

## The Art of Virtual Learning: VLEs in art and design settings

Tuesday 14 April 2009, University of East London, Docklands Campus

### ABSTRACTS & SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

10.00	Arrivals and coffee
10.15	Introduction and house-keeping
10.30	Session 1 - One Step Beyond: VLEs in art and design Annamarie McKie, University of Creative Arts
11.10	Session 2 - Integrating e-resources within a University VLE Jill Beard and Kathryn Cheshir, Bournemouth University
11.50	Session 3 - A VLE of one's own? A Virtual Learning Environment that works for studio-based learning Tony McNeill and Lucy Renton Kingston University
12.30	Lunch
13.30	Practical session - Linking the outside inside - a hands-on session using communication tools and technologies within the VLE Annette Odell and Rose Heaney, University of East London
14.45	Tea
15.15	Group discussions
16.00	Close

#### **Session 1 One Step Beyond: VLEs in art and design.**

Annamarie McKie, University of Creative Arts

I am interested in how VLEs are used in art and design colleges and why many academic staff have problems with the pedagogic limitations of this type of platform. It seems that for many, the experience of using a VLE is just to post course documents and information for students; it has become a passive transmission tool. Why is it not being used in a more dynamic way; to encourage active collaboration and reflective development in students, when they already engage in this type of debate within social networks? My talk will focus on how libraries can lead the way in encouraging more innovative use of VLEs and how social networking tools can be incorporated within VLE platforms to offer a much more rewarding learning experience for art and design students.

Annamarie McKie, BA (Hons), MA, MCLIP, FHEA, LLS Learning and Research Services  
Manager Annamarie McKie, University of Creative Arts

Annamarie has been a chartered librarian since 1995. She has over ten years experience working in academic libraries, moving into the more specialist field of art and design librarianship, in 1999. Her first art and design position was Reader Services Librarian at Camberwell College of Art, University of the Arts London, where she started to become interested in eLearning. Since 2001, she has been a College Librarian at the University for the Creative Arts, latterly chairing the Canterbury eLearning group. She has recently been appointed as LLS Learning and Research Services Manager at the University and is hoping to further explore the potential of social and virtual learning environments to support the diverse learning styles and changing needs of students.

## Session 2 Integrating e-resources within a University VLE

Jill Beard and Kathryn Cheshir, Bournemouth University

E-learning has become an integral part of many students' learning experience. Over the last five years the availability of e-books and e-journals has increased dramatically and in many higher education libraries there has been a steady movement from print to electronic materials. At Bournemouth University over 60% of the total Library budget is now spent on electronic resources. In some Schools within the University it is in the region of 70%. The ways in which students are using the resources are changing.

Bournemouth University has 3 years experience of integrating e-resources and support within Blackboard. The aim was to approach the potential of Blackboard from the perspective of our learners and so we chose the unit of study as our standard for integration, which is the equivalent of a course in Blackboard. Thus the focus was on providing the materials where they would be most accessible to the students.

Our focus has been on the provision of reading lists, the replacement of a physical short loan collection by e-resource, the storage of past exam papers, the introduction of virtual help and advice including the introduction of social bookmarking; blogs and wikis.

This paper will look at what has been done in these areas and how Librarians and learning technologists have forged new partnerships to deliver the virtual learning space.

Jill Beard, Deputy University Librarian, Bournemouth University

Jill's responsibilities include the development of support for the academic community and the evaluation and enhancement of service quality. She was Project Advisor on the Higher Education Academy funded Pathfinder project at Bournemouth University, eRes: Innovative e-learning with e-resources. She has a considerable research and publication record, notably in the area of health information.

e-mail: [jbeard@bournemouth.ac.uk](mailto:jbeard@bournemouth.ac.uk)

Tel: +44(0)1202 965567 Fax: +44 (0)1202 965475 Mobile:+44 (0)7718805431

[www.bournemouth.ac.uk/library](http://www.bournemouth.ac.uk/library)

<http://www.bournemouth.ac.uk/eds/eres/documents/eResReadingStrategiesbriefingpaper.pdf>

Kathryn Cheshir, Senior Learning Technologist, Educational Development Services, Bournemouth University

Kathryn is one of the Learning Technologists working on eRes and has the lead responsibility for working with the Library on integrating resources within the VLE.

e-mail: [kcheshir@bournemouth.ac.uk](mailto:kcheshir@bournemouth.ac.uk) Tel: +44 (0) 1202 965442

<http://www.bournemouth.ac.uk/eds/> <http://www.bournemouth.ac.uk/eds/eres/index.html>

## Session 3 A VLE of one's own?

### A Virtual Learning Environment that works for studio-based learning.

Tony McNeill and Lucy Renton Kingston University

Within the Faculty of Art, Design and Architecture (FADA), many course teams are committed to ideal of a community of practice operating primarily in the context of the studio. This commitment explains, in part, resistance to the Blackboard VLE which is deemed to provide inappropriate support to studio-based courses. Until recently, few initiatives have succeeded in convincing colleagues of the potential value of Blackboard to such programmes. However, over the last four years central e-developer support on a number of VLE-related educational

technology projects has sought to address the perceived *décalage* between studio practice and VLE functionality. This presentation will demonstrate a number of these projects and will address some of the key issues that have emerged from them, including sustainability, the appropriateness of Blackboard's design options, and the future of the VLE in the context of Web 2.0 tools and environments predicated on very different models of ownership and participation. Available at: <http://www.slideshare.net/amcneill/a-vle-of-ones-own>.

Lucy Renton MA (RCA) PGCert, FHEA. Faculty Blended Learning Leader, Faculty of Art Design and Architecture, Kingston University.

Lucy trained as a Fine Artist, and has worked for nearly twenty years at a variety of art colleges as a studio lecturer. In 2006 she was appointed as the Faculty Blended Learning Leader for FADA at Kingston University, and has worked with academic, technical and support staff in the implementation of the Blended Learning Strategy. This has involved developing organisational structures, customisations of existing VLE resources, staff training, and research. Recent HEA funded projects in collaboration with Nottingham Trent University School of Fine Art include, the Reflexive Archive (2007-8), and the Reflexive Practitioner (2009-10)-part of the Stepping Out project. Lucy also has a fractional appointment at the University of the Arts, London, where she works as a Learning Development Advisor. She has a particular interest in the pedagogies of Fine Art and the Open Curriculum. You may like to visit one of her pageflakes pagecasts <http://www.pageflakes.com/CLTADNY/21824664>.

Tony McNeill BA, MA (Hull). Principal Lecturer in Educational Technology, Academic Development Centre, Kingston University.

Tony is based in the Academic Development Centre of Kingston University where he is responsible for staff development opportunities in the area of educational technology and where he also manages a small team of e-developers working on a range of central and faculty projects. He is also part of a small team responsible for defining and supporting the educational technology infrastructure at Kingston University and therefore takes a keen interest in the growing range of digital tools and environments now available. In a former life Tony was a lecturer in French Studies and became interested in educational technology in the late 1990s when he was involved in a HEFCE FDTL project on web-enhanced language learning (The WELL Project). His current interests include the role of social media, including social networking sites, in Higher Education and the current 'hot' topic of digital literacy.

## **Practical Session Linking the outside inside**

### **A hands-on session using communication tools and technologies within the VLE.**

Annette Odell and Rose Heaney, University of East London

Annette Odell, Learning Technology Advisor, University of East London

Annette is one of the e-learning team responsible for staff development related to the use of learning technologies, Annette has particular responsibility for supporting staff within the Library, Student Services and the School of Architecture and the Visual Arts. She was recently made a UEL Teaching Fellow and is currently researching the support needs of staff and students related to Web 2.0 technologies.

Rose Heaney, Learning Technology Advisor at the University of East London

Rose is one of the e-learning team responsible for staff development related to the use of learning technologies. Rose has particular responsibility for supporting staff within the School of Health and Biosciences and her current research includes the use of Virtual Worlds for simulations in comparison to other more traditional simulation methods.