1.1 Alison Glover – University of Wales, Newport, UK

The Challenge of Sustainability - the Welsh Agenda

Global issues such as climate change, poverty, health, education and environmental degradation are very topical, with substantial media coverage. Currently it is the United Nations Decade for Sustainability (2005-2014), part of this programme is to integrate sustainability within all sectors of education. Incorporated within this process is the establishment of Regional Centres of Expertise. The British Government and the Welsh Assembly Government have published several policies prioritising sustainability across all sectors. For example in May 2009 the Welsh Assembly launched 'One Wales, One World', promoting sustainable development as the main organising principle for all sectors. Higher education institutions provide future citizens, who will lead, design and create change within society, and it is therefore desirable for students to be empowered if they are to be effective. Consequently the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW) is prioritising Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship (ESDGC) within the sector.

This research focuses on the situation in Wales. In 2008 the Welsh Assembly Government funded an audit to establish the situation of ESDGC within Welsh higher education. The Welsh Assembly and HEFCW agreed to utilise STAUNCH © (Sustainability Tool for Auditing University Curricula in Higher-Education). STAUNCH © is an innovative auditing tool created by the ESRC-funded Centre for Business Relationships, Accountability, Sustainability and Society (BRASS) at Cardiff University. As a result all higher education institutions in Wales applied the same auditing process. This provided a country wide picture of the current situation of ESDGC within the curriculum. Critical reflections of the audit have emerged and Welsh higher education institutions are responding to these.

The findings of this audit will be discussed and current actions that have emerged as a result, both at an institutional level and across Wales. The question arises as to whether higher education institutions are developing the policies and strategies to tackle sustainability issues in the way the Welsh Assembly requires. The perception of staff and students of the changing role they have to play in the development and implementation of the resulting policies needs to be investigated. This research aims to develop a conceptual and analytical framework as a guide for case studies in order to examine the implementation process and impacts of strategies and policies at Higher Education Institutions in Wales. The outcomes of this research will aim to make recommendations within the broad field of policy development and implementation and also focus upon the sustainability agenda.

1.2 Annie Weir, University of Edinburgh

Quality Assurance of Knowledge Transfer Feasibility Study

Knowledge transfer/knowledge exchange (KT/KE) is a key area of development in higher education globally (Ozga, 2007) and attracts increasing resource, but to date there is little exploration of how quality assurance (QA) in KT/KE activity could or should be established.

Recent United Kingdom and Scottish Government reports highlight the increasing importance of KT/KE from research as a way to enhance economic development and also to serve community and policy needs. Funding bodies such as the Scottish Funding Council have correspondingly increased their level of commitment to support higher education institutions' capacity building and uptake of KT/KE. Increased funding raises issues, not only about how to define and measure outputs (Kelly, McNicoll, McLellan, 2008) but also about how to quality assure them (Library House, 2008).

This paper describes a small scoping study (supported by the Scottish Funding Council) of the University of Edinburgh's quality assurance mechanisms and practices, and processes in knowledge transfer and knowledge exchange activities. The study aimed to establish whether and to what extent quality assurance of KT/KE activities is actively addressed by the different actors involved, and on what basis this issue is approached and understood by academics, KT/KE managers and institutional leaders.

The methodological approach combined document analysis of key QA and KT/KE documents with semi-structured interviews with 17 University of Edinburgh staff, including senior managers responsible for either QA or KT/KE and academics involved in KT/KE activities, as well as background conversations with two Directors with university-wide responsibilities.

As a consequence of demand for both accountability and quality, the University of Edinburgh has sought effective ways to measure its performance and engage in continuous improvement. To date there has not been a strong focus on the quality assurance or quality enhancement of KT/KE activities. The study suggests that moving beyond the current volume metrics measurement to providing a richer picture of the range (including recognition of non-commercial activities) and quality of KT/KE activities would be beneficial. The study concluded that QA of KT is likely to be contested given the complexity of the area and because KT/KE may be seen as in competition with research and teaching. At the same time, because KT/KE is growing in importance in Scotland, there are policy pressures to ensure that it is recognised, and that increased activity is supported by enhanced quality of provision.

References: Kelly, U. McNicoll, I. & McLellan, D. (2008). Towards the estimation of economic value of Scottish Higher Education Institutions. Glasgow: University of Strathclyde. ibrary House, (2008). Metrics for the Evaluation of Knowledge Transfer Activities at Universities, a Report Commissioned by UNICO. Cambridge: Library House.
Ozga, J. (2007). Knowledge and policy: research and knowledge transfer. Critical Studies in Education, 48 (1), pp 63-78.

1.3   Oliver Hewer, University of Wales, Newport, UK

Difficulties in reconciling expectations: working collaboratively in carrying out research in community development – a case study.

The concept of 'community development' can be summarised as collaborative working with communities to identify needs, take action and evaluate practice, in order to bring about social change and justice (LLUK, 2003). Traditionally a very grass-roots oriented practice, it is becoming increasingly brought into the equation of national and European policy for social change. Because of this the pressure for community development organisations to carry out methodical and 'hard' monitoring of targets and outcomes increases (MacInnes and Kenway, 2009). While academic researchers have tended to approach communities as objects in research, recent reflective practice in fields closely aligned with community development (particularly social work and public health) has emphasised the need for participation of communities and organisations in the process of research (Shaw and Norton, 2008; Flicker et al 2008). Academic social research is also increasingly dependent on external revenue, and with this comes requirements and expectations (Ham 1999). Therefore, community development organisations and academic social researchers seem to have additional incentives to work collaboratively.

However, collaboration is not without its difficulties. In particular, it raised questions and challenges about the application of traditional academic frameworks for social research. This study presents a critical reflection as a participant observer on issues emerging during a recent research project conducted in partnership with a community development organisation. A focal point concerns the reconciliation of the underpinning philosophies of community development work (for example, participation, shared ownership and control) with both academic research frameworks for social sciences (methodology, 'pure research') and expectations of those commissioning research. The issues discussed are put in the context of recent reflective practice in research. It is hoped that it will provide a basis for further investigations into how academic social research frameworks are applied to collaborative research in community development.

References:
Flicker, S. et al (2008) ''If you could change one thing...' What community-based researchers with they could have done differently' Community Development Journal 43: 239-253.
Ham, V. (1999) 'Tracking the truth or selling one's soul? Reflections on the ethics of a piece of commissioned research' British Journal of Educational Studies 47(3):275-282.
LLUK (Lifelong Learning UK) (2003) National Occupational Standards in community development work. Available online from
http://www.lluk.org/national-occupational-standards.htm [accessed 7 August 2009].
MacInnes, T. and Kenway, P. (2009) Data use in voluntary and community organisations. Joseph Rowntree Foundation. Available online from
http://www.jrf.org.uk/sites/files/jrf/2343-voluntary-community-organisations.pdf [accessed 5 August 2009]
Shaw, I. and Norton, M. (2008) 'Kinds and quality of social work research'. British Journal of Social Work 38(5): 953-970

1.4   Gemma Tombs, Coventry University, UK

The UK and the Bologna Process: Challenging Our Response

Throughout the past decade, higher education institutions have become increasingly affected by international pressures, policies and reforms. These have predominantly come in the form of the European Union economic strategy (commonly known as the Lisbon Strategy), but also through the advancement and implementation of the Bologna Process which aims to restructure higher education systems and has reached far beyond the boundaries of the EU (Keeling 2006). The existence of the Bologna Process and the Lisbon Strategy have encouraged a debate about the role of higher education in Europe, and the extent to which EU policies can and should be integrated into UK higher education institutions.

Higher education is culturally embedded into the UK's broader context, yet this is challenged by the international focus of the Lisbon Strategy and the Bologna Process, amongst other EU policies (Birtwistle 2009). The UK's response to the Bologna Process is further complicated by devolution; it has been argued that the position of the UK in the Bologna Process is both 'ambivalent and ambiguous' (Robertson and Keeling 2008), and that the extent to which its challenges are incorporated into university strategies varies enormously (Bone 2009). Whilst institutional autonomy both allows and encourages this approach, the far-reaching influence of the Bologna Process means that it cannot and must not be ignored (Birtwistle 2009).

This paper seeks to ask questions about institutional responses to the Bologna Process, critically analysing current literature on the topic and drawing on documentary analyses of EU policy implementation. It will argue that although the proportion of literature and research addressing this topic has increased in the past few years, the influences of EU policies on UK institutions are still under-discussed and under-theorised. As we proceed towards Lisbon 2010, now considered to be waypoint along the path of EU policy development, it is essential that the higher education community critically engages with this discourse in order to theorise and comprehend the integration of UK and international higher education processes.

References: Birtwistle, Tim, 2009. Towards 2010 (and then beyond) – the context of the Bologna Process. Assessment in Education: Principles, Policy and Practice, 16 (1), pp. 55-63. Bone, Drummond (2009). Three Year View of Issues Raised by the Bologna Process. JISC. Available at http://www.jisc.ac.uk/media/documents/aboutus/strategy/drummond%20bone%20essay.pdf [Accessed 13 August 2009] Keeling, Ruth, 2006. The Bologna Process and the Lisbon Research Agenda: the European Commission's expanding role in higher education discourse. European Journal of Education, 41 (2), pp. 203-222. Robertson, Susan L. and Keeling, Ruth, 2008. Stirring the lions: strategy and tactics in global higher education. Globalisation, Societies and Education, 6 (3), pp. 221-240.

1.5   Craig Whittaker, University of Bristol, UK

The Erasmus student exchange programme: Broadening the horizons of English university students?

The European Union has set ambitious targets for the number of students who participate in international exchanges for academic and professional training. These targets are not being met, but the Erasmus programme is the most successful part of the EU's attempts to achieve their goals, with almost 2 million students having participated in Erasmus in the past 20 years. However, the number of English participants has reduced significantly relative to students of other nationalities. The reluctance of English university students to study abroad is coupled with the continued enthusiasm of students to visit England under Erasmus, and the cost of hosting Erasmus students has led some English universities to consider withdrawing from Erasmus exchanges in favour of using their resources to exploit the lucrative market for full fee paying students from non-EU countries. Consequently, English students may be even less likely to have an international experience during their higher education.

This paper reports on an ESRC sponsored PhD studentship in which I use a mixed methods approach involving in-depth interviewing of English Erasmus participants from English universities, combined with the completion of repertory

grids based upon photographic images taken during the participants' Erasmus visits. This original approach is designed to supplement traditional interview methodology by using photographs to move 'beyond words'. The use of the repertory grid technique provides a potentially rich way of exploring student motivations and sense of identity, and early results suggest that this provides a rich vein to explore.

The research has practical implications in that it may help those such as international officers and tutors to understand the motivation of English Erasmus students and thereby encourage higher levels of participation, and social implications to the extent that higher level Erasmus participation may lead to more English students being equipped to compete in the international jobs market.

The methodology will be discussed, and preliminary results will be reported, including photographs and repertory grid, and possible conclusions will be explored.

DENBIGH 1 – CHAIR: SOENKE BIERMANN
THEME: ENTERING HIGHER EDUCATION

1.6   Jane Williams and Tom Hadfield, University of Wales Newport, UK

Using Induction Week to Maximise Student Engagement

There is a significant body of research exploring the complex themes around student engagement (Tinto, 1997). A key area identified as being fundamental to students' success is their Induction Week experience. In September 2009 a new course design is being introduced into our Undergraduate programme, the course team were keen to ensure this new development did not lead to a fragmentation of the new cohort and wanted to develop an approach to aid the formation of a group identity early in the students' academic life.

Using Chickering and Gamson's (1991) 'Seven Principles of Good Undergraduate Teaching' the team have decided to introduce a non-assessed group activity during induction, where the new cohort will be given the task of creating a video guide to information literacy within the first four weeks of their course. Research suggests that the introduction of a task at this time can capture students' enthusiasm when they are at their most motivated, and by using a non-traditional, technology based task they will be engaging in new ways of learning. It is hoped that this approach will give the students a clear focus during their first weeks at University, encourage them to work as a group, provide a meaningful reason to engage with a range of support and information sources and thereby increase levels of student engagement and satisfaction. The project will evaluated using questionnaires based upon Chickering and Gamson's principles followed by focus group discussions to further examine key issues or clarify emergent themes.

The results of the questionnaires will be analysed to identify the range of information sources used, support services accessed, skills that have been developed and an initial overview of the strengths and weaknesses of the approach. The qualitative data generated during the focus group discussions will provide information about how students' felt during the process and will try to ascertain their feelings of identity with their cohort. The project is supported by a University grant which requires the results to be presented as a paper by the end of October 2009.

The project will result in the creation of video guides to which will help all students on the course in their academic writing and it is anticipated that students will have engaged in a focused manner with a range of services, developing a level of awareness and familiarity which will support them during their student life.

References:Chickering, A.W. & Gamson, Z.F (Eds.) (1991) New Directions for Teaching and Learning: Vol. 47. Applying the seven principles for good practice in undergraduate education. San Francisco: Jossey-Blass. Tinto, V. (1997) 'Classroom communities, exploring the educational character of student persistence' Journal of Higher Education 68 (6) pp.599-623

1.7   Charlotte Young, Aimhigher, Bournemouth University, UK

How Key is Commitment? – Findings from Pilot Study

Aimhigher is a government funded initiative, working largely within the 13 to 19 age group who have potential to achieve, but are under represented in Higher Education (HE). The Aimhigher Summer Schools Analysis of Provision and Participation 2004 to 2008 (March 2009, p. 5) states 'it is intended that application and progression to HE is achieved via providing an experience of HE which encourages the learners in the target group to: reinforce a commitment to learning and progression to HE'

In solution to a plethora of definitions of commitment in an organisational context, Allen and Meyer (1990) produced a Three-Component Framework, identifying commitment in three approaches; Affective, Continuance and Normative, by obtaining responses to statements using a Likert scale.

Affective Commitment is most desirable as employees are emotionally attached, identify with the organisation and want to continue employment. "Research consistently shows that employee's who want to stay, tend to perform at higher levels" (Meyer and Allen 2004, p. 2). Employees with continuance commitment perceive a need to stay due to costs associated with leaving and lack of comparable alternatives, demonstrating this is the least desirable form of commitment. With Normative Commitment, employees feel a moral obligation to continue employment.

Following a review of organisational commitment literature and recent research, (Young 2008), a paper was presented at the Forum for Access and Continuing Education conference in July. This outlined how adaptation of these management models could be used to answer questions concerning, progression, reinforcement of commitment by summer schools, commitment type, year group other influences whilst investigating the concept of commitment within the wider context of Aimhigher and its objectives, evidencing and evaluating positive learner identity (HEFCE 2008/05) and references to commitment in the Higher Education Curriculum Map (Action on Access 2008).

A pilot study followed, based upon Allen and Meyer's commitment scales, used under licence from the authors Dr. John Meyer and Dr. Natalie Allen in the faculty of Social Science at the University of Western Ontario. Statements were produced to test the three commitment types in an educational context, for use at two residential summer schools, one lead by Aimhigher for year 11 and the other by the university, for year 12. The results of the Aimhigher summer school study show that there is very little difference in the commitment profile (consisting of Affective, Continuance and Normative commitment), of the whole group prior to and post summer school activity. However, when individual results are analysed an overall increase in Affective commitment can be demonstrated. This paper will discuss these findings and make recommendations for further research.

1.8   Sarah Wright, Newcastle University, UK

The Use of Aptitude Tests for Selection into Higher Education in the UK: An Overview of the Literature

Medical school admissions departments in the United Kingdom face a difficult task when selecting students to fill limited number of places on medical programmes. Due to high academic demands of such programmes, selection decisions have historically been based upon A level grades. However, curriculum reforms have led to substantial increases in the proportion of A level students achieving top grades, forcing admissions departments to rely more heavily upon other selection methods to differentiate between applicants. Pressure has been placed upon medical schools to "broaden access" to their degree programmes. This is largely due to the over-representation of students from independent schools and higher social classes in higher education institutions overall, (The Sutton Trust 2007), and medical schools in particular (Nisbet 2006).

To address the challenges of high demand and a need to increase diversity, 26 medical and dental schools in the UK introduced an aptitude test called the UKCAT for entry in 2007 onwards. However, the decision to introduce the UKCAT was not unanimous. Proponents of the UKCAT believe that its use may reveal hidden talent of students who have not performed to their fullest potential at school. Thus, the test may improve the odds of obtaining a place at medical school for students who have not had a great deal of support in preparing their application. Opponents suggest that while the UKCAT will provide a defensible measure to distinguish between seemingly equally qualified applicants, its predictive validity has yet to be determined. As such, it is too early to use the test scores for admissions purposes. Some argue that the £60 fee to take the UKCAT will be a deterrent for poorer students, adding another barrier in their struggle to gain a place at medical school (Cassidy 2008). Other authors suggest that A levels are the

best predictors of university performance, and aptitude tests will add little value to the admissions process (McManus, Smithers et al. 2003).

Whilst aptitude tests are seemingly new to medical schools in the UK, they have been widely used in other locations and disciplines for years. This presentation will provide an overview of the literature arguing for and against the use of aptitude tests for selection to higher education in the UK.

References: Cassidy, J. (2008). "UKCAT among the pigeons." British Medical Journal 336. McManus, I. C., E. Smithers, et al. (2003). "A levels and intelligence as predictors of medical careers in UK doctors: 20 year prospective study." British Medical Journal 327: 4. Nisbet, I. (2006). Student admission: Assessment policy issues in the UK- An overview from the regulator. Black Sea Conference on University Admission and Examinations. Tbilisi, Georgia, Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. The Sutton Trust (2007). University admissions by individual schools.

DENBIGH 2 – CHAIR: ESTELLE TARRY
THEME: LEARNING, IDENTITY AND HIGHER EDUCATION

1.9   Nicole Steils, Learning Innovation ARG, Coventry University UK

Innovation and Identity: The Impact of Identity on Learning in Virtual Worlds

Three-dimensional virtual worlds (VWs), such as Second Life by Linden Lab Inc., represent a rapidly emerging area for innovative teaching methods and learning experiences. Using information collected through an ongoing review of relevant literature and a case study, this paper presents a first analysis of the impact of the use of innovative VW technologies on the identity and role of both the student and teacher. It proposes ways in which this identity can be better understood and exploited in order to enhance learning efficacy.

VWs, as used for educational purposes, are often persistent online environments in which teachers and learners can interact without being physically together, typically representing themselves as 'avatars', perceptible digital 3D characters (for a more detailed definition see Schroeder 2002).

The impact of such virtualization on both the teacher and learner represents a critical area for research as these mediums for teaching push the boundaries of students and teachers identity in new and complex ways.

It is a common claim that VWs offer a 3D-space where students can learn without restrictions of real-world-learning, such as dimension, economics, identity, or distance. Therefore VWs will fulfil what is ongoing requested in current Higher Education: an opportunity for active and collaborative learning (Lombardi 2007). However, there is need for further in-depth proof of this approach. Additionally what is mostly missing in this argument is in what kind of way and to what extent VWs are adaptable to the individual requirements of students and teachers.

VWs appear to attract particularly distance learners and teachers as first research shows that distance learners perceive learning in a VW as more positive than different ways of distance learning (Edirisingha et al. 2009). However, users familiar with online video games are usually dissatisfied with the graphics of and the absence of a structure within the environment. Additionally, students and teachers unfamiliar with such media show resistance towards these environments (Franco 2004).

Research towards an improved understanding of these factors, through considering the personality and identity of users, is a significant topic for continued analysis. This student paper presents a first step towards clarifying these issues and suggesting key avenues for future research.

References: Edirisingha, P., Nie, M., Pluciennik, M., and Young, R. (2009) 'Socialisation for learning at a distance in a 3-D multi-user virtual environment'. British Journal of Educational Technology. 40, (3) 458 – 479. Franco, A. (2004) 'The challenges of virtual education'. Electronic Journal of Instructional Science and Technology. 7 (1) http://www.usq.edu.au/electpub/e-jist/docs/Vol7_No1/MeltingPot/Challenges_virtual.htm, retrieved 12.08.09.Lombardi, M. (2007) 'Authentic learning for the 21st Century: An overview. EDUCAUSE Learning Initiative' <http://net.educause.edu/ir/library/pdf/ELI3009.pdf>, retrieved 12.08.09.
Schroeder, R. (ed.) (2002) The Social Life of Avatars. Presence and Interaction in Shared Virtual Environments. London: Springer.

1.10   Kate Black, University of Chester, UK

"Mind the gap": the challenge of male trainee teacher retention

With education as investment central to social policy, the quality of learning and success of reform depend decisively upon the teachers (CERI 2000:48). However, stratagem for their serving as role-models for all backgrounds is failing, as Primary teaching increasingly deters male commitment. Such resultant gender regime is of growing national concern, being considered linked to underachievement in boys and reproduction of gendered divisions.

This action-research seeks understanding of factors contributing to 'wastage', doubting and persistence amongst male Primary ITT trainees at University "x" and the processes involved in their social integration to the profession. It aims to establish whether 'wastage' is attributable to programme/Institution expectation-reality gaps or whether intangible 'gaps' between self and socially-assigned conceptions of teacher identity, are responsible (eg. Lasky 2005).
Having the 'localised' purpose of increasing retention amongst this minority group, this will also contribute to understandings of the [inter]-national problem of male 'wastage' from ITT and other 'caring professions'.

The research adopts a constructivist epistemology within an interpretivist paradigm, employing socio-cultural theorising of identity. Adopting a multi-method, longitudinal approach, it assumes case-study methodology to consider:
1.   factors of satisfaction and retention and expectation-reality gaps attributing to male 'wastage';
2.   male trainees' experiences/perceptions of the profession/training;
3.   the implications for male retention and support.
Initial analysis of institutional data informs phase two: focus-groups to ascertain male trainee expectations and factors influencing retention. This informs a survey to male pre-University ITT students and trainees. A fourth phase will involve interviews/focus groups to verify emergent data, securing deeper empirical understanding. Applicants will be tracked through their training enabling a richer insight into their experiences.

Employing theories of service satisfaction (eg. Tinto 1993), initial findings highlight 'gaps' relating to school acculturation, emphasising the importance of social integration and social-identity theory's role in conceptualising this under-theorised area. Ongoing research seeks further understanding of needs for reconciliation of the co-existence of self with a socially-assigned identity. This is expected to broaden academic understanding of male trainees and issues affecting retention/withdrawal. Through also considering pre-entry students, an area currently lacking (Harvey et al. 2006), it is anticipated to elucidate actions encouraging a systematic, coherent policy of support and preparation. Such findings will have implications for HE ITT-providers if workforce gender-isation and the challenges of student withdrawal are to be resolved.

References
CERI (2000) Knowledge Management in the Learning Society. Paris: OECD. Harvey, L., Drew, S. & Smith, M. (2006) The First Year Experience: A review of the literature London: HEA Lasky, S. (2005) A socio-cultural approach to understanding teacher identity, agency & professional vulnerability in the context of secondary school reform. Teaching & Teacher Education 21: 899-916
Tinto, V. (1993) Leaving College: Rethinking The Causes & Cures of Student Attrition Chicago: University Press.

1.11   Pauline Joyce, Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, Ireland
            Co Author: Jerry McNamara

Approaches to learning and assessment – a case study.

This paper will report on a case study which explores how participants and their lecturers approach the experiences of learning and assessment, in the context of an outcomes-based curriculum. The objectives of the study are to investigate:
o   How healthcare professionals, as postgraduate students, approach the experiences of learning and assessment.
o   If learning outcome statements drive student learning.
o   If learning outcome statements encourage or discourage direction of learning.
o   If learning outcome statements drive teacher activity, selection of content, selection of learning activities and assessment.

Previous studies carried out in this area have taken one of two traditions; one is qualitative research of the Gothenburg phenomenographers which established the distinction between deep and surface approaches to learning. The other major research tradition is psychometric with inventories such as the 'Study Process Questionnaire' (Biggs, 1979) and the 'Approaches to Study Inventory (ASI) (Entwistle and Ramsden (1983) and many others. There is general agreement that one of the most significant contextual variables impacting on a student's approach to learning is the method of assessment for that student.

Because students must interpret the demands of the assessment they vary their study approaches, whether consciously or subconsciously, in order to meet these demands. There is a paucity of research exploring postgraduate students' experiences of learning and assessment, particularly with mature students mature students who also combine their part-time studies with work commitments and family. This student maturity, according to Barnett (1990), may effect the direction, pacing, evaluation and assessment of learning.

The research design chosen for the study is phenomenography, a qualitative research method used to explore ways in which participants vary in the manner they conceive the same phenomenon (Marton and Booth, 1997). The sample comprises students (n=12) undertaking one postgraduate programme and the lecturers (n=5) attached to this programme. Data is currently being collected by one-to-one interviews. Preliminary findings will be presented and discussed. The paper will discuss ethical issues encountered is carrying out this study as an insider researcher. It will focus on the suitability and criticisms of the methodology chosen and the learning experiences gained as a doctoral student in carrying out the study to date.

References: Barnett R (1990) The idea of higher education. Open university Press/Society for Research into Higher Education, Buckingham.Biggs J (1979) Individual differences in study processes and the quality of learning outcomes. Higher Education, 8(4), 381-394. Entwistle N and Ramsden P (1983) Understanding student learning. Croom Helm, London. Marton F & Booth S (1997) Learning and awareness. Lawrence Erlbaum, Mahwah, NJ

BEAUMARIS – CHAIR: MATT MAWER
THEME: LITERACIES

1.12   **Lynn Coleman,**
        (1) the Open University, UK
        (2) Cape Peninsula University of Technology, SA

"Flirting with ethnography" Using ethnographic research methodologies in academic literacies research

My recent Masters of Research study sough to explore and describe the academic literacy practices of students completing a vocationally orientated web design and development course at a South African higher education institution. The research proposed a more inclusive conceptualisation of academic literacy to accommodate the multimodal and digital texts produced by students in the course. An academic literacies research perspective was used to frame the study and it therefore accepts an understanding of literacy as being constitutive of the socio-cultural environments and practices in which reading and writing is used (Street, 1995, Gee, 1997 and Barton and Hamilton, 1998). The analysis of the study highlights the primacy of the multimodal text and its influence in shaping the literacy practices in the course, along with the interesting ways in which digital technologies mediate the nature of these literacy practices. In particular the study reveals how the specific socio-cultural realities of the course inform the rather peripheral and contextualised status assigned to academic reading and writing practices.

In keeping with the methodological frameworks espoused by academic literacies researchers (Lillis, 2008), the research study used an ethnographic methodological approach. This presentation offers some personal reflections on the use of ethnographic methodologies within a specific higher education context. In particular I focus on how the choice to use ethnographic methodologies had specific implications for data collection, reactivity, reflexivity and ethics. I note that while the research methodology afforded some interesting and valuable insights into the context and the nature of student literacy practices, this was offset by the personal demands transferred onto the researcher. Ethnographic research required that I developed a high level of personal awareness relating to my role as participant observer, and how this role impacted on the research site and its participants. Novice higher education researchers

interested in ethnographic approaches are therefore challenged to engage in a rather precarious balancing act between the richness of the data that can be unearthed and the introspection and personal change evoked.

1.13   Rob Abbott, University of Brighton, UK

Conceptual Thresholds and Academic Reading

Partly in response to continuing debates around student reading in higher education, this paper evaluates the process of academic reading from the perspective of both the students themselves and their teachers. The paper uses work on threshold concepts (Meyer & Land, 2002) and conceptual thresholds (Wisker, Kiley, & Aiston, 2006) to suggest a number of possible thresholds which are relevant to academic reading. It also takes ideas from studies of academic literacies (Lea & Street, 1998) to suggest that the way in which students read and use their reading differs considerably from one subject area to another.

This paper is based on a study of the reading habits of undergraduate students in three post '92 universities. The study uses semi-structured interviews to question students about how and why they undertake academic reading and evaluates the use they make of this reading in their assessed assignments. The study also talks to university lecturers about why they ask their students to read. It shows there is a considerable difference in the ways in which reading is used across the disciplines. Taking ideas from both Bahktin(1981) and Foucault(1978, 1980) the study also indicates that there are a number of epistemological and ontological thresholds which students need to cross in order to read effectively. These are to do with the sorts of dialogical engagements which students have with the texts they read as well as their beliefs about the authority of the text and their ideas about the relativity of knowledge.

Bibliography: Bakhtin, M. M. (1981). The Dialogic Imagination: Four essays by MM Bakhtin. (M. Holquist, Ed., C. Emmerson & M. Holquist, Trans.). Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press. Foucault, M. (1978). The History of Sexuality, Vol. 1: The Will to Knowledge/La Valonte de Savoir. (R. Hurley, Tran.). London: Penguin Books. Foucault, M. (1980). Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972-1977. (C. Gordon, Ed., C. Gordon, L. Marshall, J. Mepham, & K. Soper, Trans.). New York: Pantheon Books. Lea, M. R., & Street, B. V. (1998). 'Student Writing in Higher Education: An Academic Literacies Approach'. Studies in Higher Education, 23(2), 157-172. Meyer, J. H. F., & Land, R. (2002). 'Threshold concepts and troublesome knowledge: Linkages to ways of thinking and practising within the disciplines'. In C. Rust (Ed.), Improving Student Learning Theory and Practice -10 Years on, Improving Student Learning (Vol. 10). Oxford Brookes University: Oxford Centre for Staff Learning and Development. Wisker, G., Kiley, M., & Aiston, S. (2006). 'Making the Learning Leap: Research Students Crossing Conceptual Thresholds'. In M. Kiley & G. Mullens (Eds.), Quality in Postgraduate Research: Knowledge Creation in Testing Times (pp. 195-201). Canberra: CEDAM The Australian National University.

1.14   Catherine Hutchings, University of Cape Town SA

Exploring transformations within literacy practices – the relationship of referencing and agency in learners at HEIs

This paper draws on evidence provided through written reflections of adult learners coming in to higher education and examines their issues in coming to terms with attributions of voices – of others and their own. My experience as a teacher of writing makes it easy for me to state that the acquisition of referencing skills is a great contributor to the emergence of voice in students' writing. Such skills have a bearing on the identity of learners and of writers in general. In referring certain ideas to certain sources, the writer is able to distinguish the voices of others – and in doing so, provide space for the hearing or the establishment of their individual voices. However, an understanding of the real rationale behind referencing and taking on the techniques required for its conventions often proves a complex and intimidating affair for students. Indeed, it can take a lot of discussion and of practice before students see referencing as an asset in their writing. I am aware of the fear incited within learners by the institution of referencing and of the confusions that are brought about during the process of the acquisition of the techniques of referencing. And that rather than the learner being ensconced within the academic environment through being able to relate to and engage with other voices, and thereby acquiring agency in their writing, issues around referencing can actually serve to alienate them from the academic environment and deter them from their own agency. For example, one of the first things that students tend to pick up on entering the institution is the fact that they are likely to be caught out; if they were caught plagiarising, they could be accused of criminal behaviour and severely punished. This is an alienating issue to confront them on entry to the institution. Immediately, it ensures they don't belong; it sets up a hierarchical distance between

themselves and the established inhabitants of the institution and it threatens their already fragile senses of identity within the environment with being identified as not only outcasts, but criminals. In addition, it can confront established sets of values and beliefs – they have come to the institution to share knowledge – but discover that knowledge is, in fact, owned – and guarded.

My doctoral research explores transformations within literacy practices and learners' identities based on an analysis of narrative reflections written by mature students in a classroom of wider access at a higher educational institution in South Africa. Whilst my larger thesis explores various aspects of such transformations, as evident in their written reflections, this paper focuses on the relationship of agency and the issue of referencing for such students in the academic institution.

CALDICOT – CHAIR: PATRICK BAUGHAN
THEME: WORKING IN HIGHER EDUCATION

1.15   Denise Dear, Cambridge University, UK

ROUNDTABLE

Portfolio academic careers – growing evidence for green shoots of a new academic model
It has been argued that the dominant use of fixed term contracts within UK higher education reduces ability of staff to perform effectively, severely limits career development as well as level of commitment to the organization
 (Barnes and O'Hara,1999).

Whilst many HE staff groups are now subject to fixed term contracts, the effects have been most widely documented with regard to research staff (Akerlind,2009). Research staff represent a valuable resource feeding innovation into the global economy, either as technology or in knowledge transfer. They also represent a highly-skilled population often with at least 6 years of formal higher education followed by several (sometimes over 20) years of post-doctoral research. In terms of UK investment, capturing and sustaining the skills of these individuals would seem a sensible option - not just for economic reasons but for the knowledge base itself. However, balancing the intrinsic uncertainty of research funding and the needs for individuals to maintain an income is the issue of much debate (Thrift, 2009).

This paper presents evidence of an increasing new model of portfolio academic careers where individuals have sustained their research skills and reputation by playing to their strengths and skills as the funding climate around them changes. It discusses the importance of developing not just generic transferable skills but academic transferable skills and how to highlight and develop these in a rapidly changing and increasingly mobile employment market. Case studies will be presented drawn from the experienced researcher community at a leading University and avenues to building awareness of the value of such individuals to the academic community, the development of their academic identity and the growing evidence for this new academic practice model will be discussed.

The session will be organized so as to engage the audience in helping to provide input into building a framework for portfolio academic career development. This will be done by use of small break-out groups who will contribute their own experience/observations by:
a)identifying key activities and behaviours which might be associated with portfolio academic careers;
b) identification of the positive and negative considerations with respect to the research outputs and/or the working environment and
c) consideration of methods of embedding this within communities as an 'acceptable' form of academic practice.
This will be followed by a short plenary where ideas will be collated and a preliminary framework model formed.

References
Akerlind, G (2009) Post-doctoral research positions as a preparation for an academic career International Journal for Researcher Development Vol1 84-96 Barnes, N and O'Hara S (1999) Managing academics on short term contracts Higher Education Quarterly Vol 53 229-239. Thrift, N (2009) UK research careers must swap pinch points for portfolios International Journal for Researcher Development Vol 1 1-3

1.16   Amanda Moynihan, Dublin Institute of Technology, Ireland

ROUNDTABLE

Institutional Type and Changes in Higher Education: What Impact on the Academy?

Opinion on the impact of changes in higher education (HE) on the academic profession has varied over time, from believing that faculty "function without basic change or even much consciousness of the forces that buffet the university" (Altbach, 1997), p.315) to contending that "academics are bound to experience substantial changes when higher education as a whole undergoes major transformation" (Locke and Teichler, 2007), p.7). Opinion further varies from accepting that institutional type influences the impact of changes in HE on faculty (Enders, 1999) to finding that faculty "display much less sense of connection with their academic departments or their institutions than they did in the 1992 survey" (Schmitdt, 2009). Whether or not institutional type is a significant factor in the impact of changes in HE on the Irish faculty is the main question addressed in this research.

The Irish academic profession is thought to be experiencing the same changing conditions as those being reported internationally (Killeavy, 2004). The dominant discourse includes increased accountability (Altbach, 2000), increased workload (Enders and de Weert, 2004) and a decline in faculty morale (Enders, 1999). The changes in faculty conditions have been attributed to massification (Coaldrake and Stedman, 1999), diversification, globalisation (Adams, 2000) and to wider socio-cultural trends characteristic of postmodernism (Bauman, 1997) whereby faculty function within performative systems of accountability (Kolsaker, 2008) in an environment characterised by a 'plurality and multi-vocality' that is not comparable, not measurable by the same yardstick and resists consensus or the imposition of an elaborate pattern (Bauman, 1997).

Following the Carnegie international survey of the academic profession (Boyer et al., 1994), which did not include Ireland, Enders and Teichler (1997) focused on the data concerning subgroups of academics including the subgroup of academic staff at 'other' HEIs (defined as non-university colleges, mostly without graduate education) (Enders and Teichler, 1997). They found faculty in 'other' HEIs were less satisfied, had higher teaching loads, worked less hours and were less prepared to work over the conventional working hours, they spent less time on research and published much less (Enders and Teichler, 1997). In Ireland, HE is operated as a binary system with 14 IoTs and 7 Universities, but Irish HEIs have experienced some mission drift (Skilbeck, 2001) to the degree that a simple binary classification is no longer reliably illustrative of the HEIs or their faculty. Whether the changes in conditions, functions, roles, values and even identities experienced by the heterogenous Irish faculty are influenced by their institutional type is in question.

This paper, which forms part of the literature review of my PhD, will firstly apply the postmodern concepts of 'liquid' (Bauman, 2001) HEIs and a heterogenous faculty to an examination of the initial baseline data gathered from Irish HEIs, government agencies, and external stakeholders. Secondly, the research instruments, including a questionnaire and survey interviews with academics and management on both sides of the binary divide, will be proposed and discussed. Lastly, a Foucauldian model of renegotiation of faculty roles and identity between technologies of power and practices of self will be proposed in anticipation of the data findings.

References:
ADAMS,D. (2000) Views of academic work. Teacher Development, 4,65-78.
ALTBACH,P.G. (1997) An international academic crisis? The American professoriate in comparative perspective. Daedulus, 126, 315-338
ALTBACH, P.G (2000)The Changing Academnic Workplace: Comparative Perspectives, Center for International Higher Education, Lynch School of Education, Boston College Centre for International Higher Education Massachusetts.
BAUMAN, Z (1997) Universities: Old, New and Different. IN SMITH, A.&WEBSTER,F. (Eds.)The Postmodern University?, SRHE.
BAUMAN, Z. (2001) Liquid Modernity, Vambridge, Polity Press.
BOUYER, E.L., ALTBACH, P.G. & WHITELAW, M.J. (1994) The academic profession: An international perspective, Princeton, NJ, Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.
COALDRAKE, P. & STEDMAN, L. (1999) Academic worki in the Twenty First Century. IN HIGHER EDUCATION DIVISION DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, T.A.Y.A. 9Ed.).
ENDERS, J. (1999) Crisis? What crisis? The academic professions in the 'knowledge' society, Higher Education, 38,71-81.
ENDERS, J. & DE WEERT, E. (Eds.) (2004) The International Attractiveness of the Academic Workplace in Europe, Frankfurt am Main, Germany, Gewerkschaft Erzieung und Wissenschaft.
ENDERS, J. & TEICHLER, U. (1997) A victimof their own success? Employment and working conditions of academic staff in comparative perspective. Higher Education Policy, 34, 347-372. KILLEAVY, M. (2004) The Academic Workplace in Ireland, in The International Attractiveness of

the Academic Workplace in Europe. IN ENDERS, J. & DE WEERT, E. (Eds.) Frankfurt am Main, Germany. Gewerkschaft Erzieung und Wissenschaft.
KOLSAKER, A. (2008) Academic professionalism in the managerialist era: a study of English universities. Studies in Higher Education, 33, 513-525.
LOCKE, W. & TEICHLER, U. (Eds.) (2007) The Changing Conditions for Academic Work and Careers in Select Countries, Kassel, International Centre for Higher Education Research Kassel.
SCHMITDT, P. (2009) U.S. Faculty Members Feel a Lack of Clout, International Survey Finds. The Chronicle of Higher Education. Washington D.C.
SKILBECK, M. (2001) A University Challenged A Review of International Trends and Issues with Particular Reference to Ireland.

1.17 **Anne Craven,- (1) Institute of Education, University of London**
(2) Goldsmiths, University of London, UK

Managing University Strategy in World of Change: Challenges, Responsibilities and Opportunities

Universities of today are strongly affected by major changes such as globalisation, the emergence of 'the knowledge society', and even the nature of knowledge created and processed on university level. In developing its strategy, a university must take account of these and other broad changes and the opportunities and challenges thus arising, and also consider its responsibilities towards the wider society.

Strategy can be a significant tool in the development of the university as an organisation, helping it to make good use of opportunities, respond to various challenges, mitigate risks, and progress towards a continuous cycle of self-correction, advancement and achievement. Successful strategic plans need to be functional on both institutional and departmental levels, and adaptable enough still to be valid when external circumstances are affected by changes in legal, political or economic frameworks. A forward-propelling strategy also needs to be based on the values of the institution as well as underpinned by the unique capabilities of its staff.

In my paper, I discuss factors relevant for the formation and development of university strategy in the face of opportunities and threats prevalent in today's rapidly changing and internationalised society. I approach my subject from two standpoints: that of an MBA Higher Education Management student (Institute of Education, University of London) exploring the issue from a more theoretical angle, and that of a practitioner with a 'hybrid' background as an administrator-manager and as an academic, who as Departmental Administrator (Goldsmiths, University of London) is constantly marrying up institutional and departmental level strategies in her daily work.

The paper is a reflective literature study, and the key authors on whose texts I draw include David Watson, Michael Shattock, Ronald Barnett, Henry Etzkowitz and Jon Nixon. I shall also discuss case studies highlighting strategic paths taken by various universities. I am focusing on the field of higher education within the United Kingdom whilst recognising that many of the issues that I raise are topical in other university environments also. I mainly explore strategy on the level of the whole organisation but also examine the interaction of institutional strategy with staff and process management on more local, departmental levels. In my presentation, I particularly concentrate on the intersection of strategy and ethics within various relationships between the university and its 'customers' – notably in the ever-changing arena of 'third stream' activity, where the stakeholders range from industrial collaborators to civic and community partnerships, and also to the Government. Some of my key themes centre on the underlying values reflected in the actions taken by university leaders and managers. These values not only indicate useful directions for strategic planning, but also provide a frame of reference for the continuous monitoring, reviewing and adaptation of strategic plans.