

“Changing Spaces”

Peer-led networks to connect people/spaces/technology.

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SEH College

1 December 2012

Strategic objectives addressed:

This project links directly to the strategic objectives of

- transforming the student experience,
- being a university of technology and design,
- using new technologies and learning spaces to enhance student performance,
- renewing learning and teaching through professional development,

By developing and further extending the successful 2011 pilot peer-led technology/learning spaces support model for staff working in new learning spaces in the College of SEH, new opportunities for student engagement and improved teaching practice have been created through this project. Participating staff have used new technologies and learning spaces to enhance student performance, professional development and peer support. Formal lecture theatres, collaborative spaces and classrooms were the spaces utilised in this project.

This project has also created, developed and extended a body of “scholarship of learning” professionals who will over time, be able to guide other staff/peers in use of technologies and innovative teaching in these learning spaces thus renewing and sustaining learning and teaching through professional development. This has been achieved through communities of practice, professional development workshops and online technology.

Internal order number: 360351

Project leader contact details:

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Project team members:

- Gayle Nicholls (SEH ADG)
- Michael Nott (SMS)
- Rick Ryan (SEH ADG)
- Julie Roberts (LTU)* left project

1 Executive summary

RMIT has made significant investments in learning spaces and technology infrastructure in recent years. This investment has challenged staff and students to develop learning and teaching models that embrace the advantages of such spaces and technology, to ultimately transform the student experience. This is particularly urgent in SEH as the industry workplaces demand greater knowledge and use of technologically-led solutions by graduates. This urgency has required creative solutions to staff development and professional practice (Cox, 2009).

There is significant learning and teaching evidence that peer-led support, dissemination and exchange can improve outcomes for students (Radcliffe et al, 2008). This project has been scaffolded upon the concept of long-term sustainability of good teaching practice. It has recognised the movement/turnover of the teaching staff and the involvement of various age groups of staff.

This project extended the successful 2011 LTIF pilot project in peer-led support for technology in new learning spaces in SEH. The 2011 LTIF project explored the development of peer-led support models at the “coalface” that encouraged a sustainable approach to using technology in new learning spaces. Pilot participants in the 2011 study provided significant data about learning and teaching in new spaces and the use of technology in day to day classes.

The 2011 project indicated that staff acceptance for peer-led disciplinary support was high and the immediacy of professional development in areas of e-learning encouraged new models of teaching and learning such as team teaching and cross-discipline support. There was also evidence that staff preferred to work in their discipline areas to “tackle” new learning spaces and new forms of technology.

The 2012 project used the participants from the 2011 project to develop and manage peer-led learning support networks across their disciplines and spaces in semester 1 and 2, 2012. The 2012 project set up four peer-led workshop sessions that explored issues such as designing teaching around new spaces, using e-learning tools in those spaces, confidence in delivery methods, managing large groups in spaces, real-time support, feedback, reflection and scholarship of learning, as they applied to staff working in new spaces with technology. Radcliffe et al (2008) note that there is a critical nexus between pedagogy, space and technology and that professional collaboration amongst staff is fundamental to improved outcomes for students. There was also a need to ensure that this professional development was not lost because of lack of immediacy of support. This project addressed these needs through discipline based support led by peers.

The peer-led support workshop sessions were conducted at both the Bundoora and city campus in SEH teaching spaces and were scaffolded upon a “just in time” approach to professional development (Richlin &Cox, 2004).

Reflection and feedback were built into the project through feedback web links, a yammer site, evaluation sheets and an ongoing Community of Practice. As well as enabling a model of support for engaged learning and teaching, the experiences of staff have provided vital feedback for other staff, especially those who were unable to participate in workshops. Reflective practice that leads to on-going sustainable improvements was a key feature of this project.

The data developed through this project has also facilitated ongoing dissemination through an established community of practice, academic research and publications. This dissemination has continued beyond the life of the funding year and will continue to provide support for improved practice in learning and teaching spaces for the benefit of all students.

2 Outcomes

| Project Phase | Summary activity | Outcome and Impact |
|---------------|---|---|
| 1 | <p>Development of project participants and mentors</p> <p>Workshops for academic staff and mentors</p> <p>Staff and mentors using new learning spaces to trial innovations, ideas arising from sessions and technology in their classes</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emails & invitations to all staff teaching in four SEH designated learning spaces: 52 responses • Four workshops conducted: total 43 staff attendance (City and Bundoora campus) • Workshop presentation-ITS (Bundoora): 15 staff • Community Practice established: http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=iw9onmmoni5 |
| 2 | <p>De-Briefing sessions and dissemination of semester one information</p> <p>Second semester staff identified and approached about participating as peers in project.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weblink established for dissemination: http://www.rmit.edu.au/seh/learningteaching/improvingteachingandsupportingstudentsuccess • Emails and links sent to all timetabled staff in 4 designated SEH spaces: 39 responses • Yammer group established: 73 staff members |
| 3 | <p>Surveys on learning spaces.</p> <p>On-going reflection, recording of staff feedback.</p> <p>On-going development for mentors and interested discipline peers.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff evaluations completed: 18 responses • Community Practice continued: http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=iw9onmmoni5 • Resources/learning spaces information established: http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=iw9onmmoni5;SECTION=2 |
| 4 | <p>Evaluation of project.</p> <p>Opportunities for cross College dissemination.</p> <p>Student feedback survey /CES results</p> <p>Academic publications.</p> <p>Presentations</p> <p>Final report</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation framework completed (see below) • Cross-college workshop: SAB 28th Aug 2012 • CES analysis ongoing • McLaughlin, P. and Faulkner, J. 2012, 'Flexible spaces and what students expect from university facilities', in Journal of Facilities Management, Emerald Group Publishing Limited, United Kingdom, vol. 10, no. 2, pp. 140-149 • Presentation: McLaughlin P. "Engaging Students through use of Spaces." Deakin University 18 May 2012 • Final report disseminated LTU website 2012 |

Table 1: Changing Spaces: Peer-led networks to connect people/spaces/technology.

3 Project outcomes and impacts

All of the project outcomes were achieved. Table 1 identifies the outcomes and impacts. The project phases and outcomes are discussed in greater depth in the sections below. The four project phases were based upon an action research methodology. Discussions with peers on ways of using the space, impact on curriculum design and alignment with learning outcomes was used to elicit responses throughout the workshops. These responses from staff embodied in the Community of Practice provided grounded data for analysis and review of the project. To date one published article and one presentation has occurred. Further dissemination will continue into 2013.

3.1 Phase one: Development of the participating staff and workshops with staff mentors and other interested discipline participants

In this phase individual staff who participated in the 2011 LTIF SEH learning space project were approached to extend their professional development as “mentors” in the targeted learning spaces. (BU224; 14.6.16 ; BU205). In addition staff teaching in the targeted spaces were emailed and invited to participate in developmental workshops. This phase occurred in semester 1 and involved meetings between the project team and the “mentors” and others in their spaces. The interest in the 2011 project and the rapport built through reflection, feedback and technological assistance continued to encourage participants. Evidence from the 2011 study indicated that staff wanted to be in control of their learning spaces and wished to pass this knowledge onto others in their discipline to improve outcomes for students. All invited staff were given opportunities to upskill in their selected technologies and opportunities to undertake training in these spaces. Each of the mentors was given on-going support through the project co-ordinator to present at the workshops and to examine pedagogy and curriculum in their discipline. The project was voluntary and 52 staff indicated interest across city and Bundoora campuses. A total of 41 attended the four workshops, the greatest number being in the city. All workshops were cross-disciplinary.

| Project Phase 1: Summary activity | Outcome | Status |
|---|---|----------------------|
| Development of project participants and mentors (BU224; 14.6.16 ; BU205/6) Workshops for academic staff and mentors Staff and mentors using new learning spaces to trial innovations, ideas arising from sessions | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Emails & invitations to all staff teaching in four SEH designated learning spaces/52 responses | Achieved |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Four workshops conducted: total 43 staff attendance (City and Bundoora campus) | Achieved |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Workshop presentation from ITS (Bundoora) | Achieved |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Community Practice established: http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=iw9onmmoni5 | Achieved/ Ongoing |

3.2 Phase two: Development/ Reflection of participating staff

In this phase staff who had participated in the workshops and the communities of practice were given opportunities to reflect and organise their teaching practice. Staff were directed to the resources on the College website and the developing resources in the communities of practice.

Staff timetabled for classes in the designated learning spaces were emailed for second semester involvement in either workshops or the community of practice: 39 responses were received.

| Project Phase 2: Summary activity | Outcome | Status |
|--|--|------------------|
| De-Briefing sessions and dissemination of semester one information | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weblink established for dissemination: http://www.rmit.edu.au/seh/learningteaching/improvingteachingandsupportingstudentsuccess | Achieved/ongoing |
| Second semester staff identified and approached about participating as peers in project. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emails sent to all timetabled staff in 4 designated SEH spaces/39 responses • Email address list of staff in CoP circulated. | Achieved |
| | | Achieved |

3.3 Phase three : Implementation in SEH discipline classes.

This phase occurred in semester 2. The mentors and participating staff using the targeted spaces were invited to participate in a CoP workshop in Swanston Academic Building as a new targeted teaching space for SEH staff. Dissemination sessions were continued through the community of practice and the websites. Discipline based staff were able to utilise these learning and teaching strategies and approaches in their own classes in the identified spaces during semester 2. Staff surveys/evaluations on the workshops were conducted. When available, students CES results in these spaces will be examined to gain an insight into satisfaction with the teaching delivery in these spaces. Participating staff will be encouraged to keep a record of discussions, feedback etc., as well as contribute to the community of practice, which will continue into 2013.

| Project Phase 3: Summary activity | Outcome | Status |
|---|--|------------------|
| Surveys/evaluations on learning spaces workshops. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff evaluations completed • Community Practice continued | Achieved |
| On-going reflection, recording of staff feedback. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=iw9onmmoni5 • Yammer group established/73 members | Achieved/ongoing |
| On-going development for mentors and interested discipline peers. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resources/learning spaces information established: http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=iw9onmmoni5;SECTION=2 | Achieved/ongoing |
| | | Achieved |

3.4. Phase four: Evaluation of project.

At the conclusion of the second semester, mentors and staff were asked to participate in a range of feedback and reflection sessions, including the community of practice. Staff involved were able to contribute information about student experience, feedback, CES and professional development. At the time of writing the CES data is still unavailable but will form the basis of additional analysis in 2013. The available data formed the basis of an academic publication in this area, with a further number in preparation. The project has identified on-going development needs and highlighted opportunities for further sustainable peer-led support in both the existing and other learning spaces.

| Project Phase 4: Summary activity | Outcome | Status |
|---|--|----------------------|
| Evaluation of project. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation framework completed (see below) | Achieved |
| Opportunities for cross College dissemination. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshop conducted in SAB 28th Aug 2012 -23 attendees. | Achieved |
| Student feedback survey /CES results | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CES analysis ongoing | Achieved/ ongoing |
| Academic publications. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • McLaughlin, P. and Faulkner, J. 2012, 'Flexible spaces and what students expect from university facilities', in Journal of Facilities Management, Emerald Group Publishing Limited, United Kingdom, vol. 10, no. 2, pp. 140-149 | Achieved/ ongoing |
| Presentations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation: McLaughlin P. "Engaging Students through use of Spaces." Deakin University 18 May 2012 | Achieved |
| Final report | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final report disseminated LTU website 2012 | Achieved |

4 Dissemination strategies and outputs

Project findings will be disseminated to identified audiences by the provision of engaged information provision. (<http://www.altc.edu.au/print/resource-dissemination-framework-altc-2008>).

| Strategies for Identified stakeholders | Dissemination strategies and Information Provision strategies |
|---|--|
| Strategies to engage with the current users throughout the project, focusing on the learning spaces and the timetabled staff users | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yammer discussion group established and continuing- https://www.yammer.com/rmit.edu.au/#/threads/inGroup?type=in_group&feedId=147513 • Emails & invitations to all staff teaching in SEH project designated learning spaces • Professional development workshops conducted (City and Bundoora campus) |
| Strategies for enabling users to become aware of the relevant outcomes and ideas and how they might be involved in making effective use of them in their teaching | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Practice established and ongoing http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=iw9onmmoni5 |
| Strategies for obtaining feedback during the project from the users | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff workshop evaluation forms • Peer mentor sessions/face to face meetings with staff |
| Strategies for dissemination amongst potential and future users of the learning spaces. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resources/learning spaces information for SEH teaching staff: http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=iw9onmmoni5;SECTION=2 • Emails to potential users re available information via ADG dissemination processes/schools liaison • Community Practice ongoing: http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=iw9onmmoni5 |
| Strategies on the impact of the project outcomes across RMIT and the tertiary sector. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • McLaughlin, P. and Faulkner, J. 2012, 'Flexible spaces and what students expect from university facilities', in Journal of Facilities Management, Emerald Group Publishing Limited, United Kingdom, vol. 10, no. 2, pp. 140-149 • Weblink established for dissemination/reference: http://www.rmit.edu.au/seh/learningteaching/improvingteachingandsupportingstudentsuccess • Involvement in LTU learning spaces workgroup led by Leoni Russell • On-going academic publications based upon project data • Presentation: McLaughlin P. "Engaging Students through use of Spaces." Deakin University 18 May 2012 • Final report disseminated RMIT/LT staff website |

5 Evaluation of project outcomes

The following evaluation framework was utilised throughout the project. It is based upon <http://www.altc.edu.au/extras/altc-gsep/index.html> *. The impact/value to RMIT and the tertiary sector is detailed.

| Key Evaluation questions. | Initiation Stage | Response | Impact/value factor |
|---|------------------|---|---|
| Were planned processes executed and what were actually put in place for the project? | 4 | All planned processes executed except the number of workshops held semester 2 was constrained by the available room timetables. | High Impact: Positive Value to SEH academic staff |
| Were there any variations from the processes that were initially proposed, and if so, why? | 3 & 4 | The availability and suitability of mentors fluctuated during project due to time constraints and space timetabling | Medium impact: Negative Project team |
| How might the project be improved? | 4 | More workshops held at commencement of semester 1 | n/a |
| What were the observable short-term outcomes? | 3 & 4 | Staff interest and enthusiasm Attendance at workshops Community practice numbers | High Impact: Positive Value to SEH academic staff |
| To what extent have the intended outcomes been achieved? | 3 & 4 | All intended outcomes have been achieved. | High Impact: Positive Value to SEH academic staff |
| Were there any unintended outcomes? | 4 | Website/sharing resources Staff networking | High Impact: Positive Value to SEH academic staff |
| What factors hindered in the achievement of the outcomes? | 3 & 4 | Timetabling hindrances Staff availability | Medium impact: Negative Project team |
| What measures, if any, were put in place to promote sustainability of the project's focus and outcomes? | 3 & 4 | Ongoing community practice Web link established Emerging mentors in spaces | High Impact: Positive Value to SEH academic staff |
| What lessons have been learned from this Project/ how are these of assistance to others? | 1- 4 | Communication Diversity of staff ability Help future framing of workshops/disseminations | High Impact: Positive Value to sector - peer journals |

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6. Budget report

The total amount of funds approved was: **\$38,277**

The final amount of funds acquitted was: **\$38,000**

The financial statement is attached.

A single page financial statement (in PDF), signed by the team leader and relevant Finance Manager of acquittal of funds must be included with the report. It should include a statement of income and expenditure against the budget categories specified in the approved project proposal.

Appendix A

Include any material that may support your claims of outcomes and impact.

Attach pictures, presentation material, web links and so on that may be important. In particular, please provide an image that can be used for publications, such as a poster.



New Spaces in Buildings 205 & 224

In 2012, the Changing Spaces LTIF project will continue improving learning and teaching practices in learning spaces.

Staff can enhance their teaching by attending workshops to improve learning spaces skills such as using e-learning tools, developing confidence in delivery methods, teaching in these spaces, getting real-time support, and feedback.

Contact

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New Generation Learning Spaces Community of Practice (CoP) workshop

Held at Bundoora on Thursday 29th March in 205.2.11

Academics were invited to experience and experiment with technologies and the physical layout of these new learning spaces. Participants then shared ideas and observations about how to utilise these spaces to engage students in active and collaborative ways.

This was a great success as it was seen as a productive way to become familiar with the space and technologies.

ADG held similar workshops in the city campus and also in semester two. Resources and details of future CoPs workshops are available here <http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=iw9onmmoni5>



Technology Enabled Learning Environment 1

In 2012, the Changing Spaces LTIF project will continue improving learning and teaching practices in learning spaces.

Staff can enhance their teaching by attending a workshop using the Teaching Enabled Learning Environment 1 (14.6.16) to improve learning space skills such as using e-learning tools, developing confidence in delivery methods, teaching in these spaces, getting real-time support, and feedback.

Contact

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SEH- Learning Spaces

Working with staff to promote best practice of learning and teaching in ALL spaces

www.rmit.edu.au



LTIF 2011

Connecting People, Spaces, Technology

- An action research study looking at how new learning spaces and e-technologies are used 'in practice'.
- Perspectives obtained from teaching staff, students and support staff (eg LTU, ITS, DevelopMe) through class observation, individual and group interviews and on-line forum.
- Key outcomes have assisted teaching staff to:
 - examine and improve their teaching practice
 - provide access to relevant advice and support from teaching colleagues and support staff.

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School/Department/Area

4

LTIF 2012- Space Mentors

- Establish and support "space leaders/mentors" who will mentor other staff using spaces and provide support, ideas and first point of call help.
- Use "space leaders" to introduce new learning and teaching practices into spaces.

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School/Department/Area

5

Communities of Practice

- Using the CoPs to introduce technology and innovative learning/teaching ideas for implementation in new spaces.
- Supportive environment, trial and error opportunities for SEH staff.

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School/Department/Area

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