach to student support – both in the Union and the University. I'm working with the LUU Advice Centre to look at how the Union delivers support – we're expanding the drop-in service, and updating our digital resource to better respond to demand. I've also been working closely with the University to look at training for frontline staff, support in our residences, and the wider student support offer from the University.

As for the 'Tampons don't grow on Trees' campaign, the collection launched in October was a huge success. We had great engagement from students, and managed to collect around 1,500 individual products. The donated products ended up going to Rainbow Hearts and Yorkshire Aid. Due to the success of last semester's campaign, we ran another week of collections at the end of February.

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The Light Café offered light therapy, which can help lift mood during times of stress. Plus free breakfasts, which may also help!

Student Education mentors needed

Sarah Farrell, Staff & Departmental Development Unit

A new mentoring scheme has just been launched that seeks to match all University staff with a mentor from outside their faculty or service (unless they choose otherwise). The mentor-mentee relationship provides an opportunity for interdisciplinary and collaborative working and a learning opportunity for both parties. The relationship lasts around nine months, with parties matched appropriately. Examples of the types of topics mentees can request help with include:

- General topics such as confidence, motivation and leadership;
- Research-specific topics such as publications, research impact and submissions/re-submissions; and
- Student education-specific topics such as teaching, scholarship and assessment and feedback.

The scheme can also be used to support colleagues considering career breaks or those returning from any long-term leave.

Call for mentors

We are looking for mentors who would be able to support other staff from across all faculties and services, on a wide range of topics. Mentors will benefit from sharing expertise and experience, learning from the mentee, University recognition of interpersonal skills plus an opportunity to gain insight into the mentee's working environment. The mentor rôle is a challenging but immensely rewarding one – we are looking for:

- strong communicators, able to listen and offer positive and constructive feedback;
- experienced professionals who are prepared to share their career journeys in order to help and support the development of others;
- people who are passionate about their own and others' learning and development;
- new and experienced mentors who are willing to attend a half day mentoring development session; and
- those who are able to dedicate 60-90 minutes every four to eight weeks to a mentee.

We are particularly seeking mentors who can offer support in:

- student education areas such as assessment and feedback, blended and online learning, designing, research and scholarship, teaching and UKPSF applications;
- returning to work following maternity and family leave;
- building confidence in applying for leadership rôles;
- new to the UK (for new international staff who would like help in understanding and assimilating into the UK culture); and
- research-related topics such as publications, research impact and research submissions/re-submission.

Supporting mentors

A three-hour **Mentoring Others** session is available through SDDU that introduces the rôle covers basics such as ethics, contracting issues, practical mentoring tools and now to prepare for a mentoring relationship. Additional support can be found on the mentor webpages at www.sdduonline.leeds.ac.uk/mentoring/mentoring8/mentoring-useful-links/

Find your mentor

To prepare mentees for a productive mentoring experience, we offer a 90-minute **Making the Most of Mentoring** session that explores its benefits. Applications from those who would like a mentor from outside their faculty or service are also welcome. Additional information and support can be found at www.sdduonline.leeds.ac.uk/mentoring/mentoring8/resources-for-mentees/

Further information

To find out more, visit the mentoring webpages at www.sdduonline.leeds.ac.uk/mentoring/ or contact Sarah Farrell in SDDU on 37896 or s.farrell@leeds.ac.uk

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Evidencing Excellence – present and future

Vivien Jones, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Student Education)

This edition of the Bulletin includes reports on this year's Student Education Conference. The vibrancy and success of the event is evident in their words and pictures. Once again, academic and Student Education Service colleagues came together to share ideas and showcase activities which are benefitting our students in all kinds of ways and we used the occasion to congratulate another cohort of University Student Education Fellows. As always, warm thanks are due to the conference organising team in Student Opportunity – particularly Stephanie Stones and Rebecca Shaw – and to Kelvin Tapley's leadership of the event.

The Conference theme, 'Evidencing Excellence', was particularly timely given the imminent implementation of the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF), and I want to pursue that theme here as I reflect on some key developments currently underway in Student Education.

One of the most exciting and important moments at the Conference was the official launch of the Leeds Institute for Teaching Excellence and Innovation. Its recently appointed Director, Raphael Hallett, gave an inspiring account of his vision for the Institute, at the heart of which is the provision of leadership, opportunity, and support for colleagues committed to cutting-edge pedagogic scholarship and practice.

This will be realised in part through investment in a small number of Excellence and Innovation Fellowships, to be held for a year, with the first cohort due to be appointed imminently for 2016/17. As in the scenario more familiar from research awards in academic disciplines, the Fellows will be given the time to pursue their own projects. And they will be expected to evidence their excellence by contributing seminars and masterclasses to the Institute's programme of events. The Institute will thus build on our proud history of high quality pedagogy (we still have more National Teaching Fellows than any other institution), and I hope that more local centres of excellence will begin to spring up on the model of those currently being developed in the Schools of Law, Languages Cultures and Societies, and Business.

The Institute's other key responsibility will be the effective dissemination of our excellence in education nationally and internationally, establishing Leeds as the leading centre for research-led teaching and research-based learning. And from 2017/18 one or two of the Fellowships will be available to external applicants with the intention, again, of encouraging lively, outward-facing discussion and collaboration.

The dissemination of Leeds's teaching excellence to the wider world is also central to our ambitious development plans for digital online delivery. Over the past couple of years the Digital Learning Team, under the leadership of Professor Neil Morris and working with academic colleagues, has begun to establish Leeds's reputation as a creator of high quality digital learning materials. Most recently, for example, we have built a set of highly successful MOOCs for schools.

Evidencing excellence across the world in digital form is one of the most effective forms of marketing and the aim now is to extend our portfolio significantly, attracting new students and new audiences. We will work with a partner organisation to develop Online Distance Learning (ODL) programmes, under the Leeds 'brand', with the aim of attracting significant numbers of learners; and we will work with our existing partners, FutureLearn, to make the step from MOOCs to credit-bearing online courses. Such developments will of course also benefit on-campus students as we further enhance our skills in digital pedagogy and re-use digital materials in a blended-learning context.

One more important development requires mention. I am particularly delighted to note the launch, on 1 February 2016, of the revised academic promotions criteria which will enable the excellence of individual colleagues who choose to focus on education and scholarship to be rewarded appropriately, right up to Chair level.

Precisely how the Teaching Excellence Framework will require us to evidence excellence is still unclear. The Green Paper promises a detailed technical document sometime in the spring. But it does seem increasingly likely that the TEF will eventually involve a combination of statistical indicators common to all HEIs with something more qualitative and institution-specific. Key to any future success will be the high quality education which happens in classrooms, in co-curricular support, and in digital form across the University every day, evidenced yet again at this year's Conference, and reflected in our steadily improving NSS scores. For the sake of our students, we must continue to pursue excellence in our own terms, and we must be confident that we can define and evidence it rigorously in line with scholarly principles. This must be the basis of any future digital developments; it is at the heart of the Institute's vision and mission; and it is surely the best way to prepare for the TEF.

Students as Partners – extracurricular opportunities enhancing student learning in the Biosciences

Dave Lewis, School of Biomedical Sciences & ULBERG

Partnerships are a cornerstone of the Leeds student learning experience. We have **the Partnership** and the **Celebrate Week** of annual awards. They have been shown to motivate and enthuse students, promote engagement, achievement and learning gain. Critical to their success is the formation of distinct learning communities, each partner having shared values and beliefs. The added value comes from the process rather than the product: student work collaboratively, applying their knowledge to enhance both their own and their peers' learning experiences and, in doing so, acquire key employability skills and graduate attributes.

Partnerships need not be restricted to within the taught curriculum, the NUS and CBI report *Working towards your future* recommended that universities offer extracurricular opportunities for students to contribute to the development of their education. This could be across the whole sphere of higher education, from co-designing and co-developing curricula and assessments to co-researching and co-inquiring, either in discipline specific research or the scholarship of teaching and learning.

Our students are a vast and largely untapped resource: we don't make the most of their knowledge and skills, or provide them with sufficient opportunities to stretch themselves. To address this, I created three extracurricular partnership opportunities for my students. The first, an educational research internship scheme, involved students working in partnership with academic staff on on-going curriculum-development or pedagogical-research projects. Slotting around their academic studies, each intern undertakes 75 hours of paid work on projects such as the collation of an online collection of Online Educational Resources about laboratory animal experimentation, student-created guidance on the use of the e-learning resource development software Xerte, or the evaluation of public-engagement opportunities within STEM undergraduate curricula.

I'm passionate about public engagement: my students are aware of this, so I regularly receive requests from them to participate in these activities. To enable them to share my experiences and my enjoyment of engaging the public with science and its ethical implications, I created **Pop-up Science** – a student-led public-engagement volunteer scheme – which is a partnership between students and their fellow students, and between students and the community. Students work in teams to create and deliver interactive science activities at local community fêtes, family fun days and agricultural shows; those with public engagement experience mentoring those without in the creation and delivery of the event.

The majority of my 'day job' is spent delivering an ethics education for students across the Faculty of Biological Sciences. Over the years, I've tried without success to get students to participate in extracurricular ethics debates and discussions, both on and off campus. Last year I was approached by Sammy Baptiste, a level 6 Medical Sciences student who was interested in ethics and wanted the opportunity to discuss topical ethical issues with her fellow students. Together, we set up MSEDG (Medical and Scientific Ethics Discussion Group), a student-led, extracurricular ethics discussion and debate group. Meeting once a month and facilitated initially by Sammy, students from across the Faculty discuss topical issues in the biosciences, such as three-person IVF or the right to die.

Student buy-in to these extracurricular partnership opportunities is exceptional. Educational internships are typically ten times oversubscribed, Pop-up Science has over 60 students (UG and PG) enrolled this year, whilst 25 students regularly turn up for the ethics discussion sessions. I want students to learn from their experiences, not to forget them, and to implement this learning into future activities. I get them to reflect on their experiences, their learning journey and the skills gained in personal blogs.

Their reflections show they are learning from their experiences:

- "I am honestly surprised with the amount that I am learning."
- "It helps reinforce your knowledge when you have to explain something to a non-scientific audience."

They are inspiring both themselves and others:

- "I gained so much from the day. I came away feeling enthused, passionate and appreciating how much I enjoy my degree."

Free from the constraints of a formal academic environment, it's a different, more in-depth learning:

- "More relaxed, can speak your mind, ask stupid questions."

They recognise the skills gained and the positive impact on their employability:

- "Brilliant experience that taught me a variety of skills. Internships set you apart from other students."

They recognise our contribution:

- "Dave Lewis was my fairy godmother!"

They want us to offer more opportunities like these:

- "Should be an integral part of all degree programmes."

Extra-curricular partnerships provide substantial benefits for all involved. For students, they enable them to contribute to academic communities where they are co-producers of knowledge, to enrich their own learning journey by broadening their education and experiences, the opportunity to develop key skills, and, through providing training or mentoring to their peers, the skills of others, ultimately to become more well-rounded workplace-ready graduates. They provide outputs that they can showcase to potential employers. Students are co-authors on any publications, it is included on their HEAR transcripts. For staff, students bring knowledge and skills they may not possess. They promote change in, and enhancement of, your teaching and learning practices. For the Faculty, they are an opportunity to showcase our excellence in student education and research, and to enhance the educational experience of our students. Given the benefits to all, as an institution we should be making greater use of extracurricular partnerships across the entire spectrum of our activities.



LITEI Launches: Announcing the Leeds Institute for Teaching Excellence and Innovation

Raphael Hallet, Director

It is exactly the right time for our University to be building a flagship institute for teaching innovation and pedagogy.

Steadily, and rigorously, the Leeds Curriculum has evolved from institutional project to institutional catalyst for student education. As part of this structure, we promise – and with increasing richness, deliver – the distinctive student journey from research-led teaching to research-based learning. Our students are increasingly conscious not just of being inspired by great researchers but also of growing into co-creators of research themselves. We match this intensity of research training with the fresh coherence of Broadening, Discovery Themes acting as exciting pathways for interdisciplinary and experimental learning beyond ‘core’ subjects, a level of cross-campus innovation that many of our competitors can only grasp towards at present. And we complement it through the support we offer to students in taking up co-curricular opportunities.

Elsewhere, enterprise education weaves its innovation into programmes across campus; Liberal Arts is set to launch as a ground-breaking interdisciplinary programme; our students are stimulated by high quality digital resources for learning and provided with the educational architecture to assess, critique and assimilate those resources skillfully.

Such exciting developments provide the foundation for LITEI, an institute whose aim is to build on this innovation in student education by taking it to a new level of impact and visibility.

As we have worked to inspire these educational opportunities, we have perhaps been a little humble in announcing their significance and distinctiveness. Certainly, now is the right time to showcase and disseminate our teaching excellence with a bit more gusto, to offer much bolder statements about the ways we lead and change at sector-level, backing up these statements with stout and clearly articulated evidence.

The Institute will, as part of its remit, respond in an agile way to the incremental demands of the Teaching Excellence Framework, which will no doubt ask for metrics but also for coherent and detailed narratives tracing the way we offer our students the highest quality education. Whilst uncertain of their precise nature, we shouldn't be troubled by these requests, or be overly defensive. We have very good stories to tell and groundbreaking developments to report. To energise our response, there will be a dedicated research group within LITEI committed to gathering and articulating the impact of the student education initiatives we deploy, a project given a timely boost by the 2016 Student Education Conference's focus on 'Evidencing Excellence', a theme which now seems deftly prophetic.

A robust response to the TEF must be the least of our ambitions, though. LITEI gives us the more profound opportunity to build a hub for teaching innovation and pedagogical research that can lead the way nationally and build prestige internationally. The University has demonstrated its commitment to this ambition by investing over £3m in the Institute over the next four years.

As director, it is inspiring to look around me across campus and notice the current blossoming of centres dedicated to the stimulation and recognition of teaching brilliance. Already established are the impressive Centre for Enterprise and Entrepreneurship and the recently inaugurated Centre for Research into Digital Learning (based in the School of Education). The Leeds

Enhancing Educational Practice (LEEP) network co-ordinates an existing community dedicated to student education scholarship and practice, one that will feed into our new Institute. STEM teaching scholarship is nurtured by the PRiSM group, and our Learning Technologists' Network horizon-scans the constantly changing landscape of technology-enhanced education.

Most excitingly, perhaps, local centres for teaching scholarship and innovation are emerging in Languages, Cultures & Societies (LCS), LUBS and Law, to name only those nearest to fruition. This is ample evidence of the culture-shift that LITEI will accelerate and co-ordinate. We are, quite rightly, moving to an institutional culture at Leeds that gives full credit, prestige and visibility to the staff who inspire and support our students and who propagate our wider reputation for student education.

To put this into practice, then, LITEI will act first and foremost as a vibrant community for student education innovators. It will draw together our National Teaching Fellows and University Student Education Fellows into more consistent dialogue, and push these leading lights to more regular, high quality and visible outputs. Joining this established community at LITEI, and our clearest investment in talent, will be a cohort of Research & Innovation Fellows (four in the first year; six annual awards thereafter) who will be seconded to the Institute and dedicate the great majority of their year's time to teaching innovation and scholarship driving forward our institutional practice and reputation. We will reserve some of these fellowships for external recruitment, with the aim of attracting some of the most talented educators on visiting fellowships from HEIs across the world.

I'm conscious that many exciting innovators at Leeds currently lie at the developmental cusp between practical innovation and pedagogical publication, and LITEI will employ a board of research mentors and advisors to help fellows and members bridge that gap and disseminate teaching ideas and models to a much broader audience. Do you teach brilliantly? Use LITEI to write, present and publish about this.

Our digital presence must clearly be dynamic too: a LITEI website is being designed to carry details of each live project and testimonies of the impact of completed work, so that our influence ripples quickly to national and international audiences. But our presence will also be concrete and communal, with our soon-to-be refurbished building at 18 Beech Grove Terrace, at the heart of campus, becoming a hub for fellows and members to meet, work, present reports and offer consultancy on student education.

As well as a showcase and reputation-builder, LITEI must also function as a living, breathing and sometimes noisy community, hosting ideas and debate and allowing its members to take risks, be bold, be visible and shape the priorities of student education at this University and beyond.

The Institute will offer space, time and resources to those who wish to transform and enhance the education we provide at the University of Leeds. It will offer a strong platform and powerful acoustics to those wanting to broadcast our ideas and practice to the rest of the world.

I look forward very much to hearing from anyone who would like to get involved and can be contacted on r.hallett@leeds.ac.uk

Student Education Conference and Digital Festival: perspective

More than 350 University staff participated in panels, workshops, seminars and exhibitions at the Student Education Conference (SEC). The 13th annual event dedicated to all aspects of student education took place on 8 and 9 January 2016 and focused on **Evidencing Excellence**. For the first time this year, SEC incorporated the Digital Festival (formerly Hands on the Future), which many colleagues attended on day one of the new combined, two-day event. The consolidation of DigiFest and SEC demonstrates the importance of digital innovation in developing teaching excellence. Below are different perspectives on the event.

The V-C's Perspective

SEC/DigiFest 2016 was opened formally at the start of day two by Vice-Chancellor Sir Alan Langlands. He pointed out that the conditions for excellence were already in place in Leeds: "First and foremost, we are giving equal weight to education and research – others say it, we are well down the road to doing it!"

He went on to list five important conditions for success that exist at Leeds: a clear goal, summed up in our mission; the alignment and coherence of policy; student engagement; a supportive organisational culture; and key people to lead change. "All of this is a dynamic and ongoing process that will ensure an absolute focus on meeting the needs and aspirations of students – and you will know that we are now shaping up to take further steps, including substantive investment in digital learning, to increase academic quality and power."



Exhibitors' Perspectives

There were over 30 stalls in the SEC/DigiFest Exhibition Area in Parkinson Court over the two days. Exhibitors Beth Snowden, Jim Bird and Adam Tuncay were involved in two stands showcasing the Lecture Capture and Media Management system and the new interactive session tool Blackboard Collaborate. Beth Snowden writes:

"Exhibitors were given the opportunity to introduce their stalls by writing abstracts that were advertised in the SEC/DigiFest programme and on the event's website. Many exhibitors chose to cast their net wider by also advertising on Twitter. They were able to 'tout their wares' on the day by taking part in a series of one-minute lightning presentations in the Rupert Beckett Lecture Theatre. This was really well received by delegates who said they were impressed with the range and diversity of the stalls. As well as the champagne on offer at one of them



"Not only were exhibitors able to inform visitors about how their services can support student education, but they were also able to promote new and innovative technologies such as Blackboard Collaborate (the new online, interactive session tool now supported by the University). VLE e-Learning Officer Adam Tuncay was pleased that so many delegates visited his stand wanting to know more about Collaborate and were excited that it can already be accessed via the VLE. It was also used during the Online Distance Learning panel discussion during the DigiFest programme to enable Helen O'Sullivan from the University of Liverpool to actively participate.



"We were also able to evidence excellence on the Lecture Capture and Media Management stand where we showcased videos of student feedback outlining the benefits of Lecture Capture. In addition to which, we could provide qualitative and quantitative data to support the success of the project. Jim Bird, Lecture Capture and Media Management Support Specialist, was able to announce the one millionth view of Lecture Capture.

"The Exhibition Area also provided stall holders with an excellent opportunity to network with colleagues and provide on-the-spot advice and technical support. I even managed to get a few case studies from staff who are willing to share good practice on their innovative use of technology."

Parallel Sessions and presentations are also available on the VideoLeeds Channel, Guest Lectures and Special Events at <https://video.leeds.ac.uk> and further information on Blackboard Collaborate in the VLE is available from <https://www.leeds.ac.uk/vle/staff/collab/collaborate/>

SEC/DigiFest Online



atives from across the Student Education Community



A Panellist's perspective

Engineering student Bilal Ahmed says that, if he could sum up his experience as a panellist on the 'Impact in the Field' discussion in one word, that word would be 'insightful'.

"As a student of limited experience in addressing large audiences, I was able to learn from the vast experiences of other panel members and apply these to my own life; the most memorable being that striving for excellence is in itself excellence. I developed skills which I would have otherwise never have developed as an engineering student, such as being able to discuss such a subjective topic yet in a coherent, logical and thought provoking manner.

"Delegates seemed really interested in what every panel member thought since there was a broad range of backgrounds present ranging from a student employer and a student careers advisor to an ex-director in a global organisation turned author. The majority of delegates were academics and staff members, so they were open to views and opinions from an industrial perspective."

And, as the last tweet (above) would suggest, our delegates agreed with Bilal there!

A Workshop Facilitator's perspective

Martin Levesley from the Faculty of Engineering co-ordinated a workshop entitled 'Opportunity for unity!'. He tells us that he was helped by two excellent presenters and a handful of enthusiastic students (both UG and PGR), "who had all been far more involved than I was in our project, which was to build a vibrant UG research community. After a brief presentation summarising our approach a lively discussion soon got underway and I was delighted that staff were happy for our students to lead the debate on a number of topics. As well as the obvious benefits



to the staff engaged in the project and to students there was a very open conversation about costs. We agreed using the UGRL model for student payment was an obvious approach, though our students highlighted that, particularly for those considering a career in research, they really appreciated the opportunity to work within The University on a research project and the level of pay was seen more as a bonus rather than a "deal maker" though equity of student pay between research and industry supported projects was very much appreciated. Though staff very much appreciated the student perspective, they highlighted the need to ensure we have checks and balances in place to ensure students are not exploited simply as low paid workers.

"Returning to one of the keynote speaker's comments on defining excellence as "constantly striving to improve" we also discussed what should be next for a project such as this? It was great to see enthusiasm for growing the scheme both within the school, across our faculty and in other schools across the university. There was some frank discussion about barriers both cultural and financial and most encouraging, but best off all there was plenty of great ideas on how these could be overcome."



SEC/DigiFest 2016 perspectives

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A LITEI Perspective

Rafe Hallett
and Viv Jones
at the official
LITEI launch



The Leeds Institute of Teaching Excellence and Innovation (LITEI) was launched at SEC/DigiFest. The Institute's inaugural director Raphael Hallett says:

"It felt extremely apt, as the new Director of LITEI, to walk around a conference where academic and professional staff were 'evidencing excellence' of teaching innovation. Even more fascinating, perhaps, were the debates it raised about the ways in which we might characterise 'excellence' and the ways we quantify and disseminate it. To me, this showed that the Leeds Student Education community has a particularly self-aware and reflective edge, helping us investigate the types of excellence we strive for and to find inventive ways of mapping and justifying it.

"Joslin McKinney (PCI) and David Lewis (FBS) led a morning session on measuring the impact of the Final Year Project, discussing the way we need to capture alumni as well as student views on the impact of research-based learning. Mitch Waterman (FMH) led a lively workshop on the evaluation of the Leeds Curriculum, introducing the longitudinal process of mapping the 'ripples' of the Leeds Curriculum as it moves from project to business-as-usual, shaping as it does so the journey of every student. I ended the day by attending a fascinating session led by Philip Walker (Maths) who dealt with the issue of tracing and enhancing student revision techniques. His presentation introduced a project which aims to investigate how 'excellent' revision techniques might be propagated across campus.

"LITEI can only benefit from such varied and vibrant projects."

Go to page 5 to find out more about LITEI.

Delegate Perspectives

Greg Miller, Head of Student Placement, gives his account of attending the keynote and parallel sessions:

The keynote

"Leeds alumnus Mark Byford worked his way up from journalist to Deputy Director-General of the BBC. He delivered a personal, entertaining and thoughtful presentation that charted his journey from a Leeds undergraduate to his current work as an author.

"Mark set out the political context within which a succession of government reports have shaped the higher education landscape and he reflected on the emergence of the Teaching

Excellence Framework and its relevance to evidencing excellence.

"Mark explained how, in his rôle at the BBC, he implemented a wholesale review of broadcasting and how the Corporation used detailed analysis to evidence excellence which then guided its decision making in terms of content, media platforms and popularity.

"Mark's personal reflections relating to his own education at Leeds and now that of two of his children was a reminder to the audience of exactly why we should continue to aspire to deliver excellence in all that we do."

The parallel sessions

"The parallel sessions gave participants an opportunity to understand in more detail the innovative practices being developed by a broad range of dedicated staff. Engineering gave an insight into the significant programme of on-campus research internships they have developed to boost the employability of students as well as providing an insight into potential future research careers. The student interns involved in the session gave a first-hand account of the personal benefit they had derived from being involved."

Thank You!

And finally, all of us who worked on SEC/DigiFest 2016 would like to thank all of you who participated for making it such a great event – we hope to see you all again next year!



Networking in the Exhibition
Area at SEC/DigiFest 2016

The Leeds Curriculum – an overview



Mitch Waterman delivers a workshop at SEC/DigiFest 2016 on the findings of an extensive evaluation of the Leeds Curriculum

Evaluating the Leeds Curriculum – the story so far

Martin Purvis, Karen Llewellyn and Mitch Waterman

Launched in 2009/10 as a major strategic project, the Leeds Curriculum began to impact directly on the structure and ethos of our undergraduate programmes in 2014/15. So it seems timely to reflect on what has been achieved thus far, and clarify the goals of continuing programme development.

The task of developing a distinctive Leeds education was initially defined with reference to three main Curriculum strands:

- the enhancement of Research-Based Learning, including a compulsory Final Year Project;
- the universal introduction of Core Programme Threads: Ethics and Responsibility, Global and Cultural Insight, and Employability; plus
- the creation of a more structured and imaginative approach to Broadening allowing students to put their disciplinary studies into wider perspective.

At the same time we recognised that a thorough review of our assessment strategies, to ensure alignment to programme-level learning outcomes, was vital for the success of our plans. The Leeds Curriculum Project also provided an opportunity to consider whether changes in the shape of the academic year would improve student education delivery. For more details, see the Leeds Curriculum overview that follows this section.

The University has now started a substantial evaluation process measuring the success of the project against its eight original objectives. This will necessarily be long term as we follow the first undergraduates recruited under the new curriculum through to graduation and beyond. But we can also draw some immediate conclusions about the strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum development process so far.

On Research-Based Learning (RBL): the project initiated a request

that all programmes map the ways in which students progress from learning about the research of others to becoming skilled and confident researchers in their own right. Pinning down the details of the routes that students might follow proved unexpectedly difficult in some instances, but the endpoint of a mandatory final-year project (FYP) has now been in place for all undergraduates entering the University from September 2014 onwards. We have also made progress in organising supervision training for staff in schools where an FYP was not previously compulsory.

On Core Programme Threads (CPT): here too the majority of schools and institutes across the University responded positively to the request to identify and map the presence of these threads in all of their programmes. So we know that the threads are in place; but there may still be work to be done at a local level to promote awareness of their significance amongst staff and students.

On Broadening: the establishment of ten Discovery Themes has provided a much-needed structure for our substantial offering of extra-disciplinary modules – previously electives and now reborn as discovery modules. The Themes also provide a reference point against which disciplinary programmes can demonstrate their own contribution to broadening students' horizons. The appointment of Theme Leaders has enabled us to think strategically about the development of new teaching and delivery methods to reinforce our discovery portfolio. We know that students feel better informed about the scale and scope of what we offer at Leeds thanks to the launch of the Broadening website – as a component of the LeedsforLife site – and Discovery Theme fairs in September and May. As a result more students are taking a greater variety of discovery modules when compared with the previous elective provision.

On Assessment: this is still very much work in progress. But schools that have made the greatest progress with assessment

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mapping and reviewing alignment against learning outcomes have reported that it proved a useful exercise. It has helped them to identify elements of over-assessment and scope for assessing in more imaginative ways to develop a greater range of student skills.

On the Academic Year: this proved to be a knotty and time-consuming challenge, and one which ultimately defeated us. The original intent was good, but the proposed changes received such mixed reviews that this element of the project was suspended.

So, what else have we learned? Mostly that University-wide change involving input from schools, colleagues and students across the board is an achievable but time-consuming process. Some project elements took longer than originally planned; for example, we had to put back the introduction of the compulsory FYP by a year. Others, particularly assessment mapping and the review of learning outcomes, remain as continuing tasks. We have also had to review some of the University's fundamental systems and processes which support programme creation and review. There are important implications here for the ways in which the planned Integrated Programme Administration System supports these processes in future. Internal communications to keep everybody informed about project progress was always going to be difficult in an institution as large as the University of Leeds. But we have arguably been too modest in our external statements about the curriculum; not least in the way that we present our degrees to intending students. Through our commitment to Broadening and Core Programme Threads, and in our introduction of a universal Final Year Project Leeds genuinely does offer a distinctive undergraduate education.

Debunking the Performance Myth? Or why Broadening is good for your health!

Nick Robinson (POLIS) and William Young (Earth and Environment)

One of the key concerns for many staff and students alike is does student performance suffer when undertaking modules other than those offered by their 'home' department / programme? In an increasingly instrumental age, predictably yet unfortunately, students will often ask 'will my performance suffer if I do a module outside my school or faculty?'

These are not trivial concerns of course – potentially, they reflect a whole series of questions, some of which are: Will students be confronted with atypical or unconventional assessment regimes?; Is there a 'hidden curriculum' of prior understanding that students from other faculties may fail to understand?; Do modules present different challenges that students from outside the faculty or school are ill-equipped to deliver on? As Discovery Theme Leaders, these are key questions that threaten to undermine the whole ethos of Broadening and the associated Discovery Themes.

The good news...

Looking at the performance of students across the University the good news is that students, in the main, are *not* negatively affected by Discovery Themes and Broadening.

One key way to begin to answer this questions is to look at



performance data of students comparing performance of students on core modules; optional modules (i.e. can choose from within their own school), and discovery modules (which could be within their home faculty or elsewhere).

Perhaps surprisingly, until now there has been no comprehensive dataset which allows for University-wide reflection on performance. Working with Dan O'Rourke from the SIMS Team, the Discovery Theme Leaders asked for the production of a dataset which mapped performance of students across the University over the last three years, broken down by performance on core, options and discovery modules.

We then undertook analysis of the 2014/15 data based on the following:

a) Where students study – mapping the 'home' of a student against the faculty of their discovery module. The findings here are perhaps unsurprising, with the largest numbers of students discovering within their 'home' faculty.

b) Scale of discovery: a remarkable success? What is really encouraging is the sheer scale of students who are engaged in broadening via the discovery process – approximately 5,000 enrolments undertaking discovery modules. What is striking, from the data, is the sheer variety of engagement with those at the vanguard of discovery – students from Arts and LUBS – with nearly 60% of their students undertaking discovery module(s) (2,394 module enrolments and 869 respectively), whereas in Biological Sciences and Medicine & Health, it is approximately 10%.

We analysed student performance based on faculty-level data, looking at students from all faculties, breaking down performance based on each faculty. For example, we have data for the performance of Faculty of Arts students in all faculties, which covers their 'home' (Arts); to 'near home' (PVAC and ESSL), and to those faculties which we might instinctively see as 'less predictable' (e.g. Engineering, LUBS or MaPS). The good news is that the performance of *all* students, regardless of faculty of origin and of the faculty in which they undertook the module, is generally within the margins of what might be termed 'acceptable' variation. In fact students often actually perform 'better' than in their home

faculty! To take just two examples, Biological Science students 'over-perform' in the faculties of Environment, Medicine & Health and MaPS. Similarly, Medicine & Health students 'over-perform' in MaPS. For those interested in checking out the data, the slides presenting these findings will be made available in the online version of this issue at <http://goo.gl/PbwVcc>

On the surface there is much to encourage staff to be really bold in persuading their students to embark on discovery modules with confidence, and for students to be confident in taking the plunge. That said, there are a couple of caveats and things which we are further investigating:

- a) There are a couple of areas in which students do seem to underperform and it is worth exploring why. In particular, students from Business undertaking modules in Engineering, ESSL students in Environment, and MaPS students in LUBS do seem to underperform. That that happens is perhaps a question that could be addressed via enhanced targeted support, for example.
- b) We are also actively interested in exploring the stories underneath the data to understand at a granular or case-study level how different faculties are supporting students and the positive impact that this is having on performance. In short, there are clearly some very important practices which are underpinning these findings that we could all learn from.
- c) What is also clear is that the appetite for Broadening varies considerably amongst students. Those from Arts are clearly the trailblazers here and one interesting question emerges around the Broadening culture or 'confidence' of different disciplines. Are Arts students intrinsically more experimental, or do cultures of learning within the Arts privilege interdisciplinary activity more than others? If so, what can be done to learn from this area? The data may, of course, not be exposing issues of student mentality and it may be that instead it is exposing structural issues based on programme design – in short, how much scope does a programme offer for discovery?
- d) Finally, we are also aware that much is concealed in the data as currently presented. In particular, there are important insights that would be revealed with module-level analysis. At this stage, we actively choose not to undertake module-level analysis as we felt it could / would present issues in terms of confidentiality. That said, we recognise that such analysis is likely to be incredibly important to Module Leaders and we are actively investigating how to produce data to inform staff across the university, albeit with safeguards in place.

Analysis of the impact of Broadening on student behaviour, performance and satisfaction has only just begun. The Leeds Curriculum Evaluation Group, chaired by Mitch Waterman, will be including these discovery dimensions within their overarching, longitudinal analysis and an overview of this analysis can be found at the start of this Leeds Curriculum feature. Rafe Hallett, currently a Discovery Theme Leader and Director of LITEI asserts that "this kind of evidence will form a crucial part of the metrics and narratives that describe our educational innovation and the transformative effect it has on the student experience," adding that "the Institute will encourage proposals for related research projects

which measure the impact of teaching and curriculum design".

If you have any questions about Broadening, simply contact Karen Shaw on k.shaw@leeds.ac.uk

Reflections on the rôle of Discovery Theme Leader

Caroline Campbell, Language and Intercultural Understanding Theme Leader



Was it really December 2012 that I was appointed one of ten Discovery Theme Leaders? Such a lot has happened in that time, some of it planned, some of it unplanned, but always inspiring, challenging and rewarding.

It has been my first experience of working on a University-wide project (one day a week). It was exciting and daunting to create a vision for my Theme – Language and Intercultural Understanding – and to articulate the aims of the Discovery Themes project. I've enjoyed being part of the team that is responsible for decision-making, discussing strategic issues, finding creative solutions, exploring how systems can be more student-centred, and working with colleagues from across the University as well as three Student Ambassadors. I've learned to make sense of huge sets of enrolment data and use graphs and pivot tables for the purpose of analysis. I've enjoyed promoting the concept of Broadening with staff, students, employers, parents and schools, and working with LUTV to film staff and students offer their perspectives. To have developed ten coherent Discovery Themes and articulate the ethos of Broadening via a dedicated website where students can find out about each Theme and its sub-themes, explore options for each year of their programme, access module summaries, search by subject and keyword and make a wish list, is quite an achievement.

It's rewarding to hear colleagues discuss the benefits of making their modules more accessible to students from outside their school and experience stimulating discussions with students first hand who bring a variety of perspectives from their various disciplines. It's more rewarding still to hear students talk about the opportunities that Broadening offers and their ideas for creating their personal discovery pathway.

Now that the Themes have been embedded, the next stage of the project will see the creation of innovative interdisciplinary modules, reflecting our approach to interdisciplinary research. It will continue the process of evaluating Broadening as part of the Leeds experience. I feel privileged to have had the opportunity to contribute to designing the discovery part of the Leeds Curriculum. I look forward to hearing students articulate what this means for them as Leeds graduates.

Become a Discovery Theme Leader

Applications for Discovery Theme Leaders are sought. Successful candidates will be responsible for co-ordinating, developing and implementing the academic vision for one of seven Discovery Themes (0.2FTE). Deadline for applications is **11 April 2016**. Full details available at <https://jobs.leeds.ac.uk/vacancy.aspx?ref=SESSP1066>

Should you have professional recognition for your rôle in Student Education?

Rebecca Dearden, SDDU

The UKPSF@Leeds Individual Application Route to professional recognition by the University of Leeds and the Higher Education Academy. The UKPSF@Leeds Individual Application is a non-credit bearing route to professional recognition for colleagues' rôles in teaching and supporting student learning. This process is accredited by the Higher Education Academy (HEA) and managed by SDDU: successful completion results in recognition as both a UKPSF@Leeds fellow and an HEA fellow. This route is available to staff and PGR students who have been involved in teaching and supporting learning at Leeds for at least one academic year.

Fellowship applications are considered against the UK Professional Standards Framework (UKPSF) for teaching and supporting learning in higher education.

The UKPSF aims to:

- Support 'the initial and continuing professional development of staff engaged in teaching and supporting learning';
- Foster 'dynamic approaches to teaching and learning through creativity, innovation and continuous development in diverse academic and/or professional settings';
- Demonstrate 'the professionalism that staff and institutions bring to teaching and support for student learning';
- Acknowledge 'the variety and quality of teaching, learning and assessment practices that support ... student learning';
- Facilitate 'individuals and institutions in gaining formal recognition for quality-enhanced approaches to teaching and supporting learning, often as part of wider responsibilities that may include research and/or management activities' (UKPSF, 2011).

See www.heacademy.ac.uk/sites/default/files/downloads/UKPSF_2011_English.pdf

Individuals can apply to become a UKPSF@Leeds fellowship holder in one of the following four categories: UKPSF@Leeds Associate Fellow (AFHEA), UKPSF@Leeds Fellow (FHEA), UKPSF@Leeds Senior Fellow (SFHEA), and UKPSF@Leeds Principal Fellow (PFHEA).

Why apply for professional recognition?

Recognition against the UKPSF provides national recognition of an individual's commitment to learning and teaching in HE; it demonstrates an alignment of professional activities against national benchmarks; and it entitles a successful applicant to use post-nominal letters that show affiliation with the HEA, and which are recognised by other UK HEIs. Every year the University is required to supply staff data to the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA). The information provided includes your highest academic qualification and your academic discipline. We also return the teaching qualifications for all Academic and Teaching staff. Teaching qualifications are interpreted broadly and include credit-bearing awards and recognition by the HEA against the descriptors in the UK Professional Standards Framework (UKPSF) (Associate Fellow, Fellow, etc.); this information is published to prospective students as part of the Key Information Set (KIS) data.

Why have a Leeds scheme?

- "It is more direct and less intimidating than dealing with the HEA direct. It felt achievable and the [local] support really helps."
- "It has made me aware of some of the gaps in my knowledge."
- "It gave me an opportunity for reflection that has led to me looking at my overall rôle and practice."

What does the application process involve?

To evidence practice against the UKPSF, applications involve the preparation of: a reflective account of 1,500-6,000 words (dependent

on the level of application), which relates the applicant's professional practice to dimensions of the UKPSF; (or case studies / Record of Educational Impact when applying for recognition as a UKPSF@Leeds Senior Fellow (SFHEA) / UKPSF@Leeds Principal Fellow (PFHEA), respectively); and supporting references from colleagues able to comment on an applicant's activities in teaching and supporting learning. All applicants must also be able to demonstrate engagement with CPD at the University of Leeds by:

- ensuring awareness of, and engagement with, Leeds-based teaching and learning initiatives and policies, such as the Leeds Curriculum, LeedsforLife, quality assurance policies and review processes at school, faculty and University level;
- being active in the Leeds Student Education community, i.e. participation in student education networks, the Student Education Conference, engagement with the TES.

Frequently Asked Questions

Is professional recognition by the HEA a qualification?

No, recognition entitles the holder to use post-nominal letters and be registered with the HEA as working at a particular level of experience.

If I am already an HEA Fellow should I apply?

You are encouraged to consider whether application in a different category may now be appropriate for you. For example, application for UKPSF@Leeds Senior Fellow if you are already a FHEA and are now supporting colleagues to develop their teaching practice.

Is there a charge?

There is no charge for members of staff and registered PGR students.

How does SDDU support applicants?

SDDU run a series of three 'Support for Professional Recognition' workshops. Each of these sessions takes the form of a short, practical small-group session, who will also provide peer support on colleagues' applications. Each workshop runs multiple times throughout the academic year and can be booked free of charge at www.sddu.leeds.ac.uk/learning-teaching/individual-application-for-professional-recognition/ukpsfleeds-individual-application/support-for-your-application

Informal enquiries can be directed to Rebecca Dearden on r.dearden@adm.leeds.ac.uk – potential applicants should also discuss this with their Head of School or line manager.

Do you already have professional recognition?

If so, let us know, or update your details through Self Service:

http://hr.leeds.ac.uk/news/article/3461/hesa_academic_teaching_qualification_update

Log into the Self Service portal (using your usual University credentials)

- Go to Work Information > Work Profile.
- Click on the HESA Data tab.
- Click on the Pencil icon to the right of the screen to edit the data.
- Click into the drop-down list on the topmost Acad. Teaching Qualification field and select your qualification from the list.
- Enter up to six teaching qualifications using the fields provided – please select only one HEA Fellowship status.
- Click Save and Back to complete the update.

Have you completed one of the University's credit-bearing courses (e.g. ULTA-2 or PGCLTHE) and never registered your fellowship?

If so, you may still be entitled to be registered as an HEA Fellow – contact: sddult@leeds.ac.uk for information.

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