Challenges in designing for effective and sustainable e-learning in a dual-mode institution

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Plan

• Describe the University of Leicester’s (UoL) dual-mode provision of both on-campus and distance learning
• Outline series of initiatives for enhancing learning design from 2006 onwards
• Summarise outcomes of a range of course design enhancements, in both face-to-face/on-campus and distance-learning provision

UoL provision (1)

• 19,000 students, including 8,500 part-time (PT) and distance learning (DL) (many work-based learners)
• Predominantly ‘parallel single modes’ of either on-campus or DL provision; convergence in some areas
• DL profile:
  – 50 programmes from 12 departments
  – A worldwide audience
  – Over 50% of students outside EU
  – Growing and diverse range of learning technologies
**UoL provision (2)**

Key institutional strategic challenges are:

1. Reducing the ‘distance’ between the two modes of delivery

2. Ensuring ‘equivalence’ of the student experience between the two modes

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**E-learning enhancement**

The strategic challenges: designing, developing and delivering effective, sustainable technology-rich courses in a dual-mode university requires which results in and provides the development of learner-centred curricula that capitalise on the affordances of the core technologies and peer and collaborative e-ivities, with technological innovations in teaching and learning. The transformation of learning opportunities providing equivalent experiences for on- and off-campus learners. Research evidence for sustainable embedding of innovations in curriculum design, development and delivery.
Initiatives (1)

- Series of projects funded by UK HE Academy
- Benchmarking of e-learning
- Initial process in 2006
- Lower scores achieved in:
  - Instructional design/pedagogy
  - Learning material
  - These key areas targeted for improvement

Initiatives (2)

- Addressing the challenges
- Building capacity for e-learning design
- Embedding e-learning

- The ADELIE Pathfinder Project
  [www.le.ac.uk/adelie](http://www.le.ac.uk/adelie)
Initiatives (3): **CARPE DIEM**

A well-researched, well-rehearsed, team-based intervention for promoting:

- learner-centred design
- learner-centred assessment
- better exploitation of core university-provided technologies
- innovation and institutional capacity building

Carpe Diem painting by Helmut Rottler, 2001 - used with permission

www.le.ac.uk/carpediem

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Initiatives (4)

‘Seize the day’

- Rapid development
- Professional teams
- Creativity
- E-tivities
- 5-stage model and scaffolding
- Aligned assessment
- Social constructivism

www.le.ac.uk/carpediem
Initiatives (5)

• Build on the Carpe Diem model
• Linking e-tivities with assessment
• Across four disciplines at five institutions
• The ADDER project
  [Link to ADDER project]

Initiatives (6)

• Disseminate the Carpe Diem experience in a post-Pathfinder ‘Network’ project
• Transfer knowledge to six other institutions
• The CHEETAH project
  [Link to CHEETAH project]
The e-learning journey

Outcomes (1)

- 37 Carpe Diem events, 320 staff, 14 universities
- An increase in e-learning benchmarking scores
- A focus on DL provision
Outcomes (2)

Researched processes → evidence → change

*Carpe Diem* as a lever for rapid enhancement in:

- Learning design
- Technology use
- Personalisation
- Assessment
- Fit to learning context
- Learner experiences

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learners</th>
<th>Pedagogical Design and Delivery</th>
<th>Academics and UoL</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learner centredness evident in courses</td>
<td>Alignment</td>
<td>Capacity building, autonomy in learning design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engagement (with content, with each other, with tutor)</td>
<td>Tasking it up: content in context</td>
<td>Clear, transferable models</td>
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<tr>
<td>Focused scaffolding and support through e-tivities</td>
<td>Creative, technology-enabled design</td>
<td>Smart use of resources: low cost, high impact</td>
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<td>Innovative assessment methods</td>
<td>Design once, deliver often</td>
<td>Clear structures underpin a task-based approach</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stable embedded technologies for active learning</td>
<td>For on and off-campus courses, any discipline</td>
<td>Affordances of technology researched and exploited to meet specific pedagogical challenges</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clarity in learning design</td>
<td>Patterns of implementation</td>
<td>Generated new interventions in the <em>Carpe Diem</em> family</td>
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Outcomes (4)

• Distance’ between modes of study reduced

• Learner experiences approaching ‘equivalence’

Thank you!

www.le.ac.uk/beyonddistance
Project Glossary

- **ADELIE** = Advanced Design for E-Learning: Institutional Embedding
- **ADDER** = Assessment & Disciplines: Developing E-tivities Research
- **CHEETAH** = Change by Embedding E-learning in Teaching Across HEIs
- **DUCKLING** = Delivering University Curricula: Knowledge, Learning and Innovation Gains
- **OTTER** = Open, Transferable and Technology Enabled Educational Resources