

FORUM

ENHANCING LEARNING AND TEACHING



Teaching as performance

2015 Learning and Teaching Conference: call for papers
Use of performance in discipline teaching
TRANSMISSION News, events

FORUM

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For a large print, black and white text version, please contact learning-and-teaching-forum@york.ac.uk

NEWS

Update from Disability Services

Disability Services provides support, advice and guidance for current and prospective students with disabilities. We are part of Student Support Services and are based in Sally Baldwin Block B. We work with departments to facilitate adjustments so that students who have a disability are able to fully participate in the student learning experience.

Departmental disability contacts

We organised an appreciative enquiry event earlier in the year for the departmental disability contacts and representatives to obtain their feedback as part of an ongoing project to review how disabled students are supported in departments. The outcomes from the event are central to our aims and aspirations of moving forward and the future planning of the service. We are working with the departmental contacts to put into place an action plan which will include a resource pack and training to enhance the service provided.

Student Support Plans

In response to feedback from departments Disability Services introduced Student Support Plans (SSP) this year. The SSP is a summary of the information about how a student's disability affects him/her and highlights

the actions recommended to support the student within the department. It is based on the details held by Disability Services and will be updated when necessary. This is passed to the departmental disability contact.

Allocation of student cases

Following the appointment of an additional disability adviser we are changing the way we allocate student cases and in line with the increasing use of cognate disciplines we will now allocate according to clusters.

An adviser has been assigned to each of the clusters:

- James Browne – Arts and Humanities
- Claire Shanks – Science and Medicine
- Katie Emsley – Social Sciences

By allocating cases in this way we can get to know departments better and vice versa. For the moment this applies to mixed disability only, we are currently undertaking a data analysis to see if the same system will work for Specific Learning Disability (SPLD) students. So please make a note of the disability contact for your department and feel free to get in touch.

For more information of any of these areas please contact us at disabilityservices@york.ac.uk.

Taught Masters Special Interest Group (SIG)

The Taught Masters SIG provides an open forum for academic staff and support staff involved in taught masters programmes to discuss significant issues which affect or contribute to the teaching, learning and overall student experience. To facilitate this discussion and promote greater shared understanding of issues, the SIG regularly invites members of SMG or relevant university offices to the meeting to present information, clarify strategy and engage in discussion with the group.

The group will meet at the following times:

- Autumn: Monday 8 December 2014 (week 11), 12.30-2.00pm
- Spring: Monday 9 March 2015 (week 10), 12.30-2.00pm
- Summer: Monday 22 June 2015 (week 11), 12.30-2.00pm

All meetings are taking place in room BS/008, Berrick Saul Building, and lunch is provided.

If you would be interested in joining the group, please contact **Janet Barton**, janet.barton@york.ac.uk, ext 2155.

Editorial

The other day I received the first draft of this new issue of *Forum* magazine and I found myself drawn into the portal depicted on the cover page. This portal was leading to an immense amphitheatre full of students and lecturers from many different disciplines.

There were two main areas: “*home team*” and “*visitors*”: it appeared to be an interdisciplinary exchange of ideas where all the players were interacting.

I decided to visit the “*home team*” first.

The group I approached was busy learning how to perform some sort of contemporary dance with beautiful visual effects and very unusual music. At the end of the first part of the performance, Michael Brockhurst, from the Biology Department and Becs Andrews, visiting researcher at the Music Department at the University of York, explained to me that the purpose of the dance was to show, in a visual way so as to reach a wider audience, the evolution of infectious diseases.

Just on the opposite side of the stage, I noticed students practising postures and vocal warm-ups while being coached on how to improve their confidence at presentation. David Howard from the Electronics Department and Francis Newton, a technician collaborating with the Music Department at the University of York, pointed out that healthy voice use and confidence in performance have a big impact on the effectiveness of any lecture or presentation.

Very close to them, Paul Roberts from the Centre for English Language and Darren Reed from the Sociology Department at the University of York, were acting as messengers between different groups of students from different backgrounds and cultures: they had set up very clever “contact zones” where students could play freely and genuinely their unique identities using performative acts and

language as ways to express themselves as well as tools to break barriers and interact.

All of a sudden I heard a very elegant sound of baroque music coming from another part of the amphitheatre. Some students in that group appeared to be studying old music books coming from an historical library. When I approached the source of music, Peter Seymour, from the Music Department at the University of York, told me that the concert was made so special by the fact his students not only learn how to perform and are encouraged to express their own interpretation but they also allow their understanding of primary sources of music (for example original manuscripts) to be in continuous evolution.

It was then that my attention was captivated by another gorgeous piece of music characterised by a combination of sounds that were contributing to a very harmonious symphony of unexpected but beautiful sounds. When I realised that I never heard anything like that before, Roger Marsh, from the Music Department at the University of York, explained to me that he tries to offer his students a wider perspective while exposing them to areas of music they have never encountered before and showing them approaches to performance and music composition that are totally new to them.

I then moved to have a chat with the “*visitors*” while feeling extremely grateful to them for sharing their ideas with us. Besides, their enactments were extremely entertaining while being informative and educational.

One of the groups was led by Mike Clifford, from the Engineering Department at the University of Nottingham, who was acting as a famous engineer from the past as if he had just been transported across eras using a complex time machine. He then explained to me that he uses storytelling and acting in order to explain complex topics to his students and to enhance students’ engagement in his lectures.

In the other group, Ian Turner, from the Biology Department at the University of Derby, was busy organising a pantomime where he and his students were playing a barbarian horde fighting against soldiers to take over their castle. Ian then explained to me that they were enacting the way the immune system works.

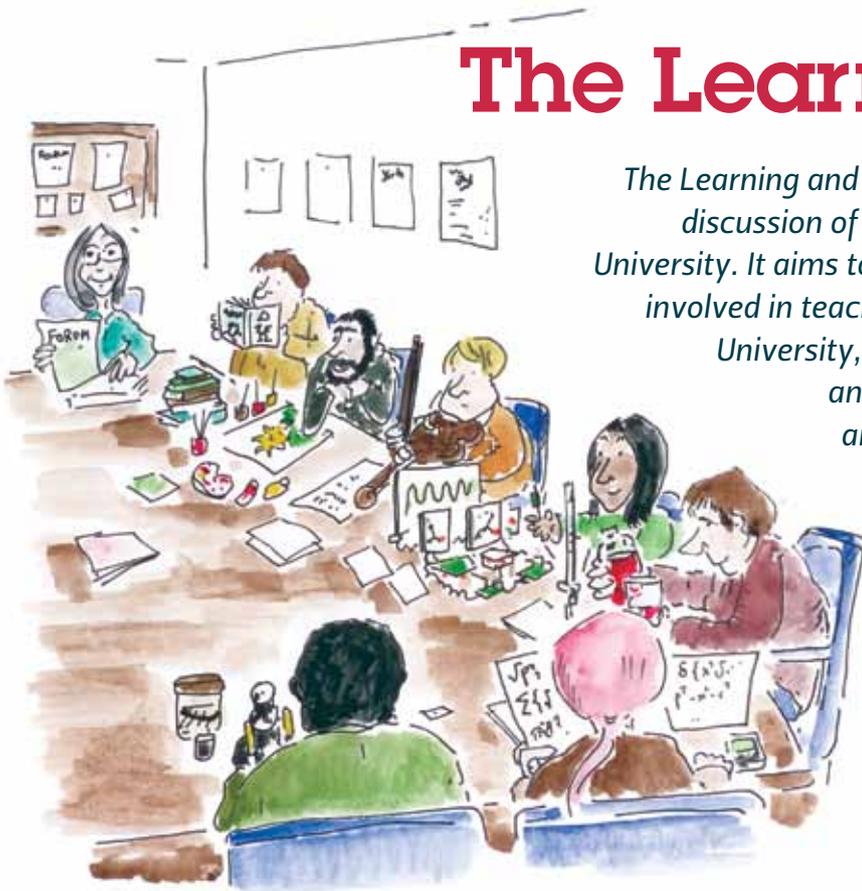
Ladies and gentlemen, enjoy the show!!!!

Paola Zerilli
Editor



The Learning and Teaching Forum

The Learning and Teaching Forum is a staff-led forum for discussion of learning and teaching issues across the University. It aims to bring together and support colleagues involved in teaching and supporting learning across the University, and nurture and disseminate creativity and good practice. Its activities include an annual learning and teaching conference and a series of lunchtime workshops each term and also this magazine.



2014/15 workshops will be on the three key thematic strands of (1) Technology in Practice, (2) Enhancing Engagement and (3) Key Skills in the Curriculum. The Technology in Practice strand will explore the use of technology in learning and teaching with an emphasis on sharing good practice. The Enhancing Engagement strand will focus on ways to engage and motivate students with their own learning. The Key Skills in the Curriculum will provide an opportunity to explore topics repeatedly requested, such as assessment of group work and teaching research methods. The autumn term workshops are now open for registrations.

Autumn series:

Workshops run from 12.30-2.00pm in Heslington Hall, with lunch available from 12.15pm.

- Wednesday 22 October 2014 (week 4)
Enhancing engagement: **'Bums on Seats' versus 'Hearts and Minds': questions of student attendance and engagement**
- Monday 3 November 2014 (week 6)
Technology in practice: **Making video for active learning**
- Monday 17 November 2014 (week 8)
Key skills in the curriculum: **Teaching research methods: engaging students in an inquiry-based research process**
- If you want to find out more please see the website, <http://bit.ly/1eS2S7P>, or if have any suggestions for future workshops, please drop us a line, learning-and-teaching-forum@york.ac.uk.

Annual Learning and Teaching Conference

The 2014 conference, attended by over 160 delegates, was on the theme of

Committee membership – get involved!

Forum is driven by a small committee comprising academic and learning and support staff who meet twice a term to plan the work of Forum. New members to the committee are usually recruited in the summer and we are always interested to hear from people who would like to get involved with the activities of the committee with a view to joining. Please do get in touch if you'd like to find out more, learning-and-teaching-forum@york.ac.uk.

Magazine articles – share your practice

The next issue of Forum, due out at the beginning of the Spring Term 2015, is on the theme of the impact of teaching. If you would like to contribute an article highlighting an example of good practice

please do get in touch. We also welcome news items, 'letters to the Editor' relating to past articles or current hot topics, and one-off articles on areas of general interest, good practice or controversy. Please contact us, learning-and-teaching-forum@york.ac.uk if you have something to offer.

FORUM workshop series 2014/15

FORUM run a series of lunchtime workshops each term, open to all colleagues involved in teaching and supporting learning, including postgraduates who teach. The workshops are run by colleagues from across the university and delivered in a variety of formats. Formats include a speaker providing background on a learning and teaching topic and sharing their experience and also interactive sessions providing opportunities to explore using new technology and resources. In all workshops participants have the chance to contribute to the discussion and find out about different practices from across the university.

Following a review of feedback collected from previous workshops and the Learning and Teaching Conference, the



hing Forum

'Thinking outside the module box'. The VC, Professor Koen Lamberts, opened the day, taking questions on the vision for learning and teaching at York. The keynote address was given by Dr Mitch Waterman from the University of Leeds exploring assessment and how it aligns to feedback and marking criteria. A variety of workshops were run by York colleagues exploring the conference theme, including topics such as embedding employability in the curriculum, aiming to build a York graduate and skills progression. In addition, 24 posters on current learning and teaching projects across campus were on display during lunch and tea. Feedback has been very positive with people appreciating the chance to find out about initiatives in the university: 'An excellent opportunity to see the diverse projects going on elsewhere'; 'Interesting and informative day'; 'Really looking forward to the next one'. Particular thanks must go to Janet Barton for her invaluable work in ensuring the smooth running of the event.

Next year's conference, *One size does not fit all*, will take place in Week 9 of the summer term: Wednesday 10th June 2015.

The theme will explore how learning and teaching can contribute to all students reaching their potential. It will examine the implications of diversifying delivery of programmes and how students are supported in the process of achieving their potential. A key theme will be the way in which programme design can address the range of student ability and levels of student engagement. The conference will also focus on the ways in which inclusivity and diversity can be integrated into the curricula and teaching.

Proposals for discussion papers, workshops and poster presentations are invited.

The call for contributions is now open and further details can be found on the website <http://bit.ly/1tYHdWJ>.

New Learning and Teaching Forum website

The Learning and Teaching Forum will shortly have its own website at <http://yorkforum.org>. Here you'll find a blog, information about the committee, details of our annual conference, our magazine, and news of upcoming and previous events and allow you to join the debate.

NEWS

Employability Tutorial wins Blackboard Catalyst Award

Careers has won a top award at the 2014 Blackboard Catalyst Awards for its online Employability Tutorial.

The international Student Impact Award recognises the success of the Careers' Employment Tutorial – a self-study resource – in increasing student engagement with Careers through appointments and events.

Blackboard honours those who push the boundaries of their educational programmes and technology in order to deliver innovative and effective learning experiences that successfully increase levels of student engagement or retention.

Development of the tutorial on the University's Blackboard Learn VLE began in 2011 with the goal of better preparing students for the world of work. It is intended to increase student engagement with Careers and improve graduate employment. It also supports the University's Student Employability Strategy with the vision of ensuring that "every York student has access to, engages with, and benefits from, the highest standard of support for their personal and career development".

It has been used by 15,000 students and has doubled the number of students engaging with Careers. The average user attends 13 per cent more appointments



and 60 per cent more careers events than a non-user.

Chris Milson, Online Training Manager for Careers, who was responsible for implementing the Employability Tutorial, said: "The tutorial is supported by academics and the University, and successfully encourages students to think about the skills and experiences they need for their future."

Funding opportunities 2014/15

Rapid Response Funding is available this academic year, in the form of grants of up to £3,000 in support of small-scale short-term projects, initiatives or purchases to enhance the quality of learning and teaching by addressing a clearly-identified need or issue.

Funding is limited, and grants will be awarded on a first-come, first-served basis. Departments in a stronger financial position may be asked to fund initiatives from their own resources. Although there is no limit to the number of submissions a particular department may make, consideration will be given to the equitable distribution of funds within the University. Proposals should promote cross departmental sharing where relevant.

All members of staff involved in delivering or supporting learning and teaching are eligible to apply. There is a short application form which can be submitted electronically at any time, and decisions will be made within two weeks. For further information, see www.york.ac.uk/staff/teaching/funding-and-resources/funding

NEWS

Vice-Chancellor Teaching Awards 2014

Congratulations to colleagues who have been awarded Vice-Chancellor's Teaching Awards this year. The scheme recognises and rewards colleagues (academics, learning support staff, teaching 'teams' and postgraduates/postdocs who teach) who demonstrate excellence in teaching and/or learning support at York.

- Mr Matt Cornock, Web and VLE Co-ordinator, Social Policy and Social Work
- Dr Paul Genever, Reader, Department of Biology
- Dr Zoe Handley, Lecturer, Department of Education
- Miss Kate Horner, PGWT, Department of Chemistry
- Dr Nick Jones, Teaching Fellow, Department of Philosophy
- Miss Alison Leonard, PGWT, Department of Archaeology
- Professor John Schofield, Head of Department, Department of Archaeology
- Dr Jacco Thijssen, Reader, Department of Economics and Related Studies
- Dr Gavin Thomas, Senior Lecturer, Department of Biology
- Dr Nick Wood, Teaching Fellow, Department of Chemistry
- Dr Stephanie Wynne-Jones, Lecturer, Department of Archaeology

New Academic Misconduct Policy launched

From September 2014, the University of York will implement a new Academic Misconduct Policy, with associated guidelines and procedures for all programmes of study. It is hoped that the new policy will increase the level of institution-wide consistency and fairness in the treatment of misconduct. It also aims to ease the burden of dealing with misconduct cases for departments, staff and students. Moreover, the new policy shall bring our institution up to date with the changing context of misconduct in higher education and address learning needs related to academic misconduct.

There are several key differences from the previous misconduct policy which are worthy of attention. These include:

- the different types of misconduct specified
- two new offences: *commission* and *incorporation* and *solicitation*
- a new approach to investigating and adjudicating misconduct cases at the cluster rather than the departmental level.

In order to understand the full implications of this policy for you, your department and your students, please ensure you familiarise yourself with the full policy document at: <http://bit.ly/1pKPHxp>.

By providing a balance between supporting learning and penalising misconduct, this policy will strengthen our students' understanding of academic integrity and contribute to their attainment of academic excellence.

If you have any questions about the policy, please send enquiries to sca@york.ac.uk.

Staff celebrated at the Excellence in Teaching and Supervision Awards

The 2nd annual Excellence in Teaching and Supervision Awards were held in partnership with the University of York, on the 11th June 2014, in the Lounge Bar.

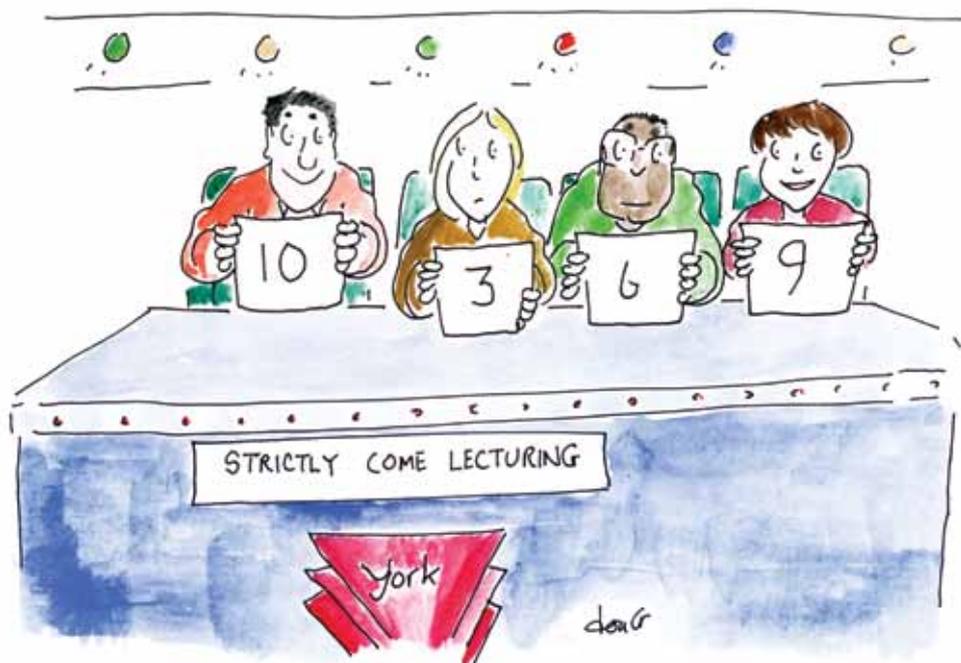
This event is a student-led celebration of excellence from across the University. 525 nominations were submitted by 402 individual students for 285 unique nominees. This is a record level of engagement, and shows the value that students place upon their education and the outstanding members of staff involved. A panel of judges drawn from the University, YUSU and current students, then awarded across 11 categories based on the strength of nominations.

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor Prof. John Robinson, opened the event, which was hosted by the YUSU Academic Officer, Dan Whitmore. Awards were then presented by staff and students, to a wide variety of staff drawn from

across the University. Amongst the winners was Norman Yeo (Language and Linguistic Science) who was awarded the Inspirational Lecturer award. When asked to nominate him, his students went into great detail, "His ability to explain and engage students is phenomenal. His enthusiasm for the subject naturally inspires us as students".

The Vice-Chancellor closed the evening, remarking the event was "one of the best I've been to since I started here". Professor Lamberts also presented the award for the Unsung hero of Non-Academic Staff to Heather Cook (Maths) for her contribution, not just to the department, but to developing the Maths Society.

The event was kindly supported by Teach First, and a Teach First Student Ambassador, Alice Shaw Ingham, presented the Teach First Promoting Employability Award to Daniel Ungar (Biology).



To lecture is to perform

David Howard and Francis Newton discuss the importance of performance in presentation.

Whenever we stand in front of a group of people to present information, the reception of information, active engagement and overall interest in the subject will, we believe, be enhanced, if the presentation itself is a performance. The notion of performing should not be restricted to public events in theatres, concert venues and opera houses where we go to enjoy a performance that engages, enthralls and entertains; our own academic experiences in presenting, whether in lectures, workshops or tutorials, should be striving to capture some of these elements of good performance as a matter of course.

Not every academic is destined to be a stage performer, but it is perfectly possible to adopt some of the key skills adopted by professionals as an important element of academic presentations. In particular, giving some attention to voice production including healthy voice use as well as how a lecturer is perceived by the audience can make an enormous difference to the overall effectiveness of a presentation session.

The voice

The voice is something most people take for granted until something goes wrong with it, such as a sore throat, partial

lack of vocal control when 'on stage' or complete inability to speak. There are some simple things that can be done to alleviate the chances of these and other issues occurring in practice, and it involves some simple postural exercises, vocal warm-ups, greater use of pitch and loudness changes, voice projection and clear articulation of speech sounds. When this is coupled with healthy voice practices, the voice becomes a key element of the performance that can be employed in a positive manner to enhance the overall audience experience.

The presentation

It takes more effort and experience to make an improvement on the presentation itself, but it is not impossible. Dealing with performance nerves, awkwardness of being out at the front and a sensation of 'clamming up' when in front of an audience who are staring your way expectantly, directly confronts a presenter's confidence. Knowing what to do with eyes (where to look), hands (what not to do with them), posture and position gives a performer something to concentrate on, and all of these can be used to good advantage when on stage. In academia, the (paying) audience is there because they want to learn and the lecturer is the expert in the subject that they have come to learn about. We start our lectures at a distinct advantage, which can, providing

the lecturer is convinced of it, provide an immediate, powerful and inspiring (to lecturer and audience) confidence boost.

The University offers courses in healthy voice use and performance that we (David Howard and Francis Newton as 'Voice Matters') present, in which these and other areas are covered.

David M Howard is Head of the Department of Electronics and he holds a Personal Chair in Music Technology. His teaching and research relates to audio in music and voice with particular reference to the analysis and synthesis of the human singing and speaking voice. David can be contacted on david.howard@york.ac.uk.



Francis Newton trained first as a navigator in the RAF, then as a classical actor, working with the Bristol Old Vic and other theatre companies, and later as an audio engineer. He worked for many years as the technician in the music department at the University of York.



Vocal confidence is not just for lectures, it is for life.

Using storytelling & drama in engineering lectures

Dr Mike Clifford, University of Nottingham, explains how he uses performance to enhance engagement in engineering lectures.

It's 9am on a cold, wet February morning. You're an engineering student sitting in a large, rather drab lecture theatre, waiting for the first lecture of the day to start, which has the uninspiring title, "The History of Technology". The lecturer hasn't even showed up yet. You're wondering if it was worth getting out of bed.

All of a sudden, there's an announcement over the PA – "Ladies and Gentlemen, good morning and welcome to Professional Studies. Please give a warm welcome to today's guest lecturer, Sir Isambard Kingdom Brunel!" The door at the back of the room opens, and a man, barely recognisable as the module convener enters, dressed in a frock coat, with an impressive stovepipe hat. The lifeless lecture theatre becomes a real theatre – "Brunel" begins by getting everyone to stand up and join in with the drama. He shares stories about other

famous engineers – names that you've heard of, but not really thought about their inventions or what drove them to their technological breakthroughs. You're glad you got up after all.

Dynamic lecturing

I started using drama and storytelling in my teaching early on in my career as a lecturer after reviewing some existing practice and literature on the use of performance techniques in the post-compulsory education sector and creative approaches to teaching and learning. My approach sets out to reclaim the lecture as a dynamic teaching tool and to engage students by arousing curiosity, generating suspense, a sense of occasion and raising expectation that the lecture would be worth attending. I see storytelling as an entry point to introduce complex topics such as sustainability as well as a means of supporting the needs of visual learners as well as those with shorter attention spans. It's not simply about entertainment – there needs to be careful consideration to the link between the costume/story/drama to the module learning outcomes.

I've used the approach to good effect in all the modules that I deliver, from telling anecdotes about the creators of numerical methods to break up the monotony of

pages of equations, to recreating a gunfight that occurred in Tombstone Arizona in 1881 to demonstrate the ballistic properties of textiles (no students or lecturers have been harmed in the lecture theatre to date).

Feedback from students on the rather unorthodox approach makes reference to "making it interesting", "engaging", "fun" and helping students to see the "benefit of turning up to lectures". Several students also make comments about me: "the lecturer enjoyed lecturing on this module", "he actually enjoys it a lot", "he's interested in the topic himself which shows and I think that's the difference". The stories / dramas "break the monotony with him being theatrical and all exciting" making "a potentially very boring subject into a gripping one", and memorable "the funny picture always sticks in your head".

For more information and a clip from the Brunel lecture, see:
<https://dspace.lboro.ac.uk/dspace-jspui/handle/2134/8649>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aj54bQp2Wfl>



Dr Mike Clifford is an Associate Professor in the Faculty of Engineering at the University of Nottingham.

His research interests are in combustion, biomass briquetting, cookstove design, natural fibre composites and other appropriate technologies. In 2009, he was voted "engineering lecturer of the year" by the Higher Education Academy's Engineering Subject Centre for his innovative teaching methods involving costume, drama, poetry and storytelling. Mike can be contacted on mike.clifford@nottingham.ac.uk.



Lecture theatre pantomime

Dr Ian Turner, University of Derby, explains how he uses the lecture room as a stage to enhance learning.

PROLOGUE

Pantomime as an entertainment and art form originates in Greece and came to fashion in the ancient theatres of Rome during the reign of Emperor Augustus. Pantomime has been part of English entertainment since the 18th century Harlequinade and the traditional fairy tale pantomimes of the 19th Century. Today pantomime remains as a form of theatrical entertainment, traditionally at Christmas time usually based on a fairy tale or nursery story that incorporates song, dance, buffoonery, slapstick, and audience participation.

ACT ONE: Pantomime in higher education

Lecture theatre pantomime (LTP) is one of my approaches to learning that uses the lecture room as a stage and uses a range of learning styles and approaches including role play, analogy and props to create a buoyant learning environment to enhance students understanding.

Lecture theatre pantomime (LTP) has been used to educate students in a wide range of contexts, an example is in the teaching of an area of genetics called the 'central dogma'. LTP delivers material in a dynamic 'live' fashion. The pantomime involves simple props such as pegs, washing lines, paper plates and costumes (builder's hats) with the lecturer playing the role of key proteins in the central dogma process. The LTP is supported



Dr Turner demonstrating principles of the 'central dogma' using a lecture theatre pantomime based approach. Picture taken by Matt Howcroft, University of Derby.



It's not relevant to the lecture but it gets the students' attention

by the static visualizer (pipe cleaners to represent DNA molecules) and traditional PowerPoint's. The session even involves the demonstration of the orientation of the repeat unit in a DNA molecule via a handstand (with assistance).

LTP is also used in a range of other contexts including the immune system. In this LTP a fictitious analogous role play of the invasion of a barbarian horde (pathogen) on a castle (the human body) guarded by soldiers (phagocytes) and scientist (lymphocytes) are used. Each component of the immune system fits into the analogy eg Dendritic or Antigen Presenting Cells are 'soldiers' looking to capture rather than kill the enemy.

Student testimony shows that LTP has a lasting and transformative impact on the students learning experience and energises them for their whole degrees. It takes HE science and opens it up to learners using a simple technique.

INTERVAL

"Best lecturer I've ever had. The way you teach is very engaging, the delivery makes the topics seem more logical, easier to understand, and therefore more interesting.... Your enthusiasm and passion for your work transfers to your students when you teach, that is what more people need to achieve." LE Graduate in Biology

"I don't think you know how influential

you have been to my University career and my future.... I owe just about everything to you. I think your sessions are interactive and informative and you deliver with such flair and enthusiasm .. [your] sessions have made me sit up, listen, be inspired and have the desire to be a better student and scientist" AM Graduate in Chemical Biology

ACT TWO: Strengths of LTP

LTP is viewed extremely positively by students. In an end of module (central dogma example) feedback sheet (two year aggregate) 94.90% of students rated the delivery style and LTP lectures as 'very positive' or 'positive'. Very pleasingly (whilst acknowledging other variables) there has also been a statistical significant improvement in student exam performance on 'central dogma' questions in the years since LTP has been adopted. A strength of LTP is that it is inclusive and can transcend language and cultural barriers to learning. LTP focuses on the core understanding of the process or the concept (the pantomime or analogy) using a simple technique rather than the terminology or specifics. These are fundamentally important but very difficult to learn without the core understanding.

LTP also helps to break down stereotypes that may exist about 'lecturers' and help to create a connection between the learners and lecturer. The inclusivity of LTP means that it accommodates the full diversity of student learning styles. Using Fleming's VARK model of learning as a reference point, the LTP approach involves Visual (diagrams and props), Auditory (speech / analogy), Reading / Writing (Text) and Kinaesthetic (role-play) elements which allows all learners to engage with the session.

FINALEE

LTP is not an approach for every academic, but used in the right context can revitalise a difficult lecture. LTP shows that alternative and energetic approaches in the lecture theatre can transform the student experience and improve their engagement and achievement.

CAST IN ORDER OF APPERANCE

Dr Ian Turner is a National Teaching Fellow based at the University of Derby. He is currently Head of Forensic Science but his main teaching areas are genetics and science communications. He tweets under @DocWithTheSocs and more information can be found at <http://linkd.in/1pzDf50>. Ian's pantomime work is published in Innovative Practice in Higher Education, Vol.1 (3) pages 1-11.

APPLAUSE

TRANSMISSION:

Contemporary dance performance and interactive installation



Mike Brockhurst, Department of Biology, and Beccs Andrews, Visiting Research Associate, Department of Music, describe how they have used performance to aid conceptualisation of infectious disease evolution.

Live performance is a powerful medium through which to communicate concepts and ideas. The strength of performance, particularly contemporary dance performance, lies in the potential for visual and aural (ie non-verbal) communication, which transcends nationality and age. This kind of performance is particularly well suited

“Brilliant! [The performance] makes something not normally interesting [to me] more accessible” and “[the performance] drew me into science, which I would normally avoid.”

to conveying ideas that seem abstract or occur on different scales – in time or space – which are often difficult to conceptualise within the context of our daily lives. In this regard visual performance is a compelling way for scientists to connect with the public about their research.

TRANSMISSION, which premiered in June as part of the York Festival of Ideas 2014, was a contemporary dance within an interactive visual and audio installation that explored Mike Brockhurst's (Department of Biology) research into infectious disease evolution. The creative team was led by artist Becs

Andrews (Visiting Research Associate, Department of Music) and comprised choreographer Simon Birch (Senior Lecturer, Falmouth University), composer Jon Hughes (PhD student, Department of Music), video designer and programmer Phill Tew, sound designer and programmer Tom Mitchell (Lecturer, University of the West of England), electronic engineer Seb Madgwick, lighting designer Louise Gregory and four professional dancers – James Southward, Isabel Slingerland, Debbi Purtill and Polly Motley.

Communicating infection

The core scientific idea behind the work was to communicate how tiny changes at the molecular level can have major global consequences. To give a contemporary example of this, it is thought that two or three changes to a surface protein of avian flu might be



enough to cause a global pandemic by allowing the mutated flu to transmit between humans. The performance was able to traverse scales – from the molecular to the global – through the responsive visual environment that Andrews and her team created. Andrews decided to harness the relatively cheap but breathtakingly effective method of using infrared digital cameras (XBox Kinect) to track movements in space and combine this data with video projections on the floor beneath the dancers' feet that reacted and responded to their movements. Using this projected light we were able to create a range of abstract environments from cells within a body to cities on the globe. Light was also used as a metaphor for infection, such that dancers could catch flickering shadowy infections from one another, allowing the audience to visually track the spread of the disease. Birch's choreography also explored the different scales and proximities of infection: sections of movement were inspired by the chemical bonds which form between the molecules of a host and parasite, other sections captured the everyday human interactions which provide the backdrop for the transmission of infections.

Incorporating sound

The sound world of the performance played an important role in conveying shifts in scale and mood, while also providing aural reference points for the audience to allow them to place scenes in our everyday world through recordings of airports and cafes. Hughes' music compositions were part pre-recorded and part generated live during the performance. These interactive elements were made possible by wireless sensor technology developed by Madgwick and Mitchell. These small sensors, embedded in bespoke padded harnesses (designed by Andrews to be worn invisibly under the dancers' costumes) allowed small specific movements to trigger snippets of recorded sound or music. The embedded sensors also allowed us to measure the



$2b^3$ or not $2b^3$... what is that equation

proximity of dancers so that the volume of sound increased in relation to how physically close dancers became. The interactive sound and video elements were intertwined using bespoke software coded by Tew and Mitchell, and combined together to give the performance a powerful and immediate sense of cause and effect: our actions have consequences but by changing our behaviour we can affect the outcome.

After each performance we opened the performance space up to the audience so that they could experience for themselves the triggered light and sound installation: How being in close proximity to an 'infected' person could result in 'catching' the light-infection and create a map of the infection network; How getting closer together or moving more could be heard in the responsive generated sounds. Our audiences told us that this opportunity to embody the installation enhanced their understanding of the performance and comprehension of the scientific ideas underpinning the work. It made the audience "part of the work" (audience quote).

Audience feedback suggested that the performances engaged with new audiences both in terms of the science and the dance: those without a science background were drawn to see the

work by the dance content, whilst people who hadn't seen live contemporary dance before were initially attracted to the work by the scientific content. Both groups were surprised and interested by their exposure to the other element. The balance of movement and technology allowed the creative team to construct powerful metaphors for scientific concepts but as one audience member put it, "the nice thing about the science was that it wasn't in your face – it was supporting, perfect". Through performance therefore the science communication can be almost subconscious, to again quote audience members: "Brilliant! [The performance] makes something not normally interesting [to me] more accessible" and "[the performance] drew me into science, which I would normally avoid."

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Learning as performance

Paul Roberts and Darren Reed discuss performance in Learning and Teaching from a Sociology and English Language Teaching perspective.

In this article we would like to draw attention to the specialised use of the term 'performance' in Sociology and Applied Linguistics, inasmuch as this may help to inform teaching practice, particularly in small group work and particularly where students come from different national and cultural backgrounds.

Since the work of Austen in the late fifties (Austen 1962), both sociologists and applied linguists have been interested in the notion of 'performative' speech acts. For applied linguistics, the emphasis is on language used to perform, to do things, (rather than to express truths); for their part, sociologists understand performances as all those conscious or unconscious expressive acts that convey and construct continuity in human relations (Goffman 1959). Language is, in part, used consciously in order to make things happen; less consciously speech acts 'perform' aspects of speakers' identities and speakers' identities are built up as a result of speech performances.

For sociologists, then, identity can be considered as being partly constructed through



And the winner of the category... 'best special effects' is...

performative acts in interaction with others and in social spaces, rather than being seen as an essential given.

For some scholars in applied linguistics, there is a growing shift from seeing language use as evidence of essential lexicogrammatical competence towards the study of performative competence, the way in which speakers negotiate interactions using a range of linguistic resources (eg Canagarajah 2013).

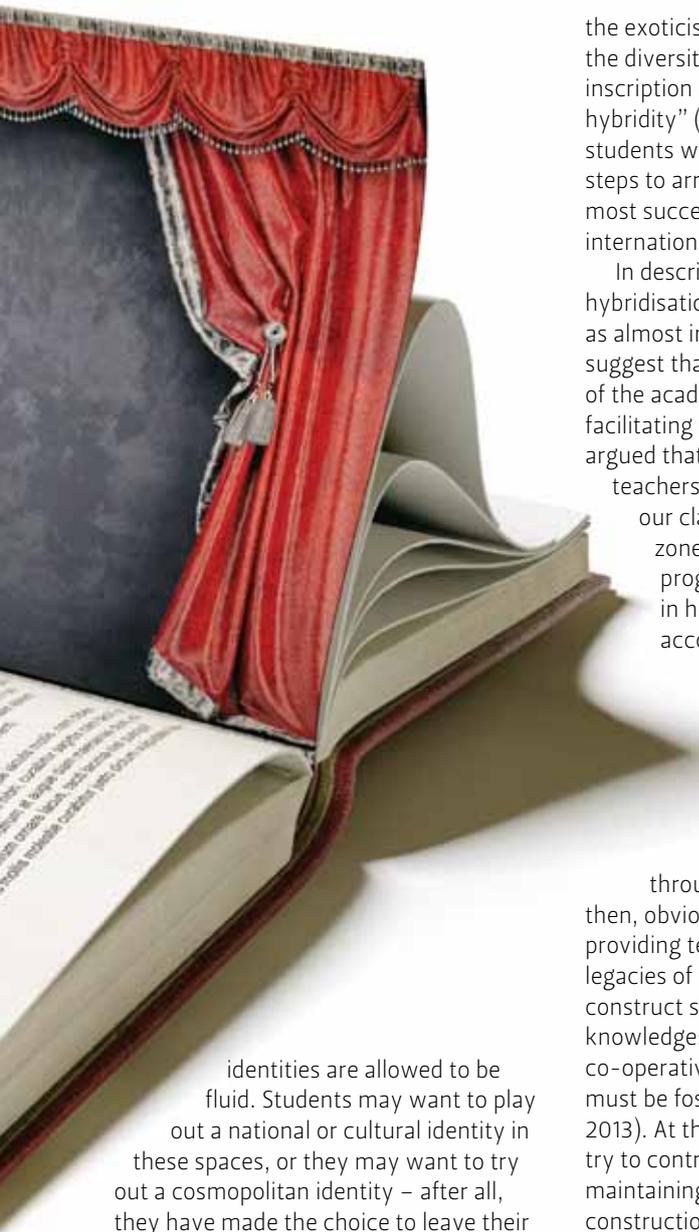
In limine sapientiae

All of this has important entailments where teaching and learning are concerned, and may have particular importance in a

university which is aiming to foreground the international experience of all of its students.

Inasmuch as the university is a staging post where students are meant to undergo a transformation, our teaching spaces are characterised by liminality. Each classroom is a threshold within the larger threshold of the university as a whole; it is a place where change takes place and, crucially, where hybrids emerge and new identities are constructed.

If all students engage in a process of change as they traverse the university threshold, then language and linguacultural change must be a large part of this. Whether they originally come from Bristol, Bombay or Beijing, students may perceive the liminality of the university and of their classrooms as 'contact zones', playgrounds where



the exoticism of multiculturalism or the diversity of cultures, but on the inscription and articulation of culture's hybridity" (Bhabha 1994: 38–9). Those students who have taken the largest steps to arrive here are likely to be the most successful in hybridisation and the internationalisation of their culture.

In describing this process of hybridisation and internationalisation as almost inevitable, we do also want to suggest that there is a role for members of the academic teaching staff, at least in facilitating matters. Indeed, some have argued that the role of Higher Education teachers is crucial (Shute 2002). In our classrooms—become—contact zones we can try to enable the progression towards expertise in hybridisation, or at least accommodate the spaces where it is happening.

Firstly, if the classroom is to be a performance space where identities and cultures are tried out and played out

through negotiation processes, then, obviously, it must be a safe place providing temporary protection from legacies of oppression – in which to construct shared understandings and knowledges, (Pratt 1999) and, within it, a co-operative disposition among students must be fostered (see Canagarajah 2013). At the very least, teachers can try to contribute to the setting up and maintaining of 'safe houses', allowing the construction of what may be termed a *communitas* of hybridity (Turner 1995).

Into the safety of the liminal space teachers may then allow themselves a role as active participants in negotiation processes, helping students by recognising their expressive acts as hybrid, processual artefacts, pieces in the complex jig-saw of constructing themselves as academics or professionals or global citizens.

Practically speaking, then, teachers and students might do well to recognise and acknowledge both the emergent, fluid nature of students' identities and the nature of teaching rooms as in-between spaces where temporary, hybrid performances lead to later sedimentation of firmer identities. They might use this recognition to take time, plenty of time, to foster equitable relationships and even-handed negotiation, not only of disciplinary content but, crucially, of personal positioning.

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identities are allowed to be fluid. Students may want to play out a national or cultural identity in these spaces, or they may want to try out a cosmopolitan identity – after all, they have made the choice to leave their home behind and to travel hundreds or thousands of miles in order to be here.

If we accept this performance view of cultural process, and following the postcolonial cultural theorist, Homi Bhabha, we may then cease to consider student behaviour in our classrooms as determined by the culture students bring with them. Instead, we may think of our students as performing culture and thereby constructing difference and sameness and creating a process of international culture “based not on

For sociologists identity can be considered as being partly constructed through performative acts in interaction with others and in social spaces.

Paul Roberts

joined the Centre for English Language Teaching as Director

in August 2009. He has taught English and trained teachers of English in six different countries and written, or co-written, several ELT books. Paul is interested in the internationalisation of Higher Education, with a particular interest in curriculum transformation. He can be contacted on paul.roberts@york.ac.uk.



Darren Reed

is a Lecturer in Sociology. His research is concerned with pedagogy in performance

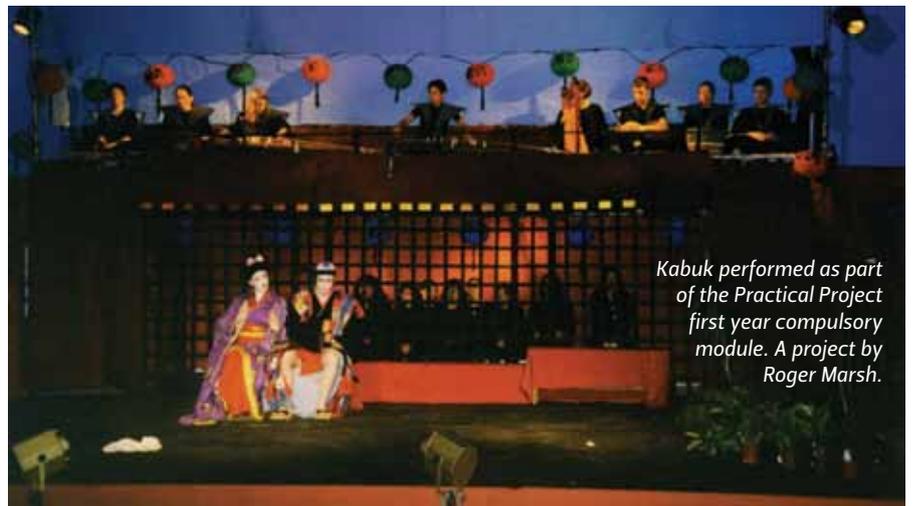
environments, based upon his expertise and interest in embodied social interaction. He is Deputy Director for Teaching in Sociology and Programme Coordinator for three masters programs concerned with the study of Social Media from sociological, management, and computer science perspectives. He teaches students from across the world, but is particularly interested in learning from international students about how to teach better.



Performance in music prog



On a rainy day this past June we went to have a chat with Professor Roger Marsh and Professor Peter Seymour during which they explained the importance of performance in music programmes and how their teaching style incorporates performance.



Kabuki performed as part of the Practical Project first year compulsory module. A project by Roger Marsh.

rammes

Photo: Christopher Leedham



Peter Seymour conducting the University Choir and Symphony Orchestra in Verdi's Requiem at York Minster.

A music degree at York aims to deliver a balanced musical education whilst providing opportunities for students to specialise and pursue their own study pathway. Students are part of a vibrant musical community, taught by active professionals. Performance is an integral part of the music programme and a range of opportunities are available for students to partake in performance, both for assessment purposes and outside the curriculum.

Interview with Peter Seymour

Could you describe in a few words your philosophy of teaching?

Assessment in the modules I teach is entirely based on performance because it is more useful for students to express their understanding of the material by sound. Within fairly broad guidelines they can choose what they perform. So, for example, they could choose anything within certain geographical boundaries but within certain stylistic boundaries.

We get large numbers applying here and students come here because they know that they can not only perform but they can also study how to perform. Within the teaching modules we would teach students how to find the original sources necessary in order to interpret music. Before coming to York, students would have studied music using mainly secondary sources. But a deeper understanding relies upon the study of primary sources (for example original manuscripts). Our understanding of these primary sources is changing all the time. And so I often say to my students when we are doing performance practise: "What I am telling you is what I understand now and I am sure it is correct, but I am sure that parts of it will have changed in ten years' time and I hope you will understand that our knowledge has changed and the most exciting thing about this area of study is that our understanding and therefore our response is constantly changing".

When there is a new interpretation of how to play a piece, do you perform in front of your students or do you tell them how to perform?

In fact one of the best ways of teaching sometimes is to perform together with the students, and occasionally I would play something to illustrate my point. But I also try to leave the students free to perform in their own ways. The main

thing is that they find the sources and use the best information available at that time, especially when it is getting closer to a performance. So yes I do perform in front of my students and in fact sometimes you cannot explain how to play music or how to sing by merely using words.

This takes me to the last question. What is the legacy that you would like to leave to your students? Can you give us some examples of what your students have done or performances they have done after they have left?

One of my former students has just been at Covent Garden and at the



Photo: Christopher Leedham

English National Opera and in America. He sometimes asks me what I would do in this situation. He has been back for two or three lessons on the keyboard with me. I see quite a lot of my old students. They have taken on the information here and continued to work in that way. My most important legacy is the following: they should first of all love the music as if they don't then they are not going to communicate as clearly as they should. They should always be "informed players" in whatever they do, whether it is understanding a contemporary piece or understanding a piece by Elgar or performing music composed by Bach. They should always be looking for more information and trying to work out for themselves which information is going to be useful for that performance. But the key aspect is that our students are performing music in an informed manner, using all the primary sources available to them at the time of the performance.

Performance in Music Programmes continued

Interview with Roger Marsh

Can you tell us about your teaching and your passion for music?

I am primarily a composer and I have been teaching for over 35 years. I help composers to learn how to compose and I teach general music students various aspects of contemporary music with a particular emphasis on music which involves words and on music theatre. During my career, I have also taught Japanese music.

A lot of my teaching is fairly practical, I have one to one tutorials with students where I look at their work and I help them with technical aspects while trying to inspire them to develop their own ideas in directions that they might not otherwise think about. Sometimes I teach small groups. But I also do a lot of standing up in front of large groups, leading seminars or just talking to the students, as we don't actually have formal lectures in this Department. We have long sessions (often all day) in our undergraduate modules which we call "projects", which involve 20-25 students at a time, and where the teaching is very informal in such a way that we can interrupt the session at any point to have direct interaction with or between the students. Students taking part in these projects are very engaged because they get to select the type of area of music study they are truly passionate about.

What are your views on "teaching as performance"?

I have always taken for granted that teaching is performance. I was never interested in the theoretical side of that. When I stand up in front of a group of people for teaching, I feel the same way as when I am performing in front of an audience. When teaching, you need to keep the students

When teaching, you need to keep the students engaged exactly in the same way you would do with an audience during a concert.



Photo: John Houlihan

Roger Marsh leads a seminar within his music teaching.

engaged exactly in the same way you would do with an audience during a concert.

My teaching style has evolved over the years, as in the early days I tried to be fully prepared in advance for all sorts of questions, but over time, I tried to develop my confidence in my ability to change and to adapt.

There is a slight paradox I suppose: in this Department, most of us perform professionally outside the Department as well. When we perform inside the Department with the students, we try to do that in exactly the same way we would do though of course, you can't really do that. In my teaching, I try to treat students as if they were professional performers. I help them achieve the best possible performance while channelling their attention on the way they are performing and trying to inspire them to think about the different ways they could be performing.

When dealing with composers, I try to encourage them in thinking in different ways and introduce them to areas they wouldn't have thought of otherwise.

In my view, the most important role of teaching is to open students' minds to new ideas while inspiring them to think in different, individual ways.

Professor Roger Marsh studied at the University of York in the early seventies. His composition



PhD (1974) was supervised by Bernard Rands. He spent two years (1976-78) at the University of California, San Diego, on a Harkness Fellowship. From 1978 to 88 he lectured at the University of Keele, and was for three years Head of Department there, before returning to York, where he is currently Professor of Music. His music has been performed and broadcast widely.

Professor Peter Seymour studied at Huddersfield School of Music and at University of



York, including post-graduate work researching into the performance of baroque music. In July 1994 he was awarded the degree of D Mus., at University of York for research into performing style. He is director of Yorkshire Baroque Soloists and of Yorkshire Bach Choir, and has worked and recorded in most European countries. He is also an artistic adviser to York Early Music Festival and Professor in Music and Organist at the University of York.



ONE SIZE DOES NOT FIT ALL: ensuring all students reach their potential

University of York Learning and Teaching Conference 2015: Wednesday 10 June 2015

Students come to the University of York with **different** expectations, **different** learning styles, **different** needs, and **different** ambitions.

Further information about this conference and the call for contributions is available on the website <http://bit.ly/1tYHdWJ>

The conference will explore the implications of diversifying delivery of programmes and how students are supported in the process of achieving their potential. A key theme will be the way in which programme design can address the range of student ability and levels of student engagement. The conference will also focus on the ways in which inclusivity and diversity can be integrated into the curricula and teaching.

Workshop themes:

- ◆ use of personalised learning approaches within teaching
- ◆ ensuring fairness / enabling unimpeded learning by students from diverse backgrounds
- ◆ dealing with a range of student ability and levels of student engagement
- ◆ embedding training for students on appropriate conduct
- ◆ addressing unconscious bias within our teaching
- ◆ addressing diversity and promoting inclusivity through module content
- ◆ examples of good practice relating to PGWT activities which successfully address individual student learning styles
- ◆ the meaning, nature and implications of inclusivity and diversity in higher education.

Posters: Any learning and teaching themes

Call for: Discussion papers, workshops and poster presentations

The deadline for submissions is **Friday 30 January 2015** (Week 4, Spring Term).

Learning and Teaching calendar of events: Autumn Term 2014

WEEK 3 W/B 13 OCTOBER 2014		
Thursday 16 October 3.00–4.00pm	HG09, Heslington Hall	Academic Integrity: Staff Turnitin awareness sessions
WEEK 4 W/B 20 OCTOBER 2014		
Wednesday 22 October 12.30–2.00pm	HG21, Heslington Hall	Enhancing engagement. 'Bums on Seats' versus 'Hearts and Minds': Questions of student attendance and engagement
WEEK 5 W/B 27 OCTOBER 2014		
Tuesday 28 October 1.30–5.00pm	HG21, Heslington Hall	Marking consistency: a half day workshop
WEEK 6 W/B 3 NOVEMBER 2014		
Monday 3 November 12.30–2.00pm	HG21, Heslington Hall	Technology in practice. Making video for active learning
WEEK 8 W/B 17 NOVEMBER 2014		
Monday 17 November 12.30–2.00pm	HG09, Heslington Hall	Key skills in the curriculum. Teaching research methods: engaging students in an inquiry-based research process
WEEK 9 W/B 24 NOVEMBER 2014		
Monday 24 November 2.00–5.00pm	HG21, Heslington Hall	A workshop for supervisors
WEEK 10 W/B 1 DECEMBER 2014		
Tuesday 2 December 11.00am–12.00noon	ATB043, Seebohm Rowntree Building	Academic Integrity: Staff Turnitin awareness sessions
WEEK 11 W/B 8 DECEMBER 2014		
Monday 8 December 12.30–2.00pm	BS/008, Berrick Saul Building	Taught Masters Special Interest Group
WEEK 12 W/B 15 DECEMBER 2014		
Monday 15 December 9.00am–4.00pm	HG21, Heslington Hall	Criticality: a full day workshop

Key to the calendar

 Events organised by the Learning and Teaching Forum. Open to all staff and PGWTs. For further information, see www.york.ac.uk/staff/teaching/sharing/sharing-practice/workshops; to register, contact learning-and-teaching-forum@york.ac.uk. If you are unable to attend an event but would like a copy of the materials, please let us know.

 Freestanding workshops offered by learning support colleagues. Please contact janet.barton@york.ac.uk for further details or to book your place.

 Taught Masters Special Interest Group: for further information, see www.york.ac.uk/staff/teaching/sharing/sharing-practice/special-interest/; to register contact janet.barton@york.ac.uk

 Academic Integrity: Staff Turnitin awareness sessions. Please contact alison.mckay@york.ac.uk for further details or to book your place on a session.