Title of paper: Staff Development for networked learning: learning from staff and students.

Authors: Elisabet Weedon, Liz Broumley and Colleen MacLean

Institution: Learn Unit, Reflective Practice, University of the Highlands and Islands Millennium Institute, based at Perth College

Session type: Individual research paper

Name and address of contact person: Dr. Elisabet Weedon, Faculty of CSP, Perth College, Crieff Road, Perth, PH1 2NX

Telephone: 01738 877464

Email: Elizabet.Weedon@perth.uhi.ac.uk

Number of words: 478 (excluding references)

Five key words: Staff development, networked learning materials, online teaching, Kolb cycle, sociocultural theory

Proposal: Individual research paper

Staff Development for networked learning: learning from staff and students.

*Elisabet Weedon, Liz Broumley and Colleen MacLean, Learn Unit, Reflective Practice, University of the Highlands and Islands Millennium Institute at Perth College*

**Abstract.** The aim of this paper is to examine the staff development needs of experienced lecturers who become involved in development of online materials and in tutoring online and, perhaps most importantly, the role that

they may play in future staff development.  Recent developments, supported by QAA and HMI initiatives in 'quality enhancement' encourages dissemination of good practice; however, the nature of dissemination of good practice is not necessarily clearly understood.  Does imparting information on good practice impact on others' practice?  Some argue that it is not feasible to assume that being told of somebody else's good practice will necessarily impact on your own practice (Cowan, 2001, personal communication).  As the use and therefore development of online courses increases (see e.g. Ryan et al, 2000)  the need for sound staff development will also increase.  There is therefore a need to examine the type of staff development that has been provided for developers/tutors and also to consider the impact of this staff development has had on the individual and the implications of this for future staff development.

This paper will use, as a starting point, a case study of one practitioner's experience to explore her cycle of development from the development of one module, to the tutoring of that module and the subsequent development of a further module.  The input, both formal and informal of this lecturer's knowledge and experience to the development of skills and understanding in other members of staff will also be examined.  The Kolb cycle (Kolb, 1984) will be used to examine the development of this lecturer.  In addition we will explore the usefulness of concepts from sociocultural theory (e.g. Wertsch, 1985) to consider the interactions at specific points of the Kolb cycle.

To conclude, different models of staff development will be considered.  It will be suggested, that informal contacts can potentially be a powerful mechanism for staff development as it is linked to peer support and is often offered on a 'needs' basis but may only be one-to-one.  This is in contrast with formal staff development which is usually based on identified needs and aims to reach a larger population; however, in doing so may not identify the most important individual needs.

The paper will thus:
- Outline the background and setting of this case study
- Overview and report the findings of the case study
- Consider a theoretical/conceptual framework for exploring an individual's development
- Explore the specific role of staff development in development
- Identify some issues for debate in terms of informal versus formal staff development and consider the feasibility of 'blurring' the boundaries between staff developers and lecturing staff and relate this to developments in other institutions.

References:

Cowan, J.  2001  Is quality enhancement an unhelpful concept?  Unpublished discussion document.  Personal communication

Kolb, D. Kolb, D.A. 1984  *Experiential learning: Experience as the source of learning and development.*  New Jersey, Prentice Hall

Ryan, S., Scott, B., Freeman, H. & Patel, D.  2000 *The virtual university: the internet and resource-based learning.*  Londoon, Kogan.

Wertsch, J. 1985 *Vygotsky and the social formation of mind*.  Massachusetts, Harvard University Press