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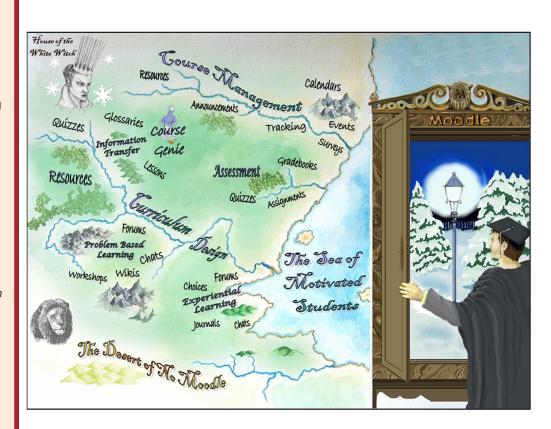
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Welcome... to the third Newsletter from the Learning Technology Development Unit in SSDD.

This issue has two main themes. The first focusses on what's happening to ensure a successful transition from a Moodle pilot to the real thing - high availablity service, training and support.

The second theme illustrates how academic staff at UCE are using the technology imaginatively to enhance the student experience, fundamentally rethinking the curriculum, the assessment strategy and the teaching and learning methods. As in the mystical lands of Narnia, so much can be achieved by taking a few tentative steps...



Go on, change our landscape forever!

Illustration by Nicola Bartholomew, School of Radiography, H&CC, UCE.
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Alan Staley Head of Learning Technology Development Unit Staff & Student Development Department



moodle

The University Of Central England In Birmingham



Moodle @ UCE >> Going According to Plan >> Alan Staley



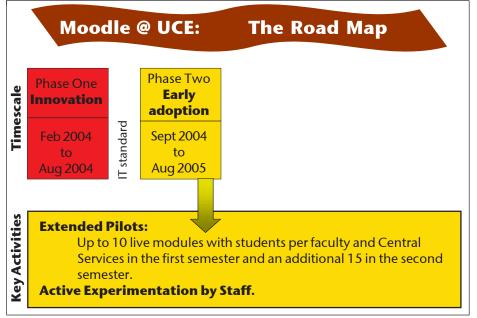
Alan Staley

When we installed Moodle 18 months ago, the Learning Technology Development Unit quickly

proposed a 4-year plan for its adoption at UCE. This deliberately promoted an incremental or organic approach whereby we could ensure that: the infrastructure was capable of supporting it; policies and procedures could be developed to ensure its effective use; and that there were opportunities for evaluation before we committed ourselves to a course of action that would be difficult to recover from if things went wrong. The last thing we wanted was to follow the rush to implement a

VLE like lemmings jumping off a cliff!

We are just coming to the end of Phase Two, as shown below:



This phase has gone exceptionally well, as you will have noted by the evaluations in the last newsletter. There are now over 120 staff with creation rights to Moodle, who are busy developing modules. Apologies to all of those staff that wanted their modules to go live with students and have been unable to do so because of

our conservative approach.

Considering that we have about 1000 academic staff, the graph below should tell you that we are now approaching the time when we will have used up all of the early adopters, and the 'mainstream' academic staff will start to use Moodle.

Now this is a critical time, as many innovations Moore's Chasm simply fall down the 'chasm'! Too often the enthusiasm of the early adopters makes little Early The "Chasm" Late Majority Majority impression on the mainstream staff or the MAINSTREAM 'rank and file'. The Innovators Early Laggards Adopters 2.5% 13.5% 34% 34% 16% Time -

> The Position of Moore's Chasm in the Distribution of Innovation Adoption

innovation fails to become embedded and simply fades away, to be replaced by something else a few years later. Oh, we've seen that a few times in Higher Education haven't we?

I don't think this is going to happen with Moodle, as over 870 staff now have Moodle accounts at UCE and of these over 250 have enrolled on the 'E-learning at UCE' courses in the last year. These staff can request creation rights as soon as they wish and start supporting their modules with Moodle.

The key to crossing the chasm is to realise that the mainstream have very different characteristics to the innovators and early adopters. Whereas the early adopters will take risks, and be pragmatic if something goes wrong, the mainstream need proven approaches before they are willing to change their methods. The early adopters thrive on change and new challenges, but the mainstream (particularly the 'late majority') will need a lot more convincing.



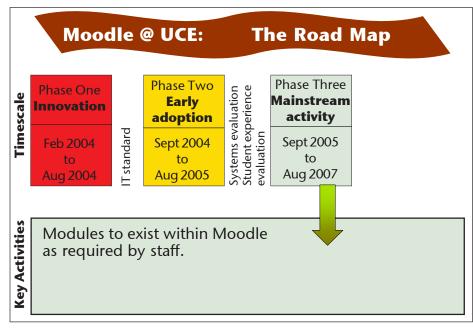


Moodle @ UCE >> Going According to Plan >> Alan Staley

Therefore, please note the comments between Phase Two and Phase Three in the plan below:

As already mentioned, we've got plenty of positive feedback from students to help convince the mainstream that adopting Moodle is worthwhile. The last 18 months have also given IT Services time to assess the impact of Moodle on our infrastructure. Thankfully, a successful £1.2 million Capital 4 bid will result in major upgrading to provide a high availability service for all the components of our Managed Learning Environment. Please see the article on page 6 for reassurances that UCE is serious about this!

Perhaps the most important difference between the early adopters and the mainstream is



the level of support required. The early adopters are fairly self-sufficient, and are prepared to teach themselves, use trial and error, and make use of horizontal networks to find solutions to problems. The mainstream, however, need formal training, lots of support on tap, and a formal hierarchy in place identifying whom to go to for help. So, using some of the HEFC e-Learning Strategy money, we have extended the secondee scheme to every department in every faculty! Please find your contacts in the table below:

Birmingham Institute of	Art and Design
Moodle Administration	Andy Saxon
Faculty Secondee	Faye Davies
Art	John Wigley
Bournville Centre	Bob Jardine
Fashion, Textiles and 3DD	Sheila Griffiths
Jewellery	Jivan Astfalck
Visual Communication	Andy Pearsall
Media and Communication	Faye Davies
Architecture and Landscape	Ljubomir Jankovic

Business School	
Moodle Administration	David While
Faculty Secondee	David While
	Mick Bridgman
Accountancy and Finance	John Davis
Management	Tony Birch
Business & Marketing	Lewis Jones
Computing	Mick Bridgman
Learner Support	Michael Schmidt

Conservatoi	re
Moodle Administration	Steve Halfyard
Faculty Secondee	Steve Halfyard
Jazz	Trevor Lines
Administration	Joanne Rutter

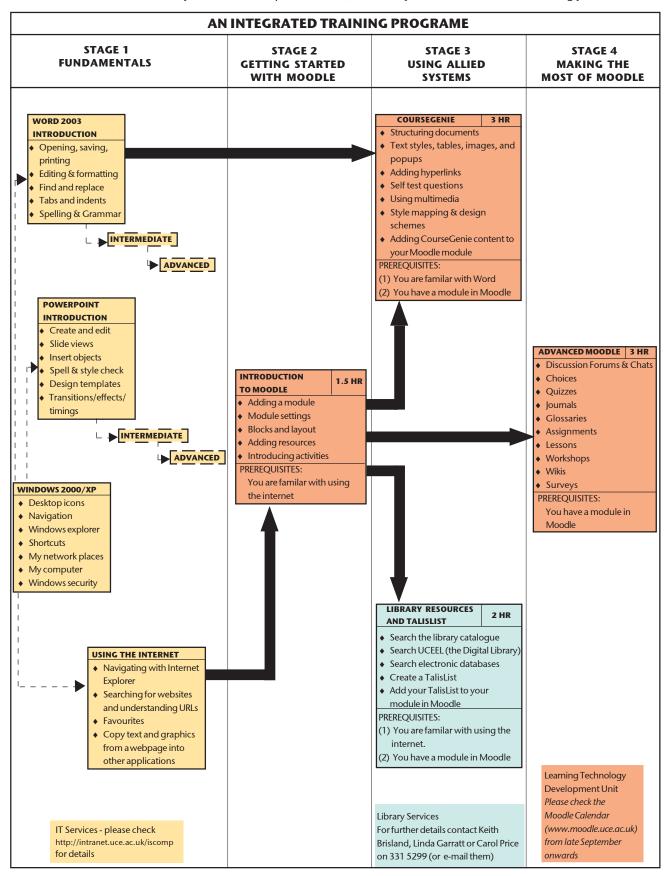
Education	
Moodle Administration	Steve Simmonds
Faculty Secondee	Graham Lowe
Early Years	Sam Elliot
Primary	John Butlin
Secondary and Post-compulsory	lan Axtell

Health and Commu	nity Care
Moodle Administration	Lilia Pegg
Faculty Secondee	Paul Bartholomew
Department 1	TBC
Department 2	TBC
Department 3	TBC

Law, Humanity, Developm	nent and Society
Moodle Administration	Matthew Machell
Faculty Secondee	Nick Morton
English	Stuart Robertson
Law	Sarah King
Social Sciences	Matthew Cremin
Property, Construction & Planning	Nick Morton

Moodle @ UCE >> Going According to Plan >> Alan Staley

By liaising with IT Services and Library Services we have developed an integrated training programme to cover Moodle, CourseGenie, Library systems (including TalisList), and the fundamentals such as Word or how to use the Internet. This is shown below. Please consider your own development needs, and book yourself onto whatever training you need.







Moodle @ UCE >> Going According to Plan >> Alan Staley

We are also in the process of appointing a new Tutor for Learning Technology Development (Implementation) to coordinate these initiatives.

This phase of the project is scheduled to last two years, with a final mandatory phase if management think this is appropriate.

The idea of including this phase of the plan was a deliberate statement to make it clear that using Moodle was not compulsory from the start. Many universities have started here, which has resulted in a fairly instrumental use of the technology to provide little more that a repository of module guides. Students have soon found little added value in using the VLE, and consequently usage has quickly dropped, and managers have claimed that the systems are a waste of money.

At UCE there have been some very innovative uses of Moodle that have really added to the students' learning experience. I hope this continues through Phase Three, and adoption increases at such a rate that most

Moodle @ UCE: The Road Map Phase Four Phase Three **Phase Two** Senior management Phase One Student experience evaluation Systems evaluation **Timescale** Mandatory Mainstream **Early Innovation** activity activity adoption T standard Sept 2005 Sept 2004 decisions Feb 2004 Sept 2007 to to to onwards Aug 2007 Aug 2004 Aug 2005 **Key Activities** All modules on all courses to exist within Moodle and to comply with Moodle @ UCE Code of Practice points 1,2,3 and 10 as a **minimum**.

modules are supported by Moodle by 2007 anyway. You can see from our code of practice that the minimum requirements are fairly administrative – no one is telling you how to teach!

Now that each faculty has its own Moodle, and its own Moodle administrator, quality issues are being addressed locally. Some faculties will be customising this code of practice, and no doubt some faculties will have other ideas - but I hope it's a

useful reference point. I'll finish this article by leaving you with a quote from Sarah Knight from the Joint Information Systems Committee,

The 'e' in e-learning is for enhanced, not electronic

I'll echo that...

Moodle @ UCE: Code of Practice

Learning Technology Development Ur	logy Development L	Learning Technology
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			My Module
1.	Module Specification	Category	Tick ✓
	Modules should include full documentation including learning outcomes, teaching and learning methods, assessment details, criteria, workload schedule etc. etc. Please see Module Designer – http://www.ssdd.uce.ac.uk/module	Essential	
2.	Reading List Modules should include 'Live' TalisLists that enable direct assess to the library catalogue, full text journal articles, and electronic services.	Essential	
3.	Announ cements Modules should include an Announcements forum so that staff can broadcast information to students concerning class cancellation, room changes, submission details etc.	Essential	
4.	Independent Learning Where appropriate, resources should be provided for students to enable them to study in between classes so that their independent learning time is structured and managed.	Desirable	
	Resources used in class should be available in Moodle prior to the class to help students with disabilities and learning difficulties.		
	Where the subject is particularly 'term laden' it is good practice to provide a glossary.		
5.	Active Learning Resources should engage the students in learning actively (not just passively absorbing information). Interaction may take place online, or students may need to prepare offline for subsequent face-to-face classes that make specific connections to the independent learning. Such classes would be interactive in nature.	Desirable	
6.	Formative Feedback Where appropriate, modules should include formative objective testing with automated feedback to help students gain a sense of achievement. When appropriate modules should include 'choices' to reveal group opinions and experiences.	Desirable	
7.	Learning Journals When appropriate, modules should include learning journals at key points in the module for the students to reflect upon their learning and for the staff to give personal and private feedback.	Desirable	
8.	Discussion Forums Where appropriate, modules should include discussion forums to enable students to discuss key issues, solve problems, link theory and practice, and facilitate group work. Staff should be active in moderating these discussion.	Desirable	
9.	Tracking Student activity should be tracked and interventions made where students appear to be disengaged with the module.	Desirable	
10.	Evaluation Modules should include a standard online module evaluation survey in accordance with the university schedule	Fecential	

Moodle @ UCE >> Moodle and IT Services >> The IT Services Team



The IT Services Team

Moodle the Early **Days**

On first meeting Moodle in 2003 IT Services staff were a little

sceptical of this open source alternative to the more familiar WebCT or Blackboard VLE offerings, but their healthy cynicism soon gave way to controlled enthusiasm as the flexibility and strengths of this product became more and more evident. Alan Staley's euphoric descriptions of its suitability for the diverse UCE academic environment coupled with its open source characteristics ensured that Moodle got off to a flying start. The low cost didn't hurt either! Moodle trials began in early 2004 and Alan soon had a few volunteers from faculties producing course modules and content. In IT Services a server was 'found' and set up to host a trial that began a limited service in September. In no time at all student users were hammering the system and soon hit 2,000 plus transactions a day. This proved too much for the 'borrowed' server and Moodle was rapidly promoted to a Sunfire server with twin processors and a lot more oomph! Access was also improved and the "anytime/anywhere" model was adopted using Active Directory for user authentication.

Moodle Behind the Scenes

So what does Open Source really mean? Well it means to many people simply that it is free, but in practical terms this means that the Moodle code is published and shared by the user community. It can be adapted and modified but perhaps most importantly users can invest their time, effort and money creating learning programmes and content. Not too surprisingly the growth of interest in Open Source solutions has risen rapidly.

Moodle is our first encounter with Open Source applications and the experience to date has been very positive. The Moodle technical

forums provide a very useful reference base that is invaluable when troubleshooting. Based on experience with a range of commercial software suppliers, Moodle bugs get fixed faster!

IT Services' role in supporting Moodle ranges from the provision of daily housekeeping support, such as backup and recovery to trouble-

shooting and investigating new Moodle releases and potential Open Source plug-ins to Moodle.

Our update and development strategy is to take advantage of mainstream Moodle, which is supported by a worldwide team of IT developers and enthusiasts, and only make

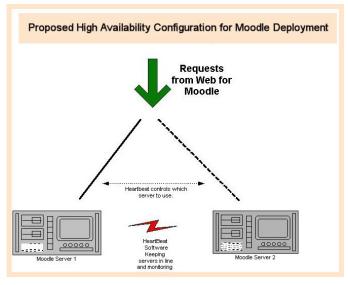
essential UCE customisations such as Active Directory authentication and the deployment of multiple Moodle faculty sites from a central Moodle platform. This approach ensures we stay in line with mainstream Moodle and take advantage of any new developments.

Current developments include the hosting of some Moodle content in a customised Digital Library vault. This provides another layer of data security to protect valuable teaching materials.

Moodle availability is a key issue for IT Services and there are plans to implement a high availability system with a failover capability in the event of a hardware **problem.** At the moment a Moodle server failure would take at least two hours to recover from the time corrective action was able to start. Not too promising at 3 o'clock on a Sunday morning! However, by providing immediate failover capability Moodle will continue to

operate in the event of many types of failure mode.

Moodle sits behind a complex array of technologies before it reaches staff and students and although since February 2004 users may have experienced the odd problem with Moodle the fact is that Moodle itself has never once failed or had a problem running.



Meet the Moodle Team

Moodle is supported in IT Services by a multidisciplinary team. Key players in the implementation are David Streather, Senior Developer and Paul Walsh, UNIX Systems Manager. The project is managed by Janet Bentley, Applications Support Manager, assisted by David Booth, Support Analyst. From the initial pilot back in February 2004, the project has been championed and supported by Colin Tennant, Director of IT Services.

Moodle Futures

The future for Moodle looks good but still poses some challenges. Growth of the system and the rate of growth will be difficult to predict but it will grow. Usage patterns vary and again we know from network usage that student patterns of use are full of surprises and difficult to predict. We can say, however, it will be interesting and hopefully not too exciting.



Moodle @ UCE >> The Virtual Ward >> Nigel Wynne



Nigel Wynne

The Virtual Ward: Solving Real World **Problems within Real World Contexts**

demonstrates how simulations and multimedia resources

developed 'pre-adoption of our VLE' can be integrated with and accessed through Moodle based programmes of study. The Virtual Ward is a visual learning environment and a patient assessment simulation that has been developed within the Faculty of Health and Community Care. It presents students with real world scenarios related to patient assessment and provides them with opportunities to develop their problem identification, problem solving and information filtering skills through collaborative or independent learning activities.

The application is currently used to support both a distance learning module within our foundation degree programme and a number of on-campus modules within our pre-registration nursing programmes. It is blended with traditional campusbased learning and teaching activities so that students receive an enriched learning experience.

The Virtual Ward provides students with an opportunity to assess patients (see Figure 1), interpret the significance of the information they identify and suggest how they might act in response to this information. Students learn through their



Figure 1: Select a patient

interaction with the Virtual Ward, during more traditional classroombased sessions and during plenary sessions. Three patient case studies structure the modules that currently use the Virtual Ward. Each patient represents common problems and

experiences a change in their condition that students have to interpret and respond to. There are two key areas within which students are asked to interact. The reception area shown in Figure 2 provides students with an opportunity to access module resources through the bookshelf, participate in online discussions via the notice board, read patients' medical notes contained in the notes



Figure 2: Reception area

trolley and access information stored in the filing cabinet.

The patient area (see Figure 3) again provides students with an opportunity to identify access and filter information about each patient. In this space this is achieved by looking at the patient's charts contained in the clipboard at the end of each bed.



Figure 3: Patient area

The charts vary for each patient but typically include a drugs chart and a range of observations charts (see Figure 4).

One of the most exciting features of the Virtual Ward is the opportunity it provides students to choose how they will assess each patient. Assessment options are represented iconically around the bed space e.g. arterial blood pressure can be assessed by clicking on the blood pressure machine. When this is done a value occurs and the software records that the student has made one choice. Only 15 choices are allowed out of between 30 - 40. This aims to encourage students to make decisions about what information may be most relevant to each patient's condition. Where assessment options cannot be represented iconically they can be accessed through a drop-down menu above the patient's bed.

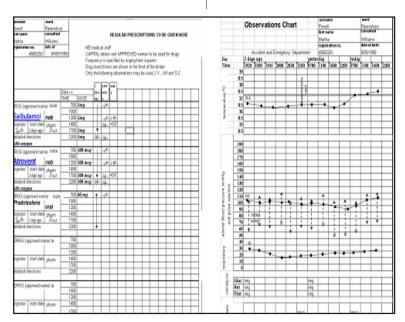


Figure 4: Patient charts



Moodle @ UCE >> The Virtual Ward >> Nigel Wynne



Figure 5: Assessing the patient generating new patient information

After choosing 15 assessment options the student is given some feedback on the appropriateness of these options to the patient's condition and situation.

Students have an opportunity to test their own understanding of the patient's experience by taking an online MCQ, upon completion of which, feedback is automatically generated (see Figure 6).

UCE FACULTY OF HEALTH AND CO

Figure 6: Multiple Choice Questions (MCQ's)

Given the pace of change within the Health Service and the variety of contexts within which acute nursing skills are taught, it was important that this application was adaptable by teaching staff with relatively little ICT skills or experience. For this reason, an extensive array of administrative functions has been built in that allows the teacher to adapt the Virtual Ward so that it aligns most closely to the learning outcomes and summative assessment, particularly to the module they teach within. For example, any teacher with administrative rights can change any

of the charts, assessment values, MCQ questions and answers and can view the extent to which students are engaging with the software. Because the Virtual Ward is web-based, these functions and the resource itself can be accessed from anywhere with an internet connection.

The software's user interface is Flash-based and is supported by a Microsoft Access database via Java servlets. It is being

developed by a team of academic staff from the School of Nursing that includes Tim Badger and Matthew Aldridge and by a number of clinical staff associated with the Faculty's Linked Teaching Initiative. The software development was facilitated by a unique collaboration with the Technology Innovation Centre. Here we provided a final year software engineering student, Francesca Stephenson, with a project for her

> Masters dissertation and in turn we received the benefit of her skills and expertise.

The web link to the Virtual Ward can be added to a Moodle programme using the "add a resource" function. The transparency that Moodle provides students and staff helps demonstrate how a variety of learning and teaching activities relate to each other when used within a blended learning approach.

Recent evaluations are informing further development. For example, some students would like to be able to have the correct answers on the MCQs revealed after each sitting and this is something we will incorporate. Also, some students would prefer more structured plenary sessions following virtual ward activity.

A significant number of students indicate that the software is having a positive impact on their learning.

"Best module so far in assisting learning process."

"Virtual Ward was excellent, a good learning tool, a good source of information and accessible from home."

"Like the Virtual Ward aspect, as free to facilitate our own learning and spend as long as we liked on each part as opposed to note taking in lecture."

"Enjoyed the Virtual Ward; it is an alternative method that I think is effective."

A number of evaluative activities are planned to facilitate our understanding of how students interact with and make best use of ICT within a blended learning approach and the data from these will inform future developments. A great deal of interest has been generated across the Faculty, and other institutions in the UK and Europe.

Don't hesitate to get in touch if you would like to know more about this development and gain guest access.

Nigel Wynne Senior Academic Learning and Teaching Faculty of Health and Community Care 0121 331 7172 nigel.wynne@uce.ac.uk



Moodle @ UCE >> Innovating Electronic Assessment >> Thomas Lancaster



Thomas Lancaster

One of the key benefits of the largely electronic delivery offered through Moodle is the ability to

innovate the style of assessments offered to students. Along with my colleague Cain Evans I have been looking into ways of better preparing students to undertake a final year undergraduate computing project, a process which we consider largely involves developing students' abilities to find out information and develop new skills as they are needed. Moodle is used to administer what is largely an individualised assignment process.

We have developed a process of patchwork peer review and we

Patchworking involves a student compiling a number of short pieces of work, which can then be combined, in pieces and with additional text where appropriate, to compile a submission for assessment. Peer review involves students formatively and/or summatively assessing the work of fellow students based on provided criteria. The process we have developed combines both of these with topics relevant for participating using the Moodle functionality to greatly aid in the administrative process.

The way in which we ran the patchwork peer review assessment for project preparation was as follows: at the start of the module students were assigned into groups of around twenty and allocated a topic that could form the basis of a final year computing project (although students were not explicitly told this

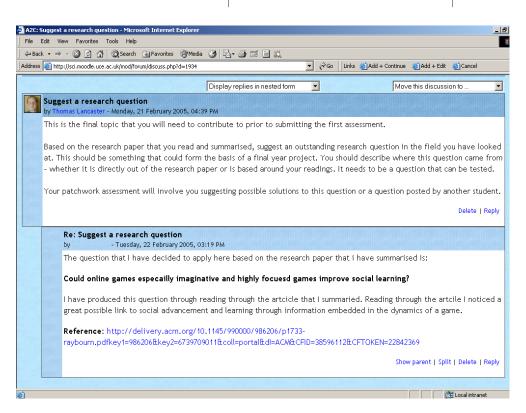
giving general impressions on the topic, next identifying, summarising and critiquing a relevant research paper, finally suggesting a more focused research question from that paper. Students were encouraged to actively engage in discussion and supported in this process by limited tutor moderation and short video lectures.

At this point students became able to access the assignment specification, complete with a marking scheme, splitting the task into criteria assessed on an ordinal scale. The delivery of this was through the built in Moodle Workshop module, which handles the peer review process and the allocation of students to peer assessments, something that would be an administrative nightmare if done by hand. Students were required to complete an assessment, involving them identifying a research question,

along with relevant papers and suggesting ways that the question could be identified. They were expected to use patches of their own writing and those of other students.

The peer review involved students being allocated six submissions to assess, including their own, and asked to provide marks and feedback. The submissions included those from outside their original group of twenty. The mark awarded for students was based on a weighted average of the reviews they received from other students and a component for the accuracy of their marking, based on the calibration of the marks they awarded

with those awarded for the same submissions by their peers. The Workshop module allows the results and feedback to be easily made available to the participants.



would be keen to see if this can be applied successfully in other disciplines and in other situations. The anecdotal feedback from the process, which has been run through in its entirety twice, has generally been positive.

at the time) with an associated discussion forum. An example topic would be 'methods of preventing spam messages'. Students were then taken through a structured asynchronous discussion by an allocated tutor over the course of three weeks, involving them first





Moodle @ UCE >> Innovating Electronic Assessment >> Thomas Lancaster

Some main strengths of the patchwork peer review process have become apparent. The key is perhaps that students are continually working towards assessment; there is a belief that most students are assessment driven and since regular forum contributions are required for a successful patchwork, students need to work from the start of the module. Many students have gone beyond the bare minimum required, regularly checking Moodle to keep up to date with progress in

their forum. The choice of assessment is geared towards the learning outcomes most appropriate for a project preparation module, since students are developing critical thinking and research skills, both by looking at academic sources and looking at the work of other students. Students are not often able to see how a marking scheme is applied or how other students tackle similar problem and these benefits will hopefully allow them to complete

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ļ	Address 🥘 http://sc	i.moodle.uce.ac.uk/mod/workshop/assessments.php?action=viewassessment&a=14&aid=270 🔻 🔗 б Links 👸 Add + Continue 👸 Add + Edit 👸 Cancel
	Element 7:	The quality of the solutions or tests identified in the student's patchwork assessment. The description should make it
		clear why these have selected and how an optimum choice was made. Weight: 2.00
ı	Grade:	Excellent C C C C Very Poor
	Feedback:	Good ideas about how businesses can avoid cyber crime, e.g providing authentication to authorised personnel.
	Element 8:	The quality and correct formatting of the referencing. Higher marks should be awarded for a more appropriate choice of citations.
		Weight: 1.00
	Grade:	Excellent C C C Very Poor
	Feedback:	Referenced throughout the report aswell as a seperate page at the end of the report of all the sources and material used.
	Element 9:	The overall quality of the final patchwork submission. A submission that pulls together a running theme with appropriate reflective material used to cohesively link the patches should be rated highly.
		Weight: 2.00
	Grade:	Excellent C @ C C Very Poor
	Feedback:	Overall i thought it was a good report to read. Provided useful information about the affects of not dealing with cyber crime. Provided own views alongside material to back points up.

their crucial final year work more successfully.

The strengths of Moodle from a tutor perspective have been immediately apparent throughout this entire process. With a module such as this, which runs every semester, it is necessary to minimise the administrative inconvenience whilst creating a standard pattern of delivery for the students. Moodle allows a

standard workshop structure to be set up then restored each semester, requiring only minimal changes to reflect updated choices of topics. All number-crunching aspects are handled internally. Students receive largely individualised assessments, based on their selection of research questions, a key plagiarism prevention strategy. They also receive greater levels of feedback than would be a module norm from the peer

review process. It is our impression that the participation rate on this module has been higher than standard taught modules, due to the flexibility for students taking it, albeit by not as great a factor as we would have liked.

It is hoped that our implementation of patchwork peer review, or a variant of it, will be appropriate for a large number of modules and will go some way towards helping the development of teaching and assessment methods that are more suited for electronic learning than their traditional classroom-based counterparts.

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	☑ Ilegal Downlaods Of Music	37	37 (40) (34) (28) (28) (38) (56)	6 (31 43 35 29 34 56)	37		
	Report on Tactics and countermeasures to prevent cyber-crime	62	62 (64) (40) (43) (75) (75) (75)	6 (38 41 35 50 75 56)	62		
	Preventing and monitoring illegal downloads of music.	43	43 (44) (31) (51) (43) (39) (49)	6 (51 28 44 43 26 34)	43		
	Information Warfare And Cyber crime (A2C)	35	35 (56) (33) (38) (39) (43) (30) (9)	6 (38 28 28 30 43 13)	35		
	☑ bahader_Ali_patchwork	43	43 (48) (24) (51) (38) (61) (38) (44)	6 (8 51 61 38 49 34)	43		
	A2C Patchwork By Imran Ali	52	52 (46) (55) (51) (56) (51)	6 (56 49 36 45 43 25)	52		
	ONLINE GAMING INDUSTRY (PATCH WORK)	32	32 (30) (43) (46) (3) (18) (28) (59)	6 (53 33 21 59 20 43)	32		
	Report on Illegal Downloads of Music	54	54 (55) (51) (66) (61) (43) (49)	6 (54 59 46 61 20 51)	54		
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	Tactics & Countermeasures to prevent Cyber-Crime (Sundeep Bath)	41	41 (56) (61) (36) (33) (39) (21)	6 (39 36 14 31 38 50)	41		



Moodle @ UCE >> Re-thinking the Teaching of Practical Skills >> Kirsty Wedgbury



Kirsty Wedgbury

The Skills **Teaching Team** in the Faculty of Health and Community Care teach essential nursing skills to large numbers of pre-

registration students and while there are numerous skills books available it can be difficult to describe all the nuances of complex psycho-motor skills using text and pictures alone. The taught skills sessions are the only opportunity for students to practise these skills prior to practice placement and are important in developing professional identity and confidence prior to clinical practise.

The primary method of teaching such skills has been to gather the group of students in class, and for the lecturer to demonstrate the techniques involved, before allowing the students to practise the techniques on their own as the lecturer moves around the classroom helping with difficulties. Great – but not with 400 students! So, we divide the cohort into groups of about 20, each with a different lecturer. This helps, although there is some concern from the students regarding the consistency of the experience. However, there are

still problems even with a group size of

- ♦ Not all students can see everything that is being demonstrated.
- ♦ Students only have one opportunity to see what is involved before attempting the technique themselves.
- ♦ Hearing the flow of blood through a stethoscope while adjusting the valve and watching the sphygmomanometer (for example) can be difficult for students especially given the 'buzz' of a classroom full of students.

- ♦ Some students demand more attention from the lecturer than others, leaving the quieter students with less help.
- ♦ Some students may be unsure that they have got the technique right, and they may leave the classroom anxious about doing this for real in clinical practice.

Could Moodle help? I was first introduced to Moodle while studying the PGCE and quickly realised its potential application to skills teaching. It seemed to provide the ideal medium to support the taught skills sessions.

Moodle is being used to develop supporting materials for the Blood Pressure Measurement session and includes interactive quizzes, video clips and animations to help illustrate the theory. There are links to the physiology webpage and other online resources so that students can build on the taught sessions at a pace to suit them. In particular, the resources developed by SALT (UCE students working under the supervision of Niall Mackenzie) will hopefully overcome some of our problems. In Figure 1 you can see the use of video 'close-ups' to show the detail of a technique (something that students would struggle to see if they

> were at the back of a group of 20).

The animation in Figure 2 shows the drop in blood pressure, while playing the associated

4) -Figure 1 sounds of

the flow of blood. And most importantly, the quiz in Figure 3 incorporates full sound and video, allowing the students to practise the co-ordination of listening to the sound of blood flow while watching a falling sphygmomanometer reading. Students get immediate feedback from the system too!

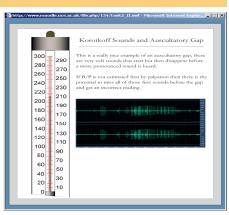


Figure 2

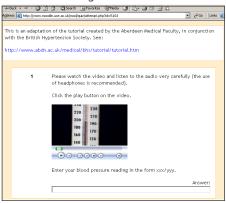


Figure 3

Students will be able to book a skills room to practise blood pressure measurement and can use the Moodle resources to check that they are following the correct procedure.

In the future, if we could encourage our practice partners to adopt Moodle, these resources would be available to nursing students in clinical practice. Again, they can check techniques and search for additional information if they come across a difficulty in the clinical area. This has the added value that trained staff could also check what is taught in university and ensure equity with placements.

It is anticipated that this resource could be used by the midwifery students and students on the Foundation Degree Programme as well as nursing students. The British Hypertension Society have expressed an interest in viewing the resource, as currently they only have resources for qualified practitioners.

This package will be piloted initially with a view to further developing supporting materials for other essential nursing skills.



Moodle @ UCE >> Online Socialization for Face-to-Face Courses >> Michael Bridgman



Michael Bridgman

For several years, lecturers in The Department of Computing have used a **Lotus Notes** discussion database to support the

delivery and assessment of Information Systems in Business, a first year, first semester, double module in the undergraduate computing scheme. The coursework for the module is a group assignment involving the submission of a tender document to provide a new system for a fictional company. As well as traditional lectures and seminars, the assignment work is supported by the online discussion database. Here, the Managing Director of the company and a number of 'consultants' post statements and respond to student questions. These roles are played by members of the module team, but the students are not told this. In the last four years this module has had enrolments in excess of 150 students.

I used the posting statistics for the 2002 cohort as part of an evaluation of the use of the discussion database for my project on the MA in Education. Despite the incentive of up to 10% of the coursework marks being awarded for contributions to the discussion, 43% of the students taking part in the module made no postings at all. It seemed that we were not even getting the quantity, never mind the quality. The evaluation of the use of the database against identified principles for successful Computer Mediated Communication identified certain shortcomings, in particular, the lack of an induction process to the use of the database and no opportunity for the students to familiarise themselves with each other. Stages 1 and 2 of Salmon's (2000) model had been missed out:

♦ Stage 1: Access and Motivation, where you try to sort out the technical aspects of getting online and getting the students to make a first posting.

♦ Stage 2: Online Socialisation

where the students establish online identities and find others with whom to interact.

In other words, it was a mistake to throw the students straight into the discussion periods. The Notes environment is not particularly easy to use and many students had given up when they ran into difficulties trying to post. Also, expecting the

students to start working effectively in groups during their first couple of weeks at university was not realistic. So, for 2003 we included an initial period where the groups made a posting introducing themselves to the Managing Director of the company in the scenario. This seems to have been a success. With a little prompting, all of the groups posted and most of the technical and housekeeping issues were resolved. The groups took the opportunity to create group and individual online identities. The fact that many of these were invented should not detract from the socialization aspect of this period. The time spent as groups inventing CVs must have been beneficial from a team building point of view. The number of students making postings

also improved; the percentage of students foregoing 10% of their marks dropped to 34%.

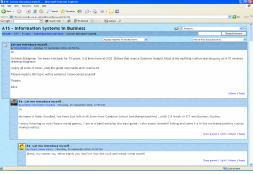
In 2004 the bright new world of Moodle seemed to offer a number of ways of improving the online aspects of our module. Once we had got around the problem of dummy IDs for our fictional consultants, we were able to create profiles for them and give them a visual identity (evaluating the impact of the photographs we chose on the students' perception of the consultants would be a whole new research project!). The discussion forums and group introductions would continue, but now we asked students to create profiles and post an initial introductory message. For

the profiles, we encouraged students



to add a photograph, to help them recognize each other and us to recognize them. Sadly, most of them stuck with the default 'smiley'. Some did use real photographs of themselves while others went for pictures of famous cricketers or racing cars.

The personal introduction forum really took off. Between 30th September and 8th October, 86 students posted introductions. This represented 81% of the students who submitted the assignment. Having an online introduction for a course that is delivered face-to-face may seem little redundant, but this was during the first two weeks of the course and



several students seemed to appreciate the opportunity to get to know people online as an alternative, or supplement, to making face-to-face contacts.

Reference

Salmon, G. (2000) E-Moderating: The key to Teaching and Learning Online, Kogan Page, London.



Moodle @ UCE >> Personal Development Planning >> Ruth Lawton with Andy Saxon



Ruth Lawton

What is PDP and why do we need it?

In February 2001 the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA)

produced Guidelines for Higher **Education Progress Files and set a** deadline of 2005/06 for the introduction of Personal Development Planning (PDP). From that date all students studying for an HE award will have to be given the opportunity to do Personal Development Planning.

The QAA envisaged that the introduction of PDP would provide a number of benefits for both students and staff. The primary objective for PDP is to enable individuals to understand how they learn and to enable them to plan, review and take responsibility for their own learning. This should encourage a positive attitude to lifelong learning and help students to become effective, independent and confident selfdirected learners. PDP should also help students to improve their general skills for study and career management, to articulate their personal goals and evaluate their progress.

What does UCE think of this?

The UCE Progress Files Working Group was formed in 2002. Its remit was to oversee the introduction of Progress Files and to investigate the potential benefits to UCE - its students and its curriculum - of PDP and, confident of the benefits, to ensure implementation for all UCE students by the 2005/6 deadline. As part of this research, there have been several successful and continuing pilots in different faculties. Each pilot is unique and relevant to its host course / faculty. All address the Four Core PDP Skills as identified by the Working Group:

- ♦ Reflection
- ♦ Action Planning

- ◆ Self Awareness including skills auditing
- ◆ Career Management

As well as the trials, UCE is currently developing a generic PDP module for Moodle (a Moodule?) that courses may choose to adopt. However, course teams may choose to design their own way of delivering PDP to students. There is support available to help you do this. Contact your Faculty PDP representative or Ruth Lawton (contact details below).

What does this mean to you?

You will need to:

- ♦ Ensure that your students know about PDP e.g. in pre-course documentation, Programme Specifications, Student Handbook etc. all of which must reflect the importance of PDP to the course.
- ♦ Inform your students within the first 6 weeks of starting their course about your PDP scheme by means of a face-to-face introduction.

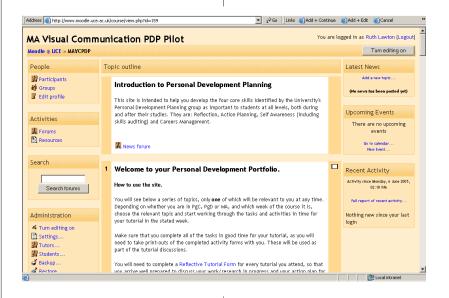
what else you could be doing to introduce PDP. Use the contacts given later to get your Guide for **Busy Academics.**

Andy Saxon takes a closer look at the BIAD MA Visual Communication PDP 'Moodule'

Based upon the UCE Minimum Specification Document the course director and I reviewed how the course was performing against the four core skills needed, in each of the three stages of the course: PgC, PgD and MA.

A fairly detailed picture was quickly built up of strengths and weaknesses found. e.g.

- ♦ A big strength of the MAVC is that the course strongly encourages Action Planning through its Individual Programme of Study structure, supporting it consistently through regular one-to-one tutorials.
- ♦ A weakness of the MAVC is that the course does not support Career Development at all well in its current delivery.



You may want to:

- ♦ Map where PDP is currently delivered through the structure of your course.
- ♦ Get more information about

After reviewing the strengths and weaknesses identified, a plan was devised:

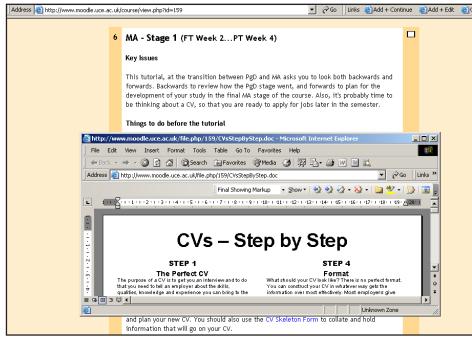
♦ The Pilot will be provided immediately to all current MAVC students, regardless of their stage of study.





Moodle @ UCE >> Personal Development Planning >> Ruth Lawton with Andy Saxon

- ♦ The Pilot will be delivered via Moodle; students will then have access both on and off campus to the learning materials and assets provided.
- ♦ A clear and thorough introduction to PDP will be provided to students in a faceto-face lecture, with an associated workshop that introduces the Moodle site.
- ♦ The Pilot will be run through the students' fortnightly personal tutorials. We propose to 'script' two of these meetings per stage as PDP tutorials. These will take place at week 2 and at week 8 of the 15 week semester.
- ♦ Students will be expected to arrive at their PDP tutorials having completed the associated pencil and paper activities that they have downloaded from Moodle. These activities (skills profile, academic progress review, work experience audit, etc.) will be used to drive the tutorial discussions, according to a skeleton structure provided to tutors in advance.



♦ It is hoped to move away from pencil and download/paper towards a fully online model as our knowledge of what works/doesn't work improves.

If you want to find out more about Andy's pilot please contact him (details below).

What about the generic PDP 'Moodule'?

This is being developed now. It will go live to students in mid-September

At the same time, we are also developing a staff PDP module to show you case studies of all of the current pilots, provide resources, information and support to help you get started. This will go live in August so keep an eye open for it on Moodle.

Contact us?

Andy Saxon Senior Academic **BIAD**

Tel: 5869 or email

andrew.saxon@uce.ac.uk

Ruth Lawton **Head of Careers**

tel: 5588 or email

ruth.lawton@uce.ac.uk



Moodle @ UCE >> All Joined Up? >> Mark Brown



Those of you who have created Moodle content will already know how within a Moodle course, items

Mark Brown

can be pulled together by simply 'cutting and pasting' the address from the browser. Something I'm becoming more aware of especially in recent years, is a format called **OpenURL** – which might allow us to journey a little further towards the place where all our electronic services can seamlessly link together.

The challenges come when we try and integrate with more established resources that already have their own syntax, and their own gateways. In the last issue of Digital Future, Peter Ebrey talked about **TalisList** and its ability to harvest resources. The potential number of items that we could link to with such a tool is daunting – and this is just at a 'title' level, not even at an 'article' level. Many of our 2000+ electronic journals provide full-text content that we host as title-links on the library web pages as well as within the catalogue. I maintain a list at http:// library.uce.ac.uk/linking.htm of electronic journal links that anyone can copy and use in Moodle. These can also be harvested as manual URLs within TalisList.

But half the battle here is context of offering routes to information that make sense - not just giving people lists to scroll through. That's where OpenURL as an agreed format between electronic publishers is so important: many of the big journal aggregators to be found on the library web pages allow us to customise routes in to full-text information. By switching on links that we can follow through to fulltext content we can add value to databases that may only give summaries of journal articles.

For example, I can do a keyword search on British Humanities Index and follow through a link to another of our databases Art FullText (see Figure 1).

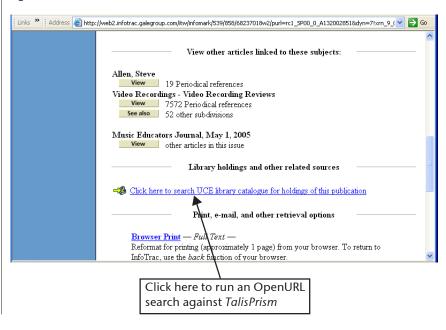
Figure 1



The article happens to be about a video on a fictional renaissance mystic, composer and general guru called Moodle Pozart! (sic). It took me a couple of clicks to jump from a catalogue-type interface to the full-text from a different provider, see the name in context in the pdf, decide the article wasn't for me, and go back again. If the search is 'carried through' from one provider to another, then it matters less where the content is hosted originally, and more how relevant it is to your existing search.

We are continuing to set up as many as these OpenURL sources and targets as we can, to add value to existing electronic services. **TalisPrism** can be searched from within **Art FullText** and **Infotrac Custom Journals** as a target – to help locate printed copies of a journal (see Figure 2).

Figure 2







Moodle @ UCE >> All Joined Up ? >> Mark Brown

The search engine within **CINAHL**, for

example, can now be used to run a search against TalisPrism and return not only printed holdings of the journal reference but links through to the catalogue record for that electronic journal (see Figure 3).

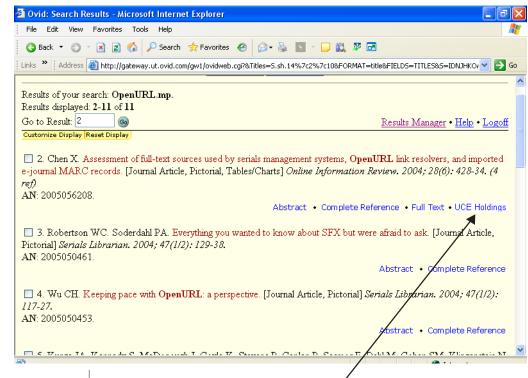
Likewise, the computing abstracts database, **INSPEC**, is set up to return fulltext links to electronic journals in **Swetswise** - a provider that offers electronic versions of our print journal holdings.

What's the relevance of all this to Moodle? Moodle can be a platform for such activity because of its

very open structure – you can link into courses from anywhere and get taken through to course content (via the necessary authentication). You can link out to electronic services via TalisList or by citing a title link to an electronic journal. Some databases, such as the business database ABI Inform, will allow you to save a predefined search as an address that could be pasted directly into a Moodle course, so that any time that specific search is run, it will always be up to date. There are even 'persistent urls' (bad Shakespearian joke here) in our online music service, Classical Music Library, that can link directly to a movement of a sonata.

Yes, some of this technology can be 'clunky' at times, but it is improving, as more and more publishers talk to each other. For example, the legal search engine, JustCite will offer an opportunity to pull together some of the legal databases in one providerneutral search engine that searches across Butterworths, Justis and Westlaw UK; we will be creating Moodle content, accessible from the library website, to explain how this works.

Figure 3



The UCE holdings option in a CINAHL result list that runs a search against TalisPrism

To take advantage of OpenURL, as well as our existing electronic journals on TalisPrism, we will be creating more catalogue entry points for electronic services, and also will be developing further links between Moodle and the library website to promote specific database guides. We are also planning an electronic journal management system that harnesses OpenURL technology. In the meantime, keep an eye open on **Inform**, the library publication for academic staff, which can be found on the front door of http:// library.uce.ac.uk - where you will find our latest news on electronic services. And please don't hesitate to get in touch.

If you want to talk further about any of the above please get in touch mark.brown@uce.ac.uk Extension 5291



Moodle @ UCE >> An Update on SALT >> Niall MacKenzie



Niall MacKenzie

Adding SALT to your main course can be good for you...!

The Student Agency for Learning **T**echnology has been in operation for a few months now and

already there are some projects coming to fruition.

Lecturers have some great ideas for their courses but it's always been time consuming and technically difficult to make things happen.

With the help of students paid an hourly rate by SALT for producing visually appealing multimedia content, academics all over the university are having their courses enhanced with exciting materials.

One example mentioned elsewhere in this newsletter (page 11) is the Blood Pressure Measurement course designed by Kirsty Wedgbury for delivery as part of the Skills Teaching team in Health & Community Care.

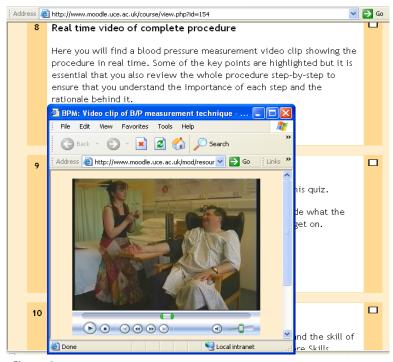


Figure 1

Two students helped out on this project, Fiza Bardam and Mark Hetherington, both from BIAD but on different courses in different

departments. Mark did all the filming work which was used in the video of the complete procedure (see Figure 1), while Fiza designed the various Flash animations (see Figure 2).

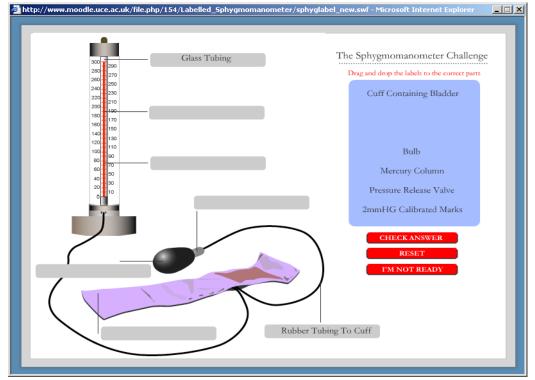


Figure 2

Amit Bhaskar and Shelley Raja are Computing students and they are helping Paul Bartholomew in the School of Radiography design some multimedia resources that will help in Paul's teaching. Two separate projects are currently in development; the first being an interactive clickable human that has links to more detailed information about different parts of the body (see Figure 3).

Nothing new there you may think, with numerous similar resources on the web. What is

✓ → Go Links <a> Add + Continue ×



Moodle @ UCE >> An Update on SALT >> Niall MacKenzie

Address a http://www.moodle.uce.ac.uk/mod/resource/view.php?id=6905

different is that the links can be adapted via database entries to suit particular teaching requirements.

In other words, clicking on the head can bring up some general resources on the anatomy of the skull, for example, or it can link to some very detailed resources

SALT - Radiography01 Jump to Moodle @ UCE » SALT - Rad01 » Resources » Clickable human This is where the clickable human project is being developed. Hyper-Linked Cross-Modular Self Study Resource Figure 3

that demonstrate a very specific topic depending on how the lecturer wants to set up the resource.

The link could be to a PowerPoint presentation, a video clip, an animation or resources on the web. All the lecturer needs to do is change the link in the database and the resource becomes tailor-made for that usage. It is hoped that this resource may become shared nationally through the JORUM project.

that allows radiography students to see the results of X-rays taken at varying degrees. A_{3D} head can be moved and rotated and also the angle at which the X-ray is taken can be

The second resource is a 'tilting head'

varied, which is a crucial skill to be mastered by radiography students. For obvious reasons, this is best done virtually, rather than practising on real people with real radiation. (see Figure 4).

Once again, the resource can be adapted by inputting specific images via a database that demonstrate particular points and the 3D head can also be replaced, depending on which part of the world you are from!

Other projects in the pipeline include a promotional CD for the Placements

Office in the Business School. Placements Manager Kim Jones is working with SALT to include filmed interviews with placement students on location about their experiences, which will give new and prospective students a real feel for the benefits of a year in industry.

We're also filming Sheila Griffiths, Senior Lecturer in Fashion Design, demonstrating various textile techniques that are very difficult to teach to large groups of students, in a similar way to the **Blood Pressure** Measurement course. The videos will be combined

with colour electronic versions of notes previously given out to the students as black and white photocopied binders.

Two other exciting projects will hopefully involve using students from the Birmingham School of Acting. One involves acting out some roles for a Theraputic Communication course run by Jim Chapman, and Andy Walsh is looking to film six "patients" exhibiting various states of mental illness e.g. depression, schizophrenia, suicidal, addictive, agoraphobic etc. which should provide some good meaty roles for budding thespians...!

Finally, the student actors will also help in filming some resources for a Moodle course being put together by Lara Cartwright in Careers. Lara is working part-time on a course for Personal Development Planning (PDP).

If you have a project idea for SALT then please get in touch; we'd like to have projects running in all faculties and so far Education, Conservatoire, LHDS and TIC aren't represented. Also, if you'd like to recommend students from your courses to work with us then please ring on 0121 3316784 or email niall.mackenzie@uce.ac.uk.

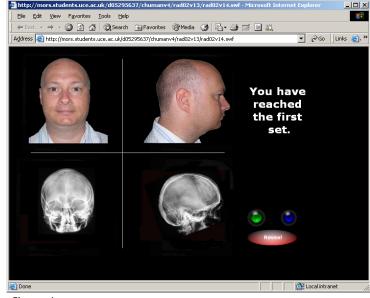


Figure 4



Moodle @ UCE >> Latest News >> Alan Staley

Moodle 1.5.1

As we put the finishing touches to this newsletter, Moodle 1.5.1 has just been released, which we will rapidly install on the test server. Hopefully, by the time that you read this you will be able to use 1.5.1 for real. Here are just a few of the major enhancements:

- ☐ Improved **Accessibility**, aiming for compliance with SENDA legislation.
- ☐ A very strong **Themes** system, allowing very fine control of how every page looks at the level of a course or even individual user.
- ☐ An integrated **Messaging** feature for direct communication between all users on the site, featuring real-time popup windows.
- ☐ A new extended **Gradebook** allowing custom weighting of different activities.

NB: The learning Journal will now be incorporated in Online Assignments – so check out your existing modules!

Moodle 1.6

It's possible that we will be up to version 1.6 by the time the academic year starts – but don't hold me to it! This is again of major significance, as it heralds the integration of Moodle (the World's leading Course Management System) and LAMS (the World's leading Learning Design System). We will then be able to use powerful design tools including 'digital lesson planning'.

Also, this release will introduce **Blogs** as the main tool for reflective activities.

CourseGenie

All staff should now have CourseGenie on their desktops - if not, then please contact your faculty IT Support. CourseGenie is the Word plug-in that converts your documents into 'little websites' by just a few clicks of the mouse. These can then

be uploaded into Moodle, enabling more visually appealing resources. Using CourseGenie will also help to ensure that the content you put into Moodle is SENDA compliant. Check out our second newsletter for more details.

Repository for Learning **Objects**

Also in our second newsletter were a few words from Peter Ebrey about a new interface to the digital library. This is where staff will be able to upload large media files, such as video, to be accessed from any Moodle module by simply copying the URL - a great way to share resources and reduce the

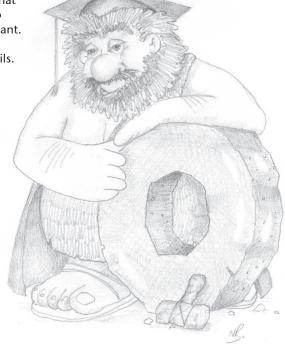
development time. Simon Baker and Felix Azige in IT Services are working on this right now, and we hope this is up and running for the start of the next academic year. The only stumbling block at the moment is coming up with a memorable acronym!

■ JORUM and WILMER

On the theme of sharing and cutting development time, please note that the JISC national repository for learning objects (JORUM) http:// www.jorum.ac.uk/ and regional repository (re-named WILMER) will open soon.

Finding us!

Unfortunately, during the annual game of musical chairs, by the time the music stopped we had nowhere to sit – so you can no longer find us in Attwood A042. Late September you should be able to find us in Level 2 of Edge Building, next to Café Edge.



Tutor for Learning Technology Development (Implementation)

And just before this goes to the printers – we have finished the interview process and hope that our new addition to the team will join us when our new accommodation is ready in September.





Moodle @ UCE >> Learning Technology Events 2005



5 September 2005

Planning for blended learning Manchester Metropolitan University

http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/SSeLF.htm



15-16 November 2005

World of Learning Conference and Exhibition **NEC Birmingham**

http://www.learnevents.com/

6-8 September 2005

ALT-C 2005: exploring the frontiers of e-learning borders, outposts and migration. University of Manchester



http://www.alt.ac.uk/altc2005/



14-16 September 2005



17-19 November 2005

4th WSEAS International Conference on E-Activities Florida International University



http://www.worldses.org/conferences/2005/ florida/e-activities/index.html



International Conference on Teaching and Learning with Technology in Art Design and Communication University of the Arts London IT Research & Development Unit.

http://www.arts.ac.uk/itrdu/conference/



28-30 November 2005

Best Practices in e-learning Online Conference Hosted by University of Calgary

http://elearn.ucalgary.ca/conference/

27 September 2005 OLT-2005 **Beyond Delivery Conference** Queensland University of Technology



https://olt.qut.edu.au/udf/olt2005/



27-28th October 2005 ePortfolio 2005 Robinson College Cambridge

http://www.eife-l.org/portfolio/ep2005/

30 November -2 Deceber 2005

11th International Conferecne on Technology Supported Learning and Training Berlin



http://www.online-educa.com/en/