

Fellowship: Building the People Culture and Embedding Good Practice - Putting Learning and Teaching Strategies into Action

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***Abstract:** Universities in the UK have more explicitly developed learning and teaching strategies since HEFCE's funding initiative 1999 following the Dearing Report. Many educational developers have been working to identify, nurture, recognise and embed good practice in learning and teaching throughout their universities. Focusing on a specific case at APU in the UK, this workshop explores, and encourages the sharing of examples of issues and practices involved in initiating, nurturing and embedding good practice in learning and teaching in institutions. This paper will look at some of the practices at a single institution APU, to consider how some of the activities of learning and teaching development have been interpreted and the funding directed to activities including:*

- ◆ *The work of the Learning and Teaching Unit including the Learning Technologies Taskforce, half time secondments as principal and senior fellowships to act as change agents, internal publications and conferences for dissemination, the influencing of policy and practice.*
- ◆ *Fellowships -co-ordinated as supported groups-which enable staff in the core university and its regional partners to develop and embed the results and practices arising from individual and group based learning and teaching projects*
- ◆ *Schools Advisors who work within their schools to share and develop good practice in learning and teaching*
- ◆ *Learning and teaching oriented research groups focusing on: retention, postgraduate student learning, learning in different disciplines, internationalising the curriculum, taking disadvantaged women returners over barriers to learning*

These can be seen as examples of strategies in practice which other colleagues might like to share and further develop.

Key Words: *Fellowship; Learning and Teaching Strategies*

Introduction

There is no doubt that national funding initiatives and the call for explicit learning and teaching strategies are a great spur to the institutional embracing of educational development. HEFCE's 1999 call for learning and teaching strategies and the tying of funding to the production of sound, expert judged strategies greatly enhanced the profile of many educational development units and centres within UK universities, which had hitherto often worked on a mixture of good will, imagination and short-term funding. As Graham Gibbs notes (*Educational Developments* Nov 2001 2:4 p12-13) 'the improvement of teaching has become more strategic in nature.' This is because funds for development are more clearly targeted at institutional goals, institutions are committed to rewarding excellence in teaching, ILT membership is supported, and developers are often working closely with Schools or faculties (depending on internal labels) to implement learning and teaching strategies. One casualty Graham Gibbs fears, is that some 'developers appear to have traded autonomy for influence, and those who have not done this deal have been by-passed' (p13).

Staff and educational development as a profession is being re-conceptualised and has to consider organisational and management theories and practices in the exploration and definition of changing roles and locations within HE (see Brew et al, 1995 in Australia, Angelo and Cross, 1993, in the US, Gibbs 2001, Andresen, 1996, Gosling, 1997) Brew & Boud, 1996, Martin 1999.

Staff development practice now requires underpinning from a broader trans-disciplinary theoretical base that incorporates management and organizational theory and existing and emerging pedagogies in the context of understandings about changes to the nature of knowledge and educational institutions (see for example, Martin 1999, Boud & Solomon 2000, Brew 2001). Staff and educational development is currently being repositioned institutionally. Historically, it frequently operated to nurture individual developments and innovations with teaching staff and to carry out consultancies, projects, run workshops related to changes. An increasingly managerial model has emerged, in the UK partly due to HEFCE TQE (Teaching Quality Enhancement) funding which places us more centrally within universities in terms of strategies, policies, management and market models and influences. In the UK, the involvement of staff and educational development before and during Quality Assurance Agency visits has increased our profile, and our management identity (see Duke 1992, Kogan et al 1994).

A developing body of research which increasingly informs and underpins staff and educational development both contributes to our professional status and our identity with the development of a 'higher education' discipline and produces tensions (see Brew 1995, Webb 1996, Martin 1999, Barnett 1997, 2000).

In the UK, SEDA is committed to supporting and developing staff and educational developers. The range of accreditation processes with which SEDA serves the growing profession recognises it as that, a higher education profession in an increasingly professionalized context.

Among the range of accreditation processes, including teacher accreditation, SEDA fellowships provide an opportunity for staff and educational development colleagues to make clear and to evidence their practice and achievement of the outcomes and values underpinning the profession. This is done through a portfolio process which includes

specialist topics (see SEDA website: <http://www.seda.ac.uk>). In the emerging professionalization of staff and educational development, we need to ensure we fully own, develop and take part in, and gain recognition for our skills and achievements. Staff and educational developers work in many instances through a model of dialogue with academic communities and individuals (Ramsden, et al 1995, 1998, Hannan, A. & Silver, H. 2000).

However, as Peter Knight points out:

In the future, the effectiveness of development activities may be judged by their goodness of fit with state or institutional priorities. In that case, educational developers might become agents of mandated change, engaged in influencing academics' working lives at the behest of institutions and governments. That, we suggest, raises ethical issues for educational developers, who have hitherto worked principally with academic staff who wish to change the ways in which they work. (*International Journal for Academic Development*, 3:2, November 1998, p. 97)

Knight argues that, in this context, 'higher education needs to think more in terms of teams and, for example, to shift the focus of incentives, education and rewards from individual faculty members to departments or other academic units' (Wergin, 1994 in *IJAD*, 3:2, November 1998, p. 97).

Our changing roles are associated with the increased identification of universities themselves as learning organisations (Barnett 2000/1) so staff and educational developers working with schools/faculties central units and individual colleagues are doing so by encouraging and supporting related activities between groups and individuals to engage with current and future developments and needs of which, for example e-learning and quality enhancement are but two.

Another growing area of our involvement is in the scholarship of learning and the research which underpins this. Good teaching is underpinned by an awareness of how students learn and how we might empower and facilitate them to learn, by planning, by consolidation and innovation of good practice. Much of what we do as staff and educational developers supports colleagues in their engagement with good teaching and good learning and with the scholarship of learning and teaching, which often involves appropriate learning and teaching research: 'Educational development may thus be described as all the work that is done systematically to help faculty members do their best to foster student learning' (Knight, p.98).

Knight poses a problem related to institution wide goals and practices in the role, somewhat caught between a managerial/institutional model and a community, individualised support model: 'Educational developers will continue to help faculty to adopt those practices that are pedagogically desirable and that also foster desirable skills and qualities. However, the growing tendency for governments and institutions to require system-wide adoption of these goals and practices implies that educational developers will need to reach *all* faculty members' (Knight, p.99).

It is in the context of the increased demands of educational development to enable institutional cultural change and to continue to support and encourage colleagues in their innovations in learning and teaching that this paper looks at developments in a large institution, APU, funded by TQEF (the Teaching Quality Enhancement Fund).

A number of questions underpin this paper, which colleagues might like to consider as we explore a single case of learning and teaching development in a single university in the UK.

- ◆ How are different universities differently directing funding for learning and teaching, of which the UK HEFCE funding is a special case?
- ◆ How are we developing learning and teaching in this relatively more stable (possibly short-lived) period?
- ◆ How are we ensuring and how could we better ensure take up and embedding of good practice across the sector?
- ◆ How can we unite both a strategic role and one which continues to encourage and support 'grass roots' innovation, 'cottage industry' local accessibility, confidence-building, nurturing and a critical ironic voice - parts of the old role for educational developers- so that we retain goodwill and motivation and *also* capitalise on the strategic positioning (without being decapitated, suddenly reconstituted, suddenly joining the ranks of the 'disappeared'.)

This last question is one of identity and role as well as of politics and power, but less of paranoia than it would initially seem, I would argue.

Anglia Polytechnic University - a case study

A belief underpinning the development of practices at APU (Anglia Polytechnic University) in Cambridge and Essex, UK, has been that both influence in strategies and policies *and* the creative imaginative elements of previous autonomy (often accompanied by the insecurities of operating out on a limb about to be cut off!) are necessary and desirable. We have been working to try and ensure that the energy and initiatives are not lost while the influence and 'joined up thinking' relating strategy to practices and then also to quality assurance are further developed. These are just a few of our thoughts and practices which we hope go some way towards that achievement -at least currently.

The University's Learning & Teaching Strategy, and the expectations of HEFCE, (1999, 2001) underlie our developments and decisions. HEFCE, of course, recognise the strategy and fund much of its implementation, although increasingly the University and its schools also fund significant elements of our developments from their own resources. Upon agreement of the learning and teaching strategy we set up a Learning and Teaching Unit with a Director of L&T Development and a small administrative and support team. Historically there had been a centre for learning and teaching which both offered taught accredited courses and a workshop programme, with some consultancy around the schools. We decided that we wished to offer a variety of services to support the variety of L&T needs around the university.

APU is an unusual university. It is both split site and regional, involving partner colleges and NHS trust contacts spanning a radius of over 120 miles round East Anglia, Essex and Cambridge, all in the Eastern part of the UK. APU has profiles in successful Widening Participation activities, work related professional learning, and internationalisation. A high proportion (over 50%) of our students are mature, most work part time, many are involved in part time study including work based learning, professional updating. Our traditional student body is taken from the East Anglian region and the rest of the world, with 20% of our students coming from a range of international origins. This kind of student profile produces specific development needs among the teaching and support staff. Part of our work in the unit has been to encourage and support those in the wider university who are working to

research these needs and good practices to help address them. Another part of our work is to engage and support innovation, and the embedding of both established and new good practice in learning and teaching, much of which involves finding ways to encourage colleagues to network and share their practice.

The decision was to divide energies and funding into several areas of activity:

1. Learning & Teaching Fellowships
2. Learning & Teaching Research
3. Advisers in the Schools
4. A central programme involving workshops, consultancies and support for Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) Teaching Learning and Assessment (TLA).

Learning & Teaching Fellowships

Three levels of Fellowships have been advertised internally throughout the regional university and have attracted response from across the region and across the different schools. These include L&T Fellowships, Senior and Principal L&T Fellowships.

Principal Teaching Fellows

Currently two colleagues are seconded half time into the Unit and take major change around the wider university. One is developing e-learning for regional delivery of the educational development accredited MA in Learning and Teaching, and the other is leading the new university Learning Technology Taskforce which involves different activities including:

- 1) Working with colleagues from the different schools who are relative e-novices but would like to learn how to 'put a module on the web'.
- 2) Developing MA Learning and Teaching modules to enable staff to further their skills in both the pedagogy and the facilitation of e-learning.

Senior Teaching Fellows

These are in post for three years. Currently five colleagues are involved in a variety of activities working on projects related to the following areas:

- Identifying and Promoting Excellence in Teaching-this involves auditing the peer observation processes in the schools identifying how good practice is recognised and rewarded, and building towards supporting and promoting candidates for the ILT managed National Teaching Fellowships scheme.
- Impact of Curriculum 2000 for APU (this is a sixth form and schools and FE development which involves students undertaking a broader range of subjects to A and A/S level prior to coming to university and so produces different kinds of learners and learning experiences.)
- Extending Open and Distance Learning using the new technologies-this has led to the development of a learning technologies taskforce to take their 'module on line' initiative into all schools, and to develop accredited modules for staff involved in staff development.
- Development of a learning and teaching strategy for the creation and operation of flexible learning environments-this involves scrutinising buildings developments for learning and teaching practices, and also ensuring that e-learning is properly located and resourced.

Working with discipline and department groups and with individuals within these groups has become more of a recognised activity with the advent of relatively small amounts of funding for development activities. Colleagues involved are now often expected to play a part as change agents and to encourage the involvement of those in their learning communities while they themselves are further drawn into the organisation of the university, supported by the learning and teaching unit. Subject based colleagues' allegiance to their discipline base and groups is well established (Becher, 1989, 1994, Squires, 1987). As Kate Morss and Marie Donaghy (*IJAD*, 3:2 November 1998) note:

Disciplines have distinct cultural characteristics (Becher, 1989; Kolb, 1981) affecting, among other things, teaching, curriculum design and staff development (Becher, 1994). It is in recognition of these Cultural practical s differences that staff developers now feel it may be more fruitful to work more closely within disciplines or departments, enabling recognition of subject-related discourse and values (Gibbs, 1996; Jenkins, 1996). Although this is not an entirely new idea and there have been examples of acquired departmental and faculty-based development from the UK, North America and Australia (Gibbs, 1996), it is one that seems to be gaining momentum (p.136).

Fellowships

We also run shorter fellowships which help colleagues buy out some time, deliver at conferences and pay a researcher to support developments and innovations, research into learning and teaching leading to change.

Fellows are expected to undertake substantial work in learning/teaching/assessment and /or learning and teaching research. Some fellowships involve small collaborative teams working together, and several have also costed in researcher support.

- Developing, innovating/problem solving using active research and other models
- Working with the rest of the L&T team in action research formats as an action learning group - fellows meet several times a year for sharing and development work.
- Working with others in relation to needs identification, development, research and facilitation of others' uptake of the development via group and committee work and dissemination of findings.
- Working with others regionally, nationally and internationally
- Publications in approved form and conference presentations
- Those involved in cognate development are encouraged to work together in sub groups in action learning format discussing information and sharing ideas

Fellows are expected to deliver internal workshops and to contribute to the Learning and Teaching Conferences. They are appointed twice a year with March and September starting dates. Most projects last a full year and are awarded up to £5000, and we encourage fellows to put forward group projects for development as this encourages working together and sharing of good practice. We also encourage projects which build on earlier successful projects, but at the same time are constantly looking out for new innovations and initiatives.

The first appointed L&T Fellows (approx.20) worked on project areas including:

- Mentoring
- Learning and Teaching styles and outcomes of International Degree Access students
- Using video to support development of quality teaching
- Developing use of games, role-play, scenarios and related techniques in teaching of History, Politics and so on
- Making a variety of videos by filming English Language at various levels
- Researching Student Feedback systems

For a full list of projects see our web site at www.anglia.ac.uk/ltu/

Support and Development for Fellows

It is important that the fellows are supported in their developments, and that they get the opportunity to share these developments with others round the university as a whole, nationally and then internationally. One, for instance, has travelled to Australia to deliver at the Web CT conference twice so far, funded from the LT Unit. The large shifting fellowships' team is very exciting and dynamic to work with. They not only have their own innovative ideas, experience and projects, but share these with other fellows in organised sessions, and encourage other colleagues to become involved (some of whom then later bid for fellowships).

Bids for fellowships have to be agreed with deans and often are directly in line with a development sought by the school, although many still develop their own innovative ideas which are then judged by a team comprising unit members, the PVC with responsibility for Learning and Teaching and a Dean. We have an initial induction meeting establishing a group dynamic, clarifying processes and sharing ideas and projects. New Fellows then share work with established Fellows in a series of structured support, planning and development sessions. These usually comprise 'What's on top' - reporting of the projects and other school, national or international developments; planning towards our twice yearly conferences at which fellows disseminate and run workshops; and a development session, at which we 'teach', 'train' or 'facilitate' each other, tackling such issues as project management, consultancy, games and simulations, Curriculum 2000 and writing for publication. Fellows are encouraged and expected to disseminate widely i.e. present and publish their work both inside and outside APU, facilitated by writing reports and by individual support. We now run an annual learning and teaching conference in September, and two smaller conferences, one on each main site, in January, the smaller conferences attract colleagues who are on site. Fellows are expected to run workshops give papers run sessions and put up posters of their work at these conferences in order to both let others know what they are doing and to encourage networking more generally.

The aim behind development sessions, individual meetings and the encouragement of teams working together on related projects is to *fully embed* good practice and change by building a 'people culture' and a culture of supported, positive learning and teaching development.

Learning and Teaching Research

Many of the fellowships involve learning and teaching research as an element which ensures that projects are underpinned by research into student learning and the links between

teaching and learning, and that effects are evaluated. Other staff are involved in this research also, and there are small groups of subject related staff involved in learning and teaching research supported by the learning and teaching unit who are not yet part of the fellowships' group. Involvement in such research has acted as a way to bring staff together, motivate them, and keep our learning conversations going about how we can evaluate the ways in which our teaching and curriculum practices do or do not facilitate learning in our diverse student body! Currently there are new small cascaded research rooted staff groups in specific subjects such as social work and languages that have developed from the core groups of those researching into learning and teaching. We are lucky that a small research budget augmented by bits of external funding helps us support a research team (of two part timers) who handle data and run focus groups, and contribute to research meetings and the presentation at conferences, publications and dissemination.

The research is centred around three core groups; Postgraduate learning - with PhD students; International masters students and their tertiary literacy; and the Disciplinary Group (comprising undergraduates in English, Women's Studies, Law and Dip Social Work, History Biology and film studies). The PhD research is in its fifth year, the discipline research is in its fourth year and the international masters' research, its second year.

In each of the three different research projects an action research format is used comprising questionnaires and focus group interviews. In the PhD research, research provides information on the possible dissonance between research-as-learning approaches, research methods chosen and hoped for research outcomes. In the discipline related work we look at students' expectations and preconceptions of learning in a subject, their learning strategies, their learning experiences and their achievement of learning outcomes. This involves first year and third year students and has led to findings which have fed into direct change in curriculum and learning and teaching practices. For example one Law teacher, faced with student who thought Law was mainly about regurgitation of facts, and knowing that her subject demanded problem solving skills, has developed 'mooting' in the first semester of the first year. It is not an expert activity, but the students love it and are learning to solve problems and articulate their arguments from sources.

In each instance of our learning and teaching research activities, the action research is shared with the students, who are full collaborators. Research informs staff understanding of how students learn and how various strategies we pursue can better enable students in their learning.

The first two projects have led to several conference presentations, e.g. at EARLI (European Association for Research in Learning and Instruction) and the ISL (Improving Student Learning) - and fed into publications: *Good Practice Supervising Postgraduate Students* (1999), *Good Practice Working with International Students* (2000), *The Postgraduate Student Handbook* (2001).

Two recently developed research projects also involve students as members of the research team. One focuses on student Retention and has a small grant from SEDA. Another with a very large ESF grant 'Empower' aims to work with women with disadvantaged backgrounds (specifically domestic violence), helping them to overcome barriers to learning and return to both learning and employment.

Advisers

Fellowships and research build a networked culture of learning and teaching development and shared practice. To some extent this unites both the energetic and innovative elements of learning and teaching, the model Graham Gibbs refers to as a more familiar educational development model, with the strategic, involving school strategies, funding, and widespread dissemination and embedding.

One key way of ensuring that the learning and teaching strategy is owned by and the practices arising from it are embedded in the different schools has been to encourage and support the appointment of advisers in each school. Each school has an adviser for learning and teaching development. This role involves co-ordinating, supporting, liaising and encouraging learning and teaching development across their schools and in relation to the rest of the university. Now they are becoming more established in their posts, Advisers are running workshops, supporting colleagues writing their ILT submissions, supporting TLA for QAA visits. Advisers are also supported with development sessions and regular meetings which help build networks and practices of *sharing*.

Advisors' comments

Mary Watkins:

An important part of my role is to support new academic staff by contributing to their induction, either mentoring them or supporting others to do so and by encouraging them to use existing opportunities to reflect on and improve their teaching. Applying for ILT membership, undertaking Peer Review and contributing to the Learning and Teaching Conferences are just three ways of doing this, which apply equally to existing staff.

I have also taken an active part in the Learning and Teaching Unit, contributing to its many research and development activities. The initiatives on e-learning have been of particular help to me in furthering my understanding of the contribution that new technology can make to learning and teaching. I am now busy trying to identify helpful ways of disseminating this.

All in all I have enjoyed my first few months in this new post. It has given me the chance to find out about other divisions within my own school and compare the ways in which their different strengths can complement each other with the other schools in the university. I have learnt a great deal about what other teachers value in their teaching, had some of my own values challenged and been able to consult the relevant literature. I spend quite a bit of time putting people in touch with one another and persuading others of the value of what they are doing and the importance of spreading it around! I believe it has been valuable to free up a staff member in this way to engage in discussions with staff, to explore and evaluate what is exciting and effective about their teaching. We are currently setting up a sub group of the senior management group to manage this more systematically.

Andy Forgan:

My first task in this role was to develop a School L&T strategy and get it approved by the School Management Group. It contained broad aims and a series of shorter-term objectives.

Included in the broad aims was the appointment of a group of people from the departments who would act as co-ordinators and through whom I could work to promote enhancement in Learning and Teaching.

Initiatives that have, with some success, been undertaken include:

- Promoting ILT membership amongst School staff.
- Developing modules to be delivered flexibly.
- Dissemination of good practice through the publication of papers.
- Enhancing the School's Peer observation process.
- Using marking criteria and feedback to students.
- Teaching full and part-time students together on professional courses.
- The development of professional skills in undergraduates.

Reflecting on progress to date I would say that the most important activities are those that help to draw the enhancement of learning to centre stage. Whilst it is generally acknowledged that teaching and assessment are the core activities of the academic staff of the School, there is little evidence of a constructive and coherent drive for continuous improvement in the ways that they may enhance student learning. I believe therefore, that the initiatives that are most important are those which involve groups of colleagues in activities that focus on how their own efforts effectively promote and support appropriate student learning activities.

Susan Hughes :

The Development of the Role and Potential Role Conflict

Two outline 'job descriptions' detailing the main responsibilities and activities of the post were given to prospective applicants. One was the generic university description which covered all advisers in all schools and was produced within the central Learning and Teaching Unit. The second was the more specific description constructed by school management. An outline of the two descriptions is given in the box below.

'Central' Job Description	Business School Job Description
<p>The advisers while having a school based function, will work largely on the interface between central University practices and developments in learning and teaching, and the needs of the School.</p> <p>The role is one of the facilitation of learning and teaching activities and developments with colleagues. Advisers will relate to the School, to the centre i.e. Learning and Teaching Unit, and to the University as a whole.</p> <p>Advisers will be expected not only to be high quality teachers and facilitators of learning themselves but to be concerned</p>	<p>The role requires the postholder to take the lead in the promotion of quality in the development and delivery of the School's curriculum.</p> <p>Tasks and duties include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To lead the Learning and Teaching Task Group - To develop a school learning and teaching strategy - To support school staff in the development and promotion of good teaching and assessment practice. - To set up and maintain a School Learning and Teaching web page and electronic conferencing facility.

<p>with the promotion of learning and teaching within their schools through the following:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To encourage innovative teaching and assessment practices. - To encourage variety and diversity of teaching and assessment practices in relation to student learning needs - To provide recognised leadership in learning and teaching. - To collaborate with other staff in developments in learning and teaching. - To motivate, mentor and coach other staff in relation to learning and teaching and related activities - To contribute to the learning community locally, nationally and internationally. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To gather, develop and disseminate 'Good Practice' documents on learning, teaching and assessment and promote their use amongst academic staff. - To oversee the procedures for monitoring the quality of module delivery. - To maintain and enhance the procedures for peer observation. - To represent the School on appropriate committees and working groups. - To act as a focal point for sources of information on good teaching and assessment practice. - To support and encourage research and publication into Learning and Teaching across the School's academic areas.
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Each Learning and Teaching Adviser is primarily responsible to their direct line manager which is normally the Dean of School. However each adviser is also expected, to some extent, to be responsible to the Learning and Teaching Unit particularly with respect to cross university developments. There is potential here for a certain amount of role ambiguity compounded by unclear lines of responsibility. This could have an adverse effect on the post holder, however, to date this has not caused a problem but has resulted in informal discussions taking place between Advisers as to where they feel their main commitment should lie. The author feels however, that there are occasions when some more direct guidance would be helpful from both central and school management.

One of the main reasons why Advisers were jointly appointed by the central unit and each school was to encourage the sharing of experience and developments across the University and the development of a 'community' of advisers. It also appears that University management feel that Advisers, who are all experienced staff, should have a certain amount of freedom in developing their role to meet the needs of their own academic communities. It would appear that most advisers find this helpful, especially at this stage in the development. The author's experience to date has been to find her 'own way' around the role although this has been assisted by discussions which have taken place with members of the school management team and colleagues, particularly those within the School Learning and Teaching Group, as to their expectations of the adviser's role.

Role Credibility

In order that the individuals appointed as advisers should retain their academic credibility with their colleagues, it is a requirement that all advisers should still undertake a substantial amount of teaching. How can advisers support colleagues if they do not know what is happening in the classroom, lecture hall or laboratory? All the advisers feel this is important but the amount of teaching each adviser undertakes does vary between the schools.

Power and Influence

One issue that has concerned both the author and some of her adviser colleagues is her position with respect to School management. Is the role purely advisory or is it seen as a management role?

Perception of the Role by Others

It could be said that the potential for a certain amount of role ambiguity is heightened by the differing perceptions of the role of advisers by colleagues, both within the academic schools and in other parts of the University. Most of the advisers appear to have stories about some of the activities colleagues expect them to perform or duties they should fulfil. This highlights the need for effective and regular communication between advisers and their colleagues. One common misperception appears to be that the advisers will deal directly with students who are having learning or study skill problems. Colleagues will mention students who are experiencing problems and then expect the adviser to deal with them.

Change Agent

The author perceives her role primarily as being that of a change agent, *“a person who acts as a catalyst and assumes the responsibility for managing change activities”* (Robbins 1998 629-30). The focus of the changes being within the area of learning and teaching. In addition raising the profile of teaching and gaining recognition that it is at least as important as research, within the academic role, is also an objective.

Creativity, taking risks, trying new approaches, are the ways in which developments will take place. The adviser should support these endeavours and develop a thorough understanding of the extent of the diversity within their school or department.

The adviser should be given the opportunity to develop the role to meet the needs of the school and it is vital that advisers gain support and commitment from colleagues, this will involve a more participative approach to change and may take some time. However, advisers are seeking to influence a core feature of their colleagues' professional practice, therefore extensive consultation and discussion are vital if staff are to consider accepting changes and developments. Advisers must also be sensitive to the views and feelings of their colleagues. There will be some colleagues who are more receptive to developments and it is helpful to engage first with these individuals. It is essential that advisers have extensive teaching experience and retain their academic credibility by remaining practising teachers. This does, however put time pressures on the role, therefore advisers need to be able to manage their time effectively. They also need access to sources of power and influence but need to take care with respect to the type of power they decide to use.

Advisors need a support network outside of their own school or department.

These reflections highlight the range of educational development roles and activities of the new breed of educational developers, the advisers. To some extent they now face and deal with role ambiguities and tensions hitherto the experience of central learning teaching/ educational development units.

Conclusion

I strongly believe that a way forward for learning and teaching development in universities, (with APU as the case with which I am most familiar), is to try and build a continuum between the energy, good will and creativity of the relatively autonomous position we used to have as educational developers, and the demands but resourced strengths of the current more strategic role. This might not be easy in the long run, but currently it is producing a wealth of innovative ways of working with colleagues both within APU as an example, and around the sector as a whole. Recent debates (Knight & Wilcox 1998, Hicks 1997, Wright 1999, Knapper 1998) raise issues about tensions and opportunities in the changing roles of staff and educational developers. Wright says:

Knight and Wilcox (1998) contend that 'an educational development approach that only emphasizes work with individual volunteers will' useful fail to meet institutional needs' (p. 97). They suggest that, increasingly, a developer will be judged on his/her ability to work with teams and departments, especially on programme design and curriculum development issues. According to Knight and Wilcox, this trend raises ethical questions, since institutional priorities may run counter to the needs of the individual professor.

Hicks (1997) suggests that while we have not yet witnessed 'the emergence of a species' of roles educational developer, the age of the inaugural' developer has passed (pp. 61-62)... Key issues developers will face include the need to take an entrepreneurial approach to their positions, to act as campus leaders in educational technology innovation, and to play a role in determining the strategic directions of their institutions. (Wright, *IJAD*, 5:1 May 2000, p.20)

Within the APU version of institutional change in educational development, there is now a range of colleagues carrying out versions of the role as Advisors and Principal or Senior Learning and Teaching fellows). A broader range of fellows are initiating and embedding change in their own disciplines and departments, then encouraging further generalisation in other disciplines, departments and round the region.

Graham Gibbs, Trevor Habeshaw and Mantz Yorke's (2000) work evaluating the implementation of HEFCE funded learning and teaching strategies in the UK is ample evidence of the imaginative ways in which educational developers have been making the best use of the funding and the strategic positioning and encouraging of other colleagues to work with them to develop and share good practice. It is hoped that the climate and culture of educational development and learning and teaching in HE will continue to flourish.

This will depend on several factors: the earmarked, identified funding continuing; universities continuing to recognise that supporting learning and teaching is essential to enable them/all of us to help achieve core missions – i.e. recognising that we really *are* in Higher Education to enable and facilitate learning, in a number of ways and as *colleagues* perceive the genuine opportunities to recognise and support learning and teaching development. Most importantly, and in many cases the most difficult to evaluate, successful development strategies in learning and teaching should continue to flourish as *students* appreciate and benefit in their learning from a variety of direct outcomes. These include shared, embedded good practices arising from projects, fellowships, advisory roles, materials

development and the learning and teaching research and other activities we are all differently involved in across the HE sector.

[An earlier, shorter version of this paper appeared in [Educational Developments 1.1](#)]

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