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Brookes chosen to pilot e-learning project

Oxford Brookes University has been chosen by the Higher Education Academy to be one of 9 HEFCE-funded e-Learning Pathfinder pilot projects. The project is funded to the level of £170,000. Our selection is recognition of the work already completed to embed e-learning into the Brookes Student Learning Experience. The group of 9 universities are working together and individually to 'find a path' by which other institutions can establish sustainable and integrated approaches to e-learning.

The wider aims of the Pathfinder programme is intended to inform HEFCE in shaping future e-Learning policy through the Pro Vice-Chancellors' network. Pathfinder will become an integral part of the HEA Research Observatory dissemination function.

At Brookes, we will be setting in place evaluation-led continuous improvement processes to support the sustainable development of e-learning, and to expand the reach of education and lifelong learning, through:

- **Evaluations** of the student and staff experience of e-learning at Brookes
- **New software** to support collaborative learning and working
- **Staff and educational development programmes** to promote course redesign within communities (programmes, departments, course teams and partnerships).

Pathfinder will support the wider community by working across the University and with our Associate College Partners and the Learning Communities project. We aim to enable the creation of social learning networks of students and staff using collaborative, learner-centred, and self-directed pedagogies.

We will be recruiting two research assistants. One, reporting to Richard Francis in the Media Workshop, will be responsible for developing the integration plan for WebCT with our new repository infrastructure. The other, reporting to Rhona Sharpe in OCSLD, will be responsible for the evaluation of e-learning at Brookes.

The project draws on the wider network of School-based e-Learning Co-ordinators and Learning Technologists as well as central support staff in OCSLD, Media Workshop and Learning Resources.

We will be working with Professor Terry Mayes of Glasgow Caledonian University, as a 'critical friend' to the programme to help ensure that our results are clearly measurable.

The Pathfinding project team consists of:

- George Roberts, Project Manager
- Rhona Sharpe, Evaluation
- Richard Francis, e-Learning Pedagogy
- Stuart Brown, Technical Infrastructures
- Jan Haines, Repositories