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e-Learning support in Japan

Reflections on a recent visit to the National Institute of Multimedia Education (NIME)

Paul Bacsich

Paul Bacsich reflects on a week spent at Japan's National Institute of Multimedia Education (NIME). The NIME provides e-learning advice and support to Japanese universities including to the Japanese Open University, thus it has some similarity to both the JISC and the Higher Education Academy. NIME is at an interesting stage of development and appears to be at a crossroads with regards to its future organisation and function. NIME's staff were keen to hear about the UK experience of benchmarking; the issue of quality in e-learning; intellectual property issues; and the reasons for the failure of initiatives such as the UKeU.

Conference review



Professor Drummond Bone at the JISC Digital Repositories conference

Digital repositories: Dealing with the digital deluge

Phil Barker and Neil Jacobs

Phil Barker and Neil Jacobs discuss some of the themes emerging from the JISC digital repositories conference. The conference was held at Manchester conference centre from 5 - 6 June 2007 and approximately 200 delegates from UK universities and colleges were in attendance. Repositories offer the potential to manage and share e-learning materials, delivering real benefits to users and institutions. Realising this potential is not always straightforward however. The conference showcased a range of research and development work in the repositories field, and demonstrated how this research can be applied practically by practitioners.

News

Virtually there? Building virtual schools for the future

Bob Harrison

In her futuristic book "Tomorrow's People" Susan Greenfield suggests that "[I]f the maturing of the Information Age is to revolutionise all aspects of the education system, from how we learn and what we learn, to what we learn with and when we learn, then it is no surprise that where we learn will be another change". So, should we reconsider the balance of our investment in bricks and glass and consider investing in 'virtual high schools'? Bob Harrison reports on his visit to Stanford University and on his discussions with staff responsible for the Stanford virtual high school project.

JANET txt launched

Paul Wakefield, UKERNA

UKERNA have launched the new Short Message Service (SMS) - JANET txt. After a competitive OJEU procurement, PageOne Communications have been selected as the partner for delivery to the JANET community. SMS is a standard whereby you can send text messages of up to 160 characters in length to mobile phones. JANET txt is a web-based application offering the ability to send and receive text messages with a host of additional areas of functionality. For more information on JANET txt go to

www.pageone.co.uk/janettxt

NEWS AND REVIEWS

Chief Executive's report

News from Seb Schmoller

ALT "Ambassadors": Earlier this year ALT created the new role of ALT Ambassador. Ambassadors provide informal advice to ALT on matters within their area of interest and act as advocates for ALT. We are delighted that three individuals have agreed to act in the role: John Taylor, who leads the newly formed FE Self Regulation Implementation Team, is a member of the Learning & Skills National Council and was previously Principal and Chief Executive of The Sheffield College, and a past Chair of the Board of BECTa and member of JISC.; Terry Mayes, Emeritus Professor at Glasgow Caledonian University, and currently leader of the Evaluation and Dissemination Support Team for the HEA/JISC e-learning Benchmarking and Pathfinder programmes; Wendy Hall, CBE, Professor of Computer Science at the University of Southampton, and a member of the Prime Ministers' Council for Science and Technology, and senior Vice President of the Royal Academy of Engineering.

CMALT: Teresa Prochazka, who doubles as our Projects Managers and Certification Manager, has been up and down the country in the last few months organising workshops for people considering getting themselves certified under CMALT, our certified membership scheme, with workshops held at the Higher Education Academy in York, in HEFCE's London office, and at Northampton, Leicester, and Anglia Ruskin Universities. Full details of future workshops and of how to arrange for us to run a workshop at your institution, are on our web site. Interest in CMALT is gradually increasing, and in the autumn we will be issuing a call for a consultant to do a small scale evaluation of CMALT and its progress to date.

2007 Learning Technologist of the Year Award: We are running the Learning Technologist of the Year Award for the first time this year. The judging panel is chaired by Professor Gilly Salmon. Applications closed on 20 June 2007 and the judging process will be completed by the end of July. A wide range of applications have been received, from individuals and teams, from HE, the private sector, and from FE, and from England and Scotland. The award will be presented by Peter Norvig, Google's Director of Research, on 5 September 2007 at the ALT conference in Nottingham.

Getting involved in the work of ALT – an important point to note: ALT is a registered charity, and our activities are governed by a board of elected and co-opted Trustees, who form ALT's Central Executive Committee (see www.alt.ac.uk/aboutalt.html). With the last issue of the ALT Newsletter members received nomination papers for 2 vacancies for Trustees, and for 1 vacancy as Vice-Chair of ALT. All three roles were filled uncontested, see Director's Report for details. Candidates for election are required to have 12 months individual membership of ALT by the AGM on which they take up office. For this year only, Trustees deemed to meet the eligibility requirement "the representative of an organisation that was in good standing as an organisational or sponsoring member on 1/9/2006 and which remains so, and who has joined ALT as an individual member by the date on which their nomination papers are received in the ALT office". ALT is keen for members to stand for election as Trustees. If, as a representative of an organisational or sponsoring member, you are considering standing next year, it is essential that you have joined ALT as an individual member, by no later than 10 September 2007, for you to satisfy the eligibility requirements. You have been warned!

"E-learning – making it work": We will be running with the Quality Improvement Agency (QIA) a major national conference for practitioners and leaders in further, workplace, adult, and community learning, with the support of the Learning and Skills Council, JISC, the Learning and Skills Network, Becta, and the Centre for Excellence in Leadership, in Nottingham on 11 October 2007. During August we will announce the programme for the event, and begin to take bookings. Find out more about the conference at www.alt.ac.uk.

sschmoller@alt.ac.uk 26/6/2007

Case studies

Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development: benefits of ALT membership

Karen Ver

With approximately 130,000 members, the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development's (CIPD) mission is to lead in the development and promotion of good practice in the field of the management and development of people, for application both by professional members and by their organisational colleagues. CIPD also generates a range of research that is available to the public. This case study describes the work of CIPD, highlights aspects of the CIPD's research that may be of interest to ALT members, and discusses how ALT membership has benefited the Institute.

Selecting an Electronic Voting System

Paul Burt, University of Surrey

This article describes the process used to select the most suitable Electronic Voting System (EVS) for the University of Surrey. It aims to be helpful to other institutions considering an EVS purchase by looking at the different aspects (characteristics, specifications and functionality) that need to be considered when selecting an EVS.

Obituary

Jennifer Burke 1973-2007

Jennifer (Jenn) Burke, chairperson of the Irish Learning Technology Association (ILTA) and Learning Technologist in Dublin City University, passed away on 29 June following a bravely fought 5 1/2 year battle against cancer. Jenn was a significant force behind the development and growth of ILTA and also contributed significantly to the Irish National Digital Learning Repository (NDLR) project. She will be sadly missed by friends and colleagues in DCU and across Ireland.

Conference reviews

JIMS Global learning impact 2007

The summit on global learning and industry challenges

Julian Clayton

Julian Clayton reports on the IMS Global Learning Consortium's annual conference, Learning Impact, which took place in Vancouver from 16-19 April 2007. The conference aimed to keep participants focused on the latest innovations in learning systems, digital learning content, the learning enterprise, and open technologies. In the last year IMS has taken on a new lease of life and this conference confirmed the central role IMS has in shaping and serving the agenda for the development of online learning globally. The conference concluded with the presentation of the Learning Impact Awards 2007.

Innovating e-Learning 2007

Ros Smith

Innovating e-Learning 2007 was voted a 'wonderful experience' by delegates signing out after the four-day event. Over 320 took part in the online conference between 11-14 June – the second to be organised through the JISC e-Learning Programme. Conferencing online was a new experience for many delegates, which included a session in the virtual world of Second Life. Innovating e-Learning 2007 was based around two themes, Institutional Transformation and Supporting Lifelong Learning. e-Books from the conference will be available on the JISC website in the autumn.

For more details of the conference go to www.jisc.ac.uk/elp_conference07

Director's report

News from Rhonda Riachi

ALT-C 2007 - book now!: Bookings are coming in as fast as last year, so don't delay. We may have to close earlier than the **10 August** deadline. Book now at www.alt.ac.uk/altc2007/registering.html. There are five pre-conference workshops to choose from, covering tools for e-learning, e-assessment, learning objects, e-portfolios and designing learning spaces – go to www.alt.ac.uk/altc2007/pre_and_post.html. The programme has been updated – go to www.alt.ac.uk/altc2007/timetable.html.

En suite accommodation with dial-up Internet access (via Ethernet cable) and telephones is available on campus next to the conference venue; book well before the deadline to secure this. Hotels in the city centre (a 15min taxi ride away – see www.alt.ac.uk/altc2007/travel.html) are also offering discounts for ALT-C delegates, which can be booked online via Travelocity Business.

Call for ALT-C 2008 Programme Committee: ALT-C 2008, to be held in Leeds 8 to 10 September 2008, will be chaired by **Dr Jill Jameson** (University of Greenwich) and **Dr John Sandars** (University of Leeds). We are now seeking Programme Committee (PC) members to take an active part in planning the programme, reviewing papers and chairing sessions at the conference. PC members must be able to commit to reviewing at least 15 abstracts for sessions, and/or refereeing at least 2 research papers during March and April 2008. The full call will go out on alt-announce shortly; for informal queries please contact me on rriachi@brookes.ac.uk. Deadline for expressions of interest: Friday 14 September.

AGM 2007: Our fourteenth Annual General Meeting will take place at Nottingham University on Wednesday 5 September, 1200-1230. All members are warmly invited to attend. All candidates were elected unopposed to the three vacancies on the Central Executive Committee so there will be no ballot this year. The following people will take up their places after the AGM in September: Trustees: **Dick Moore** (Ufi learndirect) and **John Phelps** (Goldsmiths College London).

Vice-Chair: **Steve Ryan** (London School of Economics).

These important roles are on three-year terms commencing from the Annual General Meeting in Nottingham on 5 September.

New ALT-J Co-Editors: **Frances Bell** (University of Salford) and **Rhona Sharpe** (Oxford Brookes University) have been appointed Co-Editors of ALT-J to commence from September 2007. Frances is a Senior Lecturer in Information Systems and a member of ALT's Research Committee (www.alt.ac.uk/operational_committees.html#Research). Rhona is Principal Lecturer in Educational Development and previously co-edited the International Journal for Academic Development. Over the next six months Rhona and Frances will take over from the retiring editors, Grainne Conole, Jane Seale and Martin Oliver. For more information about ALT-J go to www.alt.ac.uk/alt_j.html.

Tangible benefits of e-learning: As we go to press the finishing touches are being put on a range of e-learning case studies drawn from 17 higher education institutions across the UK. This JISC-funded project is being run as a partnership between JISCinfoNet, ALT and the Higher Education Academy and will report to the JISC Learning and Teaching Committee. The case studies will be made available to the community later this year.

Workshops: your suggestions, please: Now is the time for members to suggest topics for workshops that you would like ALT to run in the coming year. Please email your suggestions (topics, presenters and even locations) to Hayley Willis (h.willis@brookes.ac.uk).

rriachi@brookes.ac.uk



Conferences

ALT-C 2007: Beyond control Learning technology for the social network generation

Nottingham, UK, 4-6 September

Keynote speakers:

Professor Sir Colin Campbell, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Nottingham
Dr Michelle Selinger, Education Strategist, Cisco Systems
Dr Peter Norvig, Director of Research, Google
Professor Dylan Wiliam, Institute of Education

ALT-C 2007 will feature four themes: Designing learning spaces; Large-scale implementation; Learning and internationalism; Learning technology for the social network generation.

Major Anchor Sponsors:

Adobe; Becta; Blackboard; The British Council; Desire2Learn; Eduserv; The Higher Education Academy; The Joint Information Systems Committee; JISC TechDis; Positive Internet Company Ltd; The Scottish Funding Council; Toshiba Information Systems (UK) Ltd; Ufi learndirect; and the University of Nottingham.

Registrations close: 10 August

www.alt.ac.uk/altc2007

e-learning – making it work: from the preserve of enthusiasts to organisation-wide implementation

The National College for School Leadership, Nottingham

11 October 2007

Keynote speaker: Andrew Thomson, CEO of QIA

A conference for practitioners and leaders in further, workplace, adult, and community learning organised by ALT and QIA, with the support of CEL, LSC, JISC LSN and Becta.

A4 Flyer: www.alt.ac.uk/docs/oct11flyer.pdf

Join the mailing list: www.alt.ac.uk/lists.html

Courses

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ALT-N

Articles, comment, reviews and previews are welcomed for the next issue. Please contact the Editor for further details and a style guide.

Please note that only summary versions are published in the printed newsletter. Full versions appear in the online newsletter at <http://newsletter.alt.ac.uk>

Advertising rates

£300 for quarter page advert or £400 to insert a one-page flyer (no VAT)

Deadline: 21 September 2007

For editorial contributions contact the Editor:

Morag Munro
morag.munro@dcu.ie

For advertising queries contact alt@brookes.ac.uk

Association for Learning Technology

For further information on ALT contact:

Rhonda Riachi
Director, ALT
Gipsy Lane, Headington
Oxford, OX3 0BP
Tel: 01865 484125
Fax: 01865 484165
alt@brookes.ac.uk

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Reduced rate (student, retired, unemployed)	£25
Individual non-UK	£65

For organisational membership and other details go to www.alt.ac.uk/membership.html

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