

## Interim Report

<b>Project Name</b>	Viewpoints Project, University of Ulster
<b>Report compiled by</b>	Sharon Hayes
<b>With contributions from</b>	Dr Alan Masson (Director), Fiona Doherty, James Gheel, Catherine O'Donnell and Karen Virapen
<b>Reporting period</b>	(Project Start) August 2008 – October 2009

### Section One: Summary

#### Project context

The Viewpoints project is one of twelve projects funded by JISC under the Curriculum Design Programme. This programme invited proposals for projects in JISC Circular 05/08, to review course design and validation processes, and the ways these are supported and informed by technology, in order to transform learning opportunities to address an identified issue or challenge of strategic importance to the institution involved.

The project started in September 2008 and will run over a period of 3 years and 9 months. The programme is supported by a central Support and Synthesis project, which is managed by JISC InfoNet1 with contributions from JISC Advisory Services and Innovation Centres.

Each funded project in the programme has been assigned to a thematic cluster, each with a critical friend. The Viewpoints project is part of Cluster C, which also includes the [Principles in Patterns](#) project (University of Strathclyde) and the [OULDI project](#) (Open University), with Professor Peter Bullen of the University of Hertfordshire providing critical friend support.

#### About the project

The Viewpoints project will provide practitioners with a series of simple, user-friendly reflective tools that promote a creative and effective approach to the curriculum design process.

The project tools will consider areas such as assessment and feedback and information skills, and will relate these to key points in the learning lifecycle.

The project outputs will bring together principles and examples of best practice to inform and inspire the practitioner and help them to plan and share curriculum designs and strategies.

#### Key achievements to date include:

1. Development of tool interfaces – which has permitted the project to effectively engage with a range of stakeholders
2. The project has embedded into a number of institutional activities and processes including:
  - Membership of CHEP working groups and Library Subject Librarian team meetings.
  - Workshops in Conference and CIES R&R scheme.
  - Workshop in the PGCHEP Assessment and feedback module.

#### Project team

**Project Director** (Alan Masson) will provide expert guidance and support to the project in the areas of developing usable, learner-focused tools, effective pedagogic and curriculum practices and conceptual integration of workflows and information between diverse educational services. (20%)

**Instructional Technologists** (Fiona Doherty and Karen Virapen) will provide the project with skills in the areas of multimedia design, visual storyboarding, ergonomic information display and capture tools and the identification and evaluation of user requirements. These posts will be supported by the other project staff

to help specify, storyboard, develop, pilot, disseminate and evaluate online tools and services associated with the project. (100%)

**Academic ELearning Consultant** (Catherine O'Donnell) will provide specialist support to the project in course team liaison, curriculum and assessment practices and the modelling of user requirements. (20%)

**Senior Systems Developer** (James Gheel) will provide specialist support to the project in the areas of data schemas and vocabularies, systems interoperability development and testing, visualisation of complex information and on-line database systems. (20%)

**Project Administrator** (Sharon Hayes) will oversee the monitoring, recording and administration of income and expenditure and the organisation and co-ordination of internal and external events. She will also take the lead in the preparation of reports and ensuring records are adequately maintained. (20%)

This multi-disciplinary team will work closely with end users and stakeholders to design and develop tools and services that are intuitive to use and meet the objectives of the project.

## Section Two: Activities and Progress

A formal Project Plan has been developed and is maintained on the project wiki space. A current version of the Project Plan is attached (Appendix 2).

The project has broadly followed the overall approach outlined in the original project plan and it has produced a range of outputs, which are described in Section 3 of this report.

The project team has adapted the initial developmental schedule of the Viewpoints tools in two ways:

1. The addition of a further tool feature (Information Skills) to the first phase of the project.
2. The use of conceptual prototyping through the use of a UI prototyping tool (Balsamiq) for the initial development cycle of these two tools.

The development of both the Assessment and Feedback and Information Skills tools in the initial phase has permitted the project to develop an overall tool framework that is both effective and consistent across the range of educational contexts addressed by the project. This overarching framework will provide the project with a number of benefits:

- More streamlined technical development through the re-use and re-purposing of code.
- Simplified user experience, as all of the tools (with the exception of the Student Profiler), will share a common interface and workflow.
- Easier integration and sharing across the project tools, external forms and services through the use of simple and consistent data structures.

The emphasis on conceptual and usability prototyping through the use of visual representations developed using tools such as Photoshop and Balsamiq has allowed the project team to engage with stakeholders and to:

- Focus on the user experience and educational requirements without any technical programming overhead. This approach has permitted the project team to rapidly develop a design framework for the project suite of tools.
- Utilise defined data structures and a consistent and re-usable interface. This will minimise the technological development requirements of the project by reducing the need for developmental versions of the tools.
- Inform the selection of the most appropriate technical tools (programming language, database selection etc.) through a well defined use case and workflow requirements.
- Utilise conceptual demos of the project tools to assist and inform the discussion of project tools and outputs with a range of stakeholders.

Looking ahead, the key operational outputs of the project during the next reporting cycle are highlighted below (from project plan):

**Definitions:**

Phase One	Assessment and Feedback tool and Information Skills tool.
Phase Two	Community tool and Options and Pathways tool.
Phase Three	Teaching and Learning tool.
Online tool	Online version of the Viewpoints tools.
Workshop	Classroom version of the Viewpoints tool.

**Key development stages of each phase:**

1. Wire-framing UI design, content and iterative workflow by user engagement.
2. Online tool Technical appraisal and requirements gathering, prototyping, testing, refining and final version.
3. Workshop Design, demo and evaluate.
4. Disseminate User guides, train-the-trainer events, implement and embed online tool.
5. Evaluate Effectiveness of the tools.

**Other key tasks:**

- Student Profiler.
- Viewpoints toolset (overview framework).
- Viewpoints tool output options.
- Viewpoints tool enhancements (e.g. Module View and Course View, tool connections).
- Technical synergies with other projects/tools.

<b>Preparatory tasks</b>	
Dates/Duration	Q2 2009
Deliverables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify and publish user requirements and use case scenarios for tools.</li> <li>• Establish outline evaluation framework.</li> <li>• Establish templates for user experience stories and case studies.</li> <li>• Publish evaluation framework.</li> <li>• Establish case study repository.</li> </ul>
<b>Wire-framing Phase One, Viewpoints toolset and baseline review</b>	
Dates/Duration	Q2-Q3 2009
Deliverables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Phase One wire-framing - UI design, content and iterative workflow.</li> <li>• Viewpoints toolset (overview framework) development.</li> <li>• Student Profiler wire-framing.</li> <li>• Complete baseline review report.</li> <li>• Publish baseline review report.</li> </ul>
<b>Developing Phase One</b>	
Dates/Duration	Q4 2009-Q1 2010
Deliverables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Phase One online tool - technical appraisal, requirements gathering, and prototyping.</li> <li>• Phase One workshop – design, demo and evaluate.</li> <li>• Phase One dissemination – User guides and train-the-trainer events.</li> <li>• Student Profiler development.</li> <li>• Output options wire-framing and development.</li> <li>• Identify technical synergies with other projects/tools.</li> <li>• Publish interim evaluation report.</li> </ul>
<b>Finishing Phase One and developing Phase Two</b>	
Dates/Duration	Q2-Q3 2010
Deliverables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Phase One online tool - testing, refining and creating final version.</li> <li>• Phase One dissemination – implement and embed online tool.</li> <li>• Phase One evaluation.</li> <li>• Phase Two wire-framing, online tool, workshop and dissemination.</li> <li>• Identify tool enhancements.</li> <li>• Develop technical synergies with other projects/tools.</li> </ul>

<b>Finishing Phase Two, developing Phase Three and final integration</b>	
Dates/Duration	Q4 2010-Q2 2011
Deliverables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Phase Two evaluation.</li> <li>• Phase Three wire-framing, online tool, workshop and dissemination.</li> <li>• Integrate and evaluate Student Profiler.</li> <li>• Integrate and evaluate output options.</li> <li>• Develop and complete tool enhancements.</li> <li>• Integrate, test and refine all tools working together.</li> <li>• Complete technical synergies with other projects/tools.</li> </ul>
<b>Completion of Project tools and outputs</b>	
Dates/Duration	Q3 2011
Deliverables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Phase Three evaluation.</li> <li>• Complete evidence gathering for final project evaluation.</li> <li>• Software and visual resources freely available to sector under open source/Creative Commons licences.</li> </ul>
<b>Completion Phase</b>	
Dates/Duration	Q4 2011-Q2 2012
Deliverables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Publish final project and evaluation reports.</li> </ul>

### Section Three: Outputs and Deliverables

For details on our expected outputs, please see the Outputs mapping tool, which is attached along with this report (Appendix 3).

#### Expected technical outputs/system integrations

The project team have identified that there is a need to relate the tools being developed to information that describes the course curriculum, and factors which influence the learning experience. This information relationship is important to support reflection and to relate tool outputs to downstream curriculum development tools.

The project will explore how potential extensions to the XCRI standard can be used to exchange key conceptual elements of the curriculum between relevant tools and processes. The project will also work closely with the PHOEBE, LPP and LDSE projects to identify information and data that will inform practitioner reflection and articulate a high level pedagogical model of a course.

The project team will liaise with JISC-CETIS to ensure that appropriate standards are identified and referenced appropriately to ensure project tools can interact and integrate with other related tools and data-sources.

#### Design work on outputs to date

The project has completed the design stages of a number of key elements of the project toolset. These are:

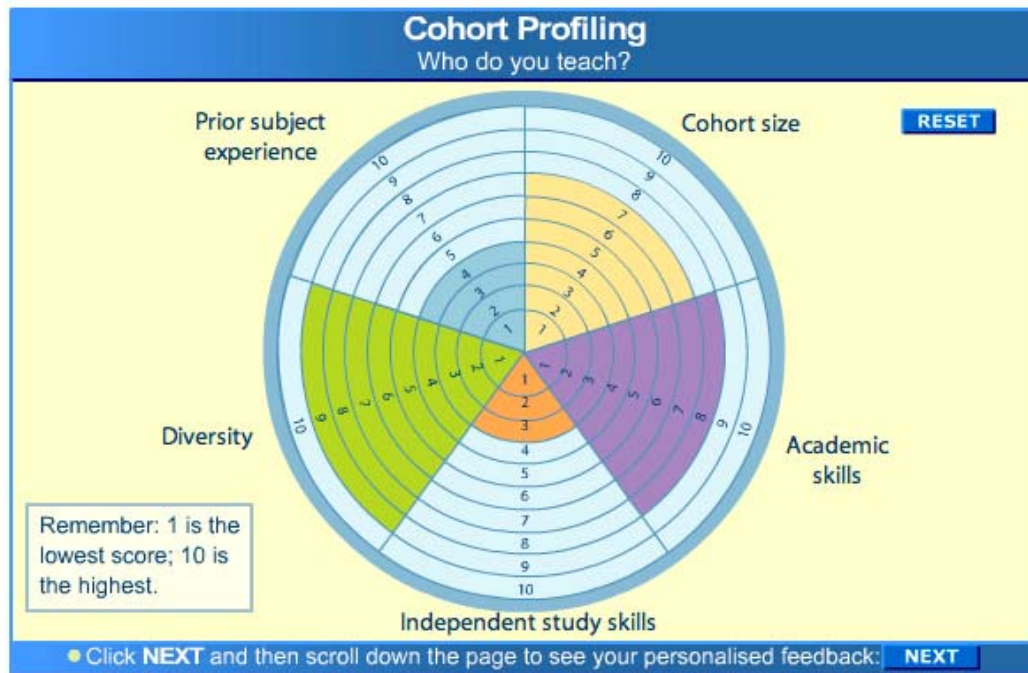
1. Student Profiler.
2. Viewpoints toolset (overview framework).
3. Information Skills.
4. Assessment and feedback.
5. Viewpoints tool output options.

Details of these tools are described below.

## 1. Student Profiler

### What is it?

The Student Profiler is an interactive tool to help staff reflect on their potential student cohort before they begin the curriculum design process. It helps them consider the implications of their potential cohort, along with opportunities and risks that exist for each student profile category. (Cohort categories within the tool could include cohort size, range of student abilities, prior subject experience, first choice of course, and professional/vocational focus of course).



Screenshot of Cohort Profile wheel filled out by a lecturer – they have rated their potential cohort according to the categories, on a scale of one to 10. They will get personalized feedback afterwards.

### Tool Status

The project team has created a working interactive version of the tool in Flash and HTML. With this version, the user can view the initial cohort profile wheel, input some information about the cohort (rating the size of the cohort from 1 to 10, for example) and then will receive personalised feedback on potential opportunities and risks. The next stage of development is to work with specific academics to develop the textual content that would sit within the tool – i.e., the potential examples, opportunities and risks for each student cohort category.

### Tool Collaboration

The project team is liaising with the following staff that have extensive and relevant expertise and experience to this tool:

- Dr Tony Cook, a senior lecturer in the Faculty of Life and Health sciences, who has done a great deal of work on student recruitment and retention within the [STAR project](#).
- Dr Clare Carter, Student Transition Co-ordinator in the Staff Development Unit, who has worked extensively in the fields of student transition and retention.

These members of staff will inform the selection of appropriate cohort categories and supporting textual information regarding these issues (potential opportunities and risks).

## 2. Viewpoints toolset (overview framework)

The aim of the Viewpoints project is to create a suite of user-friendly reflective tools to help university staff to reflect, plan and share their curriculum designs. There are five primary strands\* to this toolset, and staff can begin planning their curriculum using any of these themes as their starting point:

- Assessment and feedback.
- Information Skills.
- Communities.
- Teaching and Learning.
- Options and Pathways.

\* There is also a Student Profiler tool available, which lets staff consider the implications of different student cohorts before beginning their curriculum planning.

Each aspect of the tool is built around a central framework – the desire to **inform**, **inspire** and help academics **plan** their curriculum design. This overall framework was developed and refined through the iterative design process of creating the first two tools in the Viewpoints suite, the Assessment and feedback tool and the Information Skills tool.

Each one of the five strands is founded on best practice theoretical/pedagogical principles, such as the [REAP assessment principles](#), Chickering and Gamson's [Seven Principles of Good Practice in Undergraduate Education](#), the [SCONUL Seven Pillars Model for Information Literacy](#) and Gilly Salmon's work on [student communities, socialization and information exchange](#). (This is the 'inform' part of the tool.)

Having selected the theoretical principles most relevant to their curriculum planning, staff are provided with practical ideas of how to implement these principles (the 'inspire' part of the framework).

Finally, they are encouraged to tailor these principles and examples to their own course design and come up with their own unique 'plan'.

All of this information is captured on a student timeline, either relating to a module or an entire course. Once the information is filled out, staff can either print out their outputs in PDF format or save them to a central tool database. These outputs should help them with new course design, revising a course or module or course revalidation.

**VIEWPOINTS**  
GENERIC WIREFRAME OF REFLECTIVE TOOL STRUCTURE

The user:

- \* drags the principles into the timeline, (INFORM)
- \* chooses from suggested examples (INSPIRE)
- \* writes up their own notes/ideas (PLAN)

They then receive tailored outputs when they hit SAVE or PRINT.

Instructions    Tool resources

Module code: ABCX001

Best practice pedagogical principles	Semester phase	Add your selected principles to the timeline:	Suggested examples	? My plan ?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>① Principle no. 1</li> <li>① Principle no. 2</li> <li>① Principle no. 3</li> <li>① Principle no. 4</li> <li>① Principle no. 5</li> <li>① Principle no. 6</li> <li>① Principle no. 7</li> </ul>	Induction			
	First few weeks	Principle no. 2 Principle no. 4 Principle no. 5	2 of five examples selected... 1 of 7 examples selected... 3 out of 9 selected...	Some notes about how I will tailor these principles to my course
	Mid-semester	Principle no. 3 Principle no. 6	2 of 7 examples selected... Choose from 5 examples	Some more personal notes and comments for my plan
	Final phase	Principle no. 7	Choose from 3 examples	

The user selects what purpose they are using the tool for.

The user interface includes demos and worked examples as well as a list of tailored resources for each strand. The project will also develop a face-to-face workshop version of this interactive tool.

### 3. Information Skills Tool

#### What is it?

This is a tool that will help module co-coordinators and course directors create an information skills strategy for their course or module. It will let staff visualise how evenly the information skills load is spread throughout the course for students, and help staff when they are creating a new course, revising a course or module, or undergoing revalidation. The tool uses the [SCONUL Seven Pillars Model for Information Literacy](#) as its theoretical framework.

#### Benefits of the tool

This tool has the following expected benefits:

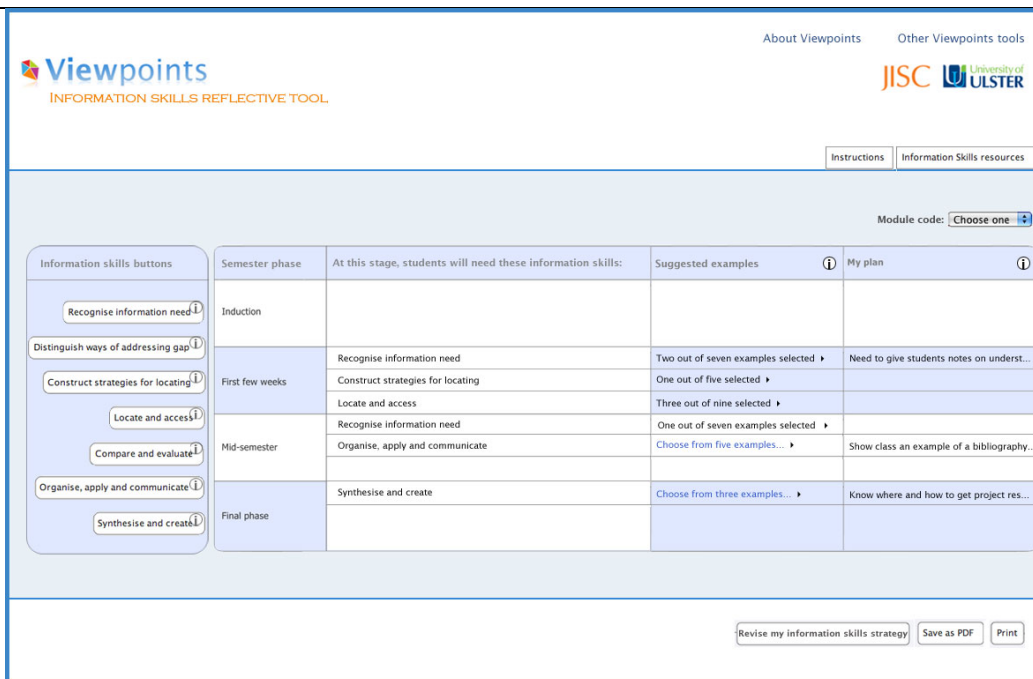
- Module co-coordinators or course development staff can use well-established principles of good practice.
- It anchors the principles to specific examples that teachers can use.
- It prompts staff to reflect and create a specific tailored information skills strategy.
- It directs them to relevant links and resources – information that might currently be hard to locate;
- It will automate more routine tasks, such as directing staff/students to specific resources;
- For librarians, the benefit is that the tool dovetails with the new information skills strategy;
- Librarians will be working on the iterative development, thus creating a practical/workable tool for staff;
- It will foster communication between librarians and academic practitioners.

#### Tool Status

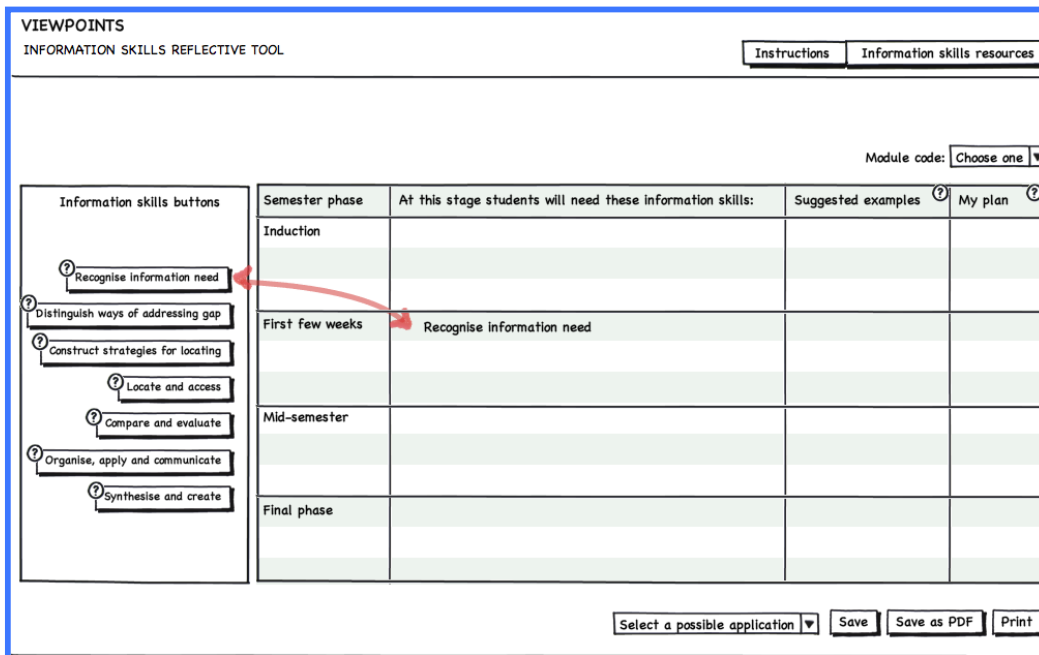
A tool mock-up has been produced in Photoshop of the interface design (both before use and with sample information added) along with a tool demonstration walkthrough in Balsamiq that demonstrates the features and workflows of the tool.

Information skills buttons	Semester phase	At this stage, students will need these information skills:	Suggested examples	My plan
Recognise information need	Induction			
Distinguish ways of addressing gap				
Construct strategies for locating	First few weeks			
Locate and access				
Compare and evaluate	Mid-semester			
Organise, apply and communicate				
Synthesise and create	Final phase			

Screenshot of the Information Skills tool as it would look before being filled out with information by a user



Screenshot of the Information Skills tool as it would look filled out with information by a user



One in a sequence of Balsamiq walkthroughs of the Information Skills tool that illustrates adding one of the SCONUL information skills principles to the student timeline

## Tool Collaboration

The project team has liaised with University of Ulster Library Staff, in particular Miss Colette McKenna (User Services Librarian) and the Subject Librarian team. This will naturally extend to academic stakeholders as the development tool moves to a prototype and development phase.

The development of this tool is supported by an online community: The Viewpoints Information Skills NING community site (<http://viewpointinfoskills.ning.com/>).

This community provides a forum for stakeholders and interested parties to review and comment on the latest developments of this tool.

## 4. Assessment and Feedback Tool

### What is it?

This is a reflective tool for Ulster staff to be informed, inspired and to help them plan their assessment and feedback strategy, focusing on the student experience. The tool will help module co-coordinators and course directors create an assessment and feedback strategy for a new course design (accreditation), revise a course or module or prepare for revalidation.

The tool uses the [REAP \(Re-Engineering Assessment Practices\) Principles of good assessment design \(7 and 1\)](#) from the [REAP Project](#) and REAP implementation techniques from the [QAA enhancement theme – the first year experiences – Transition to and during the first year](#) publication.

The tool should have the following expected benefits:

- To provide opportunities to reflect on practice.
- To provide inspirational ideas.
- To enhance understanding of assessment and feedback from the student perspective.
- To provide a conversational piece for course teams.
- To provide a structure for changing assessment and feedback.
- To create evidence to support change (panels, forms, etc.).

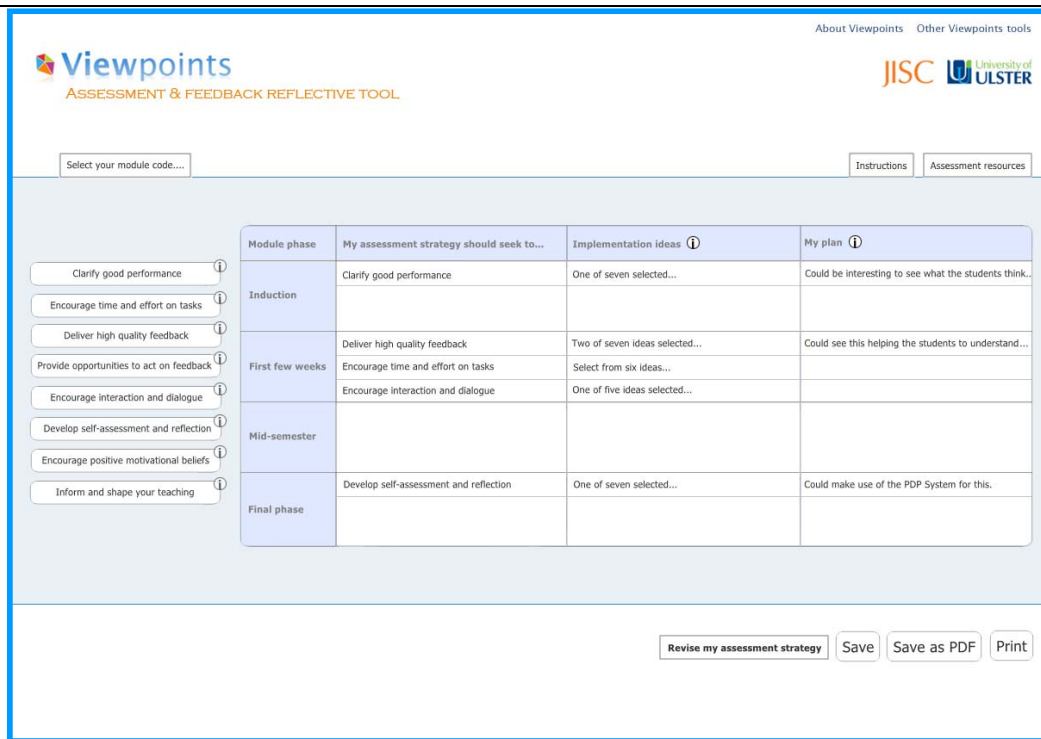
### Tool Status

The Assessment and Feedback tool is now at the end of the wire-framing process and is ready to begin technical development

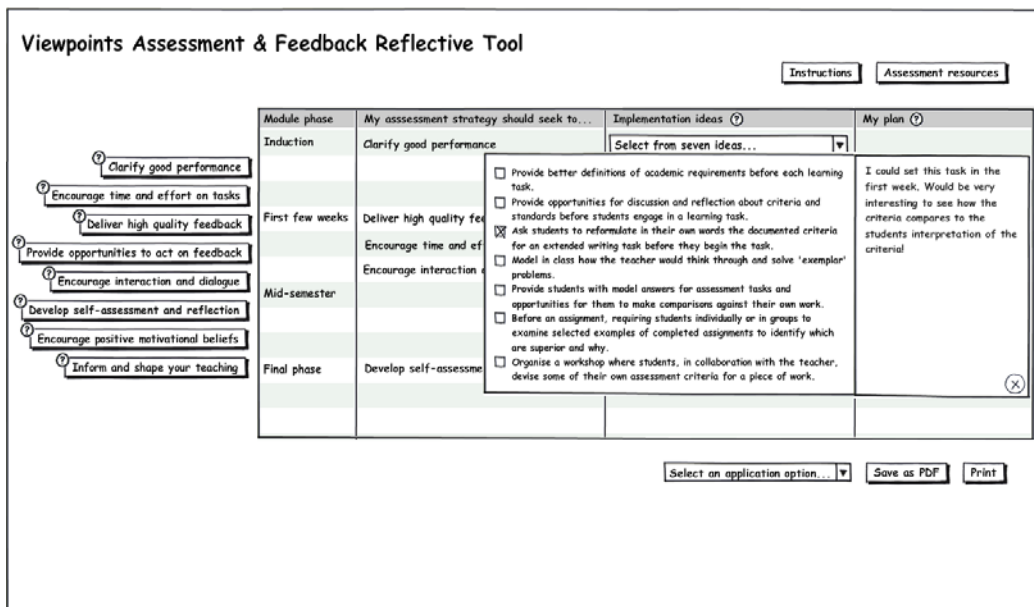
A tool mock-up has been produced in Photoshop of the interface design (both before use and with sample information added) along with a tool demonstration walkthrough in Balsamiq that demonstrates the features and workflows of the tool.

The screenshot shows the 'Viewpoints' interface for the 'ASSESSMENT & FEEDBACK REFLECTIVE TOOL'. At the top right, there are links for 'About Viewpoints' and 'Other Viewpoints tools'. The main header includes the 'Viewpoints' logo and the University of Ulster logo. Below the header is a search bar labeled 'Select your module code...'. To the right of the search bar are buttons for 'Instructions' and 'Assessment resources'. The central part of the interface is a table with four columns: 'Module phase', 'My assessment strategy should seek to...', 'Implementation ideas', and 'My plan'. The 'Module phase' column is divided into four rows: 'Induction', 'First few weeks', 'Mid-semester', and 'Final phase'. To the left of the table is a sidebar with eight buttons, each with an information icon (i): 'Clarify good performance', 'Encourage time and effort on tasks', 'Deliver high quality feedback', 'Provide opportunities to act on feedback', 'Encourage interaction and dialogue', 'Develop self-assessment and reflection', 'Encourage positive motivational beliefs', and 'Inform and shape your teaching'. At the bottom of the interface, there is a search bar labeled 'Select from possible applications...' and three buttons: 'Save', 'Save as PDF', and 'Print'.

Screenshot of the Assessment and feedback tool as it would look before being filled out with information by a user



Screenshot of the Assessment and Feedback tool as it would look filled out with information by a user



One in a sequence of Balsamiq walkthroughs of the Assessment and Feedback tool that illustrates the user filling out the information

## Tool Collaboration

### *Initial feedback on tool requirements and key issues (Jan 09 – May 09)*

Staff who were studying on the ‘Engaging the Student Experience’ module as part of the Postgraduate Diploma in Higher Education Practice fed back on initial concepts for Viewpoints tools. This work was undertaken as a work-based project by Fiona Doherty.

### **REAP Project (ongoing)**

The project team have met with members of the REAP Project at the University of Strathclyde (David Nicol and Catherine Owen) on a number of occasions for information, guidance and support on how to use the

### ***Initial Research with Ulster staff (Apr 09 – May 09)***

An introductory task and questionnaire was sent out to 21 academic staff across various faculties in Ulster, resulting in a response rate of one-third.

This questionnaire was designed to gauge the usefulness of the tool in a teaching and learning context.

Some quotes from academic staff from this research included:

- *“It allowed me time to think through the assessment processes and my expectations at each stage.”*
- *“It allowed me to consider the student experience of assessment and what assessment should be achieved in the development of the student.”*
- *“It was very useful reflecting on what the student will be exposed to from initiation of the module right through to [summative] assessment.”*
- *“It helped me consider how reflection on assessment could be configured in various stages throughout the module.”*

### ***Market testing of proposed tool interface and workflows (Jun 09 – Jul 09)***

This initial market testing with a range of Ulster staff was used to refine the key features of the tool user interface - moving it forward to the wire-framing phase and the development of the tool prototype.

## **5. Viewpoints tool output options**

### **What is it?**

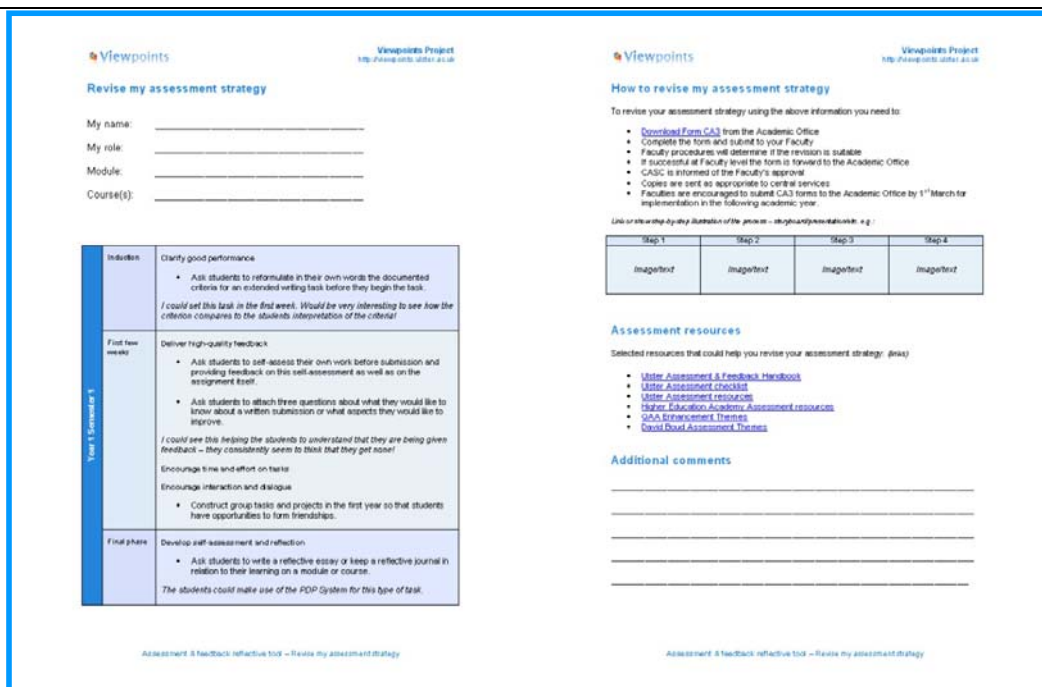
The Viewpoints suite of user-friendly reflective tools captures information which has been filled in by the user, and allows them to either print out their outputs in PDF format or save them to a central tool database.

These outputs can be tailored to help staff with the process of the possible tasks, including the design of a new course, revision of an existing course or module or the (re-) validation of a course.

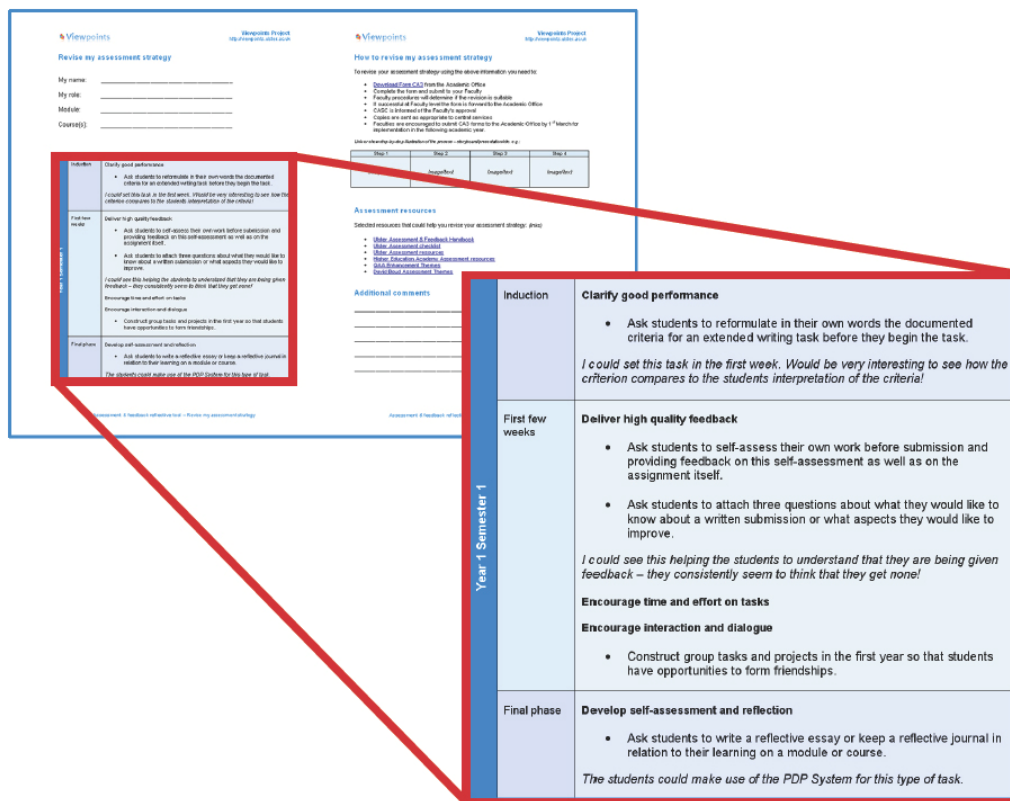
### **Status**

The PDF output feature is at the initial planning stage. We have produced a mock-up in MS Word of the layout of these potential outputs that present user-generated information in formats to meet a range of use cases. The output will show a table with the information that the user has selected or entered in an easy to comprehend layout. It will also document the process of any selected application of the tool (such as, for example, the process of revalidation) in an easy step-by-step format with supporting imagery. Links to resources will be available for each aspect of the tool and finally will include a notes/comments area to allow the user to make personal notes before using this output to enhance their curriculum design.

# Institutional Approaches to Curriculum Design Programme



Screenshot of an example 2-page output for a first semester mapping to revise an assessment strategy



Screenshot of an example 2 page output for a first semester mapping to revise an assessment strategy showing the mapping in more detail

## Tool Collaboration

The project team has begun to seek advice and guidance from key stakeholders such as the Academic Office and the Quality Management and Audit Unit on the content for these possible outputs.

The project team has also begun to introduce the output concept with Ulster staff when providing project briefings. This work will be developed in more detail as the project team engages with end users (teaching and support staff) in the piloting of these tools. This face to face engagement will inform how the project

tools can best package a range of output options that best help staff to fill out course documents, provide evidence for panels and promote conversations about curriculum design with colleagues and course teams.

## **Section Four: Outcomes and Lessons Learned**

### **Curriculum challenges and enhancement**

A key focus of the Teaching and Learning strategy of the University of Ulster is to seek to promote and foster creativity and innovation in curriculum design and delivery. This strategy has been supported by a review of Standards and Quality Assurance Arrangements. This review has introduced a number of measures to streamline bureaucratic processes in order to encourage creativity and more flexibility in the curriculum and to promote multi- and inter-disciplinarity.

The tools and services developed by the Viewpoints project will provide staff with a simple and intuitive means to reflect upon, design and plan innovative changes to the curriculum. They will help staff articulate their aspirations and strategies to learners, colleagues and institutional course approval, management and review processes including quality enhancement.

The use of a student-centred timeline will allow course teams to identify key strategic objectives and use these as drivers for curriculum change and provide a distinctive learner focus to the curriculum change agenda.

### **Key messages from the baseline report**

The baseline report of institutional curriculum development related processes has identified the following key issues for the project and other groups looking to inform and influence curriculum design:

- Curriculum design is an ongoing activity, which can be driven by a number of different agendas (personal, module, course and institutional).
- There is potential to influence curriculum development during three main phases (during initial course approval, when courses are delivered / managed and during course revalidation).
- Most curriculum innovations take place in the period between course (re) validations and the educational context to these changes may be influenced by quality related processes and / or staff developing their own practice.

This report has also highlighted the linkages between the activity of curriculum design and course review and validation processes. This has allowed the project to understand better a number of key issues that will inform the evaluation of the project:

- Processes and factors that motivate practitioners to initiate curriculum change;
- Information and drivers that staff are aware of and that influence them in their choice of curriculum (re-)design;
- Support resources and activities that staff are aware of and avail of to assist them in their curriculum (re-)design;
- Outputs generated by the curriculum (re-)design activity and their dissemination among colleagues and through institutional processes.

### **Transferable practices**

The project has extensively utilised conceptual / usability prototyping through the use of visual representations developed using tools such as Photoshop and Balsamiq. This approach has allowed the project team to engage better with stakeholders and to:

- Focus on the user experience and educational requirements without any technical programming overhead. This approach has permitted the project team to rapidly develop a design framework for the project suite of tools.
- Utilise defined data structures and a consistent and re-usable interface. This will minimise the technological development requirements of the project by reducing the need for developmental

versions of the tools.

- Inform the selection of the most appropriate technical tools (programming language, database selection etc.) through a well defined use case and workflow requirements.
- Utilise conceptual demos of the project tools to assist and inform the discussion of project tools and outputs with a range of stakeholders.

## Section Five: Communications and Dissemination Activities

The project has a formal strategy to the dissemination of its work, which is described in section 18 of the project plan (Appendix 2).

### Project specific activities

This section documents relevant project activities from earliest to most recent during the first year of the project. (JISC programme related activities, which are documented in a separate section below).

Key communication and dissemination activities are briefly outlined – full details of each can be read online in the project blog at: <http://viewpointproject.blogspot.com/>.

Date	Activity	Audience
31 Jan 09	Project briefing	Access and Distributed Learning, University of Ulster
01 May 09	Project briefing	University Centre for Higher Education Practice: Creativity in the Curriculum and Research and Practice in Higher Education Groups
21 May 09	Project networking and knowledge transfer - Assessment and Feedback	Queens CED Assessment and feedback Conference
10 Jun 09	Project briefing and knowledge transfer - REAP principles of Assessment and feedback	University of Strathclyde, CAPLE department
18 Jun 09	Project networking and knowledge transfer - Assessment and feedback	University of Ulster CHEP David Boud workshops
19 Jun 09	User feedback - Assessment and feedback tool	Sample of University of Ulster staff
30 Jul 09	Project briefing and user feedback - all project tools	University of Ulster CETL (CIES) and associated staff
05 Aug 09	User feedback - Information Skills tool	University of Ulster Subject Librarian team
10 Sep 09	Project briefing and user feedback - all project tools	Educational technology related practitioners attending ALT conference
17/18 Sep 09	Stakeholder engagement supported with detailed tool walkthroughs	University of Ulster Academic Office and QMA Departments
25 Sep 09	Viewpoints Steering Group Meeting	Viewpoints stakeholders from both within the University of Ulster and from other Universities

The project also uses a number of web tools and communities to promote, disseminate and share its work. These include:

### Project Blog

<http://viewpointproject.blogspot.com/>

This is the main public information site for both internal and external audiences. It is updated regularly by team members, so that anyone reading can quickly find out what's happening within the project, or comment online if they want to discuss or feedback on any issues.

### **Project Wiki**

<http://wiki.ulster.ac.uk/display/JVPP/Home> (project team only)

This wiki area is used for internal communication within the project team, to share ideas and collaborate on different aspects of the project, from tool development to project planning, design, development and administration.

### **Project Ning Communities**

<http://viewpointsproject.ning.com/> (by invite only)

<http://viewpointinfoskills.ning.com/> (by invite only)

Some project work in development will be shared via a number of secure Ning social networking sites. Stakeholders and key supporters can use these sites to get an overview of the project progress and to comment on work in progress.

### **Slideshare**

<http://www.slideshare.net/Viewpoints>

This online resource permits project members to share information, presentations and other documents, about the project, on Slideshare, an online presentation site. By adding relevant descriptor tags, project presentations will be discoverable for online discovery and dissemination.

### **Delicious**

<http://delicious.com/Viewpoints>

This social bookmarking site allows us to share links, useful articles and research we've found that inform and support the project.

### **Cloudworks**

<http://cloudworks.ac.uk/index.php/cloudscape/view/1485>

This is a 'cloudspace' for the JISC Curriculum Design Cluster C to share ideas, tools and resources that are relevant to their projects. Cloudworks was initially set up by the [Open University Curriculum Design Initiative](#) as a Delicious-type bookmarking/comment site for users to share resources.

### **Flickr**

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/36265730@N07/show>

Project related photos and images are shared through our Flickr online photo gallery.

### **Dipity**

<http://www.dipity.com/viewpoints>

This sample student timeline in Dipity reflects a typical student lifecycle at the University of Ulster.

### **Project representation on University working groups**

The Viewpoints Project has been asked to provide representation on the following University Working Groups and communities:

- CHEP Practice Creativity in the Curriculum Working Group (Fiona Doherty)
- CHEP Research and Practice in Higher Education Working Group (Alan Masson)
- University Subject Librarian team meetings (Karen Virapen)

These representations have been complemented by the inclusion of Professor Desmond Hunter (Director of Centre for Higher Education Practice) and Miss Colette McKenna (User Services Librarian) to the membership of the Viewpoints Project Steering Group.

### **JISC Programme related activities**

This section documents our key project activities with the JISC programme from earliest to most recent activities.

These activities are briefly outlined below – however the full details of each can be read on our online blog by clicking on each heading to read that story or from the blog home page at: <http://viewpointsproject.blogspot.com/>.

Date	Event
13 Oct 08	JISC Programme startup meeting
01 Apr 09	Assessment and feedback Workshop. Higher Education Academy
03 Apr 09	Visit from JISC Programme cluster Critical Friend (Professor Peter Bullen)
21 Apr 09	1 <sup>st</sup> JISC Programme Cluster CAMEL Meeting
13 May 09	JISC Programme Meeting
12/13 Oct 09	JISC Curriculum Design and Delivery Programme Meeting
21 Oct 09	JISC Learning and Teaching Experts meeting
Upcoming events	
11/12 Nov 09	2 <sup>nd</sup> JISC Programme Cluster CAMEL meeting

All project staff are members of CIRCLE, the JISC community networking site. This community provides a forum to share experiences, events and outputs across the programme. The Viewpoints team has provided project information to this community, including an embedded RSS feed of latest news from the Viewpoints blog.

## Section Six: Evaluation

The project team has established a formal, iterative development process to involve end users and stakeholders in the activities of the project. The evaluation focus for the project to date has been on the educational and usability effectiveness of the project tool framework and the specific tool features relating to cohort profiling, assessment and feedback and information skills. This work has involved a range of domain experts, end users and project stakeholders.

The project evaluation activities in the next six months will focus on the usability and effectiveness of the first tranche of developed tools (Assessment and Feedback and Information Skills). These investigations will use a mixture of structured and semi-structured research tools including:

- Questionnaire.
- Semi-structured interview.
- Focus group.
- Peer review.

The face-to-face interaction with a range of stakeholders during this pilot-testing phase will be used to refine the design of tool outputs for a range of different use case audiences (course validation panels, learners etc.) and provide an important baseline review evaluation criteria for the use and impact of these outputs.

The tools and services developed by the project will provide staff with a simple and intuitive means to reflect upon and plan innovative changes to the curriculum and to articulate these aspirations and strategies to learners, colleagues and institutional course approval and quality enhancement processes.

A baseline review of institutional curriculum development related processes identified the following key issues for the project and other groups looking to inform and influence curriculum design:

- Curriculum design is an ongoing activity, which can be driven by a number of different agendas (personal, module, course and institutional).
- Most curriculum innovations take place in the period between course (re) validations and the educational context to these changes may be influenced either by quality related processes or staff developing their own practice.

These factors have led the project team to re-focus the identification of potential end users on staff actively engaged in curriculum development activities such as PGCHEP, CETL Recognition and Reward Schemes, new course development teams and those involved in quality related activities.

The project team is examining how the activity of curriculum design is aligned to and interacts with a number of institutional course approval and quality processes. This will identify a range of data sources, which can be drawn upon to support the evaluation activities of the project. These data sources will include:

- Minutes of staff – student consultative committees, course committees and support department departmental liaison forums.
- External examiner reports.
- Module amendment forms.
- National Student Survey.
- Module Feedback processes.

A detailed review of these information resources and their use to evaluate the impact of project on the curriculum design process will take place during the next reporting phase. This work will be informed by specialist input from the internal departmental research fellow and the external project evaluator (see below).

### **Evaluation support**

The evaluation of the project and in particular the dissemination and impact of its activities will be supported by two additional staff who will be recruited within the next reporting period of the project:

1. The Technology Facilitated Learning Unit of the University, within which the project is located, is appointing a Research Fellow. This post will provide evaluation support to the work of the Unit, in particular with regard to the development of research and evaluation tools and the facilitation of focus groups.
2. The project will also be selecting (via a tendering process) an external project evaluator to provide an external perspective to the evaluation of the impact and embedding of the project and associated outputs.

## **Section Seven: Issues and Challenges**

The project team have identified the following issues, which it will review during the next reporting period.

### **Accessibility and inclusivity**

The Viewpoints suite of tools offers us a unique opportunity to embed suggestions for inclusivity within the curriculum design process. There are two strands of accessibility that impact upon the project:

1. Inclusivity with regard to the use of Viewpoints tools – are these tools accessible for all possible users?
2. Inclusivity in the wider context of the curriculum – can we help staff reflect on potential inclusivity issues with courses?

As regards the first strand (making the tools accessible for all users), the project proposes to make a reasonable adjustment that will see the tools available for use in a facilitated environment, for example, in a workshop where all users and their access needs can be catered for in a flexible manner.

The project team will liaise with staff from Equal Opportunities and Disability Services within the University of Ulster, along with JISC TechDis, to ensure that the concepts and recommendations used within the Viewpoints tools raise awareness and promote the use of best practices relating to inclusivity and accessibility.

### **Course and module perspectives**

One key challenge facing the project is integrating two very different user views of the tools – Course View and Module View. It is necessary to have both views available for the successful implementation of the tool, as different groups of users (teaching practitioners, module co-ordinators and course directors) will want to view their courses from very different perspectives. This is an opportunity for the tool suite to cover

a number of different pedagogic uses – making our tool more versatile and hopefully, more widely used within the academic community in Ulster.

This issue can be addressed using a number of visual cues and the tagging of module codes with specific attributes. The project team will work with course directors and module co-ordinators to facilitate better communication and co-ordination between these two important levels of curriculum design.

### **Integration with existing curriculum planning processes and tools**

Although this tool functions very well as a standalone application to help staff reflect on curriculum design, we have an opportunity now to consider the scope of Viewpoints, and how information produced using the Viewpoints suite of tools can best interact with upstream and downstream business processes and curriculum design activities.

Viewpoints tool outputs have the potential to provide information in the form of high level strategies and objectives to course documents, learner orientation resources, and available curriculum planning aids such as Oxford's [Phoebe](#) pedagogic planner, [XCRI](#) and the [London Pedagogy Planner](#).

The project team have also identified that the Viewpoints tools could promote the use of key reference resources to assist staff to reflect upon and plan adjustments and enhancements to programme and module offerings. This will involve the identification of information from resources such as those identified above and a range of QMA and personal development activities and signposting them in the relevant 'support resources' tab of the tool framework.

The data structures within the Viewpoints tools are simple and mostly closed in nature. This will allow the best possible scope to align project outputs with other tools and processes. It is the intention of the project to initially provide stand-alone outputs (i.e. PDF) than can be embedded into other curriculum planning tools and processes by the end user.

## **Section Eight: Collaboration and Support**

The Viewpoints team feel that the JISC Programme has supported the project effectively by offering an impressive range of supporting events on a diverse range of topics across a variety of media. We have selectively chosen the most relevant of these events at the appropriate stages in the project so far, e.g. attending the HEA Assessment and Feedback workshop when we were developing the initial concept of the Assessment and Feedback tool.

Our critical friend (Peter Bullen) and our Cluster group (Group C – University of Strathclyde and the Open University) have provided guidance and support to the Viewpoints project. It has been useful to share and compare our experiences and the development of our projects with each other. The ALT-C Cluster C poster session ('Representing and Supporting Curriculum Design at Task, Module and Programme Levels') gave us the opportunity to present our projects together to a wider audience.

We feel it would be helpful if JISC were to organise events that encouraged collaboration within various roles on each project. For example, it would be useful if there were targeted events planned that allowed for project staff in specific roles such as Developers, Learning Technologists or Managers to be able to meet up with their counterparts from the other project teams. It would also be helpful if the description for each JISC event clearly identified what role within a team the event would be most useful or appropriate for. This would ensure that each event is targeted at the correct project member.

### **Project Activities with the JISC Programme**

*This section documents our key project activities with the JISC programme from earliest to most recent. These activities are briefly outlined below. However, the full details of each can be read on our online blog by clicking on each heading to read that story or from the blog home page at:*

<http://viewpointsproject.blogspot.com/>.

[Programme start-up meeting](#) (13 Oct 08)

Team members Alan Masson and Sharon Hayes attended the JISC programme start-up meeting at Oxfordshire.

[Assessment and feedback Workshop, Higher Education Academy](#) (01 Apr 09)

Fiona Doherty and Karen Virapen attended the HEA Assessment and Feedback Workshop which looked at general overarching issues in assessment.

[Visit from our Critical Friend, Peter Bullen](#) (03 Apr 09)

The project team updated Peter Bullen, our critical friend, on the progress of the Viewpoints project.

[CAMEL Meeting, University of Strathclyde](#) (21 Apr 09)

The project team attended this two day event with the other projects in our JISC Curriculum Design Cluster 'C', including the University of Strathclyde and the Open University.



[JISC Curriculum Design Programme Meeting](#) (13 May 09)

Alan Masson, Fiona Doherty and Karen Virapen attended this workshop themed 'Transformation: managing and measuring change'.

Instructional Technologist Karen Virapen attended a [JISC TechDis online accessibility briefing](#) on 16 Jul 09. This online briefing was designed for members of the different curriculum design and delivery projects. The briefing covered issues such as reasonable adjustment, embedding inclusion, engaging with appropriate colleagues and users, accessibility standards, user testing and relevant sources of support.

[JISC Curriculum Design and Delivery Programme Meeting](#) (12/13 Sep 09)

Alan Masson and Fiona Doherty attended the joint two-day meeting for the Curriculum Design and Delivery programmes at the Midland Hotel in Manchester.

[JISC Learning and Teaching Practice Experts Meeting](#) (21 Oct 09)

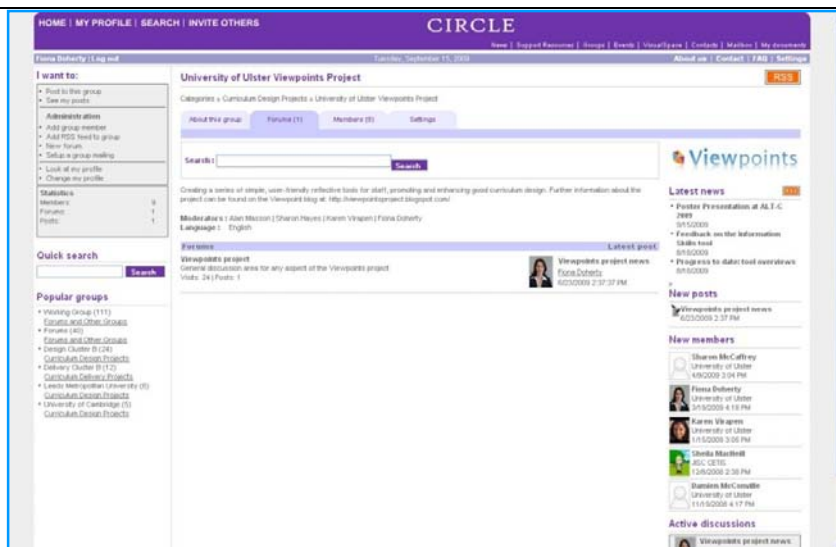
Alan Masson and Karen Virapen attended this meeting of the JISC Learning and Teaching Practice Experts group in the Studio, Birmingham.

## Online Communication

### CIRCLE

<http://www.circlespace.net/forumgroup.aspx?q=5918>

Project Information on CIRCLE, the JISC Curriculum Programmes community networking site, including a project overview, forums and an embedded RSS feed of latest news.



**JISC Approaches to Curriculum Design**

<http://www.jisc.ac.uk/whatwedo/programmes/elearning/curriculumdesign/viewpoints.aspx>

Information about the Viewpoints project is available from the JISC Approaches to curriculum design website. This information gives an overview of the project, aims and objectives, methodology, anticipated outputs and outcomes, technology and standards used, project staff and a link to the project website.

**Section Nine: Financial Statement**

<b>Total Grant</b>	[REDACTED]	<b>Duration of project</b>	45 months
<b>Reporting Period</b>	1 October 2008 – 31 August 2009		

Directly Incurred

Budget Headings	Total budget allocated	Expenditure this reporting period	Total expenditure to date	Further information
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	

Directly Allocated

Budget Headings	Total budget allocated	Expenditure this reporting period	Total expenditure to date	Further information
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	

**Checklist:**

- ✓ 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](http://www.jisc.ac.uk/curriculumdesign)

**See attached report and Project Administrator is not Sharon McCaffrey, it should be Sharon Hayes ([saj.hayes@ulster.ac.uk](mailto:saj.hayes@ulster.ac.uk))**

- ✓ 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)