



Learnhigher

**Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning**

**Final evaluation report March 2010**

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## Glossary

ASK: Assignment Survival Kit.

ALDinHE: Association for Learning Development in Higher Education. (The membership association for subscribers to LDHEN).

CETL: Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning. 74 funded centres tasked to "reward excellent teaching practice and to ...increase and deepen its impact across a wider teaching and learning community" (HEFCE).

HEFCE: Higher Education Funding Council for England (which funded the CETL initiative).

LA: Learning Area.

LAC: Learning Area Co-ordinator: the individuals responsible for each of the 20 learning areas in LearnHigher.

LD: Learning Development.

LIPS: Listening and Interpersonal Skills.

LDHEN: Learning Development in Higher Education Network. (A JISCmail list).

SCIPS: Strategies for Creating Inclusive Programmes of Study.

WrAssE: Writing for Assignments E-Library.

## 1.1 Background

LearnHigher is a collaborative CETL involving sixteen English Universities, directed from Liverpool Hope. As the largest of the 74 CETLs it has the overall aim to "reward excellent teaching practice and to increase and deepen its impact across a wider teaching and learning community" (HEFCE). It is concerned with the area of 'learning development' (LD), which it has come to describe in the following way:

'Learning Development' is an emergent and increasingly recognised field of practice in higher education in the UK. Those who identify with the term are principally involved in areas of work focussing on student learning, working directly with students and in a consultative capacity with other HE staff. This work is sometimes referred to as 'learning support' or 'study skills', but most LD practitioners reject the remedial implications that such terms may carry.

The main aim of LD work is the empowerment of students through the enhancement of their academic practices - such as skills for research, communication, self-awareness and critical thinking - in order that they may benefit as fully as possible from their experiences of, and life beyond, higher education.

(Hilsdon, Ridley and Sinfield, 2008)

Across the sixteen universities involved in LearnHigher there are twenty learning development areas, detailed in Table 1, each run by a Learning Area Coordinator (LAC).

TABLE 1 – PARTNER INSTITUTIONS AND LEARNING AREAS

<b>Partner Institution</b>	<b>Learning Area/s</b>
Bradford	1) Group work. 2) Referencing
Bournemouth	Personal development planning
Brighton	Visual practices
Brunel	1) Numeracy, maths and stats. 2) Oral communication
Kent	Assessment
Leeds	Listening and interpersonal skills (LIPS)
Lincoln	Doing research
Liverpool	Understanding organizations
Liverpool Hope (co-ordination role)	Mobile learning (m-learning)
London Met	1) Notemaking. 2) Reading
Manchester	Independent learning/self-directed study
Manchester Met	Information literacy
Nottingham Trent	Academic writing
Plymouth	Critical thinking and reflection
Reading	1) Time management. 2) Report writing.
Worcester	Learning for all (inclusivity)

LearnHigher's website is at [www.learnhigher.ac.uk](http://www.learnhigher.ac.uk) where all the above learning areas are represented. The website provides resources and information for both students and staff. It attracts 6000 visits per month from around the world (Jan 2010) and this is increasing month-on-month.

## **Part 1 Statistical Information**

### **a. Name of CETL**

LearnHigher

### **b. Names of Institutions**

See Table 1, above

### **c. Contact name**

Dr Ged Hall, Liverpool Hope University

### **d. Name of person submitting the self-evaluation**

Professor Paul Trowler, LearnHigher Evaluator and Critical Friend. The report is based on: annual evaluations; comments and input from LACs and the LearnHigher Manager; attendance at LH meetings; email correspondence; review of the LH website and of the LD literature; preliminary data from the LearnHigher-funded 'Lessons Learned' [for Learning Developers] project, reading the relevant literature.

### **e. Start date of CETL**

July 2005

### **f. End date of CETL**

July 2010. Continuation of LearnHigher after that date as part of the *Association for Learning Development in Higher Education* (ALDinHE)

### **g. Lead Directors and dates**

Ged Hall – 1/10/2008 until CETL end.

Previously Jill Armstrong (July 2005 – late 2007) and Michelle Verity (late 2007-October 2008)

### **h. Total amount of award: capital and running**

£4,028,295.98 (running costs of £2.5M, with remainder as capital)

### **i. Use of capital funding**

BOURNEMOUTH: The capital was used to transform an I.T. store within the Library courtyard, into a prestigious light and airy space for students to use on any activity to do with their personal development. Students can book the room through a simple email system, or make use of it if it is empty. It is also used extensively by the Student Union as a venue for their leadership and volunteering award. It has also been a venue for a number of student exhibitions and for clubs and societies. It is a low tech, open and adaptable space that is operating close to capacity during term time (see the response to question 4, below, for more details).

BRADFORD (GROUPWORK AND REFERENCING): Refitting teaching room – this was specially designed

to support innovative teamwork with very flexible furniture, AV and set of laptops.

**BRIGHTON:** Brighton: capital was split between a self-study area on the Eastbourne campus for students to access online study resources, and specialist equipment used to support specific visual learning projects (mainly cameras, visualisers etc) – see m. below

**BRUNEL:** contributed to the creation of a new LearnHigher Centre – a small group teaching space opening into the foyer of the Lecture Centre. The main contribution was to high specification equipment for recording and creating of oral presentations (one of Brunel's Learning Areas is oral communication).

**KENT:** The initial capital was used to set up a LearnHigher teaching room in the Drill Hall Library on the Medway campus. This room has 10 individual PCs plus a teaching PC and projector setup for use in small group teaching and student support. It is also used for staff events.

**LEEDS:** Refurbishment of a Counselling Suite in the School of Healthcare to create a space for students to develop their listening and interpersonal skills in therapeutic situations. Installation of Smart Board Technology in existing student group working rooms. Installation of heating and air-conditioning equipment in student group working rooms. Created self-directed learning space adjacent to Skills Resources.

**LINCOLN:** Provision and equipping of 'LearnHigher Room' within new build. Room intended as 'technological showcase' primarily used for staff development.

**LIVERPOOL HOPE:** Liverpool Hope used its capital funding in conjunction with capital funding from Write Now and the University's own capital investment to build the Gateway Building. This building has social study space, student bookable meeting rooms, seminar rooms, 1:1 consultation rooms and 1:1 quick query pods. The building houses Hope's student focussed support services and as such is central to the student experience.

**LIVERPOOL:** To refurbish a room in the Harold Cohen Library as a learning space for students, both individually and in groups.

**LONDON MET:** The capital spend provided a dedicated teaching, learning & staff development room for LearnHigher/LDU adjacent to an expanded social learning space (come drop-in workshop area) in the Learning Centre at Holloway Road. The adjustments here required the move of the Independent Learning Unit and two student study rooms and we also contributed to the refurbishment of those spaces. The LearnHigher room was decorated to high standard with new tables, chairs and AVA system. Similarly the social learning space was equipped with new chairs, bookcases, cupboards and filing cabinets.

**MANCHESTER:** Furnishing and equipping of two small group-work rooms. One as a computer cluster with 5 computers and an interactive whiteboard; the other equipped with an Access Grid Node.

**MMU:** The capital funding was used to refurbish and re-equip technologically an existing teaching space to create a zoned, wireless, mixed, learning environment. The LearnHigher Suite comprises an eight person meeting room, a formal fifty seat teaching space, a thirty seat meeting/committee room and an informal social learning area with 30 computers. A laptop area provides access to a further 30 machines. Specifically selected furniture and the use of colour coding define the activities appropriate to each of the areas created.

**NOTTINGHAM TRENT:** The capital money was used to develop a Learnhigher room at NTU's Clifton Campus. This is a computer resource room near to the main entrance of the library and is well used by students.

PLYMOUTH: LearnHigher capital funding at the University of Plymouth was pooled with the four Plymouth based CETLs and was used in the construction of a suite of offices including meeting rooms and video conferencing facilities.

READING: Building of independent study space for students in new Student Services building.

WORCESTER: The capital funding was used to refurbish and equip a suite of three offices and a learning space that was used primarily for staff development and project research interviews/meetings.

#### **j. Use of capital-funded facilities in 2010-11**

As a general rule they will continue as dedicated learning development spaces for students and staff. There are some exceptions or additions to this:

BRUNEL: the space will be used mainly for small group academic practice development sessions for staff. Although there will be some continuation of use for student events (see projects below), the creation of a new Student Learning Resource Centre in the library has reduced the need for student use of this space.

WORCESTER: The funding was used to refurbish and equip a suite of three offices and a 'learning space. The offices will continue to be occupied by the former CETL staff. The learning space will continue to be used for small group academic practice development sessions for staff although it has become too small for the size of the full cohorts now involved. At other times it will be available on the general timetable.

#### **k. Average number of persons employed in CETL**

At any one time there was the equivalent of 16 FTE employed across the 16 universities of LearnHigher.

To break this down:

BOURNEMOUTH: In the main, recurrent funding has paid for 0.2 academic related staff over the five years. Funding temporarily paid for the services of a research assistant who worked primarily on updating the PDP learning area on the website. Funding has also paid for travel and other related expenses.

BRADFORD (GROUPWORK): Admin support to release Student Development Co-ordinator – 0.5 appointment for duration of CETL. Also dedicated Research Assistant – 18 month FT (REFERENCING) appointment. One support tutor throughout: variable proportion of time during his role as Effective Learning Officer for one of the University Schools. One support tutor also contracted on consultancy basis.

BRIGHTON: one academic approx 0.4FTE

BRUNEL: This has been variable, with an average of about 1.1 over the life of the CETL. At one time, this was a part-time academic (0.4) related post plus a student bursary. It is currently 0.2 FTE for each of the two LAs. It has been more in the past but the Maths area has recently been funded also by other university funds partly in an attempt to sustain the provision beyond July 2010.

KENT: 1 FT LAC (Academic related position: Curriculum development post was employed). Part time admin support (Clerical post) was supplied at half a day per week for the life of the CETL from existing admin staff. A PT research assistant was employed in 2007/08 for student interviews. This amounted to approximately 30

hours.

LEEDS: **2005-06**: 0.25 FTE Clerical Assistant to cover LAC administrative duties. **2006-07** 0.45 FTE Project Officer with e-learning expertise. **2007-08** 0.45 FTE for 6 months Project Officer with e-learning expertise. **2008-09** 0.45 FTE Research Assistant. **2009-10** 1FTE E-learning support assistant, 0.4 FTE Academic Skills Adviser to cover work of LAC

LINCOLN: Average = 0.4 FTE pa – academic (FT Learning Development Co-ordinator for 1 year + 0.2 Learning and Teaching co-ordinator)

LIVERPOOL HOPE: 0.4 FTE Director (Senior University Manager). 1.0 FTE CETL Manager (Admin). 0.6 FTE CETL Admin. 0.6 FTE Learning Area Coordinator (T&L support). 0.6 FTE Web developer and IT support

LIVERPOOL: 0.5 FTE – academic-related post as Learning Development Officer

LONDON MET: The recurrent funding has been used to provide cover for the LAC's teaching time, it has supported employing a researcher to conduct literature reviews and multimedia and other resource designers to develop new resources and, eventually, the LDU website. It funded staff at the Centre for Academic and Professional Development to embed and disseminate LearnHigher resources to/with all staff through the university's VLE as part of the blended learning strategy.

MANCHESTER: 2.5 FTE. Project officer academic related employed for 1 year. Freelance evaluator employed for 11 days per year for 3 years @ £300 per day. Post-graduate assistants employed on project by project basis approx 100 hours per year for 2 years at £20 per hour. (HR strategy has acted against employing project staff beyond that first year).

MMU: Academic. Approx 0.4 for the life of the CETL, plus payment to students/academic and library staff for specific tasks (sometimes by way of conference funding or use of equipment).

NOTTINGHAM TRENT: Two members of staff have worked at NTU over the life of the CETL located in the Centre for Academic Standards & Quality (a combined QA/ QE unit). Learning Area Co-ordinator. Learning & Teaching Assistant. Both can be considered learning developers engaged in staff development, resource development and a range of student teaching. LearnHigher has funded approximately half of the staffing costs of the Learning & Teaching Assistant and allowed both to attend meetings and conferences.

PLYMOUTH: academic 0.45 academics for the duration of CETL.

READING: 0.76 FTE (research)

WORCESTER; 25% FTE LAC plus some admin cover

## **1. Staff roles after end of HEFCE funding**

All LACs and project manager to continue in full time university role. Exceptions and other details, especially for administrative and research staff, are as follows:

BRADFORD (GROUPWORK): Admin officer redundant. RA went on to do further course. (REFERENCING) One support tutor now retired – continuing to do occasional contract work for LDU. One returning to permanent FT contract as Effective Learning Officer.

BRIGHTON: PT academic returns to full time university role

BRUNEL: Brunel One LAC is retiring – provision for students to be maintained in part by other permanent LD advisers. Second LAC will continue in full-time university role. Attempts are being made to continue the post of the other LAC's assistant within the University's LD service (at 0.6 FTE at least). Two "projects" will continue as embedded events – champions and funding having been identified for them. These are the Maths Cafe, u-Link Cafe, and the Introduction to University Life and Learning pre-sessional programme.

KENT: PT admin support will continue in post.

LEEDS: The Project Officer has been offered a permanent part time post as an e-learning Adviser by the host institution. The e-learning support assistant will be applying for a permanent job within the institution, with more administrative duties. The research assistant is applying for jobs elsewhere. The Academic Skills Adviser is already employed at another local university on a part time basis.

LINCOLN: LD co-ordinator made redundant Feb 10 2010 following re-structure

LIVERPOOL HOPE: Director; permanent post managing a number of student services. CETL Manager has moved to a new role at another HEI. 1 Admin person likely to undertake doctoral study. LAC will be leaving university due to a re-structure in the unit they were seconded from.

LIVERPOOL: LAC will shortly reach retirement age.

MMU: LAC will return to teaching & research

NOTTINGHAM TRENT: Both staff will continue to be employed beyond the CETL funding. They will continue to work in learning development embedding academic writing and other activities into the curriculum

PLYMOUTH – 0.4 academic post. Negotiations are underway for this post to be adopted by the institution. Currently awaiting decision from Chancellery.

READING: Two formerly 0.5 research officer posts are likely (not guaranteed) to become full-time academic – related in July.

### **m. Number of 'spin out' projects funded**

Approximately 32 (see Annexe B for examples and funding)

### **n. Number of peer reviewed outputs published that relate to CETL work – Examples are listed in Annex A.**

One edited book with contributions from all LACS.

Two other Learning Development books from individual LACS.

Approximately 20 journal articles and chapters.  
Approximately 50 non-published peer reviewed outputs.

**o. Number of events held to develop or disseminate work beyond the CETL in the last three years internally; externally.**

Approximately 200, including both internal and external events. Some indicative examples are given in Annexe C.

**p. Volunteer for Peer Review Scheme of CETL Self-Evaluations**

Peter Hartley, Bradford University: [p.hartley@bradford.ac.uk](mailto:p.hartley@bradford.ac.uk)

## Part 2– evaluative reflection

### Question 1

<b>HEFCE Questions</b>	<b>LEARNHIGHER RESPONSES</b>
<p><i>Please reflect on how effective your CETL has been in contributing to the objectives set out for the CETL initiative when it started. Be concise and do not exceed 1,000 words for the whole of the question</i></p>	
<p>i. To reward practice that demonstrates excellent learning outcomes for students.</p>	<p>i. LearnHigher funds have been used to reward examples of innovative approaches that improve learning, for example innovation in <b>assessment</b>. Staff have been funded, resources developed and shared with staff within and across institutions, making their work more rewarding. Networking opportunities have been facilitated. The LearnHigher third annual evaluation report, 2008, gives examples of case studies from the CETL which exemplify this.</p>
<p>ii. To enable practitioners to lead and embed change by implementing approaches that address the diversity of learners’ needs, the requirements of different learning contexts, the possibilities for innovation and the expectations of employers and others concerned with the quality of student learning.</p>	<p>ii. One important role of the Learning Development function in universities is to enable diverse learners to achieve their maximum potential. LearnHigher as a CETL has facilitated a combined approach to this, being stronger than the sum of its individual parts. Thus learners for whom English is a second language or those returning to study can draw on a range of resources developed and made available by LearnHigher, as can the staff faced with the challenges to teaching and learning that diversity brings. Students, client departments and employers have been consulted and provision developed in response, for example with numeracy test preparation for PGCE students and short workshops for return to university programme for mature learners (<b>MSN Learning Area</b>). The LH outputs <i>Making Group-work work</i> and the <i>Resources for Tutors Delivering Student Workshops (GroupWork)</i>, each resulting from collaborative efforts of LH partners, are clear examples of resources that enable HE practitioners to tap into LH expertise with regard to Learning Development and devise their own innovative practice within the context of their specific learning environment.</p>
<p>iii. To enable institutions to support and develop practice that encourages deeper understanding across the</p>	<p>iii. Examples of effective practice have been shared between institutions, and research has been conducted and published to establish what works best. Examples include the <b>Maths Cafe</b> which addresses students need at the point of that need.</p>

<p>sector of ways of addressing students' learning effectively.</p> <p>iv. To recognize and give greater prominence to clusters of excellence that are capable of influencing practice and raising the profile of teaching excellence within and beyond their institutions.</p> <p>v. To demonstrate collaboration and sharing of good practice and so enhance the standard of teaching and effective learning throughout the sector.</p>	<p>Workshops available to delegates from all institutions have enabled cross-sector dissemination to take place.</p> <p>iv. Clustering of expertise in Learning Development was the key rationale for the development of LearnHigher. Regional clusters developed within the cluster of 20 LACs, and these proved effective in fostering collaborative work more locally.</p> <p>v. LearnHigher is by its nature a collaborative CETL. Within that though there has been substantial networking. For example Kent has worked collaboratively with the University of Reading and Staffordshire University to develop the <b>Assignment Survival Kit</b> for students. Kent has also worked with the University College of Falmouth and Brighton University to create assessment resources for visual forms of assessment. Other research collaborations were undertaken between London Met, Nottingham Trent and Manchester Met to develop online resources, case studies and conference presentations. There are many other examples. LearnHigher coordinators have given keynote speeches (for example at the <b>Irish Maths Support Network Conference in Dublin</b>) and offered conferences and development events for the whole sector.</p> <p>The collaborations have also led to successful external bids, e.g. the HERE project led by Nottingham Trent, and many are planning beyond the lifetime of the CETL, e.g. the plans to develop a mobile version of the Making Groupwork Work resource.</p> <p>At one of the partner institutions the clustering of the 2 CETLs in place there with other student services has produced a critical mass to raise the visibility of learning development with students. Co-locating the services with study space and study resources has also stimulated this process. The clustering has also raised the profile of these services with academic staff, who now much more routinely seek help rather than the help having to be marketed towards them.</p> <p>The CETL has enabled ALDinHE to have greater reach, and vice versa.</p>
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vi. To raise student awareness of effectiveness in teaching and learning in order to inform student choice and maximize student performance.	vi. The LearnHigher website is probably the best example of this. A survey-based evaluation of student perceptions of the website was conducted and revealed high levels of satisfaction, with only issues of navigability being raised consistently as areas for improvement. These have been addressed by a fundamental redesign in the final year of LearnHigher's life. In the early years simply populating the site was the key priority.
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## Question 2.

*Please set out the aims and objectives specific to your CETL at the start; and for each one reflect how well these have been achieved. Be concise and do not exceed 1,000 words for the whole of the question*

**TABLE 2. LEARNHIGHER AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

<b>Aims</b>	<b>Objectives</b>
<b>Building mechanisms for sharing excellent materials and resources</b>	Share existing good materials, identify or develop new learning development materials and resources for learners and staff. Surface and share our knowledge about the effective use of resources in supporting learning
<b>Building capacity in the LearnHigher Network</b>	Build practitioner capacity across the LearnHigher network in terms of broadening expertise and staff skills.
<b>Creating institutional impact</b>	Develop the use of the LearnHigher spaces in new ways that promote learning development. Raise the profile of LearnHigher work within the HEIs for greater institutional impact.
<b>Evaluation</b>	Develop effective monitoring strategies for use of the resources within learning development
<b>Developing a research base</b>	Building a research community and portfolio of evidence-based research that helps develop our understanding of effective strategies for supporting learners into new areas of higher education study.
<b>Dissemination</b>	Raise awareness of LearnHigher CETL. Engaging others in LearnHigher sub-networks that are creating excellent materials, undertaking research or involved in embedding in their own institutions.

They have been fully achieved largely due to:

1. A well-conceived plan for the CETL which identified the needs of the sector which became articulated in its aims and envisioned how a large collaborative enterprise of this nature might achieve them through combining and augmenting the individual efforts already happening in the 16 partner institutions.
2. A group of committed, hard-working and highly collaborative staff who relished the opportunity this funding provided to enhance their work to the benefit of students' learning.
3. A strong awareness of the dangers of entropy in such a large and complex organization facing external pressures, with measures taken to ensure sustained effort and strength of purpose through professional leadership and administration at Liverpool Hope combined with a collegial, dispersed approach to responsibility.

The aims and objectives have been achieved through the following broad categories of activity, with non-exhaustive exemplars:

### **Guides for students and staff**

Links to relevant websites and resources, sometimes annotated. Placed on LearnHigher website (Several learning areas)

Guides and tips, survival kits, toolkits placed on LearnHigher website (assessment, critical thinking, learning for all, LIPS, reading, notemaking, time management, report writing, visual practices, )

### **Resource development**

Electronic resources, eg WrAssE (<http://www.learningdevelopment.plymouth.ac.uk/wrasse/>) [last accessed 13.3.10], LIPS, reading, notemaking, visual practices, groupwork, m-learning, PDP.

Literature reviews (LIPS and several others)

Materials development for delivery by others (time management, report writing, understanding organizations, notemaking, group work, LIPS and others)

Expand LearnHigher space use (assessment, PDP [second room on another campus] and several others)

Award-winning resources: Resources on group work and delivering student workshops were top-three winners for the Jorum Learning & Teaching Competition in 2009 - the *Making Groupwork Work* resource for students and staff won both the Jorum award for Learning and Teaching and the ALT/Epigeum award for the best use of video.

SCIPS (UK) has been highly successful in the sector as indicated by its high usage. SCIPS, Google page ranked 6/10, continues to average over one million requests for pages per annum and is used 24/7 throughout the year. Of those who visit SCIPS via Google, 78% bookmark the site.

The Referencing website has seen similar success. In the 30 months the site has been fully operational it has attracted a total of 8,240 visitors (around 270 a month).

### **Face to face engagement**

Workshop sessions for students (assessment, information literacy, time management, report writing, groupwork, academic writing, oral communication)

Extended resource for student support (maths, stats and numeracy – the 'Maths Cafe' and others, often using LearnHigher spaces)

Workshop sessions for staff (assessment, critical thinking, learning for all, LIPS, reading, notemaking, time management, report writing, visual practices, groupwork, academic writing. M-learning delivered a high-profile and successful m-posium hosted by Manchester Metropolitan University)

Conference presentations (assessment, critical thinking, , doing research, learning for all, LIPS, time management, report writing, visual practices)

Organizing conference (assessment, LIPS, reading, notemaking, visual practices)

Networking to share knowledge (most learning areas)

### **Institutional engagement**

Manage enhancement theme in own institution (assessment, doing research)

Fund relevant work by staff (assessment, reading, notemaking, doing research [LearnHigher Award])

Curriculum development (PDP, doing research [influenced new appointment], reading, notemaking, time management, report writing, visual practices, 'Collect this' module development almost complete - information literacy and others)

Further development of connections across host institutions (groupwork, academic writing and others)

### **Increases in knowledge and understanding**

Evaluate use of LearnHigher resources and its activities (assessment, independent learning, LIPS, time management, report writing, information literacy)

Audit and evaluate other resources and activities (learning for all, visual practices)

Research and meta-research, academic publications (LIPS, information literacy, reading, notemaking, referencing (the 'Students' perceptions of referencing' project). Most LACs involved in Palgrave book *Learning Development in Higher Education: Hartley et al, 2010.* )

One very significant development in terms of this category has been the overview of LearnHigher research completed this year, published as Shahabudin 2009a:

Kim Shahabudin at Reading University compiled an overview of LearnHigher research conducted between 2005 and 2008 by collating and organising evidence from the research of individual LearnHigher partners (Shahabudin, 2009b). The aim was “to locate and expand on key insights, innovative research and areas that may merit closer investigation in the final stages of the CETL and beyond.” (p 4). LearnHigher partners' research findings and issues associated with them are reviewed under the following headings:

- student needs, preferences and practices
- effectiveness of resources and interventions
- the use of learning spaces
- the role of learning developers
- interactions between learning developers and subject academics

This is a valuable resource for learning developers and others. It offers a guide to the research that has been conducted by LearnHigher and indicates other fruitful avenues for pedagogical research in the area of Learning Development. The original documents upon which this overview was based are available at: (original documents are available at: <http://www.learnhigher.ac.uk/Main-Content/LearnHigher-Contents/researchreports.htm>). [last accessed 12.2.10)

### **Special project development**

LearnHigher Development Funding of £60,000 was provided to fund a call for development projects of up to £4,000 each. A key aim of this initiative was to extend the activities of LearnHigher across a wider community of learning developers. In total 29 projects were received from members of the Learning Development in Higher Education Network, these were peer reviewed and 13 were funded.

### Question 3

*Please add any objectives that emerged as the CETL developed, and reflect on these as for question 2 (500 words maximum).*

Individual learning areas developed their own content and context specific objectives within the broad framework of LH aims and objectives. Some overarching additional aims and objectives that developed organically are as follows:

1. To strengthen and then extend the community of practice of Learning Developers in the UK HE system and beyond for the benefit of student learning.
2. To develop research into student transition into higher education. This is particularly important as learning in FE is very different to HE and has influenced thinking about the preparedness of students to engage with generic learning resources developed by LearnHigher.
3. The development of collaborative ventures between learning areas. This has had a profound impact on how LH as a community will take their work forward post-funding.

### Question 4

*Irrespective of your answers to questions 2 and 3 above, please reflect on, and draw out the achievements and benefits of the CETL (1000 words maximum) (Think about different audiences, types of output, impact internal and externally, on professional / staff development, on student learning, work over an extended period, use of money for facilities development etc.)*

1. The creation of innovative and well-used **learning spaces**, often equipped with state-of-the-art display equipment and movable furniture which facilitates the use of small-group learning (in 2002/3 the concept of social learning spaces was in infancy so LH was breaking new ground in this). It was often a huge task to persuade some institutions to commit prime space for un-timetabled student-managed use. Since then, many institutions have developed the concept of social learning spaces in sophisticated ways. The response to question 1, above (use of capital funding) illustrates the significance and range of these spaces. For example, at Bradford, the LearnHigher room has been used for a wide range of teaching and workshops with very positive evaluations from students and staff. It has been used by the University's Estates department and some other national projects as a benchmark for new learning spaces. At Bournemouth the University Library won "Outstanding Library Team" Award at the Times Higher Education awards commenting: "We continue to develop an active and flexible learning environment relevant to all students and staff. These developments respond to the curriculum and to individual learning styles as well as to our students' preferences to work in both virtual and real spaces." This demonstrates an on-going commitment to thinking how students work particularly collaboratively in social learning environments.
2. The creation of easily accessible sets of **materials**, located at or referenced from the LearnHigher website. Kent's *Guide to Academic Practice* for students (part of the *Academic Integrity* website), *ASK* (the *Assignment Survival Kit*, also on that website and the LearnHigher one), *The Internet Detective*, *Analyse This*, *Collect This* and *SCIPS* are all examples of very many significant resources developed. Requests to re-use resources have come from within the UK and beyond. Year planners have now been taken up and adapted by University of Vienna, contributing to the LH aim of developing an international reputation as a Centre of Excellence for learning development. The Year planners have also been adopted by a growing number of UK HEIs outside the LearnHigher CETL including Universities of Surrey, Glamorgan, and Aston. There have been requests to reuse materials from resource developers in HE (including UK and international website authors, and book authors) and workplace trainers. Requests have also come from within the LD community and outside of it. However, because the

resources are published under Creative Commons we cannot be certain that they have only ‘transferred’ to others who have requested usage because it is probable that they are being extensively transferred judging by the usage stats for the website and the locations across the globe that these ‘hits’ arise from.

3. Increased **awareness among academic staff** of developments in the different learning areas.
4. Changes to **academic staff practices** to the benefit of students’ ability to benefit
5. Increasing **students’ ability to benefit** from the higher education experience, and beyond it.
6. Increased awareness of policy-makers and senior managers of the significance of Learning Development as a function and its subsequent inclusion in the **decision-making processes** of HEIs
7. Building a Learning Development **professional community**, with a developing consensus over approaches to learning development and to engagement practices vis-a-vis staff, students and institutional structures and processes.
8. Contributing to a developing body of **effective theory, practices and understandings around Learning Development** through the publication of an edited book from LearnHigher Partners, publication of articles in a new Learning Development journal and conference presentations about learning development as a function.

## Question 5

*Have there been any disappointments in how the CETL has developed/what it has achieved. What are they, why did they happen? (600 words maximum)*

1. Where the Learning Development function in an institution was carried out by a single individual, or where that function was institutionally marginalised in terms of physical location and/or exclusion from decision-making processes and information dissemination internally this severely hindered their ability to make a difference. Though mitigated by participation in the LearnHigher network this phenomenon of structured institutional peripheralism had deleterious effects for a number of the LearnHigher partners.
2. Where Learning Development lacked a champion in a strategic and powerful location within the host institution it was difficult to move forward in some cases.
3. There were flaws in the funding model which led to a lack of flexibility, for example the preponderance of capital over recurrent funding.
4. The whole CETL system did not always draw on the potential of synergies across it. It was not really a ‘system’ or ‘network’ at all. There were however useful links from LearnHigher to some other specific CETLs, for example the WriteNow CETL. More could have been made from the combined forces of the whole CETL network, to the benefit of all of them. This point is developed further below (question 9).
5. LearnHigher was excellent at producing new, innovative resources. However the constant awareness of the 5-year funding horizon meant that in some cases there was insufficient time to focus on helping students make use of what was already available, or to address fully the consolidation and full exploitation of resources it had developed.
6. The LearnHigher CETL faced early challenges in developing engagement both vertically (within host institutions) and horizontally (across the sector). In addressing these the LACs had to find effective ways to engage others in using their findings on good practice, to develop active engagement strategies and to ensure that their research is both applicable and relevant to others. They were successful in doing this. Sharing with other Learning Developers this experience and knowledge about addressing issues around engagement represents a further challenge for the future, but LearnHigher, in its new incarnation as part of ALDinHE is well positioned to do this.
7. There was some debate about the scope and range of the Learning Areas which constitute LH. Some viewed them as an uncomfortable mix of concepts and applications while for others the range and diversity provided an opportunity for experimentation as well as a more inclusive and student-oriented structure with a focus on student learning as opposed to particular specialisms.

8. There was sometimes a tension between the need for professional project management, directed from the centre and the intention to be collegial, collaborative and democratic, with mutual responsibility for conduct lying in the Learning Areas and with peers. Too much emphasis on the first could have led to over-direction and alienation of the LACs, too much on the latter to an individualistic, uncoordinated approach. The setting up of the regional clusters helped to support the latter project while retaining focus on the mission of LH. It is a tribute to LH that the partnership model worked as well as it did given the range of institutions involved, the individual differences of the partners and the highly distributed organisation. There is absolutely no doubt that for Learning Development the network structure of LearnHigher was the right one to adopt.
9. It is disappointing that, even by 2010 it is still necessary to defend the cause of learning development and have strong advocates for it. The danger is that new funding models will effectively promote the need for economy and speed of delivery rather than effectiveness in learning, with little scope for pastoral, personal or academic support. In an ideal world those with professional knowledge of learning development should be even more in demand in order to support student diversity, work with academics, and use their professional understandings to inform institutional practice. The development of the ALDinHE professional qualification may help to address this.

## Question 6

*Please reflect on the difficult and easier aspects of getting the CETL going and of getting your messages across. For example: Has action/change followed; where and why did you meet success or resistance. What worked, how did you discover this, how do you know it worked? (1000 words maximum)*

This varied according to institutional context of the partner Learning Areas. Where LearnHigher's aims were aligned with institutional concerns and strategies there tended to be management buy-in and easy engagement with institutional structures and processes. Where alignment was absent this was not the case. The same applies to the issue of institutional peripherality, mentioned above. The literature in a variety of areas confirms our stress on the significance of institution in this respect (for example Clouder, Oliver and Tate, 2008)

To illustrate that through a positive example: at one host university the recognition of the importance of Learning Development in the overall strategy of the University and its role in promoting excellence in teaching and learning has been underscored by the creation of a new affiliation of previously disparate departments within the University structure. The Academic Development Unit, (ADU) reporting directly to the DVC with academic responsibility, now brings together the Learner Development Unit and the Teaching Quality Enhancement Group (TQEG, which includes the University's educational developers and learning technologists). In combination these units will identify best practice within and beyond the institution and help to drive and support innovation designed to improve and update teaching and learning practice to ensure the learning environment is appropriate considering contemporary HE developments. The Heads of LDU and TQEG have been closely involved with the LH project, the success of which has undoubtedly influenced the strategy developments that have led to this re-structuring.

What worked well in getting the message across, and stimulating engagement in host institutions, was the clear demonstration of the positive effects of learning development. One way in which this was done was through the development of a number of case studies and their publication as part of the third annual evaluation report, 2008. These explained the innovations described and showed how they worked to impact on students' ability to benefit from HE.

The original vision of the CETL as a collaborative network proved to be the right one. It created a whole which was greater than the sum of its parts and which allowed Learning Developers who sometimes operated in

difficult institutional contexts to bring to bear the broader support of the CETL in numerous different ways. For a sometimes institutionally beleaguered professional role such as Learning Development the network model of LearnHigher itself proved an effective one in the enhancement of students' ability to benefit. Had the whole CETL framework similarly been a system or network it too might have been more effective, as noted above.

The learning areas worked best where there was a team approach, it was difficult for individuals working very much alone within their institutions particularly in a context of rapid change.

We saw that when the learning areas aligned with institutional policy things worked well, as noted above. Yet there was always a risk that if institutional policy shifted it would endanger the Learning Development function. During the lifetime of the CETL, this did sometimes happen. For example from a highly visible institutional focus on the one particular Learning Area in the early part of the CETL at one host institution, that area gradually lost its visibility as policy priorities changed. This necessitated a change in approach by the LAC, and probably involved some missed opportunities.

The development of the website has caused considerable work which, given greater clarity of vision earlier in the life of the CETL, might have been reduced. However such early clarity was almost impossible to achieve given the developing character over time of a large and complex project such as this one.

## Question 7

*Has your CETL adopted/used/been based around any specific theories, e.g. of change, or of student learning? If so, what, how have these underpinned your work, have they been useful? (1000 words maximum)*

Because of the inclusive nature of LearnHigher's incorporation of a large number of Learning Development areas a constellation of congruent theories have been deployed to inform practice.

First, individual learning areas bring to bear theory specific to that area. For example **literacy theory** is used in the *Academic Writing* learning area (Nottingham Trent) while *Learning for All* (Worcester) draws on a **social model of disability**. This substantive theory has been important in helping Learning Developers and academic teachers to unpick underlying causes of blockages to learning and to go beyond received wisdom which has sometimes driven practice into unhelpful areas. Both literacy theory and the social model of disability take the spotlight away from simply the student and focus it as well on context and presage. With a change of focus in explanatory propositions comes a range of implications for practices and for the development of materials to assist in teaching and learning. The following quote exemplifies this:

An inclusive approach to learning and teaching avoids a viewpoint which locates difficulty or deficit within the student and focuses instead on the capacity of the university to understand and respond to individual learners' requirements. It moves away from labelling students towards creating an appropriate educational environment. By 'appropriate', we mean a learning environment where learning, assessment and the organisation's practices have been redesigned and/or adapted to become more flexible in order to meet the learners' needs; for example, introducing new content to courses, adapting access or changing delivery styles. This approach is quite different from offering courses and then giving students with difficulties some additional human or physical aids to enable them to participate.

<http://www.learnhigher.ac.uk/learningareas/learningforall/home.htm> [last accessed 2.3.10]

Second, a suite of theories of teaching and learning has been applied by all learning areas. Thus **constructivist theories of learning** have underpinned most of the materials development across the learning areas and have impelled a push towards interactivity in resource design has been a driving imperative, involving student engagement with materials and leaving space for students and tutors to work with and on materials in a way which is relevant to them. Very specific applications of constructivist and related theories of teaching and learning have been developed in Hartley et al (2005) and been drawn on by LearnHigher in establishing their practices (Prof Peter Hartley is a LAC). Thus for example the Learning Combination Lock recommends a systematic process to enable educators to consider and choose between a large menu of options available to assist in enhancing learning. Concept mapping is explored as a method, rooted in constructivist theory, which provides a strategy to foster higher-order learning and cognition, encouraging students to be analytical rather than simply descriptive (what is usually termed 'deep' rather the 'surface' learning). So the *Visual Practices* Learning Area at Brighton has developed materials applying this idea (see for example <http://staffcentral.brighton.ac.uk/learnhigher/studentresourcepage.html> [last accessed 13.3.10]).

Finally, in relation to issues of change and the enhancement of student learning, two theories in particular have been applied: **action research theory** (used for example in developing an evidence base for LD research and development) and a **social practice theory of change**. The latter has been deployed in considering issues of engagement, embedding and implementation for sustainability. Partly as a result of the annual evaluation process, LACs have thought in terms of the social practices embedded in their host institutions, and beyond, and have together developed engagement strategies to help practitioners and managers there to surface, reflect on and, where appropriate, change these practices. This approach to change has been elaborated on, for example, in Bamber, Trowler, Saunders and Knight (2009).

## Question 8

*Reflecting on the last five years what other important messages are there that you want to convey about your CETL - its successes, difficulties, impact etc. (1000 words maximum)*

1. The power and strength of collaborative partnerships such as this one in effecting change should not be underestimated. Within that the smaller sub-groupings (organized regionally in this case) worked very well in providing a safe space for critical evaluation of each others' work and for rehearsal of ideas. The smaller size of these permitted good interaction and engagement for everyone: see Kim Shahabudin's 2009b paper "Reaping the fruits of collaboration".
2. Linkages with cognate areas and organizations (in this case the LDHEN network and the annual symposium) can provide a natural dissemination route, for example of funding opportunities or for publicity, by building on what already exists. The scope, range, expertise, and generosity of the wider LD network that the CETL grew out of was a very significant aspect of the success of the LearnHigher CETL
3. New developments in knowledge and understanding have been achieved, particularly in relation to how and why students use resources and what peers constitute as "excellence" in learning resources.
4. Where LearnHigher has been integrated into decision-making structures there have been genuine advances in terms of curriculum change, strategic direction and even in the responsibilities of senior posts and even the creation of new posts to take forward this area of work. At one institution a Dean of Students post has been created which has university-wide overview of curriculum developments. The Dean will also manage all student-focussed support services and so help to integrate them and give them common strategic direction. This will tie Learning Development into the curriculum more intimately. The important message here is about engagement with initiatives such as the CETL with already-existing decision-making architectures in order to achieve real impact and sustainability, even after the

end of the project.

## Question 9

*Reflecting on the last five years what important messages are there that you want to convey about the experience of being part of a wider 'movement'/experience of other CETLs. (600 words maximum)*

The CETL innovation was founded on the idea of promoting 'beacons' of good practice as an effective means of promoting change in learning and teaching in higher education. This has had valuable effects; the LearnHigher experience is that even the relatively modest funding received by each learning area has delivered a level of autonomy within their HEI and built opportunities for innovation and creativity that would not have been present otherwise. Capital funding has also raised the profile of learning development activity through visible and respected learning spaces in particular. LACs have been able to create high profile spaces for learning development activities raising awareness amongst students and staff.

For the partners in the CETL the experience of being within LearnHigher has been a positive one. Some of their comments follow:

"Getting the CETL was one of the great achievements of my recent career. It gave me status and visibility in the institution and gave me a voice on university committees. I am very proud to have been a founder member of it and proud of its achievements.

"Capital funding ensured high visibility of LearnHigher through prestigious, centrally located and badged social learning space for students."

"It has been a fantastic opportunity to develop shared interests with other partners which has culminated in substantial funded projects."

"As a collective I have been impressed at the spirit, generosity and compassion of all the partners in good times and bad."

"Working with this CETL has changed lives, revitalised individuals and elements of their organisations and left a legacy of some excellent resources and teaching spaces. From my perspective it was a very brave and forward thinking initiative that has created even more change and enhancement than it originally set out to do. Oh, and the collaborative process was a great success too!"

"Our CETL LA at [my HEI] has transformed my work, our departments' perception by the rest of [the institution], student thinking about learning and how to undertake it, staff attitudes to teaching and research, administrative staff's knowledge of what [our LA] is and the status of our department by the rest of the professional community. It has really been fantastic and created a real change in activities and perceptions."

"From an individual institutional point of view, however, it's worth saying that LH activity has supported a growing awareness within the institution that learning and skills development in students is an area they need to take more seriously and support better. An approved Institutional Strategy on Learning and Study Skills now exists...and a student-facing website which makes heavy use of LH materials. Learning development is becoming a key part of educational development work with staff around curriculum review."

“Involvement in LH has enabled us to considerably expand our range of working contacts, not least simply because we have had sufficient staffing to go beyond ‘firefighting’. In particular, it has facilitated more contacts with senior figures in the institution, including Pro-Vice Chancellors, leaders of Directorates and Faculty Directors of Teaching and Learning.”

“Involvement in the CETL has raised the profile of LD at [xxx institution]. It has enabled the team to develop its profile and achieve representation on influential university bodies. CETL funding has made a number of projects possible and supported LD team members’ attendance at conferences. As a result of LearnHigher, LD team members have been able to demonstrate that their work represents a significant field of practice, of relevance to the whole HE sector, and countering the view that we are a ‘remedial’ service.”

However, question 9 is predominantly about being part of a wider ‘movement’ of CETLs, and here the response is more muted. As noted elsewhere in this report (question 5), there has been ad hoc collaboration with other individual CETLs and this has been valuable. However the potential synergies of the CETL movement were never fully realized. We see this as partly a result of the unsystematic selection of topics covered by the 74 CETLs (each application was taken on its merits rather than being seen as part of a larger scheme: Gosling and Hannan, 2007) and partly because there was no central direction facilitating synergies between them (in contrast, for example, to what happened with the LTSN before incorporation into the HEA).

## Question 10

*Please reflect on work emerging from your CETL that has been ‘transferable’, i.e. useable beyond the home audience for which it was originally developed. (You may wish to comment in terms of materials produced, a community created, understandings that CETL work has illuminated and which are useful to others, etc) (1000 words maximum) It would be useful to hear ‘messages’ and lessons learnt that you would like to continue to be disseminated.*

1. Many learning areas (for example LIPS) have learned to make online resources more visual, more dynamic and more interactive - moving away from the pre-CETL days where learning development resources were essentially passive: pages of web links leading to text based resources. LH has progressively moved towards a Web 2.0 approach to disseminating our work and helping students, and now emphasise the possibility for academic teachers and their students in different locales to engage and interact with with resources, reshaping them as necessary.
2. The funding for the CETL has enabled the LD function to move from a reactive ‘firefighting’ mode to a strategic, proactive and interactive mode which can properly diagnose and analyse strategic needs and establish the most effective way of addressing them. Where LearnHigher has worked best it has been able to integrate with the decision-making architecture of host institutions and have serious input into thinking and policy around enhancing students’ ability to learn (as some of the quotes above illustrate).
3. Perhaps what the CETL experience taught most firmly is that ‘learning development’ must be championed. Not just through the ‘individual innovators’ (Hannan & Silver, 2000) working from the ground up, but through those with power and influence near the top. Whether champions promote learning development as a specialist set of practices that complement teaching and learning, or whether it is embedded as an integral part of teaching and learning throughout course structures and content, its goals are an important aspect of the student experience and requires sufficient recognition.
4. The challenge of managing a large, multi-institutional and multi-disciplinary project such as this one has led to the development of sophisticated project-management skills which are certainly transferable to

other contexts. As noted in several annual reports, the dangers of entropy in such a complex project are obvious, yet a combination of professional project management, the dynamism created by the enthusiasm and professionalism of the LACs and the learned ability to steer an appropriate course between direction from the centre and developments generated within the network will be of lasting value.

## Question 11

*How will the work and achievements of your CETL continue after HEFCE funding ends (1000 words maximum)? Please reflect on how far you think CETL work has become embedded in your institution or discipline and indicate if any structures have been put in place to ensure its legacy is not lost (1000 words maximum)*

1. LearnHigher will merge with ALDinHE after the end of its funding in July 2010, and in the short term at least it will retain a distinctive character within ALDinHE. The two organizations set about making these arrangements two years before the end of funding, and did so in a consensual but efficient way, determining the best course of action and making clear arrangements for a smooth transition.
2. As the LearnHigher CETL comes to an end, an edited book including contributions from all learning areas is to be published by Palgrave, there will be a joint ALDinHE/LH conference and a series of other events will ensure that its new incarnation within ALDinHE will be launched with a flourish.
3. Meanwhile a new journal for Learning Developers, *Journal of Learning Development in Higher Education* (<http://www.aldinhe.ac.uk/ojs/index.php?journal=jldhe>) published its first number in February 2009. This is another significant marker of a likely phase change in learning development practice, in the UK and across the world.
4. The move of the LH brand and its ethos of sharing and peer review into ALDinHE should provide a sound basis for continued collaboration and extending the number of institutions involved in that collaboration and the range of LAs included. However, the time to commit to this will be dependent on individual LD staff and their institutional context.
5. The research and development work of LearnHigher and its experience as a collaborative network has already been shared (eg Shahabudin, 2009b) and the CETL has funded a 'Lessons Learned' project to identify the broader lessons for Learning Developers and institutions of the work of the partners in this CETL.

## Question 12

*Do you think there are any emerging aspects of your CETL activity that will have greater importance in the future? (600 words maximum)*

Five years was an adequate length of time to address and develop a substantial area of work, though as noted above was perhaps insufficient to ensure full exploitation of the potential for dissemination and application more widely. LH has both built on pre-CETL work together with networks in the Learning Development area and has served to create a springboard for the future within ALDinHE. Some of the developing trajectories in the work of LearnHigher which will inform the continued work of ALDinHE are as follows:

- A more themed approach to projects and materials development
- A greater emphasis on technology and sciences areas of student learning (there is an emphasis on these

areas, and maths in the LearnHigher-funded projects which are underway: see the response to question 2, above: ‘special project development’).

- The need to establish a professional qualification and continuing professional development for Learning Developers in order to achieve greater recognition for this area of higher education professional practice. LearnHigher has helped move a long way in establishing recognition for Learning Development and Learning Developers.
- Continuing and developing collaborative work with other organizations, such as SEDA.
- Continuing and building on the materials development work that LearnHigher has been so successful at, with a renewed focus on ensuring fullest exploitation of that work by institutions, academic teachers and students in the UK and beyond.

## Question 13

*Any other comments (600 words maximum)*

As the work of LearnHigher concerns the enhancement of students’ ability to learn, it is perhaps most appropriate to end on comments about its work from some of them:

“It [the module on groupwork] was really useful. Well, at the time [as a first year] I would say I couldn’t really see the point but you look back and you can see how you thought then, and I’ve got so many more transferable skills, I’m more confident, so yeah, it’s really good. I think it’s far better than an academic module.”

“I think having this module where you sit down and find out what you’re like as a learner, and what motivates you, and all that stuff is really useful. Well, at the time again, I didn’t consider it, but you need something to introduce you to the idea of being a student. I don’t think it’s wise to just throw people into uni.”

“Communication and self-awareness [were enhanced] in a lot of ways – we did essay-writing workshops and all sorts of things. I think I’m better at communicating and I’m more self-aware as well....I’ve become aware of how I’m saying [things] and my communication is tailored in that way. I do think that, because university essays are again, as you’ve reached academic level, where there’s a good chance you’ve not done anything like that before coming to uni, the essay-writing workshop things were... a good introduction to the university, and essay writing.”

“I have just been looking through some of the resources and was really impressed, [I] think some of the resources could be really helpful. I am going to try to work my way through a couple a week and hopefully will get some useful information. [I was] especially impressed with the time management ones because this is my biggest problem so will be gathering as much advice as possible from this topic.”

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## Annexe A: Peer Reviewed Outputs

### I. Peer Reviewed Books From LearnHigher CETL

- Hartley, P and Dawson M (2010) *Success in Groupwork*, Palgrave Macmillan
- Hartley, P, Hilsdon, J., Keenan, C. Sinfield, S. and Verity, M., (Eds) (2010) *Learning Development in Higher Education*. London: Palgrave.
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### II. Peer Reviewed Articles and Chapters From LearnHigher CETL (examples)

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### III. Peer Reviewed Outputs other than publications (examples)

#### KENT:

Assignment Survival Kit web resource published on Kent site with plans to move a copy to the LH site.  
Assessment online filmed workshop resource for staff (on LH site) designed to assist tutors in delivering assessment related workshops.

Case studies on innovative assessment practice have been published on the Kent and LH sites.

#### Conference papers:

Using Turnitin: presented at LDHEN and CETLs conferences. Article included in the case studies on innovative practice. (title: [Using Turnitin at the University of Kent](#): Judy Cohen, UELT, University of Kent [last accessed 13.3.10]. Case study on the Turnitin pilot projects in Economics and Business. This case study was presented as [Carrot or stick: student engagement with Turnitin](#) at the Liverpool Hope CETLs Research Symposium "Opening The Gateway: Keys to Understanding Student Learning and Writing" [last accessed 13.3.10]. Liverpool Hope University, 26 June 2007. and at the 4th LDHEN Symposium: Bournemouth University "How do students engage with learning?" 12 April 2007.)

Engaging students with online resources: Paper presented at EATAW and LDHEN conferences.

(Title: [Enhancing student engagement with online resources: Case study of using the Assignment Survival Kit \(ASK\) essay writing tool with first year undergraduate Multimedia Technology and Design students](#): Judy Cohen & Ania Bobrowicz, University of Kent [last accessed 13.3.10]. This paper was presented at the 6th LDHEN Symposium: Bournemouth University [The Challenge of Learning Development](#) [last accessed 13.3.10]. 6th and 7th April 2009 and at the 5th EATAW Conference, 2009 [The Roles of Writing Development in Higher Education and Beyond](#)" 30 June - 2 July 2009 Coventry University. [last accessed 13.3.10].)

#### LEEDS:

‘Making group work work’ web based video resource produced by Bradford, Brunel and Leeds Universities  
Listening and Interpersonal Skills Online Tutorial.

Listening and Interpersonal Skills web pages featured as LearnHigher Learning Area of the month in Nov 2008  
Chapter in LearnHigher Book

‘Learning Resources that students will use’

Article in *Journal of Learning Development in Higher Education* journal. ‘Making Group Work Work’

Online Resources designed to help tutors deliver workshops – and capture the expertise of the LearnHigher partners.

LINCOLN AND OTHERS: Chapters in Hilsdon et al (2010).

#### LIVERPOOL HOPE:

Presentation at Pedagogical Research in Higher Education 2008: *How does the curriculum support students’ study practices? Using an Activity Theoretical framework to identify opportunities for intervention.*

Presentation at SEDA Spring Conference 2007

*Learning development interventions in action:*

Sharing Strategies for Success'

Presentation at SRHE 2008

'Ambiguities in a theory of change? Rewarding excellence, changing practice with the CETL initiative'

MMU:

Glass, B. Peer reviewed conference papers on iLit Research at the LILAC (Information Literacy) Conference in 2007, 2008, 2009 & 2010.

Glass, B. Two peer reviewed papers at the BOBCATSSS (Library & Information Science Conference).

READING:

**Report Writing:** Series of 3 A5 study guides (University of Reading).

**Time Management:** Series of 3 A5 study guides (University of Reading).

Study Advice website (University of Reading), online at [www.reading.ac.uk/studyadvice](http://www.reading.ac.uk/studyadvice). [last accessed 13.310].

LearnHigher folding year planners (in collaboration with Chalet Alpin)

LearnHigher: Report Writing website (2008), online at

<http://www.learnhigher.ac.uk/learningareas/reportwriting/home.htm> [last accessed 13.310].

LearnHigher: Time Management website (2008), online at

<http://www.learnhigher.ac.uk/learningareas/timemanagement/home.htm> [last accessed 13.310].

WORCESTER:

*Publications:*

Chapman, V. (2010) Individual Evaluative Practice – An Appreciative Inquiry Case Study IN Saunders, M., Trowler, P. and Bamber, V. (Eds) *Reconceptualising Evaluative Practices in Higher Education*, Open University Press/SRHE

Chapman, V. (2010) 'Transnational cooperation in learning support for disabled learners' In *Education and Social Change*, (Elliott, G. et al Eds.) London: Continuum, (in press)

Chapman, V. (2009) 'Employability and Disability', *Teaching Learning and Assessment*, Leeds Metropolitan University, Number 5, Spring. [Online] Available at

[http://www.leedsmet.ac.uk/alt/index\\_publications.htm](http://www.leedsmet.ac.uk/alt/index_publications.htm) [Accessed: 18/02/10]

Chapman, V. (2008) 'Developing Inclusive Curricula', *Learning and Teaching in Higher Education*, Issue 3, pp 62-89. [Online] Available at:

<http://resources.glos.ac.uk/shareddata/dms/1A098079BCD42A039B89C5DFDF64FFF3.pdf> [Accessed Jun 09]

*Presentations:*

Chapman, V. (2010) **Keynote speaker:** 'Developing Inclusive Curricula Through an Appreciative Inquiry Approach', *One Curriculum For All: An Inclusive Approach (richer learning, enhanced progression, improved retention)*, London South Bank University, June

Chapman, V. (2010) **Keynote speaker:** *The Ability Spectrum*, 'Learning for Life' Annual Learning, Teaching and Research Conference, University College Plymouth St Mark & St John (UCP Marjon), March

Chapman, V. (2010) **Keynote speaker:** 'Enabling Inclusion', *Including Inclusion' symposium*, University of Melbourne, March

Chapman, V. (2010) **Invited Panel Member:** 'Institutional strategies for widening participation and equality', *Research Conference: Promoting Equity in Higher Education*, Nottingham, January

Chapman, V. (2010) Poster Presentation 'Employability and Disability', *Research Conference: Promoting Equity in Higher Education*, Nottingham, January

Chapman, V. (2010) **Invited speaker,** 'Employability and Disability (A National Teaching Fellowship Scheme project)', *Second Annual University of Worcester Employability and PDP conference*, January

- Chapman, V. (2009) Keynote speaker: ‘Bringing about change through a strategic approach to inclusive learning and teaching’, *European LINK Network and Skill's Annual Higher Education Conference, Manchester*, November
- Chapman, V. (2009) Keynote speaker: ‘European Commission Projects and Impact’, *The Hidden Treasure of Projects on Disabilities-Barriers and Facilitating Factors for an Effective -Valorisation of EU Initiatives in the Field of Disability*, ENEVA project, Brussels
- Chapman, V. & Bowen-Jones W. (2009) Keynote speakers: ‘Using Appreciative Inquiry to motivate staff enhancement of their inclusive practice in learning and teaching’, *HEIR Network seminar*, University of Worcester, October
- Chapman, V. (2009) Keynote speaker’, ‘Disability is not a choice – inclusive teaching is!’ *Valuing Complexity: Celebrating Diverse Approaches to Teaching and Learning*, All Ireland Association for Higher Education Annual Conference, National University of Ireland, August
- Chapman V., Bowen-Jones, W., Peters J (2009), Keynote speakers, ‘Developing Inclusive Learning and Teaching through an Appreciative Inquiry Approach’, *Research Seminar Series 2009: Access and Success for All*, Higher Education Academy, July
- Chapman, V. & Bowen-Jones W. (2009) ‘Developing Inclusive Practice Through an Appreciative Inquiry Approach’, *Annual Conference*, National Association of Disability Practitioners (NADP), July
- Chapman, V. & Russell, R. (2009) ‘Developing inclusive practice in vocational education and training and adult education’, *Annual Conference*, National Association of Disability Practitioners (NADP), July
- Chapman, V. & Bowen-Jones W. (2009) ‘Consensus For Change Through An Appreciative Inquiry Approach’, *16<sup>th</sup> IAPESGW World Congress*, Stellenbosch, South Africa. July
- Chapman V. (2009) Invited Panel Member, ‘Developing Inclusive Learning and Teaching’, *Inclusion Summit*, Higher Education Academy, Birmingham, June
- Chapman V. (2009) Invited Workshop Leader, ‘Developing Inclusive Curricula through an Appreciative Inquiry Approach’, *Inclusion Summit*, Higher Education Academy, Birmingham, June
- Chapman, V. & Bowen-Jones W. (2009) ‘Developing Inclusive Academic Practice through an Appreciative Inquiry Approach’, *SEDA Spring Teaching, Learning and Assessment Conference*, Brighton, May
- Chapman, V. (2008) Invited panel member, *Improving the Student Experience Through Embedding Inclusive Policy and Practice Conference*, Higher Education Academy, London, September
- Chapman, V. & Bowen-Jones W. (2008) Invited speakers: ‘Inclusion and Appreciative Inquiry - A Case Study’, *Improving the Student Experience Through Embedding Inclusive Policy and Practice*, Higher Education Academy, London, September
- Chapman, V. (2008) Invited speaker: ‘Quality Assurance and Accessible Training’, *Quality Assurance of Youth Consultancy Conference*, SCAS, Sofia, Bulgaria. September
- Chapman V. & Bowen-Jones, W. (2008) ‘Using an Appreciative Inquiry Approach to Achieve Inclusion’, *Association for Physical Education Annual Conference*, Chester, July (poster)
- Chapman, V. & Bowen-Jones W. (2008) ‘From Elitism to Inclusion’, *HECU4 - Higher Education Close Up Conference*, Cape Town, South Africa, June
- Chapman, V. & Bowen-Jones W. (2008) ‘From Elitism To Inclusion - Developing an Inclusive Curriculum through an Appreciative Inquiry Approach’, *University of Worcester Annual Learning and Teaching Conference*, June
- Chapman, V. & Bowen-Jones W. (2008) ‘Developing an Inclusive Curriculum’, *360<sup>o</sup> Degree - Students as Researchers*, University of Gloucestershire (Poster)
- Chapman, V. (2008) ‘Mentoring For Employability’, *Workability Europe Annual Conference*, San Sebastian, Spain, May
- Chapman, V. (2007) Invited Speaker: ‘Developing an Inclusive Curriculum’, *The Challenge Of Disability Equality Today*, SKILL Annual Conference, Nottingham, November
- Chapman, V. (2007) Invited speaker: ‘Inclusive curricula: Why? What? How?’ *Developing an Inclusive Curriculum*, Higher Education Academy York Conferences, University of York, September

- Chapman, V. (2007) 'SCIPS: a web based resource that offers Strategies for Creating Inclusive Programmes of Study', *Equal Opportunities For Disabled Students And Graduates*, University of Warsaw, Poland, September
- Chapman, V. (2007) Invited speaker: 'An introduction to the web based resource; SCIPS' *Getting In, Getting Through, Getting Out*, UNICA, Brussels, September
- Chapman, V. (2007) Invited speaker: 'Developing an Inclusive Curriculum', *Higher Education Academy Annual Inclusion Conference*, September, York
- Chapman, V. (2007) Invited speaker: 'A Whole school approach to early intervention', *Early Intervention, Challenges and Opportunities*, The Third Conference of Special Education, College of Education, Qatar University, May
- Chapman, V. (2006) Invited speaker keynote: Developing Inclusive Teaching and Learning, 3<sup>rd</sup> Special Education Conference, College of Education, Qatar University. May
- Chapman, V. (2006) 'Supporting Inclusive Curriculum Design Through A Web Based Resource', *Curriculum Innovation for Diversity Conference*, Higher Education Academy in conjunction with University of York, September
- Chapman, V. (2006) Invited speaker 'Promoting Wellbeing', *Senior Managers Conference*, Leadership Foundation for Higher Education, October
- Chapman, V. (2006) Invited speaker keynote: 'Inclusive Learning and Teaching', *Annual Learning and Teaching Conference*, La Trobe University, Melbourne, Australia, November (Available as CD)
- Chapman, V. (2006) Invited speaker keynote 'Designing Inclusive Curricula', *Toward 2020: what WE do NOW will make the difference*, Pathways Annual Conference, Tasmania, November/December (Available as CD)
- Chapman, V. (2005) 'Mainstreaming Disability in Curriculum Design: the development of a resource for academic staff through a HEFCE funded project', ESECT, January. Available from : <http://209.85.229.132/search?q=cache:j-L0QXtteKEJ:www.qualityresearchinternational.com/ese/papers/chapmancarlislev.doc+Mainstreaming+Disability+in+Curriculum+Design:+the+development+of+a+resource+for+academic+staff+through+a+HEFCE+funded+project%E2%80%99,+ESECT&cd=1&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=uk&client=firefox-a>, [accessed June 2009].
- Chapman, V. (2005) 'Equality Proofing the Curriculum', *Association of University Administrators (AUA) Annual Conference*, March
- Chapman, V. (2005) 'Mainstreaming Disability Through Curriculum Design', *National Disability Team conference*, Watford, April
- Chapman, V. (2005) 'Meeting the Needs of Diverse Learners in Learning, Teaching and Assessment – A UK Perspective', *International Society for the promotion of Scholarship in Teaching and Learning (ISSOTL) conference*, Vancouver, Canada, October.
- Chapman, V. (2005) Invited speaker: 'An introduction to the web based resource; SCIPS' *Getting In, Getting Through, Getting Out*, UNICA, Brussels, September
- Chapman, V. (2004) 'Strategies for Creating Inclusive Programmes of Study', *Equality & Diversity in Higher Education: Learning Together*, John Moores University, Liverpool ,
- Chapman, V. (2004) Invited Speaker 'Dyslexia in Higher Education', *Implementing the Disability Discrimination Act in Higher Education*, London, Feb, Neil Stewart Associates

The Q2 and ETTAD resources have each been reviewed by at least 150 testers/reviewers from 5 different countries

#### **IV. Non-peer reviewed outputs (examples)**

Report Writing: A Resource for Tutors Delivering Student Workshops (2009), multimedia resource, online at <http://www.learnhigher.ac.uk/videoresources/reportwriting/> [accessed 13.3.10]

Shahabudin, K. (2009a), Investigating effective resources to enhance student learning: an overview of LearnHigher research, (report) online at [http://www.learnhigher.ac.uk/index2.php?option=com\\_docman&task=doc\\_view&gid=846&Itemid=244](http://www.learnhigher.ac.uk/index2.php?option=com_docman&task=doc_view&gid=846&Itemid=244). [accessed 13.3.10]

Time Management: A Resource for Tutors Delivering Student Workshops (2009), multimedia resource, online at <http://www.learnhigher.ac.uk/videoresources/timemanagement/> [accessed 13.3.10]

(There are many other examples available online at [www.learnhigher.ac.uk](http://www.learnhigher.ac.uk))

## **Annexe B: Examples of Spin-out projects**

As part of the final year work, £60k of LH development funds was committed for a call for small funded projects from the Learning Development in Higher Education Network list (LDHEN@jiscmail.ac.uk). The £60k has funded 13 projects and funded 13 project mentors from the LH SG. All projects will be hosted on the LH website and disseminated through the 6th Annual LDHEN Symposium/Joint LH end of CETL in March 2010, and, through publication in the Journal of Learning Development in Higher Education.

**BRADFORD and LEEDS (GROUPWORK):** Making Groupwork Work resource now being taken forward by Bradford and Leeds: further updating and planning a mobile version.

**BRADFORD and BOURNEMOUTH:** HEA Observatory 2007 – 2008 - Evaluating Systematic Transition Support into HE. Total value £35,000.

**BRIGHTON:** Brighton: Over 20 CETL funded Visual practices projects – these are described at <http://staffcentral.brighton.ac.uk/learnhigher/vp%20projects.htm> along with project reports and updates. Many of these have now become embedded in mainstream practice within their subject areas

**BRUNEL (NUMERACY):** Maths Café. Development of much computer-aided assessment resources, now in heavy use at Brunel University and elsewhere.  
(REFERENCING) With the Write-Now CETL (London Met. University/Liverpool Hope) funded the ‘Student Perceptions of Referencing’ research 2008-10, in total £5,800

**LIVERPOOL:** Institutional strategies and curriculum models £30K

**NOTTINGHAM TRENT UNIVERSITY, BOURNEMOUTH AND BRADFORD:** Here! project 2008 - 2011 Higher Education Retention and Engagement – partnership between 2008 - 2011 Funded through HEFCE/Paul Hamlyn Trust Total value: £179,000.

**PLYMOUTH:** Writing for Assignments electronic library (WrAssE) was supported by the LearnHigher post at Plymouth.

**READING:** Research Overview report (£19,484, Reading)  
Year planners (£7,250, Reading)

**WORCESTER:**

HEA Inclusion Project 2007/08 (supported not funded)

Qatrain2 ([www.qatrain2.eu](http://www.qatrain2.eu)) Leonardo da Vinci funding 2007/09 [last accessed 13.310].

ETTAD ([www.ettad.eu](http://www.ettad.eu)) Grundtvig funding 2007/09 [last accessed 13.310].

NTFS project ‘Employability and Disability’ (<http://www.usemyability.org/>) (HEFCE funding) 2009/11 [last accessed 13.310].

Two Minute Tips (Aimhigher funding) 2009/10

## Annexe C: Some examples of internal and external events.

BOURNEMOUTH: 13 invited sessions or consultancy in UK HEIs - not entirely about, but included references to LearnHigher. A number of internal BU events eg annual learning and teaching conferences. June 2010: LearnHigher Roadshow event to be held at University of Bolton L&T conference. Hagyard, A., & Keenan, C. (May 2007) Higher Education Academy: *CETL Pedagogic Research Methods case studies of Delphi and NGT Camden London*. Cash, C., Hagyard, A., and Keenan, C., (April 2006) 'Go on then, prove it!' *Using research to develop excellence in Learning Development* Learner Development in Higher Education Network Annual Symposium Liverpool Hope University. Cash, C., Hagyard, A., & Keenan, C. (June 2005) *LearnHigher and What is excellence in learning development?* Higher Education Academy Annual Conference

BRADFORD (GROUPWORK): Sessions at University's own L&T Conference and internal staff development seminars. Presentations at to other institutions, e.g. Leeds, Kent. Presentations to national/international conferences, e.g. HEA; ALT-C 2009 (JORUM and ALT/Epigeum awards in collaboration with Leeds).

BRADFORD (REFERENCING) Sessions at University's own L&T Conference plus visits to other institutions/conferences. Particularly important was the Referencing Symposium, which attracted a national audience of 70 delegates; a second symposium is scheduled for June 2010. It was important as it drew HE staff attention to the perceptions of students on referencing and the staff development issues that flowed from these findings. It was the first survey of its type ever conducted in the UK on this topic, so was original from this perspective.

BRIGHTON: Particular highlights include: 1. October 2007 The BigDraw@Brighton – a university-wide, month-long celebration of the role of drawing in different disciplines. We were winners of the national Campaign for Drawing 'Drawing Inspiration' award for this initiative, which has been followed up since then by a variety of drawing-related events and research projects.. 2. November 2007, "The Role of Visual Practices in Clinical Education" national seminar for medical educators and arts practitioners – to coincide with exhibition of work from the CETL-funded Learning to Look' project Brighton & Sussex Medical School. 3. May 2008 Exploring Visual Learning in the Disciplines – day conference with presentations from a number of funded projects. 4. External workshops on drawing in the disciplines

KENT: The University of Kent has run three major assessment related events: the Assessment Conference in May 07, the Assessment Symposium in May 08 and the Formative Assessment Symposium in October 09. These three events focused attention on the Kent Learning Area (Assessment) while also raising the profile of LearnHigher work at Kent. The first event attracted over 90 delegates from as far as Scotland and Ireland while all three events supported both Kent's and the sector's interest in developing assessment practices. The second event, being mainly Kent staff, was smaller while the third event attracted around 60 delegates. This last event tied in with the Kent L&T Enhancement Theme of developing effective learners, for the 09/10 academic year.

LEEDS: A North Eastern regional Learning Development Group has been established to disseminate activities to universities in the region that were not part of the LH CETL. **Jan 09** – A regional event aimed at showcasing LH activities attracted 50 representatives from local universities. **Feb 08 and March 09** All Leeds CETLS Student Conferences. Based on themes of student personal development which support the 'Leeds for Life' Transformational Initiative. Both events attracted approx 90 students. **October 08** Skills@Library launched, evidencing the integration of LearnHigher activities into mainstream university academic skills development. **September 09** Annual ALT-C conference. LH representatives received JORUM and Epigeum awards for best Learning and Teaching Resources.

LINCOLN: Presentation at HEA conference 2005 on 'What makes an effective learning resource'

LIVERPOOL HOPE: LearnHigher m-posium (April 22 2009). This event brought together mobile learning exponents from HEIs, colleges and schools. It was attended by over 40 researchers, policy makers, practitioners and academics to look at the key issues in this exciting arena.

LONDON MET: LearnHigher & LDU work and resources – HHS Away Day, London Met Preventing Plagiarism – policy – ASKe CETL, Oxford. Preventing Plagiarism – practice – London Met staff L&T workshop. Alternative assessments – Psychology Department Away Day, London Met. Critical Thinking – key note speaker for critical thinking group (those pushing for more recognition of that as an AS qualification valued by universities). Academic Reading – Bradford L&T Conference . Academic Reading – LMBS HEO Group, London Met. The student voice – student CETL network conference, Plymouth. Drawing for Learning, with Pauline Ridley, London Met staff – plus LDHEN members invited. LAC presents at the London Met L&T Conference and Higher Education Research Seminars every year – and these are for academics interested in their pedagogy – each year LAC focuses on LearnHigher research and resource development. This year LAC is giving one presentation with Write Now in WGiD resources and one, with Tom Burns, on LH resources with a special focus on the NoteMaker. LAC has been asked to run two sessions for our PG Cert/MALTHE students, the last one with Peter O'Neill from Write Now on supporting academic writing. Also gave three presentations at LDHEN this year.

MMU: (sample only): co-organised an international Library & Information Science Conference (includes Information Literacy called BOBATSSS in Parma – January 2010. 200 delegates attended from 24 countries. First time ever uk students had attended – we sponsored 4 of them. A very successful conference in all respects (eg co-operation promotion of ILit, learning, dissemination,etc)

NOTTINGHAM TRENT: EATAW 2009 - European Association of Teachers of Academic Writing conference. Attendees from across Europe and the US. LearnHigher LACs spoke twice, once on the WAC project and once on the Writing and Transitions research we had recently undertaken. Approx 500 attendees. . LDHEN 2009 - Annual Conference of Learning Developers. We spoke twice, once about the Academic Writing Readers group and once about how to work with staff to create writing resources. Approx 200 attendees. Students Writing in Transitions Symposium – NTU. This event has attracted both internal and external staff from across the UK and has had a number of prominent keynote speakers from the fields of academic writing and student transition. Approx 80 attendees. Approx 15 internal academic writing and student development workshops at various staff events/conferences. Varying numbers of attendees from 5-25 per session.

PLYMOUTH: WrAssE launch June 2009 (internal) academics attended, trial prototype of the resource and provide feedback. LearnHigher and WrAssE event September 2009 (external) over 30 academics and students from eight institutions, raise profile and get feedback on both websites.

READING: Held a very successful website launch event in October 2008, which attracted about 60 participants from the home institution, other LH institutions and non-LH institutions from as far away as Sheffield. This included talks on the work of the CETL and on particular learning areas, plus time built into the programme for guided hands-on exploration. This latter was described in feedback as especially useful with participants saying they wouldn't have found time to fully explore the resources otherwise.

WORCESTER: VC promoted Learnhigher through engagement in an HEA project called 'Disability Roadshow' whose aims were to disseminate best practice information and resources regarding inclusive teaching and learning practice; assist academic and other staff to develop inclusive approaches to teaching and learning; reach a broad target audience of staff in HE settings; and promote the expertise of the HEA SIG on

Inclusion and the HEA to a wider audience. Delivered at universities' Learning and Teaching Conferences: 1. Plymouth (13<sup>th</sup> November 08; n= c300). 2. Canterbury (16 June 2008,) and 3. Portsmouth (16<sup>th</sup>December 08). Reference to LearnHigher on the SCIPS website and embedded link to Learning for All pages gives exposure to over 650000 unique users per annum from across the globe