

Widening Access and Success – 12/05/05 11:00 – 13:30

An exploration of the nature and possibilities of research in teaching innovations

Of interest to colleagues interested in distance and e-learning from either research or teaching perspectives, across all departments.

Palitha Edirisingha, Celayne Heaton-Shrestha and Tim Linsey of the Academic Development Centre, Kingston University are the guest speakers.

Introduction to the presentation

More students are entering Higher Education than a decade ago, many from mature age groups, lower social classes, and certain ethnic groups. Universities need to provide these students with a supportive learning environment. Virtual Learning Environments (VLEs), are considered to have the potential to improve the learning environment on campus. This presentation reports on the initial findings from an externally funded, 2 ½ year research project, based at Kingston University, which explored how Blackboard can improve on-course support for a more diverse range of entrants. We covered:

- supporting students in becoming **effective learners** while accommodating a variety of **learning styles**
- providing **mentoring** support to level 1 students during induction and on-course
- improving the **satisfaction and retention** of students during their first academic year
- what makes students, mentors and staff **embrace the features of a VLE**.

The presentation will provide an overview of how Blackboard is being used for teaching, learning and student support within the research context, the research methodology, and findings, followed by lunch with an opportunity to talk to the guest speakers and colleagues.

Venue:

Gartree & Rutland, Charles Wilson Building, University of Leicester

If you would like to attend the seminar or request further information please contact Fiona Carlyle, PA & Co-Ordinator, Beyond Distance, tel: 0116 252 3423 or fc47@le.ac.uk

For more information about the University of Leicester's Beyond Distance Department please check out our website www.le.ac.uk/beyonddistance. For those inside the University please join Beyond Distance on Blackboard.