Third Research and Scholarship in College Higher Education Conference

Papers, Presentations and Posters

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Edited by John Lea

ASSOCIATION
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1. Foreword

David Hughes - *Chief Executive Officer, Association of Colleges*

Higher education (HE) is beset by enormous change and challenges but one thing remains true – there has to be a very strong focus on teaching and learning and the student experience. I am delighted at the breadth and scale of the Scholarship Project and at how enthusiastic colleges have been at embracing a critical, evidence-based and scholarly approach to their HE teaching and learning.

For too long, we have as a country been obsessed with one (important and valid) form of HE, at the expense of other routes, patterns and types. Over 200 further education colleges are involved in HE, working in partnership with universities as well as awarding their own higher qualifications. Generally, colleges deliver more to adults, part-time, flexibly and in close relationship with employers. Most of their learners come from non-traditional backgrounds and are older and more diverse than their full-time residential counterparts in universities. This distinction will become ever more important as the Government and employers wake up to the need to foster lifelong learning and recognise the need to support people to train, re-train and continue to learn across 50+-year careers.

Last year's Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) results showed that colleges are doing well in terms of quality, with 16 achieving the Gold award and many more Silver and Bronze. That was probably a bit of surprise to some, given the lack of exposure colleges have for the HE they deliver. The TEF itself was a useful step towards improving that exposure and achieving fairer and greater recognition of the vital role colleges play in our education system. The Scholarship Project will also help by fostering a confidence within the college sector and by supporting a scholarly approach to HE. College staff should rightly feel proud of their craft, of their pedagogy and of the contribution they make to supporting students to develop their learning and skills.

We do, though, live in extraordinary times. We have had a long period in which HE and universities were a universally-accepted 'good thing'; that seems to have changed, both rapidly and drastically, with a series of attacks on quality, value for money and senior pay in our universities. Whether or not any of it is fair or justified, we need now to move the debate and discussion onto the right partnership we want between colleges and universities and onto the mix of provision we want in every community for people of all ages and from all backgrounds. The college role in that is significant and this scholarship work shows how keen colleges are to expand and develop their HE offering.

So, we face an interesting but exciting year or two. The Government's post-18 review, launched by the Prime Minister at Derby College, felt like a step-change in thinking and focus. Our job at AoC and in colleges is to make sure that the review puts college HE into its rightful place alongside university HE; both are vital components of the lifelong learning system we all want to see.

2. Editorial

John Lea - *Scholarship Project Research Director, Association of Colleges*

I am very pleased to able to present this new volume of proceedings from the third annual AoC College Higher Education Research and Scholarship conference. The conference took place in Birmingham on Tuesday 27 June 2017, and included two international keynotes. Dr Leesa Wheelahan, William G. Davis Chair of Community College Leadership, University of Toronto, asked the question: `why isn't there more higher education in colleges?' and spoke of the challenges and opportunities that are currently being presented to colleges through reforms in tertiary education. Dr. Alex Zahavich, Vice President of Corporate Development and Applied Research, Southern Alberta Institute of Technology, Canada, reported on the successful implementation of an industry-driven applied research programme.

You will find here articles on a wide range of themes in college higher education. Some are aimed at furthering knowledge and understanding of a specific subject, including Rachael Illsley looking at the question of formative assessment, and Jodie McMaster exploring the role of creativity in academic literature and its application in the classroom. Other articles look more squarely at the means to enhance forms of scholarship in the curriculum, such as Ken Wake, who explores the practical steps he took when seeking to embed forms of `research mindedness' amongst his HNC/HND students, and Nicola Watchman, who re-examines the seminal work of Ernest Boyer in order to advance a distinct form of `HEness' for college higher education.

You will also find two exploratory research articles from staff and students at Peterborough Regional College which report on some of the trialling and testing work which has been undertaken for the Scholarship Project. Specifically, an article which explores students' emerging professional identities, and a separate article on the mechanism for charting the transition from academic study into the world of work.

You will also find here six extended abstracts which report on the ongoing work first presented at the conference. These include Katie Asgari, who reports on a successful partnership between her college and the NHS; Mike Saunders and Roy Fisher, who provide an update on their ongoing work on the transnational classroom and the integration of international and local students; and James Snyder, who looks at a European Space Agency project through the lense of Boyer's four scholarships.

You will also find more reports on some of the ongoing work on the Scholarship Project, including Jacqueline Brewer's work on an employer mosaic aimed at enhancing a scholarly approach to employer engagement, and some collaborative work from Jenny Lawrence, Andrew Penfold and Anne Clifford who have been looking at the question of research ethics for the project. And Nick Whitehouse from the Mixed Economy Group (MEG) reports on the results of a MEG survey looking into the future prospects for college higher education in general, and signals why there is a case for some cautious optimism.

The volume finishes with four of the posters which were presented at the conference; Jacqueline Cattaneo on peer-assisted study skills in college higher education; Phil Miller on research as professional development in college higher education; Cathy Schofield on helping students to see the value of research skills for the workplace; and Boota Singh on an experiential approach to staff development and recognition.

3. Articles

3.1 Student engagement in formative feedback

Rachael Illsley - *South Gloucestershire and Stroud College*

Introduction

I have been working on investigating ways to encourage students to engage more in the formative feedback they receive in order to develop a deeper level of student engagement in the feedback process (Price et al, 2008). This is centred on the idea of 'assessment as learning' (Bloxham, 2008) which requires students to be actively engaged in their learning journey and utilise their formative feedback as a tool to develop their work and therefore raise attainment in summative assessment.

Data collected in the National Student Survey (NSS) on whether students understand their assessments and whether they feel feedback is relevant or understood always represent some of the lowest in terms of student satisfaction in comparison to other areas (Higher Education Funding Council (HEFCE) 2016; 2017). When taken as an average of all responses in 2017, the category of 'assessment and feedback' ranked at 73% with only 'student union' falling lower at 57% (HEFCE, 2017). In a confusing juxtaposition, lecturing staff are continuously striving to improve the clarity of assessments and the feedback they provide (Beaumont, O'Doherty and Shannon, 2010). It made sense, therefore, to investigate the nature of this juxtaposition. Although this project cannot begin to unpick every aspect of this it has gone some way to understanding why students do not utilise the feedback they receive.

Review of relevant literature and methodology

Formative feedback is usually verbal, as it is ongoing and aimed at assessment *for* learning (development) rather than *of* learning (final). Verbal feedback is extremely important, as it is current, engaging and can be directed specifically at the work whilst in progress. The major downfall is that verbal feedback is transitory and rarely permanently captured, meaning conversations, or at least aspects of them, can be forgotten or misinterpreted. There are many aspects that make verbal feedback useful, not least the fact that today students live in a primarily auditory world (with the rise of social media and related interactions) meaning it could be argued they are becoming less able to engage with written feedback (McComb, 2017). It could also be argued that written feedback is so frequently provided in educational contexts it becomes less digestible as students become desensitised to it (Marzano et al, 2001). Intensifying this further, the very nature of written feedback also reinforces the traditional hierarchical relationship of teacher and student, meaning students often do not want to engage with it, as it feels final and negative in many ways. In this sense it is a one-way feedback process that cannot respond to the student and cannot be broken down if required. As evidence from the Higher Education Academy from 2014 suggests, the most useful feedback has the student at the centre and is responsive to their reactions and needs. Of course, written feedback is invaluable, but perhaps a dual approach could facilitate a greater level of engagement, at least at critical points.

Gibbs and Simpson (2005; 19) point out that "feedback is not a one-size-fits-all model", emphasising that feedback should be tailored to the student's specific needs and level of understanding. It could therefore be argued that verbal feedback is more engaging and meaningful for students as by its very nature it is a two-way process, allowing responses to be tailored to the individual and responsive in the moment. Similar to the concept developed by Schon (1983) of 'reflection in action', verbal

feedback allows lecturers to alter the way they are operating in the moment based on the students' reactions. For this reason the concept of recording this feedback makes this very important transitory moment more permanent in nature, allowing students to engage with it at a later date.

Audio-recorded verbal feedback also enables students to return to useful formative conversations at critical periods. In my project this was captured alongside an image of the work itself, making the feedback more meaningful and providing clearer opportunities for students to act on the feedback they received (Nicol and MacFarlane, 2006).

An interpretivist methodology was employed in order to capture the discourse of the students; this helps to provide an opportunity to understand the feedback they receive. An initial survey was conducted to assess the students' understanding of formative feedback and how they use this prior to the intervention. Qualitative and quantitative data was collected at the end of the intervention to compare results. Lecturers were also involved in discussions throughout the project, allowing their perspective to be captured.

Analysis and results

The results were clear in some areas and highlighted some additional reasons why verbal feedback can become so useful for students. Firstly, we will consider some broad conclusions before analysing the more detailed comparative data. It is worth noting that initially students had no understanding of the term 'formative feedback', which is perhaps unsurprising but does remind us as educators that often we talk in a language that is not always understood by students (and even fellow colleagues). Whilst I am not suggesting lecturers only use these formal terms when discussing feedback with students it does highlight that the terms we use can affect the outcomes.

Interestingly, though, during the project students became actively engaged in continuous formative feedback with the lecturing team, often asking them for feedback more frequently as a consequence of being involved in the project. Additionally, the students began to ask the tutors for the recorded verbal feedback in particular, which perhaps reflects its usefulness. This also highlights an implicit aspect found here. It seems that simply engaging students in an ongoing dialogue about feedback encouraged them to become more aware of it and more responsive to it. It also breaks downs barriers that students may feel, meaning they feel more confident approaching the lecturing team about the feedback they receive.

The students highlighted how they felt feedback became more of a two-way process; this supports the work of Lawrence and Wiswell (1995) who suggest this two-way interaction is invaluable as it provides a chance to ask questions, allowing a deeper level of understanding. They also agreed that listening back also allowed them to reflect on their own questions and responses and allowed them to develop in more holistic ways than just relating to the assignment feedback.

Lecturers reported that they liked the fact it can be tailored/differentiated to the specific student's level, which reflected Gibbs and Simpson's (2005) ideas relating to individualised feedback. An unexpected, additional, outcome was that lecturers felt the process had given them a much clearer understanding of the students' ability to interpret the feedback they receive, facilitating reflections on the written feedback they provide for students.

One of the most useful aspects of the project was when the written summative feedback was discussed in a formative manner and recorded, which fits with a consensus in the sector that students benefit from discussions with lecturers about the written feedback they receive, as often it may not make sense when read in isolation. The difference here is that conversations were recorded so became something they could return to. Although this is not always practical due to time constraints, it is a useful tool, especially if students are struggling with a particular assessment or module.

Prior to the intervention a survey was completed to gain an understanding of student engagement with the feedback they receive. Initial results reflected that students preferred feedback that was meaningful, easily interpreted and available for reflection, with three out of seven preferring written feedback as they could keep going back to it. Four out of seven suggested they preferred verbal feedback, as they found written feedback difficult to digest, but interestingly all participants 'agreed' that they 'found it hard to remember the verbal feedback they receive'. In addition, six out of seven gave a neutral response when asked whether they actually used the verbal feedback they received to develop work for summative assessment.

The issue here relating to students' inability to understand and engage with the written feedback they receive highlighted an implicit and unexpected outcome of the project, which related to how educators support those students with additional needs such as dyslexia or low levels of reading ability. Often lecturers will try to provide copious amounts of written feedback to weaker students in order to help them improve but if it is those students in particular who do not read effectively or who disengage from written text then it is unlikely this strategy will be effective; it could, in fact, become detrimental to the student's growth as it may create additional barriers to learning.

The intervention was then carried out for a semester and the same survey was conducted to analyse what the impact had been. Results reflected that engagement levels had increased due to their ability to return to the verbal feedback they received, with six out of seven preferring verbal feedback that you could keep going back to, in comparison to an initial figure of four out of seven. All students also reported that they now utilised this feedback when developing work for summative assessment.

Reflections and conclusions

Although this was a small-scale project with only seven students it does begin to convey the importance of finding methods of making formative feedback more meaningful and obvious to students. As lecturers we often provide verbal feedback assuming the student is engaged and listening and understanding what is being said; however, within relationships that often involve power imbalances students may not always have the skill set to question or interpret effectively in the moment. It may be that proving an opportunity for students to digest information in their own time when their mind is free from barriers and distractions they can interpret the information more easily.

The project did raise some critical issues that cannot be ignored which largely relate to time pressures and personal perspectives. Firstly, it is worth considering that although recordings were made they may never be returned to or utilised, which did happen during this project for some students on certain modules. This may have been because the students concerned felt they didn't need to or simply did not have the time to return to previous commentary. Additionally, recording feedback can feel intimidating to staff who do not have the technological confidence to implement such a scheme or to those that are concerned their recordings could be tampered with in some way. Time pressure also became a theme in feedback from staff. This was not an issue here due to the small class sizes but there were concerns raised about whether this could be done effectively with larger cohorts, which is a valid concern. The final theme that emerged was the reluctance of both staff and students to have their voice recorded as they did not like listening to themselves. This is a personal preference based on emotional responses which again is valid and cannot be ignored. That said, this concern was lessened throughout the project as individuals realised the usefulness of the intervention.

To conclude, whilst this is a small-scale project it begins to interpret the discourse of students relating to the feedback they receive. Whilst the primary aim was to analyse the formative feedback and encourage engagement it also highlighted a multitude of implicit issues that raised lecturers' awareness of the

feedback they provide and facilitated a deeper understanding of why students may not always engage with it. Whilst this initiative may not be practical in every classroom all of the time, it has encouraged the team to take a more varied approach to feedback, not least because student attainment is largely based on their ability to engage with such feedback and use it effectively to improve their future assessments.

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3.2 Paving the way to Level 6: Building skills to close the gap for Access and Foundation Degree learners' progression onto a Level 6 course

Samantha Jones & Natalie Morris - *Bedford College*

Introduction

There is a recognised difference between the academic emphasis of further education (FE) and higher education (HE) settings, more so than just the level of study. FE has a focus on practical skills and preparation for the workplace (Bandias et al, 2011), whereas HE focuses on 'responsibility for self-learning' (Leese, 2010, pp. 241), leaving a gap to be bridged for those wishing to progress from FE to HE. To facilitate student progression, this research aims to understand what key stakeholders see as the key requirements of learners at HE level through interviews with key universities, to better prepare them for the pedagogies employed by these institutions. This information was used to devise and test strategies for our learners on 2017-2018 Access to Higher Education courses at three further and higher education colleges. Measures of progress were taken through feedback from lecturers and students and document analysis. We targeted these strategies so that they ensure improved attainment as well as progression for the target group, which can be developed in future for students on HE courses within FE settings. A key outcome from this research will be developing teachers through a shift towards evidence-based practice, empowering them to make pedagogical decisions based on the guidelines and characteristics identified.

The two key findings of the project are, firstly, that learners appeared to demonstrate techniques in class that suggest criticality of thought. These translated into higher grade scores, within a limited sample, with particular development on areas of understanding, structuring arguments and improved use of English. Secondly, that methodological issues are not well understood in the sector and require development in order to make findings from projects such as ours more robust and reliable.

The project

In order to understand the requirements of learners progressing to Level 6 we intended to undertake semi-structured interviews with local universities to whom large numbers of college students progressed. As such, three universities were selected: University A, University B and University C. Three researchers, two from College A and one from College B, agreed to interview three lecturers each either face to face or by telephone. This work was divided into subject specialisms (IT, sociology and education) with each researcher looking to use local contacts within their subject area to secure interviews. After collection of these data the researchers met to analyse the findings and agree the pedagogical approaches identified by the interviews. The intervention in the classroom would take place over the first six weeks of the academic year and would end at a significant assessment point (October half term). The assessments taken would be compared to the assessments at the same point last year and a rubric would be applied. A rubric was created to facilitate a document study to assess the skills development in learners' work. Three to four pieces of work would be randomly selected from each cohort by each college. It was agreed that observations of the seminar sessions followed by semi-structured interviews would be undertaken of participating lecturers at each site. This would provide further qualitative evidence of the development of skills to be measured in the rubric.

This research project was conducted in full compliance with the British Education Research Association's Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research document (2011). The research was conducted over a period of nine months using current and former students at two further education colleges, as well as university lecturers. All participants gave their informed

consent to take part in the research; an information sheet was provided and discussed with the participants, giving them time to ask any questions about the project and be fully informed about the study. The information included how the data would be used and disseminated, how the information would be stored in order to protect the anonymity of the participants and what the findings may lead to. The information included contact details which enabled participants to opt out of the research at any time. The participants gave permission using a consent form which has been stored securely and separately from the findings.

The pedagogies chosen for the intervention were flipped learning and seminars. This was driven by a clear preference for "Socratic questioning [....] dialogical co-construction and collaboration" (Education Lecturer 1) from the lecturers in the universities. The idea of developing thought through collaboration was also important to Education Lecturer 2. This lecturer also advocated modelling and seminars as vehicles for dialogic or Socratic teaching as they were "not looking for didactic teaching." What Education Lecturer 2 desired is the "integration of theory and practice". This concurs with O'Donnell and Tobbell (2007) who suggest that learning academic skills must be situated and must therefore be learnt by engaging in academic work, as 'bolt on' approaches to study skills are less likely to be effective.

Key findings

A key issue in the effectiveness of seminars appears to rest in the timing of the seminar in a student's learning. Researcher 1 from College A observed that a seminar on Locus of Control was the first that the lecturer had run. However, the lecturer had taught the basic theory and providing readings for the learners prior to the seminar. These learners, as they were a smaller group (n=5) and new to the pedagogy, had then taken the opportunity to meet and discuss the subject prior to the seminar. As such it took less than five minutes for the learners to progress from "I think" statements to learners critically

challenging each other's statements - "Do you think X may be the reason?" and "I think this is still internal." In an interview following the session, the lecturer was "blown away" by the learners and recorded that they had expected to have had to regularly prompt learners, but instead witnessed "high level and thoughtful contributions" which was attributed to learners having more thinking and planning time as "they need the theory upfront...so they can prepare."

In an observed Access session on feminism, the learners had also previously been taught some theory in class and had been given a stimulus to read for the first 30 minutes of their session. This was a larger group (n=15), and some, but not all, learners in this group moved quickly to analysis and evaluation. During one discussion the lecturer needed to prompt regularly with contributions that encouraged the developments in the discussion they wished to see: "Can you justify the group answer?", "Why is this a problem?" and "How do you know that from the reading?" The lecturer recorded that whilst the session went well, "...it worked better when they had a reading to take away and think about before the session" as this was the way they had previously run the session. Billings and Roberts (2014) support the idea that allowing students time and space to consider the text before the seminar will enable them to develop and demonstrate critical thinking skills. This begins to indicate that thinking time in advanced of a seminar is useful to learners' performance within the classroom, especially for weaker students. This also appears to be supported by the data from the rubric which will be discussed below.

The language used by learners during the observations of seminars appeared to suggest the development of critical thought. One learner, discussing Locus on Control (LoC), structured her thoughts thus: "I think... because...firstly...so...". This appears to indicate the learner is building an argument through logic and evidence. Similar patterns were found during other observations. When discussing women's freedom to choose whether or not to reproduce, one learner had

picked up on a peer's comment that women were entirely free in this choice: "I think there is no legal pressure...but society does place pressure on a woman through norms...so I don't agree it's a complete choice." This second comment indicates that learners are not just developing their own ideas but are responding to, and challenging, those of others which is a good indicator of critical thought as such challenges appear to suggest that learners are "develop[ing] patterns of classroom interaction that open up students' speaking and listening, and hence their thinking, and which strive to balance the ownership of talk more equitably" (Alexander, 2017 - EARLI Conference). Although Alexander is referring here to a balance in primary schools between teacher and learner, within a college HE context the equality of talk between learners we have experienced here is, it could be argued, just as important to the development of their ideas. As an example, "I feel like you guys are not clear between internal factors and external ones", was an attempt by a Foundation Degree (FD) learner to push peers to clarify their thoughts and positions. Indeed, it may be that interactions such as this explain the development learners' grades in understanding as well as in analysis that will be discussed later in the report.

There have been many examples in the observations of the seminars that indicate discussion of variables that evidence criticality of thought. For example, an FD learner brought in ideas of bias in terms of psychometric testing. "It has made me think about how I might answer these questions, I might answer to give bias to things I think they're looking at." This learner not only seems to be revisiting their everyday experienced based on the new theory learnt (Vygotsky, 1987), but is showing an awareness of the bias of others. The validity of data was discussed by a group of Access students, when discussing women being trapped almost 20 years ago by the glass ceiling. One person commented: "I'd like to see more up-to-date data and what it's like nowadays". Similarly, context was also a feature of the discussions in both observations; in the Access group they identified that access to abortion, contraception and healthcare

"depends on where you are; in the US you have to pay for healthcare. I think...we [in the UK] have more opportunities." Here the learners seem to be demonstrating nuanced thought and argument, and this was something that the HE lecturers argue is central to what makes HE pedagogy. Education Lecturer 1 asked for learners to "look at other contexts as a means of analysis" and that "good Level 6 students can only cope if they thrive in an intellectual uncertainty." Bodgan and Elliott (2015) and Jessen and Elander (2009) addressed these skills discussed by Education Lecturer 1 through dialogic models of teaching, which allowed the students, over a period of time, to encounter the new language required by the academic community. We argue that the data above, although limited by time and sample size, does appear to point to a demonstration of development of the kind of capabilities that were recorded by Bodgan and Elliott (2015) and Jessen and Elander (2009).

These observations tentatively point to the development of critical thought as a result of the seminars, and although we cannot claim these skills weren't in the classroom beforehand, we can point to data which indicates these pedagogical practices appear to encourage them. These claims are supported by the limited data set from the rubrics. The rubrics point to the development of grades across the board. As one lecturer recorded when sending in their rubric data "most of them were higher than their average grades last year which was great to see." Both colleges' samples pointed to a development in the improvement in understanding with all findings appearing to show roughly a grade barrier improvement in this area with the average for 2016-2017 being 50-59% improving to 60-69 % in 2017-18.

Both colleges appeared to show an improvement in the structuring of arguments again by approximately a grade barrier, which appears to show learners organising their thoughts more logically as result of the interventions. Grades here ranged between 35-59 in 2016-17, to 50-69 in 2017-18. This would appear to point to the benefits to the less well performing students from this type of intervention.

Data also suggests both colleges also improved the learners' use of English, again with the greatest benefit being to the learners struggling in this area. In 2016-17 75% of learners at both colleges were in the 40-49% grade boundary for this area of their work. In 2017-18 50% of learners had improved to the 60-69% grade boundary, with no learner scoring less than 50%.

At College A, although not in the one sample from College B, there was also an improvement in analysis and discussion and reading and identification of appropriate resources. The grade range for reading and identification of resources in 2016-17 at College A ranged from 1-59%, although this is skewed by one particularly underperforming student. Despite this, in 2017-18, this area had improved to a range between 50-69%. It was a similar case with analysis and discussion with a range of 53-59% in 2016-17, rising to a range of 40-69% in 2017-18. Why these areas may not have been the case at College B is unclear, but may just be due to the low sample size.

The benefits to the learners appear to be greater for lower performing students; in all cases it is predominately the lower grade cohort that is making the greatest improvement. At the top end the boundaries are going up by 10%, which is significant; however, the next steps would be challenging the better performing learners to improve even further. Both sets of improving data appear to agree with O'Donnell and Tobbell's (2007) arguments that the learning of skills should be situated. By using pedagogies that embed the development of skills into the learners, rather than taught in 'standalone' sessions, there is evidence both from the rubric, and the observation of sessions, that learners are better able to develop their academic skill sets.

Conclusion

At this point it is important to take a critically evaluative approach to the findings made in this project. There was some slippage between the agreed methodology, and the methods that were used to capture the data in practice.

There was an inconsistency in response from the universities, with some lecturers in some universities not responding to requests for an interview. One university failed to respond to request for interviews in all subject areas. This has limited the range of interviewees and opinions collected. It also resulted in researchers using contacts further afield than the three local universities initially identified. This resulted in further methodological issues. Firstly, as they are not universities that our learners commonly progress to, and secondly, due to the location of some of these universities, it is understood that the interviews took place by email and were reported as paraphrased key points. As transcriptions of these interviews were not available to the time of writing the report it is difficult to ascertain the original words of the interviewee which affects the reliability of the data, as flipped learning was adopted at College B although there is no data to support its inclusion. At the end of the process two HE lecturers in Education were interviewed, two lecturers in IT and one in Sociology.

In practice, at College A, only two lecturers were able to take part in the study. The lecturers were teachers who both taught across Access and Foundation Degree programmes. A further three were approached; however, two were unable to participate as they were unable to make the assessment submission dates fit with the short time frame of the project, or learners were submitting work unsuitable for the rubric (in this case a CV and cover letter). The third lecturer was unable to attend the training meetings, and so felt ill-prepared to undertake the pedagogical interventions. Participating lecturers completed 12 rubrics, six for 2016-17 and six for 2017-18, with all participating lecturers being observed by Samantha Jones in order to gather qualitative data.

College B also had two participating lecturers who also taught across Access and Foundation Degrees. Participating lecturers completed two rubrics, one for 2016-17 and one for 2017-18. Although written reports were submitted, these did not contain any original data, and therefore claims for learners' enthusiasm or

learner reflection could not be substantiated and these data sets have not been used. As a result of some of the methodological issues raised, I would argue that any results of this intervention must be taken as tentative indications of the efficacy of the methods explored. Such small sample sizes, and gaps within the data captured, must greatly reduce the reliability of the findings presented.

Whilst the limitations of this report should be acknowledged, the findings point towards dialogic teaching being a beneficial approach, particularly for lower performing students. Students on Access to HE courses and Foundation Degrees often have significant responsibilities outside of their studies and may have had negative experiences prior to joining (Burnell, 2013). Pedagogic changes towards a more dialogic approach are a small change for teachers with the potential for significant impact on students on these courses, especially considering the potential for impact on lower achievement students.

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3.3 Forming deliberate and critical professional identities and giving voice: what the AoC Scholarship Project research means for colleges

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Theories of student identity in their transition to professionals provide the key building blocks for this Association of Colleges (AoC) Scholarship Project. The study takes its research subjects from AoC Scholarship Project partner colleges South and City College Birmingham (SCCB) and Grantham College, working in collaboration with Peterborough Regional College. Driving the research is a critical enquiry into the professional identity (PI) of SCCB students on Early Years (EY) placements and students at work attending Grantham College's Special Educational Needs Foundation Programme. Throughout, the term 'triad' refers to the partnership of employers, students and college higher education (HE) providers.

Overlap with a separate research project on 'Digital Scholarship' can be evidenced throughout this study giving an early indication of how identity, presence, values, knowledge, innovation and student responsibility are core to all three of Peterborough Regional College's AoC research projects.

Theory in context: professional identity and professional socialisation

To understand the development of a student's professional identity requires fieldwork in both the learning and workspace. As the student mediates between these spaces, they are learning and applying knowledge in different contexts. They necessarily build a story from this ongoing exercise whilst engaging with lecturers and employers; a personal professional narrative which tracks and adapts to experiences in those distinct spaces. Consequently, such terms as professional socialisation, professional adaptation, identity and provisional selves are significant in capturing this process as research across the triad.

> *Professional socialisation, a subdivision of the field of adult socialisation, is the process by which individuals acquire the skills, attitudes, knowledge, values, and norms needed to perform professional roles acceptably.*

(Waldron, 2010; 53).

The 'self at work' which develops and is socialised is the fully evolving self of the professional. How the student perceives this self is their 'professional identity'. Identity can be understood as 'an individual and personal experience and perception of one's self through their phenomenal field' and professional identity as that part 'based on their employment role' (Wilson, 2010; 1-2). Caza and Creary (2016; 5-6) view professional identity as 'a subjective construction' and through this construction 'individuals are able to claim purpose and meaning for themselves, and explicate how they contribute to society'.

The construction of this identity by the student and meaning applied is key to professional identity activities discussed later. It is fair to say that the umbrella term 'professional identity' can cover pre-professional identity, professional identity of the professional in a full term post and the more developed professional. Where the student sits amongst this depends on which particular sector they are working in, the professional role taken, their chosen course and host higher education institution (HEI).

Provisional selves

Trede and McEwen (2012; 5) model identity as "one of three different selves: a coherent core self, a socially constructed relational self, and

a fragmented constantly-reforming-through-dialogue self". The final 'self' is particularly pertinent to our understanding of professional identity and the dialogical processes necessary for its development. This is where the HEI and, to some degree, employers, can intervene to develop those dialogical processes with and for the student-professional.

The 'socially constructed relational self' ties in more to professional adaptation and the sociology of work. Management of this 'self' is more likely to be influenced by the conscious work of employers and work peers. Key to professional adaptation and identity shifts therein is what Ibarra (1999) terms 'provisional selves'. The notion of 'provisional selves' makes way for a number of potential professional identities to emerge. Each of these 'fusion' professional selves can be understood as a synthesis of the core, the relational and the dialogical self. These are adopted through a process of experimentation, by 'trial and error' and practice of the contrasting professional selves. Each professional self is assessed by internal standards and by external feedback, which promotes the change or reinforcement of the internal standard (Ibarra, 1999). A change of professional identity ensues. Any potential intervention is best placed at the nexus of this change in the context of learning in HE or at work, so HEIs, lecturers and employers may act as key enablers as such opportunities present themselves.

The transition from student to professional is a complex journey. This complexity is a challenge for knowledge as much as identity, as it is often at these opportune times at the nexus of change when knowledge can be mediated, channelled and translated to optimal effect. These are the points of naivety, when knowledge can be created based on the decisions made by the informed subjects involved, with decisions being formed deliberately and critically. This is the scholarship, one may add, 'of innovation', in forming professional identity across the triad.

Part 1) Farewell, Mary Poppins: South and City College Birmingham (SCCB) Early Years Higher Education

Diversity in Early Years

The Early Years sector has undergone a revolution in the past 20 years. New developments in our understanding of a child's early development and how we maintain environments to nurture young minds has meant a total shift in our expectation of the EY practitioner. In bidding 'Farewell to Mary Poppins', space has been created for a more modern and diverse set of PIs to emerge. Important for the EY sector is to ensure PI development is deliberate and critical across the triad and EY training practitioners fully engage to keep the role 'in check'.

SCCB adopts a systemic approach to developing professional identity with EY students on placement in line with Boyer's four scholarships (Boyer, 1990). Higher Education Lead for EY and Childcare, Sinead Joyce, has developed a range of student-engaged scholarly activities and learning tools to enhance the PI of students. By bringing the employer, student and college together in a knowledge-rich environment, Sinead has maintained SCCB's Early Years local reputation for the sector.

At the SCCB Early Years Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Conference, students engage with conference activities demonstrating Boyer's Scholarship of Engagement (SoE). Joining with other students from different disciplines such as Health and Social Care and different levels and experience, this multi-agency approach mimics the sector environment authentically and complements a Scholarship of Integration (SoI). As Year 2 students are upskilling, they provide good opportunities for discussion regarding employment. Students present at the conference alongside guest speakers encouraging a discipline-specific Scholarship of Discovery (SoD) and are encouraged to pose questions to support dialogue. This encourages reflection – on professional identity relevant

to their own 'provisional selves', they are able to practise within the 'safe space' of the conference venue.

A well-structured Peer Mentor Programme (PMP) supports students' capability to test their identity, more specifically, their 'provisional self', utilising dialogue, relationships and networking outside of informal discussions with friends and families. This is particularly important as some students do not engage with lecturers in more than a 'question and answer' structure. PMP provides a different experience of conversing professionally to build unique identities on shared reflection. Student-directed development of identity is facilitated, as is 'real time' support not reliant on the academic calendar or perceived ability linked to assessment grades. This programme is easily situated in a Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) as indicative of *collaborative learning.*

To enable the students' reflective learning, computer software 'Mahara' Professional Practice Portfolio is used to create an online portfolio. In terms of digital literacy, SCCB has students who display little online technology awareness right through to 'digital natives'. This 'digital scholarship' may also be classed as SoTL. Mahara permits a deeper reflection of students' professional practice and employs technology to communicate their professional identity across boundaries for more personalised learning.

If we were to place students' professional identity at the centre of a model with CPD days, PMP, placement experience and Mahara and related tutorials with lecturers grouped around it, we can start to see how PI theory runs through the 'veins' connecting them. Students make sense and create meaning from this relationship through stories or narrative. Self-narrative, a narrative centred on the student, becomes crucial to our own understanding of professional identity. During the 'transition process' across identities, when recruits are new to a role, or making identity changes, stories 'help people articulate provisional selves, link the past and the future

into a harmonious, continuous sense of self, and enlist others to lend social reality to the desired changes' (Ibarra and Barbulescu, 2010). Subsequently, work done by lecturers, students integral to the model and employers on placement and via Mahara may be defined as 'narrative identity work' and can be actioned deliberately and critically.

Part 2) Knowing what we do do!: Grantham College and Special Educational Needs practitioners

The cohort of Grantham's Foundation Degree Special Educational Needs programme, acting as the research group for this part of the professional identity research project, were a mix of special needs practitioners working in special educational schools and mainstream schools. Using a semi-structured interview format, the Regional AoC Scholarship Development Manager acted as a *critical friend* to the group, guiding them through an analysis of their own presentation and their professional journey as practitioners. Key themes to their presentation were the history of disability legislation and models of disability for educational provision.

The interview was coded as A1, A2, B1, B2 (Grantham College students) and C1 (interviewer). Below are the select responses of the group to the question posed 'What, to you, is professional identity for a special educational needs practitioner?':

> **A2**: It's a role, isn't it? It's the job that you do. I think professional identity, for me, is a good thing to have; you know what you are, you know what you're doing, you can see that ladder if you want to build up your career a little bit more.

And building on this response, 'So, for you, establishing a strong professional identity is important?'

> **A2**: It is, yes.
>
> (For your progress?)

A2: Yes, it is.

A1: It identifies what you do, what your role is. I think you realise how much you do do, and how important you are to a setting. It should be appreciated a bit more...

B2: I think that it [professional identity] is to do with other staff members as well, so they know your professional identity too.

B1: Professional identity is important. It's your position in the framework of the organisation. Everyone knows the role. It stops roles being neglected and everyone knows what they have to do. It's important that everyone has their role for the benefit of the students.

A2: ... and for society as well ... (A1, B1, B2 agree verbally).

The importance of knowledge in practice

Knowing 'what they do do', and knowing 'what they do know' was a priority of all Grantham College students and marked missing in most work settings. Recognition of the student's knowledge base and experience was duly placed most important and the employer's responsibility. Other 'knowledges' integral to their professional identity development were brought into practice. Evidence-based knowledge was a core part of their course and previous professional training. Tacit knowledge (Polanyi, 1958), the knowledge the students know they have but that can only be demonstrated through action, was particularly resonant with the students at points. When discussing what they *could* know about the children and young people they worked with – care and responsiveness exemplified by the informed professional acting appropriately and taking responsibility in the moment – it was the interplay of tacit and evidence-based knowledge that was noted as most useful in critical decision making. Essentially, the students as professionals were mediating experiential, tacit and evidence-based knowledge between practice spaces whilst developing their professional identity. Where

tacit and evidence-based knowledge met with experience, scholarship happened. Not surprisingly, where scholarship happened, the right conditions for best professional practice took hold.

The following excerpt from the Grantham group interview highlights the importance of putting knowledge into practice. It is a good example of 'recontextualisation' of knowledge (Evans, 2008). The themes brought up by the group relate to differing 'modes of inclusion' taught on their foundation degree course and discussed in their group presentation.

C1: Just to turn into another question... there are some elements of what you talked about there, parts of the conversation when you were relating the theory to your practice. Could you go through for each of you and tell me, from your presentation, which aspects of your presentation were most important for you for putting that knowledge that you have learned here, back into your work?

A1: Mine was actually was the fact of the intervention, the inclusion and what we actually realised is that as a specialist SEN school you forget how much, day to day, you do do, to include them within the provision ... and the affirmative model, which was a big one. That one needs to be remembered in practice.

A2: It was good to look at other models, I think, and relate them to our own practice in our SEN provision. Also to pick out all of the things we do do to include these children. It was just a really good activity.

B2: I feel like it's given me an opportunity now to reflect on things that I do when I'm back at my setting. Because of that knowledge that I have got, I'm more self-critical of how I apply myself in the classroom.

B1: Before this, doing this presentation, I thought my school where I'm at was inclusive but after doing this presentation, I feel like it is a lot more integration than inclusion. I've learnt a lot from this that I can take back and put into practice.

C1: So over this side B1, B2, it has been a very positive journey, but it has also made you very reflective and changed your perceptions, slightly, of where you are positioned when you are at work (B1, B2 agree verbally).

B2: … and just the fact that with our setting it's been drilled into us that it is inclusive, but by doing this module we've experienced that it is not.

C1: And do you think that, then, would influence you to make changes where you are? To try and change what is happening? (B1, B2 agree verbally).

In addition to 'modes of inclusion' are other evidence-based examples from Grantham College and at SCCB demonstrating the necessity for a fuller understanding of the 'recontextualisation' of knowledge? During the research interview, one student expressed their frustration with repeatedly having to deal with non-specialist educational practitioners who had only worked in mainstream settings having little or no working experience of children with learning disabilities. This led to frustration and confusion for all parties in certain situations where children who were unable to follow a command were reprimanded and punished for 'naughtiness' beyond their physical and mental control.

At SCCB, an Early Years example of a lapse in contextualising knowledge was evidenced for language learning. Language development is often mapped to the school year, not primarily to age. Evidence-based knowledge learnt as part of the Foundation for Early Years, however, maintains that a child's birth and age in months are more authentic intervals for understanding language development. In an Early Years setting this may lead to children being diagnosed with a learning difficulty simply for having a birthday late in the school year. Again, frustration and confusion is felt by all when patience for the child to develop naturally is forsaken for institutionally administered targets.

These stories of discord, incongruence and friction between knowledge and practice are

the very narratives on which professional identities are built. The impact of such discrepancies are not only felt by professionals and employers, but more acutely by the most vulnerable and potentially powerful group in society, children.

Directives for the Scholarship Framework

After really listening to students, lecturers and course leaders, and communing in what would become a very cathartic 'research space', the most prominent message coming from data was 'We need a new professional voice'. Students need a voice and space to deliberately form their professional identities. Ultimately, what a student may do for themselves can empower them most. Colleges that deliver HE courses are in a prime position to support students in developing deliberate professional identities, through curriculum design, peer mentoring programmes, lecturer support, 'digital scholarship' and excellent sector-engaged events.

Initial assessment of employees as they enter the workplace is vital to understanding what they do know. It is more than just reading their CV and further probing for what experiential knowledge they have gained. What more they need to know in the workplace is imperative to good safe professional practice. Employees need more opportunities to understand how they are perceived and evaluated by others. Ongoing assessment of what learning they have brought into work, what they do know, what they 'do do', needs more recognition. Employers can seal down the value by recognising what professionals 'know', as the following interview excerpts demonstrate:

A1: I would agree with that in Special Educational Needs, that what you able to bring to that setting should be identified more to what role you are given.

A2: … and we do try that. We try to give out a form for staff as to their strengths and weaknesses and where they would like to go in terms of classes for next year.

C1: So you think there should be more focus and more exploration into what you can bring to the table and your own development, as well as what you can do for the organisation or the service.

B1: … and you're not allocated to the students, that you are suited to, that you are best suited to. Both me and B2 have over 10 years' experience of working with more challenging students than we work with now. In our school, a Teaching Assistant is a Teaching Assistant, they don't take into account your experience…

B2: … or your qualifications…

B1: … or if you've done intervention before … that's not your job role.

B2: … or just the things that you are actually able to do, or did. They don't utilise you to your full potential, whatsoever.

B2: And with our role, as Support Assistants, the teachers struggle with how much … the teachers don't know how much to ask us to do, what they can do with us, how they can utilise us in the classroom.

C1: So, do you think some of the issues you have over here, is actually about how your role is perceived, and how people think you fit in, as well? That's why you don't get listened to or why they don't look into your past and how skilled you are, because you are the SSA and that's it?

(All agree)

Part 3) A guidance table for professional identity across the triad

Preparation	Curriculum	Learning Space	Digital Scholarship	Workspace
Students **Attend industry-specific conferences as visitors.** **Absorb some of that professional culture before they attend an HE course.**	Engage early with different professional environments to understand how they will be expected to 'fit' in.	Engage with theory on professional identity such as the theory presented in this article which is easy to adapt to most vocational subjects.	Engage with social media relating to their anticipated course vocation and ask questions of experts who have professional experience in that area.	Find platforms on which to develop and communicate their 'voice' i.e. professional networks, employee representation committees.
Engage in professional identity sessions in their induction.	Immerse themselves in CPD days and get to know professionals in different contexts. Try as early as possible to present with a lecturer or peer at the event.	Utilise 'Mahara' professional practice portfolio or design unique professional practice portfolio.	Work hard at the reflective part of their professional portfolio to add stories and descriptions of their experience on placement/at work, especially those incidents which are critical to the development of their professional identity.	Utilise 'Mahara' professional practice portfolio or work with employer to get professional practice portfolio set up.
HEIs **Course leaders can embed professional identity theory and training into course induction.** **Lecturers can train in providing more effective feedback.**	Sector-specific speakers invited to share expert knowledge are asked to integrate current discourse related to professional identity. Students across faculties are invited to these seminars.	Develop the control identity with students. Burke (2004) states the higher-level control identity standards are the parents to the lower identity standards. Awareness and making this cycle explicit to students and role-modelling increases professional identity resilience.	Grow professional networks dedicated to professional identity development e.g. South and City College Birmingham Early Years Network.	Lecturers and managers actively communicate with learning networks at work. Appropriate medium to be agreed on.

HE management can integrate strategy relating to professional identity into college HE policy using a hybrid model.	Course leaders and management can actively try and generate discourse relating to professional identity through seminars and visiting lecturers/ sector experts.	Produce resources e.g. textbooks and web-based resources which encourage critical debate on subject area and role of professionals.	Blogging can be introduced into the curriculum and linked with professional practice portfolios. This develops 'in action' reflection on professional identity.	Utilise 'Mahara' professional practice portfolio.
Employers **Employers can introduce more incentives for more qualified employees by giving them more responsibility.**	Employers can host seminars at HEIs on professional identity in their sector.	Students at work are a great source of knowledge. They can be asked to present and share this at work.	Support employees to generate discourse relevant to professional identity in the workspace and provide platforms for encouraging voice in the sector.	Peer recognition and enhancement schemes.
Employers can utilise space around professional environments to display vital professional knowledge and update this knowledge (safeguards permitting).	Can consolidate professional identity learning towards end of course to ease student transition into full professional status.	Employers can keep in contact with course leaders.	Utilise 'Mahara' professional practice portfolio.	Employers can provide time and space to study or make allowances for this in work schedule. Mentorship at work could be provided by a learning mentor.
Policy **Consult students considering profession.**	Consult lecturers and course leaders.	Consult student-professionals at HEIs.	Consult expert digital scholars.	Consult employers and employees wishing to upskill.

From a policy perspective, it is imperative that practitioner-based learning in Early Years, special needs and wider educational training employs a well-structured approach to developing deliberate and critical professional identities for the sector. This approach must be embedded from course design right through to research level, must start in course planning and can be introduced as early as induction, as it has now been at SCCB. To complement this, students training to be mainstream teachers may need to have more 'special needs' training as part of their core training so they understand school children's needs.

Making it critical

The final shift required for a full evolution in professional identity from pre-conscious to *critical* starts with deliberate planning. What makes professional identity *critical* makes it scholarly. Critical research exemplified here encourages criticality in sectors such as Early Years or special needs education. Like strong professional identity, it does not happen by accident. 'Voice' demands individuals take responsibility, stand their ground and step forward. Their professional sector, backed by the triad, must make that collective critical decision to support them.

As HEIs form a very live part of the triad, they are well placed to encourage communication across the triad. This communication of knowledge and practice concerning professional identity means representing knowledge in a *critical* way. With commitment, critical handling of knowledge in differing contexts, combined with drive to form distinct and deliberate professional identities, may affect a reciprocal strengthening of HEI professionals' own professional identity.

Likewise for employers, critical handling of knowledge, putting evidence-based knowledge to work, is key. Checking that tacit practices assumed in the workplace become evidence-informed, or changes in workplace policy are implemented to make it so, is the employer's responsibility. Giving space to employees to discuss tacit knowledge and what value it can

bring to the workspace and how, in a structured way, is probably the best way to keep it alive. As 'narrative identity work', this could be as simple as providing platforms for staff to share stories and to understand how to analyse these stories to enhance their professional identity.

Further professional identity research

Extending the value of research beyond its project boundaries is a great indicator of its efficiency and rigour. This has definitely been felt by staff at University Centre Peterborough (UCP) who now carry the responsibility of taking this research further as part of their Research and Scholarship Policy. Excited by the prospect of involving as many staff, students and employers as possible in professional identity research, particularly with a mixed method approach, UCP is currently planning the following small-scale projects: a filmed research interview with UCP's first Research Ambassador entering a Postgraduate Certificate in Primary Education whilst working with special needs children, the professional identity of all teaching staff in academies in Peterborough and their transition to managers, and creative methods to involve supported students in developing professional identity in an engineering setting.

Conclusion

As the student experience emerges as a complex and much-measured process, we may benefit from even more qualitative and creative perspectives on the student journey. In opening up our vision, the student experience can and does include the 'student as professional' experience. Knowing what we 'can' do as enablers and how this manifests as what we do 'do' is framed in the research and demonstrated in the table provided. To add value, his table may be cross-referenced with more detailed guidance presented in the Scholarship Framework. For any Scholarship Framework to be realised, a more disciplined effort by stakeholders to reawaken 'lost voice' is necessary.

Forming professional identities is an act of deliberate change and ultimately critical transformation that needs active engagement across the triad. It asks questions of 'Who governs the student experience?' and what more meaning can be generated by research undertaken beyond the boundaries of HEIs. How this meaning turns to stories forms narrative for more rigorous professional identity research. How this research is designed is crucial to sector change and highlighting the 'knowledge to best practice' relationship.

More participation by end service users in the research design to inform professionals makes sense. Hidden in the research data lies the call for HEIs to tend to their Scholarship of Engagement and make partners of these potential research subjects in the same spirit as they promote their own HE identity.

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3.4 Crossing boundaries and negotiating identities in the student search for employment

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Introduction

Settling into higher education (HE) and finding yourself in your studies is a daunting task for many who choose to attend college HE courses. In the back of a student's mind, alongside the dread of lengthy reading sessions and looming deadlines, is the niggling question of how and where they will find their 'self' in work. The *employment landscape* is much unchartered territory to the novice work-hunter, those seeking a career change or returning to work. How they match job prospects to their chosen course and personal ambitions is the focus of this research project.

One of the key performance measures for students and managers of any course is how quickly students transition from academia to employment; moreover, how they are able to use their knowledge, understanding and skills in a job that relates to the qualification they have studied for. Students can become frustrated and disheartened when they realise how challenging and competitive the labour market is when they come to leave. Realistically, for the majority, the student journey into employment starts prior to studying as they begin to build knowledge and skills, reflect on themselves and consider their life goals.

Here at University Centre Peterborough (UCP), Peterborough Regional College's higher education centre run in conjunction with Anglia Ruskin University, we try a variety of different approaches to embed employability in the whole student experience: opportunities to become a Student Ambassador, inviting industry expert guest speakers to course sessions, positive relationships with lecturers, and reflection on feedback from employers after job interviews. Such initiatives are integrated into UCP higher education courses but what do they matter to the student once their dissertations are complete? How can

UCP learn of their impact and how to improve or enhance these initiatives? These were the research project's core questions.

Building on the student-led qualitative research becoming typical of University Centre Peterborough, the 'live' research method of writing personal web-based logs, or blogging, was chosen. The 'Journey to Employment' qualitative study research approach is situated in the space where pedagogic, narrative and digital auto-ethnographic research paradigms intersect (Mendez, 2013; Etherington, 2010).

The project

Key to student engagement with this research was their immersion in the research process whilst driving it forward, taking the role of co-researcher with the AoC Scholarship Development Manager. Emphasis was placed on 'blogging' as a reflective exercise. Students could choose the blog software to launch their own 'Journey to Work'-type blog and were asked to update their blog every two to three weeks. To structure the blogs for this research project, they were directly encouraged to draw upon stories from their HE course, their home life, previous work searches, work experience and, most importantly, their own research into the world of work. Privacy and protection for the participants' real identities were upheld by supervisor tips for suitable pseudonyms and 'virtual identity' avatars.

Research supervision by the AoC Scholarship Development Manager pushed the boundaries of student research practice and transformed student blogging into a scholarly exercise employing all four of Boyer's Scholarships (Boyer, 1990). Reaching out to employers and the community demonstrated a Scholarship of Engagement (SoE) and reflecting on theory taught in course sessions embodied a

Scholarship of Discovery (SoD). Less prominent but no less significant, a Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) was evidenced at moments of inspiration in learning and with reference to lecturers and mentors. Punctuating the narrative of the blog, often incidentally, were times when the student blogger had absorbed learning and philosophies from alternative disciplines, and from more diverse sources such as social media and enterprise workshops.

Student-researcher activity lay somewhere in the nexus of student research and the student experience. Employing contemporary research methods, the student-researcher not only added to the knowledge-base of their college but to the quality and richness of the whole student experience thereafter. Participatory action – research, narrative inquiry and auto-reflexivity – are modally present in research data generated whilst students demonstrate digital scholarship techniques for criticality and the development of critical self-awareness. Such exploration was synchronous to other UCP research projects in its reflection on identity and use of digital scholarship to enable 'boundary crossing', a technique used in earlier research with UCP's Research Ambassadors (Mazalkov et al, 2016).

Theoretical underpinning

Boundary Mechanism Theory relies loosely on the concepts of 'territory', or more commonly 'place', and the 'boundaries' that distinguish 'territories'. *Boundaries* can be cultures, locations, time, professional levels etc, namely social cultural differences that could lead to discontinuity in action or interaction, in this case action or interaction pertaining to finding employment. *Boundary objects* are those artefacts associated with the crossing process, that is the transition from one territory to another (Gachago et al, 2015). Put into context later on, the final 'territory' for students may be the ideal *employment landscape* hosting their ideal job. *Boundary mechanisms of learning* are those which facilitate boundary crossing (Gachago et al, 2015). In this case the reflective learning cycle set up by blogging as research can be identified as a *boundary mechanism*

of learning. As a physical metaphor, it could manifest as a kind of satellite navigator. Integration of knowledge is encouraged as boundaries are crossed, offering a good chance for scholarship and innovations in scholarship, as highlighted later in the Car(d) employment model (Mazalkov et al, 2016).

Blogging as complex research

An awareness of multiple identities to be negotiated by the student researcher in the search for employment became apparent as research progressed; namely, a graduate identity, a professional identity, a parent identity, a partner/wife identity, and a member of community identity. The distinction between identities became significant in the decision-making of the student in finding employment as well as their perception of their identity boundaries, which tended to oscillate given their respective context. What was clear from the discourse generated on identity was that the stronger the student believed in their identity when interacting with employers, the better their outcome.

Similarly, as the student blogger became adept at blogging and detailing reflective insights, they began to integrate more identifiable principles into their research practice. The Higher Education Academy (HEA) recognises the following as key principles for students as active researchers: High Level Thinking, Making Critical Judgements, Synthesising Ideas and Concepts and Interrogating Ideas (Walkington, 2015).

It is also important to note, at this point in the research process, a more complex meta research cycle being set up, one that strived to improve the quality of the research through triangulation and by evaluating the research process in real time, to make it more rigorous. Triangulation in the social sciences is a technique of discovering facts or patterns in research usually using mixed methods. Mertens and Biber (2012) argue for its usefulness as a 'dialectical' process whose goals seek a more in-depth nuanced understanding of research findings and clarification of disparate results

by posing them in dialogue. Heeding this, the student researcher was writing the blog on her 'Journey to Work' in reflective mode. The blog was open to 'live' feedback via a link where readers could post comments. The co-researcher (Scholarship Development Manager) was observing and analysing the blog, using the researcher as a prompt to identify and highlight certain aspects of her journey. As her blogging progressed, the student researcher was instructed to write a personal reflection on her blog as a separate piece of writing, whilst still blogging, thus forming a dialogical relationship between the two.

Initially, the justification for this approach was to encourage critical self-awareness and in some ways safely 'contain' the student in literary/language terms. However, the process soon became vital to the research itself making it truly 'auto-reflexive'; the student became the instrument by which their own research insights, data and learning were discovered. In addition, the blog was presented to an audience of college HE professionals at the AoC Research and Scholarship Conference 2017 with added time after the presentation for questions and answers.

Knowledge, values, negotiation (agency and power): setting up the right game to play the right card

Over the last 20 years, definitions of employability have shifted. They have moved away from demand-led skill sets and towards a more holistic view of 'graduate attributes' that include 'softer' transferable skills and person-centred qualities, developed in conjunction with subject-specific knowledge, skills and competencies' (HEA, 2017).

The question for college HE is how do we as a sector keep up to date with definitions of employability from the perspective of the student? To understand how their degree serves them in the real world of work, how they negotiate a place for themselves in the labour market and what the real day-to-day constraints on their choices are.

It is tempting for students beginning a three-year degree to put off thinking about their future career and how they are going to build what Lumley and Wilkinson (2014) call *employability assets* which include gaining a mix of skills, knowledge, experience, attitudes and demonstrating a mindset which will be of interest to employers. Starting to build these early on can make a huge difference.

Knight and Yorke's (2004) USEM (U=Understanding subject matter; S=skilful practices; E=Efficacy beliefs; M=Metacognition model of employability) (Figure 1), proposes four inter-related components of employability: understanding of disciplinary subject matter and how organisations work; skilful practices, academic, employment, and life in general; efficacy beliefs, reflecting the learner's notion of self, their self-belief, and the possibility for development; metacognition complementing efficacy, embracing self-awareness, and how to learn and reflect.

Others like Sewell and Dacre Pool (2010) have developed what they call the CareerEDGE model (Figure 2) to show how the acquisition of such knowledge, attributes, experience and skills, and reflection upon them, can help enhance a person's self-esteem, self-confidence and self-efficacy and improve their employability.

But is there 'something scholarly' that we here at UCP can develop to add to these models, or adapt them based on the findings of our own student-led research? Early research indicates that there is room for such growth and differentiation in *employability practice*.

Students can mistakenly concentrate on gaining a good classification of degree thinking that this alone will lead them into their dream job and that employers will be queuing up to hire them. This is far from reality as graduate recruitment research surveys such as High Fliers (2017) suggest that it is now very difficult to gain employment without relevant work experience where you have demonstrated the application of your knowledge, understanding and skills in the work place. Surveys such as one from

the Association of Graduate Recruiters in 2015 stress that almost 27% of graduate positions are filled by people who were working, or had already worked, for the organisation. These figures reinforce the need for students to search carefully to find employers who will give paid internships.

Most degree programmes now have either specialist modules on career progression and employment and/or tutorials to support student employment. They offer advice and guidance to students regarding searching for short-term and long-term employment, writing CVs and preparing for assessment days and interviews. It is essential that students make use of these sessions and the support on offer from tutors so that they equip themselves with the necessary employment skills to gain employment in what is a competitive employment market with an average of only 2% of job applicants getting invited to interview.

In a module like Career Management and Employment one of the early self-assessment exercises we undertake with students is to help them identify their values, interests, skills and personality and how well they might match the values of particular occupations and employers. Another self-assessment exercise is getting students to think about what is important to them and why. The reason for this is that it is tempting for students to just accept the first job offer they receive which may not sufficiently interest or motivate them.

Employers are increasingly looking for employees who match their values, using value-based recruitment methods to shortlist and recruit potential employees for interview. Helping students to understand their own values and to research the values of potential employers can help them look in the right areas. Reed and Stoltz (2011) conducted research into the attributes that employers really want from their employees and came up with a list of nine (honesty, trustworthiness, commitment, adaptability, flexibility, accountability, determination and loyalty). UCP's Business Management Faculty has welcomed a number of expert guests

from different organisations to speak to the students; many of them have stressed the need for students to research the organisation that they are applying to find out as much as possible about them, including the latest developments in the news, and the organisation's mission statement and values to help them think about whether there is a good match between them and the organisation.

Students are often surprised when they are told this, but it is true: we all know someone who feels they are a square peg in a round hole, in a job that does not sufficiently interest them, or they know someone who has changed their career and finds it is much more fulfilling than anything they have done before and wished they had found this career path earlier. Often the reason for this is it is because it aligns better to the underpinning values that they hold. Students must use the skill of self-reflection in order to learn and understand themselves better in order to then communicate this effectively to employers.

For one such student who kept a blog of her journey into full-time employment (Kaur, 2017), it was interesting to see how some of the modules that she most enjoyed on her Business Management Degree such as Responsible Business, Sustainable Transformation and Environmental Practices and her major project were those that matched her values of making a difference, challenging injustice and putting the needs of others before her own.

A critique of existing models for employability

Figure 1: USEM model for employability
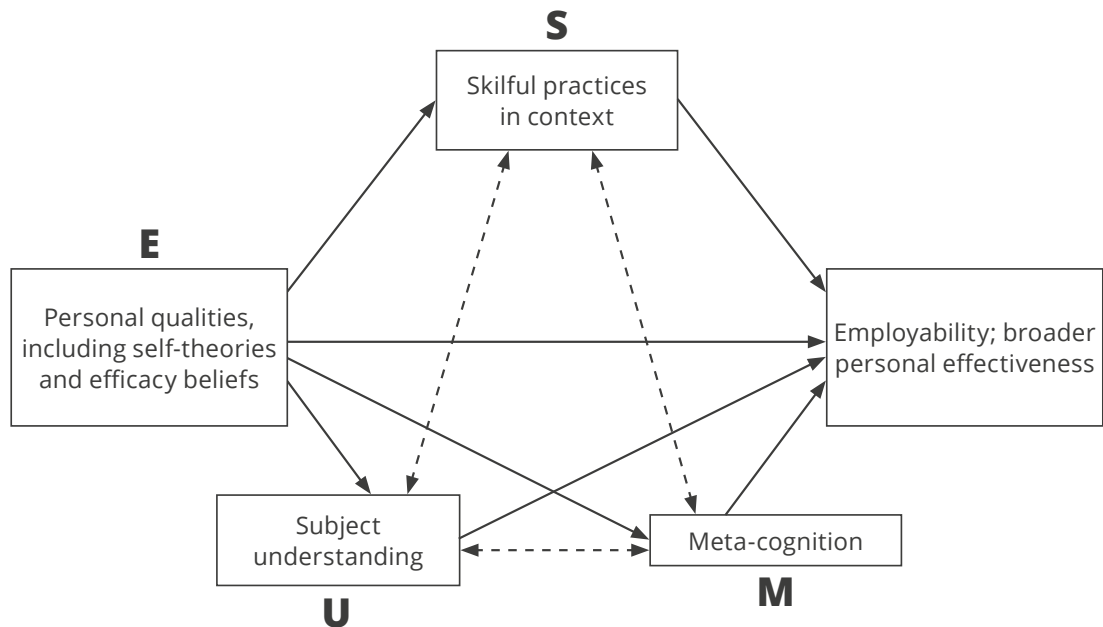
Figure 2: CareerEDGE model for employability
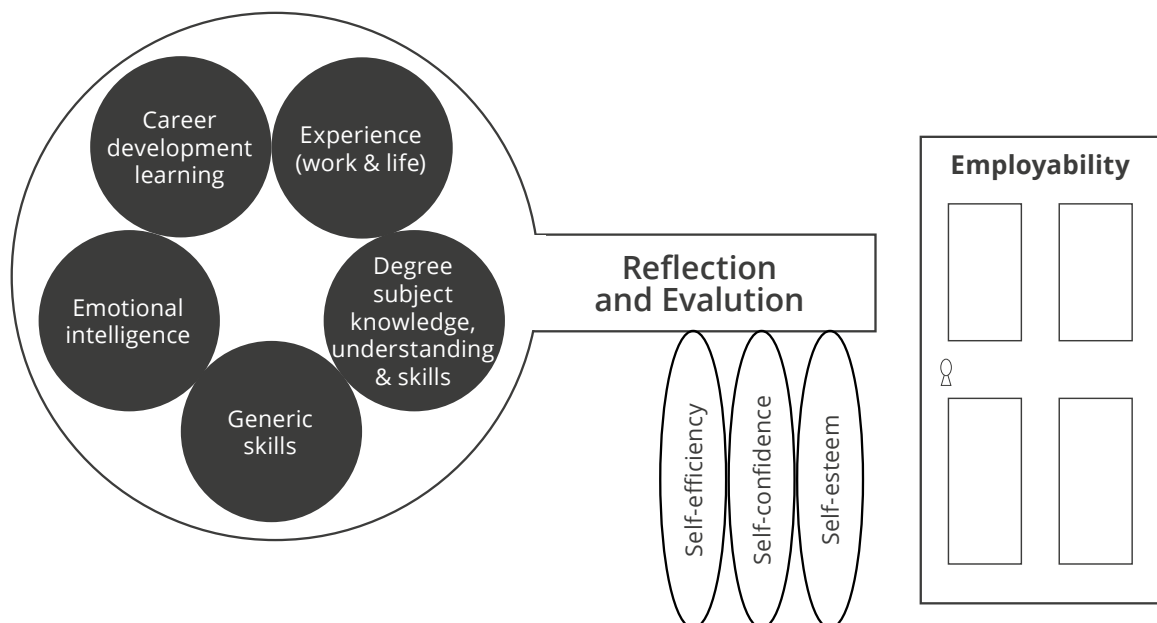
Career development learning

    Experience (work & life)
    Degree subject knowledge, understandig & skills
    Generic skills
    Emotional intelligence

CareerEDGE - the key employability model

The research undertaken for 'Journey to Employment' definitely responds to both of the models presented above. In the findings, Subject Knowledge and Understanding are highlighted by both HE lecturer and student/researcher as significant as are the student's theories and efficacy and their learning in the field of career development. Further to this, the blog process itself facilitated deeper investigation into subject/course learning and exploration into, and justification of, personal experiences and personal decision making. It could also be argued, as a reflective learning tool, the blog enhanced meta-cognition (Figure 1) and provided space for improved self-esteem via recognition of personal achievement and personal positive affirmation.

Limitations of employment models

It is fair to say that for our own students at UCP, the models are simply too static, overly generic and not sufficiently current or differentiated enough to be utilised as a tool for finding work. Framing a rich and diverse set of outcomes with one instrument didn't seem adequate or 'true'. The research generated 'live' discourse on the identities of the student which were essentially dynamic and open to interpretation, making their representation a complex and participatory process. It followed that a comprehensive model must reflect this.

The Locus of Control for the models, it may also be argued, acts too much *for* the manipulation of students by the labour market and higher education institutions (HEIs). HEIs can prepare the student with the best laid plans but our research found that once the student had completed their dissertation/undergraduate major project, they were very much on their own in the *employment landscape*. A Model for Employability that aimed to move the Locus of Control from the *labour market* and HEIs and back onto the students thus seemed potentially more useful. This suggested that a more student-centred model may be more appropriate to UCP.

Building UCP's model for employment using critical incidents (adaptation to student journey)

Despite the identification of 'critical incidents' for success in teaching being more universally acknowledged, we go back to the early work of Flanagan (1954) for our adaptation of Critical Incident Technique (CIT) to this blog-based research, and ironically back to employment study.

Flanagan (1954) developed the CIT for job analysis purposes, with the aim of identifying the critical requirements for job success. Flanagan (1954; 329) states: "Critical incidents are defined as extreme behaviour, either outstandingly effective or ineffective with respect to attaining the general aims of the activity". Although now deemed a qualitative research method, CIT was initially posed as a scientific tool to aid measurement and control in job task analysis. Conversely, for this research, CIT is used for triangulation to liberate student identities and transform learning.

Obvious 'critical incidents' of the student researcher can be summarised as follows, but extra reading of her blog may present more for the reader (Kaur, 2017): the act of reflecting on being drawn to psychology as part of her self-assessments and subsequent redirection of her career pathway; learning that criticism of her coursework, initially felt as harsh judgement, could be objectified as critical incident learning to develop herself; realising the job that would allow her to be an active parent was worth waiting for; reflecting on when she realised what research is and her perceptions of it and finally, the moment where she actually negotiated with an employer over details on a job specification to get the job which aligned with her values – the one she wanted!

In analysing the critical incidents of the student researcher, it became apparent that a certain pattern was emerging based around a set of episodic interactions. This set of performative episodes or 'games' tended to frame an interplay where the most important actors

were the student herself and the employer. Adding a certain legitimacy to these small 'games' were the HE lecturers' own summations on their own 'critical incidents' as a teacher/practitioner, which tend more towards David Tripp's widely referenced writings on critical incidents. The HE lecturer highlights these as the reflection on being informed that students should research the firm they are seeking to work with, and his series of critical incidents with students as they are filling in their self-assessment forms in class. Moreover, what is particularly resonant in the HE lecturer's contribution to this research is his acute observation of the *typical*, that is what practice continues simply as a matter of course because it is not questioned: the taking of the first job, the lack of value-based decision making by students, the forcing of 'the square peg in a round hole' etc (Tripp, 2011).

What happened when these actors came together in employment-related 'critical incidents' served most influential in the 'Journey to Employment? What was matched or played in that game at the interface between actors, most commonly *knowledge*, *value* and *uniqueness* or *agency*, needed representation in any working employment model. This is where scholarship 'happened'. For the sake of a recognisable and symbolic model these constructs were assigned a 'high card' in a deck of playing cards; cards of Knowledge (King), Value (Queen), Negotiation (Ace), Agency/Uniqueness (Jack). Jack is a split card signifying its dual use. Negotiation was, of course, the Ace card as had been demonstrated in the most *critical* of incidents.

Figure 3: A guide for students on how to find themselves in the right game playing the right card
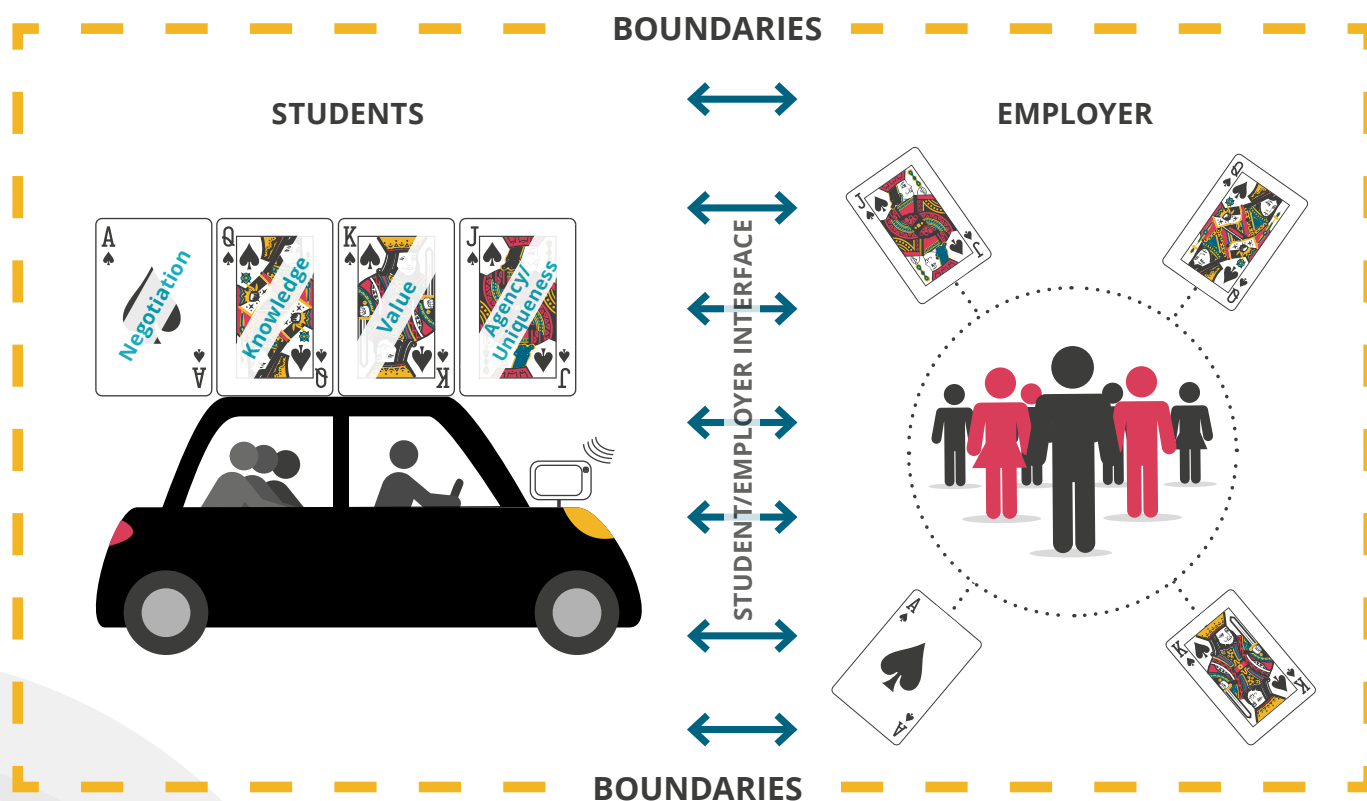
The Car(d) Interface model frames employability as landscape or environment, mapped by the student using their 'satellite navigator'. The 'satellite navigator' or mapping instrument acts as a 'boundary object' (see previous section for explanation). This 'boundary object' is informed by the student's 'critical incidents'. When 'boundary mechanism learning is activated, boundary crossing is enabled to 'scope out' the student's 'ideal employment landscape' where they are most likely to find their ideal job.

Conclusion

HEIs play an integral part in developing the 'boundary object' with the students. It is a systemic relationship. Students learn from their own *critical incidents*. Lecturers, course leaders and managers learn from their critical incidents as professionals. HE teams learn from students' critical incidents. The *learning institution* sets up a system for the student to become their own 'employment manager'.

Blogging encourages the self-reflection required to turn the critical incidents into human mapping machinery. Having exercised their reflexive function well, students become skilled mappers, equipped to mark out a more distinct and rich employment terrain. Likewise, in terms of identity, HEIs are well placed to help students forge a strong identity for finding employment, a new resilient values-driven form of identity. In knowing thyself, the student begins to know and to shape the ideal landscape for the job they really want to do, the one that means something to them.

Synergy with research on graduate and professional identity can only embed a culture of rigorous identity research. Engaging students as co-researchers in research that encourages critical self–awareness is a great start. Student-led research is even better, as by researching employment they are already 'scoping out' their ideal employment landscape. Research into firms and early work experience develops the student's understanding of their *knowledge-to-practice* relationship with the employer.

More can be done to prepare the student getting in the Car(d). Curriculum may be structured to support the students as 'employment managers'. Values can be developed by integrating self-analysis sessions. In tandem students may be trained to approach employers themselves for values-based discussions. This is explained below. Both strategies develop the student's understanding of their *values* relationship with the employer.

Participation is crucial to a fair game of employment, and this is where the *boundary object* becomes priceless. Any type of auto-ethnographic or reflexive research places the student researcher in the driving seat. If there are barriers, social-cultural, time-place, even the more abstract barriers such as knowledge, conceptual knowing, power differentials etc will only be rendered by the person facing the barrier. To the rest experiencing that social reality in any other paradigm, the barrier is not visible. The act of research is thus a creative act that renders the barrier visible to engage participants in discourse to enable the necessary *boundary crossing* (Mazalkov et al, 2016). A complete cycle scopes out an optimal landscape for each student.

Training to become a student 'employment manager' can be approached in stages. Firstly, the student must be trained in *impression management* to make the best of that initial interface with the employer. It must be memorable and values-based discussion can make it so. Secondly, students must develop the skill of 'building rapport'. Not as easy as it sounds, building rapport can be tricky but plenty of simulated exercises and drama-based sessions can help hugely. Thirdly, students must learn how to break down job specification and person specification documents to establish a shared language when discussing potential opportunities with employers. In the sub-text to these documents are the clear signs of the employer's needs. The student has to learn how to match all their 'cards' to these needs to fit in with the employer's organisation.

Finally, of utmost importance, is the high/low art of 'negotiation'. Negotiation can be practised

and allied to the student's own sense of values, priorities and contingencies. This is where the playing cards come in greatest use, as students learn to match theirs as students learn to match theirs with the employer's vantage cards. Negotiation develops the student's understanding of their *power* relationship with the employer, and it is the very 'power with' that a strong resilient identity can mediate for an ideal employment outcome.

Utilising the Car(d) interface model could potentially make the student/employer interface more reciprocal and a great deal more efficient when negotiating employment. As a critical site of knowledge translation, the interface is most scholarly when the model is applied in context. Critical incidents, values-based discourse across the board and a deeper understanding of how students form strong identities enriches the employment landscape for the whole higher education community. At high levels of scholarship, more knowledge flows across the interface both ways. King, Queen and Jack cards are played with intent, and the Ace card is more powerful for student and employer.

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3.5   The modern age of creative assessment: are teaching professionals teaching creatively or teaching for creativity? An analysis of the modern-day classroom

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The aim of this research is to analyse how the modern age of creativity can be used to help students develop a more creative approach to learning within the classroom with a comparison of creative techniques from the 1990s to the late 2000s. This research will analyse Ellis and Lawrence's key principles of modern creativity (Ellis and Lawrence, 2009) and Coffield's research on learning styles (Coffield et al, 2016) and evaluate how the effect of creative learning can impact a student's academic potential.

This research will further analyse Coffield's suggested reforms for creative learning in the classroom and the author will submit how teaching professionals can implement these to improve their students' learning experience. Much of this research will be based on schools and the private education sector; however, these reforms can equally be applied to further and higher education.

Creativity is defined as being "vital for social and economic innovation and development as well as for individual well-being". On a more personal level, it is defined as a desire for self-expression and identity (Collard and Looney, 2014). Creativity, it can be argued, is a monumental concept in education because it allows us to consider how students can reach their maximum potential and wellbeing within further or higher education.

It is submitted that one of the fundamental issues surrounding creativity is the use of learning styles within the classroom environment and how much emphasis is placed on the use of these styles rather than on how we can improve the learning outcomes of students.

Coffield, a prominent academic, suggested that the logic of lifelong learning is that students will become more motivated to learn by knowing more about their own strengths and weaknesses within the classroom rather than assuming the use of a single learning style (Coffield et al, 2016).

Therefore, if teachers can respond to individuals' strengths and weaknesses, then retention and achievement rates in education are likely to rise and this may provide a foundation for lifelong learning (Coffield et al, 2016).

Coffield asked three important questions in relation to this research: (1) How can we teach students if we do not know how they learn? (2) How can we improve the performance of our employees if we do not know how we ourselves learn or how to enhance their learning? (3) Are the learning difficulties of so many students or employees better understood as the teaching problems of tutors/workplace training managers? (Coffield et al, 2016).

It could be said that Coffield's research raises many more questions than answers; if teaching professionals often tend to take a 'one size fits all' approach to learning it then follows that all students are expected to learn in the same way regardless of their age, disabilities and capabilities.

For example, in the late 1990s to 2000, it was relatively common to expect students to copy out of text books to get them to 'cram' as much in as possible during a lesson. However, factors such as creativity and literacy levels were not taken into consideration. Technological advances such as Kahoot and YouTube were not available and it is argued that there was a lack of imaginative approaches taken to make learning more interesting and effective (Jeffery and Craft, 2012).

In 1999, the National Advisory Committee on Creative and Cultural Education (NACE) made a distinction between teaching creatively and teaching for creativity in its investigation of creative teaching (NACE, 1999).

NACE discussed that the idea that young people's creative abilities are most likely to be developed in an atmosphere in which the teacher's creative abilities are properly engaged; to engage creative learning we must, therefore, first engage teachers in the creative process.

For example, Egan and Madej confirmed this view when it was discussed that 'the philosophic mind focuses on the connections between things, constructing theories, laws, ideologies and metaphysical schemes to tie together the facts available to students' (Egan and Madej, 2015; 5).

For young students to develop in the classroom, teachers must first engage a 'philosophic' mind with theories and ideologies of creative learning to ensure a young person's creative abilities can be suitably developed.

As the further education sector moved on from NACE, new technologies we were previously unfamiliar with were being conceptualised for learning and by the late 2000s creative learning was becoming more accepted within the classroom.

Ellis and Lawrence were two of the first academics to analyse how this advance in technology could be used to create a modern-day 'creative classroom' and went on to create and research what are considered the 'six key factors to achieve modern creativity within the classroom (Ellis and Lawrence, 2009):

(1) confidence; (2) independence and enjoyment; (3) collaboration and communication; (4) creativity; (5) strategies and skills; (6) knowledge and understanding, and reflection and evaluation. These six key factors form the key headings of the Creative Learning Assessment (CLA) observation framework.

This framework enabled teachers to observe and analyse a student's learning behaviour in process, and to evaluate the product of their artistic endeavours while finding out what students know and what they can achieve and using it as a way of developing a deeper understanding of individual approaches to learning (Ellis and Lawrence, 2009).

To establish how these six key factors of creative learning can be implemented in the classroom to ensure students are developing a deeper understanding of their creative personality, it is important to understand how recent reforms in creative education can have an impact on a student's academic achievement.

Coati and Aurelie discussed that the 'pedagogy of creativity' developed by creative practitioners should provide a model to 'embrace the richer, riskier and more nuanced and subjectively powerful approaches that individual creativity and the work of the imagination truthfully demand' (Coati and Aurelie, 2012; 130).

Ellis and Lawrence shared a similar view and discussed in their report within the CLA that teachers found the open framework flexible yet supportive in helping them to look closely at how students were learning in different subjects such as painting, construction, animation, drama, dance and literature.

Teachers therefore saw it as an opportunity to find out what students know and can do and as a way of developing a deeper understanding of individual approaches to learning (Ellis and Lawrence, 2009).

Consider this example: as a private tutor in the education sector I have students who are at a variety of ability levels. One of these students is an extremely talented academic but struggles to write his ideas and thoughts down on paper. I had to decide on a more creative approach to teaching this student law and applied the six key strands of creative learning.

Once I realised his strength lay in visual presentations and that he could talk about what he saw rather than write what he thought, I started to use modern technology. I recorded these conversations using webcams, video recordings and online platforms including Kahoot. I was able to observe this student within his academic capabilities rather than insisting that he write down lecture-style notes, also known as 'rote learning', which would be likely to further enhance his suffering.

This approach reinstated Ellis and Lawrence's six strands of creative learning because the student gained confidence, independence and enjoyment of his academic abilities whilst being able to communicate and collaborate effectively using visual learning. This improved his skills, knowledge and understanding of the subject which resulted in adequate reflection and evaluation of his current skills.

Perry discussed the benefits of this kind of creative assessment and argued that creativity is a "complex, multifaceted phenomenon" and should be evaluated from various perspectives to gain the most academic achievement from students (Perry, 2017; 126, 188).

Perry went on to study creativity and evaluate it within a classroom environment and argued that professionals should be using three distinct assessments: (1) expert assessment of creative thinking; (2) belief in their own creative abilities; and (3) a personal characteristic associated with creativity (Perry, 2017).

The Creative Industries Federation (CIF) shared a similar view and endorsed Perry's argument about creative assessment and expert assessment of creative thinking.

The Federation discussed that there is a need for a greater commitment to creative subjects, and that this is not just about the economy but about changing students' lives through imaginative solutions. Such solutions could ensure that those students who may not get the chance because of current educational policies and lack of creative provisions do go on to have successful careers (Creative Industries Federation, 2016).

The CIF report went on to share a valid example of how creativity through imaginative assessment can help students who need alternative solutions to learning. They referenced Richard Rodgers, an award-winning architect who was dyslexic and was called 'stupid' at school because he could not read or memorise school work (Creative Industries Federation, 2016; 13).

This is submitted as a prime example of how easy it is for teaching professionals to let talented students fall through the system through a lack of understanding of how to creatively assess these individuals.

It is submitted that dyslexic students epitomise the kind of people who would thrive on creative assessments because they have a 3D element to the way they perceive information and can sometimes be better students than those who do not 'suffer' from this type of adversity.

For example, one of my mathematic students is considered to have 'dyslexic traits' but is on a higher standard of mathematical reasoning than another student who has no issues with standard assessments. This is because the student sees the mathematical problems from a unique perspective and approaches it in four diverse ways rather than one, summarising his conclusions and submitting a different and creative approach to the solution.

This is submitted as an advantage to both student and teacher: the teacher has now learnt a new, creative way to understand the teaching of mathematics to students who do not fit the traditional educational policies, and the student now feels able to propose his ideas without fear of being branded 'stupid'.

However, creative assessment does not just reflect on those who do not fit the traditional government structure of learning and creative assessment by personal characteristics (Perry, 2014). This type of assessment can also accelerate learning and attainment in students who do fit the framework.

A student may achieve five B grades within their academic work but may struggle to gain the A grade they desire because they are struggling to find alternative ways to reach their potential. By ensuring that all teaching professionals are experts on creative assessments, and considering the personal characteristics of each student to ensure they have a solid belief in their own creative ability, it is possible to push all students regardless of their educational needs to the very top of the academic ladder.

Coffield suggested that the most essential feature missing from creative assessment is a solid, extensive and constantly updated base of knowledge about teaching and learning on which to build a culture of learning in every school and college.

Head teachers and principals, therefore, should be responsible for the inspirational and educational leaders who will lead our next generation into further or higher education (Coffield, 2012).

It is submitted that the problem within the current education system is that teachers are not comfortable when they are asked important questions such as what their teaching style is, their theories, practices, and how they use them to evaluate a student's progress to improve the practice of their school or college. How many professionals consider informed up-to-date research on learning theories, reflective models and current debates and controversies with the teaching and learning environment?

Research carried out by Coffield has argued that learning styles have become invalid, unreliable and have a negligible impact on practice; professionals cannot, therefore, answer such basic questions in relation to their students' performance (Coffield, 2012, 2016).

To attain creative learning within the modern classroom it is submitted that we need to stop paying attention to learning styles and methods and take a closer look at our own knowledge of creative learning; using technological advances we can ensure that if we are asked what our teaching style is, as professionals we can say 'innovative', 'creative' and 'inspiring' instead of 'kinaesthetic', 'auditory' or 'visual'.

This is not to say that using a certain model within the classroom is a bad idea. In fact, it can become the opposite if it is combined with inspiring practices to reach out to all students regardless of their skill level (NASUWT, 2017).

In 2016 Ofsted introduced the Common Inspection Framework which made distinct reference to the National Curriculum. This was then followed by the School Inspection Handbook, updated in 2017, which ensured that when creativity is assessed it is done so with effective leadership and management; thus, inspectors will evaluate the extent to which learning programmes have suitable breadth, depth and relevance so that they meet statutory requirements as well as the needs and interests of children, learners and employers nationally and in the local community (Ofsted, 2017; 48).

The School Inspection Handbook made guidelines on creativity within the classroom clearer and ensured that inspectors would monitor carefully the impact of creativity during the teaching of literacy, including reading, and of maths. It also made distinct reference to inspectors considering the impact of the teaching of literacy and numeracy on outcomes across the curriculum (Ofsted, 2015).

For example, under the spiritual development of students, it refers to a student's "use of imagination and creativity in their learning". It also suggested that inspectors should consider how well the school supports the curriculum with extra-curricular opportunities for students to extend their creative knowledge and understanding and how this seeks to improve their skills in a range of artistic and creative activities (Ofsted, 2016).

Using role play in a literacy lesson to creatively express a story that a student may be studying is a notable example of creative learning and is easy to implement in the classroom. This can be taken further if a student is feeling shy

by asking them to lead the role play as a team leader rather than act. This scenario embraces teamwork, creativity and imagination.

It is submitted, however, that this kind of creative assessment should not just be limited to core subjects such as English, mathematics and science. This can be extended to law, health and social care, ESOL and other diverse subjects in both further and higher education.

Consider that this type of teaching is also allowing English and mathematics to be embedded into your creative learning. For example, as a trainee teacher on the BTEC Uniformed Public Services Course, all students had to lead an expedition. Not every student would be confident enough and not every student would have the mathematical ability to calculate bearings on a map; it was therefore necessary for creative learning outcomes to be addressed in order for all students to succeed.

One of the most successful ways this was incorporated was by team delegation. Every team had a leader, a map reader, a pacer and a compass bearer. Each task was assigned to fit the individual student's needs. The student who excelled at maths calculated the bearings, the student who had natural charisma was the team leader, and the students who had greatest attention to detail were the pacers and the compass bearers.

The fact that the students had participated in team delegation was not the creative endeavour; it was because they had used their creative knowledge to complete their expedition. Whilst one student paced, the other student calculated the distance; this meant that the 'buddy up' system ensured the other student learnt key skills that he did not have before. Meanwhile the team leader would encourage the quieter members of the group to communicate more effectively with motivation and enthusiasm. By the end of the expedition all teaching and learning objectives had been met and both English and mathematics had been embedded.

It is therefore submitted that it is not always obvious how to implement creative learning into the classroom, but it is easier if we as teaching professionals are guided by our own creative thoughts and knowledge of how to change a student's potential.

Conclusion

Overall, the idea behind creative learning and assessment is to encourage teaching professionals to inspire students from a diverse range of backgrounds to apply their knowledge creatively to ensure that they reach their maximum potential.

With the upcoming changes in the way that Ofsted are observing a student's learning experience it is submitted that now is the time for change, and now is the time to ensure that schools, colleges and universities are doing everything within their means to empower students to become teachers, leaders and outstanding members of their community.

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3.6　Perceptions of 'HEness' in a post-TDAP college: reflections on scholarship

Dr. Nicola Watchman - *Newcastle College*

Introduction

Much has been written on the interpretation of 'HEness' in a college environment (Turner, McKenzie and Stone, 2009; Feather, 2010; 2012; Wilson and Wilson, 2011; Healey, Jenkins and Lea, 2014; Eaton, 2015; Lea, 2016), swelling debates about the inherent distinctions between colleges and universities in terms of representation, orientation and embeddedness of research and scholarship. Discussions often centre upon the assumed limitations of research and scholarly activity (RSA) within a college setting. As such, the example of a college which has answered questions of scholarship capacity and engagement as demonstrated by holding taught degree awarding powers (TDAP) provides an interesting case study within this debate. As such, this article aims to address the opportunities and hurdles of RSA within a post-TDAP college (Newcastle College) via an analysis of reflective deliberations on the themes of staff motivation, opportunity and, fundamentally, awareness of (the scope of) RSA. It tackles the issue of college higher education (college HE) teaching staff's *perceptions* of scholarly activity. This small-scale qualitative study draws upon data from an in-house surveying of staff opinion on 'HEness' via one-to-one interviews (*n*=15) with the intention of mapping the understanding, engagement and next steps for research and scholarship at this institution.

TDAP requirements ask that staff should demonstrate 'active involvement in the generation or reformulation of academic knowledge and the dissemination of understanding or ideas to both internal and external audiences' (QAA, 2013). Ours, therefore, post-TDAP, is a *continued* focus on RSA. We have a critical mass of staff engaging in RSA but there is an ongoing process of college support for staff new to the institution and new to HE plus the continued investment in personal professional development by our HE teaching staff, of which RSA is one aspect. For the sake of brevity, the data presented here concerns reflections on scholarship rather than all themes discussed during the study. Here, scholarship is positioned in the Boyerian sense, with a nod to Simmons and Lea's definition of 'HEness' as 'being higher and scholarly' (Lea and Simmons, 2012; Simmons and Lea, 2014).

Method and context

This small-scale qualitative study was undertaken in the 2016/2017 academic year. In its analysis, I am mindful of the ongoing 'definitions of scholarship' debate (Simmons and Lea, 2013; Williams, Goulding and Seddon, 2013; King et al, 2014). The study involved 15 face-to-face interviews ranging from 30 to 90 minutes. Participants were Newcastle College staff: full-time, varying disciplines, all teaching HE, with a range of job roles but no senior management. Participants were granted anonymity. The project aim was to explore the perceptions and understanding of higher education within a college, to include notions of RSA. Themes included:

- Exploring perceptions of the role of the college lecturer
- The relevance of RSA in this sector
- Staff motivations for undertaking RSA
- Support and opportunities for RSA
- Perceived hurdles to RSA
- Comparative reflections of university HE and college HE.

Data

All those participating in the study were familiar with RSA and saw it as expected of them within their (HE) role. All perceived RSA to be appropriate, indeed 'essential' for college HE

lecturers, with one interviewee commenting, "I don't understand how you could teach to that level without doing the research" (Participant 5). When asked to define RSA, there was a rich, varied response. For instance, one interviewee noted the range of activity that could be considered research and/or scholarly activity:

> [RSA is] research that can come about in a variety of ways. It can be curriculum linked or not, but has an element that can be disseminated, even internally. This makes it distinct from CPD. [It] could be practical based or theoretically [sic] based.
> (Participant 6)

Here we get a sense of a perceived separation between CPD as an institution-relevant activity (performance management) as compared to CPD as a personal professional development aspect. I would define the latter as professional or academic reputation building. Arguably, Participant 6 draws a distinction between practice and theory, indicating an awareness of the Scholarship of Engagement (SoE) alongside more established/traditional notions of research. In the above short quote, we also hear a nod to Boyer's Scholarship of Learning and Teaching (SoLT) in the suggestion of curriculum-linked scholarship. This is also alluded to by Participant 2, who suggests that RSA can be both 'student-led research and staff-led research [...the former] could be part of the assessed work or beyond the assessed programme'. This concept of student engagement in research was noted by many in this study, and was often tied to our version of the Student as Producer initiative (Neary et al, 2014). Indeed, many saw their involvement in RSA as directly linked to enhancing the student experience and delivering on the promise of 'HEness', either by way of their own research-engaged teaching or by actively involving their students in scholarly projects. For instance, one interviewee stated:

> [There are] two different viewpoints: first is from academic members of staff. [RSA is] not CPD, it's different from that. So it's engaging in action research, new initiatives but it's not just doing them it's [also] evaluating them

afterwards; so, looking at impact. And secondly, it's from the perspective of the learners, so it's pushing them beyond the limitations of their course, pushing them to get published, to go to conferences.
> (Participant 10)

Overall, most interviewees talked about the fact that RSA was more than pure research. Some cited differences between college HE and research-intensive universities. Others referred to the vocational context of college HE holding a different agenda and priority for research. There was a general sense that all college HE lecturers should know the fundamentals of being research active but that many choose appropriate elements of this to inform their daily practice:

> People often think [RSA] is only [...] independent primary research but I think it's a lot more than that. For some people it might be getting back into the classroom or industry updating, it might be updating reading connected to that or it might be action research projects. For a lot of people who teach in HE it's centred around their curriculum development. [...] In creative areas it might be creating artefacts.
> (Participant 13)

Of note here is the suggestion that being research active is only one element of scholarship in college HE. This idea of scholarly activity being 'a lot more' than just research is an interesting one and I shall unpick this in my analysis below with reference to the limitations of Boyer's model of scholarship (1990) in light of the suggestion that college HE lecturers are doing more due to their ties to, and need to engage with, industry. As such, I introduce the concept of the dual professional, both scholar and practitioner.

Participants clearly saw value in RSA and were at pains to share their positivity for undertaking scholarly activity. However, staff were also keen to share their views of an imbalance between the experiences of lecturers in college HE compared to those in university HE. These

perceived differences included: institutional priority (as indicated by contracts, workloads and routes to career progression via research); job titles informed by research activity/output; and an array of differing pressures. For instance, the pressure to gain a plus one qualification outstripped a pressure to publish (on this, Participant 2 suggested there it was 'more "paperwork or perish" than "publish or perish"'); there was little discussion of a pressure to construct one's own external academic status but instead one of pressure to meet industry, institutional, peer and student standards. In reference to the point on career progression, several of my interviewees noted that HE teaching was seen as a 'badge of honour' (Participant 4), something 'trusted' to them. There was a sense that being involved in HE was a form of internal promotion, a nod to staff competence. Many spoke of a *progression* from further education to HE. While such internal progression might not be marked by the job title held, there was a sense of gaining something by being involved in HE delivery.

This perception of different agendas led to discussions of the perceived hurdles for staff in engaging in *more* research, both on their own and with students. The table below shows the top three most cited hurdles to RSA for those teaching in college HE, according to my participants.

Table 1: Staff perceptions

	Perceived hurdle for college HE RSA	No. of participants
1	Time	15 of 15
2	Workload	11 of 15
3	No staff remission for research	9 of 15

It became evident during the interviews that staff had an appetite for scholarly activity and did what they could within the confines of their other work commitments but they felt there were limitations to doing more. Interestingly, everyone in my study suggested 'time' was the biggest hurdle. This was not just an issue for those teaching across both FE and HE, although here staff cited the additional burden of working to two sets of policy criteria and performance measures (Ofsted and QAA respectively). Arguably, the hurdles of 'workload' and 'no remission' are associated elements of 'time' limitations. So, to tease out the inferred nuances here: 'workload' was often a comment on the global teaching contact hours required of college HE teaching staff and the relatively small teaching teams staff worked within; 'no remission' was a comment on the differences between university HE and college HE and the perceived impact that an increased level of research activity would demand of one's time thus negatively effecting a work/life balance.

Findings and analysis

All of my participants spoke of a distinction between HE that takes place at a university and that taking place at a college. Yet, 12 of the 15 interviewees recounted *only* positive aspects of this distinction; citing good levels of student support, widening participation/widening access, staff knowing their students, and courses being vocationally-relevant as things that colleges did well and that was out of reach or not prioritised by universities. When this comparison did produce negative positioning of college HE it was largely based on how participants positioned the views of those working within universities, mirroring many of Feather's findings (2010). For instance, one of the 15 noted: "It's like Pinocchio: I'm not a real academic; that's the *external* perception [of college HE]. Internally, it's more competence-driven; how to manage your programme" (Participant 2) thus implying perceptions of those outside college HE were inaccurate and failed to recognise the professionalism employed by those teaching HE in a college setting. As such, while there was little note of a

professional pressure to engage in academia-facing research there was a real sense of a desire to demonstrate professional pride. This was spoken about alongside a personal motivation to keep current within one's chosen discipline. This notion of sustaining staff motivation via investing in continued commitment to a discipline was evident in several of the accounts within this study.

In the main, the participants saw SoLT as a college HE-relevant option for undertaking research; one that could connect daily classroom tasks as a teacher with the requirements of working in a college with TDAP. That said, a few interviewees noted the necessity for discipline-specific research. This was particularly evident in those undertaking higher level qualifications. In recognising the relevance and relative ease (in terms of opportunity) of SoLT and SoE for FE colleges the message here is that we should not forget the discipline-specific in terms of the support mechanisms for staff scholarly activity. Staff investment, via higher degrees, requires an outlet, such as a community or network to act as an audience or critical friend. Therefore, prioritising awareness building of SoLT and SoE may enable many more college HE staff to find a route to research *but* we must support discipline-specific research to the best of our capacity. Avenues to support and encourage such might include inter-college research clusters, to provide a necessary critical mass of individuals engaged in similar activity thus revising the higher education institution (HEI) internal research cluster model. The NECTAR (North East College Teaching and Research) Network does just this. Composed of four colleges – Newcastle College, Sunderland College, New College Durham and Middlesbrough College – the network offers a collaborative and scholarly shared space with numbers of participants that would not be available within any one institution alone.

This does, however, require a reframing of our relationships with neighbouring colleges, seeing them as collaborator not competition, as our HEI cousins appear to have mastered. This, I recognise, holds its own challenges, namely the

narrowing of the HE in FE student numbers, but in large part I feel this is a condition of a lack of confidence in entering the playing field of active research. In response, I assert that this is *not* a case of FE colleges being unable to do research – Newcastle College, and now Hartpury, hold TDAP so RSA is clearly within an FE college's gift. However, the problem appears to be that colleges assume they have to "do research" like an HEI. They don't. Confidence comes in the realisation that FE colleges occupy their own field of play and can therefore offer something to the scholarly conversation that HEIs cannot. As I've said elsewhere, FE colleges need to know their space and forget the assumed places within the HE sector (Watchman, 2017).

This raises wider questions about the position of scholarship within colleges, not least in reference to the research-teaching nexus (Neumann, 1994). If activity in college HE is marked as relevant for industry, Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEP) priorities, sector skills needs etc., what does industry want from colleges? Is research (simply) a badge of competence? Is ours a research-technical-teaching nexus?

Boyer reconsidered: priorities of the dual professional

From the data presented here, it is clear to see that the issue is *not* staff engagement with RSA; all staff knew of RSA and its relevance and place within higher education content and style, and all participants saw aspects of what they did with their students, their curricula and engagement with their discipline as examples of scholarly activity. What, however, is of note is the fact that many described (during the wider interview) learning and teaching activities and methods of professional preparation but they did not always *recognise* such activity as scholarship. Therefore, for me in my academic development capacity, the key finding from this research project has been the necessity to build awareness of the dimensions, scope and breadth of research and scholarship. It follows that this needs to 'ring true' for college HE; it is with limited

merit to push a message of definitions of scholarship and research housed within the broader scope of all higher education. My task is to translate this for a college HE context and to work to demonstrate how the majority of the activity already being undertaken within the college *is* scholarly activity, and how, if captured (and disseminated) appropriately this is research (output). This is essential: the data demonstrated that staff at this institution perceived time to be the biggest hurdle to conducting (more) research or undertaking (more) scholarly activity. There was an assumption that HEIs had the time to conduct research whereas this was not something (readily) available or expected within college HE. Two things here: (i) we should recognise and promote that we are not playing the same game as HEIs. We do HE well but it is vocational in nature and addresses to a large extent a distinct student demographic. As such, RSA should be college HE-relevant and, I would argue, college HE-specific (ii) RSA is not an add-on; something to be done in *addition* to HE teaching that further increases an already heavy workload. Scholarly activity is already happening; staff may simply fail to label it as such.

This leads us to Ernest Boyer. Boyer's original premise was that higher education entailed more than research alone. This notion of stretching the concepts of the role and scope of universities is to applauded, and has made ripples in classroom practice on a global scale (as my bibliography demonstrates). That said, Boyer's four areas of scholarship were derived from a very specific starting point, that of research-intensive universities. And this, for me, is where the research-teaching tension is so strongly felt for college HE. Boyer was aiming to show that HE was more than research. Yet note that he defines the Scholarship of Discovery as 'the first and most familiar' of the areas of scholarship (1990; 17). In college HE, it is arguably not. As Williams (2013) notes, applied research (and therefore Boyer's Scholarship of Engagement) is a 'natural fit' for mixed-sector institutions (1990; 2). The first and most familiar for college HE is sector-relevant skills. The 'HEness' of this comes in the evaluation, debate,

innovation and development of those skills and methods of working in partnership with students and industry. In a nutshell, students must first be engaged in knowing the skills (Level 4) then taught how to apply those skills (Level 5) and later develop higher level thinking to question those skills with an ultimate aim of progressing the sector (Level 6).

With this in mind, I call for a reconsideration of Boyer's dimensions of scholarship to (i) harness the college HE relevance of scholarship (ii) better reflect the scholarly activity that takes place across HE in FE and (iii) acknowledge that RSA for college HE need not be the same as that performed within university HE and that recognition of such is not to college HE's detriment.

Reflections: scholarship in a college context

At Newcastle College we are building awareness of the dimensions of scholarship (in part by developing a discourse on Boyer's model). We feel it is important to present Boyer's model of scholarship as a picture of the 'well-rounded scholar'. Yet, and this is the crux, we recognise that the well-rounded scholar must include professional skills and experience, something not evident in Boyer's mapping. As such, our move is to present Boyer's model but focus upon the aspects that are most representative of the vocational higher education: the dual professional. This is not to reject Boyer but to unpack and align his work as relevant to college HE. Remember, Boyer himself noted that 'if scholarship is to be enriched, every college and university must clarify its *own* goals' (1990; 53 – my emphasis). Although not Boyer's intention, I interpret this as applicable to our interpretation of the model of scholarship itself.

With this in mind, our presentation of Boyer's model is a broad recognition of all four aspects but with a suggested *initial* focus on two: the Scholarship of Learning and Teaching and the Scholarship of Engagement. This is not to label college HE as unable to recognise the well-rounded scholars that Boyer envisaged (those dealing with each four areas of scholarship

equally). Instead, this is to: (i) recognise the limitations in Boyer's model (ii) centralise the dual professional rather than the well-rounded scholar and (iii) provide a narrative on scholarship that is applicable to college HE.

If scholarship is to be meaningful in college HE it must serve the needs of our students, have relevance for industry, and promote and cement professional command of subject matter and discipline. This will, in some (perhaps many) cases, lead to research that is of wider relevance (in essence, the scholarship of discovery) but *this should not be our starting point*. Such a starting point can be potentially debilitating and excluding to some. If we are to support, nurture and enhance RSA in a college context we have to establish a point of entry that is familiar, conformable and doable alongside the college staff workload and time pressures, such as those cited by my interviewees: that point of entry is SoE and SoLT. If we can establish a narrative on college-specific RSA which embodies the base-level good intention of Boyer's model of scholarship but which notes the duality of HE lecturers as both practitioner and scholar (the dual professional) we will have a pathway to applied and applicable research and scholarship which is relevant to vocational higher education and which is owned by colleges.

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3.7   Enhanced student engagement through embedding student-led research in an Employability and Professional Practice module

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Background information

As a tutor of Computing, I have worked on HNC/HND programmes since 2006 and much has changed in that period, both in my own view of where our programme fits within the world of academia and employment but also in the type of student who is drawn to our college-based offering.

The demographic of our inner-city college has changed significantly to produce a generally much more diverse cohort each year both in terms of age and background. Whilst this can be more challenging in some ways, it also produces great opportunities for the sharing of knowledge and different approaches to understanding where computing fits in the real world and how complex computing problems can be solved.

Within this environment, my own development has been informed by a particularly proactive HE team who have actively encouraged research and scholarship which has not been the case in the past. The combination of my own higher levels of engagement and recognition of the opportunities that a diverse cohort can present has enabled the development of student-led research projects which are discussed here.

The 'problem with students' and the benefits of diversity

What is described here as the 'problem with students' is recognised as a problem by most universities and college HE providers. As the percentage of people attending university increases, seemingly, the quality decreases. This apparent problem of quality manifests itself as an inability to read around a subject or think in wider terms than those explicitly stated in learning outcomes or assessment criteria. In many cases a poor grasp of English and/or basic maths exacerbates the problem (Alderman, 2010) but the core element seems to be the lack of a wider general perspective or the study skills to enable it.

Our experience is that as a college HE provider, around 48% of our cohort come from internal progression via BTEC Diploma or Extended Diploma programmes; in general, students progressing from these courses may have a good technical grounding and by virtue of progressing from a directly related Level 3 offering have a reasonable understanding of how our HE programme might work. In contrast, due to youth and lack of external engagement, their understanding of the computing world beyond the institution can be extremely limited.

The other 52% of our cohort is roughly composed of a more mature range of people: some are hoping to change careers by undertaking study to enhance existing knowledge; some are from other countries and may already have computing knowledge, qualifications or experience and wish to formalise this; and some may simply be seeking challenge or enhancement within their existing employment.

In general, the more mature section of the cohort brings with them a wealth of knowledge and experience; this results in a much higher level of engagement than that of their younger counterparts who are not necessarily able to appreciate the significance of the subjects we deliver and their actual impact in the real world.

Most institutions will provide scenario-based activities to try and enable students to appreciate where their subject fits – but without the actual experience of the application in the real world, some students still find it difficult to make that clear connection (Bell, 2010).

Our programme has always featured modules with an employability and personal development theme but there has never been a focus on real research. Given the problems mentioned above, it seemed logical to try and encourage students to carry out externally facing research to obtain a better appreciation of how computing impacts on real-world situations and to bring together the existing knowledge of the more mature students and that of the younger 'digital native' part of the cohort to inform each other (Garde-Hansen and Calvert, 2007). In recognition of the above, a collaborative research project was embedded into our Professional Development module.

This practice is introduced at Level 4 in the first semester as there is a growing recognition that research skills are essential for all students: knowing how to critically evaluate information and to enquire is of increasing importance (Brew, 2006) and research skills are required for graduates to function effectively in an increasingly complex world (Bar-Yam, 2004). As Scott notes (2006; 13), in a 'knowledge society' all students – certainly all graduates – have to be researchers. Not only are they engaged in the production of knowledge but they must also be educated to cope with the risks and uncertainties generated by the advance of science.

The structure of the module

The module consists of some elements of personal development in terms of developing reflective practice, creating a good CV and maintaining a personal development plan. This is all is underpinned by carrying out a group-based research project which has to focus on an area where computing/IT (Information Technology) has had an impact or is having an impact.

The subject of the research need not be purely IT based but must have been impacted in some way by IT; the specific area of research cannot be already examined elsewhere although elements of previous research can be used to inform.

Our groups are tutor selected and are deliberately chosen to be as diverse as possible. This is to expose the challenge of working with people who students would not necessarily choose to work with and to adapt to conditions which would be normal in an industrial setting.

Each group has to select its own area of research, to strictly define and state the intentions of the research, to plan and carry out the research in a time-limited environment, to collate and analyse their data and then to present their findings and produce written output in the form of an academic style paper fully referenced.

The learning outcomes of the module are centred around Personal and Professional Development, Project and Time Management skills, Communication Skills, Teamworking and Collaboration, Analytical Skills and Reflective Practice. We aim to enhance all of these through the activities inherent in our research project.

Research and investigation

Many students, both young and mature, do not clearly understand the differences between research and investigation. What we try to do from the outset is to present the situation where an investigation can be carried out to ascertain certain facts or bodies of information but it will be their application which will provide the pure research value.

This can be the starting point for getting students to think differently in regard to where computing as a subject impacts on every aspect of human life; in searching for a subject worthy of investigation, it is necessary to understand the multitude of applications that computing has.

The younger element of a group may have been exposed to IT from a very early age and believe that this is how life has always been. In that regard they can very much take for granted the technology around them. It is only in the process of wider investigation that the reality of how systems are developed to solve particular problems is clearly understood.

The project execution

The project begins with a group investigation into teamworking models and methodologies. Within this investigation each group examines recognised models such as those developed by Belbin, Tuckman and others they find through research. This will be the first experience of working with the other people within their designated groups and is often a good way of enabling the quieter students to begin to voice their opinions. The results of this investigation will be conveyed to their peer groups via a presentation which each group must organise themselves including booking rooms and arranging suitable dates.

While planning and carrying out the team model investigation, students need to discuss and define what their main project research area will be. This must be student defined but requires sign-off by the module tutor before it can commence.

This is one of the defining moments where the diversity of the group can play a major part in determining what might be a good subject area. In general, the life experience of the older members of the group can lead to excellent discussions on the part IT plays in people's lives and the significance of recent developments in changing how people live. For example, last year a group examined how internet banking had changed the way people lived. For many of the younger students, it was incredible to think that it was once normal for people to pay a bill by visiting the offices of an agency and handing over money or cheques. Online payments did not exist until a few years ago meaning that many students could not contemplate how much time and effort had been saved by instigating them. It is possible now to manage one's finances without ever actually stepping into a bank.

The perspective of the more mature and/or foreign students can also have a major impact on the thinking of the younger element by introducing differing perspectives on the subject matter. As Piaget's (1965) work demonstrates, different perspectives are important for intellectual and moral development.

A good example of this type of development occurred last year with a group who decided to investigate how the Uber online taxi company had affected the local taxi companies in Nottingham. The younger students in the group used Uber and were aware that their model of service delivery was only made possible by technology. What they were not aware of was the potential impact it could have on existing businesses that operated under different models. The more mature element of the group were able to provide perspective through their knowledge of general business and the foreign students were able to provide valuable insights into how Uber had been received in their countries of origin to enable a comparison to be made. One particularly poignant element of those discussions was where a mature Portuguese student provided video footage of Uber drivers having their vehicles smashed in Lisbon while the police looked on but did nothing to prevent it. The group's subsequent research examined the actual impact of Uber three years on compared to the initially stated fears which were evident at the time of the approval of their licence to operate in Nottingham. The group met with several minicab companies, interviewed a range of Nottingham Green Cab drivers and interviewed many Uber drivers to ask if they had encountered problems in operating.

The result of this research seemed to indicate that, on the whole, no company could actually clearly define whether or not Uber had any impact at all on their business. Individual minicab drivers also seemed completely unconcerned about the presence of Uber in the market despite having expressed opposition to them being given a licence.

Whilst the research itself cannot be considered ground-breaking in its methods or complexity, it did examine how the usage of IT can enable new solutions to be found for almost any situation and the impacts that these solutions can have on general life. This kind of perspective is rarely present in standard

scenario-based activities due to the lack of external real-world examination.

Samples of research subjects chosen by student groups

1/ The Uber Taxi Company – how have Uber impacted on local taxi services in Nottingham?

2/ The impact of social media on mental health.

3/ Is mobile phone addiction really social media addiction?

4/ Online shopping in the retail food sector: where does it go from here?

5/ How does local business utilise web technology?

6/ Technology fears: who has them and how can they be managed?

7/ The physical, mental and lifestyle effects of late-night gaming.

These are some of the subjects chosen by groups for research. The terms and scope of each investigation are set by the students but examined for viability by tutors before being approved.

Next steps

When groups have defined their research subject areas and had these approved, they must produce project plans and schedules to clearly state how they will carry out their research, a strict timeline of when each activity will occur and a breakdown of who will be doing each of the required elements. Through the teamworking investigation carried out earlier, the groups will have gained insight into who might be the best team member for analysis, project managing, data collection etc which also means they will have begun to operate as a team to accomplish the required tasks.
The groups must then utilise suitable research methods to carry out their investigations and collect relevant data. One proviso for this is that they must engage externally by talking to local

business, consumers, technology companies and technology users or anyone who might be relevant to their subject area.

Students are encouraged to enquire as widely as possible and use appropriate communication strategies to ensure that any data they collect is unambiguous and meets their specific needs. This is an excellent way of ensuring that students consider who they are communicating with to ensure that any interaction is appropriate and clear. It can involve arranging appointments with suitable candidates for research, canvassing a wide range of people to try and establish patterns, investigating case studies to establish facts and searching through established work to compare and contrast opinions.

One of the major benefits is that all members of teams must be involved to some degree in the gathering of data and this generally means that even the quietest students have to be involved with external activity. This can have quite an impact because, in some cases, they have spent the preceding two or three years in a classroom with the same people and have never really engaged with the world beyond (Jensen, 2008). Working both externally and within a collaborative team environment can completely change a student's perspective in their understanding (Seymour et al, 2004), through critical thinking, and how the real world operates in a work environment.

All of the data collected must then be analysed within the remit of the stated objectives of the research project and checked for accuracy and consistency. This activity provides good opportunities to examine data analysis in detail and to understand how trends can be identified and how data can be misleading if not treated correctly. It is not unusual for data collected to unexpectedly reveal some valuable information. As an example, a group examining the uptake of internet banking found that the greatest incidence of fear of internet banking seemed to come from the younger element of society. Further analysis found that the reasons for that situation stemmed from the fact that younger people have more knowledge

of how systems can be compromised and were therefore more aware of what could happen, whereas more mature users in general believed internet banking to be completely safe.

The expectations of the group examining internet banking were that due to a generally more wary approach to technology among older users, they would also have the greatest fear of internet banking.

Within the data analysis phase of the project, decisions on how the data will be presented also have to be made. It is also necessary to ensure that the data collected is all completely relevant to the initially stated intent of the project. In some cases, data will be made available to some of the agencies used in its collection thereby contributing to business function in the locality. In these instances, some data must be anonymised in the interests of confidentiality; this can also be a valuable learning experience for students in understanding business needs and operations

Data presentation and discussion of outcomes

Each group must arrange to present their data to their peers and any other interested parties via a formal presentation followed by questions and a discussion. This presentation is filmed for evidence and for further dialogue later. The process and data are also required to be submitted as an academic paper suitably referenced and appropriately presented. This is mainly for students to acknowledge and gain insight into what academic papers are and their importance to research generally. As discussed in Walkington and Jenkins (2008), displaying work in a public domain is equivalent to publication in the broadest sense. Student researchers recognise the importance of these events and strive to present high-quality, relevant work.

Evaluation of project outcome and process

The final stage of the project is a personal written evaluation of the whole process which examines the experience of the collaborative working environment and the outcomes of the project itself. This presents the opportunity for the student to be honest about their experience and express both the positive and negative sides they have encountered throughout the endeavour.

Often, this can involve a critique of the performance of other members of the group so it is vital that this is a personal and private part of the process and it is conducted appropriately. In many instances students have been effusive about the increase in confidence they have experienced in completing the project and the enhanced understanding of how IT impacts on the lives of everyone, even those who do not actively use it (non-IT users can still be the victims of computerised signal failures).

The evaluation stage provides opportunities to reflect on the whole project from start to finish and by referencing the journal which each student keeps throughout, it is possible to signpost areas where development has occurred and ask questions of the student as to how they feel they have developed in general.

Other external engagement

It has been said that the default state of computing students is inert: in other words, that their preference is to be sitting in front of a computer doing whatever it is that computing students do. Whilst this may be in some parts true it is generally because nothing more has been expected of them; introducing them to other aspects of computing can, therefore, have profound impacts on their perceptions of what computing is actually about.

A very simple but effective method of providing further opportunity for external engagement has been to invite our local University of the Third Age (U3A) group to be mentored by our students in all aspects of the use of digital devices such as smartphones, laptops and tablets. Our students presented sessions on internet security and staying safe on the internet and have given one-to-one sessions

on using digital devices. The main aim of this was to enhance the communication skills of our students by enabling them to understand how people communicate differently and how to adapt their methods and modes of communication to a different type of audience. Whilst it may be appropriate to explain a concept to a peer using certain terminologies, it may require a completely different approach to explain the same thing to a retired solicitor. All of this was carried out with face-to-face contact which also requires a different approach from an email conversation or instant message conversation.

The main aim was to embed a thorough appreciation of appropriate methods of communication in our students; however, the benefits of inter-generational communication were in many cases far more beneficial than either we or U3A had expected as self-imposed barriers and perceptions were challenged (Knight and Yorke, 2004).

Main conclusions

Student engagement is a major source of concern for many colleges and universities as evidenced by a plethora of studies and papers which express a wide range of pertinent issues for examination. In my own experience, distraction and lack of application certainly do occur. This can be due to previous experiences on other programmes but in many cases it is due to a lack of understanding of where their particular discipline can make a difference and how what they are studying has relevance to the real world and their place in it.

None of these problems can be solved by one measure but the above is our attempt to acknowledge and try to counter the phenomenon; in our experience it has proved to be extremely beneficial in enhancing engagement.

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4. Extended Articles

4.1 Collaboration between Specialist Make-up course and the NHS

Katie Asgari - *Rotherham College, RNN Group*

Students on the Higher Education Specialist Make-up course at Rotherham College are able to participate in real and meaningful work experience and work-related learning which challenges and stretches them in order to develop outstanding skills, professionalism and prepares them for employment.

The purpose of my presentation was to share our good practice and enhance further understanding of collaboration. In September 2013 we established an innovative partnership with the NHS to deliver enhanced simulation training which involves our students creating moulage make-up to support the training of medical professionals. This involves students creating the visual symptoms of medical conditions to allow for accurate diagnosis by trainee doctors. This is the first partnership of its kind in the UK.

We have developed this experience further by developing a meaningful and life-changing partnership with the NHS. This has had a significant impact on an already exceptional student experience and has developed additional skills in our make-up artists. In addition, the partnership has had a significant impact on NHS employees and, ultimately, patients.

My department is a strong advocate of work-related learning and firmly believes it adds great value to the student experience and underpins student success. As a result of this the innovative partnership was nurtured.

In 2013/14 the NHS was tasked with bridging the gap between academic training and professional practice and simulation was perceived to be the solution. The partnership between the NHS and the College was formed. The challenge was to address the lack of realism within simulation training with regard to injuries and diseases. The partnership work not only significantly benefits the role of the special effects artists but also the NHS human factors training, which has led to one of our students being involved in developing a prototype for use by NHS professionals.

The partnership with the NHS means that students develop a range of other skills such as:

- Students research and create moulage effects on the hi-tech manikins as part of medical scenarios devised by the Clinical Lead for A&E and Palliative Care training sessions within the clinical simulation suite.

- Students work alongside medical professionals, sharing skills and gaining new medical knowledge, ensuring work is anatomically correct and meeting realistic standards.

- Student anatomical knowledge and terminology is developed and strengthened by networking with medical professionals.

- Realistic work experience to enhance employability skills in theatre and film productions and photo shoots enables students to be more industry ready, often remarked on by visiting specialists, employers and external verifiers.

- To ensure our students are motivated, engaged and work ready.

The students' experiences are:

Real - The programmes are practically based and take place in the purpose-built Media Hair and Make-up rooms and on location at local schools and theatre productions, photo shoots, films and the NHS Simulation Centre where students develop their moulage skills

for injuries and illnesses to help train NHS staff. Positive feedback from directors and producers of productions about students' techniques, skills and professionalism has been frequent.

Meaningful - Students are gaining exceptional employability, professional and personal experience such as: working and networking with medical professionals, design planning, costing out production and medical scenarios, managing budgets, developing teamwork skills, time management and communication skills to prepare for the industry.

Challenging - Students work with actors, directors and medics under pressure and receive and give constructive criticism. All these skills and qualities develop the students' self-confidence and professional resilience to deal with people at varying levels and roles in the workplace.

Stretching - Higher level students manage and mentor Level 2 and Level 3 students via peer teaching and support and prepare them for working in the NHS and with NHS colleagues. The students self-manage their learning which reinforces the importance of team work and peer support in both the special effects industry and the NHS.

Life-changing - This bespoke partnership with the NHS and medical professions has provided unique opportunities for students to participate in numerous activities that have had a huge impact upon their learning experiences. These include:

- Working with the NHS locally and nationally participating, delivering and developing moulage skills and techniques.

- Working with universities and taking part in medical conferences with a wide range of professionals nationally and internationally.

- The training of paramedics.

- Taking part in the Tour de France, working with specialist doctors on trauma injuries.

- Working with paramedics on trauma simulation events.

An excellent example of the work with the simulation unit is that one of our students has researched and developed a tonsillectomy prototype which is now used in medical training within the ENT/Otolaryngology NHS national recruitment day.

HE students and staff manage the planning, training and delivery of sessions within the college and out in the NHS industry setting. The partnership results in organising specific training events for NHS staff as well as promoting wider opportunities for individuals to learn these skills.

Assessment practice is strong and promotes independence in students enabling them to advance their skills and progress to the next level, preparing them for industry. There are outstanding links with other departments and the leadership and management is strong and promotes team work, diversity and continuous improvement.

Conclusion

Political drivers, professional standards and serious untoward incidents all emphasise the need for improvements in patient-centred care, teamwork, safety and quality; simulation is fast becoming one of the educational tools that permits us to achieve this goal. Simulation allows for the treatment and care of emergencies and conditions to be practised and perfected before they are performed on real patients. The use of simulation as an educational tool enables the development of clinical cognitive schemes and enhances the non-technical skill of situation awareness, leadership and team work. One of the limitations of simulation, which is confirmed in feedback, is the unrealistic nature of our manikins. In an attempt to tackle this problem, we collaborated with a local college in 2013 and as a result of this we now use moulage and effects in the majority of our simulation sessions in conjunction with specialist training provided by this team.

The students find this work very rewarding and have worked exceptionally hard on

strengthening this partnership and it has now led to further developments:

- After working in the simulation department students discovered that there was a skills gap for simulation technicians; many requested training to require these skills. Students acted on this request and peer-taught moulage skills.to the hospital technicians.

- Students attend regular placements at the local NHS hospital.

- Students were invited to share their skills at a university for a UK Clinical Simulation Conference. The students prepared and delivered a 'Moulage for Manikins' session with the support of tutors. There was an overwhelming positive response to the workshop, with delegates thoroughly enjoying the session. At the conference the students won the Best Workshop/Seminar award, voted for by the delegates. Students felt this highlighted a great demand for special effects/moulage training due to the evident skills shortage.

4.2   Employment Engagement Mosaic: is engagement with employers scholarly enough?

Jacqueline Brewer - *East Surrey College*

The AoC HEFCE Catalyst Funding Project: Enhancing College Higher Education Scholarship and Student Learning Project (AoC, 2015) commonly known as The Scholarship Project, is a three-year research project that aims to create a framework that will support college higher education (college HE) and places student enhancement and, ultimately, employability central to the process using Boyer's Models of Scholarship (1990) as a theoretical framework.

During the reconnaissance phase of the project an employer engagement (EE) survey (Davy, 2016) sent to teaching staff of colleges participating in the research identified nine indicators of what good quality EE is. Subsequent results highlighted that most of the participants found meeting at least five of the nine indicators was problematic.

A triad of colleges studied this problem and participants were invited to contribute through purposive sampling (Cohen et al, 2007; 114) to establish EE in practice to identify whether it had a scholarly profile. Data collected from participants (three members of staff, students and employers at each college) through an interview were used to develop case studies of good practice, all of which were all mapped against Boyer's Models of Scholarship (1990) to establish whether the engagement is scholarly and, if so, is added to a mosaic.

Contributions are from Access to HE to Level 6 programmes (Higher National Certificates, Higher National Diplomas, Foundation Degrees and BA (Hons) Top-Ups) from a wide range of disciplines including Golf Management, Civil Engineering, Early Years, Theatrical, Media and Special Effects Make-Up, Health and Social Care and Construction. Most of the students are employed either full- or part-time.

This mosaic, re-contextualised from the work of Clark and Moss (2001), is quite localised due to the types of programmes that the colleges in this trial offer, but can be adapted to suit other institutions offering college HE. Indeed, like any tiled space, it is open to the manipulations and interpretations of individual colleges.

Davy's (2016) indicators (blue tiles) and sources of relevant literature (green tiles) are permanent fixtures but the remainder of the tiles (mauve) can be populated to suit each college as long as the findings are mapped against Boyer's Models of Scholarship (1990) through his and other related literature.

Triangulation (Cohen et al, 2007) is secured where all case studies are shared with relevant stakeholders (staff, students and employers) discussed in the interview. This constructivist approach (Silverman, 2006) is all part of the process that supports the development of scholarship and 'HEness' (Lea and Simmons, 2012) provoked by the project.

While exploring the move from the 'transactory to the transformative' (Lea, 2017) process of employer engagement, the work of Lea and Simmons' 'autonomy and the curriculum' which is one of 'four lenses' (2012; 182) is used to explore HE in an FE environment which has offered some sense in this trial and test.

Ethical issues are resolved on various levels and this starts with BERA (2011) ethical guidelines and college ethics policies at a local level. All stakeholders and in particular employers are asked to read the case study, contribute to and agree (or disagree) for information to be used which is through informed consent (Cohen et al, 2007).

Findings

It has been identified that it tends to be the teacher using their industrial experience and contacts to support this level of engagement, in particular dual professionals (Education and Training Foundation, 2014). Degree Apprenticeships have increased business departments' engagement with industry and employers of HE students but understanding of the FE culture (Lea, 2014; Smith, 2015) might lead to the premise that these relationships are unlikely to fulfil the expectation to be scholarly. Consequently, the role of employer engagement in college HE might need to be redefined to reflect the new realities of employer engagement (Boyer, 2016).

Employer engagement is 'a critical government policy' (HEFCE, 2009; 60) but as Feather suggests, this strategy applies 'as long as there is funding to be had' (Feather, 2011; 20). This engagement usually becomes the responsibility of teaching staff to continue through 'good will' (Feather, 2011; 20) and where EE is most evident; it is the teachers with strong industrial contacts that are able to keep up with industrial change and, as a consequence, can also periodically adapt the programme to accommodate this.

Recommendations

Technical college HE offers programmes that respond to an evolving industry. Inevitably, with limited funding and resources, colleges are unable to keep up with change. As a consequence, excellent sources of information and where to source these resources are in the realms of the dual professional or the teacher who has robust contacts in relevant industry and these relationships should be nurtured by teaching staff and encouraged by the institution.

Employer engagement (staff, students and employers) needs to reflect the HE ethos by being scholarly in nature, so it is advised that any EE activity needs mapping to ensure scholarship.

Boyer's Models of Scholarship (1990) provide a dynamic model that has been adopted by others (Nibert, 1996; Boyd, 2013; Healey et al, 2014b; AoC, 2016) so could reasonably, through re-contextualisation, be used to support this hybrid form of college HE employer engagement.

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4.3 Research ethics and integrity in college higher education

Jenny Lawrence - *The University Centre, North Lindsey College*
Andrew Penfold - *Petroc*
Anne Clifford - *West Nottinghamshire College*

Jenny Lawrence

Traditionally, scholarly cultures within HE are built on research activity, be that production of new knowledge through research or the exploration of existing knowledge in the curriculum; more recently, however, the production of knowledge in research-led teaching and learning has come to the fore (Fanghanel et al, 2016; Healey and Jenkins, 2009) and is supported by recent Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) proposals, which call for HE programmes to be delivered within scholarly environs (Johnson, 2016). Research programmes in universities are often externally funded research projects staffed by high achieving postgraduates working alongside experienced academics (Nurse, 2015). 'Challenger institutions' (Johnson, 2016), like our college HE settings, must find a way of building scholarly cultures that fit their specific context.

The shifting focus to research-led teaching demands that we pay detailed attention to the question of research ethics and integrity in college HE. In this interactive seminar we looked closely at how research ethics and integrity (RE&I) is managed across the college HE sector and explored initiatives working to address the management of RE&I in the specific college HE context, paying attention to how to better capitalise on validating partners' expertise and how to build an effective process in college-based settings. Given the lively discussion during the seminar it provided clear evidence to us that this is an issue of deep import across the college HE sector.

Andrew Penfold

As part of the Devon-based colleges taking part in the Scholarship Project, both Petroc and South Devon College identified that internal ethics and research approval procedures were, as with most of college HE institutions, vague

in nature (Lawrence, 2016). As a result of this both colleges formulated, and shared, an ethics procedure and policy which meets ethical standards as required by the RCUK guidance and from Plymouth University, the awarding power for both colleges.

As part of this newly formalised approach, a standardised proposal system has been introduced for 2017/18 which empowers specifically identified ethical panels, a 'Higher Education Research Ethics Committee' (HEREC), within both institutions to systematically process, accept or reject proposals submitted by all staff and students engaging with research projects within both these institutions. Both colleges acquired custom-made software, named 'Research Ethics and Application System Online (REASOn)', which requires participants to outline their proposals by identifying the types of participant, the research methods employed and practicalities of supervision. This allows for clear identification of concerns and areas for further consideration which would then be forwarded to formal ethics panel if required, or would be approved if the project is deemed acceptable and low-risk. The introduction of these policies and procedures aimed to improve both the quality and quantity of research activities, as well as support the ongoing collaboration in other areas of HE development.

Initial signs from projects engaging with the new REASOn system indicate a more professional, ethical approach to dissertation and research project by both student and staff. There has also been a noticeable increase in enthusiasm for engagement with ethical practices by staff engaging in research practices and modules. Although there has yet to be a HEREC sitting to consider higher risk applications, there has been significant interest and discussion regarding its composition, and

an almost universal support amongst Higher Education teams for its implementation.

There has also been a slightly unforeseen benefit to the research project approval system, with the institutions having a greater grasp of the research projects that individuals are engaged with. Most significantly, there is a realisation as to the vast numbers of scholarly research projects which are engaged with at Higher Education level with the institutions

An area for concern and further development raised following the implementation of the HEREC and REASOn software is the need for CPD amongst some HE practitioners who feel uneasy or out of date with relevant ethical practices and subject specific guidance. As a result of this, the institutions are looking to acquire external support to deliver training to support the policies and procedures that have been implemented.

Anne Clifford

Within college HE, research ethics and integrity policies/guidelines are sometimes issued and implemented with support from university partners (Lawrence, 2016). They are detailed and coherent documents but are designed to support the more traditional research opportunities offered within a university context. Understanding and implementing a robust research ethics and integrity process within college HE requires colleges, managers, staff, students and partner universities to discuss, review and engage with a process that works for, and reflects, the diversity of research projects offered to college HE undergraduates.

At West Nottinghamshire College, collaborative staff development events and small focus group meetings established an agreed set of guiding principles and associated practices for research ethics that would work for our institution. We have continued to adopt the key policies and practices used by our validating university partners, agreeing to apply these policies to all undergraduate research. Delivering a broad range of courses, community-based projects, live briefs and

employer-led tasks to a diverse student population demands that we embrace ethical considerations at all levels of our HE provision. The responsibility and ownership for a robust ethics process sits with our HE staff and students; there is a designated college lead and a committed team across the college, including a student representative, to head up our own ethics panels. This has enabled us to instigate a process that works within timeframes more suitable to our delivery models, with a clear quality monitoring and sampling process in place. The panels will be reviewing student research in the first instance, with developing and incorporating staff research coming at a later date. The focus is primarily on ethical considerations related to medium and high-risk research, with guidance and opportunities for resubmission of research applications where applicable. We are continuing to utilise the expertise and knowledge of our validating partners for training and will continue to meet university submission requirements. A range of materials, including the 'Establishing Ethics' handbook, case studies, research reviews and dissertation planning are in place to embed ethical considerations in a learning context, with development meetings identified throughout the academic year to support our staff/students and review our progress.

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4.4 Working with international students as partners in further education: from curriculum development to pedagogic practice

Mike Saunders - *York College*
Roy Fisher - *University of Huddersfield*

This presentation focussed on the development and operationalisation of a curriculum and of the associated transnational pedagogy used when working with international and local students in general further education. The work discussed is a continuation of that reported at the 2nd Annual AoC Scholarship Conference in 2016 and is part of a longitudinal research project at York College. This project aims to enhance and develop a functioning pedagogy for the improved integration of transnational students into general FE classes based on the foundations of both the literature on international students and their learning in a range of different national contexts, and on expertise engendered through the experiences of teachers and students within York College.

The principles of a pedagogy, meeting the needs of both international and local students, were outlined by Fisher and Saunders (2017) who reported on five key emergent practices which had arisen from working with international students needing a Tier Four Visa to study in the UK. These students were learning with local students in the context of 'integrated classes' at York College and the work reported in this presentation was the operationalisation of the first version of the curriculum.

The current stage of the study has monitored International Foundation students undertaking an Access to HE Diploma with additional English Language and Academic Skills sessions.

Two interventions in the curriculum in the Academic Skills sessions were implemented involving all the international students in the cohort that included individuals from the mainland of China, from Hong Kong and from Angola. This created a truly transnational teaching and learning setting.

The first intervention was the setting of an assessed task whereby each student created a glossary of new words and terms met during their studies. Students identified, and defined, at least 1000 words during the nine months of their course and one glossary which included over 1500 entries. Each student had identified and correctly spelt each word, and written an associated definition. The range of words and subjects was impressively wide.

The second intervention arose from a student request for help with converting instructions into a description, in this case for when writing up an experiment in a science lesson. The students were provided with a set of instructions relating to the 'Three Peaks Walk' and asked to produce a narrative description of the walk based on the instructions. The students and the tutor completed the first section collaboratively and the students then continued working through the exercise. Whilst they were generally able to undertake the linguistic operation, it became apparent that they were unable to fully understand the cultural context that had led to the production of such instructions. As a result, the next two sessions were devoted to a discussion of walking and climbing mountains 'because they are there' as a popular leisure pursuit in British society as well as of the frequent use of such activities to raise money for charity. This led to improved cross-cultural understanding of the role of walking in different cultures – an Angolan student had walked many miles each day to get to school, while a student from Hong Kong said that 'she would rather take the bus or cable car to the peak than walk all that way'.

In the Access to HE classes, where international students were taught with local students, it became clear that enhanced levels of social interaction between students from different national groups had been achieved. Local

and international students developed closer working relationships and instances of cultural interchange took place. In classes on education, the differences in educational systems in the UK and in China were used on a number of occasions to outline the issues facing all education systems, and the different responses found around the world. The discussion of the first-hand experiences of students meant that the curriculum had a wider range of perspectives than would normally be the case.

During the course of this study, it became evident that the principles outlined in Fisher and Saunders (2017) have the potential for application in any transnational classroom i.e. any classroom situation where there is a variety of nationalities and first languages present. It is important that the sector should continue to generate practice-based evidence, informed by comparative studies drawn from the global research literature, which continue to develop understanding of the needs and experiences of international students as a means of ensuring that pedagogic practice continues to evolve.

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4.5 Integrating scholarship and project-based learning with the outside world: how focus, insight and meaning is attributed to the research process within the European Space Agency's Satellite Project

James Snyder - *East Kent College*

Purpose, aim and background

The scope and objective of my work in this area is to state the problem of measuring the impact of European-wide space projects in higher education in the UK, selecting the mission objectives of the European Space Agency Satellite project as the vehicle for research. Throughout the European Space Agency Satellite project, participating students acquire and reinforce fundamental technology, physics and programming curricular concepts. The relevant literature underpinning the research methodology is that of Ernest L. Boyer, particularly relevant given that the European Space Agency Satellite project fosters A Community for Learning, provides students with The Undergraduate Experience, and is a basis for A Quest for Common Learning. In his seminal work Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate, Boyer challenges the true meaning of scholarship, classifying four kinds: discovery, integration, application and teaching (Boyer, 1990). The European Space Agency Satellite project is aligned specifically to the scholarship of discovery and the scholarship of integration, aiming to study how students make new discoveries during a real-life space project and how students integrate their discoveries within their lives and within the curriculum. The main results of the work are that the underpinning concepts and theories of Boyer have reflected the implementation of scholarly activities, and that wider higher education policy is now encouraging scholarly activities through such projects and live case studies. The work of the Association of Colleges scholarship project and related work on scholarship in colleges, is also considered (Gray, Turner and Carpenter 2014; Healey, Jenkins and Lea, 2014; Lea, 2016).

Methodology

The methodology of the European Space Agency Satellite project is clearly stated and described in detail by the competition guidelines published annually by the European Space Agency. The research mission of the satellite project redefines the traditional method of scholarship by synthesising information across multiple disciplines (Engineering, Maths, and Computing) and topics within the discipline of Computing (Design, Implementations, Testing), deployed over a yearly cycle. Real space data and the application of real-life scientific methodology is used by the students, who are accompanied by the role model support of real space experts such as scientists and even Space Agency Staff. Taking part in a satellite project gives the participating student teams the opportunity to go through all the phases of a real space project, from selecting the mission objectives, designing the satellite, integrating the components, testing the system, preparing for launch and analysing the scientific data obtained. Through this process the students get acquainted with the enquiry-based methodology typical of real-life scientific and technical professions. Simultaneously, the Pearson exam board accredits the academic criteria 'M2. Select/design' so that the methodology of participating students undertaking Pearson exam board's course units whilst doing the European Space Agency Satellite project was to apply appropriate methods and techniques to course unit modules that were mapped to the Satellite Space project.

Findings and conclusions

The principles of Boyer's scholarship of discovery and integration and the generalisation that the European Space Agency Satellite project has had an impact on the lives of its participants have been inferred from

the qualitative results. By using the space context to make the teaching and learning of science, technology and engineering (STEM) subjects more attractive and accessible, students can feel more comfortable and familiar with sciences in general. The European Space Education Resource Office for the UK (ESERO) activities have clearly helped bring STEM subjects within the students' reach. The exceptions to these principles and generalisations are that the misconception that rocket science is only for geniuses may not have been demolished. However, the European Space Agency's educational contextualisation of space becomes not just a place of inspiration and future dreams, but also an everyday fact of modern life. Questionnaires have been developed for the Higher National Certificate students for student engagement timed to coincide with a report that students prepare and present to the European Space Agency (end of October, January, and March) and this information has been integrated into a case study. Significant employer engagement was undertaken with STEM UK Ltd and ESERO UK Ltd, with interviews relevant to satellite and student scholarly activity captured and logged on video. A longitudinal survey was presented to the learners in the project that did a number of things: it tracked their engagement with the satellite project and evaluated how they felt it met their expectations of study; it captured what 'added value' (to the learner experience) they felt the satellite project gave to them; it evaluated whether they felt motivated to continue studies at Level 4 Higher Education and beyond at East Kent College given their experience of the satellite project at Level 3; it explored whether they felt direct involvement with industry increased their engagement with their studies and provided added value to their learning. The ideas for trialling and testing have come from four key areas:

- Reflections from the reconnaissance work of phase one

- Emerging or existing practices from the European Space Agency's context of the satellite competition

- The national and international satellite project which relates to college HE and the Association of Colleges

- Ideas drawn from the project's think pieces and case studies

The project has closely followed the model of Boyer's Scholarship of Discovery since and has contributed to the development of a research portfolio within further education; moreover, it has contributed to the re-enforcement of the undertaking of postgraduate research on *critical discourse analysis on the daily ethnographical realities of the use of Human Computer Interface Systems within the multicultural communities of the International Space Station*. Furthermore, the project has also followed Boyer's model of *the Scholarship of Integration*, working in conjunction with Discovery but also looking to examine how meaning is given to primary or secondary research during 'Discovery', contextualising it beyond its original area in relation to society, life experience, work experience, industry and experience to give new insight, focus and use to the information gathered.

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4.6   College higher education: a case for cautious optimism?

Nicholas Whitehouse - *Mixed Economy Group*

The Higher Education and Research Act (2017) heralds unprecedented change for all college higher education (college HE) providers. Factors including the employer levy, increased competition from alternative providers and the proliferation of new technical qualifications including training materials for governance professionals present significant challenges to colleges in an ever-more competitive marketplace.

Recent research from the Mixed Economy Group of Colleges (MEG), however, shows that for many leaders in larger HE in FE providers, there is a case for cautious optimism (King and Widdowson, 2017). MEG members deliver a large proportion of all college HE in England.

Based on a representative sample of MEG's 42 members, the research focuses on a number of themes: relationships with partner higher education institutions (HEIs); perceptions of markets and competition; partnership with employers; and the potential for the development of new, employer-responsive Higher and Degree Apprenticeships. Responses from two of these categories are highlighted here.

Relationships with partner HEIs

This included questions investigating colleges' plans to pursue new streamlined processes for degree validation. Of the 21 responses, the largest number (43%) expressed an interest in acquiring powers to award degrees at Level 6 (BDAP); 24% said they would pursue full degree awarding powers (TDAP); and 19% want to pursue Foundation Degree awarding powers (FDAP). Interestingly, 14% of those responding indicated that they would not seek any version of degree awarding powers. However, the answers in this section suggest that the majority of colleges will seek more independence from HEIs if this is easier to achieve as a result of the Act.

Colleges were asked if they would apply for awarding powers in a limited range of subjects. Of 18 replies, a total of 72% stated that they would be interested in this route to awarding powers which may reflect the already limited range of disciplines covered by college HE providers.

Colleges were asked to indicate their interest in working with other colleges which achieved awarding powers. Of the 18 responses, 55% (10 colleges) indicated they would be prepared to work in this way with the opportunity to deliver new types of HE, such as Higher and Degree Apprenticeships, as their main reason for preferring to work with a college closely followed by concerns about HEI costs and the imposition of restrictions which could hinder the development of further college HE.

Five colleges indicated a wish not to work with other colleges suggesting satisfaction with their current HEI partnership arrangements. Some suggested concerns about the likely fees that another FE college might charge. Critically, no college in this group was motivated to stay within an HEI validating partnership by any sense of 'value added' from association with a university, nor did they believe there was insufficient capacity within their college. One college noted the importance of the expertise and 'match' of the validating partner, irrespective of whether it was a college or a university.

Taken together, this question set suggests that colleges are confident providers of HE who are willing to develop new qualifications and are able to distinguish between validating partners for different types of provision.

Markets and competition

The next series of questions sought views on potential growth areas for HE in FE. First in the ranking came the intention to develop Higher and Degree Apprenticeships (HAs and

DAs) with 15 of the 21 respondents giving this rank one or two, closely followed by plans to develop more full-time courses. Whilst the growth of part-time provision was almost as highly ranked, little interest was shown in developing other higher level qualifications such as Higher Nationals, National Vocational Qualifications and Non-Prescribed HE (ranked fourth or fifth by 13 respondents). This reflects previous MEG surveys which explored the latter as an alternative to university-validated qualifications, but which at the time were not felt by many colleges to be a viable option. The response should be seen in context, however, as Higher Nationals are heavily associated with Higher Apprenticeships. It is Non-Prescribed HE that is less likely to develop.

The biggest threats to college HE provision cited by the largest number of respondents (ranked first by 19 out of 21) is the prospect of increased competition from universities with concerns about changes in a partner university's HE strategy as a key concern.

Asked about projected full-time enrolments, nine respondents predicted growth, nine expected enrolments to remain the same with three expecting numbers to reduce. Overall, this is a more optimistic picture than revealed by earlier surveys with the impact of internal progression, much from Level 3 programmes, suggested as the cause for increases.

In contrast with previous surveys, colleges appear to be more confident about part-time provision, with nearly half of the 21 respondents (47.6%) stating that they expected increases. A third of respondents expected enrolments to remain the same, with only 14.2% predicting a further decline. Of course, given the decline in these enrolments over the last four to five years, any growth may be from a reduced base. However, coupled with growth in Higher Apprenticeships there may be grounds for cautious optimism that the downward trend has stopped.

Conclusion

The survey results provide useful insights into some college HE providers' views on strategic and operational developments in an increasingly competitive market created by the Act.

The MEG survey suggests that college optimism over HE development could come from improved internal progression as well as the development of Higher and Degree Apprenticeships. However, where DAs are concerned, difficulties in securing timely validation from universities and, so far, limited college access to DA development funding, is of concern. How realistic college expectations of growth in this area are, given HEI competition, the prospect of increasing numbers of alternative providers entering the market, and the likelihood that most funding for such development continues to be channelled through HEIs, remains to be seen. That said, future policy changes around Degree Awarding Powers, announced in October 2017, suggest that the case for cautious optimism remains well founded.

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5. Posters

5.1 Peer-Assisted Study Skills (PASS) for college higher education

Jacqueline Cattaneo - *Greater Brighton Metropolitan College*

Peer-Assisted Study Skills for College Higher Education

Students as co-creators

At GBMet we are working with students to develop PASS's university -orientated guides and toolkits to suit vocational courses and college HE.

'It was really useful to be able to talk to students who have recently been through these assignments – they know what you're looking for.'

FdA Games Development student

Jac Cattaneo, Greater Brighton Metropolitan College

How does PASS work?

PASS involves Level 5 student volunteers running weekly or bi-weekly study sessions for groups of Level 4 students.

PASS leaders undergo a thorough training on working with groups – they are not expected to teach, but to facilitate discussion about coursework.

What are the advantages?

PASS leaders:
o acquire team-working and employability skills
o consolidate understanding of course concepts and content
o become part of a cross-college PASS leader community

Level 4 students:
o can discuss elements of their courses which they find problematic with their peers
o gain confidence in beginning to own their own learning
o attend college more regularly and are more likely to progress

5.2 A novel experiential approach to higher education staff development and recognition

Ann Cotterill and Boota Singh - *Warwickshire College Group*

A Novel Experiential Approach to HE Staff Development and Recognition

Ann Cotterill* and Boota Singh[#]

*Cotterill Creative Education Solutions Ltd (formerly of Warwickshire College)   [#]Warwickshire College Group

UK Professional Standards Framework

The UK Professional Standards Framework (UKPSF) is described by the Higher Education Academy (HEA) as a "comprehensive set of professional standards and guidelines for everyone involved in teaching and supporting learning in HE." The UKPSF identifies 'Dimensions of Professional Practice' as areas of activity; knowledge to undertake these activities and professional values (Figure 1). The HEA manages the UKPSF and encourages those teaching and supporting learning in HE to evidence engagement with UKPSF through HEA recognition at Associate Fellow, Fellow, Senior Fellow or Principal Fellow level.

Areas of Activity	Core Knowledge	Professional Values
A1 Design and plan learning activities and/or programmes of study	K1 The subject material	V1 Respect individual learners and diverse learning communities
A2 Teach and/or support learning	K2 Appropriate methods for teaching, learning and assessment in the subject area and at the level of the academic programme	V2 Promote participation in higher education and equality of opportunity for learners
A3 Assess and give feedback to learners		
A4 Develop effective learning environments and approaches to student support and guidance	K3 How students learn, both generally and within their subject/disciplinary area(s)	V3 Use evidence-informed approaches and the outcomes from research, scholarship and continuing professional development
A5 Engage in continuing professional development in subjects/disciplines and their pedagogy, incorporating research, scholarship and the evaluation of professional practices	K4 The use and value of appropriate learning technologies	V4 Acknowledge the wider context in which higher education operates, recognising the implications for professional practice
	K5 Methods for evaluating the effectiveness of teaching	
	K6 The implications of quality assurance and quality enhancement for academic and professional practice with a particular focus on teaching	

Figure 1: Dimensions of Professional Practice

Meeting the Dimensions

Figure 2 illustrates the key elements of the WCG HE Staff Development Framework (including HE Teaching CPD programmes) mapped to the UKPSF. The activities in green are routine for all HE staff:
- lesson observations are bespoke for HE and are explicitly aligned to the UKPSF;
- the college hosts two or more HE conferences each year including a wide range of content including pedagogic methods and the wider context in which HE operates;
- all HE staff are required to log their scholarly activity (updated at least annually).

The activities in blue are additional and required only for HEA recognition.

HEA Accreditation

The proposed accredited scheme includes support for staff who choose to apply for Fellowship or Associate Fellowship. A panel process will be instigated to make decisions on applications. In practice, all HE staff who have undertaken the key activities (in green in Figure 2) should be entitled to HEA Fellowship.

References

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2. See https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/services/accreditation
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An Experiential Approach

Developed over several years, WCG has a staff development framework covering *inter alia* induction, lesson observations, HE conferences and scholarly activity records which together cover the Dimensions of Professional Practice required for recognition. Additionally, all HE teaching staff at Warwickshire College have, or are working towards, a teaching qualification. The college therefore sought HEA accreditation[2] of its framework whereby staff predominantly evidence engagement with the UKPSF and the Dimensions of Professional Practice through an **experiential** route, i.e. through their professional practice and associated scholarly activity.
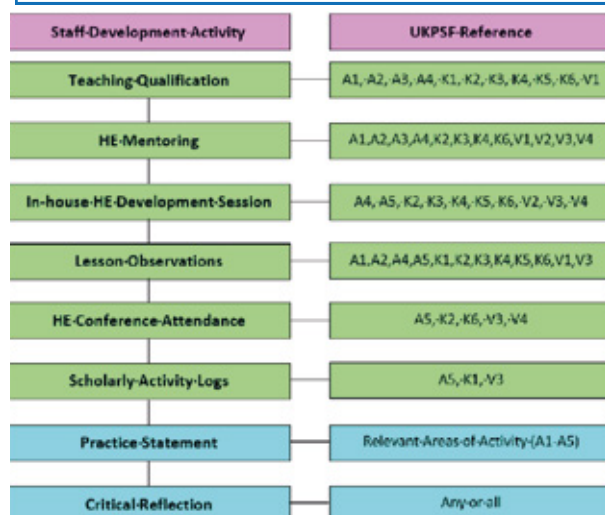
Figure 2: Staff development mapped to the UKPSF

Outcome of Accreditation Application

The HEA commended the college for its commitment to the development of HE staff through an extensive CPD programme which provides HE-specific content for academics and support staff. The college had invested and focussed on the accreditation rather than supporting and financing staff to gain HEA Fellowship by direct application to the HEA.
Unfortunately, the HEA considered that there were insufficient WCG staff with Fellowship status (including at Senior level). The college is now focussed on supporting staff though the individual route in order to satisfy this weakness.

About the Authors

After 16 years as Director of HE at Warwickshire College, Ann Cotterill, FHEA, is now an independent consultant specialising in college HE [www.anncotterill.com]
Boota Singh is HE Academic Support Manager at WCG and is the lead on the HEA accreditation project. His Senior Fellow application is pending.

5.3 Research as a form of ongoing professional learning: developing teaching excellence in college HE

Phillip Miller - *New College Durham*

Research as a form of ongoing professional learning:
Developing teaching excellence in college HE

Staff Development Day
- November

Staff Development Day
- February

Staff Development Day
- April

Staff Conference - July

Turn it in/online marking
Learners and their mobile phones
Nearpod – an interactive classroom tool
A risk assessment for observation
Effective techniques for note making

The HE Admissions Process and HE Admissions
Appeals Procedure
How to RPL a student onto a higher education course
The Open University Assessment Regulations
Understanding the QAA higher education review processes

Ad-hoc, institutionally
required team
sessions e.g HE45

- Current CPD is little more than information dissemination and updating rather than an opportunity to engage in a professional and scholarly community of practice, or acting as a learning professional (Lucas and Unwin, 2009; Lingfield, 2012; Rand, 2015).
- One-off workshops produce no significant changes in the classroom (Savoie-Zajc and Descamps-Bednarz, 2007).
- Staff don't like workshops and don't use them to improve practice as current CPD is unconnected to daily work (Zeichner, 2003).
- Current CPD is disrespectful of teacher knowledge (Zeichner, 2003).

Current CPD

Current models of CPD meet the definition of training: 'teach a person a particular skill or behaviour', but do not necessarily provide an environment for development: 'create or produce, especially by deliberate effort over time'.

The Issue

Staff Opinions

Three focus groups were carried out at two mixed economy further education colleges with 15 teaching staff taking part. Key themes were:
- Staff believe HE teaching is distinct from FE so specific HE development should be available.
- Staff believe that the opportunity to collaborate with others is crucial, both within and across disciplines.
- Experienced staff would value the opportunity to take ownership of and direct their own development.

An Alternative Model

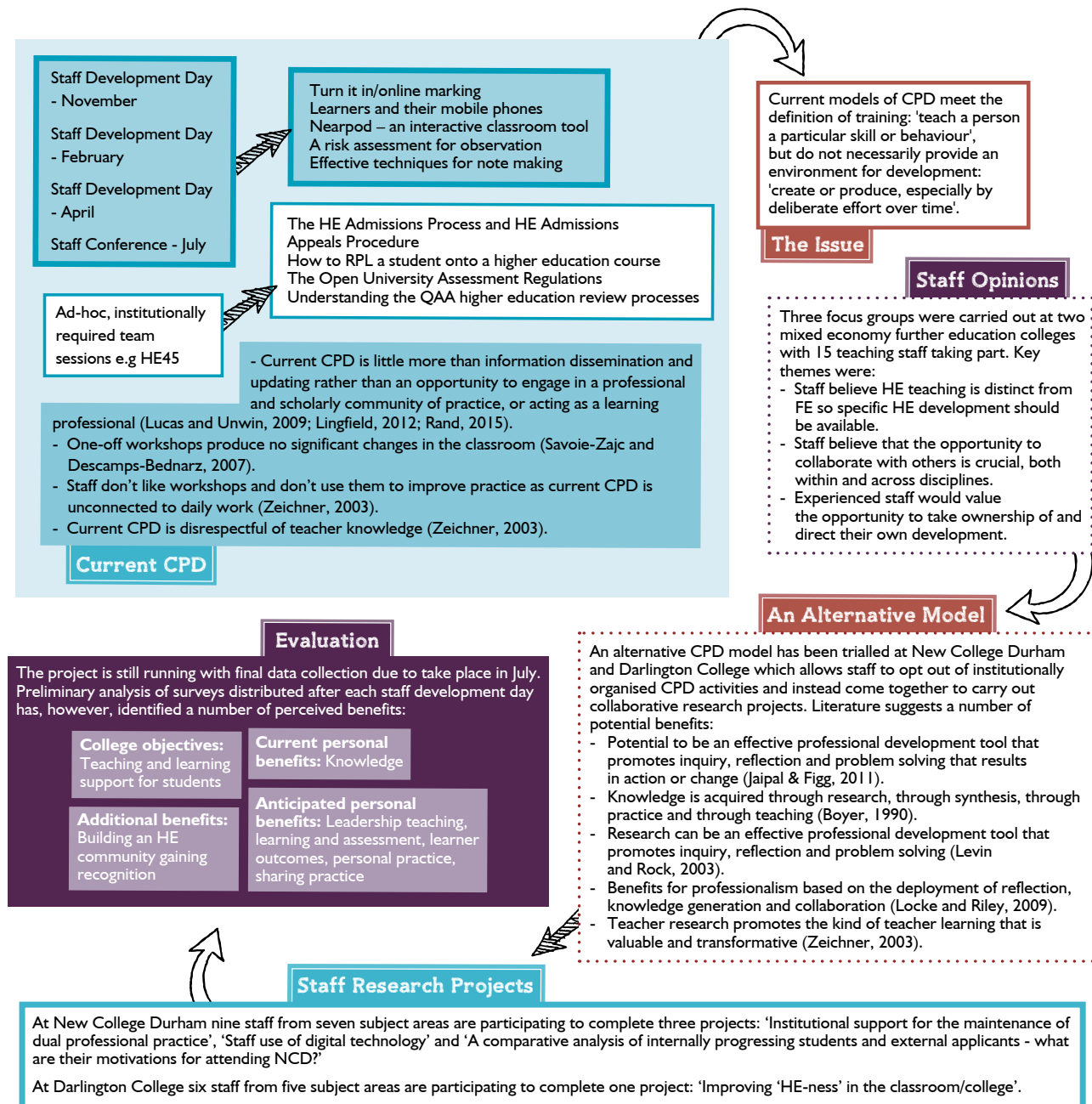An alternative CPD model has been trialled at New College Durham and Darlington College which allows staff to opt out of institutionally organised CPD activities and instead come together to carry out collaborative research projects. Literature suggests a number of potential benefits:
- Potential to be an effective professional development tool that promotes inquiry, reflection and problem solving that results in action or change (Jaipal & Figg, 2011).
- Knowledge is acquired through research, through synthesis, through practice and through teaching (Boyer, 1990).
- Research can be an effective professional development tool that promotes inquiry, reflection and problem solving (Levin and Rock, 2003).
- Benefits for professionalism based on the deployment of reflection, knowledge generation and collaboration (Locke and Riley, 2009).
- Teacher research promotes the kind of teacher learning that is valuable and transformative (Zeichner, 2003).

Evaluation

The project is still running with final data collection due to take place in July. Preliminary analysis of surveys distributed after each staff development day has, however, identified a number of perceived benefits:

College objectives: Teaching and learning support for students

Current personal benefits: Knowledge

Additional benefits: Building an HE community gaining recognition

Anticipated personal benefits: Leadership teaching, learning and assessment, learner outcomes, personal practice, sharing practice

Staff Research Projects

At New College Durham nine staff from seven subject areas are participating to complete three projects: 'Institutional support for the maintenance of dual professional practice', 'Staff use of digital technology' and 'A comparative analysis of internally progressing students and external applicants - what are their motivations for attending NCD?'

At Darlington College six staff from five subject areas are participating to complete one project: 'Improving 'HE-ness' in the classroom/college'.

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newcollegedurham.ac.uk

New College Durham

Making the Dissertation Real

Cathy Schofield

This is the story of research on the BA (Hons) Human Behavioural Studies top-up course. Research skills play an important role in academia and it is vital that students see their value in the workplace as the development of transferable skills. As such we aim to develop students' research skills through a meaningful process, supporting each stage with lectures, workshops and discussions.

The project

Students choose a unique dissertation topic from an area of personal interest, requiring innovative thinking. Alternatively they may work on a brief set by an outside agency, developing communication skills. They need to demonstrate listening, negotiation and planning skills to meet the needs of the sponsors.

Lecturer   Employer

Student   Charity

Topic
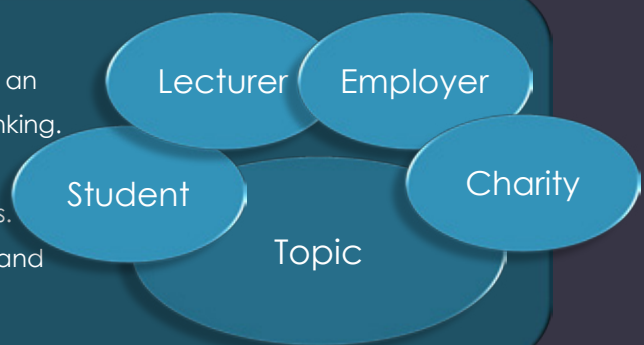
The process

This aim is to mimic the real research process as much as possible. Forms must be completed to propose the research question and design, as well as complying with the requirements of the Ethics Board.
If the sponsor of the research is satisfied with the design the student can then collect and analyse the data.

Research proposal

Ethical clearance

Data collection & analysis

Dissemination

It is important that students see that others may value their findings, so dissemination occurs in both written and verbal formats. All complete a traditional dissertation, but supervisors produce a client report for the sponsored projects. All students present at a conference designed to showcase their research findings and celebrate the process.

	Academic	Applied
Written	dissertation	client report
Verbal	paper presentation	poster presentation

The outcome from the collaboration has been a long-lasting relationship between students and charities, culminating in employment for some. Those undertaking work for their employers have been promoted on graduation having shown their worth. Lecturer-led projects are currently being formatted for publication in peer-reviewed journals.

6. Erasmus + Boosting European exchange in HVET and employer involvement in education structures (BEEHIVES)

Nick Davy - *HE Projects Consultant, Association of Colleges*

The Scholarship project is aligned to an Erasmus + project called BEEHiVES which is seeking to develop a toolkit to improve the functioning of the strategic partnership triangle between providers, employers and students within the higher vocational education and training (HVET) and professional higher education (PHE) frame.

A major aim of the European Union (EU) Modernisation Agenda for Higher Education (HE) is a reform of HE to better meet the requirements of the labour market with an emphasis on relevant skills, qualifications and graduates' employability.

One problem in achieving this aim is the often weak cooperation, understanding and interaction between HE institutions and employers. Reflecting that, various new types and forms of vocational education and training and PHE have emerged, mostly at level 5 of the European qualification framework (EQF).

PHE is offered in most countries within traditional HE structures, whilst HVET can be across HE and VET boundaries and embraces a range of providers offering high level qualifications. The common distinctiveness and underlying strength of HVET provision should be its strong systemic engagement and integration with the world of work and its requirements. How can this cooperation be strengthened in order to increase the number of young people successfully completing tertiary education and improving the employability rate of graduates? What are the necessary key-competences? How can curricula adapt to current and emerging labour market needs?

The BEEHiVES project will address these issues and create resources for a fundamental step-change in terms of employer and student involvement in programme and curriculum design, validation, accreditation and award processes.

The project will provide a series of tools and measures collected in a web-based "Strategy Matrix Toolbox" that will ensure the three apexes of the strategic partnership triangle are able to collaborate more productively, improve student retention and increase post-graduation employability.

Several outputs from the project will be included in the AoC/HEFCE Scholarship Project's Scholarship Framework (www.thescholarshipframework.co.uk)

- Survey work exploring the strategic partnership triangle in six countries, including what works from provider, employer and student perspectives;

- Emerging models of successful collaborative activity and

- The strategic matrix toolbox providing a range of tools and measures indicating how each partner can improve their partnership working.

For work to-date, including the first dedicated HVET country reports go to: https://beehives.de

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