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Report on Work from October 2011 to August 2012 as University Learning Development Associate for Curriculum Development and for Learning Environments

Angela Dove, Cass Business School

This is my second year as a Learning Development Associate. During this year I have had two roles that are theme based: curriculum development and learning environments. An additional change has been the requirement to work across schools rather than as last year, being centred on one school. In prioritising my work and balancing the two roles I have been mindful of educational excellence becoming even more important as a result of the University's Strategic Vision

Excel amongst our peers in the quality of educational experience offered to our students. A key driver to that being, developing and strengthening the quality of our education, research and enterprise and the physical environment in which we deliver them.

There were clear criteria expected of me in the posts, and I have strived to meet these as much as possible. These were:

- Championing the theme(s) by disseminating good practice, engaging staff and working on cross institutional projects
- Providing professional and expert advice and support
- Work with staff/students on developing project ideas: and mentoring
- Lead on informal networks or groups
- Scholarly activity
- Active role in the LDC network
- Providing expert advice: contributing to policy where appropriate

Providing professional and expert advice and support, contributing to policy, working with staff and students on developing project ideas, active role in LDC network

An important part of my remit has been to work with individuals and teams to think through and develop ideas for learning environments that provide students and staff with an excellent learning and teaching experience. With an emphasis on tens of millions of building expenditure on the physical environment it has been important to inject pedagogic and design principles into the learning space design project.

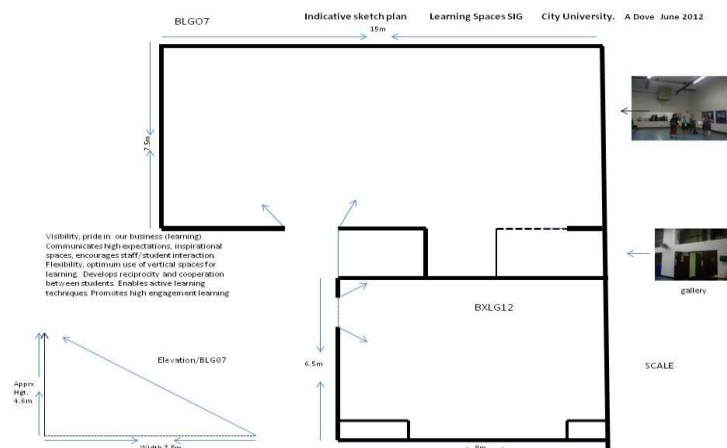
The Learning Spaces project run by the LDC in conjunction with Property and Facilities from autumn 2011 and ongoing, looks at the physical teaching and learning spaces at City University and considers the best ways of designing our learning spaces. I was tasked with designing and facilitating a workshop to specifically draw out ideas and designs for two proposed pilot spaces. This entailed working closely with Rae Karimjee, the project manager. The resulting event was notable for the mix of participants which included students working with teaching faculty, PAF and central booking. The outputs from the workshop on Dec 1st 2011 provided the framework for a new type of integrated teaching space.



Learning Space Design forum: students and faculty formulating space plans

Throughout my tenure I have been an active member of The Learning Space Group, and The Learning Space Special Interest Group. I have provided support for staff outside of Property and Facilities, based on my professional and prior experience in space design. The Learning Spaces SIG requested a workshop for indicative planning of one of the forthcoming redesigned spaces. In previous meetings we had identified Chickering and Gamson's principles for high engagement learning as core pedagogic principles for all new or redesigned learning spaces. I devised a simplified plan of existing space (Sports Hall) for participants to draw up their ideas towards briefing the architects.

I was able to draw on twelve years' experience of assisting organisations, including universities, engaged in major space projects, where involving all players in the design process is key to a successful outcome. I conducted research into Inspirational learning spaces, and innovative furniture, plus my own use of innovative spaces for learning. An example of the latter is using cultural and other spaces close to the University for site visits and structured activities: these have recently included the Hunterian Museum of Medicine and The London Metropolitan Archives.



Materials devised for the Learning Spaces SIG workshop to formulate indicative space plans

Developing project ideas and mentoring, championing the theme(s) by disseminating good practice, engaging staff and working on cross institutional projects

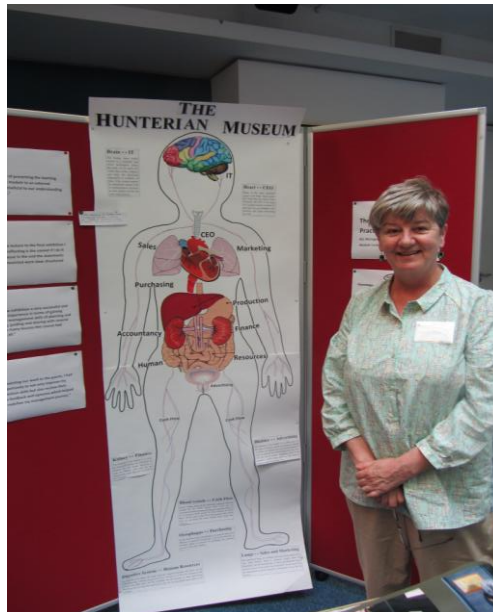
I was approached by a module leader who, with colleagues was in the process of revision and redesign of a UG module. This teacher had heard about my work on developing the Dérive teaching format with the Business School and wanted to explore the possibilities for developing it for their module. We discussed the project face to face, e-mail and phone, and I provided documentation for the dérive: including research, and the course materials. An invitation followed to present at a course meeting. As this is essentially an experiential form of learning, I invited the teacher to accompany me on one in the Clerkenwell and Smithfield locality. We individually documented this, through notes and photographs and subsequently shared and discussed these. I was then invited, with the students' permission to observe a class taking the present module. Key ideas shared with this colleague include: using the dérive format to mine the environments around City for learning, sharing the wealth of research myself and colleagues have done towards developing this pioneering format successfully at UG and Postgraduate level.



Noticing small details: image taken on a pilot Dérive, showing smokers ignoring the signage.

Championing my themes: disseminating good practice, active role in the LDC network

Throughout the ten months, I have attended a variety of City events, most importantly the Learning at City Conference on Assessment and Feedback in June, with the opportunity to network with colleagues from across the schools and to co-present a paper, 'Stimulating Student Engagement: Does it Work?' The Arts and Social Sciences Fete was also a very valuable event, and a quick and direct way of finding out about new initiatives and ongoing projects. In February 2012, I shared my work developing a new UG module Reflective Practice at The Learning Development Student Engagement showcase. I was delighted to be awarded a Fellowship of the LDC, at this same event.



Presenting student work drawing on reflective exercises by business students visiting the museum of The Royal College of Surgeons: Cass Teaching and Learning Showcase 22.5.2012

Active role in the LDC network, providing professional and expert advice and support

Throughout the year I have contributed regularly to **Educational Vignettes**, the LDC blog for sharing educational ideas, best practice and achievements.

Educational Vignettes
Sharing case studies, reviews, and tips at City University London

Welcome to Educational Vignettes | How to Contribute | Calendar of upcoming events | Type text to search here...

Learning Space Design at City, what students really want
July 20, 2012 | angeladove | 2 comments | Edit

In a very recent report from the Students Union to Senate, one of the 5 student community themes put forward concerned **Learning and Social spaces that reflect the value City places on quality education, interaction and collaboration.**

"Students expect facilities which are fit for purpose, welcoming, comfortable and focused on their needs. We would like to see an Estates Strategy which looks at existing spaces as places where achievement is celebrated. The long term plans for new spaces should reflect students' desires to come together to study, eat and socialise."

There are some excellent learning spaces at City, however still far too few are distinctive enough to make a memorable impact on actual or prospective students. We may not be able to do much with our historic building stock, so it is all the more vital that new and refurbished spaces go out of their way to represent and reinforce the values of academic

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- Top Tips for Filming from the MILL

LDC Educational Vignettes postings

20.7.2012 Learning space design at City - what students really want: This puts forward the importance of a recent Student Union Document (senate 2012) which identifies their key values: *Interaction, opportunity, identity, energy, excitement, enrichment, buzz, pride, inspiration, belonging, personalisation, participation, boundary breaking, diversity, lifelong friendship.* I propose these are also key to achieving distinctive and innovative learning spaces

13.7.2012 Powerpoints are not the only route: Working with a City academic on solving specific challenges when giving presentations. This posting stimulated a good deal of comment.

7.7.2012 Using debate as a teaching format: passing on learning innovations by colleagues teaching in other institutions who are successfully using debate to promote creativity through learning. Here I'm also emphasising the importance of establishing critical reasoning as a key learning outcome for first year undergraduates

23.5.2012 The Reflective Practitioner – shared experience of designing a new module; A case study, outlining the story from the initial stimulus of employers' requirements at the 2010 LDC Conference, then through the research, design, implementation and successful learning outcomes

4.5.2012 Educational excellence and Creativity - the undergraduate curriculum; Sharing key ideas on curriculum development brought back from attending the Creativity Conference, Cultural Capital Exchange in conjunction with The British Library in March 2012.

11.3.2012 Teaching in a new type of space at city; Sharing experience of teaching in one of the new pilot spaces (A109) that resulted from our Learning Space Forum. The module is normally taught in a standard classroom. This posting stimulated further discussion on the desirability of flexible and stimulating teaching spaces.

2.1.2012 Integrated flexible learning spaces: Inspirational learning spaces, International examples

20.12.2011 Student engagement in the design of innovative teaching and learning spaces:

Attending Teaching and Learning Events at City

31.1. 2012 The Learning Development Showcase: poster

17.2.2012 LDA review meeting

22.5.2012 Cass Assessment and Feedback Conference: presented a poster

13.6.2012 Attending the Learning at City Conference co presented a paper and chaired a session

Scholarly activity, championing the theme(s) by disseminating good practice, engaging staff and working on cross institutional projects
Teaching and Learning Research Conferences and papers

Attended the Creativity Conference. Cultural Capital Exchange in conjunction with The British Library at British Library: March 2012. Amongst the key ideas brought back and shared with colleagues was learning from the Conservatoire approach, where creativity helps to develop existing talents as well as a lifelong approach to learning. The inclusion of creativity in the first year UG curriculum could greatly enhance their employability skills and their ability to grow and adapt to change.

Taking part in the second JISC Webinar on Curriculum Design Nov 2nd 2011 was an opportunity to find out what 31 colleagues are concerned about nationally and internationally. As people joined the session, from Canada, India, and Australia, Marianne Shepherd of JISC presented key ideas: beginning with suggesting three levels of desired improvement. Personal transformation and learning, curriculum transformation and Institutional transformation. And the key drivers, being enhancing the learning experience and improving graduate employability. Ideas I brought back from this included the Open University's OULD Project, which uses different tools for visually planning and representing the curriculum. These are not only digital tools, they also have, for example, sets of stickers and A3 sheets of paper. These are techniques that I have successfully used both in my own teaching and in mentoring colleagues. Important as the digital is, analogue materials play an essential role in visualising and collaborating.

Subsequently I took part in a very different web learning event. The whole I Moot virtual conference from 26th to 28th May 2012 was live using Adobe Connect. It attracted an audience of hundreds, with dozens of presenters and multiple parallel streams running 24/7 across time zones. City was represented through a presentation, and the live chat session I participated in included Martin Dougiamas, inventor/founder of Moodle. This proved to be an in depth, live exploration of the future of Moodle, with colleagues across the globe. Shared learning I brought back from this included the potential of Adobe Connect for City, with the range of tools for generating interactivity.

Scholarly, working with staff/students on developing project ideas, disseminating good practice

LDC Curriculum Development Project. This was a major action-research project carried out in the Business School and the research part of which was funded as an LDC Learning Development project. I became involved in the research aspect arising out of my LDA responsibilities for curriculum development. The course team had made very active use of Moodle, and were anxious to combine Moodle and non-Moodle data to evaluate the operation of the module. Use was made of Moodle in interesting ways, for example the "Lesson" module which in effect allows very detailed tracking of student navigation through materials. Also, the academic team made intensive use of a special Moodle area for their own internal co-ordination. Centred on the redesigned Management Practice and Skills double module, this research project took place during and for six months after the module was finished.

It is probably the single most intensive application of Moodle to a large scale high stakes module within the business school and possibly the university

Resulting Papers/Conferences 2012

Holtham, Clive; Rich, Martin; Brown, Ann; Angela Dove, Angela and Jawaheer, Gawesh; (2012) "Evaluating Engagement to Address Undergraduate First Year Transition: A Case Study" CSEDU, Porto, April 16-18

Brown, Ann; Rich, Martin; Holtham, Clive and Dove, Angela (2012) "Managing redesign of a business degree", ABS Teaching and Learning Conference, Manchester, April 24-25

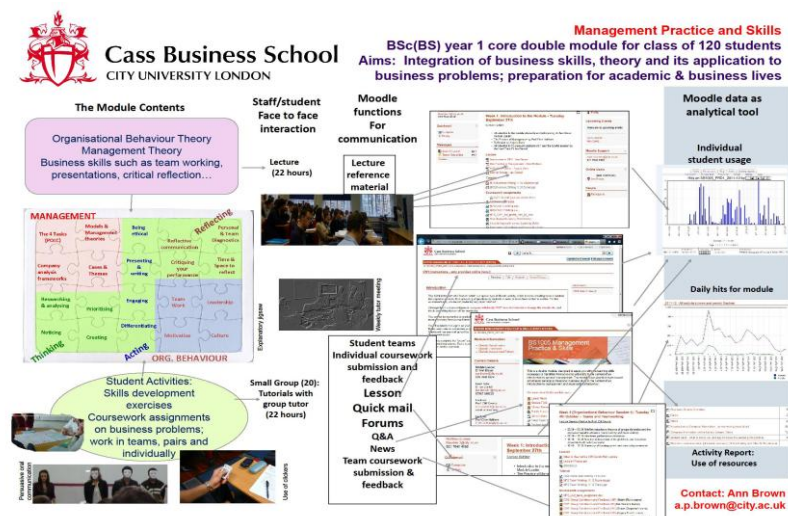
Rich; Martin; Holtham, Clive; Brown, Ann; Dove, Angela (2012) "Evaluating business students' experiential learning, using analytics and learning styles" EABIS, Paris, April 26-27

EABIS was an important networking event relating to future international collaboration

Brown, Ann; Rich, Martin; Holtham, Clive and Dove, Angela (2012) "Stimulating Student Engagement: Does it Work?" Learning at City Conference, London, June 13
We received very positive feedback from the workshop presentation, which was also captured on video by the LDC.

Brown, Ann; Rich, Martin; Holtham, Clive and Dove, Angela (2012) "Blending transmissive and didactic learning, and physical and digital channels, in the redesign of a professional degree" JISC Blended Learning Conference, Hatfield June 13-14

Holtham, Clive; Brown, Ann; Rich; Martin; Angela Dove (2012) "Liquid learning: Re-designing undergraduate management education" EGOS 2012, Helsinki, July 2012
Acceptance of the paper at the prestigious European Group for Organisational Skills led to much discussion and scope for further collaboration



This poster summarises the operational side of MPS

Lead on informal networks or groups

Throughout the year I have had meetings and discussions with experts close to City. These have included Alison Duffy (MICL), The London Metropolitan Archives, Alison Coward: director of Bracket – collaboration between business and the Arts, and Sylvain Bureau: professor of Information and Management and co-director of the Entrepreneurship major at ESCP Europe

Championing the theme(s) by disseminating good practice, engaging staff and working on cross institutional projects, active role in the LDC network

March 2012 Article Published in the Learning at City Journal

The MA in Academic Practice (MAAP) module in curriculum design and evaluation. Together with Dr. Pam Parker, I ran a student engagement workshop. This focused on why students should be engaged in designing curriculum and how we might do it in a meaningful way. We used materials I developed from Learner Voice: publ. future lab 2006. With the key framework of inform, consult, involve, collaborate and empower. I was invited back to run a further session in June 2012, on curriculum design. Our focus here was on devising new learning activities that reflect often currently missing employability skills: critical thinking, reflection, persuasive communication and self-awareness.



MAAP students presenting fresh curriculum ideas for high engagement learning

Professional Development

Championing the theme(s) by disseminating good practice, engaging staff and working on cross institutional projects

13/14.3.2012 Participated in two workshops run by Gawesh Jawaheer on evaluating Moodle statistics and their uses.

9.6.2012 I attended a presentation on the use of an innovative computer programme to set up student teams. (University of Hertfordshire)

Throughout the year I have continued my work on reflective practice which links together my professional practice and the LDA work. Increasingly reflective practice is seen as a core aspect of learning in many disciplines and employers are now actively seeking graduates who can demonstrate critical analysis, self-awareness and the ability to reflect, as well as professional and technical skills. To document this work, I have been engaged in active and continuous data collection using multiple media. For example, video, plus a comprehensive photographic record, and feedback from the exhibition on 4.4.2012 of students' work on the combined Reflective Practitioner Modules, which was a strong success and stimulated interest from several schools and external guests.



The experience of presenting the learning outcomes of the Reflective Practitioner module to an external audience was beneficial to our understanding of our potential. Student feedback 2012

Conclusion

My aim over the course of the year has been to balance out the contribution to the two LDA roles of Learning Environments and Curriculum Design. This has been achieved as can be seen from the details above. I would like to draw together the threads of the two themes and the ways in which I have worked as an LDA to fulfil the original criteria.

Learning Environments

- Leading on workshops, presentations
- Mentoring and developing project ideas
- Research and providing professional advice and support
- Disseminating good practice cross institutionally

Curriculum Development

Engaging and Working with staff on project development
Major research project: papers and conferences
Active role in LDC network: T and L events
Professional and expert advice and support
Disseminating good practice

Working across schools has been central to my experience over the year. Close involvement in the Learning Space Project has led to championing the vital importance of pedagogic principles informing the design of all our learning spaces. Developing relationships through mentoring and presentations has led to cross disciplinary project ideas, such as using the environment and cultural venues close to City for learning, which I am anxious to promote further to faculty. It has proved possible to pursue major scholarly activity and to disseminate that work widely within the university, and externally, for example, the LDC Curriculum Development Project. With the major investments about to take place in educational excellence in the University, there is likely to be continued importance of niche roles such as LDAs that can directly contribute to central and school efforts, through researching externally national and international good practice, and internally supporting the change process.