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## JISC Final Report

Project Information			
<b>Project Hashtag</b>			
<b>Project Title (and acronym)</b>	Kingston Uplift for Business Education (KUBE)		
<b>Start Date</b>	October 2008	<b>End Date</b>	Sept 2010
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<b>Partner Institutions</b>	Kingston University		
<b>Project Web URL</b>			
<b>Programme Name</b>	Transforming Curriculum Delivery Through Technology		
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Document Information			
<b>Author(s) &amp; project role</b>	Phil George (Project Manager) Susan Driver (Course Leader)		
<b>Date</b>		<b>Filename</b>	
<b>URL</b>	<i>If this report is on your project web site</i>		
<b>Access</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Project and JISC internal	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> General dissemination	

Document History		
Version	Date	Comments
3	25 October 2010	Report completed following feedback from Jisc team, Critical Friend and Cluster group .

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## Acknowledgements

This project forms part of the JISC E- Learning Programme Strand: Transforming Curriculum Delivery through Technology.

The KUBE project would like to thank:

Lisa Gray - JISC Programme Manager

Kingston University – partner institution

Anne Ooms – project evaluator, Kingston University

Andrew Comrie Critical Friend

Lewisham College, West Anglia College, De Montfort University.

Xerte Development team at University of Nottingham

Alistair McNaught -Techdis

Ron Mitchell- Mitchell Media

Members of the School of HE Business at Kingston College

## Report Summary

### 2.1 *Project Overview*

Low levels of attendance, weak learner engagement, inconsistent formative assessment and the passivity of learning activities were all identified as areas of concern in the Higher Education Business section at Kingston College. Furthermore, this section's learner profile reveals a stark difference in pre-entry academic qualifications between students at the franchising university, Kingston University, and the partner colleges, including Kingston College. Students embarking on a B.A. (Hons) in Business Management at Kingston University require 280 UCAS points in comparison to 160 UCAS points for the same course delivered at Kingston College. The opportunities afforded by educational technology were seen as an ideal means to promote engagement, interactivity, collaboration, feedback and support for these learners. This was the impetus for the KUBE project which has developed and evaluated models of good practice to address the issues identified above.

One key output from the project is the development of a pedagogic blended learning planning tool. Work during the KUBE project has resulted in the evolution of seven different models which successfully incorporate educational technology within course delivery. During the past six months the KUBE Curriculum planner has been successfully introduced into other areas of the curriculum within Kingston College including: sport and coaching, BTEC Business, Digital Art and Management programs which has resulted in Kingston College being shortlisted for a **Becta Beacon Award for Efficiency through the Effective use of Technology in FE and Skills**. The KUBE inspired model will be used by curriculum managers in other areas to plan and develop an integrated blended learning model for any part of the curriculum across the sector. This tool is particularly valuable for institutions reviewing expenditure on course delivery and we would of course be delighted to share it across the sector.

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## 2.2 Project Outputs

Here is a set of links which will take you to some of the KUBE project outputs discussed below.

**Tools and techniques in this section** were used primarily in the **awareness** raising period of the project when a primary objective was **teaching team engagement**

[Kube Visioning Day](#) This unit contains extracts from the Kube visioning day and describes the process the teaching and eLearning teams engaged in at the start of the project to understand the purpose of the project, introduce new methods and technologies and get to know each other better.

This unit also contains an embedded link to a learning unit which focuses on the [Curriculopoly board game](#), which proved to be a highly successful asset both within the institution and across the wider Jisc community.

[Kube visioning resources site](#) to access Moodle User name jiscguest Password welcome2KC  
This site was used to introduce different teaching and learning tools to the He Business Team. Accessed individually using Asus UMPC's each member of the team could work through the tools and techniques autonomously which we felt would engender a strengthened attitude towards the blended learning approach.

Examples of Blended Learning Units created using the Xerte tool can be found here. These tools were used in different ways by different members of the team and deployed at different stages within the module.

**This section contains examples of Learning units** used as part of the blended model on the Higher Education Business Programme.

This is [Organisational Culture](#) from Managing Yourself and Others.

This is [Measuring Financial Performance](#) from Business Accounting.

**This selection contains the outputs formulated into the Kube Curriculum Cube planning tool.**

[Kube Blended Model](#) animated slideshow takes you through the basics

[Kube Cube Pedagogic blended learning toolkit](#). This unit describes the component models and how they were used within HE Business as part of the KUBE project.

**This section focuses on the feedback from Students and teachers**

[Kube show reel](#) containing feedback from students and teachers.

[Students play Curriculopoly](#) as part of the feedback and evaluation process.

[View from Kingston University](#) Mark Farmer Module leader from our partnership institution provides feedback at the end of the project and discusses plans to roll-out the approach with the University and other partners.

[Foundation Degree Feedback](#) two student representatives from the foundation degree provide feedback about the use of mobile devices on the FD modules.

**KU Chat** here is the Pre-induction

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Social Networking site set up by second year students for first year students to get to know the organisation and each other.

The links above should take you to directly to the learning unit. The link to [Kube visioning resources site](#) may require you to login through the Kube Moodle site which contains other resources.

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This report should be read in conjunction with the [KUBE Project Moodle site](#). Login details:

User name **jiscguest**

Password **welcome2KC**

This site contains an extensive collection of evidence, activities, resources and media produced during the project. It also contains supporting documents including student and teacher feedback about the activities in the project.

***Pedagogic PlanningTool*** - Toolkit contains guidelines on effective learning design and interactive examples of how to transform delivery through the use of educational technology.

***Curriculopoly Game*** – Tool to promote stakeholder engagement:

URL: <https://jiscdesignstudio.pbworks.com/Curriculopoly-board-game>

***Interactive Learning Resources*** – the Xerte content creation tool was used very successfully across all 7 blended learning models. These are now streamed on Kingston College's Moodle Technology Enhanced Learning site for use across the institution. An example from the Managing Yourself and Others [module is here](#).

- ***Case Studies*** Recorded interviews have been conducted with both lecturers and students during the project in order to track the application and subsequent development of different technologies at varying stages of the project. This information has served to improve practice within the KUBE project but will also be of use as case studies for other curriculum areas.
- ***Guidelines*** Based on the above, we have produced FAQs and guidelines. These guidelines will assist those involved in pedagogic planning design to refer to recent practice.
- ***Teacher observation toolkit***. Originally a targeted project outcome the essence of the teacher observation toolkit will now feature in a wider context. Based on the project work which has taken place in KUBE, Kingston College SMT have embarked on a far reaching review of teaching practice. This review will focus on the concept of introducing the blended learning models identified in KUBE across the wider curriculum. Part of this process will involve identifying areas of teaching practice which may offer appropriate opportunities for a blended approach.
- **Summary and report**
- **Moodle KUBE Project site**

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### **2.3 Impact and Benefits to the Community**

The main benefits have arisen from the pedagogic planning tool which has enabled curriculum managers and lecturing teams to employ educational technologies in a clearly structured and cohesive format. This has facilitated the embedding of these technologies within curriculum delivery and thus eliminated the perception of educational technology as an 'optional extra'. This tool has now been adopted throughout the institution and is already reaping benefits in other curriculum areas.

The differentiation of delivery between modules on the courses has unified and thus strengthened individual lecturing teams whilst still engendering an integrated overall course delivery.

Students have benefited from the KUBE project with approximately 80% of the first year cohort of full-time students\* involved in the project stating that it has increased their motivation to study. Similar response rates have been recorded for the students' perception that it has had a positive impact on grades, helped them to understand new concepts and helped in assessment preparation.

Other significant impacts and benefits include the following: (extract taken from Becta Beacon Award application 2010)

1. A framework and support system that assist curriculum managers and teaching teams in planning and delivering integrated approaches to the curriculum involving a combination of traditional face-to-face and online methods.
2. Provide a high quality learning experience for our students that raised levels of engagement, participation and success.
3. Implement curriculum delivery models that achieved efficiency savings for the organisation whilst raising the quality of learning and teaching.

The College's KUBE Project (Kingston Uplift for Blended Education) explored a variety of ways of effectively and efficiently combining face-to-face and online modes of curriculum delivery on HE Business courses at the College. **The replacement of class-based provision with web-based approaches has taken place in a wide range of other curriculum areas across the College and has directly impacted on around 1200 learners, 65 teaching staff and all five of the College's faculties.**

\*114 students

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## **2.4 Main Lessons Learnt**

### **(Strategic)**

- The opportunity to introduce transformations to curriculum delivery at Kingston College resulting from changes imposed by the core institution, Kingston University. The change to a semester based program provided useful momentum for the project and provided a mechanism to overcome much of the expected resistance to change.
- It is crucial for key stakeholders to understand and engage with their part of the project. Evidence shows that the modules which had the greatest impact (in terms of awareness) are those in which curriculum managers and lecturers embraced the project aims and thereby transferred their enthusiasm to the end-users, the students.
- Clearly defined project aims and means of achieving them are required for teaching staff to 'buy-in' to the initiative. Some lecturers said they were unclear about the project in its initial phase. As a result of this a closer working relationship between eLearning and teaching teams was sought.

### **(Learning)**

- The degree of involvement of the project team with the delivery of the programme is directly proportional to the amount of influence the team can exert on the progress of the new initiatives. The KUBE Project Manager joined the teaching team on the Foundation Degree and an HE Business lecturer covered the maternity leave of the Tutor Support Coordinator. Furthermore, the Project Curriculum Manager lectured on all of the courses involved in this project.
- Learners require support through adoption of new processes. For example the use of podcasts with learners requires that learners understand the technical as well as practical issues, how to access, what the point is in accessing, how the podcasts should be used. It is vital that these messages are continually reinforced through the face to face contact during the early stages of each module.
- Encourage, listen to and act on student feedback concerning new methods of delivery. We tried to illicit opinions and views about the blended methods employed in KUBE. It is important however to ensure students do not feel they are research material.
- Technological support is required by lecturers and time/remission needs to be allocated for the production of e-learning materials.

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## **Main Body of Report**

### **3.1 *What did you do?***

The KUBE project team consisted of:

Andrew Williams	Project Director
Phil George	Project Operations Manager
David Hillier	Project Curriculum Manager
David Connolly	Curriculum E-learning Coordinator
Nicky Read	Tutor Support Coordinator
Susan Driver covered this role during Nicky's maternity leave	
HE Business Tutors	Janette Bradnick
	Natalie Coetzee
	Susan Driver
	Jane Southall
	Laura Tracey
Fiona Tolmie	KU Liason Coordinator
Ann Ooms	Project Evaluator

The curriculum area on which this project focussed is the Kingston University higher-level business programmes which are delivered at Kingston College. These include the full-time B.A. (Hons.) Business Management Degree, the full-time Higher National Diploma in Business and Finance and the part-time Foundation Degree in Business and Professional Administration.

## **Objectives**

### **What we set out to do and how this developed:**

The initial project plan identified four key objectives:

#### **Extend the role of e-learning through blended curriculum delivery models**

At commencement of the project there was a clear understanding that to extend the role of eLearning through the introduction of blended learning would require some kind of planning tool. There was however, no clear idea of what model would need to be developed facilitate this process. The model which emerged was largely based around the practical and appropriate methods developed by teachers for use with their learner groups, which evolved into the seven blended delivery models, which constitute the KUBE Cube pedagogic planning tool.

#### **Support learners through the use of interactive online resources**

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The adoption of a blended learning approach would clearly require the creation of a variety of online learning activities and resources delivered using a collection of tools and techniques. The eLearning team had wide ranging experience of web-based teaching and learning tools on which to base the range of activities which included a VLE, discussion boards, wiki's, podcasts and interactive online quizzes. As the project progressed one learning tool emerged as a key component in the creation and delivery of engaging and effective online learning. The Xerte online toolkit quickly became the favoured design tool for both teaching practitioners and students.

### **Enrich learning and teaching through the use of mobile technology**

At the start of the KUBE project we had planned to use a variety of mobile learning tools and techniques across the different programs. However, because of the nature of attendance patterns the use of mobile phones was not pursued as a major component on the fulltime BABM HND programmes. Podcasting was however used extensively and effectively on the part time Foundation Degree program.

### **Support teaching staff through an e-supported peer observation scheme**

As mentioned in the previous section the original intention of creating a teaching observation toolkit has become absorbed in the wider concept of the introduction of blended learning models across the curriculum at Kingston College. Part of this process will involve identifying areas of conventional teaching practice which may benefit from a blended re-design. Working in conjunction with the Quality Improvement Division and particularly focusing on teachers continuous professional development provides a platform for a peer observation program.

### **The four key themes were modified during the project.**

They evolved to become:

#### **Module redesign:** Introduction of blended delivery models.

As described above seven models of blended learning emerged from the project. This process started with the baseline analysis of current practice followed by discussion and planning with members of the teaching team to establish which sections of the modules delivered would most be most appropriate for the application of a blended approach. Individual discussion, team meetings and a visioning event in which the module leaders were given the opportunity to explore and evaluate a variety of eLearning tools, helped the project teams to start to construct 'templates' for the blended programs.

With module leaders/tutors identifying different problem areas for students, it became clear that different approaches and thus different component blends would be desirable. The solutions to these different approaches ultimately became the KUBE Cube pedagogic planning tool.

#### **Tutor controlled interactive learning tools:**

The creation of high quality, engaging and effective interactive eLearning resources was key to the success of any blended learning solution. Whilst a number of tools and techniques had been identified and were actually being used by teachers with support from the eLearning team the discovery of the **Xerte online toolkit** provided a highly effective and relatively simple way of packaging content to make it accessible, easily navigated and straightforward to deploy in the 'Study Space' vle used by the BABM/ HND students. Additional benefits which emerged included:

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**Ease of use for teachers designing learning units.**  
**Ease of use for students in using the learning units**  
**Ease of access**

**Sharing of Learning Units**

**Repurposing of Learning Units**

Xerte provides a platform for combining a variety of multi-media pages with interactivity, text and links to other webpages. This means, for example, a podcast can be easily incorporated into a Xerte unit, other media may be added to the podcast (visuals can be added to a sound file to produce a narrated slide show.)

**Podcasting** has also proved to be a successful method of supporting learners and has been utilised effectively in most of the modules involved in this project. It was particularly popular with students and lecturers on the Foundation Degree in Business & Professional Administration. Some examples of podcasts used on the program are available here  
Podcasts have been used in a number of different ways but broadly can be categorised as follows

**Pre-session podcasts:** These were created by teachers to provide students with basic principles of a module. The background to what would be covered in the forthcoming f2f session. One example of this is the Business Accounting and Finance module in which the module leader produced podcasts which dealt with explaining what a specific term in finance means (Trial Balance for example). Interestingly these podcasts evolved into conversations which took place between the tutor and her neighbour who knew nothing about finance and accounting as this provided an the opportunity to create 'absolute beginners' content.

**Summary Podcasts,** designed to be accessed by students following a conventional teaching session. The Law module leader used this method most effectively to summarise complex legal processes and revisit terms used and what they meant. The students could revisit these podcasts as needed to reinforce their learning.

**General Principles Podcasts.**

Used predominantly on the Foundation Business Degree these podcasts would introduce each module and provide a set of examples of how the module 'fitted into real life'. The podcast would take the form of a Q and A discussion between the course leader and module leader. One example is a discussion of how the Business Environment module relates to the 'Credit Crunch'.

**Student controlled interactive learning tools:** PLP, Mahara, One Community

In addition to the resource creation process dealt with in the previous section, where most of the content is generated by the teaching staff and consumed by the students. (Xerte based presentation and interaction podcasts and enhanced podcasts.) The KUBE project set out to promote the use of student controlled technology to enhance the students learning experience.

The HE business programs are all supported by the Kingston University Blackboard based Study Space Virtual Learning Environment with each module having a dedicated Blackboard site. Conventionally these sites have been used for content distribution only, the project planned to utilise some of the other existing features along with additional web-based tools to bring in elements of student controlled and collaborative learning. The headline outputs from these activities are detailed below.

- **Wiki**

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Online collaboration was introduced to students on the Foundation Degree in the form of an assessed wiki. The Foundation Business Degree requires that students prepare and deliver a group presentation as part of the Organisational Behaviour and Human Resource Management module. This forms a significant part of the summative assessment marks available in the module. The presentation requires that the students form groups of 4/5 and design create and finally deliver a presentation based on Structure Culture and behaviour of organisations. There is a high level of collaboration required and this conventionally can be problematic as the students only attend the college one evening a week and this time is used primarily for delivery. The geographic spread of the students means that team meetings outside of these times is also problematic for many students who are all in full time employment and many with families. Presentation Wiki's were set up for each team and a one hour classroom based introduction and overview was provided in which it was explained how the wiki could be used to co-produce the presentation by collaborating online. Initially the wiki's were used to pool ideas and exchange details concerning structure and culture of each individual participants organisation. (This proved a most useful feature for the students to compare and contrast ahead of the creating the presentation) The ability for students to then 'build' the presentation collaboratively proved highly popular with most of the students particularly those who lived furthest apart.

Although the introduction of these enhanced collaborative processes cannot be specifically credited, there was a noted and consistent improvement in the overall performance of the students on this module, higher grades for the module assignment and according to the module leader a considerable improvement in the team presentations.

Feedback from the students revealed that the introduction of the collaborative systems and podcasting proved very popular and an effective way of enhancing the learning experience.

- **Mahara** the e-portfolio tool was installed at the college in late 2010 it has been piloted in one of the full-time modules on the BABM/HND Grade Improvement Program (GIP). The module leader set up student groups in Mahara to work with students on methods of improving grades across the other modules. Using a combination of interactive learning units created in Xerte and deployed via Mahara with students recording progress and submitting work via the 'views' function in the ePortfolio tool. Examples of how this worked may be found on the website. Mahara is due to play an integral part in the delivery of an APEL (Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning) module in the next academic year. Mahara will also be rolled out across the curriculum at Kingston College during 2010/2011
- **Online ILP** facilities have been developed during the KUBE project but their adoption is not planned until the coming academic year.
- **A pre-induction social networking** site was set up for students joining the BABM/HND programme in September 2009. The primary purpose for this site was to act as an accessible platform for a comprehensive student survey of student owned technology prior to students starting a program. Unfortunately due to a number of technical setbacks the One Community platform did not perform as planned. The survey was completed using other means, of which more is detailed later in the report.

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The frustrations and disappointment experienced by the failure of this mechanism led to a radically different approach being adopted for new students joining the program in 2010. The aim was to provide new students with a bridge between being accepted onto the program and the physical induction which takes place in late September. This would provide a method of 'keeping students warm' giving them some basic information about their studies, getting them in touch with one another, and providing them with the benefit of the experience of current students. A Ning based social networking site was set up for new 1st years and control passed to some second year volunteers to create content. A member of the team then worked with this group in facilitating this network. A short report on how this performed is found later in this report.

## **M-Learning.**

Ipod Touch devices\* have been loaned to 37 students on the first year of the two year Foundation Degree. These students study part-time whilst working full-time. They are mature students who are usually highly motivated, experienced but located over a fairly wide geographical area. Thus the use of mobile technology is a great enhancement to their learning. Podcasts have been created specifically for use with this technology as well as students being directed to podcast materials which are freely available on iTunes U.

Details of the type of content distributed in these podcasts are detailed earlier in this report. Examples of the full podcasts are available on the associated project [website](#)

The use of mobile phones for enriching learning and teaching was not pursued as a key component on the BABM and HND programs. The main reasons for this was the attendance pattern of the students on these full time courses and the structure of the blended learning interactions identified as most useful and appropriate as outlined in the KUBE pedagogic models. Whilst podcasting tools were a key component these podcasts were generally supported by visual elements and often housed in a Xerte toolkit framework thus making these learning artefacts more suitable for PC based browsing or ipod touch consumption more than mobile phone screens. Examples of these units are available on the associated Project Website

\*These have been made available as part of a separate, completed Molenet project **M-Learning: Hand-held capture and playback devices. Podcasting** (KAPTIVATE, 2008/09).

## **The story of what we did.**

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## **Early stages**

The early part of the project concentrated on gaining information about existing practice within the delivery of HE Business courses at Kingston College and establishing baseline evidence. Information was gained from available documentation e.g internal and external audits, discussions with key members of the HE Business management team, observation of learner based activity e.g. lectures, seminars etc. The KUBE project team engaged in a visioning day which explored alternative innovative approaches to curriculum delivery.

This away day activity involved the module leaders for BABM and HND taking part in a number of activities alongside the eLearning team. This included exposure to and discussion about a collection of eLearning artefacts which included: Wiki's, Podcasts, Online quizzes, Quizbusters, discussion forum, drag and drop activities, animated slideshows, and screen cast tools. A specially created show reel and website were created by the eLearning team to demonstrate some of ways these tools might be used in teaching and learning. The module leaders were given the opportunity to work through these materials at their own pace using Ultra-mobile P.C. set up for the event (this method of delivery of content served as a great example of how blended learning could be used)

The final activity of the day focused on an eLearning team created board game, developed specifically for the KUBE day called **Curriculopoly** this device was used to initiate discussion and prompt free thinking. It involved the module leaders playing eLearning cards to race around a track based on an HE Business module scheme of work. This proved a very popular and effective way of getting the team to apply some of the tools they had been introduced to earlier in the day. A Xerte unit describing the game and containing Video footage of the team playing the game can be found on the [KUBE website](#). Following the game during the period of reflection on the day individual team members were asked to indicate which tools they would be using with their students in the new blended approach.

Following the development day the teaching team worked with the elearning development team to gain a greater understanding of how to use the tools identified as most appropriate for the KUBE program. Experiments in podcasting and video editing, quiz creation and wiki management took place as either team training or one to one support.

## **Student technology use survey**

At the beginning of the academic year 2009 students were questioned about the online activities with which they engaged at that time. This survey produced a response rate of 65% from the first year BABM/HND cohort. The survey had originally been planned to be embedded in the Pre-induction social networking site mentioned earlier, unfortunately as a result of some misunderstandings and technical problems this plan was abandoned and replaced with an incentivised survey email campaign.

The Survey monkey based survey link was embedded into an email which was sent everyday to ALL the new students. The incentive was two high value prizes for two completed surveys drawn at random. The combination of the appeal of an iPod touch and ePC with the persistent daily requests finally yielded a good return from the students and the resulting survey is available on the [KUBE website](#).

## **KU course restructure**

The delivery partner Kingston University had decided to change the pattern of delivery from yearlong to semester long modules. It was considered that the transformation of delivery

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could be introduced alongside the change from year long to semester long modules. The amalgamation of these changes led to the KUBE brand being subsumed into university-led alterations in delivery. Although this reduced the naming of changes it strengthened the influence of KUBE as it was not perceived as a separate additional agent of change and thus faced less opposition. Furthermore, the reduced use of the word KUBE, had no effect on the progress, evaluation or reporting of the project.

### **The first model**

In the initial stages of the project the team considered developing on the Kolb Learning Cycle (Kolb, 1984). This cycle was later adopted as one of the seven models which form part of the pedagogic blended learning planning tool. It forms the basis around which educational technology has been incorporated within the delivery of the Business Accounting module. Examples can be seen on the [KUBE project website](#)

### **The discovery and adoption of Xerte**

It was also in the initial stages of the project that the Project Manager realised the potential of the Xerte tool. The Xerte web engine is a powerful but somewhat complex web design tool loosely based on the CSS technology found in web design tools such as Dreamweaver. We had investigated these tools some while ago as possible blended learning object design tools but had dismissed them because of the steep learning curve and expertise needed to use them effectively. Where we to stand any chance of teacher practitioners creating their own on-line learning activities for KUBE learners the creation platform would need to be

- a) Highly intuitive
- b) Capable of creating engaging and effective content quickly and efficiently
- c) Low cost
- d) Something which teachers would enjoy using to create and learners would enjoy as an end user.

We became aware of a project based on the Xerte engine and led mainly by Alistair McNaught of Jisc Techdis alongside Ron Mitchell of Mitchell Media to create a simple drag-drop based interface which would fit on top of Xerte and thus provide a simple yet effective 'toolkit' for anyone with basic IT skills to create powerful engaging web-based multi-media interactive learning units. Following discussions, help and advice from Alistair and Ron, the **Xerte On-line toolkit** was introduced as a primary platform for the creation of KUBE blended learning units. Initially we had access to the MoleNet installation and the KUBE team worked with tutors to use this remote installation. However, following discussions with the IT and network installation team at Kingston a case was made for a Xerte toolkit installation on the College's own servers thus providing immediate and consistent access for all those engaged in learning object creation for KUBE.

Teachers approached the Xerte toolkit with much more enthusiasm than has previously been evident with other eLearning design and packaging software. There was of course a learning curve and some frustration but quite quickly some members of the team were producing engaging well designed interactive Xerte units

### **Blending in practice**

By the start of the academic year 2009 – 2010, two of the modules on the full-time courses, Grade Improvement Programme (GIP) and Managing Yourself and Others (MYO), had integrated two of the KUBE objectives into curriculum delivery. Both used Xerte to improve tutor controlled interactive learning tools and to redesign the modules. The former, GIP, reduced the amount of face-to-face teaching (which was previously poorly attended) and replaced it with online content delivery in self-access units to which students were directed on an individual basis. Each unit culminated in a task which was discussed in an individual, face-to-face tutorial. In MYO, Xerte units were developed to provide students with content

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prior to the face-to-face seminars. In this instance, educational technology provided a means of front-loading the students and this 'blend' was followed throughout this year-long module.

The results of focus groups and interviews with students have indicated that on **Managing Yourself and Others** where the front loaded approach provided learning units which summarised the textbook content into an interactive unit. Some students saw this as a replacement for the module textbook which was not the intention. However, the students who felt this way said the learning units were easier to understand and more interesting than the book. Others, indicated they used both, accessing the Xerte unit as planned before the f2f session and then reading the text as indicated. Others stated that they were happier just using the textbook for the preparation and did not feel the Learning Unit had enough depth. This is to be expected with the wide range of abilities and interest found on this program. Certainly the module leader felt we had added a further effective option for students who's learning styles were not best served by reading text books. Differentiation was certainly enhanced by the introduction of these units.

The Kingston University module leader was significantly impressed and has expressed interest in incorporating these methods into the University program.

On the part-time Foundation Degree, assessed collaboration was hosted online via a wiki. As described earlier in the report. The beginnings of the podcasting and mobile learning support activities were also in place.

These were the first steps in the development of the pedagogic planning tool which later emerged from the KUBE project.

### **The Next stage**

By January 2010, all modules of the BABM/HND courses were employing one of the seven KUBE models. In the Foundation Degree programme, the use of podcasts was embedded in three modules (Business Environment, Organisational Behaviour and Finance) and a 'Bizcast' section was established to collate a mixture of digital resources.

During this period student focus group meetings took place to assess the impact of the KUBE materials. 3 focus group meetings took place in which students gave their opinions on the materials and made suggestions for improvements. As a result of feedback, some tweaking was made to some of the online materials. In one of the meetings students played their own version of Curriculopoly in order to facilitate discussion on how the current KUBE offerings could be improved. A final student evaluation questionnaire was completed at the close of the summer semester. Likewise, the project team met to evaluate the project, reflect upon its outcomes and assess sustainability.

### **Project methodology – technical implementation, evaluation activities, stakeholder engagement**

#### **Technical implementation:**

The main technology used in the project was **Study Space (blackboard) Xerte, podcasting, Mahara and wiki tools**. Lecturers were introduced to Xerte by the e-learning team and this team provided support throughout the project. Although there was found to be an initial steep learning curve which deterred a few lecturers, those who persevered, quickly became very proficient at producing both a variety of content and interactivity. The Xerte web-based toolkit has now been installed on the Kingston College network and a feed has been established to the newly introduced Moodle platform. Within the Xerte units there is a

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mixture of media and interactivity. Lecturers needed to be able to effectively use JING and other screen capture tools, create audio files for narrated slideshows and use Xtranormal the text to speech animation program. Video clips were used by some, so rudimentary editing skills using movie maker and iMovie were needed. In addition to the above lecturers would need an understanding of video capture tools and basic format conversion software. There was a lot of work to do in training and supporting the team in creating the media rich resources being used.

Podcasting was executed on handheld audio recorders. There was a limited amount of editing which, if required, was undertaken by the e-learning team using Audacity. Finished podcasts were uploaded to the Kingston University VLE where students could either download them or subscribe to an RSS feed.

The Mahara e-portfolio tool was used as a pilot in the English for Academic Purposes module. Mahara is hosted as part of the Moodle platform at Kingston College. It is envisaged that this will become an essential tool for a module on the Foundation Degree which involves the collation of evidence of work-based learning.

Wiki tools were used on the Foundation Degree as an element of one module's summative assessment. This has been described earlier in the report

### **Evaluation activities:**

**Three all student questionnaires** (August 2008, September 2009, June 2010) August 2008 and September 2009 were conducted using web-based survey monkey tools and described earlier in the report. The final questionnaires were hard copy paper based and distributed/collected during the period of the students exams, thus ensuring maximum coverage and completion. As described earlier, considerable effort went into attempting to maximise the effectiveness of these questioning methods. However, whilst the number of student responses was encouraging and the questions planned with care this type of feedback it is still at best a snapshot of opinion and probably should be treated as such. The survey questions and report are available on the KUBE project website.

**Student focus group** which consisted of 8 students from both BABM and HND courses. This group met on four occasions to assess both the pedagogic models and the learning materials themselves. Student feedback was often captured on either audio or video and some of this feedback can be found on the KUBE project website.

**Lecturers were interviewed** and their views recorded as they embarked on the project and as the project drew to a close. A selection of these interviews is available on the KUBE website. Additionally, a dialogue continued between the lecturers and the eLearning Project Manager throughout the project, particularly during the creation of the blended learning units. During this time discussion took place about what worked and what didn't from the perspective of the teacher. This for example revealed the popularity of uncluttered podcasts making complicated processes more simple in Business Accounting which prompted the lecturer to embark on a number of podcasts in which she engaged in a dialogue with her non – accounting neighbour explaining and answering questions from a complete beginner (like the majority of the students)

Another conversation with a lecturer lead to the ( initially surprising) inclusion of an Xtranormal cartoon character called 'Business Environment Man' a Superhero who introduces the concepts of each model in the Business Environment module of the

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Foundation Degree. The students were so taken with this that several emailed to ask why he had disappeared when the module concluded.

**Impromptu interviews with groups of students** to seek their feedback on online materials. The student voice was sought wherever possible from the eLearning as well as the teaching team. One member of the project team, Susan Driver, was in fact both as Susan had taken up a fractional post in eLearning as well as her teaching role on BABM/HND (English for Academic Purposes and GIP)

**Concluding lecturer debrief.** At the end of the teaching year all participating lecturers course leaders and the Head of School were invited to a two hour evaluation meeting to discuss the project activities, successes and areas for review. This meeting was recorded using a digital recorder and permission obtained from all participants. Extracts from this meeting appear within this report and 'soundbites' from the original discussions can be found on the KUBE project website

**Engagement with the online materials was also tracked using the VLE tracking system.** This served to identify those students who accessed the materials regularly, those who had only accessed them once and those who had never accessed the materials. Representatives of these three groups were questioned to better understand their behaviour.

### **Stakeholder engagement:**

**Lecturers:** This was primarily fostered by the visioning day at the commencement of the project. This was an opportunity for those involved to formulate the direction of the project in a creative, collaborative environment. Subsequently it was felt that engagement of those lecturers not directly involved in the project could be better developed if the work of the KUBE project was undertaken with less emphasis on the word 'KUBE' as this was perceived as being an unnecessary complication to the timetabling changes already underway. Thus engagement was increased by subsuming the KUBE delivery models into the changes already dictated by the University. Naturally, some lecturers were more enthusiastic than others and of these some were more capable than others it was therefore important to ensure none of those who were enthusiastic became de-motivated because of technological challenges. This was overcome by a high level of support being made available.

**Students:** Engagement by students appeared to be closely linked to the enthusiasm shown by individual lecturers for the project. Students admitted in focus groups that ease of access was crucial to their adoption of the new pedagogic models and re-enforcement was also required to ensure that online material became embedded in their learning. All said that they had benefited from the increased interactivity and they particularly valued the formative feedback in the form of online quizzes which they used to identify gaps in their knowledge.

**Curriculum managers:** The Project Curriculum Manager (Head of the School of Business and Professional Studies. David Hillier) gave this project his full support and his enthusiasm was crucial in engaging the HE Business team. A close relationship developed between the Curriculum Manager and the eLearning Project Manager which was cemented by jointly working on resources for the M learning on Foundation Degree. The project Curriculum Manager also attended the JISC project events alongside the ELearning team, and participated in the regular project meetings which took place during the project.

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Subsequently, David has been instrumental in moving the blended learning agenda at Kingston College closer to the main stream curriculum by working with the Director of ILT on the presentation of the KUBE pedagogic planning model to other faculty teams as part of cross college staff development.

### **Senior Management Team**

**SMT** were consulted from the outset about the project and agreed that this was a worthwhile endeavour. There is a sense of kudos for the organisation to be gained from winning a high value JISC funded project, particularly for an FE institution so this is certainly an advantage with this set of stakeholders. Given the nature of the project it also fits well with the organisational objectives around the 'learner voice'

**ILT Support and Development staff:** The e-learning team relished the opportunity to support lecturers with the pedagogic value and production of KUBE materials and to evaluate learner response. A high level of motivation within the team was sustained throughout the program because of the challenges of using new tools and technology and practically applying the outputs.

### **Project Steering Group**

A KUBE steering group was convened which contained members of the project team, Quality improvement, Faculty Dean, Kingston University module leaders, Module evaluator, students and on occasion guests from JISC including Andrew Comrie. This group reported activities and outputs as well as problem areas and potentially good practice and communicated this through the organisation.

## **3.2 What did you learn?**

Project findings:

### **Lessons learnt**

The KUBE project taught us much. This knowledge can be subdivided in to two main areas.

- Knowledge about the application of a blended learning solution to an HE Business program.
- Knowledge about the twists and turns of running a project of this nature.

I will deal with these separately

### **Knowledge about the application of a blended learning solution to an HE Business program.**

During the 2 years of this project we have confronted many challenges and made adaptations accordingly. We have also changed direction positively when new technologies or techniques for learner engagement have been made available or been discovered in the continual search for an engaging approach to teaching and learning on the HE Business programmes. This approach adheres to the essence of action research in as much as it was an iterative process of implement, trial, feedback, reflect, modify and implement etc. Learner's feedback and behaviour has had a significant impact on the project from the

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outset, as has the need for flexibility to ensure compliance with quality issues from both outside and inside the organisation.

## **Teachers**

A high priority for the project was communication and collaboration with the teaching staff on the program. It was clear to us from the outset that there would be little chance of successfully implementing the changes required on the BABM HND and Foundation Degree if the teachers and module leaders did not buy-in to the process. Many hours were spent during the baselining period working with, and talking to the teachers to attempt to get a better understanding of the problems they faced, relationships with each other and with the students.

The project manager carried out observations in the classroom followed by discussions about how things went. All this needed to be handled extremely sensitively as the teaching team had recently been the focus of internal and external review processes which had caused stress and anxiety; we had no wish to exacerbate the problem.

By taking this approach and adopting a role of problem solving we won the confidence of most of the teaching team we had targeted as the most likely innovators. There were exceptions in the wider team, with some teachers expressing a lack of interest or buy in to the blended program proposed. Whilst it would have been gratifying to have 100% approval this would have been unlikely and we were happy to work with the people we had.

Later in the project some of the early dissenters became more interested in using some of the tools and techniques, this was instigated in part we understand by students speaking enthusiastically about other teachers blended modules. It was helpful having the innovative teachers to assist when appropriate with the design or creation of blended learning resources.

The project team and particularly the e-learning team need to work closely with tutors on the HE Business team in order to ensure that the project advances effectively. This was successfully achieved by the Project Manager joining the HE Business team in co-delivering a Foundation Degree module and by an HE Business tutor temporarily joining the e-learning team. This exchange of staff resources ensured that both the project and delivery demands were fully understood by all involved in the project

## **Students**

Students responded in different ways as mentioned earlier in the project. Each module leader had a different approach to the students and how they would use the blended learning provided.

Here is some feedback from the English for Academic Purposes module leader

### **English for Academic Purposes:**

One week of face-to-face teaching was replaced with an online activity. Students were given the title of an essay and a report and a variety of content was provided to support these titles. This took various forms (video, pdf, links to external sites etc.) and was hosted in Mahara. Students were asked to write either an essay or report and then send their work by e-mail to their lecturer for feedback.

This is a screenshot of the content:

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The students who completed the online session said that they gained a lot from the online guidance and from the individual feedback I gave them. However, only a small percentage of the total cohort accessed the online session. This may have been due to some technical difficulties gaining access to this site during the face-to-face sessions when this online environment was being showcased. Furthermore, this material was hosted in a different environment from their usual VLE and the additional sign in may have deterred some students. However, most of the students who didn't engage with the activity said that they had simply 'forgotten' to do so.

And here from the Grade improvement Programme

### **Grade Improvement Programme/Plan (GIP)**

I produced several Xerte packages targeted at the common challenges facing students with English grammar. Each package presented the content in various formats (interactive tasks, videos etc) and concluded with a quiz. Once students had successfully completed the end of unit quiz, they were directed to a written task which they were expected to send to me via e-mail.

Following the initial diagnostic testing at the beginning of the course, I identified the packages which would be helpful for individual students who scored below Level 2. I talked to these students on an individual basis and together we planned an order of packages which was specific to their needs.

I uploaded all the packages on to the VLE and once the students had received initial guidance on GIP, they were free to progress at their own pace. I was delighted with the response to this online programme from those who participated in GIP. They liked the opportunity to complete the work in their own time and at their own pace. They also appreciated the individual feedback on their progress. From looking at the viewing statistics, I noticed that most were accessing the materials at times when face-to-face intervention would have been difficult e.g. in the early hours of the morning and on Sundays.

Students, characteristically displayed very different attitudes to the blended learning elements embedded in the program. One difficulty for us was that the subject of our

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investigations was the 1<sup>st</sup> year students on BABM/HND. As these were 1st year students they had nothing to compare the program with. They had no experience of the methods used pre-kube and assumed that this was just the way the course was run.

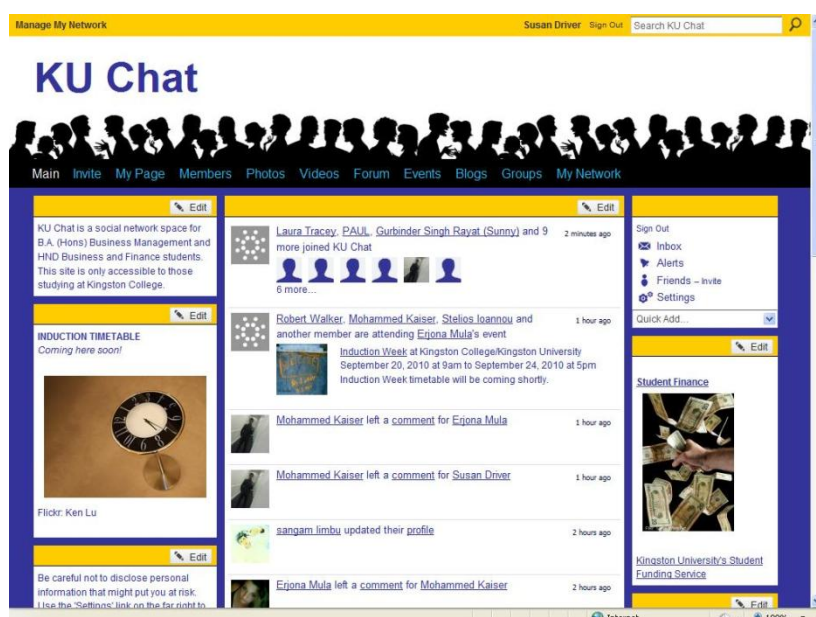
During the various evaluation exercises, particularly during the Student based Curriculopoly game session we tried to ensure students could suggest the use of **any** technology they had experience of that might benefit or enhance their learning experiences. Interestingly there was nothing really different proposed aside from Facebook which inevitably features in any discussion about online resources.

Earlier in the report we explain the unsuccessful attempt to introduce a Pre Induction site in year one and the more successful attempt to introduce a Pre-Induction site facilitated by students in September 2010.

### Here is a short summary of how this worked:

#### KU Chat

The involvement of second year students in the creation and management of KU Chat was invaluable from my perspective. We were aware that a pre-induction social networking site produced by members of staff would be addressing students on a very different level from one which was led by their peers. Furthermore, in the weeks before arriving at university, we felt that new students would benefit from the experience of those who had been in a similar situation. Finally, we presumed that the students were more familiar with other social networking sites (e.g. Facebook) and so would be able to provide more ideas on how to engage new students with the site.



At our first meeting the second year students asked me what we wanted them to do. I then threw the question back at them, "What did they want to do?" It took a while for the lecturer/student relationship to change and for us to work as a team, but they did become proactive and took both the initiative and responsibility for the success of the site. The second year students chose both the name and design of the site. They decided what content should be displayed and they produced the material. Moreover, immediately new

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students joined the site, the second year students would send them a welcome message. Their messages were very informal and often in text language. This would usually develop into a 'chat' with the new students.

KU Chat team



Although the HE Business team had ultimate editorial control, all second year students had administrator rights on the site. They say that they valued this responsibility and felt that it really was their site. All have said that they thoroughly enjoyed the experience and believe that the new cohort has gained from the project. From a personal perspective, I particularly enjoyed working with this group of 2nd year students. It was refreshing to share their enthusiasm for the project once they accepted their leading role in its success. Similarly, I have benefitted greatly from gaining their perspective on both the course and the initial HE experience.  
S. Driver

Further examples of technology based solutions used within the KUBE project can be found on the KUBE project website.

### **Knowledge about the strategies needed to effectively manage a project of this nature.**

One extremely clear message that may help those engaged in projects of this nature in the future and particularly those involving partnerships should be about how much care should be taken when identifying a focus for change. KUBE for example set out to change the nature of delivery of a learning programme franchised from Kingston University and thus designed by that institution, Kingston College could not fundamentally make changes to any of the structure of the modules, formal assessment or preferred resources, Hence the need for quite extraordinarily creative thinking and deployment of 'delivery redesign' within the constraints of an established and conventional HE programme. The redesign of curriculum delivery is inextricably linked to curriculum design and I don't believe there was a realisation of how difficult it would be separate these two elements without creating conflicts.

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It was therefore most fortuitous that we could align the changes in curriculum delivery associated with the KUBE project with those which were already underway regarding timetabling of modules. This latter change which had been instigated by Kingston University necessitated a change in curriculum delivery and the KUBE project was able to use this to fully exploit the potential of this project.

When managing a project it is essential to be aware of all factors which may impact positively or negatively on the effectiveness of the project. A continuous process of environmental scanning should if possible be put in place. It is all too easy to get caught up in the minutiae of the project and miss potential opportunities or threats. Another example of this is the adoption of the Xerte tool outlined earlier in the report. Where it not for an enthusiasm to monitor what is going on throughout the community this unique tool would not have been discovered tested and placed centre stage in the project. Equally the project would not have contained the rich and engaging blended learning resources.

### **Persuasion and People**

Persuasion is an absolutely indispensable component in any form of change management exercise. In KUBE persuasion was needed at all stages and throughout the duration of the project. The project manager for any such enterprise simply must be persuasive. There will be a continuous need to influence, decisions, people, processes. Often the most comfortable option for individuals is to do nothing. Project like KUBE cannot afford for this option to be exercised and it falls to the project manager most of the time to ensure it isn't. The skills required to do this effectively are manifold:

- Leadership, by which I don't mean management but leadership by example.
- Diplomacy, when persuading people who may feel threatened or indignant about a proposed agenda.
- Understanding motivation when coaching and supporting teachers through using untried technology both through the creation process and the leap of faith using the products with student.
- Communication skills across all levels from Senior management, via external agencies and partners through to the students
- Inspiring people to do things that do not necessarily come naturally to them.
- Remaining personally motivated despite many occasions when things do not work out as anticipated or planned.
- Understanding the importance of nurturing a culture of sharing and embedding good practice and more importantly making it happen.

### **3.3 Impact**

The KUBE project has impacted the organisation in a number of ways. Within the School of HE Business the KUBE method of blending learning is now embedded in the schemes of work and timetabling. The on-line artefacts and learning units are now working with the 2010 intake of first year BABM/HND students. There are more changes taking place in several subject areas where decisions have been made to completely replace the conventional subject lecture with online resources and activities supported by seminars. Early experiments in 'flip thinking' learning will be employed to 'flip' the learning on the Finance model. Broadly this will mean all the knowledge and theory will be delivered using

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interactive online methods with the application and practice of this taking place in the f2f seminar time. This is a complete reversal of conventional processes on this program. The Kingston College module tutor is in discussion with Kingston University Module leader to assess the viability of the University participating in the pilot.

Plans are now underway to extend the blended approach to year 2 BABM/HND and Foundation Degree.

The differentiation of delivery between modules on the courses has unified and thus strengthened individual lecturing teams whilst still engendering an integrated overall course delivery

Students have benefited from the KUBE project with approximately 80% of the first year cohort of full-time students\* involved in the project stating that it has increased their motivation to study. Similar response rates have been recorded for the students' perception that it has had a positive impact on grades, helped them to understand new concepts and helped in assessment preparation

It is difficult to assess to what extent the KUBE project has had a direct impact on the success rates and attendance/engagement of students as there are other contributing factors which may have had a greater impact or weakened the impact of KUBE. However, as mentioned above, **over 80% of students believe that it has impacted on their grades.**

Summary of student feedback may be found on the KUBE project website

\*114 students

There has also been interest from Kingston University in using the KUBE learning tools with based at the university. Discussions are progressing in particular with respect to the Business Accounting and Managing Yourself and Others modules.

The sustained use of the KUBE materials and associated benefits for the learners is arousing interest in those on the outskirts of the project. Discussions are currently taking place with several module leaders at Kingston University about the adoption of the KUBE materials for all learners across both institutions.

Furthermore, the project has given presentations at several JISC events and colleagues from other institutions within the sector have expressed interest in KUBE outputs. The Curriculopoly game attracted the interest of Leeds Business School and whilst they have been unable to use the game to date, they have expressed a wish to do so in the future

**Another significant area of impact** and benefit has arisen from the pedagogic blended learning planning tool which is enabling curriculum managers and lecturing teams to employ educational technologies in a clearly structured and cohesive format. This has facilitated the embedding of these technologies within curriculum delivery and thus eliminated the perception of educational technology as an 'optional extra'. This tool has now been adopted throughout the institution and is already reaping benefits in other curriculum areas.

Resulting from this extension of a blended approach Kingston college has been shortlisted for the:

**Becta Beacon Award for Efficiency through the Effective use of Technology in FE and Skills.**

Kingston College has recently undergone a change in senior management with a new Principal in place since May 2010. It was due to the Principals encouragement that the Curriculum CUBE model which emerged from the KUBE project was put forward as a Beacon candidate for the work carried out with the wider college community and curriculum.

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Following a visit from the Beacon team during October Kingston College has been shortlisted for the award which will be announced in mid November 2010.

Below is an extract from the application, the entire document can be found on the KUBE project website

### **Project Summary**

This document contains the Kingston College submission for the Becta Beacon Award for *Efficiency through the Effective Use of Technology in FE and Skills*. It outlines the value to learners of a strategic initiative to model and implement **blended delivery methods across the curriculum**. The application focuses on the development and adoption of the **CURRICULUM CUBE** framework during the 2009-10 academic year. This has involved replacing conventional classroom delivery with web-based methods, including a suite of new e-learning solutions that have been rolled out across the College. The CUBE framework has provided a means for conceptualising the structure of the curriculum and facilitated the planning and execution of **seven blended models** that are fit for purpose in different curriculum areas.

### **Aims and Objectives**

The Kingston College CURRICULUM CUBE scheme aimed to implement a framework for modelling blended methods of curriculum delivery. This reflects a commitment to support and develop the professional practice of our staff, enhance the experience of our learners and provide efficient solutions for the organisation.

The key objectives of the CURRICULUM CUBE scheme were therefore as follows:

- Devise a **framework and support system** that would assist curriculum managers and teaching teams in planning and delivering integrated approaches to the curriculum that combine face-to-face and online methods.
- Provide a **high quality learning experience** for our students that raised levels of engagement, participation and success.
- Implement curriculum delivery models that achieved measurable **efficiency savings** for the organisation.

A catalyst for the initiative was Kingston College's involvement in JISC's *Transforming Curriculum Delivery with ICT* programme, between 2008 and 2010. The College's KUBE Project (Kingston Uplift for Business Education) explored a variety of ways of effectively and efficiently combining face-to-face and online modes of curriculum delivery on HE Business courses at the College. Following the success of this initiative, the replacement of class-based provision with web-based approaches has taken place in a wide range of other curriculum areas across the College and has directly impacted on around 1200 learners, 65 teaching staff and all five of the College's faculties.

Some student feedback

#### **A range of comments from learners involved in the CURRICULUM CUBE scheme during 2009-10 are included below:**

- "Everything is online, so you can submit your work at home and check for feedback...it's great!" (Computing student).
- "The benefits of using wikis and blogs are that you don't need to have loads of papers you can just do it all on the computers. Also even if you're not feeling well and you don't come in for a deadline, you can still submit it when you're at home" (Business student)
- "Use of podcast/pre-session learning units has made the time in the classroom more interesting. We do more group work now!" (Law student).

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- “Weekly online materials really helped me to understand how what I was studying worked in real life. I could listen to the podcasts when I was travelling to and from College.” (Hairdressing student)
- “I was able to listen to podcasts whenever I had time – on the bus, train, even whilst I was cooking and they helped me reflect on what we had learned at a time that suited me.” (Design student)
- “The activities available online were really helpful for the Finance exam as I could practise what I had learnt in class (and check whether I had got things right) when I had time, even at night when the kids were in bed!” (Business Student)

*Excerpt from Kingston College application for Becta Beacon Award for Efficiency through the Effective use of Technology in FE and Skills (A Williams September 2010)*

**During 2010 Kingston College** has adopted Moodle as the replacement v1e for Blackboard. As a result of reflecting on the practice used in the KUBE project, teaching staff from across the organisation are now receiving training and support with the creation of more interactive and engaging course resource sites using the Xerte toolkit and other software identified as most effective in the KUBE blended learning program.

Most recently work has started on blended versions of the teacher education programs offered at Kingston College starting with PTTLS program (Preparing to teach in the lifelong learning sector)

## **Conclusions and Recommendations**

The original project plan for the KUBE project consisted of a great number of different aspects of curriculum delivery. It was difficult to address them all within the scope of the one project and so, inevitably, the project team decided to concentrate on those which could have the greatest impact on the stakeholders and greatest benefit for the wider community. Those aims and objectives which have changed during the course of the project have been documented elsewhere in this report alongside recommendations for those who may be engaged in similar activities.

Conclusions about outcomes from KUBE are mainly favourable. Certainly the structure of the way the programs are delivered has changed and will continue to change, not least due to economic as well as pedagogical reasons. The general view from those students who expressed an opinion was favourable, as was those of teachers, module leaders and management. The structure and models that have evolved will inform the new teaching and learning strategy at Kingston College and the reception from external organisations (JISC, LSIS, BECTA AoC) and others in the sector has been very good.

One important conclusion which can be drawn from this and other projects is how difficult it is to obtain consistent and meaningful feedback and inputs from students.

Another is how complex the relationship between students and learning providers can be and how difficult it can be to change attitudes and thus behaviour within teaching organisations.

## **Recommendations**

Most of the project specific recommendations are actually now action points and part of a current and real strategy. These points which include the wider adoption of the KUBE

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models and implementation of blended learning across the curriculum are detailed elsewhere in the report.

Some more generic recommendations would include:

When running a long term project the organisation needs to be clear about what it is attempting to achieve and ensure the structure is in place to enable this to happen. In KUBE we were fortunate in having a tight knit and committed project team which ensured the agenda was prioritised. Had this not been the case I feel the project would not have produced such effective outcomes

Limit the intended aims and objectives. It became clear very quickly that our original project plan was unrealistic given the time and resources available.

When in partnership with other organisations ensure their strategic plans, aims and objectives align with those of your own organisation; this will ensure maximum buy-in and thus co-operation throughout the term of the project.

Ensure appropriate communication takes place with all stakeholders, particularly those who will be required to provide support during the project. The ICT team for example were crucial to the success of KUBE and as such were involved in all high level communication around the project.

Benchmark other organisations both in and out of the sector. Many great ideas are coming to fruition all around the organisation but those involved in the project may be unaware of this unless there is continuous research and monitoring of other areas.

## **Implications for the Future**

The future for all those involved in teaching and learning looks acutely challenging in the concluding quarter of 2010. The repercussions of the grim economic circumstances, coupled with the recommended change to H.E funding have provided a most uncertain landscape for many across the Higher and Further Education sector. Students will undoubtedly struggle with even more financial stress as they are forced to pay significantly more for a university place. Doing more with less seems to be the mantra across all public services. It is clear that things cannot remain the same.

The KUBE project along with many other JISC funded projects has set about exploring ways to do things differently. I think this is utterly vital if we are to deliver valuable, meaningful, engaging, effective and appropriate learning experiences for future students irrespective of who they are, what they study and how and where they get their learning experiences. In KUBE we have scratched the surface of what is possible using a combination of technology enhanced learning resources and face 2 face class based learning. We need now to establish the 'real' value of both these things. Not the rhetoric, but the reality of the merits of what actually happens in a conventional classroom and what can be achieved via different media and virtual spaces? How much of conventional and expensive class based teaching is more about the value of social and shared experiences than the value of the teaching? Can this social shared experience be achieved by other less expensive means? Would anyone want this to happen?

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Exploration of these questions will be crucial if we are to maintain viable educational experiences for our young people and all students, right across the sector.