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University of the  
Highlands and Islands  
Oilthigh na Gàidhealtachd  
agus nan Eilean

# Learning and Teaching Developments

Quarterly updates from the Learning and Teaching Academy and Educational Development Unit

Welcome to Issue 9 of Learning and Teaching Developments - the quarterly newsletter from the Learning and Teaching Academy (LTA) and Educational Development Unit (EDU) at the University of the Highlands and Islands. This newsletter provides updates across areas including educational practice, scholarship and research, and current and forthcoming events, projects and initiatives from the EDU, LTA and other parts of the university.

This newsletter is being circulated to colleagues who have engaged with the LTA and EDU through events or projects, although we hope you consider sharing this more widely. Colleagues who aren't already signed up to receive this newsletter can email [lta@uhi.ac.uk](mailto:lta@uhi.ac.uk) and request to be added to the newsletter mailing list.

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## Remote Teaching Website

EDU, LTA and LIS have created the Remote Teaching website which contains information for FE and HE staff delivering programmes remotely during the current coronavirus outbreak, including staff who are new to online teaching. Some of the topics covered on the website include synchronous teaching options and recommendations, online alternatives to face-to-face teaching, online assessment options and considerations as well as hints and tips. You will also find information about support events and answers to frequently asked questions. The website is being updated on a regular basis so check back often to read about the newest additions.

[More Information](#)

## Virtual Mentoring Circle to Support Online Learning and Teaching

The LTA have been piloting a group mentoring scheme to support colleagues to the move to online learning and teaching in the recent Covid-19 lockdown. These one-hour 'coffee break meetings' which began in April have been facilitated by colleagues who mentor through the University Mentoring Scheme and who have knowledge and experience in different approaches to online learning, teaching, and assessment. Participants are encouraged to be mentees and consider aspects of their practice they would like to explore or enhance. Colleagues familiar with online learning and teaching who have specific areas of practice they would like to explore with mentors and colleagues are also encouraged to attend.



[More Information](#)

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## Supporting Students Online Drop-in Webinars



Since the last week in March the LTA, EDU and LIS have been running 3-times weekly drop-in webinars aimed at staff who are supporting students online. These sessions have covered a range of practical and pedagogic issues that many staff are currently facing. From the 13th April, and until further notice, the sessions will be running twice weekly, with one session being themed and the other being open. The sessions remain as drop-in, however, you can opt to register to attend which will give you the opportunity to send any questions you would like answered up-front; registering will also trigger a calendar appointment to be sent to you by email. Sessions are recorded and made available on the past events pages.

[More Information](#)

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## Open Educational Resources (OERs) Database

Open educational resources (OERs) provide access to free, reusable content that can be integrated into your learning and teaching. High quality OERs, created by institutions, providers and individuals around the globe can offer many benefits to learners and teaching staff.

To make finding these resources easier a new searchable [database of open educational resources](#) has been created on the LTA webpages. The database which caters for all disciplines contains links to books, courses, journals, policies, images, data, videos, case studies and more. There is also an option to suggest new resources and the database will be updated regularly.



[More Information](#)

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## Aurora



The five participants on the Advance HE Aurora Leadership development programme for colleagues who identify as women have now completed the development days in Edinburgh. They have been sharing their experiences through Twitter and presented and facilitating a workshop at the university's international women's day on 10th March. Their presentation highlighted the many benefits of the programme and how they planned to build on the learning from the programme as individuals and as a university cohort.

An evaluation study of the benefits of the programme is now underway. The study will include a participant survey and focus group with a report on the findings to be produced in June 2020. The report will inform refinements to the implementation of the programme and highlight professional development opportunities designed to build on participants learning from the programme.

[More Information](#)

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## Scholarship Development

The LTA has taken on a new strand of work. **Scholarship Development**, led by Heather Fotheringham, will support staff wishing to start their journey into scholarship within their own discipline, or in learning and teaching. Within this area of work is a new strand of the **University Mentoring Scheme** to provide one-to-one support for colleagues taking steps into scholarship as well as relevant events. Upcoming webinars include:

**First steps to conference presentation**, Dr Sarah Smith, University of Nottingham, Weds 13 May 1200-1300

**Communicating your subject to non-specialist audiences**, Dr Martin Khuchera, University of Wolverhampton, Friday 05 June 1200-1300



[More Information](#)

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## Graduate Attributes



A range of activities and new resources have supported the embedding of the University's graduate attributes during semester one, including a workshop at the **2020 Learning and Teaching Conference** and an **LTA Connect Webinar**. Both reflected the recommended approach in using the attributes to encourage students to use them for reflection, dialogue and personal development aspirations and planning. Information and web links to the graduate attributes are now included in the processes which support curriculum development, including the approval and reapproval processes for modules and units.

New learning resources have been created for the graduate

attributes. A set of activity cards contain an introduction and suggestions on how to use the cards, as well as a card for each of the five attributes. Please contact Ann Tilbury for more information.

[More Information](#)

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## Staff Development Fund

The Staff Development Fund Review Panel has considered just under 40 applications and awarded funding to support relevant accredited programmes of study for 27 colleagues from across the university including Orkney College, UHI, Argyll College, UHI and Highland Theological College, UHI. The £15,000 awarded so far has funded colleagues on internal and external programmes of study with half the funds going to support new programmes of study and half towards continued studies. Following completion of their studies, colleagues are asked to submit a short report on the benefits to their professional practice. These short reports not only highlight the benefits of programmes of study but also illustrate that there are strong links between these programmes; professional recognition and participation in other opportunities provided by the LTA. Promotion of the fund, including virtual one-hour briefing sessions for colleagues in academic partners and schools of study continues and a final report on funding will be produced at the end of Semester 2.



[More Information](#)

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## New Publication Featuring Head of LTA

The LTA's Keith Smyth is featured in a new special issue of *New Directions in Adult and Continuing Education*, which was published by Wiley in March. The theme of the special issue is a topical one, focused on 'Adult Learning in the Age of Trump and Brexit'. With Sheila MacNeill and Bill Johnston, Keith contributed the chapter titled 'Critical Engagement for Active Participation: The Digital University in an Age of Populism'. The special issue also features a chapter by internationally renowned critical educator Dr Stephen Brookfield who presented a workshop for the LTA last year.

[More Information](#)

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## The 2020-2021 LTA Events Programme

The LTA team are currently working on the 2020-2021 programme of events to support and showcase good practice in pedagogic practice and research.

Please complete a **webinar proposal form** if you would like to present an LTA Connect webinar or **get in touch** if you have an idea for an event that you want the LTA to explore. As well as being great fun, this kind of activity can be used to as part of an application for HEA Fellowship via the **ALPINE framework**.



[More Information](#)

## ALPINE: Celebrating HEA Fellowship Recognition from Advance HE

A number of colleagues were recognised with Fellowship of the Higher Educational Academy (HEA) from Advance HE through the university framework ALPINE, in recognition panels held in December and January.



**Alex Walker, Executive Office UHI**  
**Christiana Margiotti, Perth College UHI**  
**Heather Fotheringham, Executive Office UHI**  
**Helena Reinardy, Scottish Association of Marine Science UHI**  
**Joanna Rodgers, Centre for History UHI**  
**Kevin Lowrie, Moray College UHI**  
**Kim Last, Scottish Association of Marine Science UHI**  
**Kirsty Moran, Perth College UHI**  
**Linda Nicholson, Perth College UHI**  
**Mandy Haggith, Inverness College UHI**  
**Marie Porter, Scottish Association of Marine Science UHI**  
**Mary Doherty, Executive Office UHI**  
**Nicola Martin, Centre for History UHI**  
**Rebecah MacGilleEathain, Department of Nursing and Midwifery**

Registration is now open for recognition panels being held in next Academic Year. To see if you are eligible to apply and to download the registration form please click the more information button.

[More Information](#)

## Learning and Teaching Conference 2020

The university's Learning and Teaching Conference 2020, titled Dimensions of Tertiary Engagement, was held on Inverness Campus and online across the 22nd and 23rd January. The conference was co-hosted by Inverness College UHI, the Learning and Teaching Academy and Learning and Information Services, and featured a rich range of presentations, workshops and discussion sessions relating to the six conference themes.



A number of colleagues from across the university also presented



during the plenary sessions. External keynote presentations were provided by Julia Fotheringham on the topic of FE to HE transitions, Bill Johnston and Sheila MacNeill who explored digitally enabled tertiary education, and Dr Tom Farrelly on Virtual Learning Environments (VLEs). Tom also facilitated a Gasta! session in which a number of colleagues offered quick fire presentations amid Gaelic countdowns and audience participation.

You can also read more about the conference on the [LTA blog](#).

[More Information](#)



## Assessment and Feedback Symposium

The LTA's annual Assessment and Feedback Symposium was held on 04-05 March where we welcomed Dr Sue Folley from the University of Huddersfield as our keynote speaker. The theme for this year's event was 'using technology to enhance assessment and feedback practices', and the event included workshop sessions on using rubrics and quizzes within Brightspace facilitated by colleagues from the LTA and EDU. Attendees (both face to face and virtual) also heard from UHI colleagues who shared examples of practice in areas such as audio feedback and intelligent agents.

[More Information](#)

## West Highland College Learning and Teaching Conference and Inverness College Staff Development Day

On 19 February, Carolin Radtke (EDU) and Ann Tilbury and Keith Smyth (LTA) supported West Highland College's Learning and Teaching Conference and together facilitated a session on professional frameworks including the [Learning and Teaching Enhancement Strategy](#) and the Professional Standards for Lecturers in Scotland's Colleges and how these can support the development of practice. This was followed by a session, exploring ideas to encourage student engagement with learning content, and sharing of plans to achieve this using Brightspace and other tools.

Keith and Ann also facilitated a session for the School of Adventure Studies (SOAS) team on embedding scholarship and research in individual and collaborative practice.

Ann Tilbury presented at Inverness College's Staff Development Day on Monday 17 February, where there was particular interest in the [University Mentoring Scheme](#) and [professional recognition opportunities](#).

If you would like the LTA and EDU to support your professional development day/conference then please email [Ann Tilbury](#) in the first instance.



## Research visit to Royal University of Bhutan



In February the LTA's Keith Smyth and Alex Walker joined Professor Frank Rennie and Dr Gareth Davies (Lews Castle College UHI) to visit and collaborate with colleagues at the Royal University of Bhutan (RUB). Like our own university, RUB is a geographically distributed, federated university which is comprised of several partner colleges.

This year's visit is the second of three annual research trips to Bhutan for the externally funded project CHORTENS (Creating Helpful Open Research Tools for Engaging New Staff). The LTA and Lews Castle College team visited a number of RUB's colleges to undertake 'benchmarking' interviews, engage in knowledge exchange discussions, and to explore the potential for a Women's Network at RUB. The team also worked with senior colleagues from RUB to facilitate a residential workshop at Samtse College of Education, with sessions on action research, mentoring and educational policy and strategy.

You can read more about our visit to Bhutan in Alex Walker's related blog post which can be [viewed here](#).

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## International Women's Day 2020

International Women's Day, which was marked on 10 March at Inverness College UHI, provided the opportunity to celebrate colleagues who identify as women across the university partnership in teaching, research, professional services and student roles. The day also provided the opportunity to discuss what the university is doing to support gender equality and what can be done going forward, as well as exploring the international theme for 2020 #EachforEqual through a discussion panel with the presenters. This year we welcomed Caroline Gillwood, Head of Programmes at Stonewall Scotland and Rachel Watters, NUS National Women's Officer to present keynote presentations.



[More Information](#)

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## Introduction to Teaching for Postgraduate Research Students



On the 16th March the LTA's Keith Smyth and the university's Head of Postgraduate Researcher Development, Dr Mary Doherty, led a day long workshop for postgraduate research students who are starting to teach. The workshop featured Keith facilitating sessions on teaching basics and the support for further developing educational practice that is available at the university, while Mary led sessions on the university's context and subject-specific teaching. The workshop concluded with the participants delivering mini-teaching sessions on a topic of their own choice, and plans are afoot to offer the workshop in both face-to-face and online formats going forward.

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## Appointment of Information and Communications Assistant

The LTA team is delighted to welcome a new member with the appointment of Jane Steele to the post of Information and Communications Assistant. Jane Steele ([jane.steele@uhi.ac.uk](mailto:jane.steele@uhi.ac.uk)) joins on Monday 4 May and will be based in the An Lochran office and working from home during lockdown period. Jane will be supporting the team in the delivery of events, webinars, review panels, communications and promotions.



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