Summary

Higher Education Academy/JISC ‘eLearning in the disciplines’ (September 2009)

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Overview
This summary provides an overview, through selected examples, of DeL projects which fell under the headings:

- Understanding the landscape and building communities
- Supporting formative and summative assessment
- Using ePortfolios to support personalised learning
- Sharing and repurposing resources
- Subject centres in collaboration
- Podcasting

A full list of all projects, with links, is at http://delicious.com/disciplines.

Aims and background
The Subject Centre Distributed eLearning (DeL) programme was funded by HEFCE and managed by JISC in two phases from 2004-8, and explored cultural and organisational issues relating to the use of technology to support learning.

Methodology
DeL comprised four strands of activity over two phases:

- Promoting and exploring subject-specific issues around sharing, reuse and repurposing of content
- Exploring the uptake and embedding of the outputs of the JISC Digitisation Programme
- Exploring the use of ePortfolios in a subject context
- Enhancing learning through existing eLearning tools (pg 3).

Key outcomes/outputs

Related programmes
- DeL work stemmed from a number of JISC innovation developments, including the Distributed eLearning programme, the JISC Digitisation programme, the JISC Exchange for Learning programme 2002-6, and the JISC Design for Learning programme (pp 5-6).

Understanding the landscape and building communities
- Economics developed the IT Skills Anorak Test to help teaching staff who are less confident with basic IT skills (pg 7).
- ESCalate ran eLearning workshops and produced resources (pg 7).
- Medicine, Dentistry and Veterinary Science (MEDEV) ran mini-projects to support communities of practice (pp 7-8).
Supporting formative and summative assessment

- Economics expanded its question bank: the Assessment Question Bank is an archive of assessment questions; ExcelAssess allows users to run self-marking exams in Excel (pg 11).
- Engineering developed EASIMAP to enable mapping of programme, module and assessment level learning outcomes to the QAA Benchmark Statement for Engineering (pg 11).
- Maths, Stats and OR (MSOR) supported the STACK project which focused on computer algebra systems; it also adapted Algebra Refresher and Calculus Refresher as online assessments (pg 12).
- Physical Sciences developed a question bank for physical sciences assessment (pg 13) and developed WebPA, an open source online peer assessment tool (pg 14).
- PRS funded a project using WebCT to study automated assessment and mentored participation in philosophy (pg 14).

Using ePortfolios to support personalised learning

A key issue in DeL was the relationship between formal and informal learning, including an exploration of the nature of academic credit, how it is determined, and how it is assessed. In addition, this aspect raised the profile of the academic ePortfolio for CPS and accreditation with professional bodies (pg 15).

- Art, Design and Media supported the Evolve project, exploring the relationship between current perceptions of ePortfolios in education and the traditional role of a design portfolio (pg 15).
- The Centre for Education in the Built Environment (CEBE) and HSAP carried out surveys into the use of ePortfolios (pg 16).
- The UK Centre for Legal Education (UKCLE) considered ePortfolios not just in education but in the professional legal environment, producing case studies, briefing papers and guidance for students, staff and employers (pp 16-7).
- Physical Sciences developed an ePortfolio framework to support UGs, PGs and professionals in a range of disciplines (pg 17).
- Psychology developed a case study on the promotion of reflection and metacognition (pg 18).
- A study by ESCalate demonstrated ePortfolios can adapt to the fluid and transitional nature of education (pg 19).

Developing reusable learning objects

- A collaborative project involving History, Classics and Archaeology, the Evaluating Multiple interpretations Generative Learning Object (eMI GLO) develops critical thinking skills through engagement with multiple scholarly interpretations in the historical disciplines (pg 21).
- CSAP and Universities’ Collaboration in eLearning (UCeL), developed the Applied Statistical Methods Generative Learning Object and developed an RLO on Recognising Nominative Categorative Data (pg 21).
- Hospitality, Leisure, Sport and Tourism (HLST) undertook a student
evaluation of RLOs, and produced More Sustainable Tourism, a resource and curriculum guide on tourism and climate change (pg 21).

- Information and Computer Sciences (ICS) supported a range of work on the creation and repurposing of RLOs (pg 22).
- Languages, Linguistics and Area Studies (LLAS) developed the Learning Object Creator (LOC), a tool for creating basic learning objects (pg 22).
- Physical Sciences produced employability resources, adaptable for use in any other discipline; a version is available for education (pg 22).
- PRS funded the design of a course template and materials including RLOs for online delivery of theology and religious studies (pg 23).

Sharing and repurposing resources

- Economics produced 15 customisable case studies relating mathematical concepts to everyday topics (pg 24).
- PALATINE developed PRISM, an interdisciplinary learning website that allows lecturers and students to assemble collections of exemplar works from PALATINE disciplines (pg 24).
- Physical Sciences produced a teaching resource of skeletal material from an excavation at Hulton Abbey (pg 24).
- Psychology developed the Repository of Student Practicals (RoSP) offering online access to materials and resources to support student practical work and teaching research methods within psychology (pg 25).
- PRS supported a project on mind maps in teaching philosophy (pg 25).
- UKCLE developed guidelines for good practice for sharing resources within law (pg 25).

Subject centres in collaboration

A large-scale collaborative project between three SCs and a CETL, Newsfilm Online Digital Resources – Supporting and Enhancing Student Learning created exemplars addressing a range of pedagogical issues, the subject-specific content of which has been structured into interactive learning resources (pp 26-7).

Podcasting

- Geography, Earth and Environmental Sciences (GEES) developed the Informal Mobile Podcasting and Learning Adaptation (IMPALA) project, to explore the educational potential of podcasting (pg 28).
- HLST supported Re-engineering Assessment Practice (REAP), exploring videopodcasting, lectures and personal response systems (pg 29).
- Social Policy and Social Work produced video clips on ‘what is social policy?’ (pg 29).

Link to full text

http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/assets/York/documents/ourwork/learningandtech/elearninginthedisclipines.pdf