

Winning hearts and minds: Implementing Activity Led Learning

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12th February 2009, LbD Conference

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Overview – Faculty vision

Community of learners

Engaged in Employer and Profession
focussed

Activity Led Education

Vision 2007 - 2011

- New faculty learning (building) facilities (£60 million pounds)
- Developing a faculty pedagogical approach
- Enhancing the whole student experience

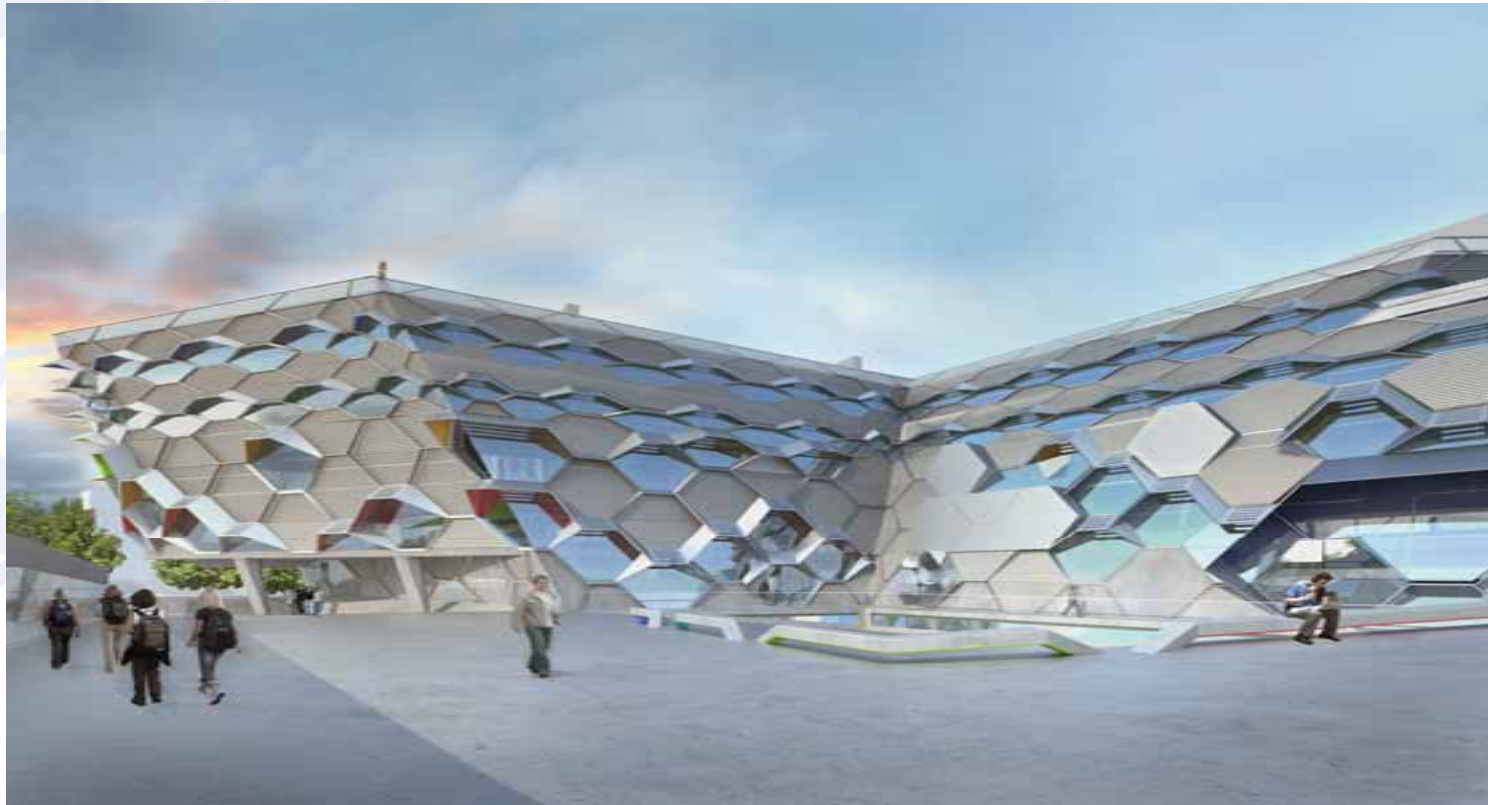
Ariel view of new building

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Courtyard view of new building

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Classroom – example

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Activity Led Learning – why?

“Learning takes place through the active behaviour of the student: it is what *he* does that he learns, not what the teacher does”

(Tyler, 1949)

Activity Led Learning – why?

“Learning in a passive system has a much greater tendency to be both superficial and quickly forgotten. Active involvement in learning helps the student to develop the skills of self-learning while at the same time contributing to a deeper, longer lasting knowledge of the theoretical material ... [and] ... it is almost the only effective way to develop professional skills and to realise the integration of material from different sources.”

(McGowan & Knapper, 2002)

Activity Led Learning - definition

Engaging students through challenges requiring them to develop and apply their technical and scientific knowledge, whilst simultaneously developing their team working, leadership, problem solving and life-long learning skills

Activity Led Learning in Action



Activity Led Learning – aims and outcomes

- Aim
 - To improve engagement and also hence retention
 - To develop employability through skills development
- Based on
 - Long experience in Coventry
 - The experience of many leading international educators
- A solution to learning
 - Developed for Coventry in Coventry
 - Designed to connect with our new building and wider community
- Outcome
 - Communities of learning that involve students and staff, and connect with external communities

Student experience enhancement

Concerns

- Student focus to systems and processes
- Remodelling inefficient systems
- Culture and attitude in service support
- All members of the Faculty community
- Influencing wider University policy

Student experience enhancement

SEE-Unit, three strands

- Student advocacy service, led by students for staff and students
- Pro-active research and analysis
- Programme for process improvement and management of change

Communities of learners



The challenge – 2008 to 2011

- More consistent ALL learning experience for all EC students, and staff capacity building
 - ALL pilots coordinated through staff LTA advisory group
 - Building emergent CoP (Wenger, 1999) of ALL researcher practitioners (Sarah)
- Student-facing systems and processes that are fit for purpose
 - SEE-U initiative, student advocacy (Irene)
- Community of practice, learners

Change management

- Continuous improvement
- Change management through the lens of complexity theory
- Change agents working 'in' the system
 - ALL pilots moving into curriculum redesign
 - SEE-U advocacy
 - Working together to evaluate practice
 - Influencing curriculum (re)design, systems and processes

Change models – factors in managing change (Knoster et al, 2000)

Vision +	Consensus +	Skills +	Incentives +	Resources+	Action Plan	= Change
	Consensus +	Skills +	Incentives +	Resources+	Action Plan	= Confusion
Vision +		Skills +	Incentives +	Resources+	Action Plan	= Sabotage
Vision +	Consensus +		Incentives +	Resources+	Action Plan	= Anxiety
Vision +	Consensus +	Skills +		Resources+	Action Plan	= Resistance
Vision +	Consensus +	Skills +	Incentives +		Action Plan	= Frustration
Vision +	Consensus +	Skills +	Incentives +	Resources+		= Treadmill

Change 'management' for sustainable change

- Use this model in non-linear way (keep in mind complexity theory)
- Let good ideas flourish
- Promote conditions for dialogue – 'learningful conversations' (Senge, 1990)
- Be flexible but keep the vision in mind

Evaluation – progress so far/1

- ALL pilots – evidence of:
 - increased student engagement for some indicators measured through satisfaction ratings
 - Includes increased satisfaction with ‘development of common skills’
- Staff engagement
 - Indications of emergent CoP

Evaluation – progress so far/2

Student Experience Enhancement Unit

- Advocacy service well utilised
- Many research activities, e.g. ALL pilots, retention monitoring, student surveys
- One system change agreed (disability support), others in progress

However

- Limited resources and capacity of team
- Difficult to influence changes and systems outside Faculty

Conclusions

- Fair progress to date in “winning hearts and minds” of whole Faculty – culture shift
- Change agents working ‘in’ the system
- An on-going learning process – continuous improvement
- Aligning ALL pedagogy with learning facilities
- Process involves integrating teaching and learning, research and development, and regional development in H.E.

References

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