

Situated Personal Development Planning

Peter Hughes

University of Bradford, UK

Neil Carrant

University of Salford, UK

Jackie Haigh

University of Bradford, UK

Carol Higgison

University of Bradford, UK

Ruth Whitfield

University of Bradford, UK

Abstract

In the UK, institutional strategies regarding Personal Development Planning (PDP) are based on two main approaches: 1) legitimising local practices, with an emphasis on PDP process, and 2) central approaches, often IT based, focused on meeting threshold requirements (Ward et al., 2006).

This paper reports on the nature and purposes of situated PDP practices that have evolved in four academic programmes of study within a UK university that took the first approach. The study examines the sorts of local PDP practices that have developed within such an institutional framework; how they have come about and what they say about the role and nature of PDP.

Using an ethnographic approach, supplemented by staff interviews and document analysis, the four case studies illustrate how an enabling institutional framework has afforded academic course teams the spaces to develop implicit and explicit PDP practices. In two cases a formal and explicit programme-deep model of PDP through e-Portfolio has been developed. In the others, there are implicit, but strong PDP practices evident

although they are not necessarily claimed as PDP. The four case studies are not readily categorised but they do exhibit hybrid characteristics of the 'professional', 'employment' and 'academic' domains (Clegg and Bradley, 2006).

In conclusion, it will be argued that the diverse and situated nature of PDP practices that have emerged in different contexts need not be seen as institutionally troublesome. These four cases present authentic pictures of what PDP has become, even if it isn't called PDP.

Key words: PDP; e-Portfolio; academic practice; curriculum; social practices.

Introduction

In the UK, institutional strategies regarding Personal Development Planning (PDP) are based on two main approaches (Ward, Jackson and Strivens, 2006):

- 1) Legitimising local practices, with an emphasis on PDP process.
- 2) Central approaches, often IT based, focused on meeting threshold requirements.

Within these two broad categories lies a diversity of PDP practices. The key purpose of this paper is to see **what PDP has become** in different academic settings, rather than to evaluate PDP practices against some ideal type of what policy makers think it ought to be.

To this end this paper will capture four rich pictures of situated PDP practice that have developed within the context of one UK Higher Education Institution (HEI). We build on the work of Haigh (2008) in looking at the social practices that influence the creation and implementation of PDP.

PDP as curriculum development

The idea that all students in UK HEIs should engage in PDP, which together with the institutional transcript would make up something called a 'Progress File', was put forward by the Dearing Report (1997). The definitive 'Guidelines for HE Progress Files' (UUK, SCOP, Universities Scotland and QAA, 2001) emerged in 2001 (revised, QAA, 2009) and

have framed the PDP/Progress File policy context since then. The headline requirement of these guidelines was that all UK HEIs would offer PDP to students on all HE awards by 2005/6. As such, this represents a major curriculum change initiative.

Wholesale curriculum change raises many issues, and as D'Andrea and Gosling (2005, p.15) point out:

Many faculty/staff feel alienated by the increased levels of bureaucracy and administration forced on them. The pace and extent of change have led to weariness and resistance to what is perceived to be externally imposed shifts in the higher education environment.

Curriculum development is a complex process. Curricula emerge through a mediation of individual, departmental, faculty/school, institutional and professional/disciplinary factors. Toohey's (1999) analysis of curriculum design practices revealed five major types: discipline-based, performance-based, cognitive, experiential and socially critical. Without getting into the detail of what each approach might imply for PDP – the key point to make is that with varied academic contexts, and varied approaches to curriculum design, it should be anticipated that PDP will be received, rejected, welcomed, contested and reconfigured in different ways in different contexts. As Clegg puts it (2003, p.817), although dominant policy discourse may present improvements in learning and teaching as axiomatic, what these mean on the ground will be mediated through the concrete actions of those implementing policy.

Situated academic practices

When academics and learning development professionals design PDP learning activities, they are engaged in academic practice. As discussed above, PDP therefore needs to be considered in the **situation** where it is designed and implemented. The idea of situated academic practice lies at the convergence of a number of ideas:

- Discipline-based 'academic tribes' with distinct practices in research and learning and teaching (Becher and Trowler, 2001).
- Communities of Practice (CoP) (Lave and Wenger, 1991).

- Ways of Thinking and Practicing (WTP) (Entwistle, 2003).

A further way of exploring the various influences on academic practices lies with a social practices approach (Bamber et al., 2009). This approach recognises that people are 'carriers of practices', and develop unique sets of practices in different contexts. When looking at HEIs, this perspective will reveal a 'multi-cultural configuration' of different social practices in different locales. These practices are shaped by 'tools', which might be anything from a policy document to a specific piece of learning technology. The practices that emerge will also be significantly influenced by the dominant discourse of each context. A further key element is that 'histories and stories about the past will impact on enhancement initiatives in the present' (Trowler, 2010, p.5).

Institutional context

The University of Bradford was established in 1966 as one of a group of 'technological' universities. In UK terms it is small-medium sized. More than 70% of its taught courses are professionally accredited or recognised. The university has a strong widening participation mission. Its current student profile reflects a strong local/regional basis (44% of first year students live at home) but also a high proportion of international students (20% - currently the highest of any UK HEI outside of London). Just over half the students are black or ethnic minorities (BEM). The university is organised around seven academic schools: Life Sciences; Management; Engineering, Design and Technology; Health; Computing, Informatics and Media; Social and International Studies and Lifelong Education and Development.

The university established a Progress Files Working Group in 2003 which developed an institutional Framework for Personal Development Planning. This was agreed by Senate in May 2005 and has been integrated with the institutional Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy. The framework anticipates that Bradford students' PDP experiences will largely be defined by their academic course, and while requiring a threshold provision of PDP opportunity for students, is not directive or restrictive. The process of establishing a PDP framework also led to the adoption of an institution-wide e-Portfolio provision from 2007-8, with the commercial PebblePad package being selected.

Methodology

This paper emerges from a small-scale study that was conducted as part of the Higher Education Academy (HEA) funded National Teaching Fellowship Scheme (NTFS) project strand: The National Action Research Network for Researching PDP and e-Portfolios (2007-2010). A related project, conducted in parallel with this one, draws upon a similar evidence base but has a primary focus on the use of e-Portfolios in the development of learner autonomy (Currant et al., 2010).

The authors are all immersed in the PDP practices of the institution, be that as subject-based lecturers, educational and learning developers or learning technologists. All of us are to some degree PDP teachers, the majority of us also provide advice and training on aspects of PDP and/or e-Portfolios to other academic and learner support staff across the institution. As such we are very much engaged as actors and agents in the processes that this research area covers. While this gives us great access to what we have researched, we acknowledge that our own activities and perspectives will have some influence on our interpretation of PDP practices.

Within this context our research has been conducted using a pragmatic, mixed method approach (Johnson, 2004) drawing upon elements of ethnography and case study analysis (Cousin, 2009). It is primarily qualitative in nature. The ethnographic approach emerges from us being immersed in the field of inquiry, noting and gathering impressions and evidence relating to PDP within the context of the academic **cultures** that they are produced in. This evidence partly comes from formal research interventions, like interviews and document analysis (or course documents, programme specifications, module handbooks), and partly through informal observations and conversations gathered through our normal working practices. A case study approach is appropriate to our emphasis on situated academic practices and our interest in looking at how PDP has developed in specific case-bounded circumstances. Through purposeful sampling we selected four academic programmes of study as our cases, each from different schools of the university.

Situated PDP – four cases

Some description is necessary to provide context for the situated PDP practice, but in selecting certain aspects of each case to foreground here we are also offering an interpretative perspective. Drawing from our synthesis of evidence relating to the cases, we are presenting some key elements of the particularities of situated PDP, and some explanation and interpretation of how those came about. As explained above, we want to outline **what PDP has become** in each of the cases, but also explore what has influenced it to develop in that way.

Psychology

This is a relatively newly established degree course for the University, and is accredited by the British Psychological Society (BPS). From its inception it was recognised that there was an opportunity to forge links between the academic subject content (e.g. key concepts in educational psychology) with provision for the learning development of the students. A first year module The Psychology of Learning and Study was created with this in mind: students study concepts like metacognition, but then reflect on how what they have learned affects their own learning. Students compile and present an e-Portfolio which includes reflections, action plans and a CV.

Beyond the first year PDP is not formally embedded within a module, but is integrated to the course through personal tutor support, and students and tutors have a PDP handbook for each year of the degree. The lecturer who co-ordinates PDP describes its key role as:

To get students into the way of studying and reflecting on that. To provide structured support that integrates learning of skills, reflection and self-development. A key aspect is alignment with the British Psychological Society's expectations for students.

Two excerpts from student first-year portfolios illustrate the sorts of approaches that students can take within this environment:

One of the most important goals for me was to become involved in some sort of voluntary work. It is my ultimate goal to become a clinical psychologist and work in the National Health Service or a Mental Health Trust. Enrolling as a volunteer will certainly improve my CV when I begin to apply for postgraduate study or for prospective jobs. (Student A, portfolio extract)

In reflection to the goals and steps outlined above, I view them to be quite realistic. This is a self evaluative reaction as outlined by Baumeister (1999) in relation to self efficacy. (Student B, portfolio extract)

The first of these reveals a strong professional orientation, the second illustrates how a combination of subject knowledge and self-reflection has been elicited by the Psychology of Learning and Study module.

An earlier investigation of the relationship between metacognition, reflection and learning on this module showed that students viewed the engagement with e-Portfolio as positive, and that both structured and unstructured reflection through the e-Portfolio improve the students' use of metacognitive strategies (Rodway et al., 2008).

In developing their approach, the subject group have drawn upon the resources of the UK Higher Education Academy Psychology Network (e.g. Lantz, 2008), and have also made use of instruments developed by the central Learner Development Unit (LDU) of the university, for example, the SaPRA tool (<http://www.brad.ac.uk/developme/sapra/>) (Carrant et al., 2008a). This illustrates a desire both to situate the PDP practice within the national subject base but also within the resources of the broader institution. The approach to PDP is programme-deep and embedded and has both strong academic and professional orientation.

Combined Studies

Like many UK HEIs, the University of Bradford offers a programme of study whereby students can study different, normally discrete, subjects in various combinations. Such courses often have a strong ethos of lifelong learning. Unlike most other degree

programmes within UK higher education, there is no subject benchmark to frame the nature of the provision, nor is there a Higher Education Subject Centre.

The host school for BA/BSc Combined Studies degree requested a staff development session relating to PDP. The request for the session was partly motivated by a perception that the course PDP provision was not yet up to speed with institutional and national requirements. This perception was partly fed by the fact that little or nothing that students did within the course was labelled as PDP. During the course of the workshop, when the design and practices of the course were examined, a different story emerged.

The course offers students the opportunity to combine courses from different parts of the university, but in order to bring some coherence to the student experience, there are a number of core modules:

- In 1st year: The Effective Learner; Communication in an Information Age.
- In 2nd year: Critical Planning; Career Planning.
- In 3rd Year: Dissertation.

An excerpt from the Programme learning outcomes illustrates how much of what would be typically regarded as PDP activity is embedded in the course:

On completion of the Combined Studies core modules, you will be able to: develop self-management and study skills appropriate to your own needs and the requirements of your course of study; formulate a career development plan to implement in both the short and long terms, showing a connection between past, present and future career goals; through personal reflection evaluate your skills, abilities, interests and values and relate these to a range of career options; demonstrate an ability to plan and complete a study based on a selected topic. (Excerpt: BA/BSC Combined Studies Programme Specification).

The two main constituencies of the student body are: mature students, motivated but lacking confidence as learners; students repeating after failing in other courses, less motivated and again lacking in confidence as learners. The social and learning context of one learner is illustrated by the following portfolio extract:

The amount of work each week did sometimes prove difficult being a single parent, working full time and having only a laptop between us at home. I did manage to complete most, but not all, of the tasks on time. Time management is certainly something to improve for future modules, as well as the purchase of another computer, as my children use the laptop for their homework as did I for this module. (Student C, portfolio extract)

Another student reflected on a key PDP process, action planning, within the context of her primary motivation for coming to university:

I always have an action plan at the back of my mind, err I've come here to do something, I've come here to learn, I've taken time out,...I want to learn and as I said, I'm an independent learner, what I've come for and that's what I want to achieve so my hard work will prove it I hope. (Student F, interview)

Another pointed to the benefits that emerged from being asked to engage in ongoing, week by week reflective activity:

It's a week by week reflection on how we err see the module, what we've been doing, what we've learnt, kind of a week by week reflection if you like on, on how we've learned and then doing the actual sort of end of module reflective statement you've actually got the blogs to refer back to because I didn't realise how much you've actually learnt; because it is step by step. You don't appreciate until you actually look back and, oh yeah this is what I thought at the beginning and then you can see how you've built up all the way through. So it has been really good. (Student E, interview)

The key thing to draw out from this case is the fact that the course team have identified a particular set of learning development needs for their students, and designed a curriculum appropriate to meet those. This involves developing purposeful learning habits, reflection and action planning. This design would be widely recognised as a PDP curriculum, but it has not been developed as a response to a sector or institutional PDP agenda, it is just the

appropriate curriculum for their students. PDP is context specific rather than discipline specific in this situation.

Geography, Environmental Science and Environmental Management

These are three closely related small degree programmes offered from within the School of Life Sciences. Tutors have taken a proactive attitude to integrating skills development, collaborative working and reflection into the curriculum (Hopkinson et al., 2003). In the first year students complete a module in Contemporary Issues in Geography and Environmental Management which has a skills focus (Hopkinson and Whitfield, 2005). In the second year, Environmental Management: Case Studies involves collaborative working with a strong emphasis on employability and real-world engagement (Hopkinson et al., 2009). The final year features an initiative that embeds reflective learning and e-Portfolio use within a mainstream subject based module (Hughes, 2010; Hughes et al., 2010).

An extract from a student portfolio mid-way through their final year gives a glimpse into how the relationships between personal interest, career development and academic aspects of the course can be integrated within a student's reflection and planning activity:

I remain excited by the challenges within the field of water management...In this light, I wish to gain a position dealing with the legislative aspects of (global) water management...my 'dream job' would be with the UN Water Centre in Hamilton, Canada,...This strongly influenced my module choices last summer. I chose Global Environmental Management as at its core is the critical engagement with global management systems, strongly overlapping with my ambitions for my future in regards to water. (Student G, portfolio extract)

A number of issues emerge from exploring the PDP activity in this subject area. There is a strong influence of staff personal epistemologies of teaching which has led to a willingness to innovate and to engage with learning and teaching initiatives. However, there is a strong emphasis on contextualising and grounding this within the subject study. To aid in this there has been significant engagement with the HEA-GEES subject centre which has been proactive in developing the PDP, skills and employability agenda with Geography, Earth and Environmental Sciences (Gedye and Chalkley, 2006). Much of the relevant curriculum

activity is not labelled PDP and in some cases emerges from 'key skills' initiatives that pre-date PDP. If students were asked if they were doing PDP, they would probably not know, yet the core components of PDP are embedded in their curriculum.

The relatively small size of the course has raised some issues as institutional reorganisations have changed where the subject department is located. When this happens, PDP curriculum practices that have evolved internally over many years can be under pressure from, for example, merging modules with those offered by associated subjects. This illustrates that if PDP practices are to endure, they need to be resilient to change.

Midwifery

The Midwifery programme is delivered through Problem-Based Learning (PBL) and has a distinctive core spine of Lifelong Learning modules. In each of these modules students compile an e-Portfolio and throughout their course they are recording and reflecting on their academic and professional experiences (Haigh and Meddings, 2008). The portfolio building activity serves to link the academic and practice parts of the course and continues while students are on placements (Haigh and Currant, 2010). Students complete reflective statements at the beginning and end of each year and the final year portfolio also includes reflections on preparing for and attending job interviews.

An extract from a final year portfolio student illustrates the proactive attitude toward PDP at the beginning of the year:

Academically this will be a tough year. I have already started to develop plans for my practice project and have made contact with significant people for support. I have organised my learning needs and intend to make use of all available support from the university. I will discuss all plans with my personal tutor and will access her support on a regular basis. I have made arrangements to take part in various workshops run by the Learner Development Unit to develop my writing skills and develop a more confident attitude when carrying out presentations. (Student D, portfolio extract)

This programme serves as an example of PDP being fully embedded within assessed modules at each level of study. These life-long learning modules have been explicitly designed to support students' transition and progression into, through and out of their university study into their profession. Although stand-alone modules, they also serve to integrate other aspects of the programme, for example, practice placements and inter-professional learning.

One consequence of the move toward PDP through e-Portfolio in this course has been that what has been typically seen as an individual process (personal reflection, personal action planning), has become more collaborative as students share reflections and support each other through the e-Portfolio, particularly when they are in practice settings (Haigh and Carrant, 2010). Thus personal development planning is becoming collaborative development planning (Carrant et al., 2008b).

Discussion and conclusion

The brief outlines above give a glimpse into the diverse forms of PDP curriculum that have developed within different social contexts. The mix of influences on these practices includes professions, disciplines, student characteristics, personal epistemologies of individual teachers, institutional context, resources and technologies. In response to the question 'what has PDP become?', the answer is different in each context.

It is tempting to try to fit this diversity into boxes, to order and classify it. For example, we could analyse the cases in terms of Clegg and Bradley's (2006) three ideal types of PDP: professional; employment; and academic. However, it is more consistent with a social practices based analysis to revel in the particularities of each case. We have exposed a range of situated **pedagogies** of PDP; we have not identified a best practice **pedagogy** of PDP.

We haven't addressed in this project questions about which of these practices, these pedagogies, are more or less successful in promoting student learning. The general thrust of our argument is that the context, the situation, is absolutely key. What may be empirically shown to be an effective PDP practice in one context, **may** not translate into another context. As Ylijoki states (2000, p.360):

...there can be no universal criteria for quality nor any single, correct model to be mechanistically implemented in order to improve teaching. Instead, both the assessment and the improvement of teaching have to emanate from each department's own cultural bias.

What we think the four cases do show is that local contexts and cultures (and the individuals of which they are composed) are influential in shaping PDP practices. These can be learning cultures which can respond to changing circumstances (e.g. in characteristics of students). These local cultures are in turn situated within and mediated by their institutional context, with the institutional 'centre' seen both as a pressure and a resource. A social practices analysis of these cases shows that although individual and local practices have had the space to develop, there is still a broader social context that these situations are positioned within. As Kogan (2000, p.210) puts it, part of individual academic identity is a professional identity:

...which is both individual and social, so that people are stronger because of their expertise and their own moral and conceptual frameworks, but also performing a range of roles which are strongly determined by the communities and institutions of which they are members.

If we can say anything about PDP effectiveness at this stage, it would be that, from a social practices perspective, pedagogies of PDP are likely to be better understood, and more relevant, if they are developed and introduced paying attention to the range of social influences on curriculum design. Perhaps the PDP community, and policy makers, need to worry less about whether the right sort of PDP is happening, and instead focus on encouraging 'reflective practice within reflexive departments that are situated in learning universities' (Trowler et al., 2005, p.440).

Acknowledgement

This paper is an outcome of the National Action Research Network on researching and evaluating Personal Development Planning and e-Portfolio practice project (2007-2010). The project was led by the University of Bolton in association with the University of

Worcester and Centre for Recording Achievement, and in national collaboration with the University of Bedfordshire, Bournemouth University and University of Bradford. The project was funded by the Higher Education Academy, National Teaching Fellowship Project strand. More details about the project can be found at:

<http://www.recordingachievement.org/research/narn-tree.html>.

References

- Bamber, R., Trowler, P., Saunders, M. and Knight, P. (2009) *Enhancing learning, teaching, assessment and curriculum in higher education*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Becher, T. and Trowler, P. (2001) *Academic tribes and territories*. 2nd edn. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Clegg, S. (2003) 'Learning and teaching policies in higher education: mediations and contradictions of practice', *British Educational Research Journal*, 29(6), pp. 803-819.
- Clegg, S. and Bradley, S. (2006) 'Models of personal development: practices and processes', *British Educational Research Journal*, 32(1), pp. 57-76.
- Cousin, G. (2009) *Researching learning in higher education*, New York and Abingdon: Routledge.
- Currant, N., Currant, R. and Whitfield, R. (2008a) 'From paper to e-Portfolio: the meteoric progression of a university skills tool', *Learning Excellence – Making it Happen: JISC RSC-YH E-learning Conference*. University of Bradford 10 June. Available at: <http://www.slideshare.net/ncurrant/online-skills-profile> (Accessed: 9 June 2010).
- Currant, N., Hughes, P., Currant, R. and Whitfield, R. (2008b) 'From PDP to CDP? Exploring PDP and Web 2.0 connections at Bradford', *PDP and Web 2.0: Opportunity for Partnership? CRA Seminar*. Available at: <http://www.elp.ac.uk/downloads/craweb2.pdf> (Accessed: 9 June 2010).

- Currant, N., Haigh, J., Higgison, C., Hughes, P., Rodway, P. and Whitfield, R. (2010) *Designing e-Portfolio based learning activities to promote learner autonomy: final report to the Fourth Cohort of the Inter/National Coalition for Research into Electronic Portfolios*. Available at:
<http://ncepr.org/finalreports/cohort4/University%20of%20Bradford%20Final%20Report.pdf> [Accessed: 9 June 2010].
- D'Andrea, V.M. and Gosling, D. (2005) *Improving teaching and learning in higher education: a whole institution approach*. London: McGraw-Hill.
- Dearing, R. (1997) *Report of the national committee of inquiry into higher education*. London: HMSO.
- Entwistle, N. (2003) *Concepts and conceptual frameworks underpinning the ETL project: occasional report 3*. Edinburgh: TLRP and ESRC. Available at:
<http://www.ed.ac.uk/etl/docs/ETLreport3.pdf> (Accessed: 18 January 2007).
- Gedye, S. and Chalkley, B. (2006) *Employability within geography, earth and environmental sciences*. Plymouth: HEA-GEES. Available at:
<http://www.gees.ac.uk/pubs/guides/emp/geesemployability.pdf> (Accessed: 9 June 2010).
- Haigh, J. (2008) 'Integrating progress files into the academic process: a review of case studies', *Active Learning in Higher Education*, 9, pp. 57-71.
- Haigh, J. and Meddings, F. (2008) 'Using an assessed e-Portfolio to support and monitor personalised and collaborative learning in an undergraduate midwifery programme', *Conference Proceedings: e-Portfolios, Identity and Personalised Learning in Healthcare Education, Special Report 10*. Newcastle: HEA-Medicine, Dentistry and Veterinary Medicine [Online]. Available at:
http://www.medev.heacademy.ac.uk/static/uploads/workshop_resources/105/105_ePortfolios_LR.pdf (Accessed: 9 June 2010).

- Haigh, J. and Carrant, N. (2010) 'Guiding, supporting and assessing midwifery students in clinical placements', *Effective use of PebblePad: a collection of case studies from PebbleBash 2010* [Online]. Available at:
<http://www.pebblepad.co.uk/pp2010/cs04.pdf> (Accessed: 22 July 2010).
- Hopkinson, P., Sharp, L. and Whitfield, R. (2003) 'Demonstrating progress in key skills – stories from the front line', *Learning and Teaching Conference*. University of Bradford 18 June.
- Hopkinson, P. and Whitfield, R. (2005) 'Measuring key skills through progress files', *Learning, Teaching and Assessment Conference*. University of Bradford 7 June.
- Hopkinson, P., Sharp, L., Leigh Miles, S. and Comerford Boyes, L. (2009) 'From Harvard to Bradford: experiences of running a peer education for sustainable development project', *Planet*, 22, pp. 34-38 [Online]. Available at:
<http://www.gees.ac.uk/planet/p22/phlssmlb.pdf> (Accessed: 9 June 2010).
- Hughes, P. (2010) 'A critical, collaborative and constructivist pedagogy for the social science of climate change', in Haslett, S.K., France, D. and Gedye, S. (eds.) *Pedagogy of climate change*. Plymouth: HEA-GEES. (in press)
- Hughes, P., Carrant, N., Haigh, J., Higginson, C. and Whitfield, R. (2010) 'Integrating subject knowledge and self-development to promote learner autonomy through e-portfolios', *GEES Learning and Teaching to 2020: GEES Subject Centre 10th Annual Conference*. University of Plymouth 7-9 July [Online].
<http://gees.ac.uk/events/2010/ac2010/ac2010.htm> (Accessed: 23 July 2010).
- Johnson, A.J. (2004) 'Mixed methods research: a research paradigm whose time has come', *Educational Researcher*, 33(7), pp. 14-26.
- Kogan, M. (2000) 'Higher education communities and academic identity', *Higher Education Quarterly*, 54(3), pp. 207-216.

- Lantz, C. (2008) 'Psychology student employability guide', *Higher Education Academy Psychology Network* [Online]. Available at: http://www.psychology.heacademy.ac.uk/docs/pdf/p20080915_Employability_Guide.pdf (Accessed: 9 June 2010).
- Lave, J. and Wenger, E. (1991) *Situated learning: legitimate peripheral participation*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- QAA (2009) *Personal development planning: guidance for institutional policy and practice in higher education*. Gloucester: QAA.
- Rodway, P., Schepman, A. and Hartley, P. (2008) 'The effect of e-Portfolios on reflection and metacognition', *Psychology Learning and Teaching Conference*. Bath 1-3 July 2008 [Online]. Available at: <http://www.psychology.heacademy.ac.uk/plat2008/html/programme.asp> (Accessed: 9 June 2010).
- Toohy, S. (1999) *Designing courses for higher education*. Buckingham: SRHE/OUP.
- Trowler, P., Fanghanel, J. and Wareham, T. (2005) 'Freeing the chi of change: the Higher Education Academy and enhancing teaching and learning in higher education', *Studies in Higher Education*, 30(4), pp. 427-444.
- Trowler, P. (2010) 'Large scale university curriculum change: from practice to theory (and back again)', *Tomorrow's Sustainable Universities*, University of Bradford 15-16 July. [Online]. Available at: <http://www.brad.ac.uk/sustainable-universities/media/SustainableUniversities/Keynote-Prof-Paul-Trowler.pdf> (Accessed: 4 October 2010).
- UUK, SCOP, Universities Scotland and QAA (2001) *Guidelines for HE progress files* [Online]. Available at: <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/progressfiles/guidelines/progfile2001.pdf> (Accessed: 9 June 2010).

Ward, R., Jackson, N. and Strivens, J. (2006) *Progress files – are we achieving our goals? A working paper*. Centre for Recording Achievement and The Higher Education Academy. [Online]. Available at:
http://www.recordingachievement.org/research/narn.html?view=item&item_id=397
(Accessed: 24 August 2010).

Ylijoki, O.H. (2000) 'Disciplinary cultures and the moral order of studying: a case study of four Finnish university departments', *Higher Education*, 39(3), pp. 339-362.

Author details

Peter Hughes is Senior Lecturer in Learning Development within the Centre for Educational Development at the University of Bradford
(p.hughes3@bradford.ac.uk).

Neil Currant is Academic Development Adviser in the Learning Development Unit at the University of Salford.

Jackie Haigh is Lecturer in Midwifery in the Division of Midwifery and Reproductive Health at the University of Bradford.

Carol Higgison is Senior Lecturer in e-Learning within the Centre for Educational Development at the University of Bradford.

Ruth Whitfield is Learning Architect within the Centre for Educational Development at the University of Bradford.