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Teaching research ethics through reality television

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In this paper we will present the findings of a research project funded by the HEA Psychology Network. The research aimed to explore the use of 'reality television' in teaching research ethics to Psychology undergraduates. The research was conducted over two sessions, one week apart. 15 second year students were recruited to the study and 12 students returned to take part in the second session.

In week 1 the students were shown an extract from an episode of Big Brother (Channel 4). They were then asked to discuss in small groups the ethical issues they felt it raised. In week 2 they were given a research brief which was designed to raise similar ethical issues to the Big Brother extract. The students were asked to discuss the ethical issues it raised and to suggest ideas for design. The students were subsequently asked to submit a research proposal in response to the research brief, focusing on the ethical issues, and the proposals were double blind marked along with a sample of proposals written by students from the previous year. The students gave both oral and written feedback on their experience of taking part in the study.

Feedback was generally very positive, and proposal marks for the students taking part were higher than those for the previous students. The findings suggest that students found this an engaging and stimulating method of teaching and that they were able to apply their learning in a research methods context. This paper will report on both the student experience and on the learning process as revealed through analysis of the group discussions.

Development of a tool to support learning on a statistics module

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The teaching and assessment of statistics in psychology presents many challenges, one of which is the development of assessment methods which support learning. A second issue of concern is that of assessing students' understanding and application of a range of tests, while avoiding the possibility of plagiarism which can occur when all students are presented with a single (or limited number of) datasets. When considering the development of a new assessment to address these issues a review of practice within the department showed that it was common for academics to consult with colleagues when analysing data. It was felt that an assessment which mirrored this practice would be both more ecologically valid and support student learning as they discussed alternative analyses. To this end an assignment was developed in which all students were presented with the same research scenario with a range of attendant research questions.

Students were required to develop a testable hypothesis, choose an appropriate analysis to test the hypothesis, run an analysis then report the results and interpret the findings. Alongside this a dataset generator was developed which allowed the module leader to both define the variables and set their parameters. Definition of the variables can be in terms of the variable itself (means, standard deviations) and in comparison to other variables (differences, associations, positive or negative relationships). Each student was then invited to log onto the system to download a unique set of data which they used for their analysis. During formative stages staff on the module work with students through the problems set and feedback on attempts at them. In the summative phase of the assessment staff did not help students with the assessment aside from technical questions related to obtaining the dataset, or if the enquiry could be framed in conceptual terms. Feedback from students showed that although they found the assessment challenging, they reported greater confidence in data analysis on completion.

From an academic's viewpoint use of the system in formative work allowed identification of student weaknesses, while in the summative phase grading of and feedback on submitted work was both quick and easy. In this session the data generation tool and how it has been used support student learning in a statistics module will be demonstrated.

Undoing the side-effects of statistics education: developing training methods to eliminate the equiprobability bias

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In this talk we present the findings of a HEA Psychology Network-funded miniproject. The project was aimed at finding ways of eliminating the equiprobability bias (Lecoutre, 1985) which is a tendency for individuals to think of random events as "equiprobable" by nature, and to judge outcomes that occur with different probabilities as equally likely. The project was based on a large scale study (Morsanyi, Primi, Chiesi & Handley, 2009) which showed that, paradoxically, psychology students at more advanced stages of their education tend to give more incorrect equiprobability responses than students who had no former education in statistics. The aim of the project was to develop and compare training methods that can eliminate the bias, and thus undo the side-effects of statistics education.

The training methods were based on three different theoretical approaches: Lecoutre's (1985) theory of the equiprobability bias, the theory of naïve probability (Johnson-Laird, Legrenzi, Girotto, Sonino-Legrenzi & Caverni, 1999), and the fast and frugal heuristics approach (e.g., Gigerenzer, Gaissmaier, Kurz-Milcke, Schwartz, & Woloshin, 2008). The study was conducted with first, second and third year psychology students from the University of Plymouth. The students either took part in one of three training sessions (experiments with random generators, training in extensional reasoning, statistics in real life) which was followed by filling in a probabilistic reasoning questionnaire, or they took part in the study as a control group (i.e. they just filled in the questionnaire). Students' cognitive capacity, and their need for cognition were also measured.

The results indicated that the random generators training successfully decreased the equiprobability bias. However, none of the training increased overall normative responding on the questionnaire (some tasks measured heuristics and biases other than the equiprobability bias). This suggests that targeting a single bias with a training method is not enough to increase student's overall understanding of the rules of probability, and that future training efforts should focus on a selection of the most typical biases, rather than just one particular bias. Nevertheless, a post-training questionnaire indicated that students enjoyed the training sessions and found them useful.

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Research informed teaching in the psychology curriculum: an initial evaluation

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There are several ways in which research can inform psychology teaching. In a typical psychology curriculum, students learn about the research process, varieties of data analysis, the practicalities of conducting research and the philosophies that underpin research methods. Inquiry-based learning activities are commonplace, where students design and participate in each other's projects culminating in an undergraduate empirical dissertation. Lecturers can discuss their own research and how the psychological theories they use link to the research process and findings. Furthermore, students can take part in research as participants, as research assistants or by doing background research for experiments that form part of their curriculum.

This paper presents an evaluation of the ways in which research currently informs psychology teaching in our department, the impact research has on students' current views of the curriculum and the potential effectiveness of some of the above methods in modifying those views. Using a mixed method design, staff, students and recent graduates were surveyed. Staff completed a questionnaire detailing how they incorporated research in their teaching and students took part in focus groups and completed questionnaires. As could perhaps be expected, staff research tended to be introduced mainly in the later years of an undergraduate course or at Masters level.

In the first year, students saw research primarily as what goes on in research methods classes and were not fully aware of the kinds of student research that took place in the department, whereas those in their final year felt that an exposure to research methods and statistics enhanced their ability to be more critical of statistical and ethical information portrayed in the media. In relation to staff research, students at levels 1 and 2 felt that, on the whole, staff did not talk about their research and were generally unaware about staff research without looking at their web profiles. Even when staff did refer to their research, students in the first year didn't seem to pick this up. When asked to produce a job description of university lecturers, level 3 students regarded them foremost as teachers and entertainers with research hardly mentioned at all. Level 3 students also felt there was a lack of focus on qualitative methods, despite staff surveys indicating the presence of these methods in their curriculum. Where students had been involved in staff-led research projects the response was overwhelmingly positive.

The experience was regarded as very valuable in that it brought the theory to life, seemed to enhance group identity among the students involved and improved students' understanding of research design and appropriate statistical analyses. Future directions on how a research-oriented focus can enhance the curriculum, support students' learning and perhaps alter their perception of what a university lecturer is are discussed.

Do our students know what psychology is and does it matter: the need for an improved pre-induction programme?

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Improving student retention is a major objective for most degree programmes in the UK. Across the sector exit interviews with students who drop out often report 'wrong choice of programme' (Cook & Rushton, 2009). This is particularly relevant for psychology programmes as a number of students do not have previous qualifications in psychology therefore may be ill informed about the nature of the discipline.

As part of a large ongoing study into the first year student experience students were asked during induction what had been the main source of their information on psychology (time 1). Follow-up questionnaires were distributed at the end of the first semester (time 2). 188 students were grouped according to whether they had been informed about the subject of psychology from an academic, media or university source. The academic group included those who had taken a course in psychology i.e. a Higher Grade qualification or A Level, the media group learned about psychology from watching television and reading magazines and the university group learned about psychology from Open Days, University website and University Prospectus.

Repeated measures analysis of variance examined how well informed students perceived themselves to be about psychology, before and after the first semester, demonstrating a significant main effect ($p=0.017$) with the overall mean increasing from 3.26 to 3.71. For the academic group, ratings increased from 3.57 to 3.66; the university group increased from 3.02 to 3.22, however the media group increased most from 2.76 to 4.68, indicating that they felt that they had been well informed about the subject of psychology before they started the programme.

Potential differences between how sure students felt they were about their choice of programme, at time 1 and time 2 were explored. There was a difference bordering on significance with the degree of certainty decreasing ($p=0.059$). There was no difference between time 1 and time 2 ratings for the academic or media groups but paired samples t-test indicated that there was a significant difference ($p=0.012$) for the university group where the mean decreased from 4.16 to 3.90. Overall, satisfaction decreased across all groupings from 4.53 to 4.15, indicating that students were still satisfied, but not by such a high margin than at the start of the semester.

Students were less confident about they wanted to do after graduating at the end of the first semester than at time 1, with those who had a previous psychology qualification feeling more sure about what they planned to do after graduating than those who were informed about psychology from a media source. In light of the above findings the authors are working on an improved induction syllabus and an enhanced programme to better inform prospective students about the nature of psychology.

Closing the gap: an exploration of first year students' experience of learning

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Since the late 1990s higher education (HE) institutions in the UK have given increasing attention to promoting wider participation and improving student retention and achievement, following recommendations made in the Dearing Report (1997). Much research has been generated into factors influencing student success, continuation and completion, as well as potential means of enhancing these outcomes.

In response to concerns within the School of Health & Social Sciences about student retention, an investigation was carried out in 2008-09 on factors leading to withdrawal from university. The resulting report documented a review of retention literature and an analysis of telephone interviews with former first year students who had withdrawn. An extension of this work in 2009-10 involved shifting the focus towards 'success' by gaining insight into the broader student population by exploring the expectations of students at induction and the experiences of students who successfully progress into Year 1, Trimester 2.

Data was gathered at the start of Trimesters 1 and 2, using two related, semi-structured questionnaires administered as part of normal induction processes by module and programme tutors, and designed to elicit the students' expectations and experiences of learning. Underpinning this research is the assumption that successful learning leads to retention and progression (Yorke and Longden, 2008).

Students' responses are interpreted within the theoretical framework of the "psychological contract", a concept which has been widely applied in employment contexts, but less so in education. The analysis will help reveal our students' perceptions or frameworks for representing and reflecting on experiences.

Findings will yield insights that will inform the design of future induction activities as well as on-course support for effective student learning. Central to these induction activities will be the design and selection of reflective exercises which will help develop and 'tune' 'psychological contracts' appropriate to successful learning.

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Exploring the psychological contracts of 1st year psychology students and associated links to retention

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The psychological contract has been identified as a significant predictor of retention in higher education (Charlton, Barrow & Hornby-Atkinson 2006). This HEA Psychology Network funded project seeks to assess the impact of an 'intervention' designed to manage the psychological contract between 1st year undergraduate students and their tutors in the context of an evolving student-centred programme of personal and academic development planning (PAD). An action research approach is adopted. A range of other academic related measures are used to help provide a greater understanding of why students persist or not with HE and to place the psychological contracts data in a wider context.

The findings reveal variations in the expectations of both staff and student samples as well as gaps between what staff and students expect in terms of the student/HE relationship. Several differences emerged between those students who leave and those who persist with their study to the end of year 1. In particular, students who leave are more likely to expect that lectures and handouts will provide all the information they need to pass the course, engage in greater self-handicapping behaviour and show a significant fall in their performance approach scores across the year suggesting reduced effort, persistence and aspirations. The qualitative data provide insights into differences between the expectations of younger and more mature students and provide a rich context for interpreting the quantitative measures.

Actions that have arisen as a consequence of this research are summarised as are plans for future research in this area.

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The development of Emotional Intelligence (EI) within PDP provision: a Higher Education Academy (HEA) Psychology miniproject

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Following the QAA Progress Files Initiative in 2005, all HE programmes are required to provide students with opportunities to plan and reflect on their learning and self-development, known as personal development planning (PDP). Practical study skills tend to receive the most attention and support during this PDP process. Staff and students are increasingly aware of the challenge of finding employment following completion of their studies. The Pedagogy for Employability Group (2006) provides a list of transferable skills that employers are seeking; many of these skills are aspects of Emotional Intelligence (EI). The CareerEDGE model of graduate employability (Dacre-Pool & Sewell, 2007), proposes that EI is a vital component which underpins a great deal of the social interaction that takes place in the workplace and, as such, EI development deserves a much higher profile in undergraduate career development.

Evidence shows that it is possible to develop EI skills in HE students. An EI intervention conducted at the University of Central Lancashire, was shown to successfully increase EI scores, with those low on EI at the start of the study making the most gains. Subsequent analysis indicated that these students were also more likely to persist with their studies than those who had not participated in the intervention, suggesting that the development of EI skills is not only possible, but that it may also have a positive impact on student progression and retention (Qualter, Whiteley, Morley, & Dudiak, 2009). Furthermore, researchers at Teesside University, after embedding EI skills within their PDP programme, found that students developed a more realistic understanding of their own strengths and weakness and were better able to set measurable goals, anticipate obstacles to those goals and take calculated risks in achieving them (Dudiak & Anderson, 2006). Following these findings, a range of EI resources have been developed by staff at these two institutions. Materials include details of single EI awareness sessions, how EI can be embedded within the teaching of a module or programme, ways in which students can be encouraged to engage with the process of PDP via EI workshops and how EI can be used as a tool for preparing students for the transition to employment. In addition, resources have been developed for staff to support their understanding and teaching of EI to students. All these materials are freely available to all HEIs via the HEA Psychology Network website.

This 90-minute interactive workshop introduces the 'EI for PDP' website and its materials. It will include an overview of the resources available, interactive group work using the EI workshop materials to 'get a feel' for the resources from a student perspective and a group discussion of the usefulness of the website for staff and PDP.

An Inter-Professional Leadership Development Programme for psychology students

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Leadership is a practical skill that should be incorporated into psychology training. Graduates who show leadership in the workplace are highly valued for this attribute. In Australia, however, the Australian Psychology Accreditation Committee which oversees the accreditation of all psychology degrees specifically does not permit practical, workplace-related experiences to be part of the psychology curriculum for undergraduate degrees. Instead, a psychology degree from an Australian university is based on the scientist-practitioner model and involves much theoretical knowledge being taught throughout the three years of the degree. Hence, a consequence of this approach is that when our students enter the workforce, they may not immediately demonstrate their leadership potential. It is against this background that the School of Psychology and Social Science developed a leadership programme aimed at addressing this gap in their training.

The programme was designed to provide 12 months of theoretical and practical experience in leadership. Entry into this extra-curricular programme was highly competitive and voluntary. The programme was aimed at second-year students who completed the programme over and above their normal course requirements. We designed the programme, taught through a series of workshops and seminars, to consist of three curricular components: Leadership Knowledge, Leadership Skills, and Leadership in Action. The curriculum included understanding the theoretical components underpinning leadership such as management theories, participative theories, and relationship theories. Students were then provided with the opportunity to develop and practice their leadership skills by participating in a series of expert-driven seminars, through role-playing, perspective taking, and management of groups.

Finally, students worked with local organisations to provide strategic leadership in developing a community project under the supervision of an external agency. Students completed a minimum of 30 hours of work on their respective projects.

This paper will outline the components of the programme and the evaluation of the students, their leadership, and their participation in respective community projects. We will describe two community projects and their effect on the leadership capacity of the students involved. In brief, the evaluations have revealed a hugely positive response from both students and community agencies. Implications and further development of the Leadership Programme with respect to learning and teaching, in a variety of contexts and teaching modes, will be discussed.

Service learning to social activism

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The purpose of this study is to examine the impact of service-learning curriculum on student propensity to engage in social action. Combining community service with academic instruction, service-learning is a teaching method that focuses on critical, reflective thinking and civic responsibility (Campus Compact National Center for Community Colleges, 2002).

A unique blend of hands-on experience and learning (Jacoby, 1996; McGoldrick, 1998), with reflection of the vital link between the two (Eyler & Giles, 1999), service-learning reinforces didactic, skills and attitudinal components of their education (Parker-Gwin & Mabry, 1998) in service that benefits students and service recipients (Furco, 1996). Thus, service-learning contains specific learning objectives focused on civic involvement and social responsibility, and students not only learn through service but also learn to serve. As service-learning creates an excellent environment for better learning the content of psychology courses by engaging students in active, relevant, collaborative learning- attributes that are known to maximize learning (Pascarella and Terenzinin, 1991), it is not surprising to find growing interest and implementation among psychology educators in service-learning (Duffy & Bringl, 1998).

There is a particular fit between psychology and service-learning because service-learning "combines a strong social purpose with acknowledgement of the significance of personal and intellectual growth in participants" (Giles, Honnet, and Migliore 1991:7). As a result of such, identifiable changes in students' knowledge, skills level, and/or attitude should be the expected outcome of a service-learning experience (Rhoads & Howard, 1998; Stanton, Giles & Cruz, 1999). Furthermore, service-learning should yield behavioral changes, including propensity for behaviors related to social action.

Although service-learning and other like experiences are often encouraged by colleges and universities, they often lack evaluation to develop connections between experience and measurable outcomes (Parker-Gwin & Mabry, 1998). As such, this study seeks to examine the impact of service-learning curriculum on student propensity for social action. Twenty students enrolled in a Psychology of Trauma course which utilizes service-learning curriculum will complete the Activism Orientation Scale (AOS) (Corning, A., 2002) at various intervals. Students will also post weekly to a reflective learning blog to collect qualitative data to be coded with regard to service-learning curriculum and propensity for social action. Implications of results for teaching and learning will be discussed.

Applying positive psychology to promote well-being and autonomous learning in first year undergraduates.

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Positive Psychology is a relatively new development that aims to identify ways of improving the quality of people's lives. It theorizes that all individuals have psychological strengths that they may be unaware of, but which can be utilized to improve their functioning and quality of life (Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Transition to university can be psychologically demanding for students.

This study assesses the psychological strengths that students bring with them to this task and the self-efficacy with which they engage in the process and how these strengths relate to their health, well-being, and life satisfaction. Character strengths and measures of symptomatic mental health and well-being were assessed in 214 students on day one at university. Two weeks later information about strengths and a report of the students' top three strengths were delivered to them in study skills and personal development seminars. As part of this module students discussed utilization of their strengths at university and were encouraged to include statements of their strengths in the online personal development portfolios that they were creating. They also discussed how they might present their strengths to employers and were asked to include statements on their strengths in the curriculum vitae that they were developing.

After receiving the personal report on their strengths students were assessed on the impact the report had on them and statistically significant increases in self-esteem from the baseline measure were recorded. Students were followed up at 5 months and their ratings were compared with those of a control group who had only been assessed and had not received the skills sessions. Statistically significant differences were found between the two groups evidencing the effectiveness of the interventions. Significant associations were found between particular strengths, mental health, life satisfaction, which were predictive of achievement, levels of autonomous learning and well-being at university.

Student related variables as predictors of academic performance among undergraduate psychology students in Barbados

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This study examined the influence of student related variables (psychological resilience, study habit and interest in higher education) on the performance of 131 first year psychology students on the University's Introduction to Developmental Psychology course. Evidence suggests that psychological resilience, the students' ability to cope with academic stress without manifesting psychological dysfunction (Neill & Dias, 2001); students' study habits that is strategies to monitor and manage their time for studying, (Risko, Alvarez and Fairbanks 1991) and students' interest in schooling (Odinko and Adeyemo 1999) all contribute to academic achievement.

Since some students have been performing below expectation in the course, it is important to find out whether psychological resilience, study habit and interest in higher education will actually predict their academic achievement in developmental psychology with a view of buffering these academic related variables so that students' can achieve more in developmental psychology. Their ages ranged from 17 to 40 years ($M = 28.17$, $SD = 1.61$). The four valid instruments used for data collection were: the adapted version of Wagnild and Young Resilience Scale (1993), Study Habit Scale (SHS), Interest in Higher Education (IHE) and Academic Achievement Scale (AAS). The instruments yielded the reliability coefficients of 0.79 0.77 and 0.73 (Cronbach's Alpha) and 0.71 (Test retest), respectively. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient and Multiple Regression Analysis were used to analyse the data. Findings revealed: significant positive relationships between psychological resilience and students' performance in developmental psychology ($r = 0.243$, $p < 0.01$); study habit and students' performance in developmental psychology ($r = 0.504$, $p < 0.01$); interest in higher education and students' performance in developmental psychology ($r = 0.598$, $p < 0.01$).

Psychological resilience, study habit and interest in higher education also jointly accounted for 40.2% ($R Square = 0.402$) of the total variance of students' performance in developmental psychology and this percentage is found to be statistically significant ($F(3, 127) = 28.46$, $p < 0.01$). Psychological resilience, study habit and interest in higher education account for 5.9%, ($R Square = 0.059$); 25.4%, ($R Square = 0.254$) and 35.8% ($R Square = 0.358$) of the total variance of students' performance in developmental psychology respectively. These percentages are found to be statistically significant ($F(1, 129) = 8.11$, $p < 0.01$); ($F(1, 129) = 43.84$, $p < 0.01$); ($F(1, 129) = 71.95$), $p < 0.01$). These mean that students' interest in higher education is the strongest predictor of academic achievement followed by study habit and psychological resilience. The findings of this study indicated that there should be more effort towards improving students' study habits and buffering their psychological resilience which will continue to sustain their interest for better academic performance.

Advancing Psychological Science: the role of the British Psychological Society

Panel Members:

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Peter Reddy, Aston University

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The panel session will consist of an outline of current ongoing work to support psychology education and research followed by a discussion relating to improving communication with and feedback mechanisms for the sector and the Society. The Second part of the panel session will be brainstorming new services the Society can undertake as part of its Learned Society brief and innovative and effective ways of implementation. During this session we would like to address the roles of divisions and sections, particularly that of the DTRP as the home of academics and researchers in the Society. We look to explore the following questions:

What do we currently do that is valued by and supportive of the academic community?

To highlight activities of the boards (especially Research Board & Psychology Education Board) and the divisions and sections (especially DTRP), also looking at how initiatives such as the Learning Centre which may be perceived as being 'practice-driven' can be utilised or adapted to meet the needs of the academic and research community.

How do we currently fulfil our objectives as a Learned Society?

To showcase Society initiatives that fulfil our Learned Society objectives (such as award & grant schemes, guidance documents, e-newsletters, etc.) and to explore ways in which we can more effectively communicate and disseminate the activities the Society carries out to promulgate and support the discipline.

Do we communicate this effectively and how can communication with the academic sector be improved?

To discuss the methods by which people receive their information about Society activity (e.g. website, The Psychologist, e-newsletters). Identify and discuss ways to better engage and integrate with the academic and research community. Explore the most effective communication methods, what we need to communicate and how.

What would academics most value from the Society in terms of enhanced Learned Society activities?

To look at areas that the Society can develop in order to better visibly represent the needs and concerns of academic psychologists. The Society is eager to address perceived gaps in its Learned Society activity and to work with our colleagues to develop worthwhile objects that are more fulfilling of the needs of the community.

It is hoped that this session will give the Society a positive base from which to move forward in partnership with our members to continue to build the Society as a Learned Society, that is inclusive, rigorous and supportive of academic psychology.

Continuous assessment in a large course of educational psychology in Barcelona

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To enhance and unify college education in Europe, the Bologna premises include among other features, the convenience of applying continuous assessment systems at university. In this context and despite having more than 60 students in class, we have analysed the learning response and the student satisfaction in an advanced educational psychology course at the *Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona* (UAB), in which a continuous method of evaluation was implemented.

According to the constructivism approach (Mayo, 2010), the student learns more and more efficiently through the completion of different activities, both practical and theoretical (Khalifa and Lam, 2002) and both individual and collaborative (Tan *et al*, 2008). Following this principle, we asked our students to participate in a cluster of varied and continuous learning assessment activities, such as: 1. Preparing and leading oral presentations on practical cases and on theoretical issues. 2. Answering an objective test aimed at assessing declarative content learning; 3. Commenting on their classmates' oral presentations. 4. Writing a final Psychoeducational Report addressed to a secondary education student, including all the variables and content studied in the module.

Our preliminary findings, both qualitative and quantitative, suggest that this sort of assessment incorporates many advantages: The students appreciate the immediate feedback they get when doing their presentations, both from the lecturer and from the classmates; the undergraduates' plagiarism and procrastination is really low as they feel responsible for the real cases they are managing; the assessment allows customized schedules because each undergraduate can choose when to do the presentations during the course; and the system provides a good chance for the students to improve their knowledge, since all of them have the opportunity to do a second presentation and to write again the final report, if needed. In addition, when at the end of the module our students were asked through an anonymous satisfaction survey, they enthusiastically welcomed the opportunity to gain so much theoretical and procedural knowledge at the university, and they realized that this teaching and assessing methodology was really motivating and useful for their learning.

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A field-based study: understanding the cognitive processes and outcomes associated with self assessment and the assessment of others academic performance.

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In order for students to take control of their learning and in effect become self regulated learners they need to understand what good performance is, be able to accurately judge how their performance compares to good performance, and understand what they need to do to improve performance (Sadler, 1989 cited in Nichol & MacFarlane-Dick, 2006). Higher achieving students are more likely to actively engage in and self regulate their learning but Pintrich and Zusho (2002) argue that even 'at risk' students have the potential to become self regulated learners. However, anecdotal and research evidence (eg. Boud, 1989) has indicated that low and high performing students differ in their capacity to understand the requirements of assessment within an academic task.

This discrepancy has been attributed to differences in motivation but also in cognitive processing, in that poorer performing students have difficulty in understanding and objectively applying set criteria to their own work (Moreland, Miller & Laucka, 1981). Consequently, an understanding of assessment criteria and student cognitive processing is important in aiding students in their course performance. This project investigated differences in ability to understand and apply assessment criteria among a cohort of final year psychology students, within the School of Social Sciences and Psychology, Victoria University, Melbourne, Australia.

The aim in this field study was to assess differences in the cognitive grasp of performance measurement between students with high academic ability in contrast to students with relatively lower academic ability. In particular the project examined students' capacity to reflect upon and assess their own and other students' work against set marking criteria. Specifically, the hypothesis was that weaker performing students were more generous or tended to grade themselves higher in comparison to stronger students.

The results with participants including 64 third (and final) year Psychology students, 52 females and 12 males, completing the core unit History and Theories of Psychology within the Bachelor of Psychology degree indicated that higher performing students were significantly more accurate in predicting their academic performance than lower performing students.

Plagiarism: a behavioural economics approach

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In this presentation we will discuss the outcomes of our HEA Psychology Network miniproject on using techniques from behavioural economics to reduce student plagiarism. We will report the results of two experimental and two applied studies.

Study 1 looked at the effects of cueing honesty or originality on levels of plagiarism in a text summary task. Participants engaged in a sentence unscrambling task that was designed to either cue honesty (honesty condition), originality (originality condition) or to be neutral (control condition). Following this all participants took part in a text summary task, and the degree of correspondence between their summaries and the original text was noted. Study 2 examined the effects of cueing different levels of text ownership on levels of plagiarism the same task. Participants received passages of text for summary that were either presented without ownership information (no cue condition), with basic information about who had written the text (basic ownership information), or with a picture and short biography of the writer of the text (rich cue condition). Levels of correspondence between participants' summaries and the original texts were again recorded.

Study 3 examined the effects of increasing the chances of detection (by informing students that all essays would be submitted to plagiarism detection software) and of subsequently providing information about what constitutes plagiarism (by giving students plagiarism reports on their first assignments) on levels of plagiarism in undergraduate essays across a term. Levels of plagiarism were compared to baseline levels from the previous academic year.

Study 4 looked at the effects of cueing honesty or originality using assignment coversheets on levels of plagiarism in a one-off undergraduate essay assignment. Based on this research, the pros and cons of using techniques from behavioural economics in addressing the issue of student plagiarism will be discussed.

Students' Avatar creation and experiences of learning in a virtual world

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The aim of this exploratory study of digital identity in an educational setting was to investigate the process of avatar creation by students using Second Life as part of their studies on a cyberpsychology module. Factors relevant to students' avatar choices and the influence of these choices on their experiences of learning in a virtual world were explored.

The Department of Psychology at Glasgow Caledonian University has launched an honours-level module in cyberpsychology, which uses Second Life for teaching and learning activities concerning online environments, identities, relationships and communities. Few students had prior experience of multi-user virtual environments such as Second Life, although some were familiar with massively multiplayer online roleplaying games such as World of Warcraft.

Using Second Life on this module gives students firsthand experience of a virtual world and the process of avatar creation. They were required to engage in discussion around self and identity in relation to online environments and were expected to be able to apply psychological theory to understanding human behaviour on the internet. Using Second Life facilitated their understanding of the module content and the research in this area. Students were guided through the process of gaining a Second Life account, created their avatars in their own time and attended a face-to-face orientation session in which to learn how to navigate their way around this strange new world.

Sessions were organised for students in Second Life relating to the module content on elearning. During this session, students had the chance to meet with the lecturer in order to visit and explore psychology learning and teaching resources in Second Life. These included the problem-based learning resources at the University of Derby and the virtual hallucinations lab at the University of California. The latter proved to be a particularly immersive experience for the students and a source of much discussion.

At the end of the module, a small number of students took part in a focus group in which to discuss their experiences. They discussed the choices they made regarding their avatar name, gender and appearance, enabling the ways in which the educational context of Second Life usage influences self-representation and identity construction in Second Life to be explored.

Feedback was also gathered from students in the module evaluation questionnaire. In general, students were positive about both the teaching and the research potential of virtual worlds within the discipline. They were particularly enthusiastic about their use of Second Life for learning about cyberpsychology and found it to be a novel and engaging experience. However, some problems were encountered and the barriers to using a virtual world in psychology learning and teaching will be outlined, from both the staff and student perspective.

Real benefits of a Second Life: development of a virtual conference centre and evaluation of academic tutorials within Second Life for psychology students

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Second Life is an internet-based virtual world launched in 2003 by Linden Research Inc. A free downloadable program enables its users to interact with each other via avatars, i.e. a computer user's representation of himself or herself, in virtual simulations of real-world environments. Currently Second Life is used by approximately 150 Universities in thirteen countries, and in the UK Higher Education sector increasing numbers of academic entities are creating a presence within Second Life (Kirriemuir, 2008). It has been estimated that by 2011 80% of internet users will participate in virtual worlds (Gartner 2007). Thus far there have been few studies which evaluate the effectiveness of Second Life in learning and teaching environments.

The aim of our project was to create a Virtual Conference Centre (VCC) and dedicated Tutorial Huts within Second Life which would provide Psychology students with the opportunity to participate in additional academic tutorials, and also allow them to present the findings of their empirical projects at our VCC, either as poster or oral presentations. Here we report on the development of the VCC and tutorial rooms, and the evaluation of the benefits of taking part in tutorials and conferences with Second Life for our students.

Psychology learning and teaching in virtual worlds: the PREVIEW-Psych project

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The sense of immersion within multi-user virtual environments can provide educators and students with the ability to connect and communicate in ways that greatly enhance the learning experience even when attending a lecture or seminar in person is not possible, practical, or desirable. We can provide students with a custom designed and safe environment for them to learn and we can control that environment in a variety of ways to suit our teaching methods and needs. These innovative methods of teaching place the student at the centre of the learning by involving them in the experience itself. Many corporations now report large cost savings by using virtual worlds for interactive staff training and this trend has further increased their appeal to higher academic institutions faced with increasing financial constraints and increasing student numbers.

The University of Derby and Aston University, in collaboration with the Higher Education Academy Psychology Network, have recently completed a JISC funded project to validate, transfer and disseminate activities and materials from the PREVIEW project to the Psychology community. PREVIEW, a JISC funded project led by Coventry University, implemented a user-focused approach to develop immersive collaborative tutorials and materials in Second Life. The PREVIEW-Psych project developed and transferred PREVIEW's online problem-based learning scenarios and tutorials to enable their use and re-use by the psychology community. During the project the PREVIEW-Psych team adapted, piloted and evaluated interactive problem-based learning scenarios in the virtual world, including a computer reproduction of a family house featuring 'intelligent avatars' that replicate the social interactions and symptoms of people with clinical conditions such as depression, schizophrenia and anorexia nervosa. Psychology undergraduates found out more about the virtual family from a Psychological viewpoint as they interacted with the evolving scenarios from the perspective of a visiting social worker. In addition to the scenarios, the team also hosted open events to disseminate the relevant materials and skills and a 'Best Practices in Virtual Worlds Teaching' guide for the wider psychology teaching community published by the HEA.

Although all of the major Universities now have a presence in virtual worlds, specific skills need to be acquired to run effective learning and teaching using these virtual learning platforms. Existing pedagogies may not be sufficient to inform good practice in these settings. This presentation will outlined a theoretical framework for understanding the relations between the tools, techniques and technology used in learning, support and research in these evolving virtual spaces. The talk will be of interest to educationalists who would like to use multi-user virtual worlds to support their psychology teaching and learning, especially if they would like to implement this using problem-based learning.

Using Second Life to support experiential learning

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This paper will present an evaluation of a course where Second Life (SL), in conjunction with Moodle, was used to support learning and teaching in an undergraduate psychology course. Specifically, SL was used to provide lectures and student-led activities to teach Cyberpsychology, a final year course in the Department of Psychology at the University of Bath.

Each week the students were given a lecture in SL, and then they were given a task to complete during the following week that enabled them to experience and reflect upon the phenomena, behaviours and theories discussed. Throughout the unit, students were required to maintain an 'e-portfolio' in which they kept a record of their SL interactions and activities, and reflected upon their experiences. This formed the basis of their coursework. Activities were developed to encourage experiential learning and to highlight psychological theory and research. Activities included, for example, creating an online identity through appearance, spending a week as the opposite gender, engaging in group tasks such as building an object and group decision making, and engaging with various subgroups. These activities were described, conversations archived, with virtual images and objects photographed or saved.

The material contained in the e-portfolios constituted examples and evidence for students to draw on in their coursework. Group discussions in SL were used for feedback sessions with students. This feedback was archived so the students could review it at a later date. One of the strengths of virtual environments, such as SL, is that they provide strong support for synchronous interactions and collaborations, and immersive environments for experiential and constructionist learning. E-portfolios were added to further support such learning and played an important part in the formative processes of learning, encouraging learners to present their experiences, achievements and reflections, share with peers, tutors and incorporate feedback into their learning.

Examples of the students work will be presented at PLAT2010 along with the students' evaluations of the effectiveness of using SL to support experiential learning.

Demonstrating new resources for teaching qualitative methods at undergraduate level

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This workshop focuses on developing teaching qualitative methods at undergraduate level. It is aimed at staff who are designing new courses and for those who would like to refresh established courses. The workshop introduces a set of resources that have been developed by the Higher Education Academy group TQRMUL (Teaching Qualitative Research Methods at Undergraduate Level). These resources include a recently published book and on line data bases of audio and video recordings of interviews, their transcripts and other information associated with a study on friendships at University.

These teaching resources have been developed in response to research that identified the most common practices and needs of staff teaching qualitative methods at undergraduate level in the UK. During the workshop members of the TQRMUL team will outline examples of how the resources may be used to facilitate teaching qualitative methods. The focus will be on both course design and on specific methods (such as discourse analysis and interpretative phenomenological analysis).

Small group activities will be interspersed throughout the workshop so that delegates can consider how to develop their own courses and address their specific teaching needs in relation to teaching qualitative methods.

Evaluation of a rating scale assessing trainee clinical psychologists' clinical skills in-vivo

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Objectives

The shift towards competency-based training in clinical psychology emphasises the need for trainees to develop transferable clinical skills. Yet, there are no published or formalised means of assessing trainees' acquisition of trans-theoretical clinical skill. The presentation reports on the findings from a HEA-funded evaluation of the Clinical Skills Assessment Rating Form (CSA-RF), a seven-domain rating scale, designed at Leicester University to assess trainee clinical psychologists' generic clinical skills *in-vivo*.

Design

The evaluation is in two phases and is of a mixed-methods design. Correlations and factor analysis are utilised in *Phase One* to ascertain internal consistency of the scale, factor structure and inter-rater reliability. Thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) is utilised in *Phase 2* to investigate the process of assessment and how consensus ratings are reached.

Methods

Twenty-nine qualified clinical psychologist supervisors were recruited for the evaluation. Participants engaged in ratings of video material of interactions between trainee clinical psychologists and simulated patients using an expanded form of the CSA-RF. In Phase 1, 19 participants each rated eight different 15-minute interactions. In Phase 2, paired participants (10 in total) initially rated one 30-minute interaction separately, then came together to create a consensus rating during a recorded conversation.

Results

In *Phase One*, internal consistency of the original 39 items of the scale was found to be acceptable (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.82$), suggesting inter-item homogeneity. A factor analysis identified five factors accounting for the bulk of the variance. These are named *Demonstrating Professional Therapeutic Engagement, Creating a Secure Base, Formulation, Facilitating Mutual Understanding and Session Structure*. In terms of inter-rater reliability, this has proved more complex. Whilst raters consistently agreed between pass and fail criteria for the clips, inter-rater reliability of individual or grouped scale items was generally poor. In *Phase Two*, emergent themes of the consensus rating sessions relate to the application of a "good enough principle" to assess trainee skills. This is mediated by the interaction between the two raters in reaching consensus. Prior individual expectations and standards provide the context in which the video is rated, but the relationship between raters seems paramount. At times, this shifts the interaction from a task-focussed one to a relationship-focused one.

Conclusions

The CSA-RF appears to be a valid and practicable means of assessing trainee clinical psychologist's generic clinical skills *in-vivo*. Whilst more work is required regarding inter-rater reliability, raters were able to consistently demonstrate agreement at the pass/fail boundary. Individual variation between raters may also relate to the subjective nature of clinical assessment. Whilst the need to reach a consensus rating can at times, shift the task focus, raters continue to aim to apply principles of good enough practice.

Peer group supervision: developing a DVD for trainee clinical psychologists

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It is important for trainee clinical psychologists to develop their understandings of supervision for two reasons: recent policy changes oblige qualified clinical psychologists to undertake continuing supervision throughout their careers; and 'New Ways of Working in Applied Psychology' anticipate that clinical psychologists will act in a supervisory and consultative role to other NHS staff from an early stage in their careers.

Peer group supervision (PGS) is a modality that has been growing in popularity for trainees and newly qualified psychologists, and an investigation of the mechanics and benefits of PGS has been undertaken. This paper will outline research into PGS as utilised by final year clinical psychology trainees in Yorkshire and Ireland, and also report on newly qualified psychologists' experiences of PGS.

We will then present a model of structured PGS that has been relatively easily learnt by trainees, and showcase a new illustrative DVD, developed as part of a miniproject funded by the Psychology Network. The paper will include trainees' responses to learning the model, and their opinions about its value. It is hoped that this will encourage discussion of the relevance of the material to the training of applied psychologists.

Managing change: the experience of implementing a psychology work placement year

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Like other psychology departments, we aim to prepare students for gaining appropriate paid employment on graduation. At a university like ours that actively promotes widening participation, many undergraduate students have little access to ways of gaining knowledge of professional life. Attempts to encourage students to reflect on their personal development and the skills they are gaining on their degree seem often to have limited effect.

Most students want careers in professional areas of psychology or in related areas that make use of the knowledge and insights they gain in their psychology degrees. Too many are disappointed. We set out to help our students achieve their goal.

This paper provides a case study of how we have implemented a new optional psychology work placement sandwich year for students to take between their second and third years of study.

How was this change brought about and how has the initiative altered things for the Department? What problems were anticipated and have they materialised? What has the impact been on the first groups of students who chose to go on placement? What do our students say about the way the experience of the placement year has changed them?

In UK psychology, experience in applied settings is not typically provided for undergraduates. Is it time for a reconsideration of the potential value of an element of workplace based learning at undergraduate level?

No regrets? Measuring the relative benefits of a psychology placement year at graduation and beyond

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Reddy and Moores (2006) found that students who took psychology placements achieved higher final year marks and were rated more favourably by academic staff on a measure of transferable skills. In this paper, we investigate whether a psychology placement year is 'worth it' for several groups of people in terms of both academic and career success. In terms of academic benefits, key findings are that:

- (i) a psychology placement confers an academic advantage of similar magnitude to other subjects with an optional placement year;
- (ii) this effect was similar across ethnicities and socioeconomic groups, although some ethnicities were less likely to choose to take a placement year in the first place;
- (iii) the placement year academic advantage is not due to just being one year older;
- (iv) students scoring in the 2.2 range in their second year gain a greater advantage in the final year from doing a placement.

In terms of career success, DLHE survey data 6 months post-graduation suggest that:

- (i) placement students across the university are more likely to be in work than non placement students, and
- (ii) that students who have taken a placement are more likely to be in graduate level jobs.

This holds true for psychology students as well, in particular amongst graduates with 2.1 class degrees. Survey and interview work with psychology alumni is currently investigating if alumni who took a placement are generally more or less satisfied and more or less further on in their careers and this data will also be reported.

Applying the principles of psychology to teaching and learning

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By definition, psychology includes the study of information processing, or how people think. For over 40 years, the field has carried out research into thinking, and developed models about how we process information. For many reasons (inertia, reward structures, politics etc.), very little of this research has been used to inform teaching and learning practices in education.

This panel will explore various research findings from psychology, and discuss their possible application to learning. The focus will be on HE and how we can take what we know from the literature and apply it to our teaching practices in order to foster better learning among our students.

The planned format for the panel is to have short presentations from the three panellists, with the bulk of the time spent discussing ways that psychological findings can, and have been, applied in teaching.

What is critical thinking? An exploration of students' and lecturers' understandings to develop a critical thinking toolkit

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Critical thinking is a crucial skill that facilitates deep learning and academic achievement in higher education. However, critical thinking is a complex construct that is interpreted differently in different contexts and disciplines. It is poorly understood by many students, who consequently lack insight into their own critical thinking skills. This project examined psychology students' and lecturers' understanding, beliefs and attitudes about critical thinking, using qualitative methods and standardised measures in order to develop a web-based critical thinking resource; the Critical Thinking Toolkit for Psychology (CriTTPsych).

The qualitative element of the project utilised focus groups with undergraduate psychology students and individual semi-structured interviews with their psychology lecturers to explore these issues. Thematic analysis was used to identify key themes in participants' experiences of critical thinking at university, these were: 'recognition and expectations', 'conceptualizations of critical thinking', 'development and transitions', 'writing and expression', and 'learning strategies'.

The analysis also revealed that both students and staff saw critical thinking as developing from interactions among students in their learning, emphasising the social nature of the phenomenon. In phase two, Items for a 'critical thinking questionnaire for psychology' were derived from the emergent themes identified. This questionnaire was administered, alongside standardised measures of argument evaluation and cognitive reflection, to a further cohort of undergraduate students to validate the measure. The evidence based tool kit resource that is being developed from this will include a range of materials (e.g. self-assessment and diagnostic instruments) for enhancing the skills, dispositions and approaches needed to develop and demonstrate critical thinking in psychology.

The ultimate goal of CriTTPsych is to inform learning and teaching interventions to promote better student understanding of critical thinking, including how best to demonstrate it in the assessment process.

Supporting critical thinking as a core disciplinary criterion

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This paper offers a (mostly post hoc) rationale for an important aspect of our honours psychology teaching.

What we would like our best graduates to exhibit is critical thinking; not the reproduction of asserted truths about psychology, but balanced assessments of the degree of certainty that might be attributed to published claims. We expect them to exercise and exhibit this graduate attribute in their final year dissertations, and in one hour unseen essays in finals exams. This amounts to a core disciplinary criterion, which underlies almost all assessment in the programme. Some of the most important educational literature on feedback and assessment (A&F) e.g. Sadler, 1989, argues that the biggest issue is not the timing or emotional carefulness of feedback, but conveying the meaning of the criteria. If you tell a student to spell "colledge" correctly, they are quite capable of doing so even if you don't give them the spelling: they know how to find out. But telling them to "be critical" has almost no effect at all: the whole point is, that they don't know how.

The main tactic supporting this has been to require students to write a series of three "critical reviews" (CRs) over their final two years, which requires them explicitly to focus on being "critical", and lets them tackle this criterion in work on a long scale (3 months each). Repeated spontaneous praise from several external examiners for the quality of the work produced suggests these are valuable.

The CR assignments are supported both by advisory documents, and by small group or personal tutorials. While common thinking in HE assumes that feedback should be spread evenly across all activities, courses, and content, our department in fact is extremely unbalanced in its allocation of feedback effort, and focusses it heavily on CRs. Our recent high NSS ranking may be due to this effective focussing. Because it is a core criterion, benefit from the CRs is seen in the quality of exam answers too.

Not only have we had apparent success by stretching the task from exam 60 minute tasks to three month CRs, recently we've seen some benefit in shrinking it to a five minute version of a critical thinking task, which will be described. Varying the timescale may be beneficial in helping students abstract the underlying commonality (the core criterion).

Finally, we've had some promising results from introducing yet another exercise in relation to CRs: reciprocal peer critiquing where students critique each other's work using the marking criteria especially "being critical". The argument in part is that to understand a criterion fully, it helps to exercise it in different ways: not just as an author but as a reader; and in the micro task, not just on serious psychology, but on everyday journalistic topics too.

Student and staff mobility in psychology

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The academic, social and cultural benefits of spending time abroad are well-rehearsed and many, if not most, universities are on board with the concept of internationalisation against the backdrop of globalisation. Nonetheless, research suggests that there are a number of issues around student and staff mobility. Study abroad opportunities may be open only to an elite group of students. Also, students who are able to study abroad can experience a variety of challenges such as loneliness and isolation, language difficulties, and frustration of engaging in curricula without an international perspective.

While less is known about staff mobility, finances, academic timetabling and departmental responsibilities, these aspects may prevent staff from engaging with opportunities to work abroad. Also, similar to students, staff who are able to work abroad also encounter a variety of challenges.

During this informal session participants will have the opportunity to explore mobility experiences of staff and students, identify the challenges surrounding mobility, and generate ideas for facilitating mobility amongst psychology staff and students via the recently established European Network for Psychology Learning and Teaching (EUROPLAT).

The development and evaluation of an elearning module introducing risk assessment and risk management to forensic psychology masters students and trainees

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An e-learning module introducing forensic risk assessment and risk management to forensic psychology students and trainees, the development of which was funded by a HEA Psychology Network mini project grant, will be outlined and demonstrated in this 'show and tell' session.

The module, which was written by Dr Sarah Brown and colleagues with expertise in specific areas such as domestic violence and personality disorder, was completed at the end of 2008 and evaluated by students and forensic psychology masters course directors early in 2009. The resource was first made available via the HEA Psychology Network website in February 2009 and continues to be accessible and available to trainees/students from this site.

During this 'show & tell' session, the entire project, including the evaluation of the resource, will be briefly outlined and the e-learning materials will be demonstrated. The e-learning module employed 'exe' software, which is an open source authoring application to assist teachers and academics in the publishing of web content without the need to become proficient in HTML or XML, to develop the e-resource.

The 'exe' package is easy to use to develop e-learning materials as it produces information in clear web pages that are easy for users to view on a range of computers. It also allows information to be presented in a range of formats and includes a variety of interactive options, such as quizzes, multiple choice questions and reflective case studies.

This software and how it was utilised for this module can also be demonstrated during the session.

The development of a web-based learning resource for teaching Conceptual and Historical Issues in Psychology

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Conceptual and Historical Issues in Psychology (CHIP) is a thriving subfield of psychology, with active Learned Societies in many European and North American countries. The field supports a wide range of scholarly journals devoted to historical, conceptual and philosophical issues in psychology. Not only is CHIP an important subdiscipline in its own right, but it can play a major contributory role to the rest of the discipline as a whole. In contrast to the situation with the natural and biological sciences, CHIP can legitimately contribute to the progress of its parent discipline (Smith, 1988; Danziger, 1994; Richards, 2002).

In 2002 the British Psychological Society recognised the importance of CHIP by changing its Qualifying Examination syllabus to include the subject. All BPS accredited psychology degree programmes must now teach CHIP somewhere on the curriculum, although it need not be separately examined. Yet a 2005 survey of undergraduate Psychology courses in the UK revealed that only about a third included substantial coverage of CHIP (Richards, 2005). Not only do the approaches and agendas of provision vary widely, but only a small minority of courses actually engages CHIP 'as an active and important subdiscipline in its own right'.

The provision of the subject clearly presents a considerable challenge to the nonspecialist suddenly confronted with resourcing CHIP courses. Not only must tutors locate suitably up-to-date library resources and teaching materials but they also need to be convinced that such materials will be sufficiently inspiring to students new to the field. This problem has been recognised even in the United States which has enjoyed a long-established tradition of teaching CHIP courses under the banner of 'History and Systems'. A 1997 survey of undergraduate courses in the USA found CHIP to be one of the six most common courses on the psychology curriculum – a distinct contrast with the situation in the UK (Perlman & McCann, 1999). Nevertheless, Henderson (2006, p.60) argued that there was an acute need for a forum providing 'updates for teachers in which psychologists who do scholarly research in history or philosophy or historians who do scholarly research in psychology could provide basic overviews that inform nonspecialist teachers about recent trends and provide guides to the literature that would not be overwhelming.'

This show and tell session highlights the development of a HEA Psychology Network-funded web-based resource to assist and support those whose responsibility it is to deliver CHIP courses at various levels of the undergraduate syllabus. The website will be used to show how CHIP may be incorporated into undergraduate psychology teaching at the various levels.

Multiple choice test administration and feedback to students: an automated system

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Multiple choice questions (MCQ) have become a part of assessment for many programmes for a number of reasons. Often MCQs are adopted for the wrong reasons, and are seen as an easy add-on to an assessment that is already in place. MCQs have a checkered reputation in assessment. Lecturers and course leaders sometimes incorporate MCQs without thinking about the pedagogical advantages offered by the format, and instead focus on the advantages of the format when dealing with large student numbers. In order for MCQs to become a positive pedagogical addition to an assessment strategy, the reasons for adoption, development of the items, and administration of the question results must be carefully thought out. This demonstration focuses on the final stages of the use of MCQs, the processing and administration of the results from MCQ tests.

In order for MCQ items to be fully developed, the individual items should be closely examined. Classical item analysis suggests that each item should be checked to see if it contributes to the overall purpose of the test. In addition, scaling of marks should take into account the developmental nature of the test, in addition to any correction for guessing.

The cost of the development of items and providing students with feedback are issues facing anyone who relies on MCQs. Because good MCQs are difficult to produce, lecturers who devote time to question development are reluctant to release the tests to students. This means that feedback to students on MCQ tests is usually minimal.

We have developed an online administrative tool to address some of these issues. We will demonstrate how to use the tool, and show users how the tool can be used to address issues of item analysis, scaling, test moderation and tracking, and providing students with individualised feedback.

What can psychologypracticals.com offer the average lecturer?

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psychologypracticals.com is a website funded by the Higher Education Academy Psychology Network and provides access to materials and resources to support student practical work and the teaching of research methods within psychology at undergraduate and postgraduate levels.

One of the major aims is to locate and to provide resources that will enable lecturers to create and share materials for student practical work more easily. The site provides access to high quality resources catalogued from across the internet. Coverage includes experiment generator scripts; materials; data sets; reading materials; exemplar lab reports which help students construct their own more effectively; video-based tutorials on how to perform common tasks in the major statistical packages such as SPSS, Statistica; and tutorials covering the basic building blocks of constructing paradigms in the leading experiment generators.

In this show and tell session we highlight some of the benefits the site might provide for lecturers and students alike; stress the importance of making use of expertly peer reviewed resources over search engines such as Google; and showcase content in relevant areas.

We hope to both raise the profile of psychologypracticals.com and elicit submissions of links to resources that might be reviewed by the team and be made available to the wider community. We also talk about the barriers to submission from the community and what may be done to allay their fears. Pedagogical issues surrounding the use of others' resources will also be discussed.

The Psychological Test Resource and the Individual Difference Practical Cook-Book

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The aim of this 'show and tell' is to detail teaching tools that have been developed to add to the support given to those teaching individual differences via the Higher Education Academy Psychology Network psychologypracticals.com. This show and tell presents two resources that have developed with the support of Higher Education Academy Psychology Network funding; a Psychological Test Resource and an Individual Differences Practical Pack (with the latter appearing this summer).

The Psychological Test Resource is a database of over 1500 psychological tests that students and lecturers can use to identify psychological tests that could be used in their independent research work. The database also covers psychological tests developed across a number of psychological domains including, including social, developmental, cognitive and clinical psychology.

The second resource is an Individual Differences Practical Pack used to support learning in individual. The project provides a 'cook-book' of Practicals for lecturers to use in their teaching and has suggestions for a number of different Individual Difference Practicals, ranging from simple to elaborate, which facilitates first year to third year undergraduate teaching, and taught postgraduate study. The subject matter draws from the main areas of the Individual Difference section of the BPS qualifying exam/QAA statements and uses a variety of different research methods and analysis techniques.

Both resources have been developed and evaluated with the support of a number of academics within the UK, with the development of the Practical Pack being supported by Pearson Education.

Enhancing Employability: a serious game for psychology undergraduates

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Serious games can be described as interactive computer games, designed with an educational purpose. They engage learners because they are fun, innovative and interactive. Over a decade ago, the Dearing Committee (1997) reported that all HE courses should foster key skills in addition to cognitive and subject specific skills. Yet feedback from graduates indicates a failure to engage with career management issues (including employability) early enough in their academic programmes. In particular, they do not give sufficient time to think about how to communicate their skills and aptitudes to prospective employers (Froud, 2003). With increased emphasis on the promotion of student employability, particularly where this builds self-confidence in students drawn from wider and non-traditional backgrounds (Department for Business Innovation & Skills, 2009), we sought to help our students develop their career learning.

The aim of this project therefore was to create a serious game for psychology undergraduates in order to enhance their employability through recognition, and articulation of the key skills demanded in graduate jobs. Our application enables students to identify these skills, then provides a safe space in which to convey their skills to employers. The full game comprises four stages: vacancy selection; psychometric tests; skills ownership and, finally the selection interview. We will present the design and evolution of our game, and share the results of an initial evaluation of Skills Ownership. We will demonstrate the current application and share our plans for future developments of our serious game: Enhancing Employability.

What can I do with a 3-year psychology degree? Encouraging active career engagement in undergraduate psychology

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Undergraduate psychology students develop an impressive array of transferable skills, applicable in a wide range of career settings. In addition to developing an understanding of human behaviour and a foundation in psychological science, psychology students develop strong skills in interpersonal communication and teamwork, critical thinking and problem-solving, numeracy and research, as well as an evidence-based and disciplined writing style, an appreciation of culture and difference, and tolerance for ambiguity. These attitudes and skills are sought after by employers and provide a foundation for diverse and rewarding career opportunities.

Despite the efforts by psychology departments to highlight the value of the many marketable skills acquired in an undergraduate psychology degree, many undergraduate psychology students have little appreciation of the transferable skills they have developed and their usefulness in the workplace. Moreover, many students lack confidence in their ability to apply their psychological knowledge (their unique skill set) to situations in the 'real world'. This lack of confidence is exemplified by one recent third year student's comment on her outstanding success in a work experience placement: "I didn't realise I was competent".

In this paper, we outline strategies we have developed to promote students' career development and work-readiness in the undergraduate psychology program at QUT. Our approach has developed through a close collaboration between academic and careers staff. New work-integrated learning units in the undergraduate curriculum are supported and extended through extra-curricular seminars and workshops, with a strong focus on career development and skills development through volunteering in the community. Our aim to provide resources and activities to support and encourage the development of a community of practice among students, so that seeking out opportunities to develop skills and competencies through community engagement, and reflecting on learning and skills development, becomes an integral part of the fabric of our program.

The overwhelmingly positive feedback from students in response to these initiatives, and the transformative effect of workplace learning experiences on students' confidence and work-readiness supports our efforts to further refine and extend these initiatives.

Employability, situated learning and liberal education

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The UK Bachelors psychology degree does not qualify graduates for entry into the psychology professions and aligns with the non-vocational liberal education tradition, however parents, employers and students may not understand this. From the view point of situated learning full participation in the university is the preserve of lecturers with undergraduates at the periphery. Students participate purely as students, thus all that is learned in university is how to be a student. In this sense a university is an odd community of practice. A solution to this is to understand the university as a community of learning, after Humboldt (1810, cited in Elton 2008) where the teacher is not there primarily for the student but both are there for the sake of learning, but it may stretch the point to apply this to mass undergraduate education.

The power of situated learning can be seen in students returning from a sandwich placement year and feeling the experience to be a vital source of learning, yet one that they find hard to articulate. Liberal education and employability seem to pull in different directions however the competencies sought by employers and thought to be delivered by the UK psychology Bachelors degree accord well with Newman's argument that universities should develop critical faculties so that students can see things as they are, get to the point, discard irrelevance and detect sophistry. Newman argued that such an education would prepare a student to fill any post with credit and approach any subject without fear (cited in Johnson, 2005). Graham (2005) argues that graduate competencies cannot explain the value of subjects in terms of their content and distinguishes the *point* of studying a subject from the *benefit* of studying it. He argues (page 54) that '*literacy, numeracy, articulacy and facility with analysis are benefits (let us hope) of studying philosophy, linguistics, psychology (.....); but it is not in these that we find their point. The point, rather, as I think Newman meant to say, is the exercise and the enriching of the life of the mind for its own sake.*'

Exercising and enriching the life of the mind has the vocational benefit of future-proofing graduates through endowing them with the intellectual capacity to adapt to and to explore the potential of change. This reconciliation of the liberal tradition and employability needs to be made to stakeholders, along with Graham's contention that the ultimate value of the psychology degree lies in it providing not an *occasion* for thought but a worthwhile *object* of thought - higher education is a source of wealth per se.

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The extended induction in psychology: supporting the transition to university through peer-mentoring

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New undergraduate students embarking on a psychology degree face a host of potential challenges when making the transition from school to university. The academic environment demands increasing independent and self-motivated learning from new students. These expectations are explicitly laid out during induction week, yet often students complain about being overloaded with information. This can result in confusion about what is expected. Furthermore, large lecture classes are not conducive to easy social integration within the degree course and it often takes many weeks before students make friends with fellow psychology peers.

In order to support the transition to university and to facilitate social integration, the School of Psychology introduced a peer-mentoring scheme in 2008. This scheme is called the extended induction and runs for the first half of Semester 1. In induction week incoming (Stage 1) students are assigned to a group of roughly ten people. Each group has a mentor from the Stage 3 cohort who meets them in time-tabled sessions to discuss topics related to academic skills and practice. The mentors themselves meet with the Stage 1 director before each session for training and (de)briefing.

This scheme has been running for two years and has been positively received by the students, based on both quantitative and qualitative evaluation. The mentees benefit from early contact with a small group of their peers and the advice and guidance of more experienced students that have already progressed through the course. Moreover, the regular contact with a small number of fellow psychology students in time-tabled sessions facilitates the formation of cohesive study groups that are being used in tutorials and other small group teaching sessions in the wider degree. The extended induction also presents an opportunity for the mentors to develop and practice graduate skills such as team-leading and communication.

This paper will present the rationale, progress and evaluation of the extended induction peer-mentoring scheme, as well as future developments.

Cascaded Blended Mentoring – from voluntary to compulsory: evaluation results and challenges for a mentoring programme for first-year students

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The winter term of 2007 saw the implementation of Cascaded Blended Mentoring (CBM), a formal peer mentoring programme, as a first semester course in the psychology programme at the University of Vienna. To provide orientation and help first-year students master the transition from school to university, the course offers help improving basic study skills (capacity for teamwork, time management, information literacy, learning strategies). As part of CBM, senior students (*student mentors*) supervise groups of about eight first-year students and support them during their first semester.

During the first three years of the programme (winter term of 2007 to winter term of 2009), 1342 first-year students were supported by 168 student mentors; about 75 to 80 % of all first-year students participated voluntarily each semester. Roughly 90 % of participants completed the course successfully. Moreover, mentees rated their *student mentors'* support and the opportunity for "getting to know other students" as highly valuable.

In addition to the positive evaluation by the mentees themselves, participation in CBM had a positive effect on academic progress. After one year of study, mentees in the cohort of the 2007 winter term had completed, on average, two more courses than non-mentees; after two years of study, they had completed four more courses. In comparison to the 2006 winter term cohort, drop-out rates after both one year and two years of study declined.

Due to the success of the voluntary course, CBM will be integrated as a compulsory course in the psychology programme for the 2010 winter term. One challenge for CBM will be integrating the needs of the 20 to 25 % of first-year students who would not participate voluntarily. Another challenge will be increasing the depth and breadth of study skills covered by the course without disproportionately increasing the workload for *student mentors*.

Building competence in undergraduate students through practicum experience

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Edith Cowan University's peer mentoring programme for psychology students was initially established by the School of Psychology (now the School of Psychology and Social Science) in 1999, in response to rising attrition rates. It is a nationally lauded, award winning programme. Initially, it was offered to internally enrolled students, and operated as an opt-in programme. Since then, the programme has been overhauled, and now operates as an opt-out programme. In 2008, mentoring for externally enrolled students was trialled; due to its success, it was first offered as a formal programme in Semester 1, 2009.

The peer mentoring programme employs a Programme Manager, who is responsible for overseeing and co-ordinating the programme. Responsibilities include recruitment and training of mentors each semester, formation of the mentoring groups, and evaluation of the programme each semester. Changes to the programme are made each semester based on feedback from the previous semester. Additionally, the Peer Mentoring Programme Manager acts as an informal mentor to the mentoring volunteers; provides advice as required and is responsible for both the internal and the external programme. One of the difficulties faced with the mentoring programme over the last decade is the declining number of second and third year students willing to volunteer as mentors. This has been addressed in 2009 by embedding the programme within third year undergraduate units. The students in these units are required to participate in the mentor programme, and the programme informs students as part of an assessment. The mentoring programme now serves a twofold purpose: it assists first year students in the transition to university; and, it gives third year students practical skills to prepare them for professional life. This latter point is vital in building competencies in students.

Under the Australian model, there is no requirement for practicum experience for undergraduate psychology students, and because it does not form an essential part of the programme, it is rarely, if ever, offered. I contend that Edith Cowan University is unique in Australia by offering third year psychology students practical based experience rather than a purely theoretical perspective. The programme is evaluated each semester via online surveys, using a web based survey tool. The internal and external programmes are evaluated separately, and the views of both mentees and mentors are sought. Additionally, the survey is complemented by interviews and/or focus groups, which add depth to the data. Measured benefits for mentors include development of leadership, interpersonal and communication skills, as well as group work. The mentors also indicate that the programme gives them skills they need in their professional careers. The mentees report that the transition to university is smoother, which is reflected in our lower attrition rate. Mentees also say that another benefit of the programme is the formation and development of study groups, which happens earlier in their academic careers via the programme than would happen naturally.

This paper discusses the Peer Mentoring Programme in relation to building competencies of students in the undergraduate programme, for both internally and externally enrolled students. It discusses the skills attained by third year students, how it benefits first year students, and how the programme has reduced attrition in psychology at Edith Cowan University. Further, it discusses recent evaluations and the future of the programme.

Recycling feedback: making the most of your feedback resources

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When used effectively, feedback from previous assessments can make a critical contribution to the development of a student's writing style. And yet, there is often a widespread failure among psychology students to collect feedback for their assignments, especially those assignments completed towards the end of the academic year. As well as failing to benefit the students this uncollected feedback is demoralising to staff, leading them to see the feedback process as unproductive and a waste of their time.

This paper reports on a new academic programme developed to tackle these issues. In this programme feedback from second year research projects was carried over to the next year and integrated into the teaching of the third-year dissertation project. Students collaborated with staff to use their feedback from second year as a basis for developing their third year project. The aim was for students gain the maximum benefit from the feedback while at the same time restoring staff confidence in the feedback process. This paper will report on the findings of our study which looked at the impact of this programme.

A variety of methods were used to assess the programme and its impact. A questionnaire measured student evaluations of the programme, assessing their perceptions of the relevance and impact of feedback as well as the preferences for how they receive feedback. A number of the students also participated in a semi-structured interview aiming to explore the students' perceptions of the programme in greater detail.

At the same time as assessing the effectiveness of the programme, both the questionnaire and the interviews also explored more general issues in relation to students and feedback. This included topics such as the differences between mature and school-leavers reactions to feedback as well as links between self-efficacy, approach to learning and feedback.

There are a number of findings that we aim to discuss in this presentation. These would include the finding that the students who participated in feedback programme scored significantly higher in the final project mark irrespective of the students' self-reported feedback preferences. From the qualitative analysis we will review the finding that although feedback was understood to be an important part of the learning process it only received real attention in second and third years. Furthermore, the students also saw feedback as occurring within a relationship that evolved over time between tutors and students and so would take feedback from some tutors more seriously than from others. Overall, in this presentation we hope to draw out lessons for future research in this area and future programmes of this type.

Feedback provision for literature reviews within psychology: a practical way to tackle the challenges this task presents for academics

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Providing students with appropriate feedback on assignments is often challenging for academics teaching in the discipline of psychology. A key benefit of assignment feedback should be to provide students with information they can understand, and apply in future assignments, in order to improve their writing, and critical thinking, skills. However, how best to impart the necessary information to students to allow them to achieve such goals is challenging.

This paper describes a feedback document designed, and then provided to 1st and 2nd year undergraduate psychology students for a Continuous Assessment (CA) piece of work completed for their Research Methods module in their undergraduate B.Sc. in Applied Psychology program in the Institute of Art, Design and Technology (IADT) in Dun Laoghaire, Co. Dublin, Ireland. The goal of the CA was to complete a literature review on a topic within psychology. The goal of the assessment feedback document was to provide students with clear and concise feedback on their CA along with their grade, so that they could use this information in a practical way to improve on similar pieces of work in the future.

The document was devised using previous examination marking schemes, with adjustments, to make it more specific for the CA in question. The feedback document was first pilot tested in the previous year (2008/2009), and qualitative feedback from students on its use was positive. This paper will detail the process completed in order to develop the feedback document, as well as displaying the feedback document itself. An explanation of the feedback document's key features will be presented. Student and lecturer feedback on the benefits of the feedback document will also be provided, such as its clear summarized points of feedback, and its easy adaptation, with minor changes, for other CA exercises in other modules in psychology.

The feedback document's apparent ability to yield a high degree of grade agreement and consensus among academic staff will also be highlighted as a one of its key strengths. Suggestions for how the document could be adapted, and applied, by other academics working in similar subject fields will conclude the presentation.

From audio to text and back again: providing students with good feedback

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In recent years, a number of educational innovators have been experimenting with providing students with feedback on their work using audio podcasts. A number of problems with this approach have been identified. Using voice recognition software to turn speech into text, the speed and ease of providing high quality audio feedback can be combined with the advantages of printed text, giving the students the best of both worlds.

Since the National Student Survey began four years ago, feedback on assessment has been one of the lowest scoring categories (Attwood, 2009). One of the hoped for answers to the problem has been the use of audio podcasts. A number of high profile research projects into the use of audio podcasting to provide students with feedback for their work (e.g. Sounds Good; Audio Supported Enhanced Learning) have been undertaken in recent years. Several difficulties have been identified, including (but not limited to); distribution of podcasts, reluctance to listen to feedback in public places (even with earphones), reluctance to mix feedback recordings with music on personal players, referencing particular parts of a paper in the feedback, and returning to specific points made in the feedback.

These problems are specific to the media used. Although much easier to use than previously, sound recordings are not the same as text files and paper. However, there are big advantages to using audio recordings for student feedback. The time savings are significant, the depth and scope of the feedback is greater, and the feedback can be explained and understood (as opposed to illegible scrawling in the margins).

Recent work in combining the more traditional written feedback with audio recordings has demonstrated that the advantages of both types of feedback can be realised. Voice recognition software enables real time translation of speech into text, allowing a lecturer to provide feedback in the same manner as making a podcast (taking advantage of the speed, depth and scope, and explanatory power of the podcast) while producing a text file that can be distributed to the students in the same way a podcast might be or simply printed and stapled to the students' work.

The challenges to implementing the system are minimal. There is a cost to the software, and a short training time (five minutes or less). The other major challenge would be misinterpreted words (sometimes humorous), and a difficulty with some accents.

The advantages to providing oral feedback in a written format will assist students, and should improve students attitudes toward feedback on their work.

Who-wants-an-interactive-lecture? Embedding the use of personal response systems in large lectures

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The Department of Psychology at Glasgow Caledonian University is currently evaluating use of Personal Response Systems in large lectures as a Higher Education Academy Psychology Network funded Departmental Teaching Enhancement Scheme project. The Personal Response System (PRS) allows for anonymous responses to forced-choice stimuli to be collated from students in large lectures using wireless handsets. Results can be displayed to students immediately on screen in the lecture.

The PRS has the potential to enhance the student learning experience through increasing interactivity and immediate formative feedback during lectures. During the first stage of this project, the PRS was used during 10 of the 23 lectures on the introductory psychology module (N = 120). It was used to break up the lecture content with related activities (e.g. responding to visual stimuli such as inkblots and for demonstrations and in-class replications of known research findings). It was also used to introduce small-group peer discussion in large lectures, to facilitate formative multiple-choice assessment and to gather feedback from the students at the end of the module. The lecturer also used it to test students' understanding of core concepts and to identify and direct further teaching regarding these concepts.

Eighteen students kept reflective diaries to record their experiences of using the PRS in their lectures. They completed their responses to a standard set of open-ended questions after they had attended a lecture incorporating use of the PRS. The diary entries were analysed using thematic analysis in Atlas.ti. This allowed aspects of the learning process relating to motivation and engagement to be extracted.

Feedback was also gathered from 24 students using a short evaluation questionnaire in Blackboard. In general, students were very positive about the use of the PRS in lectures, particularly in terms of the impact on their motivation to attend lectures and their ability to remain attentive and engaged throughout the lecture. In particular, students enjoyed being able to compare their answers with those of other students and believed that use of the PRS facilitated their understanding of the module content and had a positive impact on their level of confidence. However, some technical issues with the system did arise and students expressed concern regarding the perceived loss of valuable teaching time and content as 'disadvantaging their learning'.

These results are discussed in relation to the potential barriers and enablers to the use of the PRS in large lectures from both the student and staff perspective. Based on the findings from this initial work, the next stage of the project will be to embed the PRS on other modules across the department.

No more 'Death by Powerpoint': using Pecha Kucha to improve assessment and enjoyment of psychology students' presentations

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Psychology students' presentations may sometimes demonstrate a lack of confidence in subject knowledge, and lack of experience with information delivery. One consequence of these issues may be densely-worded presentation slides, which are dull for the audience, affecting the amount of information they retain (Atherton, Morley & Pitchford, 2009). Text-heavy slides may also encourage students to read from them aloud, which is unengaging. Individual student presentations may also absorb considerable class time, restricting the time available for questions that assess whether students have understood or merely memorised the material.

We sought to improve the quality and assessment of students' presentations by adopting the Pecha Kucha (PK) method (pecha-kucha.org/what). PK presentations comprise 20 slides, each auto-advancing after 20 seconds; these constraints encourage deeper consideration of slide design and narrative, resulting in more dynamic presentations. Students (N=10) were given an introductory demonstration of PK and a workshop to develop their understanding of narrative structure, visual aid design, slide timing, and the value of practice, before delivering their presentations in class.

We assessed students' responses to this novel presentation style via a short Likert-scale questionnaire: the majority preferred both preparation and delivery of their PK presentation to more traditional methods, and all emphatically preferred watching others' PK presentations over traditional delivery. Perhaps most crucially, all students felt that the shorter presentation time, permitting more time for questions and discussion, allowed them to demonstrate their understanding of the topic better than traditional presentation assessments. Likewise, qualitative verbal feedback from teaching staff (N=4) was very positive: staff noted that shorter presentations allowed more time to ask questions and assess students' knowledge in depth, as well as fostering collegiate class discussion. Staff also felt that PK was more engaging than traditional student presentations. Three students obtained first class marks, demonstrating that PK does allow students to convey sufficient breadth and depth of knowledge within a short presentation.

Some concern was expressed that weaker students were still reading from their slides, though to no greater extent than in traditional presentations, and that a few students appeared uneasy about when automatic slide transitions would occur. These are important aspects to consider, perhaps reflecting more general issues about presentation preparedness.

We recommend Pecha Kucha as a worthwhile and enjoyable method of assessment, and believe that it encourages presentation skills - valuable for employability - extending beyond mere writing and reading from slides. We also note that students' expectations of how to present are based at least partly on their role-models' behaviour, and we encourage teaching staff - whose own slides may lack clear narrative structure or contain text that is only there as an aide memoire (Morley, Atherton & Pitchford, 2009) - to consider the lessons and benefits of PK in their own practice.

Rethinking PowerPoint slide design in the psychology classroom: learners' needs should come first

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Teaching with audio-visual presentations has become increasingly prevalent in both face-to-face and on-line college learning environments. An overwhelming market share and relatively simple user interface have meant that teaching psychology-related content often includes a spoken narrative accompanied by Microsoft®PowerPoint slides. However, PowerPoint's default settings – a short, phrase headline followed by bulleted lists, and banks of stock images – do not encourage compliance with multi-media learning principles derived from cognitive and educational psychological research (Mayer, 2005b, Mayer & Moreno, 2003). These principles call for the judicious use of specific types of images, the removal of extraneous details, signalling of relationships between concepts, and not repeating slide text verbatim (Mayer, 2005b). In turn, this increases learner cognitive load (Sweller, 2005), reduces comprehension and the potential for knowledge transfer.

The goals of this presentation are four-fold: (1) to ground this pedagogical issue in contemporary theories of information processing and cognitive load reduction, (2) to present data from an analysis of psychology textbook instructor's resource slides and image banks, showing that most (>90%) slides adhere to PowerPoint's default settings and violate multi-media learning principles, (3) to show how an alternative slide design, called the Assertion-Evidence design is more closely aligned with multi-media learning principles (Garner et al, 2009), and (4) to provide concrete examples of how this design can be used to effectively present psychology-related information.

This presentation does not advocate that the most effective method of instruction is through direct instructions using multi-media software. However, we call for closer attention to slide design and will discuss how research in educational psychology offers specific insights in this regard. We will close with the need for research on the effectiveness of alternative slide designs for learning psychology content, and will identify several pedagogical, learner- and content-related variables that could mediate learning outcomes. Interested audience members may include instructors of psychology, those interested in the application of learning theories to instructional design, users or consumers of instructional technology, and individuals who have authored psychology textbooks or supplemental instructional resources.

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Reflecting on the value of lecture recordings and a multimedia teaching space in a final year undergraduate course

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Recordings of lectures to date in the UK may have been made as much to assess the technical feasibility of the process and to test equipment as to make a convincing contribution to student learning. Our data shows that student demand for lecture recordings is strong and they may eventually become routinely required in UK universities. This study investigates if, when and how they are used by students to support their learning in a 10 week final year undergraduate modular course and addresses the concern that the availability of recordings may support a surface rather than a deep approach to study.

Student preference for lecture recordings is correlated with approach to study and first results show no correlation with a surface approach, a significant correlation with a deep approach and a highly significant correlation with a strategic approach.

Data to be collected in the January to May period will add to the existing data set with an additional cohort and also report on the use a new multi-media teaching space designed to facilitate the interleaving of seminar group work and formal teaching, and enabling seminar groups to audio record their discussions. Student use of group audio recordings will be reported.

The role of reflection in enhancing academic skills: an empirical investigation

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We report findings from a mini-project funded by the Higher Education Academy Psychology Centre. We examined whether reflection could enhance the key academic skills of note taking and short answer writing. We also examined the cognitive processes that underlie learning-related reflection, with the aim of gaining a greater understanding of the role of reflection in learning and in the development of metacognition.

Our sample consisted of undergraduate students at the University of Chester. The majority of the sample studied psychology (single and combined programmes), with some representation from social science students (e.g. criminology, geography). Our research took a laboratory-based approach. We asked students to watch a brief documentary while taking notes, and then asked them to write a short answer to a question based on the contents of the documentary. An experimental group reflected on these two behaviours, while a control group performed a filler task that blocked reflection.

Two forms of reflection were examined: reflection after an immediately prior learning episode (episodic reflection) and reflection without experiencing an immediately prior learning episode (generic reflection). The former has the advantage of the availability of recently experienced details of a relevant event, while the latter may display the benefit of generalised insight. One of our research aims was to explore which of these two types of reflection was more effective.

In light of well-documented difficulties students have when attempting to reflect, the use of reflection prompts was also examined. While there is previous evidence that such prompts can help learning, it is also possible that prompts may interfere with reflection, for example by disrupting the dynamic processes involved in reflection. A further aim of our research was to explore whether reflection prompts help or hinder reflection.

We will discuss the impact of our experimental factors on reflection and academic performance. We will also address issues related to students' development of metacognitive insight into key academic skills.

Developing effective student essay writing skills: a study of the modelling behaviour method and the impact of self-efficacy

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The modelling behaviour method uses videos of students thinking aloud about how to plan an essay in order to teach other students' writing skills (Braaksma et al, 2006). Research has demonstrated a positive influence of the modelling behaviour method on essay writing skills in secondary school children (Braaksma et al, 2001). Our study investigated the value of this method in combination with traditional feedback for first year undergraduate students.

The study compared students receiving the modelling behaviour method in combination with traditional written essay feedback with students in a control group who only received traditional feedback. In addition, the interaction between essay writing performance and students' levels of self-efficacy, self-assessed through a questionnaire, and motivation, measured through attendance at tutorial meetings, were explored. There was no significant effect of the modelling method on performance.

Attendance records suggested that the impact of the method might have been inhibited by high levels of motivation of both the experimental and control groups, compared to secondary school children whose attendance is obligatory. After exploring academic self-efficacy ratings, as measured through the Academic Confidence Scale Questionnaire (Sander & Sanders, 2003), it appeared that academic performance could be predicted from confidence levels and that self-efficacy could be mediated by traditional essay writing feedback. A comparative analysis of the confidence profiles of high and underperforming students furthermore elucidated contrasting patterns, with high performing students exhibiting greater confidence for input variables, and with underperforming students demonstrating higher confidence for outcomes.

We concluded that self-efficacy measures can be used pragmatically to support students' development in essay writing skills, but that the modelling behaviour method may not be suitable in an academic learning environment.

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The use of virtual summer schools to sustain engagement and consolidate understanding.

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Extensive research in the US has led to widespread recognition of the phenomenon of 'summer learning loss', i.e., the potential for the long summer vacation to lead to an undoing of school-year learning. Based on such findings, many US schools and universities offer summer programmes of study which aim to support academic success in the oncoming semester by creating more time for study and sustaining engagement over the vacation period. Problems with staffing (and student availability and / or willingness to be on campus during summer), has meant that such programmes have failed to emerge widely in the UK but a project conducted at the Department of Psychology at the University of Bolton attempted to overcome these issues by developing a 'Virtual Summer School' using the university's virtual learning environment (VLE).

A module of online study, aimed at Year 1 students who had just completed an introductory research methods course, was developed. Materials and activities included: narrated screen-casts of the lectures the students had attended that year; movie demonstrations of the SPSS analyses they had done; multiple choice quizzes; links to web-based interactive exercises, tutorials and articles; data sets for analysis practise and activities that required integration and application of acquired knowledge (e.g. The Research Question Generation Game).

Multimedia resources were used as much as possible to facilitate deeper understanding and better recall (e.g. Brunye, Taylor and Rapp, 2007). 'Units' of study, each unit relating to one course topic such as 'Descriptive Statistics', were released systematically over six weeks of the summer vacation. Gradual release was used to encourage repeated visits. VLE page tracking data revealed that 172 students (of a possible maximum of approximately 200) accessed the site. Discounting hits to web links, (which cannot be tracked on WebCT), the screen-cast movies and pen and paper exercises alone attracted 3329 hits, the movies of lectures and statistics demos being watched 814 times totally 83 hours of viewing.

Student feedback was unanimously positive, indicating they found the initiative useful and enjoyable and would like to see a similar online resource for every module. Consequently, for next summer the virtual summer school course concept will be extended to other modules of study within the curriculum and the possibility of them being 'required work' for those students retaking assessments before the following academic year is being investigated.

Encouraging student confidence and motivation through a research apprenticeship scheme

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This paper describes the effect of a research apprenticeship scheme that we found to be very effective in promoting student confidence and motivation. The idea for the scheme originated from a desire to provide psychology students with an opportunity to become involved in a 'hands-on' research project during their undergraduate studies. We saw such involvement as equipping students with valuable work and research experience, which would assist them in their final year dissertation research, as well as improving their future job prospects.

First, second and third year students were invited to take part in the programme, and were offered the chance to be trained as a research assistant, assisting with various aspects of research such as playing the role of experimenter, assisting with data collection, transcribing interviews and coding behaviour data. The scheme was marketed as being prestigious and competitive, and therefore attracted the most conscientious and enthusiastic students. The recruitment process required students to compile a CV and to write 250 words describing why they would be suited to such a role. Following this, a short-list of students was compiled and students were invited to attend a formal interview. During the interview, the students were informed that taking part in the scheme involved a significant commitment and that if they performed poorly then the apprenticeship would be discontinued.

The chosen research team comprised 15 first, second and third year students in total. Each student received regular work appraisals which required them to set themselves goals, thus equipping students with the ability to reflect on their own personal development, skills and knowledge. Regular team meetings allowed the students to connect with each other and to form friendships across year groups.

Feedback from students has been overwhelmingly positive, indicating that being involved in the programme increased their motivation to perform well in their studies. Impacts on personal development and self-confidence were also obvious. Many of these students are now in their final year, and dissertation supervisors have commented on how these students have shown an unusually high level of professionalism, dedication and motivation.

As a result of this innovation, the school has recently implemented a similar model to enrich the student experience. Whether a scheme like this can operate as effectively, when it is available to all students as opposed to operating on a competitive recruitment basis, is one of the questions that will be considered in this presentation.

Strategies to help minimise plagiarism possibilities: how might we design innovative assessment tasks for psychology students?

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The issue of plagiarism is a serious concern for higher education institutions, and a number of contributory factors are suggested to account for a possible rise in student plagiarism, including the general availability of internet sources and an increase in the use of coursework (HEFCE, 2009). It is also recognised that when students enter university they do not necessarily have an understanding of what plagiarism is, or the importance of citation and referencing (Sunderland-Smith, 2008, see pp.182-83). It is well established that institutions need to adopt a holistic approach to tackling plagiarism, which involves ensuring that: institutions have explicit policies and procedures; students receive relevant information, advice and guidance, and have opportunities to acquire skills in time management, information literacy, note-making and academic writing; and staff are supported so that they can design programmes that enable students to develop their skills and devise assessment in ways that help to minimise plagiarism (Carroll, 2007; Macdonald & Carroll, 2006). Indeed, Macdonald and Carroll (2006) have stressed the importance of 'assessment for learning' where formative assessment can be used to ensure that students have opportunities to practise, for example, academic writing skills and receive timely feedback.

This workshop will look at a variety of strategies relating to assessment design, which can be used in ways that can help reduce the likelihood of student plagiarism (Bloxham & Boyd, 2007; James, McInnis & Delvin, 2002; The Higher Education Academy Psychology Network, 2009). This will include a consideration of the use of innovative assessment tasks for psychology students such as, posters, presentations, and information leaflets by drawing on relevant case studies (e.g. MacAndrew & Edwards, 2002; McGann, King & Sillence, 2008). There will also be a focus on designing assessment in ways that enable students to develop skills relating to academic practice and employability skills. The workshop will give participants the opportunity to review the use of traditional forms of assessment (essays and examinations), and to actively consider, discuss and plan alternative approaches in the context of their teaching.

Managing change within the teaching of psychology: new formats for teaching and evaluation

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With the Bologna process, several characteristics of academic education, not only within the field of psychology, have changed. On the one hand, education has become more standardized providing curricula that are obligatory to most students within one field. As a consequence, some courses have become obligatory to large groups of students which often means that teachers have to handle large lectures for a heterogeneous audience. On the other hand, modern media tools open the possibility to implement new ways of teaching and learning, e.g., by switching from traditional classroom instruction to problem-based learning.

These are only single facets of the overall changes in the European academic system. Many teachers feel the need to try new ways of teaching and evaluate the effects of these new methods. Within this panel, we provide some new approaches facing different changes in the small group classroom as well as the large scale lecture hall. The contributions by Hill and Zumbach address the introduction of problem-based learning. Hill examines the changes necessary for introducing PBL from a classroom management as well as an experience-based perspective. To this end, Hill analyzes outcomes and students' attitudes under the condition of problem-based learning compared with students in traditional classroom settings. Zumbach analyses the role of tutoring behavior depending on students' and tutors' expertise and results show that a continuous adaptation process of instructional strategies is necessary for effective instruction. This is also a prerequisite for large scale lecture hall instruction.

Spinath investigates how students' learning and motivation can be fostered in very large groups of students. This study shows that weekly submitting written statements are an effective means to increase student learning and become manageable with the right technology and tutor support. Finally, Stehle and Spinath investigate students' evaluations of teaching as a means to increase the quality of teaching. These authors show that teachers who define realistic learning targets are rewarded with better student evaluations. These results corroborate the validity of student ratings of teaching and might inform teachers on how to improve their evaluations and their teaching.

Taken together, the contributions of this panel provide a wide range of ways in which to manage change in teaching of psychology.

Introducing enquiry-based learning to a large first year group

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Student performance in a first year module on developmental psychology had been disappointing with very few students showing any evidence of independent study or learning. Teaching had been via traditional lectures to a large group, backed up with reading and video resources. Student feedback suggested that they did not understand learning as constructivist, but saw knowledge as an absolute, as facts that are simply conveyed from the lecturer to the student. A second problem with the lecture format was that it did not support students in developing independent learning skills. Supplying them with relevant reading has limited value if students do not approach the reading correctly, i.e. with a particular goal in mind.

The aim was to encourage students to engage with their learning through the establishment of learning communities which involve cooperative learning techniques and group process learning activities. Research has shown that learning that takes place in a group situation can lead to a better understanding of the material (Boud, Cohen & Sampson (1999). Rather than absorbing information, knowledge is constructed through an active and reciprocal process (Zhao & Kuh, 2004). Disadvantages of group work have been documented, including lack of commitment (e.g. Barton, Van Duuren & Haslam, 2007) and difficulties managing group interaction (e.g. Cohen & Sampson, 2001). This project aimed to overcome some of these issues by setting individual goals for group members, clear guidance on activities and close supervision.

Students worked in groups of four to identify the theories behind a set of applied issues in developmental psychology. They were guided into identifying four questions in each session. Each member of the group was required to research one of the questions, to produce a short handout, indicating resources used, and to report back verbally to the rest of the group in the next session. Groups were then guided into identifying the next set of issues to be answered and the process repeated. Once the topic had finished, students had access to a downloadable PowerPoint lecture with voice-over (via BB Flashback) covering the material that would have been included in a traditional lecture.

At each session, students were initially encouraged to develop their own ideas on how they should proceed. The guidance given at the end of the session aimed to help them develop the ability to construct a reasoned argument backed up by empirical research.

Student performance in the end of module exam was compared with the previous cohort by using the same examination questions (essay format). Student feedback on the different teaching approaches was compared via student feedback questionnaires. More in depth information on students' perception of the new teaching method was collected via focus groups.

Analyzing the influence of tutoring in problem-based learning: the role of tutors' and students' expertise

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In this contribution we examine the role of tutoring behavior and learners' expertise in problem-based learning. Problem-based learning (PBL) is an interdisciplinary, collaborative, and situated learning approach that contributes to meaningful and successful learning and teaching within authentic learning environments. Nevertheless, several factors directly and indirectly affect problem-based learning, such as case or problem design, learning group characteristics, the role and expertise of tutors, and learner characteristics.

In one study, we investigated the role of tutors' content expertise during a problem-based learning scenario. We examined whether a tutor should use expertise in facilitating small group problem discussion or not. In a first experimental condition the tutor acted as a moderator providing no information regarding the problem. In a second condition, the tutor provided learners with his expertise and corrected wrong statements or answered direct questions. Results suggested that learners assessed the setting more positive and achieved higher scores in a final test when the tutor imparted his knowledge.

In a second study, we conducted the same experimental manipulation but extended the research design by a quasi-experimental factor. First, we addressed issues of tutoring behavior by using expert as well as non-expert tutors. Second, we varied the level of students' expertise. On one level, experienced students within the learning domain were recruited (graduated psychologists or other professionals within the area of clinical psychology). On another level, beginners took part in this study (first and second year psychology students). Overall, a 2x2 semi-quasi-experimental design resulted.

For providing an authentic problem-based learning scenario, a problem from the field of clinical psychology was chosen. The problem itself was presented in within a hypermedia learning environment describing a problem taken from the domain of clinical psychology. Learning objectives with regard to this problem included knowledge about cause, diagnosis, development and therapy of depression and anorexia nervosa. Also, the learning goal was to establish connections between both disorders. The resources to solve the task were passages of a study book from the field also presented within the hypermedia learning environment.

While the first study on novice learners revealed advantages of expert tutors on learners' knowledge acquisition, the results of the second study reveal some benefits of non-expert tutoring in problem-solving groups with advanced learners.

Looking for new ways to induce deep learning: effects of written statements on students' knowledge and motivation

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Modularized courses of study come along with a high quantity of exams. Teachers are looking for alternatives to traditional exams to reduce the number of tests at the end of a term. Moreover, it is doubtful that traditional exams ensure deep learning, especially when there is so little time to prepare for one exam before the next one follows. For these reasons, there is a need for innovative formats in which students show what they have learned.

In an introductory class to educational psychology at Heidelberg University, students answer questions to each lesson and submit these written statements every week. The aim of the present study was to investigate the effects of these statements on students' objective and subjective learning and interest in large university classes. During several semesters, students were randomly assigned to different conditions, ranging from mandatory presence to optional presence but weekly written statements. Each semester, more than 200 students were investigated in a pre-post-test design assessing students' motivation as well as subjective and objective learning.

As expected, students who were free to attend the class but had to submit written statements each week, had better objective learning outcomes compared to all other groups. This effect was mediated by the amount of time invested to class contents. Moreover, students who wrote statements each week were highly interested in the contents of the class and were content with their workload. These results show that written statements are a good way to induce deep learning and foster students' motivation.

Improving teaching by student and teacher evaluations of teaching

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Students' evaluations of teaching are widely used at universities throughout the world as sources of feedback on instructional effectiveness. In addition, the feedback from such student ratings helps university teachers to improve their teaching performance (Kulik, 2001). It is argued, that the insight teachers gain from student ratings can be enhanced when teachers themselves also evaluate their own teaching from their perspective. Agreement or discrepancy between the two perspectives on the various aspects of teaching might help teachers to identify the reasons for the good or bad ratings and thus help teachers to improve their teaching performance.

Based on this presumption, we developed two parallel teaching evaluation forms for students and teachers. Besides the usual items describing the various aspects of teaching, the teacher form also contained eleven items on which teachers could indicate the competencies the course was designed to convey. In contrast, in the student form the students were asked to which degree they acquired these eleven competencies over the course. The aim of the present study was to investigate how student and teacher ratings differ with regard to the competencies acquired in a course and if possible discrepancies are related to the overall ratings of the course.

Over the period of four semesters, 124 courses in psychology were evaluated by N=1985 enrolled students and N=111 teachers. Corresponding Items in the student and teacher form were used to calculate different measures of agreement. Results show that courses with high agreement between students and teachers regarding the acquired competencies also obtain the better overall ratings. This finding suggests that teachers who define realistic learning targets and choose appropriate learning and teaching activities to facilitate the acquisition of these targets are rewarded with better student evaluations. These results corroborate the validity of student ratings of teaching and might inform teachers on how to improve their evaluations and their teaching.

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Can we meet their expectations? Experiences and perceptions of feedback in first year undergraduate psychology students

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Student dissatisfaction with feedback given on assignments is increasing within the UK Higher Education sector. However, reasons for this growth in dissatisfaction can be unclear to teaching staff, who believe their students are receiving timely, extensive and informative feedback.

This study explores possible reasons to explain the mismatch between staff and student's perceptions of feedback quality. One hundred and sixty six first year undergraduate psychology students were asked to complete a questionnaire detailing their experiences of feedback on coursework before attending university and throughout their first year. In the second half of the study, an experimental design was adopted and participants were asked to rate their satisfaction with feedback on one of four mock essays. The impact of received grade (high, low) and amount (extensive, limited) of written comments was manipulated across the four groups.

The results indicate that procedural elements of feedback (timeliness and legibility) are considered satisfactory. However, the questionnaire revealed that students can have a severe, negative emotional response to the feedback provided. Further, some students do not know how to engage in self-help (independent learning) behaviours to improve their grades.

The second part of the study revealed that student's satisfaction with feedback is not influenced by the grade received. However, greater satisfaction was reported when more extensive feedback with fuller explanations and ideas for ways to improve their work was provided. Suggestions for improving student satisfaction with feedback in light of these findings are discussed.

Effective and efficient feedback to undergraduate students: it is possible to do both!

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The National Student Survey (2008) highlighted student dissatisfaction with feedback mechanisms currently used in undergraduate Psychology programmes. In contrast, academic staff feel that they provide good quality feedback, which is not adequately utilised by students. Concurrently, student numbers have increased and there has been a trend for increasing consumerist attitude amongst students. This has led to a growing tension between the need for academics to manage workloads and improve efficiency, whilst maintaining or improving the effectiveness of their work in terms of developing student learning.

Building on previous research in this area (Hulme and Forshaw, 2009), this mini-project has employed focus groups and the Delphi consultation method to produce recommendations for good practice in delivering feedback to psychology undergraduates, incorporating both staff and student perspectives. These recommendations include training for staff and students, methods of personalising feedback, issues around content and tone, and systems to engage students with feedback and to facilitate reflective learning, so helping them to develop from supported to independent use of feedback. Evaluation of tutor training events already held in both psychology and other subject areas has also been conducted.

This paper aims to disseminate the findings of the mini-project, and to inform delegates of suggested good practice with regard to feedback delivery.

Information just went into my head! Making games as a method of learning and assessment

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The "Brain Game" is a neuropsychology assignment given to third year undergraduate students studying for the Applied Psychology degree in the Dun Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design & Technology, Dublin. Making games as an assignment could easily be applied to other psychology subjects.

Originally designed by Professor Linda Walsh of the University of Northern Iowa, the Brain Game assignment is consistent with the principle of constructive alignment (Biggs, 2003); the game assesses students' ability to describe structures and functions of the nervous system and explain how brain damage and disorder is reflected in behaviour, two of our Neuropsychology module's learning outcomes. The game is a criteria-based assessment where students' grades will reflect how well the learning outcomes are met.

Students are given one month to complete the assignment. Before and during that period, they are supported with lectures and exercises to learn about the brain, its anatomy, and associated functions and disorders. Students then present their games to the rest of the class and everyone plays each other's games.

Students felt the Brain Game assignment was a valuable learning experience that increased their interest and knowledge of neuroanatomy and neuropsychology. Most students described it as being "different" and/or "fun", with one particularly enthusiastic student saying: "It increased my knowledge without effort. Information just went into my head. I liked that when researching I continued to read on even if I didn't have to". Aspects of the assignment that the students didn't like were mainly to do with the time it took and group-related issues. Some students also found the creative aspect of it quite challenging.

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Engaging students in the fundamentals of theory: a peer and tutor marked assessment in organizational psychology

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Engaging students in the fundamental and underlying theories of any particular psychological discipline can be challenging, especially if this theory bears little or no relevance to the life experience of the students. In the absence of experience, the learning of theories and principles can be an up-hill battle for students. It is the task of educators to find the relevant links, if they exist and if not to create learning experiences in which deep learning can take place.

This assignment was designed for 2nd year undergraduates studying a module in Organizational Psychology. The aim was to give students an understanding of the basic theories and principles of the discipline. Lectures and workshops explored a variety of topics relating to the subject. Groups of three were randomly allocated. Each member of the group chose a different topic covered in class. Students developed ten MCQ's on their topic. The MCQ's were administered to the other two members of the group. The students corrected and gave feedback to their peers on the MCQ's. Collectively, essay questions were designed on each topic and detailed outline answers were developed. These were presented to the whole class. The final group mark was based on student scored MCQ's and tutor marked presentations.

The feedback received from the students was that they enjoyed the challenge of creating the MCQ's and essay questions. They engaged with their own topic particularly well. The development of three essay questions along with detailed outline answers encouraged them to learn from their peers and engage actively with the material. An 'Organizational Brain Game' was organised as a final and unmarked part of the assignment which helped to make the theory live. Groups pitted their knowledge against 'The Brain' in order to create the 'perfect organization' while tendering for a contract to build a recycling plant. This final task actively engaged students in a fun way, drawing on theory they had to overcome the obstacles thrown at them by the 'Brain'.

Lecture-free lectures for the introductory psychology course: an active learning approach

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The emphasis in the presentation will be on active learning about temperament through:

- (1) administering a brief version of Eysenck's temperament inventory that highlights extraversion-introversion and degree of stability, then
- (2) having the participants form groups according to three temperament types (sociable/buffalo, aggressive/bear, unobtrusive/deer) and discuss briefly the main positive features and possible excesses of their type, and finally
- (3) highlighting three traditional aspects of temperament (active, sociable, emotional) and how they relate to the three temperament types above.

At our college, Central New Mexico Community College, there are over 60 sections of general psychology taught by two dozen instructors with 25-30 students in a section. The approaches used vary from lecture/visual to hands-on/active learning.

Two colleagues and myself sponsor the Mountain States Conference on the Teaching of Psychology which each fall (autumn) attracts 80 or so psychology instructors from a half dozen South-western states.