Taking a stand with Sanchia Alasia

Black students’ experiences of the impact of coaching and mentoring

Power and impact of Student Voice

Join us in Portsmouth for ALDcon23

Registration now open

ALDinHE Awards for individuals and teams

Apply now!
Thank you to everyone who took the time to provide feedback, following the launch of #LoveLD magazine. We were delighted with your comments. We had initially planned to publish bi-annually, but following all your feedback, we have switched to publishing quarterly. If you would like to feature in a future issue or have ideas to share on how we may shape the magazine, please email admin@aldinhe.ac.uk.

Thank you!

What I like about the magazine is that it was put together with an LD audience specifically in mind and it brought back happy memories of the conference where I always feel part of a supportive community.

Review by Nicola Gayson
University of Salford Manchester

Hello, and welcome to the ALDinHE LoveLD magazine, issue 2 from the Professional Recognition Working Group. I would like to take this opportunity to tell you a bit about the group and what we do.

What we do:
The Professional Recognition Working Group is made up of recipients of the Certified Practitioner (CeP) and Certified Leading Practitioner (CeLP) awards from the LD community. Our main role in the Association is to review applications for the recognition scheme. When I became Chair in 2020, we focussed on updating the templates and guidance for the recognition awards and currently are working on offering verbal feedback to applicants.

All members of the working group review applications and we also have other reviewers to call upon to support with reviews. Annual training and standardisation are offered to all reviewers to ensure quality assurance in the reviewing process. Anyone who has been awarded a CeP or a CeLP can become a reviewer, you just need to attend the annual training and offer time to complete reviews. The working group facilitate the reviewer training and we offer writing retreats to support the community with time to discuss and complete their applications. These are informal sessions to talk through your application. Previous attendees to the writing retreats have come with examples from their practice and seek clarification on whether they are the “right type” of examples to use for each of the values. If you wish to become a reviewer email: admin@aldinhe.ac.uk and book on our next reviewer training.

Sheryl Mansfield
• Lead of the ALDinHE Professional Recognition Working Group
• Member of the ALDinHE Steering Group

Varied topics
I’ve really enjoyed reading the first issue of the LoveLD magazine, especially the way it has been crafted with a variety of topics covered (including crafty makes - the little bookmarks and recipes!!! Just brilliant!)

Sarah Robins
Lancaster University

Immensely pleased
I’m already in love with LoveLD Magazine Learning Development Magazine. It looks absolutely fantastic ALDinHE.

Can’t believe issue 1 is 60 pages long. Immense work.

Lee Fallin
University of Hull

A substantial investment
I just wanted to send a quick email to say how fantastic the magazine looks – this must have been a substantial investment of time for the team and I’d like to say thank you! It looks great and really captures LD in a way I’ve not seen before.

Sandra Abeg金陵
University of Calgary

Just brilliant
OMG! This is such a great idea - well done to the team - it was unexpectedly lovely to find our report and a congratulations on my NTF - but absolute genius was the crafty makes - the little bookmarks and the recipe!!! Just brilliant!

Dawn Irving Bell
BPP University
YOUR FEEDBACK ON #LOVELD MAGAZINE ISSUE ONE

WELCOME TO ISSUE 2 OF THE #LOVELD MAGAZINE

ANNUAL REPORT

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THE BOOK SHELF - FIND INSPIRATION FOR YOUR NEXT READ.
Events

JLDHE READING CLUB
Spend a thought-provoking hour together discussing the latest research in Learning Development. The group’s goal is to create a space for collaborative discussion of shared reading that is open to everyone no matter their role or level of experience.

PRICE: FREE
MORE INFORMATION AND TO BOOK: aldinhe.ac.uk/events

THE END OF GENERIC ACADEMIC SUPPORT
The experiences of developing and delivering two workshops – Robert’s session ‘Conceiving arts and design research’ with a visit to the Sceaux Gardens Estate next to the campus in June 2022; James’ session ‘Creative problem solving’ at the college’s indoor open space, the Learning Zone, in November 2022. Both will present and reflect on the motivation, planning, delivery, and challenge of the workshops respectively. They will also discuss with the audience about the prospect or potential of extracurricular academic support provision.

PRICE: FREE
MORE INFORMATION AND TO BOOK: aldinhe.ac.uk/events

SUPPORTING STUDENTS’ DIGITAL ASSESSMENTS
This webinar aims to reflect on the presenter’s experiences of providing support, and explore some of the challenges faced in supporting non-traditional assessment tasks and how these were overcome. Ultimately, the aim is to consider how learning development practices can support both students and staff in navigating ever-diversifying teaching, learning, and assessment practices, and what learning developers, and others in perhaps non-traditional learning development roles, may need to undertake such work.

PRICE: FREE
MORE INFORMATION AND TO BOOK: aldinhe.ac.uk/events

ALDINHE ANNUAL CONFERENCE
We have three broad conference strands:
- The impact of Learning Development on transformation and transitions into, through, and out of HE.
- The impact of Learning Development on equality, diversity and inclusion for individuals, HE, and society.
- The impact of Learning Development on sense of belonging and its value to students, staff and Higher Education.

Early bird ticket prices end April 28. Registration closes May 26.

WHAT’S ON

FEATURE

JUNE 9 (ONLINE) AND 13 - 14 (UNIVERSITY OF PORTSMOUTH)
ALDINHE ANNUAL CONFERENCE
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Early bird ticket prices end April 28. Registration closes May 26.

WHAT’S ON

FEATURE
Regional Event

Join us in-person at Lancaster

Theme:
Collaboration in Learning Development

Host:
Lancaster University

Date:
17 May 2023

Visit the Events calendar on the ALDinHE website for more information and to book.
If you are interested in hosting a Regional Event or an online 1-hour webinar, please complete our google form or for further information email admin@aldinhe.ac.uk.

Regional Events provide an opportunity for practitioners with wide ranging experience to network and exchange practice on a chosen theme at a local Higher Education institution usually local to attendees (although you are welcome to travel). They encourage the development of local communities and networks of practice, offer you the opportunity to present on emerging work or practice, generate feedback from your peers and provide hosts with the support necessary for them to gain experience in organising external events.

Whether you are relatively new to Learning Development or an old hand, Regional Events are a fantastic and relatively cheap opportunity to learn from and share practice with each other. You will also contribute to raising the profile and importance of LD within your institution and nationally, as well as building up your own portfolio of evidence for your CEP/CELP application, UKPSF or research.

Host HEIs are supported by ALDinHE with the organisation of their event, from choosing a theme, communications to the community and evaluation.
8 March 2023 was International Women’s Day. This year’s theme is #EmbraceEquity. Equity isn’t just a nice-to-have, it’s a must-have. It acknowledges the unequal starting place, works to correct and address the imbalance, and ensures everyone has access to the same treatment, opportunities, and advancement. Here are a few tips from our CEO of Lean In, Rachel Thomas, that you can start doing right now to help make your workplace more equitable.

**HOW YOU CAN MAKE THE WORKPLACE MORE EQUITABLE**

- Schedule a coffee chat with a junior woman colleague to discuss her career path and goals.
- Watch meeting dynamics this week to make sure women get equal airtime and full credit for their ideas – better yet, make this a habit.
- Check the invite list for meetings to make sure the women who should be at the table are, and pay special attention to make sure women from diverse backgrounds are included.
- Reflect on how a woman coworker made an impact and email their manager praising their work.
- Let’s work to remove office housework.
- If you’re a manager, share one specific thing each woman report on your team can do to advance their career (and make sure you focus on measurable actions, not personal style).

**5 ACTIONS YOUR COMPANY CAN TAKE TO EMBRACE EQUITY**

- **Track metrics and set goals.** This looks like setting and tracking representation, hiring, and promotions targets by both race and gender, so women of color are not overlooked.
- **Hold leaders accountable for progress.** You can do this by incorporating people management and DEI goals into managers/senior leaders’ performance reviews.
- **De-bias hiring and promotion decisions.** Set clear and specific evaluation criteria for hiring and performance reviews and put evaluators through unconscious bias training to eliminate unfair, gendered assumptions.
- **Offer career development programs for women and women of color** (e.g. formal sponsorship and/or mentorship programs specifically for women and/or women of color).
- **Audit who’s doing office housework** — work that contributes to the business but isn’t taken into account in performance reviews, doesn’t lead to advancement, and isn’t compensated — and make sure it’s distributed evenly between women and men —and that women are not doing additional work without additional reward.

While this is not an exhaustive list of actions institutions can take, it’s a great start.
**Be a Session Chair**

We are currently looking for session chairs to help support our presenters at ALDCon23. The role of the session chair is to ensure the presenters set up to present and to help coordinate the session by introducing presenters and managing questions.

We are looking for session chairs for both the online and in-person days.

If you are attending ALDCon23 and are interested in chairing a session or sessions, please register your interest by 21 April.

**Learning Together**

The Nursing department at the University of Northampton has organised some online webinars for Black nursing students and staff that work with Black nursing students.

Visit the Event Padlet for all the events, speaker details, dates and Bbcollab room link.

**Wellbeing**

The Open University’s Wellbeing and Mental Health collection on OpenLearn is a practical resource hub supporting students/apprentices; however, much of its content is highly relevant for everyone. Not only does it offer free educational material, but it also provides valuable signposting to support services. You never know when you or someone you know may benefit from a bit of support, especially during this current climate. It’s never been so important!

Visit the resource hub

**BOOK DEAL ANNOUNCEMENT**

Alicja Syska and Carina Buckley are working on an exciting new project in the form of a co-edited book, which brings together over 40 authors including students, active in the field to capture what it means to be a Learning Developer today. The working title of the book is How to Be a Learning Developer in Higher Education: Critical perspectives, community and practice, and it will be published by Routledge. It will have 27 chapters organised to convey a sense of the journey that Learning Developers undertake when joining the field with little prior knowledge or training. The book aims to fill a gap that has troubled many LD practitioners for a while: mainly, that no one teaches you how to do the job, what to expect from it, how to do research or publish in the field, or how to even define and advocate for what we do. We will have more details about the book’s release later in the next edition of the Magazine – watch this space!

Understanding Digital Inequality: A Theoretical Kaleidoscope


The differences in degree outcomes for students from backgrounds currently underrepresented at university in the UK is a challenge for most institutions, and it is an issue across the Higher Education sector. Recently, we have seen the publication of new guidelines on regulating student equality of opportunity from the Office for Students (2023), and further insights on reducing equality gaps for students with disabilities from TASO (2023). In the spaces we work in as Learning Developers, we have insights into the barriers that generate equality awarding gaps at university and we are uniquely positioned to be able to contribute to the closure of these.

The new ‘Challenging Awarding Gaps’ community of practice provides a forum for Learning Developers interested in exploring ways to contribute to the closure of institutional awarding gaps affecting – for example - students from particular ethnic groups, students with disabilities and mental health needs, and students from low socio-economic areas. This community of practice is intended as a safe space for practitioners to reflect and find ways to become a better ally for underrepresented students at university.

The ‘Challenging Awarding Gaps’ community of practice aims to:

- Help Learning Developers share creative, sustainable ideas for contributing to wider institutional and sector efforts to remove systemic and structural barriers to student success
- Encourage Learning Developers to share knowledge and insights about approaches to closing awarding gaps and improving graduate outcomes for all students
- Support Learning Developers to consider EDI-focused action research and evaluation for interventions designed to improve student retention, success, and employability

This new community of practice will launch in June 2023 (exact date TBC) and meet on a quarterly basis. We are seeking interested members and invite you to join our mailing list or email: admin@aldinhe.ac.uk to receive details of the launch for this community of practice.

References:
Office for Students (2023). Available at: Consultation on a new approach to regulating equality of opportunity in English higher education - Office for Students
TASO (2023). Available at: What works to reduce equality gaps for disabled students (pcdn.co)

For anyone in need of gentle encouragement to write and publish

Dr Alicja Syska and Dr Carina Buckley have recently produced a provocation published in the journal Teaching in Higher Education, ‘Writing as liberatory practice: unlocking knowledge to locate an academic field’.

Listen to the latest episode of The Learning Development Project Podcast

NEW COP LAUNCH!
Our universities must have a strong and enduring commitment to race equality and recognise the role they can play in dismantling the forces that perpetuate structural inequality and racial prejudice.

The events of the pandemic having a disproportionate impact on BAME communities and the murder of George Floyd by American police officer Derek Chauvin, have proved another turning point across the world for race relations.

Many Universities have had listening exercises and deep reflection on how they can use these conversations to take real action. The call for action is not a new one, but there has been a shift in the momentum to make real sustainable change in our universities particularly around closing the ethnicity pay gap and the racial awarding gaps for students.

There has also been increased impetus to decolonise and make the curriculums that we teach in our universities more inclusive. Statues have been taken down, most notably that of slave trader Edward Colston in Bristol during a Black Lives Matter march, with calls that ‘Rhodes must fall’ at Oxford University. Debates have ensued about how society manages these statues and symbols of colonialism and imperialism going forward.

The UK’s colonial past permeates our nation today and Universities are not exempt. This can be seen at odds with the mission statements of most universities – which are generally to use the power of education to transform lives, communities, businesses, and society. It would be amiss for us not to acknowledge however that racist prejudices, opinions, and actions which are not in keeping with society’s commitment to equality for all, either then or now are a systemic part of our institutions today. As Universities we have a role in acknowledging and highlighting the dark parts of our past to reflect and build a better future. To achieve this, we will need to continually hear from the lived experiences of our staff and students, work together to identify the barriers and take pro-active steps.
EIGHT REASONS TO JOIN THE STEERING GROUP:

• Contribute to the strategic development of the association
• Gain experience in the operation of the association with people from other institutions
• Develop professional skills that can translate to careers in and out of academia
• Demonstrate impact for professional accreditations, eg. ALDinHE, AdvanceHE
• Develop new insights into current trends and initiatives in the LD community
• Opportunity to take responsibility in a chosen area
• A chance to step outside of normal routine to become more objective
• Benefit from knowledge exchange, share practice and influence a culture of collaboration

Informal enquiries may be addressed to the Secretary or any member of the current Steering Group. Nominations are requested by 30 May 2023, as an email attachment sent to admin@aldinhe.ac.uk. Nominations will be published on the ALDinHE website prior to the Annual General Meeting held at ALDcon23.

Sanchia Alasia a multi award-winning specialist in equality diversity and human resource she currently works at London South Bank University as their Head of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. She’s an associate member of the Chartered Institute of Personnel Development and a Fellow of the Chartered Management Institute.

Sanchia has won numerous awards including, being highly commended as a political figure in the Baton awards in 2020, winner as outstanding public sector figure at the Precious awards in 2020 and as one of the top 100 most influential, impactful and successful African Business leaders by the African Chamber of Commerce in 2022. She was also named as one of fifty most inspirational Black women in the UK during Black history month in 2019.

The reality is that the lived experiences of BAME staff and students in our universities today show that there is still much to do to tackle systemic racism. There is an overwhelming amount of data from external reports over the years – including the Lammy Report, Angiolini Review, or the Parker Review, which outline the inequalities that have now resulted in how BAME people are being disproportionately affected in society and which this pandemic and the murder of George Floyd have put a spotlight on. Not just with the higher death rate, but they have also been more likely to lose their jobs and are finding it harder to gain re-employment.

BAME people have to apply for 80 per cent more job roles to get a positive response. UK Black professional representation has been stagnant since 2014, with just 1.5 per cent in leadership positions. Reportedly, on average Black people are paid 23 per cent less than their white counterparts. The ethnicity pay gap remains, and, currently, it is not a legal requirement for employers to collate ethnicity data despite prominent members of the community pushing for it a few years ago. Black women are four times more likely to die from pregnancy or childbirth, that this information has been known for many years, but no concrete action plans have yet been put in place to address this. The list goes on, but despite this, BAME people keep going.

Many Universities for the most part have recognised that they need to do more to make their institutions a welcoming and inclusive place for their staff and students; alongside supporting the advancement of BAME people within. The Diversifying Leadership programme run by Advance HE of which I am co-programme director, supports early-career academics and professional services staff from BAME backgrounds to progress in leadership roles. By working with the participants to explore themes of power and influence, demystifying leadership, and cultural identity. By providing a safe space to learn from others and set fresh personal challenges, the participants will have some tools to navigate their career aspirations through their institution. Institutions must play their part by alongside sending participants on this programme, working to make real sustainable change in eliminating institutional racism. Frameworks like the race equality charter can help institution’s identity where the pinch points are and what specific actions, they will need to take to tackle them. By examining specific measures that they can take to recruit, retain, promote, and support BAME staff and students, they ensure that when participants have completed the programme, they not only see but really feel their commitment to diversity, equality, and inclusion.

Our universities must have a strong and enduring commitment to race equality and recognise the role they can play in dismantling the forces that perpetuate structural inequality and racial prejudice.
Coaching and mentoring as ‘targeted’ Learning Development provision

By Dr Jenny Hillman and Dave Lochtie, The Open University

Many Learning Developers work within, or closely connected to, Access and Participation work in their institutions. Indeed, widening ‘opportunity, not participation’ is part of the ALD-inHE manifesto itself. The Personal Learning Advice Service is a coaching and mentoring service at the Open University which has been delivering ‘targeted’ support to students from cohorts identified in the Access and Participation Plan, as part of the institutional aim to achieve equitable outcomes for students from backgrounds currently underrepresented at university in the UK. Like other areas of Learning Development, coaching and mentoring seeks to support students ‘learning to learn’ but, importantly, also addresses institutional barriers to student success. As Learning Developers, we often have privileged insights into student journeys, their narratives, and their experiences of university. In the PLA Service, we have found that proactive, targeted coaching and mentoring support can provide distance-learning students with safe spaces to share these (Clay et al., 2023).

We have shared elsewhere (Lochtie & Hillman, 2023) the outcomes of a recent evaluation which saw a modest (not statistically significant) uplift in completion and pass rates of a subset of Black students who were considered ‘at risk’ of poorer outcomes in their studies. This coaching and mentoring support offer was made with an explicit acknowledgement that there are significant systemic and societal barriers to Black students’ success at university – with or without intersecting disadvantages such as mental health or disability – and builds upon other examples examining coaching support for ‘non-traditional’ students (Spencer, 2021).

After the intervention concluded, the students were issued with an optional, online student experience survey. It was completed by 102 respondents – or 27% of the cohort who received coaching and mentoring. Our analysis found that for the students who received the intervention, the Learning Development support from the coach-mentor underpinned 4 key areas (Fig 1) of self-reported changes in the students’ holistic study experience:

1. Confidence - students shared examples where coaching enabled their problem-solving skills and ability to "come up with solutions" based on previous experiences
2. Accessing support - student described feeling supported to access help with different aspects of study without the stigma of asking for ‘help’
3. Recognising strengths – students talked about the value of sharing personal narratives and the lifting of limiting beliefs imposed by social and cultural stereotypes
4. Personal growth – students described how they had used coaching and mentoring to focus on exploring solutions for issues in their lives outside of study.

We have started to see how the spaces created by Learning Developers can help to challenge inequities among underrepresented student groups by providing a space to challenge damaging stereotypes and overcome systemic issues. It is hoped that practitioner research and co-creation with students in this area will generate further insights.

References

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Fig. 1

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1. Confidence

2. Accessing support

3. Recognising strengths

4. Personal growth

Holistic personal development and impact on wider lives

Ethics: HREC/4577/Hillman: HREC Favourable Opinion 18/12/22
In my role as Head of Learning and Teaching Enhancement at the University of Northampton, I have a bullet point on my job description that states: “Lead on the development of mechanisms to enhance student voice involvement as co-creators in learning and teaching.” I have excellent working relationships with our Students’ Union and their sabatical officers and take those relationships very seriously: we meet regularly, I support them, they talk to me about concerns and challenges, we work together to ensure students understand concepts such as ‘anonymous marking.’ But I wanted to do more. With encouragement and ideas from our Visiting Professor Karen Fitzgibbon from the University of South Wales I set about establishing a pilot student panel.

The challenge began when I wanted to engage some students to be on the panel. It was time consuming, frustrating and a few times I wondered if it was worth it. Eventually, it all came together and I had each question printed out onto cards and gave them to randomly chosen students. Initially I had planned for four students but we have a Black Advocates programme (which employs Black students to mentor other Black students) and so I invited them to the event but I had seven students who were prepared to come onto the panel and answer questions. We agreed that this is an event we want to facilitate regularly with different topics and also give staff the chance to ask follow-up questions. Each panel should have tangible outcomes too.

Follow-up activities
I wrote a summary for the VC and DVC and we have agreed that this is an event we want to facilitate regularly with different topics and also give staff the chance to ask follow-up questions. Each panel should have tangible outcomes too.

It was powerful to hear from engaged students that they didn’t know what feedback really is and it was even more powerful to watch the faces of the audience as they heard those very honest comments.

The event took an hour and included refreshments (mainly cake) and was held in a lovely room that the students and staff knew well. I facilitated the event to ensure we kept to time and that the students were happy.

Student and Audience Feedback
After the event asked for feedback from the audience on a 1-2 basis and also spoke to the students individually. The students agreed that:

- They found the event useful and cathartic.
- They wanted the audience to be able to ask follow-up questions.
- They would be happy to be on more panels.
- One student volunteered to record her responses and share the video.

As for the staff feedback:
- The session was useful, and they would attend in future.
- Student panels should be a regular event facilitated throughout the academic year.
- It was beneficial to spend time with students in a different setting, listening to students from different subject areas.
- They wanted to ask follow-up questions.
- They wanted to have an open Q&A at the end of the session.
- They liked the cake.

You have your assignment brief and submission date; what do you do?
What do you do if you don’t understand the assignment brief?
What do you think happens when you hand in an assignment?
What is feedback?
What do you do when you don’t understand the assignment brief?

I had each question printed out onto cards and gave them to randomly chosen students. About 20 colleagues came to the event and for a pilot, I was happy with this number. In the future, I would like to have more people attend if possible. Each member of staff was prompted to ask the question on their card and then the student panel took it in turns to answer. We decided that staff would not ask follow-up questions for a few reasons, we wanted to focus on the student voice, not on staff responding or reacting to an answer. We wanted the audience to sit and reflect. And, we wanted to ensure that the students felt secure and happy to be so honest. And they were honest!

Surprising feedback
Two surprise answers really stood out for me:
- The students couldn’t explain what feedback (or feedforward) was. They focussed on their grade.
- They had no idea what happens between submitting an assignment and receiving their grade (note the emphasis on grade, not on feedback).

Both elements I will be working on to create guidance and tools for colleagues to share with students. The resources will probably include one of the students on the panel creating a short video – she has already volunteered!

In summary: “Always co-create with students” K. V. Coulson.
In February, we said farewell to Jenny Hillman, The Open University, who has been a member of JLDHE’s editorial board for over two years. Her expertise was invaluable to advancing our publications and her commitment to the journal much valued by the entire team. We thank her for her service and wish her well on her new path.

Maria Kukhareva, University of Bedfordshire, stepped down from both the ALDinHE Steering Group and as Co-Lead of the Research Funding working group, in March. Maria took on the responsibility of ALDinHE’s research funding group and drove it, developing and revising the criteria, the marking schemes and the guidelines each year. Maria was keen to introduce the idea of mentoring into the bid writing process, as well as supporting bid winners during their research, and she was keen to develop closer links with the Journal, to create more of a transition from a new researcher to a published author. Maria was also very interested in developing the idea of a scholarship of LD, which Maria, together with Carina Buckley, presented on, at ALDcon19 and one output from this was the scholarship of LD stories available on the ALDinHE website. We wish Maria all the best for her future endeavours and bid a happy farewell.

LearnHigher said farewell to LearnHigher Co-Lead, Jason Truscott, University of Plymouth, in February. Jason has been an integral part of LearnHigher and will be missed. We wish Jason well in his future opportunities.

Dr Katharine Jewitt, Associate Lecturer and Researcher at The Open University, shares thoughts on how Learning Developers can evidence impact.

**Impact - and what might get in the way**

In learning development, we want to have an impact and are required to attempt to prove impact. This can often be problematic in many ways, for example, how conscious are we of the true rationale behind our actions and what sort of impact are we trying to have anyway? How research-informed is our practice?

Often we do things without being clear as to the assumptions that underpin the activities we are doing - and perhaps we are not reflecting on our work as research that can then have impact in the world.

To put it another way: we do not have a clear rationale for what we are doing - we are not exactly sure why we are doing it - we do not know what impact we want to have - and perhaps we have no dissemination policy to hand for when we do realise that we have had impact.

If we are not careful, we can be very busy… doing things that seem potentially impactful… but the thinking is not quite joined up - the connections between the various activities are a bit tenuous - and we have no evaluation strategy in place:

Dr Katharine Jewitt, Associate Lecturer and Researcher at The Open University, shares thoughts on how Learning Developers can evidence impact.

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In learning development, we want to have an impact and are required to attempt to prove impact. This can often be problematic in many ways, for example, how conscious are we of the true rationale behind our actions and what sort of impact are we trying to have anyway? How research-informed is our practice?

Often we do things without being clear as to the assumptions that underpin the activities we are doing - and perhaps we are not reflecting on our work as research that can then have impact in the world.

To put it another way: we do not have a clear rationale for what we are doing - we are not exactly sure why we are doing it - we do not know what impact we want to have - and perhaps we have no dissemination policy to hand for when we do realise that we have had impact.

If we are not careful, we can be very busy… doing things that seem potentially impactful… but the thinking is not quite joined up - the connections between the various activities are a bit tenuous - and we have no evaluation strategy in place:

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If we are not careful, we can be very busy… doing things that seem potentially impactful… but the thinking is not quite joined up - the connections between the various activities are a bit tenuous - and we have no evaluation strategy in place:
What is ‘impact’ and how can we evidence it?

In the UK, the word impact is used pretty much synonymously with knowledge exchange. That means whatever knowledge you have, it is exchanged with stakeholders. Researchers need to take their research to stakeholders for them to use. Stakeholders will then create feedback and the cycle continues. Knowledge exchange is research through iterations. It is an organic feedback loop.

Impact provides information to institutions, organisations, businesses, community organisations, government, about the benefits derived from money spent in research. It is about Learning Developers proving that the research they are working on has an influence, impact, and resonance with stakeholders beyond the university. Impact needs to be measurable and a return on investment for the research.

We often work in one of these areas, it is rare to work in all three.

**Research impact defined**

In the UK, particularly through the research excellence framework (REF), there is a national research impact policy, which defines research impact as research that has as an effect on, change or benefit to the economy, society, culture, public policy or services, health, the environment or quality of life; beyond academia. Impact must be demonstrable. It must be proven. It must be provable to transform the economy, culture, leisure, health and wellbeing, workplace, environment or quality of life.

Impact is often described as:

1. **Instrumental impact** – when you influence in a really organic and careful way, policy development or service delivery. You are finding ways to alter behaviour or to change legislation.

2. **Conceptual impact** – this is changing how policy infrastructures and definitions are formed.

3. **Capacity building** – this is when you impact on an industry through enabling technical, technological or skills development.

There are three particular ways to configure or think about impact that we can use in our thinking about research impact.

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We often work in one of these areas, it is rare to work in all three.

**FIVE STAGES OF IMPACT**

1. **Research inputs** – This includes things like gaining funding, attracting staff and support, developing an infrastructure, gathering the kit they need.

2. **Research activities** – includes research participants, research training is part of these activities, creating conferences and all sorts of presentations, workshops, membership of academic and learned societies, and a whole series of stakeholder and community engagements. This might also include board management for different community organisations.

3. **Outputs** – This is the stage where most people stop. This includes media briefings, publications, policy briefings, e-books, patents, e-publications.

4. **Outcomes** – licences, revenue, new companies, spinoffs, venture capital, job creation, citations, policy interventions. It doesn’t even stop there. The fifth stage is called benefits.

5. **Benefits** – demonstrate economic, education, health, social, cultural, environmental transformation, how the research has impacted on quality of life or provision of public services, eg have you improved the education and skill development of a particular workforce? Have you enabled job creation? Have you improved risk management in businesses? Business schools, as an example, can help in this area helping businesses mitigate and manage risk, perhaps through governance protocols.

**Dissemination of research**

Social media is a useful tool for dissemination – Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, Mastodon, Instagram, podcasts, vlogcasts, open access, really matters. You may be engaging with communities who do not have access to libraries with academic journal subscriptions. Open access, the capacity for your research to be read by diverse communities is incredibly important. Even if your research is restricted behind a credit card paywall, you need to remember to use podcasts and vlogcasts to point to that research and talk about that research in a way that is free for lots of different people to hear and to use.

**How can Learning Developers create impact today?**

Think about a research project and start with a collaboration. If you are interested in impact, start with a real-world collaboration and ask different people in different settings and ask them what are their problems or challenges and enable that to configure and shape your research. If you start there then your research is much more measurable and trackable. Applied research works very well when thinking about an impact narrative.
Impact is to be embraced

Impact is to be embraced. Whatever you may think about the politics, impact is a positive thing, as it demands all of us as practitioners and scholars to think about why we are doing this research. What are you trying to do? Who is your audience? Then, choose the format, choose the platform that allows your research to find its audience. It is important you create a research schedule, that you are predictable and you demonstrate time management, because you have to have deliverables. While there are some intellectual and political challenges with research impact, why impact is great is because it makes us all think about research narratives, how can we tell the story of our research with effectiveness and with clarity. Why is it important? Why are you doing this research? Why should your colleagues care?

Registration for the conference opens on 31st March 2023 and closes 26 May 2023. Early bird ticket prices are available until 28 April 2023. Please visit the ALDinHE website for more information.

Dr Katharine Jewitt

Dr Katharine Jewitt is a Researcher in Digital Education and Associate Lecturer at The Open University in four faculties (Business and Law; Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics; Wellbeing, Education and Language Studies and The Centre for Inclusion and Collaborative Partnership) tutoring on access, undergraduate and postgraduate courses. She also works as a Validator with the Digital Schools Company to guide and implement its ongoing strategy to promote digital skills in Nursery / Primary / Special Education / Secondary schools & organisations. Katharine is also the ALDinHE Administrator, JLDHE Technical Editor and Co-Chair of the UNESCO Inclusive Policy Lab for Education and Digital Skills. Katharine tweets at twitter.com/katharinejewitt

Pathway to impact

When you answer these questions, that is your pathway to impact. As Learning Developers, we can also support our research students in implementing impact in their careers by helping them navigate this pathway.

Disseminate your research through ALDinHE

The Association for Learning Development in Higher Education provides many ways for you to disseminate your research:

- Publish a blog
- Carry out funded research
- Publish in ALDinHE's Journal of Learning Development in Higher Education (JLDHE)
- And discuss your paper once published in the reading club
- Host a regional event
- Run an online webinar (LD@3 event)
- Share resources on Learn Higher
- Discuss research on The LD Project podcast
- Write an article for the LoveLD magazine
- Facilitate a Community of Practice in your research field or join an existing CoP.
- Discuss on the forum (the LDHEN Jisc mail list).
- Use your research impact to gain professional recognition.
- Present at the ALDinHE annual conference.

ALDinHE annual conference 2023

This year’s #ALDcon23 has three broad conference strands around impact:

- The impact of Learning Development on transformation and transitions into, through, and out of HE.
- The impact of Learning Development on equality, diversity and inclusion for individuals, HE, and society.
- The impact of Learning Development on sense of belonging and its value to students, staff and Higher Education.

Networking through the expertise directory

Attending the ALDinHE annual conference.

Attending events

Joining a working group or steering group.

Social networking

Joining a community of practice

Joining the reading club

Discussions on the forum (LDHEN Jisc mail)

Share reading

When carrying out research, the intermediaries of social media need to be thought about - agents of translation, amplifiers and network builders, for example, LinkedIn and Twitter are great examples of that. Also, be flexible. Where you thought research may go is probably not where this research is going to go. If you are listening to your stakeholders then your research is going to go in a different direction.

To gain traction and gain impact, you need to build relationships. That requires you to create multiple iterations or multiple cycles of engagement with research users / stakeholders. In the case of impact, work with stakeholders in an organic feedback loop (discussed earlier) to improve and enhance the research. Stakeholders help to enhance, improve and engage with your research. Listen to those stakeholders and listen to what they want from you. Ask them what sort of research would help. Listen to them and provide that research. Being part of the Association for Learning Development in Higher Education opens up many opportunities for networking, including:

- Joining the reading club
- Social networking
- Networking through the expertise directory
- Attending events
- Attending the ALDinHE annual conference.

Dr Katharine Jewitt

Pathway to impact

Why should your colleagues care?

Why are you doing this research?

How can we tell the story of our research with effectiveness and with clarity.

How can we tell the story of our research with effectiveness and with clarity.

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Why are you doing this research?

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When you answer these questions, that is your pathway to impact. As Learning Developers, we can also support our research students in implementing impact in their careers by helping them navigate this pathway.
enABLE - Active Learning

What is enABLE?
Based on the principles of Active Blended Learning (ABL), enABLE is a participant-centred, hands-on, workshop-based intervention that helps teams articulate shared values and principles in a safe, structured, and collaborative environment for storyline and activity creation. enABLE is underpinned by a suite of specifically designed and openly licensed toolkit materials that provide flexibility and encourage creativity, underpinning innovative approaches to course and module design.

enABLE underpins the University of Portsmouth’s Blended and Connected Approach to learning and teaching, in which students engage with their studies:
- Through activities that enable them to take ownership of and critique new concepts, ideas, and feedback;
- In and outside the classroom, synchronously and asynchronously, individually and in teams;
- For the development and application of subject knowledge, professional and digital skills.

1. The Design Needs Analysis (DNA) Meeting
- The initial DNA meeting with the enABLE facilitation team affords the course team the opportunity to discuss the specific requirements, focus, length, and intended outcomes of the enABLE workshop. This conversation helps the enABLE facilitation team to understand the context for the enABLE workshop, and to plan workshop activities accordingly. The DNA meeting is at the heart of enABLE, as it allows the course team to take ownership of the process, identify the core inputs they regard as central to effective learning design and student engagement, and plan for meaningful outputs and deliverables.

2. A Collaborative Approach to Learning Design: enABLE is a team-based approach to learning design and takes into account the content, structure, timing, sequence of learning activities and assessment strategy. The focus is on enhanced pedagogy and embracing technology-enhanced learning within an active blended learning framework to support and ensure meaningful student engagement.

3. Creativity: enABLE encourages creativity in learning design, providing an opportunity for academic staff to think more broadly and creatively about their academic practice.

4. Flexibility: The enABLE process and supporting resources are designed to be flexible and adaptable to address the bespoke requirements of course teams. enABLE can be used to focus attention on specific aspects of academic practice such as student well-being, employability, equality, diversity and inclusion.

How does the enABLE process work?

The enABLE process is based around three elements:

1. The Design Needs Analysis (DNA) Meeting
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2. The enABLE Workshop
- The format and length of the enABLE workshop is determined by the DNA meeting, and as such each workshop is very much bespoke. An indicative structure is shown above.

3. The Module Creator – used to identify the key module features including module learning outcomes, module rationale, learning and teaching approaches, and assessment and feedback strategies.

Activity 1: Introduction and Creating a Shared Vision
- Introductions and card activity to identify key course or module features

Activity 2: Course/Module Strata and Tweet
- Creating a mission

Activity 3: Storyboarding
- Storyboarding to facilitate design, integrating learning type elements and activities

Activity 4: Activity Creation
- Development of core activities

Activity 5: Review and Action Plan
- Focus on action-planning to maintain momentum around learning design

Indicative enABLE workshop structure

3. The Context Creator – given enABLE’s focus on context over content, the context creator plays a central role in activity creation, encouraging the teams to think creatively about the synergy between knowledge generating activities and knowledge check activities linked to Laurillard’s Learning Types.

4. The Activity/E-tivity Planner – having identified potential activities in the context creator, the activity planner is used to develop a blueprint for each activity which can be shared and critiqued by the wider course team.

5. Storyboarding – a key deliverable from the enABLE workshop is the creation of a detailed storyboard which helps programme team map out the key elements within course or module design.
The progress of enABLE is closely monitored and to date there has been 172 DNA meetings and 176 enABLE workshops involving in excess of 492 participants. enABLE workshops have also taken place at Universities across the UK, as well as internationally in Berlin, Ireland and Italy.

Most significantly, enABLE has signalled a transformative shift towards the way in which learning design is conceptualised, implemented, and scaled up at Portsmouth. The emergence and implementation of enABLE highlights an institutional realignment towards collaboration, openness, and student-centeredness, giving staff the confidence to think more broadly, creatively, and collaboratively about learning design.

How to engage with enABLE
enABLE toolkit resources are available via the enABLE website – enable.port.ac.uk – and can be downloaded and used under a Creative Commons license. We also offer enABLE train-the-trainer events for institutions that might wish to adopt enABLE and become an enABLE associate partner, which gives access to the core enABLE toolkit resources, which can be edited and branded to reflect specific institutional contexts.

What has been the impact of enABLE?

The driving force behind the success of enABLE has been the appointment of Faculty-based learning designers who act as enABLE facilitators, pro-actively identifying and leading course and module teams through the enABLE process. The enABLE facilitators meet regularly to review the progress of enABLE, to discuss opportunities for enhancement, and to create new toolkit resources. Since their initial appointment, this team has matured, gaining the skills and confidence to become effective enABLE change agents, and are now driving further enhancements to the enABLE process based on their own experiences of delivering enABLE workshops, and their familiarity with ABL.

IUL University staff in Florence actively storyboarding new module design

Initial feedback from enABLE participants suggests that it has had an immediate impact on approaches to learning design, with the value placed on the collaborative and team-based approach, evident in feedback:

‘The best opportunity within UoP to ensure course and module design are cohesive and beneficial to students. A MUCH more collaborative way to plan and orchestrate the teaching and other areas of support required to deliver valuable experiences to student cohorts and to meet learning outcomes’

‘A much more structured way to approach design/ redesign and improvement of courses with colleagues and to encourage team building within (often disparate) course and module teaching teams’

‘It has given me more focus and made me feel quite energised about things I need to do as part of a team, rather than doing it by myself’

‘I think most staff were initially worried these sessions would involve being told how to teach our modules, which would rub people up the wrong way. However I was glad to see the process involved more of an overview of the aims and methods of the module, and some general advice about how it is structured and delivered’

For more information, please email: andy.clegg@port.ac.uk
Student-Staff Co-Creation of Virtual Environments for Simulated Field Trips

Inspired by the limited opportunities for educational field trips during the COVID-19 lockdown period, a team of staff and students and the University of Exeter have been developing methods of creating virtual environments representing real world locations with the aim of simulating the field trip experience.

Initially focusing on the Roskrow Barton wind turbine and solar photovoltaic site close to the University campus in Cornwall, a combination of SketchUp and Unity software has been utilised to develop a 3D roaming virtual environment, originally hosted on the AltspaceVR platform. This is accessible to students using desktop, mobile and VR headset devices.

Using the student-staff co-creational approach, the aim is to assess and maximise the utility of such resources and develop best practices for the creation of further virtual environments. It is hoped that ultimately these can be used to supplement or even replace the real world field trip experience for those students unable to undertake physical site visits, or to simulate locations anywhere around the globe in otherwise difficult to access areas.

Due to the closure of AltspaceVR, the platform will be moving to VRChat or Microsoft Mesh. Students are providing feedback and suggestions on the environment as it stands, in order, to inform further development on the new platform.
The JLDHE Reading Club meets bi-monthly, on the second Wednesday evening of the month for a stimulating and thought-provoking hour together discussing the latest research in Learning Development. The group’s goal is to create a space for collaborative discussion of shared reading that is open to everyone no matter their role or level of experience. If you would like to join the group, please complete this short sign-up form.

The group exists to build stronger links with our JLDHE community of readers and engage our readers and the wider learning development community. We wanted to create a space and opportunity where learning developers and others can get together to discuss research and share ideas on published work in JLDHE.

A unique aspect of the JLDHE Reading Club is that we invite authors of the Journal’s papers to join us and get involved in conversations about their work. Having the author involved is a great opportunity for our readers to ask questions and dig deeper into the findings, recommendations and methodological approach of the articles. It’s a great learning opportunity for new and experienced learning developers alike and has helped to create a real sense of a community of practice where we can all learn and benefit from each others’ experience.

Before each JLDHE, we always send an invitation to vote on what you want to read and discuss in the upcoming meeting. We believe this helps to ensure we discuss what is most relevant to attendees at that time - and stops us from arbitrarily picking a paper at random! Once the paper has been chosen, we generally ask attendees to consider three questions when reading the paper:

- How do the ideas intersect with your own role?
- Is there a particular extract you found interesting and want to discuss with the group?
- Do you have any lingering questions or ideas after reading this piece?

We don’t stick rigidly to these discussion points and are happy to ‘go with the flow’ of the conversation, depending on what readers want to discuss and any questions they have for the authors.

After the meeting, we write up a brief summary of the discussions (which attendees are always invited to contribute to) to share with those who wanted to come along, but couldn’t find the time. These summaries are shared in the Reading Club section on JLDHE’s website. If you would like to join the group, please complete this short sign-up form.
We are inviting expressions of interest from colleagues who would like to undertake the role of Guest Editor on this special issue. Please fill out an expression of interest.

We are putting together Collaborative Conference Proceedings and Reflections from ALDCon23 and we ask for your contributions to it in the form of critical reflections, observations, and conversations that emerged from the conference session you attended. This collective reflection intends to promote a dialogic approach to scholarly activity in LD and to further our view that a conference presentation, workshop or poster should not be the end of the conversation.

You will be able to access the collaborative documents via the programme on the ALDinHE conference website. The deadline for contributions is Friday 14 July 2023, 5pm (UK time).

This special volume will be published as Collaborative Conference Proceedings and Reflections by the Journal of Learning Development in Higher Education, to be released in Autumn 2023. You can also read the 2022 edition on the JLDHE website.

Your reflection can be a short paragraph or 1-2 sentences that capture the essence of your observations, but in some instances longer reflections may be appropriate as well. We also welcome visual contributions, including original drawings and illustrations that do not require seeking permission to publish.

While the presentation abstracts and authors’ reflections will be formally reviewed, the collaborative element will be a creative co-production of ideas by the LD community and edited by a community sourced editorial team. As a publication in the JLDHE, it will have a citation with a DOI number. If not anonymously submitted, your contributions can be used to help support your evidence of impact across the HE sector and your on-going professional development.

Please see the timeline in the lead up to publication.

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Last year I had the great pleasure of joining the Editorial Board of the Journal of Learning Development in Higher Education (JLDHE). This started as a guest editor for the Special Edition, ALDinHE Conference Proceedings and Reflections. For this special issue, I, alongside a team of other guest editors, had the opportunity to weave together the peer-reviewed conference abstract with community and author reflections. Based on my experience as a guest, I was excited to apply and interview for a permanent editor role. As you can safely guess from the title of this post – I was successful.

Become an editor
I've been an editor for a handful of months. I'm still early on in my journey, but have already found it very rewarding. It's a fantastic opportunity to support and mentor new authors, alongside helping more established writers get their work into print. The biggest surprise, for me, has been the dedication and generosity of our peer reviewers. I am often overwhelmed with the interest in review, and often find it challenging to choose who to allocate.

It was stupid of me to be surprised. After all, over the last couple of years, it had become clear to me that peer review was a form of community building. This particularly resonated for the Compendium of Innovative Practice where, as a reviewer, I had myself really felt part of something. This is something that I feel is very special about JLDHE. It is a community – an argument well established in Alicja's contribution to the conference proceedings.

Get involved!
I hope this post is encouraging for anyone who is thinking about getting more involved in journals – especially JLDHE. I recommend peer-review as a great place to start getting involved (it's where I started!). It helps you contribute to a journal and get a feel as to what is within it's scope. JLDHE is always looking for more reviewers, so watch the LDHEN and SEDA JiscMail networks for future calls to review!

Perhaps the single most rewarding part of being on the Editorial Board is the opportunity to work with an amazing set of colleagues. I have thoroughly enjoyed learning from them all, and getting to know them more through our work. I have to give Gita Sedghi, who has been my mentor a HUGE shout out. Gita has been the one who has answered my 200-300 questions about the journal, editing and our journal system. (Thanks Gita!).

Our Editorial Board is a great team (yes – I'm biased). We meet monthly to ensure everything is on track for upcoming issues, and there is a lot of work to keep on top of between these meetings. I've found the pace and challenge really refreshing. As you can see above – it's also a rewarding role.

Dr Lee Fallin is a Lecturer in Education Studies at the University of Hull. He has ten years of experience working as a Learning Developer for the University Library and is an ALDinHE Certified Learning Practitioner. Lee is a Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy, a Microsoft Certified Educator and a Microsoft Innovative Educator Expert. Lee has an EdD in Education, a PG Cert in eLearning and is working towards his PG Cert in Academic Practice. His research interests focus on the intersections between education and geography, inclusive of physical and digital spaces. His current research interests include learning spaces and communities, inclusive digital practice, research methodologies and geographies of place. You can find him on Twitter as @LeeFallin.
In the spirit of ‘new year, new me’ I decided my goal for this year was to feel more confident when discussing research with academics. I often feel tongue tied when it comes to conversing and debating with other academic professionals; their vocabulary is so beautifully articulate that on more than one occasion I’ve been left with a feeling of imposter syndrome!

To work on this goal and prove to myself that I am just as capable of vocalising and articulating my ideas, I thought what better way to do this than join the Journal of Learning Development for Higher Education (JLDHE) Reading club where I can engage in discussions with fellow peers in a safe environment.

The article was sent to us a week before and was ideal— not too long and easy to follow so that I was able to read snippets and make notes during my lunch breaks. The article ‘Students Perceptions of Reading Digital texts for University study’ provided interesting insight into how students engage differently with digital text compared to print.

Wednesday came, I got home just in time to make myself cozy. I made a cuppa, grabbed some biscuits, and had my notes laid out in front of me. I logged on, a little nervous and not sure what to expect. There was nothing to be nervous about; Craig led the group in a quick round of ‘who’s who’ and introduced Sarah, one of the co-authors of the article we were reading. Craig commenced the discussion by asking us how we read the article—digital or print. This led to an interesting debate on the pros and cons of both methods after which we dived into the article.

Having Sarah join us enriched the discussions, enabling us to clarify and ask further questions about the research. The group were able to draw from their experience and share ideas around the topic of engaging students in active reading. We covered everything from improving reading workshops, creating reading camps, the tactile experience of books and the ease of access to e-resources. Each of us were able to have our voices heard as we unpacked the different points raised within the article.

The space created by Craig, enabled me to feel confident to vocalise my thoughts and opinions with peers and gain a sense of shared professionalism. All in all, I thoroughly enjoyed the experience, and look forward with eagerness to the next meeting.

Review of my first ALDinHE Reading Club meeting

FEEL MORE CONFIDENT

NEW YEAR

NEW ME

JOIN THE JLDHE READING CLUB

Alexandra Read

Alexandra Read (she/her) is an Academic Skills Advisor at The University of Suffolk, where she works within the Directorate of Learning and Teaching. Alex delivers academic skills and learning support through one to one with students, delivers tailored academic skills workshop within the School of Health and Sports Science and contributes to Inclusive CPD training within the institute. Her area of expertise and interests are in Specific Learning Differences (Splds), Inclusive Practice and Universal Design in Higher Education.
We have £5,000 available in funding, with a maximum of £1,000 per project, and this opportunity is open to anyone who works at a member institution. Each year ALDinHE allocates funding for innovative research projects that focus on specific aspects of Learning Development.
Using Student Engagement Data to Evaluate Online Activities and Resources

In this magazine article, we will be sharing the results of our research into student engagement with online learning and which virtual educational tools are preferred by staff and students at the University of Exeter.

Post pandemic

After the COVID-19 pandemic hit in 2020, we, as well as all the teaching world, had to rapidly assimilate new online technologies and learning materials, in order to carry out online teaching. Yet, some have proved more popular and engaging than others. This is what we wanted to research: what do staff and students have to say about the online learning tools, and how are they engaging with them?

Research funding

In January 2021 we were allocated funding by ALDinHE to complete research into how students are engaging with online learning tools. Our initial thought process to do this was three-fold: staff focus groups, collection of “click data” from the University’s online digital learning platform and a student questionnaire. However, in the end, the questionnaire wasn’t posted as it was felt this would replicate previous University student questionnaires.

Questions

Firstly, staff were invited over email to take part in focus groups in March of 2020 over Microsoft Teams. Staff who responded to the email (approximately 25) were split into five focus groups and asked a selection of questions from a question bank, such as:

“What digital tools have you used while teaching this year?”

“What teaching methods have you used for each of these?”

The purpose of asking the academics these questions about online learning was to get their opinion on what they were using, what they prefer and what they feel the students are enjoying the most. These answers will be compared against the results taken from the “click data”.

Click data

Lastly, we collected 3100 students’ interactions or “click data” from 500 Exeter Learning Environment (ELE: The University of Exeter’s digital learning platform) module pages. After we collected the “click data”, academics who had a large uptake of interactions on their course pages had a follow-up interview to discuss how they were keeping their students engaged.

Over one million data entries!

As the analysis for the data is still in progress, we don’t yet have a definitive answer to our question, however, we hope that in the future, educators or teaching bodies can look at the feedback of tools generated by our “click data” and interviews to see how they can intentionally use the tools to increase engagement among their students. Having the evidence from students’ “click data”, the focus group answers and the subsequent interviews with staff can show exactly what they are interacting with and how this can enhance teaching methods that are used for online pedagogy in the future.

By Eleanor Sandison, Tomas Nicholas and Valentin Kozsla, Digital Learning Developers from the CEMPS (College for Engineering, Maths and Physical Sciences) department at the University of Exeter.

These key data can be used as a core tenet of the design and evaluation of new tools being developed or considered for use by the university. We will work with relevant module leaders to implement this method and publish our findings so that academics from other organisations can benefit from our research.
Practice

Leadership and Management Sketchnotes
Thank you to Bryan Mathers for the sketchnotes

The Starfish Model and Getting your idea off the ground by @bryanMMathers is licenced under CC-BY-ND
We are looking for volunteers to support reviewing and mentoring opportunities. This is a chance to step outside of normal routine to become more objective. You’ll benefit from knowledge exchange, personal learning and reflection. You’ll develop new insights and contribute positively to individual development. The role provides evidence to demonstrate impact when applying for CeP / CeLP / AdvanceHE and other professional recognitions. ALDinHE offers support to members who want to apply for recognition or disseminate their work to the wider LD community. Reviewers will be expected to offer support and feedback to applicants.

Apply to be an ALDinHE reviewer

This is a chance to step outside of normal routine to become more objective. You’ll benefit from knowledge exchange, personal learning and reflection. You’ll develop new insights and contribute positively to individual development. The role provides evidence to demonstrate impact when applying for CeP / CeLP / AdvanceHE and other professional recognitions.

Apply to be a reviewer
Submit A Resource To LearnHigher

LearnHigher is a network for promoting and facilitating the development and dissemination of high quality, peer-reviewed resources for learning development in the higher education sector. We aim to support the development of such resources as well as conduct and disseminate research into the use and effectiveness of learning development strategies and materials.

ALDinHE offers mentoring to individuals to support resource submissions to LearnHigher. To request support in submitting a resource to LearnHigher, please email admin@aldinhe.ac.uk.

Visit LearnHigher

The LearnHigher Mentoring Process

Process 1
Email admin@aldinhe.ac.uk to register your interest in submitting a resource to LearnHigher.

Process 2
You will receive a confirmation email from a LearnHigher mentor asking for a copy of your resource. You will also be asked how you would prefer to receive feedback on your resource and consider the timescale.

Process 4
When advised, submit your resource to the LearnHigher website for review by the working group.

Process 5
You will be notified when your resource has been accepted to be published on the website.

Process 3
Use the feedback received to revise your resource.

Process 6
Complete the feedback form about your experience.
The recognition scheme is open for applications all year round. Join us on a writing retreat to progress your Certified Practitioner (CeP) and Certified Leading Practitioner (CeLP) award. The CeP and CeLP awards promote Learning Development as a profession in its own right.

BOOK NOW
20 JULY 2023
1.00 - 3.00pm
Online
Free event

The writing retreat can offer you the opportunity to ask questions regarding your application and offer you time to write and reflect on your application. The writing retreat can also offer the opportunity to peer mark colleagues' applications gaining useful feedback.

Successful applicants receive formal recognition of their specialist knowledge and practice. This demonstrates expertise to both current and prospective employers, and might also be useful when applying for HEA fellowship.

For more information about professional recognition, visit the ALDinHE website.

Visit Professional Recognition on the ALDinHE website
The ALDinHE Neurodiversity / Inclusivity Community of Practice has been meeting every other month since its inception in June 2021. We are a community of 200+ people who work in different facets of education that include learning development, widening participation, libraries, wellbeing, learning technology and careers.

We are looking to collate resources / information in a resource bank that will be useful for raising awareness and understanding of neurodivergence and positively inform teaching / workplace practices.

It is estimated that around 1 in 7 people (more than 15% of people in the UK) have a neurodivergence, meaning that the brain functions, learns and processes information differently (University of Edinburgh, 2020).

To help shape the content of the resource bank, please complete our short survey by 30th April 2023.

Enter Survey

Visit the ALDinHE website to discover more about the CoP.
REGISTRATION IS OPEN

#ALDCON23
aldinhe.ac.uk/aldcon23

Join us online 9 June 2023 and at the University of Portsmouth 13 - 14 June 2023.

Registration closes 26 May 2023.

Early bird ticket prices are available until 28 April 2023.

Please visit the ALDinHE conference website for more information.

Visit #ALDCON23
The Quiet Focus Zone is a room that has been put aside for quiet time and focused work during the conference. This is a designated space that allows for quiet reflection, time out from the conference, a place for people to rest, take a break, check emails etc. Please ensure all devices are on silent and noise is kept to a minimum. The Quiet Focus Room is a multi-use space that can be used for focused work or quiet rest and reflection.

Chat and Connect zone is a place where you can go to connect and chat with each other, sharing your ideas and thoughts on the conference. This is a space you can discuss topics of interest and engage with other attendees.

ALDinHE is pleased to announce we are hosting our first in-person conference breakfast networking event at ALDCon23. Join us for our networking breakfast event, for an informal, friendly space to connect with like-minded people working in the field of learning development while enjoying an early breakfast. This event provides an opportunity to network before the conference begins. All face-to-face delegates are welcome and it is a chance for those new to learning development or new to the conference to meet other members of ALDinHE.

Spinnaker Tower and the University of Portsmouth have developed an app called “Spinnaker AR” that allows those with Android mobiles to view enhanced scenes from the tower’s main viewing deck, where the conference dinner is being held. Delegates will be able to scan a QR code at the tower, to access.

You can walk around Old Portsmouth, following a self-walking tour (provided). You may wish to make arrangements amongst yourselves to do this as a group. Check out the full social programme on the ALDcon23 website.

ALDCon23 in Numbers:
- 79 Sessions
- 175 Posters
- 6 Mini Practitioner Keynotes
- 8 Professional Development Sessions
- 37 20-Minute Papers
- 3 Resource Showcases
- 3 5-Minute Lightning Talks
- 6 60-Minute Workshops
- 13 Wild Cards
Congratulations to Lee Fallin, University of Hull, on being awarded The National Teaching Repository Award for Global Reach and Impact for the “Designing for diverse learners” poster which has supported colleagues all over the globe.

March 2023

Congratulations to Jenny Hillman, The Open University, on being awarded a Certified Leading Practitioner of Learning Development (CeLP).

March 2023

Notifications for the ALDinHE Awards for Both Individuals and Teams are Now Open via #ALDCon23 Website

Welcome to Elle Spender, Swansea University who has joined ALDinHE’s conference committee and many congratulations on your recent promotion to Associate Professor, Accounting.

Congratulations and Welcome to ALDinHE’s new Conference Committee Deputy Chair, Janet Ramdeo, University of Surrey

I joined the ALDinHE’s Conference Committee in 2022. I am an experienced teacher educator with over 15 years of experience in a range of universities. I predominantly worked in international teacher education and Initial Teacher Training (ITT), having led teacher development projects in China and Kazakhstan, as well as led employment-based ITT provision at two London universities. I am now a Learning Developer in inclusive education, specifically race equality, at University of Surrey, supporting projects examining and tackling the awarding gaps. My research interest is primarily in the intersectional experiences of racially minoritised educators and learners.

I have been committed to high quality student learning experiences throughout my career, which underpins my reason for joining the Conference Committee. Core to my professional values on education and the role of higher education, I believe in research and scholarship and dissemination of innovative practices that enhance students’ learning experiences, outcomes and employability. Being a member of the Conference Committee, I feel privileged to be central to a key annual activity that provides opportunities for Learning Developers to enhance their practices which can affect positive learning experiences for students across their own institutions. Further, I am keen to support an activity that allows Learning Developers to have a space to create meaningful connections with like-minded practitioners.

I look forward to meeting colleagues at ALDCon23 and having inspirational conversations about high quality higher education learning development. See you there!

Congratulations to Dawne Irving-Bell who was recently appointed as a Professor of Learning and Teaching at BPP University.

Dawne established The National Teaching Repository, an Open Educational Resource and is Principal Fellow of the Higher Education Academy (PFHEA), National Teaching Fellow (NTF) and received the Collaborative Award for Teaching Excellence (CATE). Dawne also received a National Award from her Subject Association recognising her outstanding contribution to re-shape teacher education.

March 2023

Congratulations to Bernard Aidoo, London Metropolitan University, on being awarded a Certified Practitioner of Learning Development (CeP).

Dawne

Double Awards for Kevin Brazant

Congratulations to Kevin Brazant, London Metropolitan University, on achieving both Senior Fellowship of AdvanceHE and Certified Leading Practitioner of Learning Development (CeLP).

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Congratulations and Welcome to LearnHigher Co-Lead Laura Key

I have been using LearnHigher resources to inspire my practice (in over 10 years in HE; currently as an Academic Skills Tutor at Leeds Beckett University) for a number of years. Being keen to become more involved in ALDinHE and to exchange knowledge about LD resources across the sector, I joined the Learn Higher Working Group in March 2022.

I have really enjoyed being part of this inter-institutional network, peer reviewing content and sharing ideas about LD more broadly, so when the opportunity arose to become co-chair of the group, I was eager to take on the challenge! In my day-to-day job at Leeds Beckett, I have responsibility for leading on in-curriculum teaching provision for my team, and being a working group member is invaluable in giving me sector-wide perspectives on pertinent LD issues and directions. I look forward to supporting the further development of the LearnHigher working group in the co-chair role.

Congratulations Folashade Akinmolayan Taiwo
Queen Mary, University of London

Congratulations to Folashade Akinmolayan Taiwo who has been awarded ALDinHE research funding for 2022-23, to explore:
Understanding the barriers to inclusivity and belonging within team based assessments

Congratulations Helen Webster

Congratulations to Helen Webster on a new role at the University of Oxford as Educational Development Consultant (Academic Skills Development)

Congratulations Sandra Abegglen

Congratulations to Sandra Abegglen, a Researcher in the School of Architecture, Planning and Landscape (SAPL) at the University of Calgary, Canada; who has become the first ALDinHE Certified Mentor (CeM). Sandra took part in the pilot and successfully carried out two sustained mentoring relationships over a minimum period of 6 months.

Following a successful pilot, the peer mentoring scheme and Certified Mentor (CeM) recognition scheme will be launched at this year’s ALDcon23.

Congratulations to Tom Burns who has been awarded ALDinHE research funding for 2022-23, to explore:
Building the Ideal Higher Education: A Creative, Imaginative Workshop for the LD Community

Congratulations to Linh Tran who has been awarded ALDinHE research funding for 2022-23, to explore:
The Meme-ification of teaching and learning: Using Memes to increase students engagement, understanding and knowledge retention.
The ALDinHE Award and The LD Team Award

Closing date for nominations: Tuesday 2nd May 2023

Nominate Now!
Tabletop strawberries
A raised surface and a few growbags are all you need to put this new technique to use in the garden

If you have never grown strawberries before, tabletop growing offers an array of advantages over the traditional practice of planting directly into the ground, making it easier to achieve a plentiful supply of fruit. Moreover, you don’t need lots of space or even a dedicated patch of soil to do it. Commercial strawberry growers have started to use the tabletop method, which involves planting directly into containers or grow bags supported about 90cm (36”) off the ground — or tabletop height. The technique transfers easily into the garden, giving you excellent access to your growing plants and saving you some backbreaking work when it comes to harvest time.

You can buy purpose-made tabletops from garden suppliers, or otherwise simply place growbags on some wooden centers or boxes, or even bricks or blocks of concrete. Alternatively, a homemade trough of compost raised to the correct height is another option, although this can’t be moved easily for overwintering.

The benefits of growing your strawberries this way are many, whether you choose to raise the plants outdoors or in the greenhouse. Cropping is much heavier; picking is easier without having to bend down; the fruit won’t get splashed with mud; there is no need for staking; it will reduce the risk of soil-borne diseases and weeds, and it will help to prevent attacks from slugs and vine weevils.

PLANTING & WATERING
Plant growbags in spring and summer with cold-stored runners (frozen), which will produce a small crop of large fruit later on in the year, or your own potted-up runners. Before planting, give the bag a hard shake to loosen up the compost. Then cut a 5cm (2”) horizontal slit just below the seam at each end for drainage and make small holes along the bottom where it overhangs the support. Next cut two rows, 10cm (4”) apart, of staggered planting holes in the top of the bag — 10 plants per 1m (3’4”) bag is ideal — with the centers of the holes about 7.5cm (3”) from the edge of the bag and 19cm (7¾”) apart. For bare-rooted plants, a 5 x 5cm (2 x 2”) N-shaped cut should be made. Fold the cut flaps under so they’re not on show.

Use a kitchen fork or narrow trowel to insert the plants into the compost so the roots are as straight as possible. The holes should be deep enough so that the base of each plant’s crown is resting on the soil surface. Water in thoroughly. Potted runners need a larger X shape so you can make the planting holes big enough. Use your fingers or a trowel and plant to the same depth as it was in the pot.

The key to watering your planted-up growbags is little and often. To make watering easier, you could use a drip-irrigation system, with at least two drippers per bag. The Big Drippa comprises a 10-litre water reservoir connected to lengths of tubing with drip valves on the end to control the dose, but any system suitable for growing tomatoes in growbags would be suitable.

Alternatively, cut two round holes, 5-10cm (3⁄4”) in diameter and 30cm (12”) apart, in the centre of the bag between the planting rows. Cut off the tops of plastic bottles and insert them into the holes, then pour in the water. Be careful not to overwater or allow the soil to become saturated as this will wash away nutrients and can kill the plants, especially very young plants.

Start giving a liquid feed every time you water three or four weeks after planting your bags, as by then all the existing nutrients in the compost will have been used up. Choose one with a high level of potassium, such as Phostrogen, Levington Tomato or Bio Tomato Feed. Strawberry plants start producing runners in June and these should be removed as they appear, using a sharp knife or secateurs.
Storage Bench

A great addition for your office or home with seating and storage combined.

Project Notes

Technique: Wood Craft
Skill Level: Beginner
Allow: Create in an Afternoon

You Will Need:
- Dremel Saw Max DSM20 Abrasive Circular Hand Saw
- Dremel DSM500 3inch wood and plastic carbide wheel
- 1 x 3" Cedar Planks
- 1/2" and 1/4" Plywood Sheet
- 1x1" Stock Planks
- Screwdriver
- Wood Screws
- Hinges
- Stain
- Foam
- Fabric

Suppliers:
All supplies from your local DIY store. Dremel products are available at all good DIY stores, online at Amazon and www.dremel.com

Step 1
Get started by cutting the frame for your bench. We chose 1x3 cedar for our frame. You’ll need eight 17” lengths of the 1x3 cedar for the legs and four 30” lengths of the 1x3 for the cross pieces. Additionally you’ll need four 12” pieces for the sides.

Measure and mark your cuts. Mount the DSM500 Wood and Plastic wheel in your Saw-Max tool. With the panel clamped to your workbench, turn on your tool and cut along the marked lines. You’ll notice how easy it is to follow your marked line through the notch at the front of the tool.

Planting takes centre stage now, but do keep an eye on the weather and make sure plants don’t suffer from frost.
Step 2
To give your bench a finished look, you may want to consider the 8 leg pieces an angled cut. On all 8 legs, draw a mark 3” from a bottom corner and 2” from the side. Connect the marks with a straight line. This will be your line of cut for the angle cut. With your material clamped, use your Saw-Max tool with the same DSM500 blade to cut along your marked line.

Step 3
Use wood glue to attach the frame pieces together for each of the four sides. If you made angle cuts as we did in step 2, be sure to keep all of the angled edges facing the inside of the frame.

Step 4
After glue sets, glue and screw together the 4 frame pieces with the shorter side frames inside of the longer front and back frames.

Step 5
Next, you’ll need to cut six 1/4” plywood panels to fit inside all four frames and one 1/4” plywood panel for the bench top. Cut two smaller panels for the side frames at 15” H x 16” W. Cut two larger panels for the front and back frames at 15” x 33.5”. Cut large panel for the bench top at 18” x 36”. Cut large panel for the bench bottom at 15.5” x 33.5”. With your plywood clamped, use your Saw-Max tool with the same DSM500 blade to cut along your marked line. You may need to cut along one edge of your panel at a time, stopping to re-position your plywood before moving on to your next cut. We wrapped all of our panels in fabric for a decorative touch. If you choose to do this as well, you’ll need to cut a piece of fabric to cover the top of the plywood, leaving plenty of overhang. Lay your plywood panel on top of your fabric. Fold and staple your fabric along each edge of your plywood panels.

Step 6
Secure your two front and back panels and two side panels of plywood inside of your frame using a drill and wood screws.

Step 7
Next you’ll need to create a base for the bottom to be secured to. Here we used the same angled cutting technique from step 2 to cut four cleats to fit inside each of the four bottom corners. We cut our cleats about 3” long. Secure your cleats into each corner at one inch from the bottom using your drill and wood screws.

Step 8
With your cleat base now in place, fasten your bottom plywood panel piece by drilling the corners of the panel into each cleat.

Step 9
Before finally installing the bench top, we added foam underneath our fabric for extra comfort. Cut a piece of fabric to cover the top of the plywood, leaving plenty of overhang. Stack first your foam on top of your piece of fabric then lay your plywood panel on top of it. Fold and staple your fabric along each edge of your plywood panel. With your bench top now fully assembled, secure it to the top of your bench using hinges. We used a total of three hinges; two for each end and one for the middle for added support.
Delicious Bread to Break and
Hearty Black Currant Jam

Make a lovely hot bread for breakfast, lunch or dinner—already portioned and individually flavoured—ideal for sharing with dear friends and family, loaded with hearty blackcurrant jam!

Beginner Level - Bread 1 ½ Hour Jam 30 Minutes + Cooling Time

To Make the Bread

Bread Utensils: Large Mixing Bowl, Wooden Spoon, TeaTowel, Heart Shaped Baking Form.

Bread Ingredients: 50g Fresh Yeast, 2.5 dl Luke Warm Water, 1 Teasp. Salt, 1 Teasp. Sugar, 2 TableSp. Vegetable Oil, 6-7 dl. Flour, A little Milk, Different Seeds and Nuts

Pull the fresh yeast apart into small cubes into a large mixing bowl, add the lukewarm water—slowly stirring to dissolve the yeast. Now add salt, sugar, oil and flour—mix all together to a smooth dough—5 minutes in a kitchen machine or 10 minutes by hand.

Leave the dough in the bowl, covered by a clean teatowel to raise (proof) for 5 minutes only.

Grease the form with vegetable oil or with butter which ever you prefer.

Take the dough out of the bowl and knead it through—add a little flour if needed. Form into a thick roll and cut it into equal sized parts—my baking form is 23cm by 24cm and 11 dough balls fitted perfectly.

Brush the balls with a little milk and sprinkle healthy seeds and delicious nuts on them—flavour each individually! seeds blue poppy seeds, white sesame seeds, sunflower seeds, pumpkin seeds, pistachios and chopped hazel nuts. Leave to raise again for 20 minutes under teatowel. Bake on 220 C—430 F for 12-14 minutes.

To Make the Jam

Jam Utensils: Small Cooking Pot, Wooden Spoon and Clean, Sterilized and Hot Glass Jars.

Jam Ingredients: 2 Litre (1kg.) Black Currants, 1 kg. Sugar or Jam Sugar, 0.5 Litre Water

Clean the berries—top and tail them and give them a wash if they are dirty.

Put them in cooking pot along with the water and bring to the boil. Let simmer slowly for approximately 15 minutes.

Take the pot from the heat, use a wooden ladle and stir in the sugar. Continue simmering the berries until the sugar has dissolved for about 5 minutes—skim off the foam that develops with the wooden spoon.

Pour the jam into the warm glasses and close the lids straight away. Leave the jars to cool and keep them refrigerated.

Mmmmm—Enjoy!
These yarn letters are very simple to make and look great in your home or office. Choose a letter or word that has meaning to you and display where you can see it every day for inspiration. All you need for this project is a paper mache letter (available from all good craft shops), yarn, tape and scissors.

**Step 1:** Tape one end of the yarn to the back of your letter facing up. Begin wrapping close to the edge of the letter. Be careful the yarn doesn’t slide off the edge as you work with it. Cross over the yarn as you wrap around curves in an X.

**Step 2:** Continue wrapping and pushing the yarn into place. Pull the yarn tight as you wrap.

**Step 3:** When you are finished, cut the yarn and tape into place or tuck in.

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**Project Notes**

**Technique:** Yarn Craft  
**Skill Level:** Beginner  
**Allow:** Create in 1 Hour  

**You Will Need:**  
- Paper mache letter  
- Yarn  
- Tape  
- Scissors  

**Suppliers:** Supplies available from all general craft shops

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**TIP**

For the curves, cut short pieces of yarn and glue them across the difficult edges and curves with a hot glue gun. Do this if you need to fill any gaps too.
Handy household tips

TRAVELLING TO #ALDCON23?
If you suffer from car sickness - put a ¼ table spoon of ground ginger in a cup of water and drink this before you travel-it helps a lot!

LAVENDER
A few drops of lavender oil on your pillow makes you rest more peacefully and sleep well through the night-plus you might dream of the coming summer.

HAIR TREATMENT
A great and easy to make hair treatment is to warm up half a cup of olive oil, squeeze in the juice of a lemon and leave to work in the hair for 30 minutes-it works wonders!

THE BOOK SHELF
We've been turning the pages on some of the best books. As and when you come across helpful reading for the #LoveLD Learning Development Community, please pop a quick note on the ALDinHE book sharing padlet. We want to collate the reading of the LDHEN hive mind!

PAINTING
If you don’t have time to finish off the paint job-wrap the brush in cling film and leave it in the fridge for the night to keep it fresh.

Painting

Lavender

Hair Treatment
This magazine was designed and produced by Dr Katharine Jewitt, Administrator of the Association for Learning Development in Higher Education.

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Keep in touch with #ALDinHE on social media:

Contact: admin@aldinhe.ac.uk