

## Learning Futures – The challenge



Universities have a responsibility to - and the ability to - provide a holistic environment for learning at the level of higher education. The on-campus buildings are adorned with the names of historical benefactors. These help to keep us grounded in the values and traditions of the past. The physical environment includes the means to research, digital the archives of past learning and the presentation of new knowledge, the resources for learning and living, the people and the (for many) unparalleled and pervasive 'atmosphere' of scholarship. The campus buildings provide the focus and wherewithal for nothing less than the creation and transmission of cultures ...to position our society for the future. Who amongst us will dispute this?

The original kind of off-campus extension to learning is familiar to us- field trips, clinical practice, gallery visits – all powerful, important and part of the scholarly experience. However, technology provides largely untapped opportunities for creating new types of learning environments that extend the possibilities of the 'old' tools (books, lecture theatres, seminars rooms). Consider the encouraging success of podcasting in geography, for example.

However... 'online' is a learning environment too. The scope, depth and breadth of possibilities have grown exponentially over two decades. Millions of people experience electronic networked environments, in their variety of guises, as communities and as libraries, each providing access to untold riches for knowledge generation and sharing.

Many millions contribute to building them too – without the benefit of a campus.

Of course the online space is much less organized or controlled compared to the physical academy. Time works differently. Interdisciplinarity is the norm not the exception. Contributions are scrutinized for their usefulness rather than the status of their author. Hierarchies are less obvious. The importance of personal identity (and the associated potential for discrimination) is more complex, often with different constructs in different contexts. Ownership is based less on monetary benefactors and more on commitment and knowledge. More recently, one way communications media such as radio and TV have been somewhat swamped by interactive and participative approaches- Web 2.0 take the stage! As educators of the 21st Century, we have to put more effort into design and delivery for successful learning as a result.

So... we invite you to 'Start The Year' and look forward with the 2008 Learning Futures Conference: The Campus and Beyond. Here the focus will be on collaborating for understanding, researching and practising learning and teaching in Higher Education in environments old and new, familiar, traditional and mixed. We invite you to join with us and see e-learning as the vital alternative to the traditional campus of the future, *as well as* its extending force. Most importantly we will look towards and over the horizon...and consider the best pathways.

*Professor Gilly Salmon*

### Further details

[www.le.ac.uk/beyonddistance](http://www.le.ac.uk/beyonddistance)  
or use one of the contacts below

### Booking

To book a place, contact:

**E-mail:** [sdu@le.ac.uk](mailto:sdu@le.ac.uk)

**Phone:** +44 (0) 116 252 5118

**Fax:** +44 (0) 116 223 1815

Staff Development Centre  
Charles Wilson Building  
University of Leicester  
University Road  
Leicester LE1 7RH

### Venue

Gilbert Murray Conference Centre  
Oadby, Leicester

Gilbert Murray Hall, founded in 1957 is set in its own landscaped gardens. This dedicated conference centre is a highly regarded conference venue. It provides ample space for registration and hospitality along with seminar space, all under one roof and the adjacent lawned areas offer the perfect location for our conference with a selection of en suite accommodation nearby.

### Cost

**£200** for the 2 days including overnight accommodation

**£75** for day 2 only

Free of charge to University of Leicester staff - Day attendance only

**(Please note:** the Conference dinner is not included- this costs £14.50 if you wish to attend)

Beyond Distance Research Alliance

# Learning Futures

Conference 2008:

*The Campus & Beyond*

A two day international conference

Tuesday 8 Jan 2008: The Campus and Beyond

Wednesday 9 Jan 2008: Research Into Practice

 University of  
**Leicester**

# The Learning Futures Conference

## The Campus & Beyond

The 2007 Beyond Distance conference focussed on 'Learning Futures' - spotting future trends and learner expectations, and how practitioners can ride the surf to improve learning and teaching.

It built on the 2005 and 2006 conferences which were concerned with setting the e-learning research agenda.

The hallmark of the BDRA conferences is the provision of space, time and ideas for those involved in e-learning teaching and learning to come together to exchange ideas and think through the development of concepts, theories and rigorous and appropriate methodologies, good practice and models of change.

An important aim has been to shift the focus to improving student learning from concentration on learning technologies.

**The 2008 conference** is firmly focussed on Learning Futures: spotting future trends and learner expectations, and riding the surf to improve learning and teaching.

The aims are:

- To articulate and surface key transferable e-learning ideas and models for consideration in different contexts
- To develop stronger relationships promoting research on innovative teaching in inter-disciplinary, intra-disciplinary, cross professional, multi institutional ways through building principles and models for testing through work in practice and context
- To continue to shift the focus to improving student learning from learning technologies, with a particular emphasis on those renewing distance learning programmes

## 8 January 2008 The Campus and Beyond

A fast paced day with keynote addresses and moderated shorter presentations - and plenty of time to network.

The conference will be chaired by Christine Fyffe, Pro Vice Chancellor, Teaching and Learning, University of Leicester.

Keynote speakers include:

- **Dr Tony Bates**, President, Tony Bates Associates Ltd, on the implications of Web 2.0 for teaching and learning in a knowledge based economy.
- **Professor Gilly Salmon**, Professor of e-learning & learning technologies, University of Leicester, on the campus and beyond
- **Student Speakers**, from the University of Leicester and NUS (invited) giving a student perspective on e-learning
- **Dr Linda Creanor**, Senior Lecturer (e-learning) Glasgow Caledonian University on .....

You can choose from six strands in the elective moderated sessions focussed on our conference theme:

- responses to the speakers: discussion
- employability
- personalisation
- informal/formal learning
- approaches to inclusion
- models of change

Sessions will be moderated by colleagues from the University of Leicester.

Participants are invited to propose short presentations by **15 November 2007** to [learningfutures2008@le.ac.uk](mailto:learningfutures2008@le.ac.uk)

The slots will be confirmed by **7 December 2007**.

There will also be a '**Research Dragons**' session: are you bold enough to put out your research idea for consideration by a panel of research hardened evaluators in the public eye? More details will be sent to those who book a place.



Visit the innovative Media Zoo and interact with, experience and experiment with some of the 'technological wildlife on offer'

## 9 January 2008 Research into Practice

The day will provide opportunities to showcase briefly current plans and developments in e-learning research and seek support, collaboration and ideas. If you want to showcase your research, please email [learningfutures2008@le.ac.uk](mailto:learningfutures2008@le.ac.uk) by **31 October 2007**. A proforma will be provided.

Professor Gilly Salmon will hold a 'research surgery' by sign up appointment to talk through questions participants have on planned research.

In addition, there will be a series of research workshops, including:

- **Podcasting - IMPALA stories** – This session will enable practitioners and researchers from all areas of further and higher education to learn about a range of empirically-tested transferable models for using podcasts in higher education and to consider options for developing podcasts and evaluating student learning. Practitioners from a range of academic disciplines who are involved in the HEA-funded IMPALA project will present their approaches to developing and using podcasts to address key teaching and learning challenges.

- **Web 2.0 and mobile learning by Teaching Assistants - WoLF stories** – This session is based on a JISC funded project investigating how Pocket PCs and Web 2.0 tools support portfolio development by teaching assistants (TAs) on foundation degree courses. WoLF aims to develop a model for integrating institutional VLE, personal mobile devices and Web 2.0 technologies for the purpose of work-based learning by non-traditional learners. In this session, teaching assistants will tell their stories of how the technology made an impact on their learning in a work-based setting.

- **Embedding good e-learning practice** – The ADELIE project was a one-year HEA-funded Pathfinder project to October 2007. ADELIE worked with academic staff to embed good e-learning practice across the University of Leicester, with a focus on course re-design to meet the e-learning needs of specific departments. The ADDER project, which started in October 2007, builds on ADELIE research but focuses on developing departmental assessment practices as part of e-learning design across 4 disciplines at 4 universities.

The session will focus on lessons learned from ADELIE and its key messages to the sector, the interaction between capacity building and research work as part of both ADELIE and ADDER, and design and assessment for learning in Higher Education.

- **Seal: Second Environment Advanced Learning** – The SEAL project will elicit viable and preferred futures for learning in education through creating and researching interactive events with communities of learners, teachers, technologists and creative practitioners in Second Life. The potential for 'freeing up' existing mindsets could enable visioning of advanced approaches to learning – and SEAL will work out what is new and how educators can draw on existing frameworks and models. SEAL addresses imagining, evaluating, choosing and disseminating appropriate approaches that will meet, and perhaps exceed, the expectations of the learners of the future.