



Project Document Cover Sheet

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Project Information			
Project Acronym	Coeducate		
Project Title			
Start Date	September 2008	End Date	June 2012
Lead Institution	University of Bolton		
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Partner Institutions	None		
Project Web URL	http://coeducate.bolton.ac.uk/		
Programme Name (and number)	<i>Institutional approaches to curriculum design, Circular 05/08</i>		
Programme Manager	Sarah Knight		

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Interim Reporting Template

Project Name: Coeducate, University of Bolton

Report compiled by: Stephen Powell

With contributions from: Bill Olivier

Reporting period: May 2010 – end of October 2010

Section One: Summary

The Codeucate project continues to make progress in the three key areas of activity identified to support the strategic priorities of the university to develop responsive & employer led curricula:

1. curriculum design tools and associated process change;
2. capacity and capability raising amongst staff engaged in course design;
3. ongoing systematic inquiry into curriculum design to identify changing priorities and requirements of the University of Bolton (UoB).

Curriculum design tools and associated process change

Over the reporting period we have 'wired together' the University Moodle VLE with the student data systems and the new module database developed by the university as part of its effort in this area of work. This was critical work for the UoB and the project as we move towards a Service Oriented Architecture approach across the university's systems.

In Moodle, new courses are created in an organisational structure under the 'creator'. To improve the navigation and 'filing' of courses we have developed & deployed a tool that enables courses to be moved into appropriate hierarchy structures within Moodle – for example, from a member of staff to a subject area.

We have demonstrated our module support tool to users for initial feedback and are now working using an agile design approach to rapidly improve its functionality and value to end users. Using a simple design based on Moodle 'blocks', we hope that this will have wider sector appeal and take-up.

By integrating the different 'silo' services, the implementation of new document handling services, and the course authoring support systems, we anticipate significant benefits to the quality, efficiency and transparency of the curriculum development and validation processes.

Capacity and capability raising amongst staff engaged in course design

The Open and Distance Learning module for UoB staff has now ended and resulted in the development of 5 different innovative programme models as a resource for other staff and the sector to utilise. Participants also identified the need for an innovation support network to allow course designers to develop and strengthen innovative proposals in the early stages of their development. The project, with the university, has also identified the need, along with the tools, to develop the capability needed to make effective use of them. Thus raising capacity for innovative design will be the other main, complimentary, activity for the project in 2010/11.

Ongoing systematic inquiry into curriculum design to identify changing priorities and requirements of the University of Bolton

The IEC's independent Open Learning Initiative is now underway with Shaanxi Normal University. This is seeking to develop new business models for OER that allow for differential pricing for the support and accreditation options open to students. It is early days but 12

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Masters level students are studying with us and it is hoped the lessons learned will help the University, supported by this project, to develop programmes for UK learners & employers that have significantly flexible pricing models.

The UoB Curriculum Review is now underway, and as the Coeducate project we are represented on the Core UG Curriculum & Student Commitment Group. The outcome of this group's work will be a set of requirements for all undergraduate programmes at Bolton and this Review provides this project with a new opportunity to make significant input into the future characteristics of courses and hence increase the take up of the tools and capabilities we are providing to meet them.

A 'realistic evaluation' of the IDIBL framework began the work of identification of mechanisms that have resulted in the development of new programmes in the university and, through that, an action plan to further develop the ideas and resources that underpin the approach for the period of 2010/12.

Section Two: Activities and Progress

Report on activities in support of objectives

Project Objectives	Ongoing supporting activities <i>(new activities italicised)</i>
1. Understanding the curriculum development problem at UoB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Running of staff module 'Planning and Developing Open Learning Courses' <i>(evaluation of this activity & summary blog post including models produced will be available by the next interim report)</i>. • Archimate modelling activities <i>(summary blog post including models produced will be available by the next interim report)</i>.
2. Identify tools and processes for course development & curriculum design across the UoB & with stakeholders	<p>Identification of Jisc projects that have outputs that could be used or adapted.</p> <p><i>Development of to support module authoring process by staff through provision of contextualised support (development work).</i></p> <p><i>Evaluation of document & workflow tools for support of validation processes.</i></p>
3. Implementation of new tools and processes across the UoB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Integration Moodle with student data system and module database (report & code).</i> • <i>Development and rollout of Moodle course handling system that enables courses to be moved around the Moodle category hierarchy structure (report & code).</i>
4. Raise awareness & build capacity of staff to critically examine and develop work-based curricula across the UoB	<p>Teaching on the UoB PGCHE programme module on curriculum design.</p> <p><i>Participation on the Core UG Curriculum & Student Commitment Group as part of UoB curriculum review. This work will lead to the development of a set of regulations against which all UoB undergraduate programmes will be re-validated and is an opportunity to input ideas & understanding developed by the Coeducate project across the institution.</i></p> <p><i>Learning for the 21st Century Open Learning Project exploring</i></p>

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	<i>new models and approaches for higher education initially through a trial initiative with Shaanxi Normal University (overview).</i>
5. Support staff to embed inquiry-based approaches & negotiated learning in work-based programmes offered by the UoB	Continued use of the IDIBL framework to support the development & piloting of new courses including an initial evaluation of the activities and proposed next steps.

Completed work packages

1: Review of current processes and practice

Milestone: Report on baseline data, incorporating models of existing processes

2: Understanding the initial issue or challenge and identifying the changes desired by the end of the project.

Milestone: Working document specifying requirements for process change and supporting actions (online Google doc).

Steering meeting, 30th June 2010

As well as the standard items such as a report on actions to date and review of the financial report & resources, the meeting agreed the following actions:

- The idea of an Innovation Support Network, as detailed in the report, was considered a very good one and it was agreed to take forward this proposal as a focus for the Coeducate project in 2010/11;
- The project should be represented in the Academic Review starting in September 2010 & Peter Marsh will action this;
- Steering group to be extended to include Head of Professional Development (Sue Burkinshaw), Pro-Voce Chancellor Academic (Rob Campbell) & Head of Employer Engagement (Mike Lomas).

Current work packages (amendments are indicated in *italic text*)

	Earliest start date	Latest completion date	Outputs (clearly indicate deliverables & reports in bold)	Milestone	Resp.
WORKPACKAGE 3: Planning and implementing innovations in curriculum design processes in order to realise the desired changes.					
12. Integrated course development system: this will integrate a number of different technological platforms at the UoB as well as incorporate other tools to help academics plan and validate programmes	April 2010	Dec 2011	New technological and process models. Report on lessons learned from integration of technological platforms.	Dec 2010	WO

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collaboratively including with employers.					
13. A number of discoverable and interoperable learning technology tools (widgets) that would enhance course design. <i>Now likely to be achieved in part through the development of a Moodle Block.</i>	Apr 2010	Dec 2011	A selection of W3C widgets that can be played using the Wookie Server, exact number dependent upon 'granularity' of widget functionality. <i>Moodle Block module design tool.</i>	Dec 2010	WO
14. Open learning course on "Planning and Developing Distance Learning Courses", level 7, 20 credits	Mar 2010	June 2010	Materials for online handbook (see point 15 below). Evaluation of approach.	Dec 2010	SP
15. Curriculum development online handbook / resources as an outcome of course above and other activities.	July 2010	July 2011	Following the first iteration of the open learning module, some initial resources will be available and included in the UoB Moodle space for course design being developed.	Dec 2010	SP
<i>16. Develop Innovation Support Network.</i>	<i>January 2011</i>	<i>July 2011</i>	<i>Evaluative Report on initiative</i>	<i>October 2011</i>	<i>WO</i>
WORKPACKAGE 4: Piloting and evaluation of the new processes.					
17. Pilot cohort for Masters in Learning with Technology	Sept 2008	June 2010	Research paper on the IDIBL curriculum development initiative.	Dec 2010	SP
18. Validate suite of courses around the theme of Regeneration and Sustainable Communities	Sept 2008	Nov 2008	Validated courses.	Complete	SP
19. Pilot cohort for Regeneration and Sustainable Communities	Feb 2009	July 2011	Research paper on the IDIBL curriculum development initiative.	Dec 2010	SP

NB: Dr Owen Watson has joined the project as a full-time developer.

Section Three: Risks, Issues and Opportunities

Risks

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Live issue: Professor Peter Marsh who is the project sponsor and chair of the steering group retires at the end of December 2010.

Mitigation: Professor Rob Campbell takes up the roll of project sponsor and chair of steering committee as the Deputy-Vice Chancellor Academic. Rob is well known to the Coeducate team who are now working to bring him up-to-speed with the project.

Live issue: Brown Report has thrown up in the air many of the assumptions of higher education funding.

Mitigation: Working on new models such as open learning and the single most significant fact for work-based learning that there will be an even playing field for full-time & part-time funding students accessing the financial support packages available.

Report on any unexpected opportunities, positive outcomes and successes arising from changes to the plan and new opportunities.

Participation in the Core UG Curriculum & Student Commitment Group as part of UoB curriculum review will provide the opportunity for the project to have further cross-institutional input into the curriculum development process.

Dean of Quality Assurance & Enhancement is back from long-term sick leave and is now fully re-engaged with the project.

The UoB has won a Jisc funded Building Capacity project that is being run by the staff development unit. Both projects are aware of the need to coordinate activities to further build the capability of staff to take on and develop new approaches and are working closely to further this aim.

Section Four: Outputs and Deliverables

During this reporting period, we have begun linking project outputs from our Design Studio project page. After initial 'teething problems' this is now a relatively straightforward process and we will continue to add all project outputs as they are delivered.

Anticipated outputs	Outputs (This reporting period <i>italicised</i>)
1. Description of technology and process underpinning an integrated course development system including lessons learned from integration of technological platforms.	<i>Code & documents on project blog:</i> 1. <i><u>Integration Moodle with student data system and module database</u></i> 2. <i><u>Development of Moodle category structure tool</u></i>
2. Evaluation of W3C widgets to support programme development that can be played using the Wookie Server.	
3. IDIBL programme framework as Open Educational Resource.	IDIBL framework as an open learning resource.
4. Peer reviewed paper evaluating the IDIBL curriculum framework innovation.	
5. Models and examples of curriculum approaches with particular emphasis on employer engagement.	
6. Moodle, module design block to offer contextualised support for module authoring activities. This will have an interface tool to enable easy update & customisation with	

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minimal technical support.	
7. Report on implementation of Work/document flow tool to support validation process.	
8. Evaluations of capability & capacity building initiatives.	

Section Five: Evaluation

Using the realistic evaluation approach described in previous documentation, the project team have established a summary of the evaluation strategy based on the key programme elements (table 1). To recap, the main aim of realistic evaluation is to identify the underlying mechanisms that are at work and that lead to the result or outcome rather than simply focus on a before and after measurement. This view implies that 'it is not actual programmes which work but the reasoning and opportunities of the people experiencing the programmes which make them work' (¹Pawson and Tilley, 1993: 2).

Design matrix for Coeducate project realistic evaluation

Programme elements	Term of anticipated impact	Unit of analysis	Research strategy	Theory-development	Opportunity for experimental control	Techniques	Result
1.IDIBL framework for work-focussed learning	Long term	Community	Action research	High	None	Quantitative / qualitative	Theory formation & development
2.Open Learning Module	Medium	Individual	Action research	Medium	None	Qualitative	Theory formation & development
3.Programme design tools involving process change	Medium	Community	Action research	Medium	None	Quantitative / qualitative	Theory formation & development
4. Innovation support network	Medium	Community	Participatory action research	Medium	None	Quantitative / qualitative	Theory formation & development

Data collection activities in the next six months

Programme elements	Proposed activity	Timing	Progress & activity
1.IDIBL framework for work-focussed learning.	Interviews of staff using IDIBL framework.	June / July	10 key staff involved with the use of the IDIBL framework were interviewed (approximately 45 minutes each) using a semi-structured method and with results transcribed. The IDIBL project team held 4 review meetings to evaluate the project and develop a set of possible next steps reported on project blog. Although very time consuming, this dual track has yielded invaluable information on which to progress the initiative and provide data for peer reviewed journal publications.

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2. Open Learning Module.	Interview of staff on 'Planning and Developing Open Learning Courses'.	July, 2010	Not feasible due to staff workloads / holiday season. This has been reframed as a focus group activity planned for November.
3. Programme validation support and & module design tools involving process change.	User group testing of tools developed / identified.	Sept 2010 - Dec 2010 Jul 2011	Initial meeting held with plan for establishing an agile design process from now until the end of academic year 2011 with approximately 4 week intervals.
4. Programme design tools involving process change.	Survey on curriculum design and affective issues related to new technology implementation.	June 2010	Survey undertaken and instrument developed reported on project blog with analysis of results.

Section Six: Outcomes and Lessons Learned

Indicative project outcomes:	Progress
1. Rich picture of the curriculum development process at UoB & outlining possible strategic interventions.	
2. Amended and improved technical systems to support curriculum development.	The SOA approach being pursued at the UoB by this and other projects is yielding results as exemplified by the linking of three separate technology systems explained elsewhere. In a relatively small institution with limited resources, this approach offers best chance of being able to respond to new opportunities and challenges required of our technology.
3. Simplified and streamlined curriculum development processes.	Although earlier work identified that the curriculum development process is fit for purpose when judged against sector practices, the changes coming about through the reaction to the Brown report means that we must re-visit this question.
4. Increased capacity for development of curriculum relevant to purchaser needs including delivery, teaching and assessment approaches	The University has many staff who are creative in their thinking about and designing new courses and approaches for learning particularly those who are new to higher education teaching. The challenge is how to put in place structures, systems and processes that make it possible for these approaches to flourish and not be

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	marginalised by the operational pressures that tend to dominate and exclude innovation.
5. Increased employer understanding of and engagement with Higher Education in the development of work-based programmes of learning.	
6. New courses that enable new groups of students to access Higher Education.	
7. Use of inquiry-based and negotiated learning approaches across the UoB work-based learning portfolio.	See evaluation report .

Section Seven: Communication and Dissemination Activities

Continuing to take the opportunity of communicating internally through existing University structures continues to be the best way of engaging stakeholders and in particular is of importance when we seek to develop tools that will support curriculum development activities.

The project has proposed a paper for CAL2011 following on from the presentation at the CAL2009 conference.

Presentation at the CRA patchwork assessment [seminar](#) 4th June, 2010 (IDIBL approach to assessment)

Project blog <http://coeducate.bolton.ac.uk/> remains the primary route for dissemination activities.

Section Eight: Collaboration and Support

Once again, cluster meetings have worked well as a means of sharing ideas and keeping up-to-date with sector wide changes and the pattern of three sessions per year is about right. Some of the Elluminate sessions have also been useful in providing a view of other innovative practices being developed across the sector. When contacted, the support team have been responsive in dealing with any issues or requests made.

Section Nine: Financial Statement

Total Grant	£400,000		Duration of project	45 months (3 years, 9 months)
Reporting Period	1 May 2010 – 31 October 2010			
Budget Headings	Total budget allocated	Expenditure this reporting period	Total expenditure to date	Further information
Staff	£419,054	£51,709	£176,511	
Travel & Subsistence	£4,500	£1,884	£5,346	
Equipment	£0	£0	£0	

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Dissemination activities	£2,400	£0	£790	
Evaluation activities	£1,890	£0	£0	
Other (please specify)	£0	£0	£0	

Checklist:

Before you return this report:

- ❖ Ensure that your project webpage on the JISC site is up to date and contains the correct information. Attach details of any required amendments to this report. Project webpages can be found from: www.jisc.ac.uk/curriculumdesign
- ❖ If there have been any changes to the original project plan and/or work packages, ensure that amended copies of the relevant sections of your project plan are attached to this report.
- ❖ Identify and name any areas within this report that you'd like removed before the report is made public (*see below)

***Please note** the interim reports will be made available on the JISC website and on the Circle site with the budgetary information removed. We recognise that projects may occasionally address very sensitive issues. We would like you to present as full a picture in this report as you can as the lessons you learn are valuable to us. We assure you that any issues you identify as confidential are removed before the report is made public. Where such issues do represent valuable lessons for the community we will involve you in further discussion as to how they could be passed on without identifying institutions or individuals.