

Student Lifewide Development Symposium

<http://lifewidedevelopmentsymposium.pbworks.com/>

Role of PDP, portfolios, facilitation, technology and recognition schemes in encouraging and enabling holistic student development through their lifewide experiences

Tuesday March 1st 2011 10.00- 16.00

Lakeside Conference Centre Aston University

<http://www.abs.aston.ac.uk/conferenceaston/>

Sponsorship by SCEPTR E allows the cost to be kept to £50

KEYNOTE PRESENTATIONS

Creating a Buzz – ‘Lifewide Learning’ : The need for a radically revised pedagogy
Professor John Cowan, Edinburgh Napier University

In the last half-century, higher education has progressed fairly steadily to a common pedagogical approach which centres on what Biggs calls the aligned curriculum. In this arrangement, intended learning outcomes are identified and declared; assessment which calls for these outcomes is (ideally) carefully designed; and learning activities which will enable the desired learning and development to be achieved are conceived and undertaken with the support of effective facilitation. The same principles and practices have been applied in the most purposeful of schemes for personal development planning, and to learner-directed and managed learning.

I will argue that full recognition of lifewide learning, wherein learning and development occurs more or less contemporaneously and often incidentally in multiple and varied places and situations throughout an individual's life course, calls for higher education to devise a radically different approach and pedagogy. In particular, this should recognise that:

- The outcomes of lifewide learning emerge late on – rather than being defined initially as intended learning outcomes;
- Many at least of these outcomes are *unintended* – rather than intended;
- The process begins from the choice of an area of activity which may be attractive to an individual for a variety of reasons, and with learning often as a by-product of the experience – rather than the activity being purposefully selected by someone else and planned to enable the learner to achieve specific learning;
- Assessment and evaluation for lifewide learning are analytical and reflective – rather than being evaluative, formatively or summatively, comparing progress with intended learning outcomes;
- The outcomes of lifewide learning may only have meaning for the individual and are judged against particular criteria that make sense to the individual in that context – rather than against more general criteria determined by someone else;
- Learners have to evolve their own frameworks for analysing and judging their own development in the particular contexts in which it has occurred – rather than being constrained to general criteria devised by others;
- Hence learning outcomes from lifewide learning are *identified from* the assessment or review process – rather than being *confirmed by* it;
- Assessment and evaluation of lifewide learning are centred on the learner's self-knowledge of what the experience has generated – rather than on predetermined outcomes and criteria;

- Assessment and evaluation of lifewide learning make demands on learners and others for informed and objective judgements for which we currently have few if any established methodologies to offer – rather than having established methods directly derived from and compatible with predetermined learning outcomes;
- Marked development of confidence [and self-belief](#) is a common aim and valued outcome in lifewide learning – and less so than development of competence;
- The level of the consequent learning and development from lifewide learning emerges as the experience develops – rather than being predetermined as the context within which a module or programme is designed.

In three short buzz group activities within the allotted time, the presentation will invite participants to begin to consider the following questions, in relation to examples from their own experience:

1. Do the second parts of the above assertions describe good or desirable practice in current PDP-based learning?
2. Do the first parts of the above assertions describe good or desirable practice in lifewide learning?
3. What are their reactions to the pedagogical implications for lifewide learning which the speaker will table?

A PDP-focused question will be tabled for discussion later, perhaps:

If lifewide learning and development is an emergent process, how can we create adequate PDP practices to support and facilitate these forms of learning and personal development?

References

- Biggs, J. & Tang, C. (2007). *Teaching for Quality Learning at University: What the Student does*, Maidenhead; Open University Press.
- Boyd, H.R., Adeyemi-Bero, A. & Blackhall, R.F. (1984) Acquiring Professional Competence through Learner-directed Learning. London, Royal Society of Arts, Education for Capability Unit.
- Boyd, H.R. & Cowan, J. (1986). The case for self-assessment based on recent studies of student learning. *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education*, 10(3)
- Cowan, J. (1978). Freedom in selection of course content: a case study of a course without a syllabus. *Studies in Higher Education*, 3(2).
- Cowan, J. (1984). Learning contract design; a lecturer's perspective. Royal Society of Arts - Occasional Paper No 7.
- Cowan, J. (2004). Education for higher level capabilities. Beyond alignment to integration? In V.M.S.Gil., I. Alarcão. & J. Hooghof. (Eds). *Challenges in Teaching & Learning in Higher Education*, University of Aveiro, and Netherlands Institute for Curriculum Development.
- Francis, H.F. & Cowan, J. (2007). Fostering an action-research dynamic amongst student practitioners. *Journal of European Industrial Training*, 32(5) pp 336-346

Life based learning – a strength based approach to capability development and personal development planning

Maret Staron, Senior Consultant with Mindful Creations, Sydney, Australia

A new model for capability development called **life-based learning** has been developed through a research project investigating professional development for the knowledge era undertaken in Australia (Staron et al 2006). It is based on the proposition that learning for work is not restricted to learning at work and all learning is interrelated, so it is not easy to separate learning at work from the other types of learning adults do. Learning is a multi-dimensional experience and individuals have knowledge, skills and attributes that may not always be visible or recognised by an organisation, but it makes a significant contribution to organisational achievements and relationships. Life based learning acknowledges the importance of personal values and foundation truths and their profound effect on work and culture. The research identified the need to adopt a **strength based (rather than a deficit based) orientation** to capability development in a life-based learning context: a proposition that might be transferred to and used to support PDP practices in UK Higher Education.

The life-based learning proposition has many overlaps with the lifewide learning concept developed at the University of Surrey. It holds the possibility of engaging individuals more systematically and more deeply with the development of their own capability and agency that is necessary for creating and sustaining a good quality of life (Alkire 2008) and a sense of personal and social well-being in a world of continuous, rapid and sometimes disruptive change. Here we are dealing with concepts of capability that impact on personal well-being and development developed by the Nobel Prize winning Economist Amartya Sen. 'The central feature of well-being is the ability to achieve valuable functionings' (Sen 1985: 200). Functionings are beings and doings that people value and have reason to value. They include simple achievements like being safe and physically comfortable and complex achievements like leading and managing a large organisation or performing in a challenging situation. A key feature of the strength-based orientation to capability development is the need for individuals to take responsibility for their own development, to evaluate needs, identify and build upon strengths. This requires the concomitant development of

The presentation will outline the life-based learning model and try to relate the strength-based approach to capability development to the development of capability for personal development planning and self-regulation (Jackson, 2010).

References

- Alkire, S. (2008) The Capability Approach to the Quality of Life. Available on-line at: http://www.stiglitz-senfitoussi.fr/documents/capability_approach.pdf
- Jackson, N. J. (2010) Learning to be a Self-Regulating Professional: the role of Personal Development Planning. In N. Jackson (ed) *Learning to be Professional through a Higher Education*, Available on-line at: <http://learningtobeprofessional.pbworks.com/w/page/32872854/Learning%20to%20be%20a%20self-regulating%20professional>
- Sen, A. (1992) *Inequality Re-examined* (New York, Cambridge, MA: Russell Sage Foundation. Harvard University Press
- Staron, M., Jasinski, M and Weatherley, R. (2006) Life-based Learning: A strength-based approach for capability development in vocational and technical education. Australian Government Department for Education Science and Training and TAFE NSW Available on-line at: [HYPERLINK "http://learningtobeprofessional.pbworks.com/w/page/32893040/Life-based-learning"](http://learningtobeprofessional.pbworks.com/w/page/32893040/Life-based-learning)
- <http://learningtobeprofessional.pbworks.com/w/page/32893040/Life-based-learning>

About the Symposium

This symposium provides a strong mix of keynotes from internationally renowned contributors, workshops allowing in depth discussion of practice and short taster contributions enabling participants access to a wide range of practice. It builds on SCEPTre's April 2010 'Enabling a More Complete Education' Conference

- focuses on processes and opportunities for encouraging and enabling learners to develop themselves, through their lifewide experiences, and gain recognition for commitment to their own development
- provides an opportunity to share thinking, practices, policies and research to gain deeper understandings of the ways in which higher education enables students to draw benefit and gain recognition from their unique world of informal learning and experience
- emphasises cost-effective and inclusive approaches used to promote student development
- foregrounds well designed practices which employ Personal Development Planning through which learners can become more capable, self-aware and self-regulating, and better able to adapt to meet whatever situations they encounter or create for themselves
- considers the important enabling role of technology in supporting these processes and forms of development.

Who is the conference for?

- People who are involved in promoting, supporting and facilitating student development
- People who are involved in facilitating the recognition of informal learning in any context, examples of contexts might include – work placement, part-time work, volunteering, travel, business enterprise, student societies, community action groups.
- People who have a particular role in supporting PDP & portfolio-based learning

- People who have an interest in the use of technology to support student development
- Managers/administrators who have responsibility for overseeing/managing/coordinating/developing institutional PDP schemes or award schemes for recognising informal lifewide learning.
- Institutional and national policy makers who would like to find out more about the practice and innovations in this dynamic area of UK Higher Education.
- People in non-university organizations that have an interest in the holistic development of people as a way of developing the business

Draft Programme

09.30	Registration
10.00	Welcome - Professor Norman Jackson and Rob Ward
10.10	First plenary <i>Creating a Buzz – ‘Lifewide Learning’ : The need for a radically revised pedagogy</i> <i>Professor John Cowan, Edinburgh Napier University</i>
11.00	WORKSHOPS (4 OR 5 parallel workshops on the student lifewide development theme)
12.05 -12.45	Lunch
12.50- 14.15	Show and tell – Parallel 5min x 5slide presentations - each slot is 15mins to allow for discussion and movement between sessions. Presentations will be audio recorded so that podcasts can be created after the event. We want to encourage as many people as possible to share their ideas and practices. There will be up to 5 parallel sessions each with up to 6 pitches (max 30). Pitches may be organised into thematic strands eg PDP, Award schemes, enabling technology, portfolios, facilitation techniques, assessment of personal development etc
14.15	Break Refreshments
14.45	Second plenary Life based learning – a strength based approach to capability development and personal development planning <i>Maret Staron - Mindful Creations, Sydney Australia TBC</i>
15.30	Final plenary – Lifewide Development - facilitated discussion Rob Ward and Norman Jackson
16.00	Finish

Abstracts for 5x5 show and tell session : **DEADLINE Feb 1st 2011**

- Abstracts up to 300 words in single spaced 12 point Arial Font. They should be a succinct summation of theme and its relevance and importance to other practitioners
- Abstracts must include the title for the workshop or 5x5 presentation, presenter(s) and affiliation(s) ie name(s), organisation(s) and email contact(s) and include 3 to 6 key words.
- Abstracts will be circulated before the conference so that people can decide which sessions they would like to participate in
- Contributors will be notified of acceptance by Feb 10

Proposals for workshops on Lifewide Development theme **DEADLINE Feb 1st 2011**

TO BOOK A PLACE OR OBTAIN FORMS FOR WORKSHOP PROPOSAL VISIT
Student Lifewide Development Symposium wiki
<http://lifewidedevelopmentsymposium.pbworks.com/>