



Survey and Analysis of the Impact
on Institutions and Other Bodies
Involved in the X4L Programme

Final Report

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC) has commissioned Glenaffric Ltd to undertake a survey and analysis of the impact on institutions and other bodies involved in the Exchange for Learning (X4L) Programme.
- 1.2 The X4L Programme commenced in 2002. A total of 31 projects have been funded from across the UK in two phases, involving more than 100 institutions and teams from colleges, universities, libraries, JISC Services, local authorities and commercial companies. The programme is exploring adaptation and repurposing of copyright-clearable content suitable for use in learning, and how learning materials can be shared in a standard way.

The four aims of the programme are to:

- use and develop the best available tools to explore whether repurposing content can become a popular, sustainable way of producing e-learning materials for the future;
- increase the numbers of people in institutions with the necessary skills to repurpose learning objects;
- expose and begin to tackle the challenges associated with repurposing learning objects; and
- begin to populate a national repository with learning materials as well as case studies and exemplars showing how these have been achieved.

- 1.3 The broad aim of the survey and impact analysis of the Programme is to 'gather information on the kinds of changes that are perceived to have occurred through X4L'. The survey is also intended to:

- obtain information about project outcomes that are continuing to have an impact in institutions beyond the funded project period, as well as during the lifetime of the project; and
- consider any differences in approach to projects between FE and HE that may have resulted in different levels of impact.

- 1.4 The study was expected to consider the perceived impact of X4L on a number of different job roles and responsibilities in relation to the programme, including:

- project managers
- learning technologists
- teachers
- library/learning resources staff
- IT technicians
- Principals/Vice-Chancellors and senior managers of institutions involved in X4L
- X4L Advisory Board members.

The intended scope of the study also included an investigation of the potential or perceived impact of X4L on other individuals and bodies involved in the programme such as commercial companies, public library authorities and museums.

- 1.5 A number of potential impact scenarios were proposed at the outset as follows:

- more use is being made of the VLE;
- a learning technologist, employed as part of the project, has now been given permanent employment;
- learning technologists and teachers work more closely together;
- teachers and library staff are able to direct learners to more online resources of use to them;
- library staff and teachers work more closely together;

- the institutional IT strategy and e-learning strategy have been amended as a result of lessons learned in the project;
- the institution is now more aware of interoperability and open standards and will be able to make better purchasing decisions with regard to technology systems that avoid vendor lock-in.

The study was also expected to consider the role of X4L in enhancing awareness in external organisations of the needs of FE and HE, the availability and use of resources and services, and any changes in the way services are offered. More generally, the impact analysis also takes account of the extent to which project activities have been successful in addressing the four main aims of the programme.

2 Methodology

2.1 Initial consultation and ongoing communication

- 2.1.1 The survey commenced in mid April 2006. The evaluation team held an early face-to-face meeting with the Programme Manager with a view to clarifying the scope and objectives of the study. This meeting confirmed that the key focus of the study was the perceived impact of involvement in the X4L Programme on individual members of the project teams, and the institutions and external organisations involved. This meeting also provided the evaluation team with a general overview of the Programme structure and the work of individual projects and to identify sources of relevant information. The broad of categories of key informants for the study were also agreed, and a number of specific individuals were identified who could be invited to participate in interviews or expert discussions.
- 2.1.2 Following the initial consultation, the evaluation team submitted a work plan for the study and provided regular updates on progress to the X4L Programme Manager.

2.2 Documentary review and analysis

- 2.2.1 Documentation relating to each of the X4L projects, including final reports and completion reports, project websites and published outputs was reviewed and analysed for information relating to the perceived impact of the programme on individuals and institutions. A table summarising the key points of interest identified by the projects themselves with reference to staff development and progression and project outputs is included at Appendix A.
- 2.2.2 The review and analysis of project documentation helped to highlight areas of interest for further investigation through expert discussions with project representations. The summary document also served as a source of reference for the impact analysis process.

2.3 Expert discussions

- 2.3.1 Following an initial communication from the X4L Programme Manager to the wide programme mailing list, outlining the scope and objectives of the Impact Study, selected project and programme representatives were contacted in April and asked to participate in a telephone discussion. It was explained that the discussion would explore the individual experiences of those involved in the project, any impact on the curriculum, and ways in which departments or institutions might have benefited or changed as a result of involvement in X4L. It was anticipated that the discussion would last around 20 to 30 minutes, and a series of possible dates and times was presented. A follow-up reminder was sent to those who had not responded after one week.
- 2.3.2 A total of 25 interviews took place between 4 and 19 May 2006. Respondents included representatives from 18 projects, including at least three people who were able to comment from a senior management perspective, and seven representatives from the programme management, review team and Advisory Board. They also included two follow-up interviews with specific project team members on the recommendation of project managers, and three representatives from external organisations (including commercial companies and museums).
- 2.3.3 Respondents were asked the following broad questions:

- What did you personally get out of the project?
- What do you think being involved with the project did for other members of the project team?
- What impact do you think the project had on the institution:
 - operationally? (approaches to learning and teaching, use of online resources, VLE, curriculum areas)
 - strategy and policy developments?

In a small number of instances where a particular respondent was contacted to explore one particular area of impact, the questions were limited to that area. The duration of the discussions ranged from 11 to 46 minutes, with an average discussion duration of 28 minutes.

2.4 Thematic analysis and presentation

- 2.4.1 A summary transcription of each discussion was produced, and an outline of key points raised was maintained on an ongoing and incremental basis throughout the timeframe of the discussions. This included a summary of the points of perceived impact on the respondents as individuals, project team members, institutions, external organisations and regional and national developments. It included general issues raised in the course of the discussions in relation to the projects, institutions and JISC, and was used for of interim reporting to JISC.
- 2.4.2 The presentation of the analysis of these key points and themes in this report includes some direct quotations from respondents, as cogent and colourful illustrations of the points raised and discussed in relation to the perceived impact of X4L.

3 Impact on staff

3.1 Introduction

- 3.1.1 The review of project documentation identified a number of areas where X4L projects had produced materials, resources and held events that were perceived to have impacted directly on staff development in the sector. The examples of impact scenarios proposed for investigation in this study included the possible identification of a learning technologist employed as part of the project having been given permanent employment. They also included examples of improved collaboration across different staff groups such as library staff, learning technologists and teachers, and the ability of staff to direct learners to useful online resources.
- 3.1.2 In effect, the telephone interviews and follow-up discussions with project staff revealed a range of examples of the direct and indirect impact on staff of involvement with X4L. These included specific examples of career progression, research profile development and further project work as well as general comments about the role of the programme in raising awareness, developing skills and enhancing understanding about e-learning tools, technologies and technical issues.

3.2 Career progression

- 3.2.1 Several respondents highlighted the impact of X4L on the career progression of those involved. There were at least two specific examples of internal promotion of people employed as project workers to full-time college ILT co-ordinators, and of one part-time member of staff subsequently appointed full-time ILT champion. One individual attributed her career progression from a tutor at a small FE college to a development post in a university directly to her involvement with the project and exposure to her future employer through the regional X4L cluster. Some specific pay rises and honoraria payments for work on X4L were noted. There were a number of other examples of staff movement between sectors as a result of exposure and experience through X4L. These included the secondment of a member of staff at an FE college to manage another JISC project in an

HEI, and an individual appointed on a temporary contract to manage the project who subsequently became a full-time member of staff at a university.

“The work I did with X4L has been recognised through professional progression and internal promotion.”

“The project really raised my profile in the college and gave me a new string to my bow, I am not just a wee lecturer now.”

- 3.2.2 The impact of X4L is also directly attributed to the progression of an individual who was appointed to the project as a graduate software developer, and effectively head-hunted during the lifetime of the project to work for an independent e-learning development company with links to the project institution. Her position with this company is now senior multi-media developer. Interestingly, the same project afforded the opportunity for an academic with more than thirty years' experience to fulfil her life plan by developing a freelance consultancy career. This individual attributes her development of a national profile and reputation directly to her work on the project and involvement with the programme. Indeed, several respondents highlighted the development of a national and international profile as a key element of the impact of X4L on individual project team members.

“The project had an enormous amount of impact on me personally in terms of realigning or developing an academic perspective on what technology can offer teaching and learning.”

3.3 Research developments

- 3.3.1 X4L had a significant impact on academic research in the broad area of developing and reusing learning objects. Several project reports highlight conference papers, briefings and refereed journal articles on project-related themes, including presentations in Europe and North America. These publications and presentations have served to disseminate the findings of X4L not just to wider audiences in the relevant subject communities but also to other relevant technical and pedagogical development groups. While the impact of X4L in terms of research development is significantly more evident in the HE-based projects than in the FE sector, there are examples of FE-based research outputs and conference presentations. Significantly, these include contributions from library and learning resource staff to the academic research community. A number of respondents from both the FE and HE sectors identified the role of X4L in helping to promote the academic credibility of staff involved in educational development.

“The project has advanced our research, provided an opportunity for publication in the area of learning objects, and has given us a certain profile in our field.”

- 3.3.2 At least two X4L project managers have subsequently completed and submitted doctoral theses on topics related to the project focus. This work has also led to further research outputs and the development of a national and international profile in e-learning research. There are other instances of the direct impact of staff X4L experiences on postgraduate dissertation work and professional development courses, and some researchers appointed through X4L have continued their work in subsequent funded development programmes.

“There was a real drive from our project manager to be research active, and a lot was learned about producing papers and giving presentations.”

- 3.3.3 Several respondents highlighted the role of their X4L experiences in helping to develop the confidence to submit further project bids and expand key areas of development focus. Examples of this include further work within the JISC Design for Learning programme and with the HE Academy Subject Centres. There is also at least one example of synergy between the work of X4L and ongoing European Social Fund (ESF) development work.

3.4 Raised awareness and confidence

- 3.4.1 Many people commented at some length on the extent to which involvement with X4L had impacted significantly on their awareness of key e-learning developments and the possibilities presented by the use of technology. Principal among these was the concept of

reusable learning objects, and the issues and implications of reuse and repurposing, including in particular awareness of different user needs and learning styles. In general, the programme was perceived to have exposed participants to new ideas, initiatives and ways of working that impacted on practice in quite subtle and long-term ways.

“The project was a means of professional and personal development that has enhanced the work I do in college. I was able to function at a national level with e-learning concepts and issues and to transfer that into my practice.”

“It definitely had a high level of impact on conceptual skills development in the team, particularly in the conceptualisation of learning models.”

“One member of the team developed from having no experience of using IT at all into a real enthusiast and evangelist for e-learning.”

- 3.4.2 A number of FE project participants also commented on the beneficial impact of working with HE colleagues through the project, highlighting the positive influence of some of the X4L clusters in this regard (the West Midlands cluster is singled out as having been particularly effective).

3.5 Collaboration and sharing

- 3.5.1 Several project participants noted the role of X4L in helping to overcome barriers to sharing and collaboration both within and across institutions, sectors and organisations. A number of examples were highlighted, including the role of one project in encouraging collaborations in specific subject contexts that continue to be sustained and developed since the project ended.

“It was a brilliant idea, people still talk about it. The idea of sharing is still there, it is implicit in all the subject network activities.”

3.6 General skills development

- 3.6.1 Involvement with the X4L programme is held to have impacted on individuals' general skills development in a number of ways. Several respondents highlighted the acquisition and enhancement of general project management skills as a key personal achievement through the project, and the subsequent application of these skills in other contexts. Particular skills that were highlighted included negotiating and team-building, interviewing, communicating with people at various levels within organisations and externally, and working to deadlines. A number mentioned that in general terms their X4L experience had encouraged them to 'think about things differently' and had helped to develop the confidence to explore new areas and concepts. Other practical experiences through X4L included an enhanced understanding of organisational financial reporting processes.

“The project taught me to set the budget processes up at the outset. Also that it is folly to assume you can direct a project without allocating yourself clear time, and the importance of having a good full-time project manager.”

“I learned a lot about managing people whom I am not directly responsible for, and how to motivate and encourage people.”

4 Impact on institutions

4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 The example scenarios of possible institutional impact of X4L that were suggested for exploration in this study included more use being made of the VLE, the amendment of institutional IT and e-learning strategies, and better purchasing decisions through more awareness of interoperability and open standards.
- 4.1.2 In effect, feedback from respondents indicates a wide range of areas where the experiences and lessons learned from the projects are perceived to have impacted significantly on institutional operations. A number of instances were also presented of the direct and indirect impact of X4L project experiences on institutional strategic development

and institutional policies, and the perceived contribution of X4L to the general context organisational cultural change was highlighted. A key underlying principle of the institutional impact of X4L was the notion of technology enabling developments in curriculum design and delivery.

4.2 Operational impact

4.2.1 Respondents commented that the enhanced understanding of e-learning developments gained through involvement with X4L had impacted on curriculum development in general, and in particular on the support for innovation and developing use of technology that they were able to encourage within their organisations. They particularly highlighted the impact of an enhanced understanding of interoperability issues, the role of metadata specifications and standards, and the opportunities and challenges presented by open source developments. Involvement with the programme had also introduced some people to the potential use of PHP and MySQL applications, which had subsequently impacted on institutional operational activities.

“The project gave us time and space to look in depth and detail at the whole learning object thing.”

“It freed staff to think about the curriculum in a different way.”

“A lot of knowledge about technical standards and development issues has informed developments within my team. Through the steer we got on open source and working with PHP we now have a strategy for developing tools to support the production of multiple resources.”

“Before the project the institution was bogged down in creating static web pages. It made us aware of IMS standards and e-learning as a whole and really reconsider our whole website approach.”

4.2.2 There were several examples of inter-departmental collaboration within institutions resulting from the projects. These included the interesting example of a collaboration between staff in the subject areas of English and Physics, where a synergy of the different skills bases led to the effective communication and dissemination across the institution by the English staff of the technological developments led by the Physics staff with more advanced computing and IT skills. More generally, the programme seems to have established a culture of ‘ask the librarian’, and has helped to promote and sustain the role of library and learning resource staff in supporting academic staff to access and use online resources.

“Librarians were the forgotten group. They are highly qualified and highly trained, and they are terribly important for developing learning resources. They felt wanted on this project, not on the periphery, and not just for classification. We recognised that students need good practical research skills. Librarians go on about this, but people are listening now.”

4.2.3 A number of respondents highlighted a direct and far-reaching impact of X4L on the content development processes in some institutions. These include better use of a central materials production unit through enhanced understanding of the skills levels and production values (including interoperability metadata) for the development of quality learning materials. The example was given from one college of a new staff appointment being made in recognition of the emergence through X4L of the need for a hybrid post combining both content development and librarianship skills.

4.2.4 Project experiences are held to have impacted positively on support for the development of the effective use of the institutional VLE. This includes the provision of tools to support the development of multiple products from one resource, and improved use of the repository function within the institutional VLE. In one instance, it was reported that better understanding of open source developments through X4L has informed the specification and procurement of a local digital repository. In at least two separate instances, the operational experiences of the X4L project had led to the strategic decision to replace the

proprietary institutional VLE with an open source system that afforded the interoperability that staff now knew to be possible and desirable.

“We have implemented Moodle across the institution now. X4L has broadened our work on the reuse and repurposing process with information intermediaries and academics.”

“Generally there has been an impact in terms of the adoption of standards and understanding of interoperability issues. There has been a proliferation of VLE use across the college, we have trained more people, and have implemented a way of working that will be embedded across the college with a quite intensive reuse and repurposing methodology that we have shown to work.”

“The project has resulted in teachers doing things differently in the classroom, and greater access to learning opportunities outside the college. All of this can be traced back to getting project funding to pump-prime these developments.”

- 4.2.5 There is no particular emerging pattern or logical thread to the subject areas that were involved in X4L. In most instances, the involvement of a particular subject area in project activities was due to personal interest and enthusiasm from staff in that area rather than resulting from strategic curriculum development planning or obvious content-related relevance. Indeed, respondents noted that the disciplines that were interested in getting involved in the development of RLOs were often not those that would initially spring to mind. In many institutions, subjects like computing and business were not involved at all, while there was real enthusiasm in areas like health and beauty, construction and catering.
- 4.2.6 Some project institutions were actively building on their project experiences in the context of HE in FE provision.

“Through X4L we are looking at common curriculum areas to test what will happen if we set up a reuse process with a group of tutors in one in one institution with a common curriculum from the university. We have proven positive outputs from this.”

- 4.2.7 The impact of the programme is also perceived in accounts of increased learner enthusiasm and engagement with learning. There were suggestions of increasing bottom-up demand from learners for more use of RLOs and online resources.

“We’ve had feedback saying this is the best thing they have ever had in their whole educational experience, and that they wish it had been available when they first came to the college.”

4.3 Strategic impact

- 4.3.1 X4L is one of a range of development initiatives that seem to have coalesced in a reconsideration of strategic e-learning developments in some institutions. With specific reference to X4L, several respondents noted an emerging awareness of the need to address developments in a systematic and ‘industrial’ way as opposed to relying on pockets of enthusiasm and ‘cottage industries’.

“The project made us think about the extent to which content drives culture change. Earlier strategies were about making sure the infrastructure was in place, now we are thinking about practice.”

“We have learned a lot about how to manage and promote the adoption of ILT across the college.”

“X4L was a real fit with our institutional strategy. Our entire philosophy is to get external funding for initiatives we want to develop. This is a positive, equitable arrangement, in that we do things more effectively and the rest of the sector gets to benefit too.”

- 4.3.2 In some instances a direct relationship was reported between the experiences and lessons of the X4L projects and strategic institutional developments, particularly in FE colleges. A

strong sense of raised awareness about content development, open source products and the potential of repurposing to effect genuine cultural change in institutions was reported.

“Digital repositories were not on our radar before X4L. On the basis of our experiences we have been able to specify a requirement for a local repository for the college.”

“I think the idea of getting academics to work with skilled software developers to produce learning materials was really taken on board by the university.”

4.3.3 Respondents highlighted instances of changes to (or clarifications of) institutional regulations relating to work-based learning, IPR and repurposing policies. There was also a growing awareness reported of the need for more flexibility in staff contracts to take account of the changing context of online learning, and of the value of actively supporting multi-disciplinary development teams.

4.3.4 A number of instances were given of the impact of X4L on institutional awareness of the external strategic context in the sector, encouraging an outward-looking focus on innovative developments. Several respondents commented on the role of X4L in introducing key e-learning concepts into the vocabulary of the sector, and defining and reaffirming these concepts through use. Membership of JISC committees and Advisory Boards was considered to have had a strategic impact on their institutions by affording early insight into the strategic implications of new developments and initiatives, and to help prepare for strategic change. The meetings also offered a sounding-board for ideas and opportunities for mutual support and collegiate solutions.

“Being part of the JISC experience gave me a credibility within my own institution, an awareness of emerging issues and an understanding of what we had to do.”

“I was energated by the experience. In the day job we just see the barriers, and it was useful to see that others have barriers and work with them towards collective solutions.”

4.3.5 In at least one FE institution, engagement with the programme coincided with a period of re-evaluation of e-learning initiatives resulting in the strategic decision to withdraw resources from external development work.

4.4 External links

4.4.1 A number of examples were given of the role of the programme in forging and strengthening external relationships between organisations. These includes links with JISC Regional Support Centres (RSCs) and the HE Academy Subject Centres. One respondent described the role of an X4L project in helping to shape an institutional bid to HEFCE for CETL funding, and the subsequent impact of the X4L project on the focus of the CETL activities.

4.4.2 A key element of X4L was the involvement of a large number of FE college partners and a high level of collaboration between FE colleges and HE institutions. Respondents commented that the programme helped to build confidence and capacity in the FE sector for planning and managing multi-partner development projects. One interesting result from increased collaboration between the sectors was an emerging role for FE in advising HE partners on the development of VLE solutions. FE representatives also appreciated the opportunity to engage in academic discussions with HE colleagues, and to be able to take advantage through project partnership with HE of the LTSN (now HE Academy) resource and networking base.

“We passed our expertise to the university about how to organise and set up Moodle efficiently at the right granular level, and they have now adopted our solution. They valued the expertise within the project team.”

“The project had a tremendous impact in strengthening relations between the colleges in the partnership and the university at a number of different levels.”

“Working with colleges was useful because it gave me the change to see education from a different perspective.”

4.5 Other institutional highlights

- 4.5.1 Some X4L projects have provided a basis for further development work and successful funding applications, both in terms of building on work started through the project and in continuing or developing the consortium partnership. One X4L project partnership has continued and enhanced the institutional partnership in a collaborative project within the Scottish Funding Council's e-Learning Transformation programme. Another has developed a successful bid for funding through the JISC Design for Learning programme. In this context, it was noted that X4L had started a process that is now continuing in the radical reshaping of the institution's learning and teaching strategy.

“Technology is not driving our developments, technology is enabling, learning design is driving. We no longer have to make explicit that technology plays a part when we are redesigning the curriculum.”

- 4.5.2 FE colleges have received positive comments in inspection reports about online learning provision and the availability of e-learning resources that may be attributed to the outputs and experiences of X4L.
- 4.5.3 Feedback from learners indicates a positive response to the availability of products developed through X4L. Respondents reported examples of learners demanding more online resources of the type developed through project activities.

4.6 Impact on JISC

- 4.6.1 It was suggested that X4L was one of the first JISC development programmes to have a distinct identity, with its own logo and a catchy, meaningful name instead of being referred to by the number of the circular that announced it (5/99, 7/99 etc). There are strong suggestions that X4L was a significant element in helping to develop the profile of JISC in the FE sector, and a concern that some of the momentum that has been developed from 2002 onwards may be lost through current funding arrangements.
- 4.6.2 A number of the management processes that were put in place for the X4L programme have been adopted or adapted for use in other JISC development programmes. Some of the X4L reporting templates and strategies for dealing with project issues have been incorporated into the JISC programme management induction and training provision. New forms of programme-level output using videos and DVDs have been used subsequently in other programmes, notably the e-Learning Programme. The Interoperability in Action video has received international acclaim and was used as part of an England-wide training programme run by Becta. Processes developed for requesting permission to repurpose third party content have been used in other JISC programmes, and by the HE Academy and other agencies.

5 Impact on external organisations

- 5.1 A number of external organisations were involved with X4L projects, including commercial software developers, museums, public lending libraries, and professional and technical libraries.
- 5.2 Most respondents from external organisations commented that engagement with the programme had enhanced their understanding of the FE and HE sectors and of the role that organisations could play in helping to develop provision that would be relevant to their work. It was also felt that the programme had served to raise awareness in the FE and HE sectors of the potential value of developing relationships with external organisations such as museums and libraries.

“It was good to get out of the office and meet people in their environment. Strategically it was really good for us to be involved with X4L because the programme had such a high profile and was seen as a success.”

- 5.3 Developers commented that engagement with the programme had raised their awareness of the concepts of usability and flexibility in commercial products. The programme also highlighted an interesting relationship between speculative funded developments and commercial product development. Project funding provided a safe environment for testing and piloting products and approaches which could then be taken to market with some degree of confidence in their commercial viability. In at least one commercial situation, the experiences of the project continue to be drawn on when considering viable approaches to market.

“In a commercial setting there are more restrictions on what we can do, we have to sell a viable product, we need a good return. With X4L we could be more creative, if something didn’t work that was okay as long as we could say why it didn’t work. This was great for me straight out of university, it was a real strength to be able to try things out and take risks. Now I say we can try things because I know from my experience with JISC that it has worked before.”

6 Regional and national impact

- 6.1 There are strong suggestions from a number of quarters, including projects, external organisations and senior managers in the sector, that X4L had a significant profile in the sector and an enduring brand identity. The programme raised awareness about reusable learning objects, metadata standards, digital repositories, IPR and copyright issues, which are now elements of common parlance and accepted significant concepts across the sectors. Addressing these issues is fundamental to all subsequent related development work, and their relevance to institutional strategic planning and operational activities is recognised. Several respondents commented that the programme was ‘of its time’ and played an important part in helping the sector to respond to a recognised emerging need. It was suggested that X4L has more of a profile and currency with the HE Academy subject centre network than other JISC development programmes, and has really helped to move the conversation forward in the sector about sharing and reusing materials.

“When you talk about RLOs, people know what you are talking about now.”

- 6.2 Both the HEFCE e-Learning Strategy¹ and the DfES e-Strategy² of 2005 make reference to the importance of RLOs, IPR and copyright in the effective use of e-learning. Elements of the DfES e-Strategy relating to widening participation and social inclusion also reflect the impact of the programme on plans for the implementation of a national e-learning strategy. The employment issues and staff development provision associated with sharing and reusing learning objects are written into national e-learning strategies. The influence of X4L is also seen in the ongoing work of a number of CETLs that are dealing explicitly and implicitly with RLOs and the concepts of reuse and repurposing.

- 6.3 The Staff Development Resources and Repurposing Guidelines were some of the programme outputs that are perceived to have impacted on the sector on a national scale. In a developmental context, this is exemplified by the relevance of these resources to subsequent programmes, particularly the HE Academy Subject Centre e-learning projects that were funded through the JISC Distributed e-Learning programme.

“They had heard about the ‘cookbook’, and knew that it would contain some good staff development resources and guidance.”

- 6.4 Less tangible, but perhaps more pervasive, is the longer-term impact on the sector of the people whose skills and knowledge were developed through the programme. A number of examples were given of project staff adopting an informal advisory role in the sector through RSCs and curriculum development networks for the FE sector, and the HE Academy Subject Centres. The presence of RSC members on some project Steering Groups was felt to be mutually beneficial, and some project staff continue to be asked to

¹ Strategy for e-Learning, HEFCE (2005)http://www.hefce.ac.uk/Pubs/hefce/2005/05_12/

² Harnessing Technology: Transforming Learning and Children’s Services, DfES (2005)
http://www.dfes.gov.uk/publications/e_strategy/fore.shtml

contribute to e-learning dissemination and awareness-raising events. Generic skills and specific technical expertise that were developed by individuals through X4L project activities continue to be applied and further developed in other contexts.

“There are some really talented people out there, and X4L gave them a structure to create things, the seeding of talented people is a key output from the programme.”

“I had to get tooled up on metadata standards, on UK LOM core, and other projects have benefited from this. It is still a resource the university can call upon.”

“I am called upon to talk to other people and give advice and examples from the position of knowledge and experience gained through the project.”

- 6.5 Respondents have suggested that X4L had a recognisable impact on the ongoing development and implementation of National Learning Network (NLN) materials in the FE sector. X4L is also held to have had some influence on the DfES Aimhigher widening participation campaign³ and Foundation Degree Forward⁴ (FDF).
- 6.6 One project based in Scotland has had significant national impact in both the education and health sectors, with strong endorsement from the Scottish Executive through strategic alignment with development priorities for these sectors.

7 Issues and concerns

7.1 Introduction

- 7.1.1 The survey and analysis of the impact of X4L has raised a number of issues and comments from project staff and other respondents that have a bearing on the longer-term impact of the programme and perceptions of its success. Some of these issues may also be relevant to future development programmes. They relate to the scope, scale and management of the project activities, to the general institutional context of the projects, and to the ongoing work of JISC.

7.2 Project-related issues

- 7.2.1 Several projects reported widespread changes in institutional senior management in the course of the programme. Some noted that they experienced challenges because of a lack of apparent senior management engagement with the project. Others said that they had very positive responses from institutional management and an enhanced interest in learning and teaching as a direct result of the project.
- 7.2.2 One respondent articulated a tension that is implicit in a number of project reports between the extent of the project achievements, and the scope and scale of the task. It was felt quite keenly by some that while the projects had largely achieved their objectives, this had served to highlight the enormity of the challenges to the sector in producing high quality materials and in genuinely embracing and mainstreaming the potential of technology to transform learning and teaching.
- “We are in the Jurassic phase, in manufacturing terms we are at a very rudimentary level. Commercial companies are investing millions in the development of sophisticated products and systems. It’s a very exciting time to be involved in this kind of work.”*
- 7.2.3 There was a further tension between the process-oriented role of development projects in exploring and investigating issues, and the product-oriented drive to deliver tangible outputs. This tension was felt particularly acutely in consortia including FE and HE partners. In broad terms, FE partners were more concerned with the production of materials for use in teaching, while HE was more interested in the exploration and documentation of

³ <http://www.aimhigher.ac.uk/>

⁴ <http://www.fdf.ac.uk/>

processes. There is a sense that issues of sustainability and scalability were not properly addressed by some projects. Some of the disappointment expressed at the lack of direct continuation funding for X4L projects may be seen in this context.

- 7.2.4 Many respondents commented warmly and positively about the support, advice and guidance they received from the X4L Programme Manager. This was particularly appreciated by those with little previous experience of project management and the scope and scale of relevant JISC development work. Despite this support, some project representatives found the whole programme experience somewhat daunting.

“I can’t describe what a shock it was when I was thrown into enormous great meetings full of professionals with expertise in areas I had no idea about, whose whole vocabulary was completely alien to me. I picked up a lot, but I found it really difficult.”

7.3 Institution-related issues

- 7.3.1 X4L seems to have exposed a number of issues relating to different organisational cultures and access to resources in the FE and HE sectors. While several respondents have commented on the important role of the project in helping to enhance mutual understanding and forge relationships, a number of significant issues arose concerning the sharing of online resources across different institution and sectors. These related to staff time and availability, staff skills levels, and the availability of appropriate technology in classrooms. Crucially, they also concerned a lack of perceived relevance of materials developed in one sector for application in another.

“Our FE partners were more interested in developing materials for use and less in investigating the processes for reusing.”

“Individuals who might contribute did not have enough time outside their existing teaching commitments to participate. There were also issues with the culture in the college, the low level of integration of technology with classroom teaching, the level of skills of lecturers, and the lack of perceived benefit.”

- 7.3.2 A recurrent issue relating to perceptions of institutional impact of X4L is that it is not seen as possible to disaggregate the impact of one developmental programme from other e-learning initiatives and developments taking place in the sector over the broad timeframe of the programme.
- 7.3.3 The lack of apparent institutional support for some projects had a significant adverse effect on the sustainability of the project activities. Projects highlighted the importance of high-level institutional engagement from the outset for the longer-term embedding and scalability of project activities. The extent to which project activities are embedded in mainstream institutional practice is questioned in a number of ways.

“But has this fed through to validations and reviews? Onto course resource lists?”

“It has caused us to think about things differently, but it is difficult to identify direct impact in any sustained sense.”

“It seems like the right way forward, but it has not proven attractive to staff in any sustained sense across the institution yet.”

“We built a repository, but the server was disconnected last week because of security issues. IT services would not support the server or let us support it, and there was a major hazard.”

7.4 Impact on JORUM

- 7.4.1 Although JORUM and the other JISC services were not included in the scope of this impact study, respondents made a number of comments in relation to the impact of JORUM on the activities of the projects. JORUM is a service in development, and the experiences and comments of the X4L project teams have been actively sought and welcomed by the

JORUM developers throughout the programme, and are fed into future development and strategic thinking about the role of a national repository in the evolving landscape of local and regional repositories.

- 7.4.2 X4L has brought the socio-cultural issues attendant on sharing learning objects into sharp focus. Several projects expressed regret that due to development timescales they were not able to capitalise as effectively as they would have wished on the opportunities presented by JORUM. They were concerned by ongoing legal file-sharing issues, and noted that the terms of the current HEFCE licence were restricting the potential application of RLOs in JORUM. Several projects mentioned the development of local, sub-regional and regional repositories. This may be viewed as a positive outcome of the programme in terms of proving the concept of the digital repository, but has repercussions for the development and sustained use of a national repository. There is a residual and pervasive need to grasp the socio-cultural and policy aspects of content sharing alongside the technology that makes federation possible.

7.5 Issues for JISC

- 7.5.1 A number of comments were made regarding the general lack of structures for maintaining dialogues and collaborations that were opened through the programme. This was felt particularly acutely in the current context of JISC funding for FE. The scalability of some of the processes for shared development and reuse was questioned in a number of responses and final reports. A specific issue was raised regarding the lack of 'aftercare' available to external organisations who participated in project activities but had no further contact with JISC following project completion.

"We opened channels of communication but without a common purpose, collaboration just falls by the wayside."

"Apparently we were 'object of the month' but no-one told us and we are not able to access it ourselves. I am sure it is driving extra traffic to our site but I have no evidence for this."

- 7.5.2 A number of respondents commented that the role of X4L deserves to be more widely recognised and championed by JISC. The programme is perceived as having played a significant and direct part in raising awareness about the use of technology in further and higher education and hence in supporting JISC's overall mission.

8 Conclusions and comments

- 8.1 There can be little doubt from the information gathered, both in documentation and through interviews with participants, that X4L has succeeded in its four aims. The programme has explored the use and development of tools for repurposing, raising and addressing key issues about the parameters and conditions for the sustainable development of e-learning materials. It has exposed and tackled many of the challenges associated with repurposing learning objects, and has established principles and practice for the development of a national repository of learning materials, case studies and exemplars of use. Perhaps most significantly, X4L has exposed a large number of institutions, and large numbers of people in those institutions, to the potential benefits of e-learning in general and repurposing learning objects in particular.
- 8.2 There is a strong sense from this impact analysis that X4L was a very timely development programme. It was initiated when most institutions had procured and implemented a VLE and were searching for ways to exploit the functionality of these systems to enhance learning and teaching practice. The programme had an explicitly practice-oriented focus and aims, working with academic practitioners in real learning and teaching contexts, and helping to forge genuine working relationships across various institutional departments, services and sections. There is a sense of enduring enthusiasm for and commitment to e-learning developments from those involved in the programme.
- 8.3 X4L has served to enhance the implementation and ongoing use of VLEs in institutions by addressing a wide range of issues associated with e-learning, encouraging the exploration

of new initiatives, approaches and ideas, and providing opportunities for staff to push at some of the boundaries of established practice. It has helped to enhance the role of library and learning resource staff in the development of academic materials and in the use of those resources in the curriculum. Interestingly, most of the examples of significant career progression through involvement with X4L that came to light through this impact analysis involved women. There may be a number of reasons for this, such as willingness to participate in reflective analysis at this stage, generally increasing numbers of women staff members in FE and HE over recent years, engagement with professional development in general and e-learning in particular, or gender bias in the focus on staff development and learner experiences.

- 8.4 X4L has demonstrated that the principal benefits of reuse and repurposing are generally understood and accepted in the communities involved in the programme. However, the concept of reusable learning objects is still not proven or generally accepted in mainstream practice across the FE and HE sectors. That said, X4L has identified and explored many of the key barriers to reuse and repurposing, including the pressures of time and resource constraints on staff, concerns about professional integrity and academic independence, cultural resistance to sharing, and tensions between community collaboration and institutional competition. The programme has also highlighted a number of issues for further development, including the opportunity to build on experiences of reusing and repurposing learning objects to enhance the development of learning designs.
- 8.5 X4L has served to enhance the profile and role of JISC in the FE sector, and to promote cross-sectoral collaboration through e-learning developments. This has positive benefits for ongoing regional collaborative initiatives, particularly in the context of widening participation, retention and progression in the tertiary sector. The programme has also raised issues relating to cultural and organisational differences and the viability of cross-sectoral resource sharing. In general terms, the impact of X4L in strategic terms is more readily apparent in the FE institutions involved. HEIs have implemented some policy changes as a result of the programme but there has been minimal impact on institutional strategy. FE is also able to offer more tangible evidence of positive learner feedback, which may be as a result of more direct contact with small groups of learners and targeted surveys of learner experiences.
- 8.6 The programme has highlighted the benefits to the sector of engaging with external organisations in a developmental context, and opportunities for external organisations to collaborate with academically-based research and teaching communities. There is a wealth of staff development resources available on the programme website, which could be restructured and packaged for ease of access to a wider community of users on a sustainable basis.

Glossary

Becta	British Educational Communications and Technology Agency
CETL	Centre of Excellence in Teaching and Learning
ESF	European Social Fund
FDF	Foundation Degree Forward
FE	Further Education
HE	Higher Education
HEFCE	Higher Education Funding Council for England
HEI	Higher Education Institution
JISC	Joint Information Systems Committee
JORUM	JISC Online Repository for Learning and Teaching Materials
LOM	Learning Object Metadata
ILT	Information and Learning Technologies
NLN	National Learning Network
RLO	Reusable Learning Object
VLE	Virtual Learning Environment
X4L	eXchange for Learning

Appendix A: X4L Project Key Point Summary

Project	Description	Staff Development	Key Outputs
<p>ACETS (Assemble, Catalogue, Exemplify, Test and Share) Edinburgh University</p>	<p>These are the five main conceptual steps the project identified at its inception that it would need to address. Funded for three years and starting in September 2002, the ACETS Project was led by the University of Edinburgh with partners from the universities of Cambridge, Birmingham, Newcastle (LTSN-01 – now the Academy Subject Centre for Medicine, Dentistry and Veterinary Medicine) and two Colleges of Further Education; Suffolk and Edinburgh’s Telford College. The Project deliberately took a healthcare focus and partners were selected on the basis of their involvement in and experience of the tertiary healthcare sector. The main focus of ACETS has been the investigation of the processes by which teachers use third party reusable learning objects in their teaching. It was not concerned with the creation of content nor was it primarily interested in technical issues. To fulfil the Project’s aims a number of multi-dimensional, detailed case studies of reuse, were commissioned from practicing teachers working in a wide range of institutions and educational settings. It was important that the case studies were generated by practicing teachers as a means of both maintaining their validity and capturing the idiosyncrasies of their experiences.</p>	<p>Teachers: as the exemplifiers were exclusively drawn from this group it is perhaps not surprising that they were most affected by the Project. There were many benefits reported for teachers including saving time in recreating materials, stimulating them to rethink the way they teach and encouraging them to seek out and take advantage of professional development opportunities. There were also some disadvantages including the time it took (particularly resource discovery) and the problems of copyright and accuracy. Overall it would seem that there are real potential benefits for teachers in reusing materials but the time investment in skills acquisition and creating the learning activities may be a serious problem.</p> <p>Learning Technologists: this group had a very heterogeneous profile across the range of exemplar projects. Some exemplifiers reported the role of learning technologists to be absolutely essential while others fared perfectly well without them.</p>	<p>Twenty-one exemplars were completed from across the UK (12 were from southern England, 4 from northern England, 4 from Scotland and 1 from Wales). Regarding the provenance of the third party materials, 5 of the exemplars employed commercial resources, 10 used non-commercial resources and 3 used a mixture of commercial and non-commercial resources. From a subject perspective, 9 were from medicine, 3 from nursing and allied health professions, and 1 from dentistry and 8 from non-clinical disciplines.</p>

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Project	Description	Staff Development	Key Outputs
ALBEDA York College	The A level Human Biology course taught at York college includes a module on Epidemiology. This module has been one that hasn't engaged many students and is difficult to teach in an interesting way because of the extensive use of statistical data. Under the overall term of the "Analysis of Epidemiological Data" it was felt that interactive learning using IT would be a way of making the module more interesting to learn and that the learning process could include the acquisition of research and IT skills.		The project produced a complete course in our VLE Blackboard. What began as an exercise in resource development, however, became rather more of an exploration of web-based learning techniques and how they can be integrated into an otherwise class-based learning programme
ARCHES Warwick University	The project aimed to make available photographs, 3D computer images and animations from other University of Warwick sources, including the THEATRON and Appia projects from the School of Theatre Studies and private collections of lecturers including Dr. Zahra Newby of the University's Classics department. The aim was to place these within an online repository, so that they would be available for teaching and research, but also so that they could be used by students in creating essays, presentations and, possibly, within performances.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repository designed and built which seamlessly links assets, learning objects and evaluation of their use. • Functionality to enable discovery trails within learning objects and assets designed and tested • 600 images uploaded with associated metadata • VRA Core metadata schema modified for use with digital images • Repository piloted with learning activities • Pilot of practical application UK LOM Core • Sample learning objects created and deposited in a variety of VLEs and in RELOAD • Process for economic and efficient creation of metadata piloted

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Project	Description	Staff Development	Key Outputs
Business English Henley College	X4L Business English has created a collection of reading and writing learning objects based around the theme of 'Business English'. The writing objects focus on the construction of letters, memos, reports, articles, lists, notices and leaflets for general business purposes. These consist of smaller stand-alone objects focussing on planning and drafting, paragraphing and general principles of layout, task achievement, appropriate register and proofreading.	A dissemination course has been developed within the college VLE and the team plan to use this to deliver staff training in creating content packages. This resource has also been identified for inclusion in the JISC funded Staff Development Cookbook.	The project created 62 learning objects in all consisting of: 8 level 1 reading learning objects <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 18 level 1 writing learning objects • 6 speaking learning objects • 6 level 2 reading learning objects • 6 level 2 vocabulary learning objects • 6 level 2 writing learning objects The business topics covered include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Absenteeism • What is a business? • The Internet • The Drugs Industry • Ethics and Globalisation • The Music Industry
COLOSSUS Strathclyde University	This project aims to produce 40 substantial learning objects, which will be further repurposed by project partners during the project, for use in social science subjects and deposit in JORUM. Resources to be repurposed include census data, materials from the National Archives and the JISC-funded EMOL collection.	All the academic staff engaged in development are new to learning object creation. Several have now begun to use or have extended their use of digital resources in their teaching. Internal dissemination, particularly by academic staff engaged in the project, has widened awareness and interest in the content being developed and the development process within institutions.	Work is underway on 66 learning objects across the range of social sciences disciplines: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economics 8 • Feminism 6 • History 5 • Politics 9 • Psychology 24 • Philosophy 6 • Sociology 6 • Assessment 2

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Project	Description	Staff Development	Key Outputs
ELVIS East Down Institute	The project aim is to develop a framework of online learning resources to support further education and training in specified vocational areas that are key to economic development and government policy in further education and training. The subject areas covered in this project fall within Engineering and Informatics.	The project offered a wide range of development opportunities in learning object design, and wider e-learning technologies. Web development using database technologies. Project experience has enhanced skills for curriculum development at HNC/D level. All staff received training in learning object design, web development tools and using ILT in teaching.	The ELVIS website consists of a database of around 1000 records of web-based content mapped to specific course and module specifications and around 50 of the packaged learning objects as described above. In addition to the original subject areas, the curriculum covered has been extended to e-Media and Music Technology, particularly covering the BTEC National qualifications in these subjects.
eStudio Wolverhampton University	The project was devised in 2002 to explore the potential of utilising e-learning in art and design education (primarily at transitional FE/HE levels) and to identify and repurpose digital content, with a specific focus on utilising the JISC Collections.	Now able to include e-learning advice in her consultancy activities and she has been invited to prepare papers and speak at conferences on the subject. The project and financial management skills she developed in the e-studio project relate directly to her new role and to her ambitions for working in the public service in future. Direct impact on approach to teaching and career profile.	To date (24 March 2006) the project has transferred five learning objects to the Jorum: Film Noir Photo Essay Studio Performing Arts Web Links Tool Web Links Palette The Project has submitted several project resources to the JISC X4L staff development cookbook
Healthier Nation Lauder College	The aim of this Project is to identify electronic learning materials held within identified resource databases and content repositories and provide models for accessing and re-purposing resources to support health care curriculum delivery (at FE and HE levels) with specific reference to 'the big four' diseases: Cancer, Chronic Heart Disease, Stroke and Mental Illness.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tutor Re-purposing Guidelines with supporting case studies • A collection of over 300 health care resources with supporting metadata tags • 3 re-purposed health care learning packages based on different learning/teaching approaches

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Project	Description	Staff Development	Key Outputs
Lawpaths Kent University	Lawpaths was conceived as a way of sharing materials produced by law librarians for legal information skills training. Its first aim was to discover and collate the wide range of online resources produced by law librarians and teachers in further and higher education and to provide a hub of these materials to support the learning and teaching of legal information skills. In addition it aimed to look at ways of re-purposing these to a generic or customisable form, enabling their adaptation to local environments and to explore and test the technology for doing this. Finally, it aimed to negotiate with publishers of legal online services in order to improve their provision of training materials and to encourage them make these accessible external to any commercial service provision.		Project website containing all project documentation is at http://library.kent.ac.uk/library/lawpaths Staff Development Cookbook: Evaluating Resources on the Internet Lawpaths was a good idea, and clearly met a perceived need at the time of making the bid. It might have succeeded In providing a sustainable service in accordance with its aims and objectives had there not been some internal and external management failures.

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Project	Description	Staff Development	Key Outputs
<p>The Learning Bank South Birmingham College</p>	<p>The project will develop FE/HE capacity to implement four reuse and repurposing scenarios. The scenarios are identified by the key role of the practitioner in the workflow process, namely tutors/learning support staff, information intermediaries, educational technologists and senior managers. Each scenario incorporates X4L Programme level issues and issues of the workflow process such as resource discovery, learning design, tools, copyright and metadata.</p>	<p>Project Manager has been appointed to a middle management post Senior Content Developer Has gained substantial expertise in standards and tools for e-learning Content Developers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed substantial new skills and developed substantial legacy materials. Now working in New Zealand • Developed skills an expertise in VLEs and ReLOAD, metadata, copyright issues, and creation of materials (including best solutions/ accessibility) • Has expertise in content packaging, programming and systems management • Has expertise in web development and design, content packaging <p>Lecturers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase understanding of e-learning • Increased skills in content development and the pedagogies of e-learning 	<p>The project has created and packaged the following learning objects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study Skills • Hospitality and Catering – Catering videos (5 objects): video-based learning objects on Chicken Preparations providing video demonstrations, sound and text • Business – Marketing (4 objects): html-based learning objects focusing on specific areas of Marketing

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Project	Description	Staff Development	Key Outputs
Learning 2 Learn Stirling University	The L2L project arose out of an informal widening participation group hosted by the University of Stirling. That group was interested in examining the shared development and use of digital learning resources to help students return to learning through FE colleges and learners making the transition from FE to HE study. The project partners identified the development of appropriate study/learning skills as a key element in supporting both groups of students		61 learning objects 11 staff development resources
Maps and Learner Guides SCROLLA	The original aim of the project was to encourage the sharing of evaluated web-based subject specific resources directly relevant (mapped) to the Scottish curriculum (SQA framework) to benefit Scottish FE and HE staff.		Information Gateway Learner Guide Template Tool Exemplar Learner Guides Good practice guides
PILOT Blackburn College	The aim of this project was to re-purpose existing math based learning objects into a central curriculum resource within a VLE, a math based knowledge map, and to offer learners identifiable learning pathways for individual and customisable support in acquiring underpinning knowledge and skills required to successfully complete accredited vocational training programmes.	All staff involved in project have either left or retired	Research methodology for producing curriculum centred knowledge maps Maths Knowledge Map for national distribution populated with re-purposed learning objects
REALM Coleg Sir Gâr	The broad aim of the project is to repurpose publicly created content from the NLN programme, a number of JISC services (including Image databases and resources from the Spoken Word and Dart Projects), Census Database archives and a small amount of materials created within the South West Wales E-Training Network. The subject areas under consideration are Business and Management, Leisure and Tourism and Performing Arts in HND and Foundation Degree programmes.		To date 420 assets have been extracted from the following sources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NLN Materials • DART • UK Data Archive • SWWETN Materials

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Project	Description	Staff Development	Key Outputs
ReSET Glasgow Caledonian	This project will take CBL resources such as TLTP and other legacy material and use it as the basis for producing high quality, copyright-cleared, standards-compliant, reusable learning objects suitable for use by teachers on HNC, HND and Foundation Degree programmes.		171 Learning Objects listed in catalogue Feb 2006
Retasking Key Skills Coleg Llandrillo	The project explored the issues involved in attempting to create learning objects from existing on-line learning resources. The materials in question were commercially produced key skills learning resources which had been developed for delivery via Teknical's Virtual campus. The project aimed to take a representative sample of materials that supported the Communication Key Skill and then re-task the sample resources into learning object format.	The project involved subject specialists, web developers, curriculum managers, delivery staff and students. For each type of person the project highlighted issues and areas for discussion. The main points are detailed below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considerable staff development required before the subject specialist is able to carry out the task • Re-tasking is not a cut and paste activity • Re-working • Accessibility • College Environment 	The project created free standing key skill communication learning objects for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grammar and Punctuation • Writing Memos • Body Language
Stars and Literature New College Telford	The aims of the LSL project were to develop friendly online materials that can be used as part of a teaching and learning process. The project was designed to enhance use of ICT within New College and JISC communities and enrich the learning experiences of students. The project focus was on the developing materials around the curriculum areas of Cosmology and English Literature.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning objects for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Cosmology ○ Wilfred Owens "The Send Off" ○ Wilfred Owens "Exposure" ○ Introducing the First World War • HTML templates • A Flash Template for timeline, text can also be changed in other Flash objects by changing the text file attached to them

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Project	Description	Staff Development	Key Outputs
SURF X4L Staffordshire University	The project involves Staffordshire University, Stoke-on-Trent FE College, Shrewsbury College of Art and Technology and The Royal National College for the Blind. The project concentrates on the repurposing of content for use within MLEs/VLEs and focuses on the various phases needed to enable this to take place effectively.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided the platform for second phase X4L bid (SURF WBL project in work based learning) • Better awareness of IPR and Accessibility issues and work at FE Colleges • Stronger community of practice in West Midlands area • New Policy introduced to promote reuse of e-learning content at Staffs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contributions to X4L website and packages distributed to colleges on CD • COSE release 2.1 and updated • Contribution of content packages to JORUM repository: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Careers Module ○ Information Skills Module • Reports on SURF X4L Website: • Updates to X4L Cluster • Technical Report and ICE Update • Technical Strand Report and separate extracts on SCORM, e-Resources, and Accessibility
SURF WBL Staffordshire University	The focus of the project is to examine the resourcing and support of Work-Based Learning (WBL) for those taking HE courses in FE, and create, by building on available national resources, outputs from JISC programmes and the work of the SURF X4L project, a collection of generic content and subject-specific embedding exemplars for use across the SURF Consortium and deposit in JORUM.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 learning objects under development • Further 27 planned

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Project	Description	Staff Development	Key Outputs
X4L Lit Coleg Llandrillo	This project aims to identify the scope and structure of the learning objects which need to be created in order to capitalize on this type of digital resource for a variety of student groups.	Specific training and career development opportunities came for the staff directly through the work done in the development of the Learning Objects and the delivery of the project's objectives. More general development opportunities have come from the collaboration and consultancy work the team has been asked to undertake as a result of its delivery of this early-completing project. One example is the undertaking of evaluation work on another X4L project, another example is the publication through LSDA of a paper on LO structure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning outcomes from the following qualifications: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A/S Literature ○ A/S Critical Thinking ○ GCSE English Comprehension Skills • The project provided learning objects based on source content for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ One item of poetry ○ One section from an item of narrative fiction ○ One section from an item of drama
X4L Social Knowledge Coleg Llandrillo	This project follows on from our previous X4L development work and aims to further develop the Level 2 Learning Object design and structure in light of recent developments in International Interoperability Standards. The project also aims to investigate this Learning Object approach within another curriculum context (previous work was based within the English Literature curriculum).		<p>Twenty Level 2 Learning Objects covering four qualifications and a non-qualification informal learning route were created drawing on existing web content for four areas of knowledge:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statistical information • Law • Racial diversity • Work

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Project	Description	Staff Development	Key Outputs
X4L Music Brockenhurst College	The project aims to develop standards based e-learning objects utilising and repurposing materials available via the Grove Online reference work, MIDI, digital video and audio clips, content available through an existing relationship with Soundcraft, plus materials to become available on the Arts and Creative Industries Hub of the RDN.	All the teachers involved in the project have identified important ways in which their engagement with e-learning has caused/enabled them to re-think and seek to enhance practice in other areas of their work. Technical staff have gained a significant appreciation of pedagogy (as it applies to both teachers and learners)	The key achievement of the project has been its sustained focus on a close study of the processes and procedures involved in identifying, re-purposing, developing, deploying and supporting the use of e-learning materials within traditional college learning environments. The two colleges now have extensive first-hand experience of the e-learning development cycle, from conception through to supported delivery, and an understanding of the potential of e-learning to improve and sustain the quality of learner experiences.
X4L Rapid Tresham Institute	To explore the re-purposing of existing and forthcoming materials suitable for use within the teaching and learning methodologies for the subject areas of Art, Media and Performance studies, at a range of abilities from foundation to first-degree level. This will include existing JISC and NLN materials as well as newly identified learning objects from cross-curricula areas, which have applicability to Art Media and Performance. To increase co-operation and collaboration between FE/HE institutions and learning media data agencies/bodies.	Teaching staff are the immediate beneficiaries of the project, with training plans and guidance to support those new to post or new to ILT. Training departments can also make best use of the training programme to identify core areas of ILT training to be undertaken. Some staff may wish to reuse the materials.	42 learning packages for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community of practice materials • Bursary scheme outputs • Training materials • Staff resources 1500 images from the Dryden and Carr Collections which will appear on SCRAN
X4L West Midlands Solihull College	The main purpose of the project was to create 120 learning objects which could be effectively meta-tagged, designed to cater for a variety of accessibility needs, reused and adapted in different learning contexts and be made available through a national repository. The two main curriculum areas cover within the project were Engineering and EFL.	Without doubt, every member of the team has gained a positive experience from their involvement with the project. The experience has helped us better understand object design, content construction aspects, accessibility issues and content wrapping.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The construction of 'How to Use' guides • 60 EFL/Basic Skills Learning Objects & 60 Engineering Learning Objects • The development of a standardised object interface