



## Special Interest Group

Quality Assurance and Quality Enhancement in e-Learning  
practitioners moving from a QA to QE agenda

[www.qe-sig.net](http://www.qe-sig.net)

### Newsletter – January 2010

#### Background to the SIG

The HE sector is moving towards a position where learning technology is embedded within standard academic practice, and this implementation of technology enhanced learning (TEL) generates challenges for organisations in terms of quality assurance (QA).

There are issues about the appropriateness of QA processes to support TEL, particularly more innovative use of technology to support learning and insufficient attention has been paid to date to the ways in which technology can enhance rather than simply augment LT&A.

THE QA/QE in e-learning Special Interest Group is a practitioner-led group, involving both academic and professional support staff, whose aim is to invigorate quality enhancement practice within higher education in the UK. With an emphasis on the enhancement of teaching, learning and assessment through technology, the group's main objectives are to:

- Aggregate, share and synthesise current and emerging knowledge and practice in quality enhancement related to the use of technology in learning, teaching and assessment (LT&A);
- Building synergies between Higher Education Institutions and with other external sector agencies;
- Influencing local and national policy.

#### 2009 – a busy year of activities

Since the inception of the SIG, Steering Group members have been involved in a number of activities.

Along with discussions with QAA and the HEA, these have included being invited speakers at a workshop for the JISC Curriculum Design and Delivery programmes, various other conference presentations and workshops and a joint workshop event with the EADTU E-xcellence project, hosted at the London Knowledge Lab.

Two of our SIG members, Magdalena Jara and Harvey Mellor have recently published a paper in the Special Issue of 'Quality Assurance in Education' journal entitled 'Factors affecting quality enhancement procedures for e-learning courses'



*Members of the SIG Steering Group*

#### Who's behind the SIG?

The SIG is led by a Steering Group currently chaired by Dr. Eileen Webb of Teesside University, with Ms. Maria Papaefthimiou of Reading University as Deputy Chair.

The website and communications are coordinated by Dr. Dave O'Hare of Derby University. We are also lucky to have the help and support of Dr. Harvey Mellor of the Institute of Education and Professor Peter Chatterton as Executive Ambassadors.

#### Finding out more about the SIG & what it offers

Details of the SIG activities and more can be found on the SIG website ([www.qe-sig.net](http://www.qe-sig.net)), along with a range of resources contributed by members.

The best way to find out more about our work is to become a member of our SIG online community, members are able to discuss issues and ideas with other practitioners and have access to all the resources.

#### 2010 – working with the HEA and QAA

One of the SIG's current projects is to review guidance and produce materials to support quality assurance and enhancement (QA/QE) for all courses which rely on technology for LT&A. This will aim to provide active support for innovative curriculum design and place emphasis on enhancement within quality assurance processes.

With the support of an HEA grant, the SIG is presently actively working on the following three key areas:

- Developing a commentary and critique of the QAA Code of Practice Section 2 (QAA 2004) involving consultations with the sector, and in collaboration with the QAA. These consultations will be facilitated by survey and targeted workshops (details below).
- Developing a trainer's on-line toolkit for 'Quality Enhancement of Technology-Supported Learning, Teaching & Assessment' based on the face-to-face workshops run by SIG members within the Pathfinder Network project 'QA-QE in e-learning'. The aim of the toolkit is to support the embedding of quality enhancement within academic practice associated with TEL.
- Organising a conference during 2010 in conjunction with the HEA and QAA to share the findings from the analysis of the QAA Code of Practice, and to disseminate the Toolkit.

#### Dates for your diary

##### HE Sector Consultation Activities – QAA Code of Practice

- Online Questionnaire – January 2010  
<http://tinyurl.com/yexa58w>
- Southern workshop – 5 February 2010  
London Knowledge Lab, Institute of Education  
Details from Barbara Newland  
[bnewland@bournemouth.ac.uk](mailto:bnewland@bournemouth.ac.uk)
- Northern Workshop – 19 February 2010  
HEA Offices, York  
Details from Judith Kuit  
[judith.kuit@sunderland.ac.uk](mailto:judith.kuit@sunderland.ac.uk)

##### First International Conference on quality for e-learning 2 July 2010

Fielder Centre, University of Hertfordshire

The conference will focus on our work with the HEA & QAA on the Code of Practice as well as launching our trainer's online toolkit for "Quality Enhancement of Technology-Supported Learning, Teaching and Assessment". It will include a keynote from Professor Colin Raban as well as a Panel of Specialists including academics, QA/QE specialists and representatives from the QAA, HEA and JISC.