

Consolidating Understanding: How to Transform Higher Education through Technology Enhanced Learning

Workshop Chairs

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Description, Topic and Goals of Workshop

The primary objective of this workshop is to consolidate learning to enable more consistent progress in the deployment of technology enhanced learning. Critical success factors and lessons learnt from our mistakes are two sides of the same coin. Evidence which contributes to debates in this area can emerge from a number of different sources. The current era of using the Web and the Internet to enhance learning builds on significant advances which were made from the mid-1990's. Over the last decade and a half numerous projects and programs worldwide have attempted to harness the power of computers and communications technologies to enhance learning.

The literature on technology enhanced learning contains much on individual innovations which have been engineered to address specific educational issues. But individual institutions are also consolidating learning through activities such as benchmarking of e-learning. The evidence can therefore be drawn from two rather different perspectives, the individual technologically inspired view, and the more holistic, strategic, institutional view.

Most conferences and workshops report on success stories only. But reality consists of successes, failures, and many points in between. Perhaps the most interesting is the knowledge which has accumulated which enables project managers to identify potential failures at an early stage and apply remedial measures. This type of knowledge is extremely valuable. Millions are being invested to innovate education, and to build European-wide strength and cohesion in the area of technology enhanced learning. As a community which sees its future strength in knowledge, harnessing technology effectively to facilitate high quality post-secondary education is especially important. For this reason, it would be especially helpful to develop a Pan European perspective which is able to differentiate between factors which are specific to particular approaches to education, and those understandings which have a more global value. A useful discussion was begun at previous conferences, but there are many more contributions which could be made. What hard-learned lessons aren't we hearing about? What are the challenges that even successful projects have faced? What about the projects that don't work out as planned?

The workshop will therefore make a further effort to compare the learning from what has succeeded with the less well-documented evidence of activities which have not succeeded in the manner which was originally intended. Combining these two threads, what can we learn from these lessons in E-Learning projects? How do we utilize both successes and failures to improve our work?

In this workshop, we will explore these and related questions. We will explicitly solicit papers that report on Technology Enhanced Learning projects that did NOT achieve the originally intended outcome. And we will explicitly solicit papers that report on the success factors and lessons learned that could be generalized or extended to other projects.

The major outcomes of this workshop will be

1. An understanding of some critical success factors in embedding eLearning within educational institutions;
2. An understanding of the factors that can lead to failure;
3. A research agenda for future funding programmes and projects to address.

The purpose of this workshop is to provide a forum for participants in mature eLearning projects or institutions with extensive deployment of learning technologies to exchange information about the lessons learned from their projects/implementation in trying to bring about technological and cultural change within their institutions.

This workshop will bring together themes from three previous workshops;

e-Failures (at EC-TEL 2006) http://www.ectel06.org/workshops.html#e_Failures

CSFIC 2006 (at ECDL 2006) <http://www.csfic.ecs.soton.ac.uk/>

WWWrong (at EC-TEL 2007) <http://ariadne.cs.kuleuven.be/ec-tel07/>

Structure of Workshop and Selecting Workshop Participants

The day will be split into three parts.

1. Presentation of short papers describing project outcomes
2. Round table discussion of lessons learned
3. Round table facilitated discussion of open issues.

The workshop registration will be open to all. Presenters will be asked to write short papers (6-10 pages) for presentation and publication.

There will be a call for papers, which as well as being advertised through the customary EC-TEL channels will also be pushed through EU and UK e-learning funding programme channels. A maximum number of delegates will be set in order to ensure that round table discussion will be possible.

Submissions for full papers will be evaluated by the workshop chairs, along with a PC if the demand is large. The following evaluation criteria will be used:

1. Description of success or failure and factors.

2. ability of the presenter to deliver an engaging presentation which invites and elicits interactivity with the workshop participants;
3. fit within the overall workshop programme to ensure a range of different experiences which will provide an interesting and broad view of the topic for discussion in the workshop session;

The results of the workshop will be published as a report. If the quality of the submissions warrants it, the chairs will also seek to publish selected papers through a special issue of a suitable Journal such as IEEE Journal of Educational Technology & Society. Outcomes of the workshop will also be reported to the Society for Research in Higher Education, the JISC and the Higher Education Academy in the UK.

The Workshop Chairs

Su White is a senior lecturer in Computer Science in ECS at the University of Southampton. She is also one of the University's Learning and Teaching Co-ordinators responsible for enhancement and change and has been involved as national co-ordinator on e-learning projects. Her PhD concerned the Institutional Context for technological change.

Su's current research includes exploration of factors associated with organisational change in the context of technology-enhanced learning. In 2007 she was one of the organizers of the successful 2007 EC-TEL workshop titled 'What Went Wrong'; this followed on from a related event in 2006 at the European conference on Digital Libraries which looked at Critical Success factors for educational change. Su has considerable experience of workshop organisation and dissemination and was Chair of the 2007 UK Higher Education Academy's conference in innovations in teaching in Information and Computer Science.

Maggie McPherson's is a Senior Lecturer in ICT in Education at the University of Leeds. Her interests include holistic approaches to technology-enhanced learning through action research, with a strong focus on Critical Success Factors for e Learning. In addition to publishing a number of journal articles on this topic, she has since 2005 edited two special editions of BJET which have addressed this important topic. In addition to active participation in a number of Pan European consortia in the area of e-learning, Maggie is currently working with Su White and Professor Paul Bacsich to organize workshops and a seminar series in the UK which address Transforming Higher Education in Higher Education through Technology Enhanced Learning (THE-TEL).

Technical Requirements

Data Projector, Whiteboard, Flip Charts, Flexible seating that can be arranged for both presentations and round table discussions. Internet connectivity is preferred but is not essential for this workshop.