**ELAG: E-learning Advisory Group**

22nd September 2010, SMB 0.08

**Present:** Adam Crawford (AC), Charles Shields (CS), Tony Croft (TC), Ray Dawson (RD), Ruth Kinna (RK), Phil Richards (PR), Jan Tennant (JT), Caroline Pepper (CP), Simon Austin (SA), Alice Swinscoe (AS), Ruth Jenkins (RJ)

**Chair:** Morag Bell (MB)  
**Notes:** Jenny Narborough (JN)

1. **Apologies**

Jane Horner, Rob Pearson, Keith Pond, Martin Hamilton, Michael Earl.

1. **Minutes**

The minutes of the last meeting were approved

1. **New terms of reference**

Latest draft was circulated prior to the meeting, comments were requested

In relation to the statement ‘To encourage the submission of proposals for external funding’, it was agreed ‘appropriate’ should be added, and the statement should include e-learning, distance learning and learning spaces.

SA stated the reality is departments are likely to be operating with less staff, but at the same time the standard of teaching students expect will rise. Therefore we need to maximise efficiency and effectiveness of staff time, and at the same time enhance what we do in terms of teaching.  
  
It was agreed that the terms efficiency and effectiveness needs to be added to the terms of reference with efficiency directly relating to staff, and effectiveness relating to teaching and learning.

In addition to reporting to Learning and Teaching Committee as required, it was also felt to be important that the group should report where appropriate to Estates Management, the IT Committee, and the Student Information Steering Group.

**ACTION: CS to update terms of reference**

Membership

* CP title has changed from ‘Teaching Support and Administration Manager’ to ‘Learning Space and Administration Manager’
* The Timetabling Officer would not be required to attend these meetings as CP reports directly to them.

It was agreed that the group would meet 3 to 4 times a year.

1. **Strategic issues**
2. **E-learning strategy - discussion paper**

The discussion paper was circulated and key points detailed. CS noted a Zip file of selected E-learning strategies will be circulated with the minutes from the meeting.

**ACTION: CS to circulate selected e-learning strategies with minutes**

MB noted that key issue point 1 should also refer to physical learning spaces; this was agreed by the group.

It was acknowledged the key issue to consider was ‘How do we incentivise academics to engage with e-learning?’

TC suggested the term e-learning for this point should be replaced with the term learning, to have an awareness of the different pedagogy needed to incorporate e-learning into a curriculum and the relationship between online learning and F2F learning.

AC talked about his attendance at a meeting with Wolfson about the future of Learning and Teaching in the institution. AC states the department were acutely aware of the increase in student fees, and the expected rise in expectations from the students, whilst operating with less staff, possibly with de-motivated staff. He noted the strategy needs to emphasise the drivers and efficiencies for staff.

The group discussed the issues relating to lack of staff uptake of new e-learning systems, noting time issues to take up new systems, but also time to reflect on the impact of use within the wider picture of teaching a curriculum.

Suggestions relating to effective roll out included support, RK noted in particular the support of FELOs provided with the move to Moodle, SA noted the use of departmental champions and perhaps offering support should be related to career progression, and the value of piloting systems.

TC noted we need to link learning with e-learning, and show changed to pedagogy and the extra value gained, and the importance of making visible principles of efficient and effective teaching and learning.

MB – noted the significance of balance of teaching and learning options across a curriculum.

SA noted the university has a clear guide to how long students should be spending on completing module but no idea how long it takes for staff time to prepare and deliver modules. The suggestion was it may be useful information to audit and help with showing evidence on % of time certain e-learning activities may save.

It was noted that the probation programme looks in detail at the use of alternative teaching practices to traditional lecturing and the inclusion of e-learning. It was acknowledged on some occasions staff from within departments can be detrimental to uptake of alternative T&L practices. Again the terminology of efficient teaching and effective student learning was emphasised and suggested to be incorporated further in the probationers programme

**ACTION: JT to look to emphasis efficient teaching and effective student learning to the probation programme**

RJ suggested making the most of using other available resources. CS agreed and suggested the Open Edu resources which are to be discussed under 4d.

MB suggested a small group is formed to look at the uni wide implications and the pedagogic justification of use of e-learning activites. This group will report to ELAG

**ACTION: MB To co-ordinate the formation of a group looking into specifics of use of e-learning activities.** Note: additions to this action come under item 4c.

RJ raised the issue of copyright, and added that she, library colleagues and the copyright officer are involved in creating a University Copyright Policy.

MB – stated copyright must be included in the strategy.

It was also agreed that example of how to use e-learning within a module or curriculum would be useful to show staff, such as an evidence base of champions.

It was agreed to use the Bristol e-learning strategy document as a good template. The next version of the Lboro e-learning strategy document draft is to be circulated prior to the next meeting for discussion and, if appropriate, approval during the next meeting.

**ACTIONS: CS to produce and circulate the next draft of the e-learning strategy prior to the next meeting**

**All to come to the next meeting with comments.**

1. **Web 2.0 policy paper**

Previously, two Web 2.0 policy papers have been drafted and at meeting last week it was agreed that a third draft would be composed. This would be an updated version of PR’s draft, and would allow for the use of some Web 2.0 services which have been approved plus include guidelines on how to seek advice if planning to use other, non stated, Web 2.0 services. There would also be case studies of use.

**ACTION: CS to write new version of Web 2.0 policy document and present to IT committee.**

PR noted everyday use of Web 2.0 is relatively low risk, however, when it relates to or impacts on teaching and learning the risk increases.

AC asked how would a Web 2.0 policy be policed?

CS stated the e-learning team could not take responsibility for Web 2.0 use, nor could the team police its use. It was agreed that the policy has to be clear ultimate responsibly for using Web 2.0 services lies with the academic or person using the service.

1. **Lecture capture**

CS stated it had been decided a steering group for lecture capture was unnecessary, instead a working group would be formed to discuss relating policies (such as reuse etc).

It was suggested this group should be combined with the group relating to e-learning activities (suggested under 4a of these minutes)

**ACTION: CS and MB to co-ordinate creation of the group(s) relating to uni wide implications of e-learning activities**

1. **OER presentation by Tony Croft**

Tony presented 2 open education resources (OER) for maths tutoring,

1. mathcentre.ac.uk, developed by Loughborough in collaboration with Coventry and Leeds Universities in association with the HEA. The site has over 1000 resources freely available online, with each resource having a CC licence (Creative Commons) which communicates how the resource can be shared and/or reused etc.
2. Finding Electronic Teaching and Learning Assessment Resources (FETLAR), an online repository of maths resources

The group congratulated TC on these useful sites and noted how highly respected maths resources from Lboro are and the advantages to the success of the sites this brings.

It was agreed a policy would be required if seeking funding for future, similar projects which have an awareness for protecting resources if relating to DL and possible sale of courses.

**ACTION: MB to forward policy relating to creation of resources for OER**

1. **Physical learning spaces update** presentation by Simon Austin

SA has been involved in 2 HEFCE projects, the first Offices Spaces and the second on the Learning Landscape. The latter in particular looks at the campus as a whole and that often E-learning and Facilities Management groups second guess what academics want both regarding virtual and physical spaces.

He notes we may have to make radical changes to achieve more than what efficiency gains can deliver. As previously noted

* We are likely to have less staff to same number of students,
* Will be required to reduce our carbon energy,
* plus there may be a huge inertia to incremental adoption of new solutions

Suggestions:

* Reduce staff / student contact time
* Reduce staff assessment time
* Reduce management and admin
* Increase student responsibility and independent learning
* We also need to look at space efficiency gain

There is need to engage the students with any change to take them with us through the change.

Possible ways to do this:

* Video delivery and different experiences in lectures
* Abandon semesters and assess once a year
* Increase module credits from 10 to 12
* Understand staff time per module (see audit suggestion under 4a)
* Stop all teaching at 5pm and switch off heating
* Increase peer learning both independent and group
* Reduce volume assessment, perhaps increase summative assessment and reduce formative
* Reduce scope creep of degree programmes, cutting down on module choices and extras bolted on.
* Stretch and separate staff and student worlds?

SA believes lboro is well placed to make changes whilst maintaining a high level of student experience. SA welcomed comments and suggestions, these included

* Embracing current and future technologies such as Web 2.0 services by encouraging student driven learning, reducing focus on staff content creation, moderation and the administration of ‘protecting’ university owned resources.
* Train probationers to practice T&L in new and efficient ways from the start of their teaching practice incorporating new services including e-learning services.
* Increase PHD and RA involvement in teaching
* Increase ‘socialisation’ time and reduce student ‘listening’ time, also relating to physical space
* Reduce lab contact time
* Incorporate or increase peer assessment

Concern was raised that student and parents perceptions of value for money relate to contact time. If a reduction of F2F teaching would students feel they can communicate and approach tutors?

AS commented that students feel value comes from engagement, when they feel engaged they are more comfortable approaching tutors.

It was agreed individual e-learning elements could not be considered on their own it’s how they are incorporated in the wider picture of the curriculum.

MB suggested this discussion continues at another forum  
**ACTION: MB to table this discussion to continue**

1. **Distance Learning Fund update**

To be discussed at the next meeting

1. **AOB**

A tour of the renovated areas in James France building was conducted.

1. **Date of next meeting**

**ACTION: MB to arrange next meeting**