



# **The Higher Education Academy**

Annual Report 2005–2006



**The Higher Education Academy** is an independent organisation funded by grants from the four UK higher education funding bodies, subscriptions from higher education institutions, and grant and contract income for specific initiatives.

## **Mission**

The Academy's mission is to help institutions, discipline groups and all staff to provide the best possible learning experience for their students.

## **Strategic aims and objectives**

To be an authoritative and independent voice on policies that influence student learning experiences

To support institutions in their strategies for improving the student learning experience

To lead, support and inform the professional development and recognition of staff in higher education

To promote good practice in all aspects of support for the student learning experience

To lead the development of research and evaluation to improve the quality of the student learning experience

To be a responsive, efficient and accountable organisation

---

## Contents

Chair's introduction . . . . .	2
Setting the agenda. . . . .	3
Policy, partnerships and collaboration . . . . .	5
Supporting institutions . . . . .	10
Professional development. . . . .	18
Promoting good practice . . . . .	24
Research and evaluation . . . . .	31
An accountable organisation . . . . .	36
The Board . . . . .	38
The Council . . . . .	40
Senior Executive Group . . . . .	42
Financial information. . . . .	43



## Chair's introduction

This has been a successful year for the Higher Education Academy, in terms of the range of our activities, the impact of those activities on our stakeholders, our growing reputation and not least our financial stability. If our first full year was devoted to laying the foundations, this second year has seen us building on them effectively in delivering our mission. The details are fully set out in this Annual Report and I would highlight just four as typical of our work.

The creation of a National Professional Standards Framework was a major undertaking, successfully achieved, that required consultation with, and the approval of, national policy-makers, employers and academics. We are now engaged in making the framework operationally effective. With the help of the academic profession we have also begun to think afresh about the principles of professional recognition and development, a process which will come to fruition in 2006-07.

We have put a special emphasis on developing our relationships with each higher education institution, particularly to help with their strategic approaches to learning and teaching. If demand is evidence of success, there is no doubt that this has been well received, and the challenge now is to find the resources, consisting essentially of having sufficiently qualified people, to meet the growing demand for our services.

One of the distinctive features of the Academy is its emphasis on research and evidence-based practice. Many research projects are currently underway. I hope the results will be thought-provoking and where necessary, challenging to current practice and policy. Meanwhile the dissemination of existing knowledge is proceeding apace through our Subject Centres and more generally. The full involvement of the Academy in national policy-making on teaching and learning is recognition of our leading expertise on these matters.

We have been conscious from the beginning that we are a UK-wide organisation which must serve all parts of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Each of the four countries has different arrangements for higher education in terms of structure and governance, and we have worked hard to tailor our services to their different needs. Considerable progress has been made during the course of this year and this will continue to be a focus of our attention.

All organisations, particularly those working in higher education, depend on the quality of their staff for their success. We are fortunate to have Professor Paul Ramsden as our Chief Executive, and our thanks go to him, his senior team and all who work at the Higher Education Academy for their high level of commitment and ability.

Finally, I express my gratitude to my colleagues on the Board who have been supportive, but at the appropriate times questioning, to ensure that the organisation stays focused on its major goals. Together with the Council under the skilled leadership of Professor Judy Simons, they provide invaluable advice and guidance on our future development.

**Leslie Wagner CBE**

Chair

The Higher Education Academy Board



## Setting the agenda

*Paul Ramsden looks back over a year of challenges and achievements*

Our universities and colleges enjoy a well-deserved reputation across the world for excellence in the student learning experience. The Higher Education Academy's distinctive role is to work with colleagues throughout the UK to help sustain and enhance this pre-eminent position.

Although we are still a young organisation, we are an ambitious one. We have made great progress in the last year in delivering the aims of our strategic plan, locating ourselves as the UK's focal point for enhancing learning and teaching in higher education, and providing value for money for all our stakeholders. Students are at the heart of everything we do. We offer a resource to help higher education institutions (HEIs), disciplines and individual staff who share our commitment to improving the quality of the student learning experience.

### Informing policy

Our vision is to be an authoritative and independent voice on policies that affect the student learning experience. We foster robust debate, challenge received wisdom and create a forum for new thinking – about issues as diverse as methods of funding research, work-related learning, international perspectives in the curriculum, and the research-teaching nexus.

### Applying evidence

The best policy and practice evolve from a sound knowledge base. The Academy is a centre for evidence-informed practice in higher education. We advise and assist HEIs, subjects and individuals through our extensive dissemination and research activities, including funded projects on issues of central importance to teaching and student learning.

### Supporting good practice

We provide a place to share, broker and network examples of good practice in managing the quality of the student learning experience and encouraging effective teaching and assessment for an increasingly diverse student population, most notably through our nationwide grouping of Subject Centres.

## Recognising excellence

The Academy celebrates the many examples of high quality provision for students' learning experiences across the four countries of the UK. We administer awards for good teaching and effective student support; we recognise professional achievement through our National Teaching Fellowships and accredited programmes.

Highlights of our work this year have included:

- our institutional liaison scheme, which provides a more structured and strategic approach to dialogues with universities and colleges, and has been very positively received
- growing involvement in policy debate and influence; for example, providing guidance on assessing research on teaching and learning in higher education for the 2008 Research Assessment Exercise (RAE)
- the appointment of Senior Advisers based in Scotland and Wales to strengthen relationships with HEIs in each country
- the appointment of Senior Associates with experience in senior academic management to increase the Academy's capacity to support HEIs
- the comprehensive restructuring of the Academy's senior management to align our structure more closely with our strategic aims
- a third successful Change Academy event, attended by 151 delegates from 17 HEIs, providing support for institutions wishing to bring about large-scale strategic change
- integration of the Subject Centres into all aspects of the Academy's operations. Collaborative work has been particularly strong in the areas of employability and entrepreneurship, widening participation, sustainability and support for interdisciplinary studies
- the establishment of a professional standards framework, providing a comprehensive set of sector standards for teaching and supporting learning in higher education. This acts as an enabling mechanism to support the professional development of staff engaged in supporting learning
- proposals for a new model for the recognition of individual staff for their commitment to teaching, responding to the expressed wishes of nearly 3,000 staff we surveyed
- the accreditation of institutional programmes to support teaching staff in around 120 institutions
- the development of a programme of work to take forward support for enhancing the student experience through e-learning and blended learning
- further development of Academy networks. The Pro-Vice-Chancellors' Network now has a membership of approximately 180 PVCs, Deputy Principals and their equivalents whose responsibilities include learning, teaching and student support. The establishment of an Employers' Group, chaired by Board member David Thomas, brings an employers' perspective to the development of strategy on linking the student learning experience to the needs of the world of work
- implementation of wide-ranging revisions and improvements to the National Teaching Fellowship scheme in England and Northern Ireland, which rewards and celebrates excellence in teaching and supporting learning
- building on our research and evaluation activities, including continuing input to policy and practice in the 2008 RAE and supporting the analysis and development of the National Student Survey. We have also made available through a competitive process research grants for ten institution-led projects in 2005-06 and funded a further 18 for 2006-07
- major commissioned surveys of the first-year undergraduate experience and the postgraduate research learning experience
- a UK-wide conference and publication on developing institutional policy and practice on the teaching-research relationship
- over 500 delegates – a record number – attended the Academy's Annual Conference in July 2006.

We have established a strong platform from which to support and lead further improvements to the student learning experience. This report gives a brief overview of our work with institutions and the wider sector over the 2005-2006 academic year.

**Paul Ramsden**  
Chief Executive  
The Higher Education Academy



## Policy, partnerships and collaboration

*An authoritative and independent voice on policies that influence student learning experiences*

The Academy is a source of authoritative advice on policies that affect the student learning experience. We have developed a programme of work to stimulate robust, evidence-based debate on policy and to provide an independent voice and advocacy on these issues, alongside the Academy's owners Universities UK and GuildHE (formerly SCOP).

During the course of the year senior Academy staff have contributed to national policy in a number of key areas, including quality and standards, pedagogic research in HE, research training, e-learning, performance indicators, and evaluation of programmes and national initiatives related to the student learning experience. Our Subject Centres

## Welsh learning and teaching strategies

In December 2005 we held our first major conference in Wales, on Welsh institutional learning and teaching strategies, for all staff with responsibility for learning and teaching in Welsh HEIs. Over 80 delegates attended, representing all 12 Welsh HEIs and including staff from the Academy's Subject Centres. The day provided an opportunity for delegates to engage in discussion to prioritise the Academy's programme of support in Wales.

The conference saw the launch of an Academy report on Welsh institutional learning and teaching strategies 2004-05, commissioned by the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW). It identifies emerging trends in Welsh learning and teaching developments and highlights examples of novel and effective practices in institutions' learning and teaching strategies. It also provides links to resources and other support available from the Academy and is available in both English and Welsh from our website at [www.heacademy.ac.uk/wales.htm](http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/wales.htm)

are contributing to national policy in particular disciplines (see the case studies).

We have contributed to national consultations on the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE)'s strategic plan for 2006-11, the Scottish Funding Council's strategy and corporate plan for 2006-09, the Quality Assurance Agency's new institutional audit methodology, and the future of the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) beyond 2008.

## National Professional Standards Framework

In February 2006 we launched the first ever National Professional Standards Framework for teaching and supporting learning in higher education, on behalf of UUK, GuildHE and the four UK HE funding bodies. The standards are research-based and sector-owned, and represent a very significant achievement for the sector in meeting the commitment given in the 2003 White Paper on *The Future of Higher Education*. The Framework was described by Professor Drummond Bone, President of Universities UK, as an important milestone for the UK's higher education sector.

## The research-teaching relationship

The relationship between research and teaching is an issue of growing international concern. We held a UK-wide conference on developing institutional policy and practice on the teaching-research relationship in November 2005, which generated much useful discussion that will enable the sharing of policy and practice and themes that we are taking forward in our work with institutions. We also commissioned and published a monograph on institutional strategies to support linkages between teaching and research. *Institutional strategies to link teaching and research* by Alan Jenkins and Mick Healey is designed to help institutions review their current policies and decide on what measures they might introduce to strengthen the teaching-research relationship.

We have funded a number of research projects looking at various aspects of the relationship (see the section on Research and Evaluation). We are

supporting the HEFCE-funded initiative in England to support the research-informed teaching environment, and are working with the Scottish Higher Education Enhancement Steering Committee for Research-Teaching Linkages. We support the Research and Teaching Forum, an independent group chaired by Professor Roger Brown with a remit to explore and understand the relationships between research and teaching.

## Research Assessment Exercise

We have been influential in the process for assessing research on teaching and learning in higher education in the 2008 RAE. We are working with the RAE managers and panel representatives to provide guidance to panels and sub-panels on the evaluation of subject-specific outputs. Through our own representation on these panels we are also playing a critical role in broader aspects of the 2008 RAE.

## Partnerships

We work strategically with the national and devolved Governments of the UK and the UK HE Funding Councils. We are represented on all the major quality and teaching and learning committees in the UK and are observers on several Boards of allied organisations. We have a Service Level Agreement with Universities UK, Universities Scotland, Higher Education Wales and GuildHE and Memoranda of Understanding with Action on Access, the Association of University Administrators (AUA), the Equality Challenge Unit, the Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC), the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education (LFHE), Lifelong Learning UK (LLUK), the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA), the Staff and Educational Development Association (SEDA), the Universities & Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS).

We are providing technical and policy support to the **Burgess Steering Group** on Measuring and Recording Student Achievement, and have led work on proposals for the HE transcript for students.

We work with the **Centre for Recording Achievement (CRA)**, an Associate Centre of the

## Building support for strategically important and vulnerable subjects

The Subject Centre for Languages, Linguistics and Area Studies (LLAS) is leading a £4.5 million programme, **Routes into Languages**, to encourage the take-up of language courses. The programme will establish regional networks to enable HEIs, schools and colleges to work together, and national consortia will be set up to promote translation and interpreting as careers. Funded activities may include undergraduate ambassadors, e-mentor schemes, language graduates visiting students in schools and colleges, and summer schools for non-Western European languages. One strand will investigate how to ensure a lasting legacy for the London Olympics in terms of promoting languages, culture and internationalisation. It will look at the role universities and colleges have in preparing communities for the Olympics and in harnessing the event to promote interest in schools.

In a similar project, the Subject Centre for Maths, Stats and Operational Research (MSOR) is part of a consortium which has been awarded £3.3 million to build demand from students wishing to study science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) subjects in higher education.

The **Increasing the supply of mathematical science graduates** programme, one of four pilot initiatives, will aim to widen participation in mathematics among student groups that have not previously been well-represented in HE.

“The pilot project will help school and college students understand the purpose of studying mathematics, be confident about meeting challenges in the subject ... and encourage them to realise their potential. It will also demonstrate the wide range of careers open to graduates from the mathematical sciences,” commented Michael Grove of MSOR.

Both programmes are funded by HEFCE.

Academy, to support institutional development of Personal Development Planning and e-portfolios.

We are partners with the **Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC)** in taking forward HEFCE's ten-year e-learning strategy, helping institutions to make the best use of technology to support student learning. We also host the JISC-funded TechDis service, which aims to enhance provision for disabled students and staff through the use of technology.

We are collaborating on academic leadership with the **Leadership Foundation for Higher Education (LFHE)** and are represented on its research advisory panel. We also run the very successful annual Change Academy with the support of the LFHE.

We are working on standards development and skills enhancement with **Lifelong Learning UK (LLUK)** to ensure that there is no duplication between the National Professional Standards Framework for HE teaching and other training requirements for staff in HEIs.

With the **National Student Survey (NSS)** steering group we are helping HEIs to make better use of NSS data and suggesting other measures that they might use to monitor the student learning experience.

Our work with HEFCE's **Quality Assessment, Learning and Teaching Committee (QALT)** has resulted in the relaunch this year of the National Teaching Fellowship Scheme (NTFS) with two strands, Individual Awards and Projects. We are working with the **Higher Education Quality Working Group** in Scotland in supporting the delivery of the Scottish Quality Enhancement Framework (QEF). The Academy is also represented on the **HEFCW Learning and Teaching Committee**.

Staff in our Subject Centres are developing links with relevant staff at the **Quality Assurance Agency (QAA)** at the discipline level. They are advising on the Academic Infrastructure (which provides a means of describing academic standards in UK higher education), for example on subject benchmark statements, and are working with the QAA on supporting enhancement-led frameworks for HE qualifications in England, Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland.

We are working with the **Universities & Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS)** on fair admissions processes to HE, following the recommendations of the Admissions to Higher Education Review chaired by Professor Steven Schwartz.

At the institutional level, we operate as a source of expertise on the student learning experience for a range of staff, including HEIs' governing bodies. The role of our Pro-Vice-Chancellors' Network has been expanded to include policy shaping and influence.

## Scotland

This year we strengthened our support to HEIs in Scotland. In October 2005 we appointed a Senior Adviser for Scotland, Alastair Robertson, who is co-located at Universities Scotland's office in Edinburgh. He acts as our contact for Scottish HEIs as part of our Institutional Liaison Scheme.

We have established a Scottish Sounding Board to provide an informal mechanism for advising on our approach to our work in Scotland, and have identified a number of strategic priorities. Our strategy has emerged following discussions with Scottish HE stakeholders and organisations, including institutions, academic and central services support staff, the Scottish Funding Council, QAA Scotland, Universities Scotland, students and Student Participation in Quality Scotland (sparqs). As a member of the Quality Working Group in Scotland, we are working in partnership with other stakeholders and agencies to avoid duplication, maximise benefit to our subscribing institutions and add value to the Quality Enhancement Framework (QEF).

## Wales

The Academy's work in Wales has developed rapidly during the year. We appointed a Senior Adviser for Wales in September 2005. Gabriel Jezierski is based in Cardiff.

We have established links with the **Welsh Funding Council (HEFCW)**, the Welsh Assembly Government, the Department for Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills and Higher Education Wales. The

links have served to clarify priorities for Academy activity in Wales, which will include contributing to an e-learning strategy, assisting with a package of student learning enhancement activities, and supporting work in the Welsh medium. We have held a major conference and published a report on Welsh institutional learning and teaching strategies, and established a network on assessment. The Senior Adviser for Wales is planning work on the four employability themes of work-based learning, employability in the curriculum, enterprise, and employer engagement.

## Northern Ireland

We have held discussions with the Department of Employment and Learning (DEL) in Northern Ireland about our work with NI institutions. The Academy Senior Adviser for Northern Ireland, Rob Norris, is taking forward support for NI activities by visiting the NI HEIs.

Our Chief Executive spoke at the launch of the NI Centres for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETLs) at Stormont Castle. We will be delivering support for the seven CETLs in Northern Ireland in the area of research and evaluation. We are also working closely with DEL on the evaluation strategy for the CETL (NI) initiative. Other activities will embrace UK-wide matters and integrate NI issues with the wider UK agenda.

## International links

We have built connections with agencies and institutions overseas and established a role as an influential body internationally. We have established links with organisations such as the Carnegie Foundation in the US and the Carrick Institute for Learning and Teaching in Australia. The Carrick Institute is keen to establish close ties with the Academy and in particular to learn from the experience of our Subject Centres.

Academy staff have visited or received visits from representatives of HE bodies in Denmark, Hong Kong, Japan, Malaysia, the Netherlands, Norway, Saudi

Arabia, Sweden and Taiwan interested in the UK approach to supporting learning and teaching. Our Chief Executive, Paul Ramsden, has been appointed as Chair of the international advisory board of the Swedish National Agency for Higher Education. Paul Ramsden also addressed a meeting in the Netherlands of representatives from research-intensive universities in North America, Europe and Australia and spoke about the Academy's work on academic leadership and student learning.

The Third Forum of Multinational Teacher-Scholars was hosted this year during the Academy's Annual Conference. The Academy has been working with international colleagues in Canada, Australia, New Zealand, the United States and Sweden to bring together recipients of national awards for teaching excellence in HE in order to share knowledge and contribute to the literature on student learning.

## Looking forward

This year we reviewed our Service Level Agreement with Universities UK and GuildHE, and as a result we have extended our biannual meetings with the four UK HE funding bodies to include UUK and GuildHE representatives. These meetings enable a dialogue about priorities between the funding bodies, UUK, GuildHE and Academy officers to ensure that we continue to respond to stakeholder needs as well as feeding back issues from the sector to inform policy.

In 2006-07 we will hold 'think tanks' to discuss employer engagement in HE and new approaches to assessing research quality. We are also planning to hold policy seminars (in England and Scotland) on understanding excellence in learning and teaching, and an annual Academy Lecture and Debate, accompanied by a series of pamphlets on policy issues.



## Supporting institutions

*Supporting institutions in their strategies for improving the student learning experience*

This year we have strengthened and deepened our relationship with higher education institutions and are developing intensive work with individual HEIs as well as providing extensive services and practical support to the whole sector.

We introduced an Institutional Liaison Scheme in November 2005 as part of our commitment to address institutional needs and to enable us to offer a more focused programme of support for institutions. By August 2006 over 90% of the Academy's subscribing institutions had received a visit from a senior member of staff. Our institutional contacts in HEIs generally have a leadership role in learning and teaching or human resources and are at Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Dean

or Director level. The first year of the scheme has primarily focused on raising awareness of the Academy and information-gathering from the HEIs. Reports from the meetings will in time provide a rich resource of information on current learning and teaching developments in the HE sector.

The first reports indicate that the scheme is welcomed by HEIs. Many reports show that institutions see a key role for the Academy in brokering the collation and dissemination of good practice. Towards the end of the year, in response to institutional suggestions, the scheme was modified to allow greater teamworking by Academy liaison staff to provide opportunities for regional and country-wide comparisons and for interaction with existing regional networks in the HE sector.

We are now considering how the scheme might evolve to provide customised support for HEIs.

Our Subject Centres are offering services to departments in particular areas. For example, the Centre for Bioscience and the Subject Centre for Geography, Earth and Environmental Sciences (GEES) offer departmental workshops tailored to the needs of an individual department. The Centre for Materials Education offers departments a Supported Change Programme, which establishes a partnership with relevant departments to influence change at departmental level relating to learning and teaching.

## Institutions in Scotland

In Scotland our activities this year have included supporting institutions' internal Learning and Teaching Conferences, for instance at Heriot-Watt University in March and Glasgow Caledonian University in May, by providing publicity materials, delivering presentations and running workshops. We have also provided consultancy support for projects in individual institutions, such as the University of Abertay's White Space project and a review of St Andrews' Learning and Teaching: Innovation, Review and Enhancement Centre.

We have held major national conferences in Scotland on 'Innovations in Supporting the First-Year Experience' and 'Education for Sustainable

### Institutional Liaison: University of Abertay

Staff and students at the University of Abertay in Dundee are engaged in an institution-wide project entitled White Space. This brings together a number of innovative projects, initiatives and research strengths of the institution in a more integrated way to create a distinctive Abertay student experience. Since Abertay is a relatively small institution with a diverse, mainly local, student body and an emphasis on vocationally-focused programmes, the thrust of White Space is to change curriculum design to include more emphasis on generic skills and greater involvement of local employers in the early years of degrees.

Following an institutional liaison visit by the Academy's Senior Adviser for Scotland, one of our Senior Associates, Graeme Roberts, has undertaken follow-up visits with Abertay colleagues to offer support and advice on taking White Space forward. Graeme Roberts has also been asked to comment on the draft Reflective Analysis which Abertay is currently preparing for its Enhancement-Led Institutional Review (ELIR).

*"Abertay has benefited greatly from contact with Academy representatives in Scotland. In particular Graeme's experience of developing the quality enhancement agenda at the University of Aberdeen together with his extensive working knowledge of ELIR has been very useful as we develop our own White Space project and put the finishing touches to our Reflective Analysis."*

Professor John Palfreyman,  
Depute Principal (Academic  
Development),  
University of Abertay

Development' and a residential event for HEI Employability Champions, as well as running a variety of events and funding projects in various Scottish institutions through our Subject Centres.

We have published three editions of a Scottish-specific newsletter to highlight events and activities in Scotland, including those of the Subject Centres.

## Institutions in Wales

An initial meeting of our Welsh Institutional Liaison Group was attended by most of the Welsh HEIs and a programme of work is being developed. Four themes have been identified by Welsh HEIs as priorities for the Academy's work with them: assessment, employability and work-based learning, research-informed teaching, and developing an e-learning strategy for Wales.

The Welsh HEIs are interested in sharing and exchanging good practice across the UK HE sector and see the Academy having an important role in identifying acknowledged good practice. This is particularly important in Wales where there are no Centres for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETLs). We are also preparing a series of activities to support educational developers in Wales.

## Pro-Vice-Chancellors' Network

The Pro-Vice-Chancellors' Network, co-ordinated by Professor Janet Beer (Manchester Metropolitan University) and the Academy's Chief Executive, is a forum of PVCs, Deputy Principals and their equivalent whose responsibilities include learning, teaching and student support. It has approximately 180 members from 154 HEIs in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. The network collaborates with a similar network run by the Leadership Foundation to co-ordinate activities. Speakers at its meetings have included Sir Alan Wilson of the DfES, Professor David Eastwood, Chief Executive designate of HEFCE, and Professor Bob Burgess, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Leicester.

The network has created a number of special interest groups whose meetings have included discussion of the structure of the academic year, e-learning, higher level skills, and the challenges facing small and specialist HEIs.

## Employers' Group

An Employers' Group, chaired by Board member David Thomas, has been established to reflect the increasingly important engagement between employers and HEIs. It has contributed to our research on work-based learning, to the Student Employability Profiles and to Academy conferences on employability, as well as to the debate on employer engagement in HE.

## Thematic work with institutions

We have held a major programme of events and activities for institutional academic managers and staff around four broad themes, identified by institutions and other stakeholders as priorities for our support.

**Innovations in the curriculum and student support.** We have held a number of events on a range of topics in response to institutions' interests and priorities (see also the section on 'Promoting good practice'). The topics reflect new approaches to strategy and practice; they focus on practicability (actual case studies and examples of innovation) and scalability within and between institutions, related to improvements in the student learning experience. Events have been held on the use of Virtual Learning Environments (VLEs); work-based learning; blended learning; employability and enterprise in research-intensive universities; encouraging student engagement in the curriculum; innovation for diversity; innovations in supporting the first-year experience; personal tutoring; and embedding innovations within HEIs. Events draw heavily on institutional experience and practice. Most events have been significantly oversubscribed.

**Quality management.** We work with individual institutions to help them establish systems that will realise their strategic goals for teaching, learning and the student experience. A programme of events has




## CHANGE ACADEMY

Change Academy is unique in the UK. Organised by the Academy with the support of the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education, it is a team-based process providing support for institutions wishing to bring about large-scale strategic change.

The third Change Academy took place in Nottingham in September 2006 and was attended by 151 delegates from 17 HEIs. The university and college teams contained a mix of managers and academics, as well as administrative staff, staff and educational developers, researchers, and staff involved in providing guidance or services to students. Many teams included a student representative, whose place was subsidised by the Academy.

Projects brought to the event this year included: building and implementing a global/internationalisation development strategy; institutional research for sustainable development; enhancing the student experience in a research-led university; and changing a university culture from being defensive in the face of lack of external recognition of learning and teaching activities, to one of celebrating the successes of both students and staff.

The week-long residential event is just part of a year-long programme of support for change from the Academy. The Change Academy Organising Team members, drawn from institutions across the UK, support the institutional teams and their leaders throughout the year.

A number of teams who have participated in Change Academy in previous years are now using its principles in other projects within their own institutions.

been planned focusing on supporting institutional capacity to link quality assurance and improvement. For instance, we held a national conference on helping institutions to make the best use of data from the National Student Survey (NSS) to improve student learning experiences.

**Assessment.** A national conference on assessment in May 2006 highlighted the value of feedback to students and offered a number of practical solutions. Nine assessment projects have been commissioned from the PVC network of small and specialist colleges. Two DVDs have been produced on student views of feedback and plagiarism which are offered without additional charge to institutions. A 24-hour event in Scotland in June explored issues of opportunities offered by assessment with a group of 34 students from across the UK in collaboration with Student Participation in Quality Scotland (sparqs). Future work will be informed by the outcomes of the Burgess Report on Measuring and Recording Student Achievement.

**Academic leadership.** We have received many requests from HEIs for assistance in the area of academic management and leadership, particularly at Head of Department level, to improve the student learning experience. We are developing a seminar programme to explore academic leadership at the discipline and departmental level, involving the Subject Centres and complementing the work of the Leadership Foundation. The focus will be on recognising and developing effective academic leadership of departments to support prospective and existing HoDs. We are also planning a seminar programme, in collaboration with the Leadership Foundation, focused on the role of Heads of Teaching and Learning and how they can align their work with institutional strategies and priorities.

## Disability Equality Partnership

The Disability Equality Partnership, established in January 2006, brings together the Academy, Action on Access and the Equality Challenge Unit to support HEFCE's Disability Strategy. Within the partnership the Academy's focus is on embedding disability awareness into the wider work of the Academy,

institutions and communities of practice across the HE sector. The partnership's achievements this year have included the introduction of a helpdesk, provision of a staff guide to disability legislation, a disability equality bulletin, evaluation of disability trainers, and provision of a website and resource directory. In July 2006 we published *Embedding success: enhancing the learning experience for disabled students*, a collection of case studies which communicates the learning from projects funded by HEFCE and DEL on the learning and teaching of disabled students. It is annotated with commentaries from Subject Centre and other Academy staff, placing the projects in a discipline-based context.

## External examining

A key feature of our approach to support for external examining has been collaborative working with a number of groups. Four regional workshops on 'Foundations of external examining' were delivered jointly with Foundation Degree Forward. The objective was to encourage more people to become external examiners on foundation degrees and to promote good practice. About 160 participants representing about 75 institutions across the HE and FE sectors attended the workshops. A major outcome of the collaboration will be further comprehensive guidance for external examiners working on foundation degree programmes across the HE in FE sector, and a training event for new external examiners.

We also worked with Edexcel, making presentations at the training programmes for new examiners and participating in the Edexcel licence centres' conference. Other work included focus groups of external examiners covering a wide range of disciplines in 12 institutions, exploring how external examiners reach decisions on the standard of student work and degree awards and make comparisons across the HE sector. The initial findings of the focus groups were discussed in a plenary session at the Academy Annual Conference in 2006 and a report will be published later in 2006. Work has also begun on gathering good practice in external examining on programmes delivered through collaborative provision.



## Involving industry in the curriculum in the Built Environment

The Centre for Education in the Built Environment (CEBE) initiated ACBEE (Accelerating Change in Built Environment Education), which was established to encourage improved dialogue between industry, universities and professional bodies with a view to shaping more relevant educational provision for students. The initiative has been funded by ConstructionSkills (a Sector Skills Council).

With many efficiency improvements being introduced throughout the industry in recent years it has become obvious that universities and the built environment courses they offer must also progress. CEBE has collated over 50 case studies which illustrate collaboration between education and industry.

For the past three years, ACBEE has championed a unique learning experience for third-year Civil Engineering students. The Constructionarium replicates the experience of working on an engineering project by asking students to build a scale construction on a real building site with real materials. To make the experience as authentic as possible, they are expected to meet time, cost and quality standards similar to those they would find in industry.

Previous projects have included scaled constructions of Canary Wharf Underground Station and tunnel portal and the Torre de Collserola in Barcelona.

A student from Constructionarium 2004 commented: "I would say that it is one of the most educationally valuable experiences we have had ... As it is unlikely that any student will work on site labouring, it is important that graduate engineers actually understand what a worker can do."

[www.acbee.org](http://www.acbee.org)

## e-Learning support

In September 2005 we launched the e-learning benchmarking initiative in partnership with the Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC). We invited universities and colleges to compare their plans and processes for using e-learning to enhance the student learning experience. The exercise will provide both quantitative and qualitative information on institutional policy and practice. We also consulted the sector about e-learning research themes prior to funding our first round of e-learning research projects (see the section on research and evaluation).

We received 56 responses from a cross-section of HEIs in England, Scotland and Wales to our invitation to participate in the e-learning benchmarking pilot exercise. Twelve institutions were selected to participate. The remaining 44 institutions will be invited to join the main benchmarking exercise which begins in October 2006.

Nine of the institutions involved in the benchmarking pilot are now piloting the e-Pathfinder programme with projects covering institutional issues such as change management, learner progression, course redesign, staff CPD and assessment. The Pathfinder programme will provide institutions with the resources and support to embed e-learning within their institutional policies and practices.

We are distributing £1.45 million to Subject Centres for the development of subject-based materials and tools on e-portfolios, digitisation, sharing and reuse of learning objects, and embedding of existing tools. Outputs from these Distributed e-Learning projects are being made available by the Subject Centres, many of whom are also developing regional, discipline or professional networks and mechanisms for the sharing of information and resources.

The e-Learning Research Observatory will take forward the activities currently being carried out by the e-Learning Research Centre, which completed its work in September 2006.

## HE in FE

The HE in FE enhancement programme is continuing to gather practical examples of good practice from the sector, including enhancing the HE experience in further education colleges and managing examination boards. We are also working to improve coherence in the sector, for example through collaborative work with other agencies like the QAA and Foundation Degree Forward (FDF). HE in FE liaison officers have been appointed in six Subject Centres to increase engagement with the HE in FE community in their subject areas.

We have now completed a comprehensive mapping exercise of all HE in FE in England and will publish the results in Autumn 2006. Networks for senior staff and practitioners have been further developed and a small research capacity has been created. Particular initiatives are underway with several Subject Centres, and links with widening participation and employability initiatives have continued to grow.

## Personal Development Planning and e-portfolios

We are working in partnership with the Centre for Recording Achievement (CRA), an Associate Centre of the Academy, to support institutions in the implementation of forms of e-portfolios and Personal Development Planning (PDP) by which students can reflect upon their own learning, performance or achievement and plan for their personal, educational, and career development. The CRA is providing a consultancy service to HEIs, offering advice on the development and implementation of different forms of PDP and e-portfolios, the evaluation of PDP/e-portfolio practice, and the integration of institutions' PDP systems into their strategies for employability.

In partnership with the CRA, JISC, the National Coalition for Electronic Portfolio Research in the US and SURF in the Netherlands, we held an international seminar that brought together over 100 practitioners and researchers from the US, Australia, Europe and the UK to discuss researching and evaluating PDP and e-portfolios. A major outcome will be the launch of a UK-led research and evaluation team to take this work forward.

## e-Learning projects in the Subject Centres

The Economics Network, as part of its Distributed e-Learning (DEL) funding, has enhanced and promoted 'ExcelAssess'. This application makes it easy to select and combine self-marking questions from an existing library at Glasgow Caledonian University. The team has also extended the library of questions to cover Economics topics as well as the existing coverage of Excel skills, numeracy and statistics. Information is available at [www.economicnetwork.ac.uk/xlss/](http://www.economicnetwork.ac.uk/xlss/)

The Social Policy and Social Work Subject Centre (SWAP) has worked with the JISC/NSF-funded Spoken Word Project to create an audiovisual resource collection looking at the making of the modern Welfare State, the impact of devolution on the social policy context of Scotland, and the changing role of women in British society. A number of other sources of information (photographs, documents etc) are also being compiled to supplement the spoken word. The audio extracts selected for use are engaging as they involve the authentic voices involved in significant social policy events. For example, audio programmes have been retrieved that allow students to hear from those directly involved about the impact of the Beveridge reforms of the late 1940s, from Sir William Beveridge to Tony Blair. Information about the Spoken Word Project is available at [www.spokenword.ac.uk](http://www.spokenword.ac.uk)

The Psychology Subject Centre has been working with the Educational Psychology community to develop shared resources. The project Supporting the Sharing of Resources across UK HE Educational Psychology Departments marked the first time representatives from all 16 courses in professional training in Educational Psychology have collaborated on the joint development of assessment procedures and learning resources. Fourteen Educational Psychology programmes will be using the materials created and seven of these will be using the materials specifically to train students in the British Psychological Society's competency standards in educational testing.

## Senior Associates

As part of a strategic focus on closer links between the Academy and HEIs, and to provide support for senior management in institutions at an appropriate level, we have recruited Senior Associates to work part-time at senior management level with HEIs. Senior Associates provide us with a range of expertise and experience and will lead the development of new activities in our institutional support programme, assist us to build strong relationships with key national bodies and contribute to the development of policy. They are able to provide a consultancy service to HEIs by acting as a 'critical friend', brokering internal developments, facilitating the sharing of good practice between institutions and bringing knowledge of practice that works elsewhere. They are:

### **Professor Michael Bradford**

Pro-Vice Chancellor for Teaching and Learning (Geography), University of Manchester

### **Professor Barry Jackson**

Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Director of Learning & Teaching, Middlesex University

### **Professor Paul Luker**

Former Pro-Vice-Chancellor, University of Bournemouth

### **Professor Chris Park**

Director of the Graduate School, Lancaster University

### **Professor Graeme Roberts**

Former Vice-Principal of Teaching & Learning, University of Aberdeen

### **Professor Freda Tallantyre**

Former Deputy Vice-Chancellor, University of Derby



## Professional development

*Leading, supporting and informing the professional development and recognition of staff in higher education*

The Academy supports the professional development of staff through its national accreditation scheme for institutional training programmes in HE learning and teaching. We also maintain a Register of Practitioners which provides public recognition of individual expertise and commitment to supporting the student learning experience.

This year 15,866 staff held Registered or Associate Practitioner status with the Academy, of whom 3,188 had gained registered status by completing an accredited programme.

## National Professional Standards Framework

A major achievement this year was the publication in February of the National Professional Standards Framework for teaching and supporting learning in higher education – a world first. The standards were developed on behalf of UUK, GuildHE and the higher education funding bodies for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland after extensive consultation with the sector. They recognise the diversity of institutions and the distinctive nature of teaching in HE, and enable a sector-owned approach to learning and teaching standards.

The standards meet the commitment in the 2003 White Paper that “from 2006 all new teaching staff should obtain a teaching qualification that incorporates agreed professional teaching standards”. They are based on research and have been designed to be acceptable to HEIs, workable in practice, non-prescriptive and adaptable to individual institutions’ needs.

The framework will support HEIs in their professional development activities for all staff engaged in supporting learning. Institutions will determine their own criteria when applying the framework. During 2006 we have been offering guidance and support to HEIs on the interpretation and implementation of the framework, including a series of regional seminars for staff to explore its implications. From September 2006 we will be incorporating the standards framework in all our accreditation activities.

## Programme accreditation

Over 220 staff development programmes in teaching, learning and academic practice in 121 higher education institutions are currently accredited by the Academy. This means that 90% of HEIs large enough to sustain such a programme have Academy accreditation.

Our teams of 38 accreditors visited 38 institutions during the year, with 42 programmes leading to Registered Practitioner status being accredited. This process was supported by Academy staff. Two HEIs have now been formally accredited in relation to the National Professional Standards Framework.

## Part-time Teachers’ Network

We are supporting the development of a Part-time Teachers’ Network to establish and disseminate good practice in supporting and developing part-time staff. We helped set up a project planning group with representatives of a broad range of institutions and groups from across the UK. The group, chaired by Professor Tony Brand, formerly of the University of Hertfordshire, has commissioned a range of activities including work on categorising part-time staff, and surveys of initiatives on part-time teachers in selected institutions, work by CETLs on developing part-time staff and subject-focused and institutionally-based projects.

First indications are that substantial amounts of activity are undertaken by many Academy Subject Centres and some CETLs to support the professional development needs of part-time staff, along with other discipline- and institution-focused initiatives.

Work is also under way on raising awareness of the professional development needs of part-time staff; investigating opportunities for part-time staff to meet the UK Professional Standards Framework; liaison with funding bodies; and regional and country-based seminars to share good practice and the challenges of supporting part-time staff.

*“The National Professional Standards Framework is an important milestone for the UK’s higher education sector. It is a significant achievement by the sector and one which will enable students to have full confidence in the professionalism and quality of the teaching they receive while studying.”*

Professor Drummond Bone  
President,  
Universities UK

## CPD at North East Wales Institute

Staff at North East Wales Institute (NEWI) will be benefiting from a new Professional Review and Development Plan to help them with their Continuing Professional Development. NEWI, working with their internal CPD group, were interested in developing a new CPD framework and needed a clear proposal on the way forward at an institutional level; they also wanted an external perspective for quality assurance purposes.

Another important factor was to ensure that the new Professional Standards Framework was fully embedded in NEWI's internal processes. NEWI's work with the Academy has led to the development of a NEWI web resource linking directly to the Academy's resources.

Colette Bleakley, who led the development, said, "We have had critical conversations with the Academy on the rationale for our programme, providing feedback on our modules and materials. The enthusiastic response has been an enormous help and we are now ready for accreditation from the Academy."

Fourteen new accreditors were appointed this year and have participated in a two-day induction and training event.

We envisage accreditation or re-accreditation visits to 54 HEIs in 2006-07. Seven new programmes are scheduled for accreditation and five HEIs are seeking first-time accreditation in 2006-07. We expect to see increased interest in accreditation from the FE sector following the extension of the Academy's work in this area.

## Evaluation of accredited programmes

This year we carried out an extensive evaluation of the effectiveness of our accredited programmes. We found that the programmes had clear potential benefits for HEIs, lecturers, students and student learning. In particular, all participants reported becoming more student-focused in their teaching after completing one of the programmes.

The evaluation included an online survey of nearly 400 recent participants in accredited programmes in 32 UK HEIs, complemented by more in-depth discussions and interviews with Pro-Vice-Chancellors and Vice-Principals, programme leaders, Heads of Departments and Faculties and programme participants in six HEIs. Reported benefits of accredited programmes included helping to raise the profile of teaching generally within an institution or department; putting teaching "on a more professional footing"; and enabling new staff, perhaps with a research background, to think more deeply about teaching. The programmes enhanced new lecturers' confidence. The survey identified areas for development in providing more subject-specific content and in reducing the burden on participating staff. In the light of this survey, we expect to develop new ways in which staff can show that they are meeting the national professional standards.

## Disciplinary input to accredited programmes

One of the major issues arising from the evaluation was the need for more subject-specific content in such programmes. Our Subject Centres are very

well placed to provide this, for instance by running workshops for new staff or through the Supporting New Academic Staff (SNAS) online database. SNAS brings together staff from Subject Centres and leaders from accredited programmes in HEIs.

SNAS project meetings have provided a lively forum for discussing ways of blending generic and disciplinary approaches to supporting new staff. We have also set up online discipline-based discussions for programme leaders and staff developers and published case studies on linking research and teaching in the disciplines.

The SNAS database, which supports new staff through resources organised by discipline-focused themes, has proved beneficial to a wider range of staff in addition to new lecturers. In recognition of this, we are reviewing how best to maximise the SNAS resources and incorporate them into the wider Academy databases. We are now establishing a group to look at discipline-based inputs into professional development.

## Review of accreditation scheme

Informed by the evaluation of accredited programmes, we are also conducting a review of the accreditation scheme itself, covering both the range of professional development activities we accredit, and why and how we do it. We have established a steering group chaired by Professor Nigel Palastanga (Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Learning & Teaching at Cardiff University) to guide this review, which will take account of the views of staff developers in HEIs and those of our own accreditors, as well as the knowledge gained from the formative evaluation of existing accredited programmes.

We are piloting a scheme to accredit Continuing Professional Development (CPD) activities with ten HEIs. The outcomes will inform proposals arising from the review of accreditation.

## Support for Graduate Teaching Assistants and new lecturers

The Subject Centre for Economics has developed its support for Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs). A new page on the Centre's website has been dedicated to support for teaching assistants and new lecturers. It includes a chapter from the *Handbook for Economics Lecturers* with sections on structuring class activities, teaching diverse classes and preventing and resolving problems. It also features case studies written by experienced GTAs, online resources and a calendar of events for GTAs. The Subject Centre also recently hosted two workshops for GTAs in Nottingham and East Anglia, which focused on key aspects of managing small tutor groups and providing useful feedback to students.

The Subject Centre for Psychology organises an annual event for new lecturers. This popular two-day residential forum provides an opportunity for newly-appointed Psychology teaching staff to develop their teaching practice and to share experiences with others. In addition to discussion groups, experienced practitioners lead sessions focusing on issues such as research supervision, assessment and teaching research methods. This event complements institutional Postgraduate Certificate in Higher Education (PGCHE) courses and in some institutions contributes to the PGCHE qualification.

*“On behalf of the Course Planning Team I wish to thank the Accreditation Team for being so supportive and constructively critical, before and during the validation. We received back from the Team helpful and supportive ideas that would undoubtedly improve the course content and overall provision. We have had a very positive experience working with you and we look forward to future exchanges.”*

Dr John Dallat,  
Accredited programme leader,  
University of Ulster



## Profile of a National Teaching Fellow: Jenny Naish

Jenny Naish is Head of International Development in the National Centre for Work Based Learning Partnerships (NCWBLP) at Middlesex University. She also works in the Middlesex CETL in Work-Based Learning.

Jenny has been central to the development of WBL at Middlesex since its inception over a decade ago. Its special work-linked features enable learning to take place in – and be entirely centred on – the working environment. As Head of International Development for WBL Jenny is responsible for the quality assurance and staff development of all the University's partners delivering WBL programmes globally.

She has to provide an academic service to students while also maintaining good relationships with managers who need tangible proof of the returns of investment in work-based programmes. Her students range from dancers at the Royal Ballet and officers at the Ministry of Defence Police to Food Store managers at Marks & Spencer. She comments, "The tutor/student relationship is unconventional and communicating as equals in the learning process is key. Supporting this process requires high levels of my own teaching skills within sensitive business environments to ensure the academic rigour of the programme while simultaneously meeting organisational need."

## Consultation on the future of the Register of Practitioners

One of our primary aims is to raise the status of teaching in HE and provide a means of recognition for individuals who demonstrate commitment to it. In 2006 we commissioned a major consultation on the future of the Register of Practitioners. The consultation outlined a model for the Register that shifted the focus from membership of a professional association to the recognition of achievement.

Nearly 3,000 people responded, 79% of whom were Registered Practitioners. They expressed overwhelming support for the changes: 86% supported the proposed change to a recognition model and 80% agreed with the proposals to replace the current Register of Practitioners with three categories of recognition: Associate Fellow of the Higher Education Academy; Fellow of the Higher Education Academy and Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy.

There was also strong support for the new categories to be aligned with the National Professional Standards Framework. Implementation of the new recognition scheme will begin in 2007. The new model will result in greater recognition for individual staff, and will be more inclusive and attractive to a wider range of staff. We hope that HEIs will increasingly take account of recognised status in their own reward and recognition strategies.

## Relaunch of the National Teaching Fellowship Scheme

In January we relaunched the National Teaching Fellowship Scheme (NTFS). The scheme is funded by HEFCE and the Department for Employment and Learning in Northern Ireland, and recognises and rewards individual excellence in HE teaching.

Earlier in the year we undertook a comprehensive review of the scheme to ascertain its impact on both individuals and institutions. This resulted in a recommendation to separate the award to the individual from the requirement for the award holder to carry out a project. The scheme now has two strands, Individual Awards and Projects.



**Above:** The 2006 National Teaching Fellows at the awards ceremony, held at Middle Temple Hall, London in September.

HEIs are able to nominate up to three staff for the Individual Awards, which aim to raise the profile of learning and teaching; recognise and celebrate individuals who make an outstanding impact on the student learning experience; and provide a national focus for institutional teaching and learning excellence schemes in England and Northern Ireland. Individual awards of £10,000 are made to support the Fellows' professional development. Each strand is overseen by a National Advisory Panel. Professor Rick Trainor, Principal of King's College London, and Professor Janet Finch, Vice-Chancellor of Keele University, chair the Panels for the Individual and Projects strands respectively.

In June we announced the 50 winners of the new Individual Awards. They were chosen from a record 242 nominations submitted by HEIs across England and Northern Ireland, and represent staff in a huge variety of disciplines and roles. The awards were presented in London in September.

## Association of National Teaching Fellows

An Association of National Teaching Fellows was set up in 2005 to enhance the impact of the NTFs, who now number 230, in promoting excellence in teaching and learning. As an association of the Academy it will work with us to promote the expertise of the award holders to the benefit of the sector. Its first Chair was Bob Rotheram (Nottingham Trent University, NTF 2002) and it is currently chaired by Lesley-Jane Eales-Reynolds (University of Portsmouth, NTF 2001). Working with the ANTF, we continue to support individual NTFs through induction, mentoring and advice and an annual symposium.



## Promoting good practice

*Promoting good practice in all aspects of support for the student learning experience*

We seek to be an authoritative source of information and advice on many aspects of the student learning experience. We offer a brokerage service by sourcing examples of good practice, showcasing effective strategies developed by institutions, and providing opportunities for people to share practices. Here we give examples of the very wide range of activities and resources we offer to serve the needs of HEIs and individual staff.

Our Subject Centres support a high level of engagement with individual staff, subject-level units within HEIs and key discipline bodies. They reach at least 50,000 individual staff in the course of a year.

Collaborative work among Subject Centres, and between Subject Centres and other parts of the Academy, has been particularly vigorous in the areas of employability and entrepreneurship, widening participation, sustainability and support for interdisciplinary studies.

We judged the 2005 THES Awards for Widening Participation Initiative of the Year and Outstanding Contribution to the Local Community, and have agreed to sponsor the Best Student Experience award and to co-sponsor the Outstanding Support for Overseas Students and Outstanding Support for Students with Disabilities awards in 2006.

We have also established links with *The Guardian* who supported the NTFS Individual Awards.

## Conferences, workshops and networks

As well as our flagship Annual Conference, which attracted over 550 delegates in 2006, we have held 52 events over the year attracting 3,500 participants, on topics including: assessment, entrepreneurship in research universities, institutional teaching and learning plans, interdisciplinary learning and teaching, the National Student Survey, Personal Development Planning, personal tutoring, sustainability skills, technology-rich learning spaces, VLEs and work-based learning.

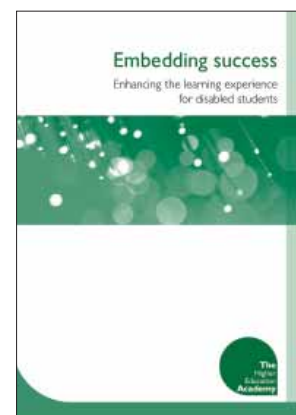
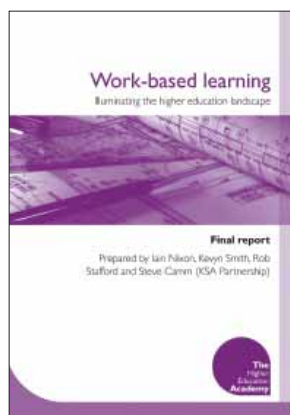
Subject Centres held almost 500 events, including conferences, workshops and shorter events, and contributed to a similar number of external events, attracting over 14,000 participants in total. They funded over 500 mini-projects, facilitated 159 networks, made 585 visits to departments, and held 939 meetings with external bodies. The Academy centrally facilitates 20 CETL networks and 6 other networks.

## Resources and information

Subject Centres have produced over 14,000 electronic resources and over 900 printed publications, including academic journals, guides and newsletters.

### Conference on Personal Tutoring

As part of our Innovations in the Curriculum programme, we organised, jointly with the University of Westminster, the second Annual Conference on Personal Tutoring in May 2006 at York St John University. Delegates included personal tutors, student support staff and learning and teaching co-ordinators. Dr Charlie Nutt, Associate Director of the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) in the US, brought an international perspective to the debate on topics including supporting international students, improving the first-year experience through personal tutoring, online tutoring, staff development for tutors and institutional models for the role. A book and an electronic case book of practice, based on papers presented at the first annual conference, were launched at the conference.



**Above:** *Work-based learning* and *Embedding success* – examples of the Academy's broad range of publications.



## Student Essay Award

The Student Essay Award is an opportunity for the Academy to learn directly from students about the issues affecting them and is a valuable resource for research into good practice. Each Subject Centre hosts its own competition and the winners are entered into the main competition, which is sponsored by Toshiba. We received over 350 entries in 2006. Liz Piper, the Health Sciences and Practice winner, who is studying for a Nursing Diploma, was this year's overall winner, writing on 'How does your experience of your course compare with any expectations you may have had?' Her essay looked at how her preconceptions about the social, academic and knowledge-based aspects of her course compared with the reality of her first year.

We have centrally produced over 40 publications, including:

- *Institutional strategies to link teaching and research*
- *Celebrating excellence: six years of the NTFS* (a digest of activities undertaken by National Teaching Fellows)
- 2 Briefings on Education for Sustainable Development (for academic senior managers and employers)
- *Embedding success: Enhancing the learning experience for disabled students*
- Student Employability Profiles
- *Work-based Learning: Illuminating the Higher Education Landscape*
- The Learning & Employability series
- Four issues of our magazine, *Academy Exchange*
- Four specialist newsletters for particular groups
- A Subject Network Prospectus

## Centres for Excellence in Teaching and Learning

We are assisting the Centres for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETLs) in England and Northern Ireland by facilitating networking to

share and disseminate information and effective practices. Subject Centres are contributing through shared activity with individual CETLs and through the development of subject- and thematic-based specialist networks. Specific activities have included a conference on ethical decision-making, workshops on supporting pedagogic research in CETLs, a one-day workshop on recognising and rewarding excellence in teaching and a meeting to discuss the creation of a network of external and internal evaluators for CETLs. Together with the University of Manchester CETL on Enquiry-Based Learning we have launched a network for students involved with CETLs.

We are helping CETL Directors and Managers to develop their own project management capabilities and providing guidance on change management. We are also working closely with DEL in Northern Ireland on the evaluation strategy for the CETL (NI) initiative and are holding a series of workshops for the CETLs (NI) to explore how this strategy can be linked to the evaluation of CETLs in England.

## Internationalisation

One focus for our work this year, identified as an important theme by the sector, is the

internationalisation of the curriculum and support for international students. At the disciplinary level our Subject Centres are addressing the internationalisation of the curriculum through collaborations with professional bodies and overseas subject associations, contributions to international journals and conferences, international research collaborations and the dissemination of international practice.

We are also planning a programme of centrally co-ordinated activities on internationalisation. This will include a literature review; funding a number of disciplinary projects; events on supporting international students and to promote dialogue about internationalisation, including the implications of the Bologna Process; and the development of web-based resources, including case studies of institutional practice.

Underpinning all the Academy's work is a commitment to having an international perspective in recognition of increased competition from overseas providers, growing international perspectives on curriculum and standards issues driven by the Bologna and other policy agendas and, not least, the needs of students themselves entering a world of global connectivity and mobility.

We are also working with a wide range of stakeholder organisations to provide effective and coherent support for institutions. These include: the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education, the funding councils, the UK HE Europe Unit, Universities Scotland, UKCOSA (the Council for International Education), the Council for Industry and Higher Education (CIHE), the British Council, the Development Education Association, the Staff and Educational Development Association (SEDA) and the UK Socrates-Erasmus Council.

## Dissemination of FDTL project outcomes

We help to disseminate the outcomes from Fund for the Development of Teaching and Learning (FDTL) projects within institutions in England. We also provide opportunities for FDTL projects to feed into our broader thematic work by, for example,

## Education for Sustainable Development: Subject Centres working in partnership

Three Subject Centres held a joint event in March 2006 on sustainability and corporate social responsibility (CSR). Delegates, who included both staff and students, came from the communities served by the Hospitality, Leisure, Sport and Tourism Network, Geography, Earth, and Environmental Sciences Subject Centre (GEES), and Centre for Sociology, Anthropology and Politics (C-SAP).

The event explored the opportunities for enhancing student employability and citizenship provided by the increasing interest in CSR and business ethics. Workshops included a "coffee and papers" session to allow time to read and reflect on papers that have influenced thinking on the topic; a problem-based learning activity on 'Greening the Olympics' run by Jenny Blumhof of GEES; 'The Tragedy of the Commons'; 'Working with ethical audits' and several other interactive activities.

Materials generated by the event for the active and experiential learning and teaching of sustainable development will be made available to subject communities.



## Annual Conference 2006

Over 550 delegates attended the Academy's second Annual Conference at the University of Nottingham in July. The Conference themes – higher education policy, scholarship of teaching and learning in the disciplines, and innovations to support the student learning experience – were explored in over 100 sessions delivered by UK and international specialists.

A keynote speech by Professor Bob Burgess, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Leicester, focused on the development of HE policy in relation to the development of a credit framework and the abolition of degree classifications.

A keynote on 'New ways to support an integrated student experience' was delivered by Sue Holmes, Chair of the Association of University Administrators. Reviewing some of the key issues in creating the "right sort" of environments for learning, Ms Holmes asked how students could be involved in the decision-making process and emphasised the need for more mobile working styles in the future.

A discussion on the Bologna Process with Tim Birtwistle, a UK Bologna Promoter and Professor of the Law and Policy of Higher Education at Leeds Metropolitan University, gave an overview of the key issues and set out the agenda.

Professor Caroline Gipps, Vice-Chancellor at the University of Wolverhampton, discussed 'The scholarship of teaching: how to build capacity in research on teaching and learning'. Her presentation looked at how to embed research-informed teaching across institutions.

Dr Mike Prosser, Director, Research and Evaluation at the Academy, asked how we can analyse and interpret the results of student surveys – especially institution-wide and national surveys – to improve the student learning experience.

Papers from the 2006 Conference are available from our website at:

[www.heacademy.ac.uk/events/4741.htm](http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/events/4741.htm)

presenting at Academy events and contributing to Subject Centre activities, events and publications.

In 2005-06 we commissioned a series of evidence-based reports through the Subject Centres involved in FDTL phase 4 to gain a better understanding of the impact of FDTL and the nature of project outcomes at the disciplinary level.

## Employability and enterprise

The first UK-wide Burlington Conference in April 2006 brought together some 100 'employability champions' to share good practice and develop strategies to address challenges in employability, enterprise and work-based learning.

Many HEIs have identified the enhancement of their students' employability as a priority for our work with them this year. In response we have produced the Learning and Employability series: a range of guides for senior managers and staff who are reviewing or developing strategies and practice for the enhancement of student employability. Five new titles and six revised titles, written by leading researchers in the field, have been published this year, including *Work-related learning in higher education*, *Employability and doctoral research postgraduates*, *Part-time students and employability*, *Ethics and employability* and *Career development learning and employability*.

We also commissioned a study on work-based learning. *Work-based learning: illuminating the higher education landscape* outlines case studies of successful WBL initiatives taking place in HEIs. The study reveals that there is a great deal of workforce development activity underway in the HE sector. The report is available at [www.heacademy.ac.uk/researchpublications.htm](http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/researchpublications.htm)

We have set up an employability enhancement network in Scotland. We are also working closely with the National Council for Graduate Entrepreneurship. This year 14 of our Subject Centres have collaborated on a number of projects to embed enterprise learning across the curriculum.

## Faith Guides

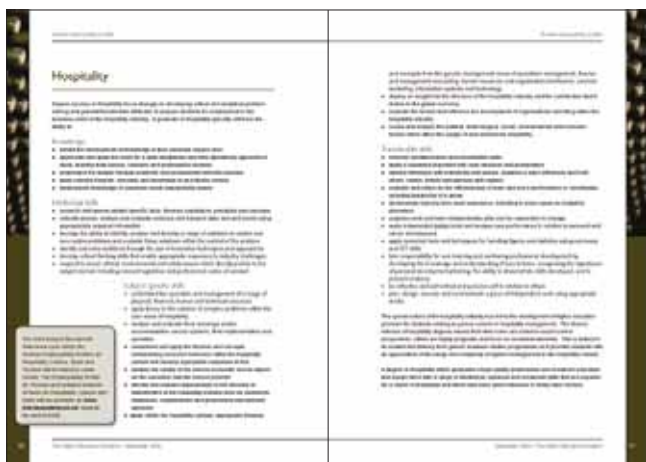
A series of five Faith Guides has been produced by the Subject Centre for Philosophical and Religious Studies (PRS). The Guides to Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism give information on how best to support students with a variety of religious beliefs. The series covers key religious and cultural sensitivities that may arise within a university environment, and offers a concise reference to the religions in question and the belief structures that underpin them, combined with tips for recruiting and retaining students and providing an inclusive and welcoming environment. The guides also detail students' feelings about life on campus.

Dr Simon Smith, the Centre's Associate Director, says: "These Guides will not necessarily solve all the controversies or confusion, but may bring some answers to some of the basic questions - such as what a religion is, and what it means to be a member of a specific faith."

<http://prs.heacademy.ac.uk/publications>

*"[The Academy Annual Conference] is a great end to a busy academic year with enough food for thought to last several years. Now a must-attend annual event – a truly enhancing experience."*

Professor Brent MacGregor,  
Vice Principal,  
Edinburgh College of Art



Above: Pages from the Student Employability Profiles.

## Student Employability Profiles

Together with the Council for Industry and Higher Education (CIHE), we launched a series of Student Employability Profiles for all degree programmes, which will help academic staff, employers and students to understand better the skills developed through the study of a particular subject. All 24 of the Academy’s Subject Centres worked on the relevant Profiles to ensure that their content and style will be useful to academics. The Profiles were based on the employability skills identified in the QAA’s subject benchmark statements, which were then mapped against competencies identified by CIHE members as ones that help transform organisations.

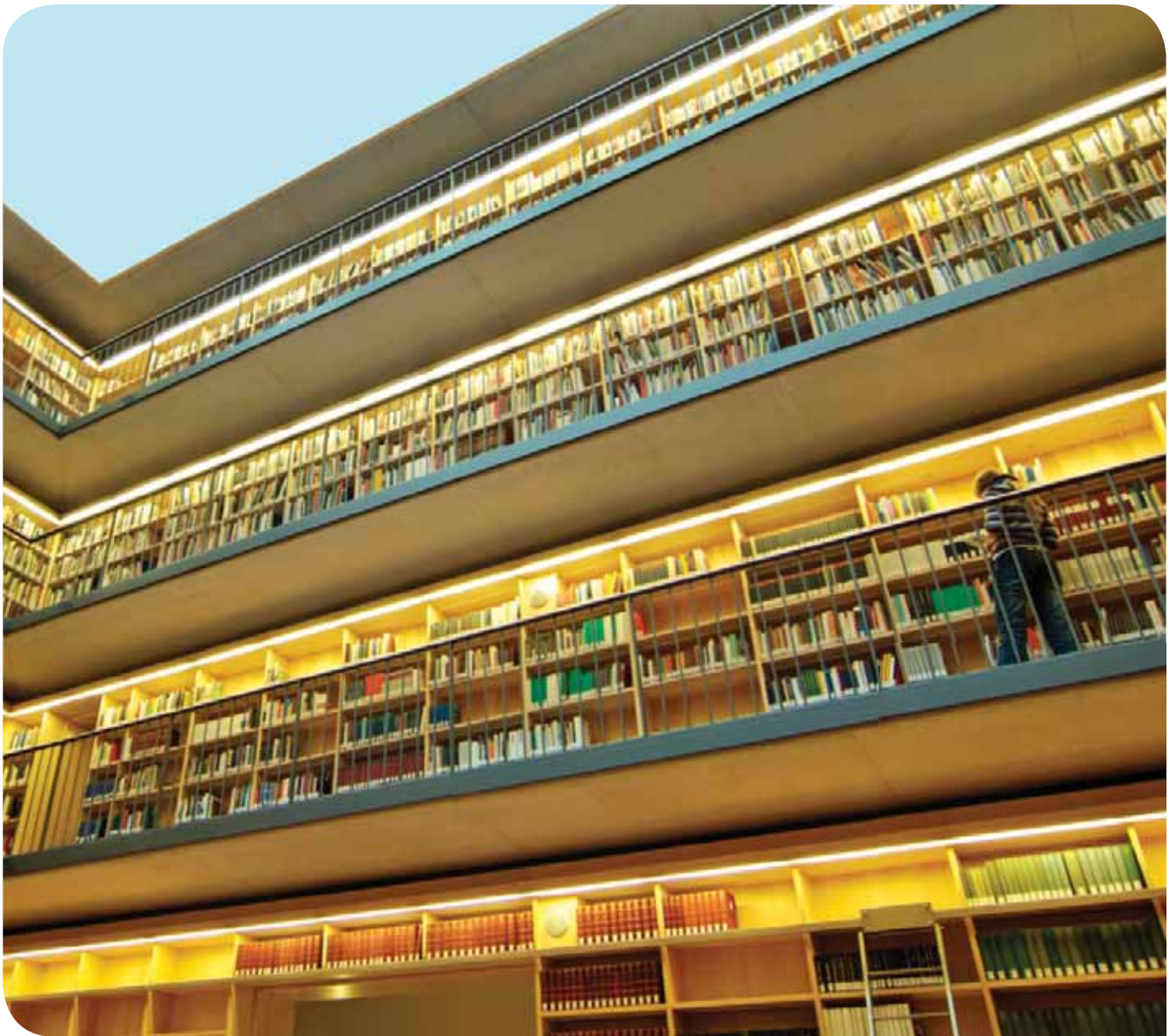
Two complementary guides to the Student Employability Profiles were also published, one intended for academic and support staff, and the other for employers’ use. They provide an overview of the 52 discipline profiles, and point to further material available on the Subject Centres’ websites.

The Profiles are available from:  
[www.heacademy.ac.uk/profiles.htm](http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/profiles.htm)

## Academy online services

The Academy website continues to provide a wide range of resources. These include:

- a resource database containing over 500 learning and teaching resources on a wide range of topics: [www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources.asp](http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources.asp)
- Funding Finder: a comprehensive list of funding opportunities available to the sector: [www.connect.ac.uk/funding](http://www.connect.ac.uk/funding)
- SNAS database: resources targeted specifically at new academic staff: [www.heacademy.ac.uk/snasdatabase.asp](http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/snasdatabase.asp)
- Directory of Employability Resources: a searchable database of employability publications and materials available throughout the sector: [www.heacademy.ac.uk/employability.asp](http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/employability.asp)
- Case Study Finder: this innovative tool can search for examples of practice across a wide range of key areas including assessment, employability, curriculum design and other aspects of learning and teaching: [www.connect.ac.uk/casestudies](http://www.connect.ac.uk/casestudies)



## Research and evaluation

*Leading the development of research and evaluation to improve the quality of the student learning experience*

The focus of our research and evaluation activities has been on developing approaches to improving student learning experiences which are more directly informed by research and evidence. We are seeking to encourage, fund or commission investigative studies focused on more immediate policy and practice issues, evaluative studies focused on evaluation for improvement, and more theory-driven studies focused on developing ideas to inform practice over the next decade or so. Through a programme of literature reviews, we are also seeking to synthesise and contextualise existing research and evidence in order to inform practice and policy that impact on student learning experiences.

## Research grants

This year we awarded a second round of 18 research grants from a pool of 122 applications. Funded projects include:

- Ontology, identity formation and lifelong learning outcomes: theorising the relationship between discipline-based research and teaching: Melanie Walker, University of Sheffield
- Academics' experiences and conceptions of 'research' and 'teaching': developing the relationship between these activities to enhance student learning within different disciplines and institutions: Lisa Lucas, University of Bristol
- Tribes, territories, research and teaching: enhancing the teaching-research nexus: Paul Trowler, Lancaster University
- To examine the impact that introducing a new method of assessment: Practically Assessed Structured Scenarios (PASS) has had on vocational courses in events management and whether it has relevance for other vocational courses: Julia Tum, Leeds Metropolitan University
- An investigation into the mechanisms that facilitate and encourage the research-teaching nexus in Science and Engineering Departments: staff and student perspectives: Joanne Jones and Maria Fasli, University of Essex
- Learning from digital natives: integrating formal and informal learning: Anoush Margaryan and Allison Littlejohn, Glasgow Caledonian University
- Enabling transition into higher education for students with Asperger's Syndrome: Manuel Madriaga, Sheffield Hallam University
- Characteristics of high quality research environments: Keith Trigwell, University of Oxford
- Exploring practice and participation in transition to postgraduate social science study: Jane Tobbell, University of Huddersfield
- Widening Participation and continuing to postgraduate education. Decision making, deterrents and creating success: Mary Stuart, Kingston University
- Judging teaching excellence: capturing applied policy in relation to theoretical perspectives: Graham Gibbs, University of Oxford
- Strategies for generating 'transformative quality' at sub-institutional level: David Rush, University of

Winchester

- Enhancing learning through the internal-external quality interface: Lee Harvey, Sheffield Hallam University
- Increasing the quality of feedback on assignments while altering student perceptions of good feedback based on their school experience: Harriet Jones, University of East Anglia
- Staff and student perceptions of feedback quality in the context of widening participation: Chris Beaumont, Liverpool Hope University
- Using role and reference grammar to support computer-assisted assessment of free text answers: Elizabeth Guest, Leeds Metropolitan University
- Academic leadership: professional development for programme leaders: Veronique Johnston and Jenny Westwood, Napier University
- Investigating the capabilities of course and module leaders in departments: Paul Blackmore, Coventry University.

Reports from the first round of ten research grants awarded in 2005 will be published later in 2006.

## Widening participation and e-learning research services

We have established two new research services on widening participation and e-learning. The WP service is intended to improve the relevance, quality and dissemination of WP research to a wide audience; our online services allow users to browse for projects.

The e-learning service provides a "one-stop-shop" for identifying and accessing the results of national and international e-learning research aimed at enhancing the student learning experience.

## e-Learning research projects

We have funded our first round of four e-learning research projects, selected from 123 expressions of interest. The projects, due to report in July-August 2007, are:

- Putting Web 2.0 to work: new pedagogies for new learning spaces: Dr Sian Bayne, University of

Edinburgh and Professor Ray Land, University of Strathclyde

- Informal mobile podcasting and learning adaptation (IMPALA): Professor Gilly Salmon and Dr Palitha Edirisingha, University of Leicester
- Evaluation of generic, open source, web-based marking tools with regard to their support for criterion-referenced marking and the generation of student feedback: Dr Anne Jones and Dr Lillian Greenwood, Queen's University Belfast
- Impact of blending a multimedia e-learning resource with traditional teaching methods to support mathematics learning within the life sciences: Dr Vicki Tariq, University of Central Lancashire.

A similar call for e-learning proposals will take place in 2006-07 as part of our forthcoming e-Learning Observatory function, to be launched in Spring 2007.

## Literature reviews

Our first round of literature reviews are due to report later in 2006, with a further four reviews funded for 2006-07. The second round of funded reviews are on:

- The student learning experience: Dr Geoffrey Hayward, University of Oxford
- Learning spaces for the 21st century: Dr Paul Temple, The Institute of Education, University of London
- Innovative assessment across the disciplines: Professor Dai Hounsell, University of Edinburgh
- Influencing thinking and practices about teaching and learning in higher education: Professor Maggi-Savin Baden, Coventry University.

As part of our literature review programme we are also conducting a meta-review of the reviews. Our aim is to work towards identifying the types of review that are most meaningful and useful to the sector.

## Surveys

Our surveys of student experiences continue to develop. A survey of the experience of participants in

## Feedback in Law Schools

The UK Centre for Legal Education (UKCLE) commissioned a study to explore the different forms of feedback provided to students in Law Schools and to evaluate their perceived effectiveness in enhancing student learning. Eleven Law Schools participated, with contract law chosen as a 'typical' undergraduate law course to provide a common context. The study found that:

- out of six pre-1992 universities, five set formative assessment
- out of five post-1992 universities, only one set formative assessment
- all students given the opportunity of formal formative assessment recognised its value, and those who were not given it wished they had been
- students wanted both a mark and comments
- students felt that being given feedback at an early stage boosted their confidence.

"With law students identifying assessment and feedback as the least satisfactory aspects of their learning experience in the latest National Student Survey, this project is a timely investigation into formative assessment practices in Law Schools," commented Tracey Varnava of UKCLE.

## Integrated approaches to widening participation

A study led by the Academy and the European Access Network found that there is an increased commitment to widening participation across universities and colleges of all types. The research was commissioned by UUK and GuildHE and investigated policy and practice in widening participation, involving senior managers, project managers, teaching and learning staff, students and partnership organisations.

*From the Margins to the Mainstream: Embedding widening participation in higher education* was published in December 2005. The report examines how widening participation has become a mainstream activity, moving from individual projects to practices that span whole universities and colleges and are linked to other institutional strategies such as teaching and learning. Such practices do not simply promote wider access to higher education, but also help students to succeed once they have entered higher education.

The study found that HEIs used a variety of ways to promote an integrated approach, including explicitly valuing diversity in their mission statements; devolving widening participation responsibilities across the institution; providing financial incentives to staff and departments; disseminating good news stories; creating personal links across the institution; and staff development. The study made a number of recommendations for staff and institutions to support widening participation.

The report is available at:  
[www.heacademy.ac.uk/1701.htm](http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/1701.htm)

Academy-accredited programmes in higher education was published in May 2006. The final report of a survey of first-year student experiences is due for release in Autumn 2006 (see box opposite). We are working closely with the sector, funding bodies and other interested parties on the development of a postgraduate research experience survey, which will be made available to HEIs who wish to use it to survey their research students' experiences and to benchmark these against other HEIs.

Two new surveys are being commissioned: an investigation of academic staff experiences of the impact of national initiatives to increase the professional status of teaching, and a study of experiences of taught Masters' students – a somewhat under-investigated group.

We continue to work with the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) on the assessment of research on teaching and learning in higher education, and with the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) on the support for capacity building for research on teaching and learning in higher education.

A Research Advisory Committee has been established, chaired by Professor Peter Scott, Vice-Chancellor of Kingston University.

## National Student Survey

We are helping institutions to make the best use of the results of the National Student Survey (NSS) to enhance their students' learning experiences. We are encouraging interpretation of the NSS results as a way of looking at students' experiences of their courses and the quality of their learning, and how these can be improved.

We held a national conference in June 2006 on how institutions and departments can use the NSS. For the 2007 survey we are working with Ipsos MORI to develop and pilot a 'bank' of optional extra questions that HEIs may wish to add for their own use. We are also reviewing the institutional dissemination site to improve the analyses as well as helping to make it more user-friendly.

## The first-year experience

In May 2006 we published the first major study of UK students' first-year experiences. It was carried out for the Academy by Professor Mantz Yorke and Professor Bernard Longden of Liverpool Hope University. Preliminary results were reported at a national conference on Innovations in supporting the first-year student experience, held in Edinburgh in May.

The study found that over 80% of students were happy with their choice of subject, and the majority were confident that their studies would lead to a graduate-level job, but that over half needed to undertake paid work to help fund their studies, and a similar number were worried about their finances.

Over 6,000 students across a range of broad subject areas at 23 HEIs across the UK were asked about a wide range of aspects of their first year, including teaching, learning and assessment. One of the aims was to investigate the reasons why students do not return for a second year, and to compare the reasons for non-completion with those given in previous studies.

It appears that the more students know about their institutions and courses before enrolling, the less likely they are to consider dropping out. The study found that the likelihood of withdrawal was considerably affected by two key factors: students' prior knowledge of their institution and their course, and how stimulating they felt their teaching to be.

Teaching was generally seen as supportive, and staff were generally perceived as friendly: in most subject areas a majority of students said that at least two members of staff knew them by name. Most students thought that the feedback they received supported their learning. 72% were confident that their programme would lead to an appropriate graduate-level job.

The full report from the first phase of the study will be published in Autumn 2006. The next phase will focus on students who have not returned to their second year. A final report on the whole project will be available in Autumn 2007.

We are commissioning a study, starting this Autumn, on the ways in which universities and colleges are using the NSS results and website in their own procedures for improving the student learning experience. We are planning to work intensively with a small number of institutions on their use of the NSS data in their quality management activities.

## National Teaching Fellowship Scheme Projects

A new Projects strand to the National Teaching Fellowship Scheme (NTFS) was launched in January 2006. Institutions will be invited to compete

for funds of up to £200,000 for projects which apply existing research, knowledge, expertise or practice to advance understanding of factors that lead to enhanced student learning, provide transferable outputs relevant to institutional and national strategic priorities, and address one of the issues identified as priority concerns for the sector: innovation in the curriculum and student support; quality management; student assessment; or academic leadership. At least one member of the bidding team must be an existing National Teaching Fellow. The invitation to bid for project funding opened in September 2006 so that Individual Award winners from 2006 were able to apply.



## An accountable organisation

*A responsive, efficient and accountable organisation*

The Academy has continued to develop its infrastructure in order to build a firm foundation for its external activities. We have harmonised pay and grading for all staff, undertaken a restructure of the senior management team to align skills and responsibilities with the strategic plan, and paid greater attention to value for money, now that initial financial systems and procedures are in place. We are keen to respond to all stakeholders effectively and have been building our client relationship management database over the year.

Work is in progress towards providing individual HEIs with their first institution-specific reports of our activities with them, which will complement this Annual Report.

## Website development

In January 2006 we embarked on a web development programme to ensure that our web presence better reflects the work of the Academy and offers easy access to the unique resources we have available. In the Spring we launched an online survey to find out what users think of our website. We used the results to make some changes to the current website, including an A-Z service to aid navigation, and also gave the site a fresh new look. This has received overwhelmingly positive comments and over the coming months we will continue to improve the online services we offer.

Over the summer we began to develop a web portal. Following user testing, changes have already been made to the existing site, a pilot phase for the portal has been launched involving seven Subject Centres, and the programme will develop over the next three years. The aim is to provide a service that showcases effective practice in learning, teaching and the student experience as well as providing regular updates on Academy news and a forum for active debate. The project will help us evaluate our online services and explore ways to collaborate more effectively with Subject Centres to deliver new and innovative web services.

We held our second Annual Subscribers' meeting in June 2006. Following presentations by Paul Ramsden (Chief Executive), Bruce Brown (Director of the Art, Design and Media Subject Centre), Mike Prosser (Director of Research and Evaluation) and Cliff Allan (Deputy Chief Executive), the Senior Executive joined Leslie Wagner, Chair of the Board, on a panel to answer questions about the strategic direction of the Academy, its funding and its purpose.

We continue to keep our stakeholders informed through newsletters and *Academy Exchange* magazine ([www.heacademy.ac.uk/academyexchange.htm](http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/academyexchange.htm)) as well as by publication of Board and Council minutes and papers on our website at [www.heacademy.ac.uk/governance.htm](http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/governance.htm).

This year we have integrated the work of the Academy in York and that of the Subject Centres more fully and have involved Subject Centre Directors in strategic policy development for the whole Academy. As the Academy establishes itself, teams have been working to ensure effective integration of new structures between Subject Centres and staff based at York, to communicate the message that we are "one Academy" to our stakeholders. In addition to the client relationship management project mentioned above, we are facilitating communications and visits between teams to gain an understanding of operations

and ensure better signposting of activities and avoidance of duplication of effort. This has been helped by an intensive review of our planning and project management activities.

This was the first year in which the Academy has had a direct funding relationship with Subject Centres, strengthening the relationship between the parts of the Academy and contributing towards their greater integration, while maintaining the Subject Centres' distinctive roles and levels of response to stakeholders.

Another initiative begun during the course of this year was the development of the next phase of our website to provide a web portal.

## Staff development

Academy staff have benefited from a tailored staff development programme, including opportunities to attend a joint event with Subject Centres as well as the Academy's Annual Conference. Some staff are undertaking specialised training related to their roles and all staff have the opportunity to attend annual team-building events. The Academy operates a monthly staff briefing to ensure that staff are up to date with recent developments and have a broad awareness of our varied work.

# The Board

*The Board is the executive authority that manages the business of the Academy*

The individual Directors are also trustees of the charity. The Board meets at least four times per year. Its membership is:

- four appointees from UUK and GuildHE, one of whom is elected by the Board to serve as Chair
- two appointed jointly by all the higher education funding bodies
- four Council members (two Registered Practitioners and two Subject Centre representatives). One of these is the elected Chair of Council
- two chosen by the Board from outside the sector
- up to two co-opted by the Board, one of whom shall normally be a student co-opted after consultation with the National Union of Students and National Postgraduate Committee.

Members of the Board serve on the following committees:

- Audit Committee
- Finance and General Purposes Committee
- Nominations Committee
- Remuneration Committee

**Professor Leslie Wagner CBE**

Chair of the Board  
The Higher Education Academy

**Gary Attle**

Partner, Mills & Reeve Solicitors

**Carole Baume**

Head of Regional Collaboration and Widening  
Participation  
The Open University

**Professor Janet Beer**

Pro-Vice-Chancellor  
Manchester Metropolitan University

**Professor Roger Brown**

(retired 31 October 2005)  
Vice-Chancellor  
Southampton Solent University

**Professor Bob Burgess**

Vice-Chancellor  
University of Leicester

**Dr Liz Elvidge**

Academic Staff Development Officer  
University of Cambridge

**Professor Peter Goodhew**

Director, Centre for Materials Education  
Professor of Materials Engineering  
University of Liverpool

**Professor Bernard King**

(appointed 9 January 2006)  
Principal and Vice-Chancellor  
University of Abertay Dundee

**Julian Nicholds**

(retired 7 July 2006)  
Vice-President Education  
National Union of Students

**Professor Judy Simons**

Chair, English Subject Centre Advisory Board  
Pro-Vice-Chancellor  
De Montfort University

**Wes Streeting**

(appointed 7 July 2006)  
Vice-President Education  
National Union of Students

**David Thomas**

Chair  
Educate Ltd

**Professor Rick Trainor**

Principal  
King's College, London

**Professor Dianne Willcocks**

(appointed 31 October 2005)  
Vice-Chancellor  
York St John University

**Observers****Dr Liz Beaty**

HEFCE

**Helen Bowles**

GuildHE

**Professor Philip Gummatt**

HEFCW

**Dr Bill Harvey**

SFC

**Siobhan Logue**

DELNI

**Greg Wade**

UUK

**Peter Williams**

QAA

**Ewart Wooldridge**

Leadership Foundation

## The Council

*The Council determines policy on all matters concerned with professional standards and the development of individual practitioners*

The Council membership is:

- 16 elected Registered Practitioners
- six appointed from the Subject Centres
- two appointed by UUK and GuildHE jointly
- two appointed by NUS, one with the agreement of NPC
- up to four co-opted representing other interests with an important stake in professional standards.

Professor Judy Simons, Pro-Vice-Chancellor at De Montfort University, was re-elected as the Chair of Council in July 2006.

**Professor Judy Simons (Chair)**

De Montfort University  
Chair, English Subject Centre Advisory Board

**David Anderson**

Aston University  
(retired 31 March 2006)

**Professor Ronald Barnett**

Institute of Education  
(elected 1 April 2006)

**Carole Baume**

The Open University

**Professor Bruce Brown**

University of Brighton  
Director, Art, Design and Media Subject Centre

**Philip Burgess**

Dundee University

**Professor Lesley-Jane Eales-Reynolds**

University of Portsmouth  
(elected 1 April 2006)

**Dr Liz Elvidge**

University of Cambridge

**Heather Fry**

Imperial College London

**Professor Peter Goodhew**

University of Liverpool  
Director, UK Centre for Materials Education

**Professor Mick Healey**  
University of Gloucestershire

**Dr Paul Hudson**  
Queen's University Belfast

**Professor Brian Hudson**  
Sheffield Hallam University

**Professor Roland Ibbett**  
University of Edinburgh  
Chair, Information and Computer Sciences Subject  
Centre Advisory Board

**Professor Michael Kelly**  
University of Southampton  
Director, Subject Centre for Languages, Linguistics  
and Area Studies

**Lois Kennedy**  
The Open University

**Dr Loykie Lominé**  
University of Winchester  
(retired 31 March 2006)

**Dr Ursula Lucas**  
University of the West of England  
(retired 31 March 2006)

**Dr Niall Mackay**  
University of York

**Dr Janet MacDonald**  
The Open University in Scotland  
(elected 1 April 2006)

**Dr Tariq Mahmood**  
St George's Medical School, University of London  
(elected 1 April 2006)

**Dr Sofija Opacic**  
National Union of Students

**Dr Tina Overton**  
University of Hull  
Director, Physical Sciences Subject Centre

**Professor Nigel Palastanga**  
Cardiff University

**Tim Roll-Pickering**  
National Postgraduate Committee

**Bob Rotheram**  
Nottingham Trent University  
(retired 31 March 2006)

**Professor Gillian Salmon**  
University of Leicester  
(elected 1 April 2006)

**John Sweet**  
Cardiff University  
(retired 31 March 2006)

**Dr Mike Tribe**  
University of Sussex

**Greg Wade**  
UUK

**Liz Warr**  
Writtle College

# Senior Executive Group

*Day-to-day management of the  
Academy is undertaken by the  
Senior Executive Group*

**Paul Ramsden**  
Chief Executive

**Cliff Allan**  
Deputy Chief Executive

**David Sadler**  
Director (Networks)

**Linda Challis/Howard Colley**  
Director (Institutions)

**Jane Pither**  
Director of Finance and Corporate Services

**Mike Prosser**  
Director of Research and Evaluation

**Jane Clarkson**  
Head of Public Affairs

# Financial information

## *Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 July 2006*

### **Independent Auditors' Report to the Board of Directors and Trustees of the Higher Education Academy**

We have audited the financial statements which comprise the income and expenditure account, the balance sheet, the cash flow statement, the statement of total recognised gains and losses and the related notes which have been prepared under the historical cost convention and the accounting policies set out therein.

This report is made solely to the Board of Directors and Trustees of The Higher Education Academy, as a body, in accordance with the Higher Education Funding for England Code of Practice. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the Board those matters we are required to state to them in an auditors' report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the Board, for our audit work, for this report or for the opinion we have formed.

### **Respective responsibilities of the Board and auditors**

As described in the Statement of Directors' and Trustees' Responsibilities the Board of Directors and Trustees is responsible for preparing the Report of the Directors and Trustees and financial statements in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice – Accounting for Further and Higher Education, applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Our responsibility is to audit the financial statements in accordance with relevant legal and regulatory requirements and International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland).

We report to you our opinion as to whether the financial statements give a true and fair view and are properly prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice – Accounting for Further and Higher Education.

We also report to you whether income from funding bodies, grants and income for specific purposes from other restricted funds administered by the Academy have been properly applied only for the purposes for which they are received and whether income has been applied in accordance with the Statutes and, where appropriate, with the Funding Agreement with the Higher Education Funding Council for England.

We also report to you if, in our opinion, the Report of the Directors and Trustees is not consistent with the financial statements, if the Academy has not kept proper accounting records, or if we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

We read the Report of the Directors and Trustees and consider the implications for our report if we become aware of any apparent misstatement within it.

## Basis of opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Auditing Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland) issued by the Auditing Practices Board and the HEFCE Code of Practice. An audit includes examination, on a test basis, of evidence relevant to the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. It also includes an assessment of the significant estimates and judgements made by the Board of Directors and Trustees in the preparation of the financial statements, and of whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the Academy's circumstances, consistently applied and adequately disclosed.

We planned and performed our audit so as to obtain all the information and explanations which we considered necessary in order to provide us with sufficient evidence to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material mis-statement, whether caused by fraud or other irregularity or error. In forming our opinion we also evaluated the overall adequacy of the presentation of information in the financial statements.

## Opinion

In our opinion:

- i. The financial statements give a true and fair view, in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice, of the state of affairs of the Academy at 31 July 2006, and of the deficit of expenditure over income, recognised gains and losses and cashflows of the Academy for the year then ended; and the statements have been properly prepared in accordance with the Companies Act and the Statement of Recommended Practice on Accounting in Higher Education Institutions.
- ii. In all material respects, income from the Higher Education Funding Council for England, the Learning and Skills Council and grants and income for specific purposes and from other restricted funds administered by the Academy have been applied only for the purposes for which they were received.
- iii. In all material respects, income has been applied in accordance with the Academy's statutes and where appropriate in accordance with the funding agreement with the Higher Education Funding Council for England.

### RSM Robson Rhodes LLP

Chartered Accountants and Registered Auditors  
Leeds

15 November 2006

### Breakdown of income for 2005–2006 by source

**68%** Higher Education Funding Council for England

**8%** Scottish Funding Council

**3%** Higher Education Council for Wales

**6%** Joint Information System Council (JISC)

**>1%** Department for Education and Skills

**1%** Department for Education and Learning  
in Northern Ireland

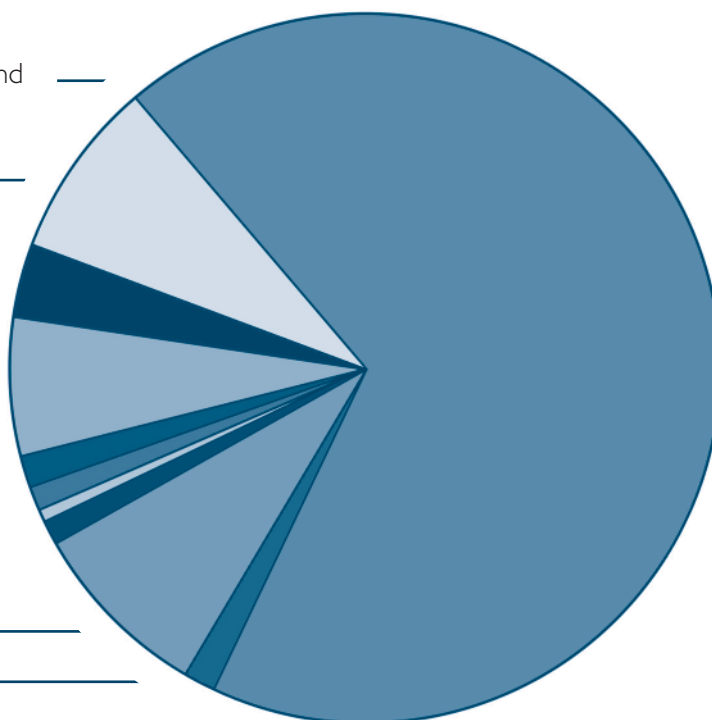
**1%** Other grant income

**1%** Registration and accreditation income

**1%** Learning and Skills Council

**8%** Institutional subscriptions

**2%** Other income



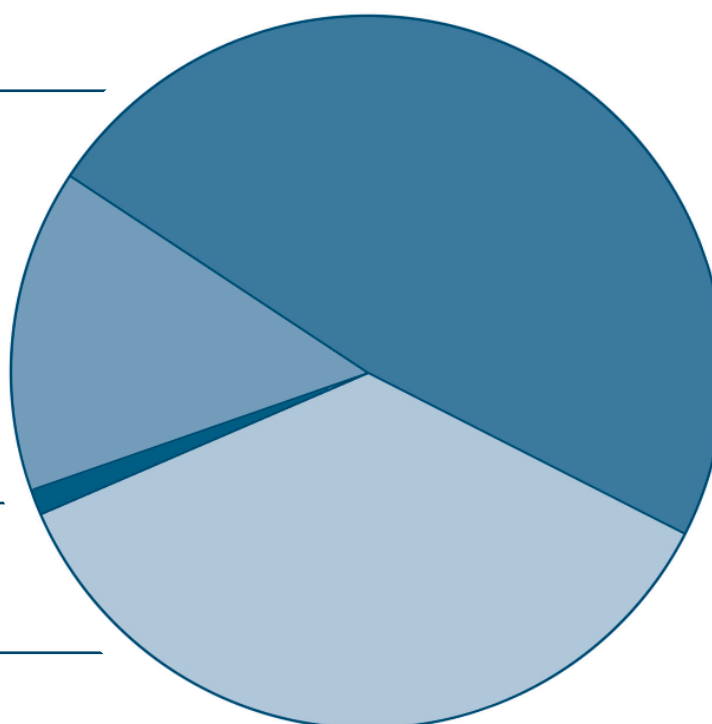
### Breakdown of expenditure in 2005–2006 by category

**48%** Subject Centres

**15%** Staff costs

**1%** Depreciation

**36%** Other operating expenses



## Income and expenditure account for the year ended 31 July 2006

Income	Year ended 31 July 2006	Year ended 31 July 2005
	£000	£000
Funding body grants	22,089	6,471
Other income	2,505	3,164
Interest receivable	116	164
<b>Total income</b>	<b>24,710</b>	<b>9,799</b>

Expenditure	Year ended 31 July 2006	Year ended 31 July 2005
	£000	£000
Staff costs	(3,671)	(2,767)
Subject Centres	(12,018)	-
Other operating expenses	(9,065)	(4,929)
Depreciation	(282)	(199)
Interest payable and similar charges	(3)	(6)
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>(25,039)</b>	<b>(7,901)</b>

	Year ended 31 July 2006	Year ended 31 July 2005
	£000	£000
<b>(Deficit)/surplus for the period</b>	<b>(329)</b>	<b>1,898</b>

**Balance sheet as at 31 July 2006**

<b>Fixed assets</b>	<b>Year ended 31 July 2006</b>	<b>Year ended 31 July 2005</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
Tangible assets	680	759
<b>Current assets:</b>		
Debtors	1,242	870
Cash at bank and in hand	2,502	4,636
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	(2,661)	(4,173)
Net current assets	1,083	1,333
<b>Net assets</b>	<b>1,763</b>	<b>2,092</b>

<b>Reserves</b>	<b>Year ended 31 July 2006</b>	<b>Year ended 31 July 2005</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
Capital reserve	117	117
General reserve	1,646	1,975
<b>Total reserves</b>	<b>1,763</b>	<b>2,092</b>



**Picture credits**

*Front cover/page 24: Doug Menez*

*Page 2: David Lothian*

*Page 3/36: Bruce Greer*

*Page 5/10/31: Alex Nikada*

*Page 13: Edward Lewis*

*Page 18: John Ryan*

*Page 23: Nathan Strange*

*Page 26/28: Bob Webzell*

**Company Limited by Guarantee**

*Registered in England and Wales*

*Registered No: 4931031*

*Registered as a charity No: 1101607*

## **Annual Report**

2005–2006

Published by:

The Higher Education Academy  
Innovation Way  
York Science Park  
Heslington  
York YO10 5BR  
United Kingdom

Tel: +44 (0)1904 717500

Fax: +44 (0)1904 717505

**enquiries@heacademy.ac.uk**

**www.heacademy.ac.uk**

ISBN 1-905788-25-8

© The Higher Education Academy

November 2006

All rights reserved. Apart from any fair dealing for the purposes of research or private study, criticism or review, no part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any other form or by any other means, graphic, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, taping or otherwise, without the prior permission in writing of the publishers.

To request copies in large print or in a different format, please contact the Academy.

## **The Higher Education Academy**

Our mission is to help institutions, discipline groups and all staff to provide the best possible learning experience for their students. We provide an authoritative and independent voice on policies that influence student learning experiences, support institutions, lead and support the professional development and recognition of staff in higher education, and lead the development of research and evaluation to improve the quality of the student learning experience. The Higher Education Academy is an independent organisation funded by grants from the four UK higher education funding bodies, subscriptions from higher education institutions, and grant and contract income for specific initiatives.