

**Health Sciences and Practice Subject Centre**

**Mini-Projects  
2001 – 2007**



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Published by:  
Health Sciences and Practice Subject Centre  
Higher Education Academy  
Room 3.12 Waterloo Bridge Wing  
Franklin Wilkins Building  
King's College London  
150 Stamford Street  
London SE1 9NH

ISBN No. 0-9542440-8-7

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# Introduction

The Mini-project scheme was launched in 2001. The scheme aims to improve the experience of learning and teaching in higher education for learners, teachers and the organisational cultures in which they operate. The aim is to develop scholarship and debate about how to best improve learning and teaching practice, through commissioning reviews of literature, policy, and studies of the experience of teachers and learners in a variety of learning environments. The term 'mini' is to describe the funding available not the quality of the work!

The mini-project scheme is inclusive. Novice researchers and developers can apply with little or no experience, if they are appropriately supervised. Experienced researchers and developers can apply, using the scheme to pilot larger initiatives or build upon work previously undertaken. For instructions on how to apply, please visit our website: <http://www.health.heacademy.ac.uk/projects>.

While the scheme has been open to all research and development ideas in the past, the 2007 call was open to two specific project strands. The first was "Involving Service-users and Carers and other stakeholders" and the other 'E-learning' which had two calls to tender: "Mapping exercise on the use of e-portfolios" and "Scoping e-learning and the development and use of e-learning in Health Sciences and Practice". We fund between 3 and 12 projects annually depending on need and funds available. In 2007 we funded six projects. To date, we have supported 33 Mini-projects to completion and are currently supporting 17 projects, 50 in total.

This publication presents a short description of each project with comments on learning points and future developments on all those completed by February 2007. Current projects are also listed under each area of interest. Although grouped into themes, these reports also have a broader appeal. Please browse through them.

For this publication, the completed project leaders were asked to provide some learning points, which would serve as "take home messages" and useful guidelines for other mini-project holders. They were also asked to highlight some related developments that had taken place since the completion of the project. These may include places of further publication or dissemination, work that is underway or further work which needs to be completed.

We hope that you find this publication helpful and informative.

Margaret Sills  
Academic Director



# Mini-Projects by Theme

Mini-Projects funded by the Health Sciences and Practice Subject Centre between 2001 and 2007 are grouped here in alphabetical order under the following themes: e-Learning; Interprofessional Education (IPE), Mental Health, Nursing Issues, Involving Service Users and Carers, Staff Development and Student Learning. However, many of these reports also have a broader appeal and may relate to several of the themes. Please browse through them.

Completed projects are described in short and a link to the corresponding full report is provided. Projects for which a structured, invited abstract was not available at the time of this publication are listed under the themes with a link to corresponding full report.

Current projects are listed under the themes, and as soon as they are complete, their full reports will also be made available on our web site:

[www.health.heacademy.ac.uk/projects/miniprojects](http://www.health.heacademy.ac.uk/projects/miniprojects)



## e-Learning

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<b>Learning To Use The Internet As A Study Tool - How Do Available Resources Meet Student Needs And Priorities?</b> Carol Bond, David Fevyer & Chris Pitt, Bournemouth University. June 2005.	10
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<b>An Evaluation Of Online Training In The NHS Workplace.</b> Neil Hall, Patricia Harvey, Liz Meerabeau. University of Greenwich. March 2004.	15
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<b>Development Of An Online Sociology Of Health And Illness Module For A Number Of Health Professional Courses.</b> Dominic Upton, University of Wales Institute, Cardiff. March 2004.	17
<b>Putting Post Registration Nursing Students Online: Important Lessons Learnt From A Small-Scale Study.</b> Heather Wharrad, Elaine Cook & Cherry Poussa, Nottingham University. February 2004.	18
<b>Reusable Learning Objects In A Post-Registration, Nurse Prescribing Course (ROWEN).</b> Heather Wharrad, Fiona Bath-Hextall, Nottingham University. August 2006.	19

## **Current Projects in e-Learning**

### **An Investigation Into The Factors Supporting Healthcare Education Providers' Use Of E-Portfolios**

Linsey Duncan-Pitt, University of Wolverhampton.  
Due December 2007.

### **Using Web Based Multimedia, Simulated And Virtual Practice To Assess Students Professional Practice Skills**

Mary Gobbi, University of Southampton.  
Due: December 2007.

### **An Evaluation Of The Intergration Of All The Students Online In Integrated Curricula Project (SONIC) Materials Across Pre-Registration Curricula In A Faculty Of Health And Social Care**

Moira McLoughlin, University of Salford.  
Due December 2007.

### **Development, Implementation And Evaluation Of An E-Learning Module In Evidence-Based Healthcare Practice**

Abbie McKenna, University of Ulster.  
Due December 2007.

### **Scoping E-Learning; Use And Developmment In Health Sciences And Practice**

Pam Moule, University of the West of England, Bristol.  
Due December 2007.

### **A Virtual Practice Community For Student Learning And Staff Development In Health And Social Work Inter-Professional Education; Changing Practice Through Collaboration**

Janet Scammell, Bournemouth University.  
Due December 2007.

## Online Courses In The Therapies Survey

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**Published:** June 2002

Full Report: <http://www.health.heacademy.ac.uk/projects/miniprojects/anthony.pdf>

**Key Words:** Allied Health Professions, E-Learning, Virtual Learning Environment

### Project Abstract

This project involved conducting a survey to identify the online courses in therapy education. The population surveyed was schools of Radiography, Podiatry, Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy and Speech & Language Therapy in the UK. The survey also identified barriers and bridges to creating online courses, packages used to create them, and the potential for online courses to therapists. There is considered to be a role for online courses in the therapies, though as a support for, rather than replacement of traditional courses. The therapies are less enthusiastic than nursing about the use of online courses, and are concerned that the practical skills needed should not be offered via online courses. If online courses are to succeed, appropriate resources need to be in place, these include staff development.

### Learning Points

- Schools running online course are not yet in a position to evaluate; in general, evaluations remain positive with at worst mixed student reaction.
- There are many virtual learning environments used, but two predominate: WebCT and BlackBoard.
- Online courses are more suited to post basic courses than undergraduate studies.
- Online courses are especially useful in niche areas with typically widely geographically spread students.

### Further Developments

1. Anthony DM (2003) Online courses in nursing and midwifery: comparisons with allied healthcare professions. *British Journal of Healthcare Computing & Information Management* **20** (1) 28-30.
2. Anthony DM (2002) Online courses in the therapies survey. *ITIN* **14** (4) 13-25.
3. Anthony DM et al. Diversity of students in an online course. *Diversity in health and social care*. 2006 (work in progress).

## Learning To Use The Internet As A Study Tool - How Do Available Resources Meet Student Needs And Priorities?

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**Published:** June 2005

Full Report: <http://www.health.heacademy.ac.uk/projects/miniprojects/bond.pdf>

**Key Words:** E-Learning, Linking Teaching and Research, Health and Social Care

### Project Abstract

This project aimed to identify the resources that are available to help students develop the skills that they need to effectively use the Internet as a resource during their studies, to identify the elements of a study guide that were of importance to the students and produce a tool to help them select appropriate sources of guidance. Structured internet searches were carried out through Google and Yahoo to locate web based tutorials and information sites excluding commercial software packages but including online catalogues of major publishers to identify hard copy study guides. Focus groups revealed that students' lack of IT skills, or lack of confidence in the skills that they have, needs to be addressed to enable them to maximise their use of all the resources available to them. Their reluctance to use online resources to help them develop their information skills could result in their missing some excellent educational support mechanisms.

### Learning Points

- Having set out to establish what students wanted in an online resource this study found that what was most wanted was human support when problems were encountered.

### Further Developments

1. Bond CS, Fevyer D, Pitt C (2006) Learning to use the Internet as a study tool: a review of available resources and exploration of students' priorities. *Health Information and Libraries Journal*. **23** 189-196. Available at: <http://www.blackwell-synergy.com/doi/full/10.1111/j.1471-1842.2006.00656.x>
2. Bond C, Fevyer D, Pitt C (2004) Student reactions to online tools for learning to use the internet as a study tool: Outside the comfort zone? *Australasian Society for Computers in Learning in Tertiary Education, ASCILITE 2004 Beyond the Comfort Zone*. Perth, Australia, December 2004. Available at: <http://www.ascilite.org.au/conferences/perth04/procs/bond.html>

## Interprofessional Computer Assisted Learning

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**Published:** July 2003

Full Report: <http://www.health.heacademy.ac.uk/projects/miniprojects/connor.pdf>

**Key Words:** E-Learning, Interprofessional Education, Virtual Learning, Evaluation, Work Based Learning

### Project Abstract

The aim of the project was to evaluate computer mediated communication within the delivery of a post-graduate module that focused on inter-professional collaboration. The perceived need for such a project arose from a combination of professional and pedagogic reasons. In particular, the potential of flexible delivery and asynchronous discussion was being recognized in higher education and, simultaneously, discussions were taking place in healthcare regarding the capacity of ICT to facilitate professional collaboration.

### Learning Points

- Flexibility was increased and students' time patterns, in terms of when they used CMC, differed widely. This taught me to appreciate the time and place independence of the approach and to recognise the importance of such flexibility for busy professionals. It is not always easy to fit into the structured learning timetables of higher education institutions.
- Some students were able to develop workplace communication systems from the experience. This made it all the more meaningful and such transfer of knowledge should be consciously 'designed in' to professional programmes.
- The permanence of written discussion and asynchronous element of CMC supported deeper levels of reflection and greater transparency of group processes. This was valuable in learning about collaboration and essential for the development of self reflective practitioners.
- The project also allowed me to reflect on my own practice and to realize the value of constantly asking why we deliver educational experiences in a particular way and to be alert to alternatives.

### Further Developments

Since completing the project (in 2002) it has been published in Innovations in Education and Teaching International (Volume 40, Number 4/November 2003) and the findings were presented in several conferences.

# An Evaluation of Web-Based PEBL for an Inter-professional Graduate Entry Programme

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**Published:** October 2005

Full Report: <http://www.health.heacademy.ac.uk/projects/miniprojects/goreham.pdf>

**Key Words:** E-Learning, Interprofessional Education, Nursing, Virtual Learning

## Project Abstract

The project aimed to evaluate the perceptions of students and facilitators of their use of web based bulletin boards to support Problem Enquiry Based Learning (PEBL) in a graduate entry programme for nurses and medical students. The evaluation used a multi-method approach and was based on the principles of Guba and Lincoln's (1989) 4<sup>th</sup> generation evaluation. Analysis of the on-line discussion was based on Salmon's (2000) 5 stage model of Computer Mediated Conferencing (CMC). Findings indicated that both students and facilitators felt the PEBL programme was excellent, specifically the bulletin boards were felt to enhance learning and helped students to develop an understanding of working in interprofessional groups. There were a number of technical and organizational issues that detracted from the smooth running of the web based PEBL which acted as distracters from learning. For facilitators, the project team's assumptions about their e-learning experience and skills were challenged early on in the project and highlighted the need for staff development and support. Analysis of the bulletin board conversations showed some discussions at stage 4 knowledge construction.

## Learning Points

- Keep talking to your fellow project members, and write down and circulate what was agreed.
- Everything takes longer than you had anticipated.
- Give presentations, it helps your learning and dissemination of the project.
- Find time to read the literature as early as possible.

## Further Developments

1. Two articles are under way; one related to the findings of the project and the other about the need for staff development.
2. Graphics/photos are being included to illustrate the PEBL scenarios in order to encourage students to develop observational skills.

## Using A Think-Aloud Protocol To Evaluate An On-Line Resource For Nursing Students

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**Published:** November 2005

Full Report: <http://www.health.heacademy.ac.uk/projects/miniprojects/gresty.pdf>

**Key Words:** E-Learning, Nursing

### Project Abstract

This study aimed to address some of the evaluation issues associated with e-learning and to provide an insight into the effectiveness of e-learning. We adopted an alternative methodological approach (a think-aloud protocol) in which students were observed using an online resource and their real-time comments were noted.

### Learning Points

- Obtaining ethical approval can be the rate-limiting step of data collection; secure it as soon as possible after funding is obtained.
- When working collaboratively, have a clear idea of who will be responsible for each part of the project and stick to agreed deadlines.
- The volume of qualitative data amassed can be quite intimidating: remain focused on what you originally set out to analyze and achieve.
- Keep up to date with the published literature and try to attend relevant conferences to share findings and to inform developments.
- Writing the final report is different to writing an article for publication (due to the different criteria that need to be addressed), so budget time accordingly.

### Further Developments

1. Cotton D, Gresty K (2006) Reflecting on the think aloud method for evaluating e-learning. *British Journal of Educational Technology* **37**(1) 45-54.
2. Cotton DRE, Gresty KA (2006) The rhetoric and reality of e-learning: Using the think-aloud method to investigate student use of an online resource. Submitted for publication in *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education*.
3. Presentations: Exploring students' experience of online learning using the think-aloud method. The Society for Research into Higher Education Conference, Edinburgh University, 2005; *Research in E-learning: How can it be improved?* H.E. Academy Annual Conference Heriot-Watt University, 2005.
4. A re-examination of the data to investigate student support issues is planned.

## E-Learning Support For Interprofessional Education In Health And Social Care (ELSIE)

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**Published:** March 2007

Full Report: <http://www.health.heacademy.ac.uk/projects/miniprojects/leeder.pdf>

**Key Words:** Reusable Learning Objects, E-learning, Calculations, Interprofessional Education, Problem-based learning, case studies

### Project Abstract

The aim of this project was to develop a series of interactive and engaging web-based reusable learning objects (RLOs) featuring animations to enhance understanding of complex concepts; interactive exploration of interprofessional issues; and video clips of case vignettes to support the facilitation of interprofessional learning through problem-based learning. The RLOs were further developed based upon peer-reviews. Student (n=3) use and opinions of the RLO, assessed via observation, online and questionnaires and a focus group discussion, were very positive and encouraging. The components of this project will provide many opportunities for creative redeployment in many interdisciplinary teaching and learning settings. The video clips are particularly reusable.

### Learning Points

- This was a short project with a modest budget that has produced enduring and high quality outputs thanks to the whole-hearted participation of a committed interdisciplinary community of practice.
- A semi-structured focus group evaluation with a small group of students elicited responses that a web-based form would not.
- The scope of the project has meant that it has not been possible to carry out evaluations of the other two learning objects to this level of detail.
- The video clips are of exceptionally high quality and the role-playing abilities of academic staff were surprisingly professional.

### Further Developments

1. All the RLOs are downloadable at <http://www.health.heacademy.ac.uk/projects/miniprojects/completeproj.htm>
2. All the resources created for the project are available on the RLO-CETL (<http://www.rlo-cetl.ac.uk>) website and will be uploaded to JORUM (<http://www.jorum.ac.uk>), the national repository, to ensure sustainability.
3. The resources will be richly metadata indexed using controlled vocabularies.
4. The components and resources will be actively promoted to the RLO-CETL community in to encourage uptake and reuse.

## An Evaluation Of Online Training In The NHS Workplace

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**Published:** April 2004

Full Report: <http://www.health.heacademy.ac.uk/projects/miniprojects/meerabeau.pdf>

**Key Words:** E-Learning, Work Based Learning, Bio-medical scientists

### Project Abstract

In this project seven biomedical online modules were designed, developed and tested for healthcare scientists. Stakeholders included NHS funders and the HPA; evaluation was funded by the HEA. Evaluation data on opinions and use of the WebCT-based modules were gathered from authors, developers, tutors, NHS training officers and students via interviews, online questionnaires, automated computer logs and email surveys. Students were positive about the effectiveness of WebCT, the module content, the range of computer skills required, the variety of software used in learning activities and the enthusiasm and support provided by the tutors. Training Officers in the partnership hospital trusts commended the initiative as timely and well-suited to a busy and unpredictable workplace.

### Learning Points

- Establishing and maintaining a team to ensure that all interested parties had input into the direction and management of the project.
- Creating a focal point for information to liaise between authors, students, tutors, accrediting bodies, and the University services.
- Supporting students as individuals; ensuring that they do not become isolated and that online training is seen as a positive method of learning.

### Further Developments

1. The modules are now run live and student numbers continue to grow across NHS trusts. Development of further online modules has been ongoing.
2. An accredited MSc in Biomedical Science (Online) has been established.
3. Harvey PJ et al. On behalf of the BioMed Online Consortium: Can workplace experts adopt online methods to support workplace training requirements? 3<sup>rd</sup> European Conference on e-Learning, Paris, 2004.
4. Harvey PJ, Cookson B, Meerebeau E, Muggleston D. Biomedical Online Learning: The route to success, *EJEL* 2 (2) December 2004.
5. Working Together - the BioMed Online Learning Project, *Biomedical Scientist*, February 2005

# How Do Diverse Groups Of Learners In The Health Sciences Respond To A New Virtual Learning Experience

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**Published:** January 2006

Full Report: <http://www.health.heacademy.ac.uk/projects/miniprojects/peacock.pdf>

**Key Words:** Allied health professions, E-learning, Physiotherapy, Virtual Learning Environment, Online Discussions, Online Learning

## Project Abstract

This qualitative study focused on providing a detailed analysis into the experience of two specific and differing physiotherapy student cohorts and their tutors who were new to using a virtual learning environment. The study sample consisted of 59 students from two student cohorts studying Physiotherapy at QMU, and five of their tutors. Research methods included individual in-depth interviews, focus groups and questionnaires. The findings of this study provide us with some insights into students' attitudes to e-learning with a VLE and provide some guidance for tutors who are moving to this new learning environment.

## Learning Points

- The manner in which tutors used the VLE reinforced students' perceptions of their role in the learning process and what learning entails.
- Tutors need to focus on what students will do with their online learning artefacts to encourage independent learning.
- Researchers are not neutral and cannot entirely disassociate themselves from the subject area placed under scrutiny.

## Further Developments

1. Paper: Peacock S (2007) "E-learning in physiotherapy education" accepted for publication in *Physiotherapy*.
2. Presentations at QMU WebCT Winter and Summer Schools for staff development.
3. We are now implementing an ePortfolio across the institution and evaluating its impact from both the tutor and student perspective as part of the ISLE (Individualized Support for Learning through ePortfolios) project (<http://isle.paisley.ac.uk/default.htm>).

## Development Of An Online Sociology Of Health And Illness Module For A Number Of Health Professional Courses

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**Published:** March 2004

Full Report: <http://www.health.heacademy.ac.uk/projects/miniprojects/uptonf.pdf>

**Key Words:** Allied Health Professions, Nutrition, Dietetics, Health Sociology, E-Learning

### Project Abstract

The sociology of health and illness is a key component to many health professional courses taught throughout Higher Education Institutions in the UK. This study produced on-line teaching material in the sociology of health and illness and explored student opinions, performance and student group differences in these while using the new material. It also explored variables to predict success and engagement with the on-line module. Data from students (n=118) across a variety of health and social science disciplines (nutrition, dietetics, speech and language therapists, community studies and podiatrists) were favourable, yet more negative in the podiatry group. Among all, there was some reluctance to develop an independent learning style. Male students tended to benefit from the course more than their female colleagues.

### Learning Points

- Producing on-line materials are resource intensive;
- Students differ in their ability to access online materials and what they get from the material;
- Evaluation projects are important in developing educational material;

### Further Developments

Published papers have explored the value of the project in dietitians, speech therapists and podiatrist. These have been published in peer-reviewed journals.

## Putting Post Registration Nursing Students Online: Important Lessons Learnt From A Small-Sale Study

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**Published:** February 2004

Full Report:

<http://www.health.heacademy.ac.uk/projects/miniprojects/wharradcook.pdf>

**Key Words:** Nursing, E-Learning

### Project Abstract

This paper analyses the use of a web site set up in September 2001 providing electronic resources and discussion forum for part-time post-registration nursing students (n=20) on a degree course. The number of hits, barriers to use, and ways to overcome those barriers were explored through questionnaires (90% response rate), web site user information and focus groups (4 students). In this study, 7 students agreed that the website had encouraged them to use a computer and of these 5 felt that using the website had enhanced their computing skills. It was recognised that all students would need to develop both skills and confidence in utilising computer technology in order not to be disadvantaged. Skills development needs to be threaded through the course so students become effective on-line learners as advocated by Salmon (2002) in her 5-step model.

### Learning Points

- Consider arranging workshops on e-tutoring so that all staff are aware of the pedagogy and best practice in teaching and learning on-line and will provide the interactivity on the discussion forum that the students demand.

### Further Developments

1. We have now developed a website for the whole of the post registration programme. Discussion forums are available on all pathways and we also assess contributions from on-line student discussion as part of the summative assessment for a critical care module.
2. Article: Wharrad HJ, Cook E, Poussa C (2005) Putting Post-Registration Nursing Students On-Line: Important Lessons Learned, *Nurse Education Today* 25 (4) 263-271.

## Development and Evaluation of Web-Based Electronic Resources and Discussion Forum for Part-Time Post-Registration Nursing Students (ROWEN)

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**Published:** August 2006

Full Report:

[http://www.health.heacademy.ac.uk/projects/miniprojects/wharrad\\_ROWEN.pdf](http://www.health.heacademy.ac.uk/projects/miniprojects/wharrad_ROWEN.pdf)

**Key Words:** E-Learning, Nursing, Reusable Learning Objects, Non-Medical Prescribing

### Project Abstract

Evaluations from students on a non-medical prescribing course and concerns from tutors about the students' level of understanding of pharmacology concepts were addressed by developing a series of web based reusable learning objects (RLOs). RLOs were gradually introduced to successive cohorts to reinforce the face to face sessions. Student feedback and perceptions of their understanding of the pharmacology concepts were measured using questionnaires. The RLOs had an impact on all the students during the course and five students (out of 10 followed-up by telephone interview after one year) reused the RLOs when they had completed the course and returned to nursing practice. The results also suggest that RLOs may help the weaker or less confident students with understanding of pharmacology because since RLOs have been available no students rated their understanding of the specific concept as 'Bad' or 'Very Bad'.

### Learning Points

- Production management needs to be carefully coordinated to ensure that specification writing, peer review processes, formative student evaluations etc are timely. The time taken to do this as the production team gets bigger shouldn't be underestimated.
- Rigorous peer review at the written specification stage saves costly changes once the RLO is in media form.

### Further Developments

1. This work has been disseminated widely via UCeL workshops and more recently Centre for Excellence in Teaching & Learning in RLOs workshops. Also a presentation at AMME in 2004 (Bath-Hextall, Wharrad & Lymn, 2004).
2. HEFCE funding was obtained to become a partner in a RLO-CETL. There are many other projects underway involving development and research into the design and use of RLOs.
3. The produced RLOs are being used widely both nationally and internationally.



## Interprofessional Education (IPE)

<b>Completed Projects in IPE</b>	<b>Page</b>
<b>The Identification of Core Topics of Health Care Ethics That Can Be Taught Through IPE.</b> Helen Aveyard, Oxford Brookes University. March 2003.	22
<b>Interprofessional Education: Today, Yesterday and Tomorrow (Revised).</b> Hugh Barr, The UK Centre for the Advancement of Interprofessional Education (CAIPE). Published as Occasional Paper 1 in the Subject Centre Series, March 2002. Reprinted June 2005.	23
<b>A Critical Review of Evaluations of Interprofessional Education.</b> Della Freeth, Marilyn Hammick, Ivan Koppel, Scott Reeves, Hugh Barr. Prepared by JET (Interprofessional Joint Evaluation Team). Published as Occasional Paper 2 in the Subject Centre Series. October 2002.	24
<b>Evaluating Interprofessional Education: A Self-Help Guide.</b> Della Freeth, Scott Reeves, Ivan Koppel, Marilyn Hammick, Hugh Barr. Published as Occasional Paper 5 in the Subject Centre Series. March 2005.	25
<b>Breaking Bad News: An Interdisciplinary Educational Development Pilot Project For Students of Nursing and Midwifery.</b> Ann Wakefield, The University of Manchester. November 2002.	26

## Current Projects in IPE

<b>Development of A Programme To Facilitate InterProfessional Stimulation-Based Training For Final Year Undergraduate Healthcare Students</b> Guillaume Alinier, University of Hertfordshire. Due December 2007.	
<b>Evaluating Student Learning In An Interprofessional Curriculum: The Relevance Of Pre-Qualifying Interprofessional Education For Future Professional Practice</b> Kathy Pollard, University of the West of England, Bristol. Due December 2007.	

## The Identification of Core Topics of Health Care Ethics That Can Be Taught Through IPE

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**Published:** March 2003

Full Report: <http://www.health.heacademy.ac.uk/projects/miniprojects/aveyard.pdf>

**Key Words:** Ethics, Interprofessional Education

### Project Abstract

This project aimed to identify core topics of health care ethics that could be taught through an interprofessional approach to pre-registration education. Five nominal group technique workshops were run with academic teaching staff from different professional disciplines in our university (nursing branches, occupational and physiotherapy). Seven core topics of health care ethics that are common across all disciplines were identified: ethical theory, professional duty of care, informed consent and patient refusal, confidentiality, vulnerable patient, research ethics and rationing. However participants in all workshops identified the need for case studies used in teaching and learning to be specific to the clinical setting encountered by the student. Despite the identification of common core topics, caution should be taken when seeking to integrate these into an interprofessional pre-registration programme. There is evidence from other studies that students have difficulty in transferring knowledge from one context to another. In view of this, an interprofessional approach to health care ethics teaching to a group who do not encounter shared clinical ethical encounters may be inappropriate.

### Learning Points

- There was no single approach concerning how ethics is perceived by staff who teach throughout the curriculum. Some perceived ethics to be practice based activity whilst others regarded it as more theoretical.
- There was strong agreement that ethics teaching should be context specific; learning should reflect the experience of the individual students.
- Attention should be given to determining the context of teaching and ensuring that profession-specific teaching materials and examples are available where appropriate.

### Further Developments

This project was written up as a paper: Aveyard H, Edwards SJ, West S (2005) The identification of core topics of health care ethics that can be taught through interprofessional education *Journal of Interprofessional Care* vol 19 (1) 63-69.

## Interprofessional Education Today, Yesterday and Tomorrow

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**Published:** June 2005 (1<sup>st</sup> printed Jan 2002)

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Full Report:

<http://www.health.heacademy.ac.uk/publications/occasionalpaper/occp1revised.pdf>

**Key Words:** Interprofessional Education, Health and Social Care

### Project Abstract

The Learning and Teaching Support Network for Health Sciences and Practice commissioned this review from the UK Centre for the Advancement of Interprofessional Education (CAIPE) to help teachers engage effectively in interprofessional (IPE) education. The guide reviews arguments for shared learning for health and social care professions in the Government workforce and training strategy – collaboration, substitution and accelerated career progression – noting concern expressed by universities and their teachers to clarify ends and means. Examples are given of work and college-based interprofessional education before and after qualification designed to modify attitudes, secure common foundations and competency-based outcomes. The paper focuses upon interprofessional education in the UK with reference to all four countries, but stopping short of discussion of policies and practices in each.

### Learning Points

- Appraising my own understanding
- Identifying gaps for future remedy
- Capturing a complex subject succinctly
- Addressing multiple audiences
- Generating a joint agenda for action

### Further Developments

1. This project was published as an Occasional Paper No 1 in the Higher Education Academy Health Sciences and Practice Subject Centre series.
2. Editing case studies prepared by the four English pilot sites for pre-registration common learning.
3. Reviewing the historical development of IPE education in the UK up to 1997.
4. Systematic reviews of evaluations of interprofessional education with 'JET'.
5. Editing supplements for the Journal of Interprofessional Care.
6. Commissioning texts as Editor of the 'Partnership for Health' series for Wiley Blackwell.

## Critical Reviews Of Evaluations Of Interprofessional Education

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**Published:** October 2002

Full Report:

<http://www.health.heacademy.ac.uk/publications/occasionalpaper/occasionalpaper02.pdf>

**Key Words:** Interprofessional Education, Health and Social Care

### Project Abstract

This critical review of evaluations of interprofessional education, based on a systematic review of Medline (1964-2001), CINAHL and the British Education Index was conducted by a multidisciplinary team to create shared understandings and rigorous procedures. The (mainly North American) studies identified mostly focused on post-registration continuing professional development usually occurring within the workplace or an employer's training facilities. Fewer than 30% of studies included pre-registration students, often in a service delivery setting rather than the university. Within a focused set of higher quality studies the evaluation designs were dominated by variants of before-and-after studies. Few studies addressed the longevity of any changes detected. Studies evaluating university-based interprofessional education tended to focus on learners' reactions, attitudes and perceptions, or less frequently, knowledge and skill. Studies evaluating interprofessional education that augmented a quality improvement initiative tended to focus on behavioural change, organisational change and patient benefit. Studies based on quantitative data and limited interpretation dominated.

### Learning Points

More prospective studies and more longitudinal studies, as well as more interpretive and critical studies would be beneficial.

### Further Developments

1. This project was published as an Occasional Paper No 2 in the Higher Education Academy Health Sciences and Practice Subject Centre series.
2. It was part of a larger project resulting in Occasional Paper No. 5 in the Higher Education Academy Health Sciences and Practice Subject Centre series 2005.
3. This review was updated and extended for a book published in association with CAIPE: Barr H, Koppel I, Reeves S, Hammick M, Freeth D. *Effective interprofessional education: argument, assumption and evidence*. Oxford, Blackwell, 2005.

## Evaluating Interprofessional Education: A Self-Help Guide

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**Date:** March 2005

Full Report:

<http://www.health.heacademy.ac.uk/publications/occasionalpaper/occp5>

**Key Words:** Interprofessional Education, Health and Social Care

### Project Abstract

This self-help guide, commissioned through the 'mini-projects' scheme of the Higher Education Academy Health Sciences and Practice Subject Network, contains ideas and resources on the evaluation of interprofessional education in the context of health and social care. The guide also contains a glossary, which is an important feature especially in IPE where different disciplines use different terms. Some of the content is nevertheless sufficiently generic to be of interest to people working in other fields of educational evaluation. There are extensive suggestions for further reading.

### Learning Points

This guide was developed in response to the findings of an earlier mini-project reviewing evaluations of IPE, which was published as Occasional Paper No. 2 in the Higher Education Academy Health Sciences and Practice Subject Centre series in 2002. (See mini-project 'Critical Reviews of Evaluations of Interprofessional Education' (OP 2) on page 21).

### Further Developments

1. This project was published as an Occasional Paper No 5 in the Higher Education Academy Health Sciences and Practice Subject Centre series.
2. Themes from this guide were developed and expanded for a book, published in association with CAIPE: Freeth D, Hammick M, Reeves S, Koppel I and Barr H (2005) Effective Interprofessional Education: Development, Delivery and Evaluation.

## Breaking Bad News Training in an Interprofessional Setting: A Curriculum Innovation

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**Published:** July 2003

Full Report:

<http://www.health.heacademy.ac.uk/projects/miniprojects/wakefield.pdf>

**Key Words:** Interprofessional Education, Nursing, Medical Education

### Project Abstract

Over two half-day interprofessional learning sessions medical and nursing students were encouraged to learn specific communication skills associated with 'breaking bad news to patients and relatives'. Educational processes were augmented by the use of simulated patients. The evaluation strategy examined not only whether the students considered the educational approach useful or threatening but also how they felt about working with simulated patients. The innovation was evaluated in detail in order to establish whether integrating the medical and nursing curriculum in this way would be feasible and beneficial for future healthcare students.

### Learning Points

- Interprofessional educational opportunities require considerable co-ordination and co-operation from all those involved.
- Students find interprofessional learning particularly stimulating but do not want to learn in a totally collaborative educational environment but rather engage in discipline specific learning which is supplemented by interprofessional elements at key points in the curriculum.
- There is a need for a stronger evidence base to highlight the benefits and pitfalls of interprofessional learning.
- Educational facilitators and students found the approach useful for diverse groups of students to work and learn together.
- Simulated patients provided students with one of the most powerful educational learning tools to help them see the impact of their interactions and comments.

### Further Developments

1. We have published from the Breaking Bad News study at international conference and in several international journals. References online at: <http://www.nursing.manchester.ac.uk/staff/publications/index.aspx?ID=1201>.
2. We are now helping to embed interprofessional learning within the entire faculty.

## **Involving Service Users and Carers in Education**

### **Completed Projects in Service Users and Carers**

None at time of print.

### **Current Projects in Service Users and Carers**

#### **Listening To Users And Carers Who Have Limited Communication Capacity Or Skills**

Liz Anderson, University of Leicester.

Due December 2007.

#### **In Our Shoes: A User And Carer Led Teaching Module**

Susan Benbow, Staffordshire University.

Due December 2007.

#### **Involving Users And Carers And Other Key Stakeholders In The Development Of Curricula For The Care Of Older People**

Phillip Clisset, University of Nottingham.

Due December 2007.

#### **Exploring The Needs Of Service User Involved In Planning And Delivering Mental Health Services And Education**

Marjorie Lloyd, North East Wales Institute of Higher Education .

Due December 2007.



## Mental Health

### Completed Projects in Mental Health

Page

- Graduate Primary Care Mental Health Workers: The Process Of Introducing The Role Into Primary Care Trust** 30  
John Strain, Nimmi Hutnik, Jane Gregory & Gemma Bowers, University of Surrey. September 2006.

### Current Projects in Mental Health

**Evaluation of Programme Leading To Bsc In Mental Health Studies (Nursing And Social Work)**

Jenny Weinstein, Mental Health Department, London South Bank University.  
Due September 2008.

## Graduate Primary Care Mental Health Workers: The Process Of Introducing The Role Into Primary Care Trusts

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**Published:** October 2006

Full Report: <http://www.health.heacademy.ac.uk/projects/miniprojects/strain.pdf>

**Key Words:** Mental Health, Clinical Practice, Primary Care Mental Health Workers, New Roles, Organisational Change, Practice Learning

### Project Abstract

Primary Care Mental Health Workers were recently introduced into the NHS to provide brief therapeutic interventions, strengthen the information base of mental healthcare services available to clients and the community and assist in practice outcome measurement. To understand the adoption process of this new role, Primary Care Mental Health Workers in six Primary Care Trusts (PCT) completed activity reports. The most common area of employment was in practice audit and evaluation. Less time was devoted to mental health promotion and, with the exception of one PCT, very little time was given to clinical work.

Three distinct models of adoption of the new role were identified: a precision skill model (limited and strictly defined clinical encounters), a knowledge co-ordination model (limited face to face clinical encounters) and a limited clinician model (role holders as apprentice clinicians).

### Learning Points

- The training for new clinical roles which have no professional association needs to address the pressures faced by role holders from other established clinical professions;
- Understanding organisational change needs to figure in the training of the new role;
- There is scope for a category of research that can be done more quickly than full high quality research but goes beyond management audits.

### Further Developments

A follow up study twelve months later confirmed the validity and value of the three category adoption process, although there were significant differences in the employment profile.

## Nursing Issues

<b>Completed Projects in Nursing Issues</b>	<b>Page</b>
<b>Development Of A Good Practice Guide For Mentors.</b> Gina Finnerty, Rosemary Pope & Helena Knowles, University of Surrey. March 2005.	32
<b>A Study To Evaluate First Year Student Nurses' Use Of A National Numeracy Resource To Develop Key Skills For Nursing Practice.</b> Carol Hall, Christopher Jones, David Hilton, Sian Davies, Iain MacDiarmid. University of Nottingham. October 2005.	33
<b>A Realistic Evaluation Of Undergraduate Perceptions Of The Definition, Operationalisation And Effect Of Supernumerary Status.</b> Brian McGowan, University of Ulster, June 2005.	34
<b>Competence in practice-based calculation: issues for nursing education. A critical review of the literature, NHS Education for Scotland.</b> Mike Sabin, Napier University. Published as Occasional Paper 3 in the Subject Centre Series, December 2002.	35

## Current Projects in Nursing Issues

### **Critical Thinking Disposition And Public Health Nurse Education**

Fiona Begbie, Robert Gordon University.  
Due December 2006.

### **Exploration Of The Needs And Experiences Of The Student With The Dyslexia In Clinical Practice, And How Best They Could Be Supported**

Anna Crouch, The University of Northampton.  
Due August 2007.

### **Promoting Independent Skills Aquisition In Practical Allied Health Education: A Student Centred Approach In Neuromusculoskeletal Physiotherapy (Pre-Registration)**

Nicky Wilson, University of Southampton.  
Due October 2007.

## Development of a Good Practice Guide for Mentors

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**Published:** March 2005

Full Report: <http://www.health.heacademy.ac.uk/projects/miniprojects/finnerty.pdf>

**Key Words:** Mentoring, Assessment, Nursing, Midwifery, Practice Learning

### Project Abstract

In this study nine mentoring trainees from four NHS trusts participated in two focus groups to help us test and further revise a Good Practice Tool developed by the University of Surrey. Findings from the focus groups indicated that a tool for specific use by mentors in the education audit process could be a positive development. Where implemented, the tool will need to be used in an organic way, demanding regular referral and revisions by mentors, continually assessing the local learning and teaching support needs. It is envisioned that this tool will complement current evaluations of practice settings. Used as part of the audit process, the tool has potential to stimulate dialogue around good practice in teaching and learning in clinical settings.

### Learning Points

- Structuring support in three sections was helpful to strengthen design of the tool, i.e. learning support, social support and pastoral support.
- On reflection, too much emphasis was placed on the research process and not on the tool or implications for practice.
- The tool has provided impetus locally to focus on developing mentors but needed more accompanying guidance in order to be successfully implemented

### Further Developments

1. Posters presented at EIHMS Research Day, University of Surrey, June 2004 and oral presentation at Nurse Education Conference, Salford June, 2004.
2. Oral presentation. Development of a good practice tool for mentors in practice. Hawaii International Conference on Education, January 2005.
3. The above research informed the new educational environment audit tool at the University of Surrey (2006), and an ongoing working group to specifically improve mentor development.

Electronic portfolios are being piloted locally with practitioners on the mentor preparation module with a view to embedding more widely due to success of mentors identifying their support needs and using peers and tutors in new ways.

## **A Study to Evaluate First Year Student Nurses' use of a National Numeracy Resource to Develop Key Skills for Nursing Practice**

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**Published:** October 2005

Full Report: <http://www.health.heacademy.ac.uk/projects/miniprojects/hall.pdf>

**Key Words:** Nursing, Mathematics, Numeracy, Practice Learning

### **Project Abstract**

This project evaluated an initiative established between a School of Nursing and a College of Further Education to allow student nurses in their first year of the Diploma in Nursing an opportunity to review their Mathematics skills using Adult Numeracy Resources (ANR). A total of 142 students across three cohort groups in one School of Nursing Education who had failed to meet a successful criteria of 70% in the School Assessment were offered access to the ANR or a traditional intervention including group tutorials. Test scores showed a significant increase for all students ( $p < 0.001$ ) but no significant difference between the traditional tutorial and ANR subgroups. Students identified books, family and ANRs as helpful adjuncts to their learning. In respect of ANR materials, students felt increased confidence in their mathematical ability. Whilst in nursing there needs to be caution in supporting increased confidence without improved outcomes, there is some benefit in the promotion of a positive learning cycle in mathematics for new learners.

### **Learning Points**

- Identify research assistants early in the project to extend their working hours to work on a small project such as this one, rather than advertise repeatedly and unsuccessfully for a small number of hours of work.

### **Further Developments**

1. Maths in nursing-group has been established across the School of Nursing during 2003/2004.
2. Papers presented at: Education and Technology for Health Research Centre within the School of Nursing; Royal College of Nursing International Research Conference in Belfast, March 2005; HEA Engineering, Dyslexia and Dyscalculia Interest Group Conference, Loughborough University, April 13, 2005; The First International Conference on Assessment in Teaching and Learning, The Polytechnic University of Hong Kong, June 2005.

## **A Realistic Evaluation of Undergraduate Perceptions of the Definition, Operationalisation and Effect of Supernumerary Status**

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**Published:** June 2005

Full Report:

<http://www.health.heacademy.ac.uk/projects/miniprojects/mcgowan.pdf>

**Key Words:** Nursing, Practice Learning, Work Based Learning

### **Project Abstract**

The evaluation set out to answer three questions:

1. What do students understand by the term supernumerary status?
2. How is supernumerary status implemented in their placements?
3. What effect does supernumerary status have on the students involved?

Focus groups were used to elicit the experiences of second year student nurses about supernumerary status. Focus groups were recorded, transcribed and content analysis was carried out to identify common themes. Data were subsequently analysed according to the process described by Pawson & Tilley to fulfill the criteria of a realistic evaluation. Students appeared to be generally well disposed towards supernumerary status but an underlying lack of preparation and explanation of the concept led to inconsistent experiences of it. Armed with this misunderstanding the students invariably suffered from disappointment and disillusionment in practice.

### **Learning Points**

- Clarity of a shared definition of supernumerary status is required.
- Students require to be prepared for supernumerary status at an early stage in their course.
- Clarity of expectation is of paramount importance.
- Reduction in confusion over supernumerary status paves the way for skill acquisition and experience building to take place.

### **Further Developments**

Further study with a larger/more experienced sample is required as is the examination of the concept from the point of view of qualified staff and mentors of students to facilitate a quasi-triangulation.

## Competence in Practice-Based Calculation: Issues for Nursing Education – A Critical Review of the Literature

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**Published:** December 2002

Full Report:

<http://www.health.heacademy.ac.uk/publications/occasionalpaper/occasionalpaper03.pdf>

**Key Words:** Calculations, Numeracy, Nursing

### Project Abstract

This critical review focused on the topic of competence in practice-based calculation, and the implications for the nursing profession of research and practice in this area. The report (published as an Occasional Paper No 3 in 2002) explored and critically analysed the breadth of literature published on this topic and focused on the mathematical calculation skills required for clinical nursing as a pre-requisite to nurse registration. It reviewed studies indicating lack of proficiency both in the student population and amongst registered practitioners, the links between proficiency and subsequent clinical practice, and suggested an integrated approach to improving mathematical knowledge and application in practice.

### Learning Points

- The mini-project provided an opportunity for me to undertake a robust exploration of a topic relevant to my work.
- The wide dissemination afforded by the LTSN/HEA network ensured the work reached a broad audience.
- The project provided an excellent opportunity to establish links with other practitioners and academics with related interests.
- Links between this work and subsequent projects were supported by the LTSN/HEA structure.
- Provided a springboard for a larger programme of work looking at supporting numeracy learning across the healthcare sector in Scotland.

### Further Developments

In my subsequent project work within NHS Scotland, our stakeholder group has recently completed a national consultation on the development of a healthcare numeracy strategy and details of the current NES Numeracy projects can be found at: [www.nes.scot.nhs.uk/multi/#7](http://www.nes.scot.nhs.uk/multi/#7). Whilst the recent project work is focused upon the healthcare sector in Scotland, we have continued to maintain the link with the HEA and collaborative partners across the UK.



## **Staff Development**

### **Completed Projects in Staff Development**

None at time of print.

### **Current projects in Staff Development**

#### **Developing Critical Thinking Skills In Healthcare Academics: A Staff Development Approach**

Stella Jones-Devitt, York St John College.  
Due Spring 2007.



## Student Learning

<b>Completed Projects in Student Learning</b>	<b>Page</b>
<b>An Evaluation of the Validity of Assessment Strategies Used to Grade Practice Learning in Undergraduate Physiotherapy Students.</b> Lynn Clouder & Jane Toms, Coventry University. February 2006.	40
<b>Exploring Learning And Teaching Ethics In The Nursing Curriculum.</b> Janet Holt, University of Leeds. June 2006.	41
<b>To Identify and Disseminate a Shared Model of Best Practice for Student Practice Placements to Enhance Student's Learning.</b> Karen Jeffers & Patricia McClure. University of Ulster. July 2003.	42
<b>The Development Of A Distance Supervision Protocol For Allied Health Profession Students On Practice Placements In Non-Traditional Areas.</b> Jill Jepson, Catherine Wells & Priti Biswas. University of East Anglia. February 2006.	43
<b>Student Nurses' Interpersonal Skills - An Exploration Of Teaching, Research And Practice Issues.</b> Aled Jones, University of Wales Swansea, March 2003.	44
<b>Collaborative Teamwork Skills: How Are They Developed Through Interprofessional Education And Are They Applicable in the Practice Setting.</b> Frances Reynolds, Brunel University. April 2003.	45
<b>How Effective Are Student Research Projects In Equipping Them To Be Evidence-Based Practitioners?</b> Maggi Savin-Baden, Coventry University. November 2005.	46
<b>A Qualitative Investigation to Explore the Development of Team Working Skills in Undergraduate Physiotherapy Students in a Small Group Setting.</b> Susan Smith, Leeds Metropolitan University. March 2003.	47
<b>Implementing Clinical Supervision for Complementary Therapy Clinical Tutors: An Evaluation.</b> Sylvina Tate, J. Richardson, O. Leonard, J. Paterson. University of Westminster. February 2003.	48

## Current projects in Student Learning

<b>Adjustments for disabled students in health care: development of a national web resource of case studies.</b> Shea Palmer, University of the West of England, Bristol. Due 2007.	
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## **An Evaluation of the Validity of Assessment Strategies Used to Grade Practice Learning in Undergraduate Physiotherapy Students**

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**Published:** February 2006

Full Report: <http://www.health.heacademy.ac.uk/projects/miniprojects/clouder.pdf>

**Key Words:** Allied Health Professions, Assessment, Linking Teaching & Research, Physiotherapy, Practice Learning, Work Based Learning

### **Project Abstract**

The aim of the study was to explore the validity of assessment strategies, a Clinical Reasoning Viva in particular, used to assess practice-based learning within an undergraduate physiotherapy programme in the UK. Our focus was on establishing: face validity, content validity, construct validity and criterion-referenced validity of assessment strategies. A qualitative methodology was adopted in order to explore student, practice educator and university visiting tutor perceptions of validity of assessment strategies. A total of 55 interviews were conducted. Our findings provide evidence that continuous assessment of observed performance should be accompanied by another form of assessment, preferably oral in nature, which specifically tests students' reasoning skills and thinking ability. This type of an assessment was seen to add value by all stakeholders by driving depth and breadth of learning and helping to ensure fitness for purpose.

### **Learning Points**

- Face and content validity are relatively easy to establish with a qualitative methodology; construct and criterion validity are more complex and require further research.
- When assessment is perceived to add value the drive for efficiency in assessment is less of an imperative.

### **Further Developments**

1. Presentations at meetings and conferences held at Coventry University: The Practice Learning and Support SIG Meeting on Assessment, March 2006; Clinical Educators Forum, April 2006; Faculty of Health and Life Sciences, Teaching and Learning Conference, June 2006.
2. Presentation at the EARLI SIG Assessment for Excellence Conference, Northumbria University, 30<sup>th</sup> August-1<sup>st</sup> September 2006.
3. Paper under review: Clouder DL, Toms J (2006) The Impact of Oral Assessment on Student Health Professionals Learning in Practice' submitted to Physiotherapy Theory and Practice.

## Exploring Learning and Teaching Ethics in the Nursing Curriculum

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**Published:** June 2006

Full Report: <http://www.health.heacademy.ac.uk/projects/miniprojects/holt.pdf>

**Key Words:** Nursing, Ethics

### Project Abstract

The aim of this project was to identify core ethics content, learning and teaching methods and process of facilitation in the United Kingdom pre-registration nursing curriculum. Questionnaires were returned from 47 of the 61 institutions providing pre-registration nursing education (75% response rate). The results indicated that the majority of ethics teaching is integrated into nursing modules, and lectures, seminars, debates and case studies were the most common learning and teaching strategies. Some shared learning takes place with other health care and medical students, but its use is not widespread. Ethics is usually assessed through essays and examinations, but 26% of institutions do not assess ethics as a discrete subject. The subject was taught mainly by specialist lecturers in nursing or healthcare departments. While 81% of institutions reported between one and ten members of staff with taught Master's degrees in either ethics or law, 49% reported having between one and ten lecturers without any formal qualifications. There was broad agreement on the inclusion of ethical theory in the curriculum and clinically focused ethical subjects, but ethical issues raised by reproductive technologies and genetics were less likely to be included in the curriculum.

### Learning Points

- The importance of identifying appropriate key contacts willing to complete the questionnaire before sending it out.
- Two interesting findings were that there is little evidence of shared learning of ethics between healthcare students, and traditional learning, teaching and assessment strategies are mainly used in the UK nursing curriculum.

### Further Developments

1. Posters: Higher Education Academy Festival of Learning July 2005, Leeds. Interdisciplinary *Ethics Applied* Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching, University of Leeds, September, 2005.
2. Paper in preparation to be submitted to Nurse Education Today.

## To Identify and Disseminate a Shared Model of Best Practice for Student Practice Placements to Enhance Students' Learning

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**Published:** July 2003

Full Report: <http://www.health.heacademy.ac.uk/projects/miniprojects/jeffers.pdf>

**Key Words:** Allied Health Professions, Interprofessional Education, Practice Learning, Work Based Learning

### Project Abstract

This study recognises the need to explore placement requirements within and between different healthcare programmes. The project aimed to:

1. examine current placement practice across several health professional disciplines and geographical areas
2. develop a comparative profile of the range of health professional programmes within one HEI and across different HEIs in one discipline (Occupational Therapy)
3. obtain and analyse students' views on the quality of the practice placement experience and the practice educators' views on placement and the quality of support for their role
4. create through consensus a shared model of best practice for placement in terms of preparation and support for both students and practice educators.

A number of essential criteria were discerned for a shared model of best practice.

The model identifies aspects in pre-placement, during placement and post placement for both practice educators and students. The findings of this study reinforce the importance of effective partnerships among Higher Education Institutions, placement providers and students in securing and delivering high quality placement experiences.

### Learning Points

- Timetabling is an important factor in completing such a project.
- A detailed Gantt chart with defined tasks and deadlines can be helpful in planning and completing a project.

### Further Developments

This mini-project has a relationship with a 3 year FDTL phase 4 funded project titled 'Making Practice-based Learning Work' in which the authors have been contributors. See web-site [www.practicebasedlearning.org](http://www.practicebasedlearning.org)

## The Development Of A Distance Supervision Protocol For Allied Health Profession Students On Practice Placements In Non-Traditional Areas

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**Published:** February 2006

Full Report: <http://www.health.heacademy.ac.uk/projects/miniprojects/jepson.pdf>

**Key Words:** Allied Health Professions, Assessment, Interprofessional Education, Practice Learning, Work Based Learning

### Project Abstract

The aim of the project was to evaluate and develop a protocol for the distance supervision of students in role emergent placements i.e. placements which do not routinely employ a profession specific supervisor. The project adopted an action research methodology known as participatory evaluation to inform and improve practice. Data was collected by individual interviews, transcribed and analysed by the three researchers. The project showed that practice placements in role emergent settings can be undertaken very successfully providing key issues are planned for and organised early in the process. Findings of the project helped develop a draft protocol to enable the student to undertake a learning experience which addresses their personal and professional development, thus making role emergent placements a viable practice experience.

### Learning Points

- Establish a clear and realistic time frame for the project.
- Maintain a responsive overview.
- Communicate with the appropriate people in plenty of time.
- Clarify team roles and responsibilities.
- Use every opportunity to disseminate findings.

### Further Developments

1. To date, the project has provided the material for three peer reviewed conference presentations.
2. An AHP professional body has been informed by the findings when preparing their position statement on role emergent placements.
3. The protocol has been adopted within the school to underpin new placement experience in the private, voluntary and statutory services. This has increased placement provision, and has assured quality within learning opportunities in a range of current practice.

## Student Nurses' Interpersonal Skills - An Exploration of Teaching, Research and Practice Issues

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Full Report: <http://www.health.heacademy.ac.uk/projects/miniprojects/jones.pdf>

**Key Words:** Linking Teaching and Research, Nursing

### Project Abstract

This study assessed the effectiveness of conversation analysis (CA) as a means of evaluating and teaching student nurses communication skills; it aimed to better understand the dynamics of student nurse-patient interaction and to gauge patient evaluations of the interaction. Five student nurse-patient interactions were tape-recorded on a variety of acute general wards and ten patients provided feedback on a 14-point structured questionnaire adapted from the SEGUE framework. While patient feedback reported largely patient-centred interaction, CA conversely suggested that student nurses relied mostly on closed and leading questions. The data collected during this study was successfully used as an educational resource during lectures with undergraduate nursing students. Further questions need to be asked regarding the positive evaluation of the patient questionnaire and the less favourable picture of the interaction which emerges from the CA.

### Learning Points

- How to plan and execute a research project, all within a finite time frame.
- How to write a report of a completed research project.
- How actually “doing research” is always different to textbook versions of “doing research”.
- The willingness of patients and nurses to be participants even at difficult or busy times.

### Further Developments

1. Presentations: RCN International Nursing Research conference, Manchester, 2003; International Patient Participation in Education conference, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, 2005.
2. Some of the work funded by the mini-project will also appear as part of a research article which is in the process of being published by the Journal of Clinical Nursing.
3. The work undertaken in the project was a “first-step” from which more data and analysis have been undertaken and added to the mini-project work.

## Collaborative Teamwork Skills: How Are They Developed Through Interprofessional Education And Are They Applicable In The Practice Setting?

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Full Report: <http://www.health.heacademy.ac.uk/projects/miniprojects/reynolds.pdf>

**Key Words:** Allied Health Professions, Interprofessional Education

### Project Abstract

Do first-year allied health students perceive their learning and seminar group experiences during a university-based interprofessional module as contributing to their skills for participating in collaborative teams on placement? Two cohorts of first year occupational therapy and physiotherapy students (2001-2 and 2002-3) participated. Two questionnaire studies and one focus group study were conducted each year to assess the carry-over of skills and attitudes from university interprofessional education (IPE) to clinical teamworking. Students reported that many aspects of IPE offered helpful preparation for teamworking on placement, particularly participatory, group-based activities (e.g. problem-based learning). Students who reported productive, supportive seminar group dynamics at the end of the IPE module had more confidence for working in teams in the clinical setting. However, when followed up after placement, they did not necessarily retain these positive attitudes. Focus group discussions suggested that university-based IPE offered a valuable toolkit of interpersonal skills that enhanced participation in team working on placement.

### Learning Points

- Students perceive active, collaborative learning activities as offering some preparation for IPE teamworking in the clinical placement setting.
- Positive seminar group dynamics during IPE in the university setting help to foster confidence for interprofessional working in the clinical setting.
- Students re-evaluate the clinical relevance of some university-based learning activities (especially role play) *after* a placement experience.
- Students request more education about team dynamics and professional roles during IPE to prepare for collaborative working on placement.

### Further Developments

Further qualitative enquiry is needed to explore how students' early experiences of university-based IPE may influence later attitudes to working with other professions on clinical placement, both positively and negatively.

## How Effective Are Student Research Projects In Equipping Them To Be Evidence-Based Practitioners?

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**Published:** November 2005

Full Report:

<http://www.health.heacademy.ac.uk/projects/miniprojects/savinbaden.pdf>

**Key Words:** Evidence-based practice, Linking Teaching and Research, Allied Health Professions, Student Research projects

### Project Abstract

This study explored the extent to which research projects met the aims espoused in the BSc Occupational Therapy course document and compared how systematic reviews and empirical studies equipped students (n=8) to be evidence-based practitioners during their first year of practice. An illuminative evaluation framework in conjunction with interpretative interactionism was used. The findings of this project suggest that systematic reviews should be used more extensively across health and social care curricula in the UK in order to improve the research capabilities of future professionals and in order to build research capacity in practice settings.

### Learning Points

- National ethical procedures in health and social care remain problematic for small scale studies.
- Students still find undertaking research projects complex and troublesome.
- Many staff, even those with higher degrees, find supervising systematic reviews at undergraduate level challenging.
- Further research is needed into group supervision at undergraduate level.

### Further Developments

Since the project was completed further staff development has been implemented to support tutors in group supervision and first year research method modules have been improved.

## A Qualitative Investigation to Explore the Development of Team Working Skills in Undergraduate Physiotherapy Students in a Small Group Setting

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**Published:** March 2003

Full Report: <http://www.health.heacademy.ac.uk/projects/miniprojects/smith.pdf>

**Key Words:** Allied Health Professions, Physiotherapy

### Project Abstract

This research project was planned and undertaken to reflect the changing and important agenda of developing team-working skills. Focus groups were undertaken with fifty first-year students enrolled on the BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy programme at Leeds Metropolitan University. The issues addressed via the semi-structured framework of questions focused on students' Belbin roles as a starting point, the level of reflexivity within their team, experiences of working together in small work groups, strategies they employed to complete the group assessment task and maintain team satisfaction, cohesion and reflexivity. This study provided qualitative data for managing future scenarios in BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy students' team work. The report presents recommendations for preparing students for the team work and the related forms of assessment.

### Learning Points

- Keep the design of the project simple
- Make sure you can fit the project into the specified time plan for the project
- Plan and allow some slippage time for delays
- Transcribing takes longer than you might anticipate
- Make sure the subject can link to practice.

### Further Developments

1. Smith S (2005) Developing team working skills in Physiotherapy students. *International Journal of Therapy and Rehabilitation*. Vol 12 (10) 454-461.
2. Therapy Weekly were also interested in the work and interviewed me for Therapy Weekly Oct 2005, 20th edition, page 1.  
<http://www.therapyweekly.co.uk/>

# Implementing Clinical Supervision for Complementary Therapy Clinical Tutors: An Evaluation

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**Published:** February 2003

Full Report: <http://www.health.heacademy.ac.uk/projects/miniprojects/Tate.pdf>

**Key Words:** Allied Health Professions, Tutoring, Clinical Supervision

## Project Abstract

The overall aim of this project was to implement and evaluate a framework for multidisciplinary clinical supervision within a complementary therapy setting. The findings of this study represent the views of 36 clinic tutors and suggest that participants especially valued being able to collaborate and share experience across the different pathways. There is strong evidence that the clinical supervision groups offered a supportive learning framework for the clinic tutors, and the majority of participants felt that the pilot project enhanced reflection as general good practice. Nevertheless, lack of time featured quite strongly as a potential barrier to the process. The clinical supervisors all had a clear preference for a multi-disciplinary approach but varied in their enthusiasm about clinical supervision. There were clear pathway differences in support for and participation in the process, which also relates to the tension inherent in teaching reflective practice and clinical supervision to students when clinical tutors are themselves not engaged in the clinical supervision process. The importance of 'role modelling' the student experience was mentioned a number of times. Preparedness for the clinical supervision experience and associated theoretical input requires further discussion. Some of the findings seem to suggest that involvement in clinical supervision enhances teaching, and that this ultimately impacts on the patient.

## Learning Points

- Marketing and training is essential to the success of clinical supervision
- Work effectively with the committed; the skeptical will eventually join in.
- Be responsive and creative with approaches to the supervision process.
- Never make assumptions about participants' knowledge base.
- Don't take non-commitment personally; enjoy the process and have fun.

## Further Developments

1. This project gave rise to an Occasional Paper (No. 4) by the Higher Education Academy Health Sciences and Practice Subject Centre, published in March 2004, and several articles in peer-reviewed journals.
2. Clinical Supervision is now an integral part of clinic tutor development.

# Mini–Project Application Process

Grants (usually about £5000) are available annually for new projects. Normally the initial call for applications is publicised towards the end of May on the HSAP website, quarterly newsletter and e-bulletin, with a closing date for applications at the end of September. This allows projects to commence in January of the following year.

A CV is required from at least the project leader and signatures required from the department or school.

Final selection is made by our panel of reviewers using the following criteria:

- Need established
- Aims and objectives clearly specified
- UK Higher Education Institution or linked with a HEI
- Evidence of support from the institution (human and /or financial resources allocated)
- Equality and equity issues addressed
- Value for money demonstrated
- Methodology justified
- Ethical issues addressed
- Clear evaluation strategy
- Clear dissemination strategy
- Student involvement where appropriate.

Matched funding or other institutional contributions would be advantageous.

Feedback is offered to every applicant.

## The Mini-Project Process

Successful projects are assigned a named contact person from the subject network.

Once funding has been agreed, payments are made in three parts:

- one at the outset of the project
- one on satisfactory completion of an Interim Report
- one on submission of a satisfactory Final Report by the agreed deadline

Information about the nature and content of these reports, as well as other potential 'products' deriving from the projects, is given to current projects through a combination of face-to-face meetings and information on our website.

[www.health.heacademy.ac.uk/projects](http://www.health.heacademy.ac.uk/projects)

All completed projects are published on our website



# Epilogue

We hope you have enjoyed the booklet and found information and ideas to support you in your work.

This booklet and full reports on all completed projects are available to download from the Subject Centre website: [www.health.heacademy.ac.uk/projects](http://www.health.heacademy.ac.uk/projects)

Thank you to Irja Haapala, Rosie Cannon and all the mini-project leaders for their work in putting this publication together.

We welcome feedback on how the publication serves its purpose and how a future publication on mini-projects might be improved.

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