

In ConTact

Newsletter of the RSC Scotland South & West

April 2010

Fionnuala Carmichael—RSC Manager

A date for your diary! On Thursday the 3rd June we will be holding our Annual Conference at the Caledonian University in Glasgow. Themed 'Best of the West' we will be featuring examples of innovative practice from around the institutions we support in the south and west of Scotland. It promises to be an exciting event. Do take a look at our conference website to find out more about the event and book early to take advantage of our discounted rate.

<http://bit.ly/awKx4o>



Throughout the year we have been researching and creating case studies from around the region and hosting them on our website. Over 30 case studies are currently available in a variety of different and complementary formats and the number is growing, reflecting the wide range of exciting initiatives and activities happening locally in the FE & HE sectors. From access and inclusion to staff development; from the use of learning technologies to managing the curriculum; from server virtualisation to plagiarism, these case studies reflect the innovative and interesting ways in which staff and also learners have exploited new technologies to benefit and enhance learning and teaching.

On our website you'll also find [a web page for each of our supported institutions](#) where we are shining a spotlight on the people we support and providing a mechanism for sharing experiences. Using videos, podcasts and other media and resources, they reflect the great work going on that harnesses new technologies to benefit learners.

Best of the West



Contents

Online Accessibility Self-Evaluation Service

e-Books for FE

Banking on Success

RSCTv:

Five Top Copyright Law Tips for Colleges and Universities

Events

JISC RSC Scotland South & West Team

Online Accessibility Self-Evaluation Service

We have launched our new Online Accessibility Self -Evaluation Service (OASES). This resource aims to support managers to help identify areas of current strength and areas for development in terms of accessibility and inclusion. It targets key players whose actions can play a significant role in facilitating an inclusive and accessible learning experience.

If you are interested in undertaking this process, we will provide you with an online questionnaire and, on completion of the survey, we will report the outcomes. This will be benchmarked against wider practice across the UK based on findings of earlier UK wide JISC TechDis evaluations. Institutions can compare their own responses with those of the wider sector in order to benchmark their progress in a variety of areas and formulate a list of priority areas to address. The evaluations will focus on specific areas of practice within an institution:



Institutional
Self
Accessibility
Evaluation
Reflect
Inclusion

Senior Managers

With a variety of agendas to address and priorities to balance, developing a culture of accessibility need be neither costly nor time-consuming. This survey will highlight where senior managers can make the most difference to the accessibility and inclusion agenda.

Library specialists

The library/learning resource centre is a pivotal area for developing independent Learning. Supporting learners in independent learning is critical to increasing their confidence and self-reliance.

Marketing

The first contact with any organisation is likely to be through its marketing. Accessible marketing is easy to achieve, requires little budget and adds value for all stakeholders.

IT / Network specialists

IT infrastructures have huge potential to maximise learner support but there are also risks regarding the introduction of unnecessary barriers for users with accessibility needs.

Extended Learning Support/Support for Learning

The first contact a disabled student has with an institution may be through their disability support mechanisms. Staff in this area carry much of the responsibility to gather the expertise needed to help change the institutional culture around accessibility and inclusion so that fewer barriers are encountered.

Staff Developers and Learning Technologists

Staff developers and learning technologists influence the lives of disabled students in many ways. It is vital to develop measures which will positively impact upon the student experience by adding benefits or reducing barriers.

For more information please contact Margaret McKay.

Or visit our website at: www.rsc-sw-scotland.ac.uk/accessibility_pages/OASES.htm

e-Books for FE

Do you know that there are almost 3000 e-books freely available for students and staff in FE colleges to use? The e-books for FE project makes a core collection of e-books available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week so the book you urgently require will not be out on loan just when you need it!



The e-books can be accessed outside the college network via a PC or a mobile device such as your mobile phone. There's no need for you or your students to carry around heavy textbooks.

Text and images from the e-books can be copied and pasted into the college VLE or to student handouts or coursework and the source is automatically cited. This saves time and improves accuracy of information.

The fact that materials are in a digital format results in the resource being much more accessible to a range of students including those with a visual impairment.

Users can personalise their e-books by adding their own notes and comments and highlighting relevant parts of the text.

The e-books for FE project is a collaboration between JISC, JISC Collections and the LSC (an English funding body), and the Scottish Funding Council has contributed

funding to ensure there are titles relevant to the Scottish Curriculum included in the collection. Further details about e-books can be found on the project website <http://fe.jiscebooksproject.org/>

To access the e-books a login and password is required. Your library or learning resource centre should be able to provide you with access.

Banking on Success

Making use of e-Assessments has a number of benefits for both the learner and lecturer and forms a critical part of the learning process. Bank on Success, our project focusing on e-Assessment, is running for a second time during June.



Based on a model the RSC team has used before, the aim is to up-skill staff in the art of designing valid and reliable e-Assessments and, at the same time, build up an assessment bank for the sector to use. There are already around 40 sets of e-assessments available on our website zipped and ready to be uploaded into Moodle or BlackBoard.

Training sessions are organised for the 11th & 12th of June aimed at curriculum staff who will agree to produce two sets of 10 question assessments in return for a free one day training session here at the RSC.

You'll find further details on our website.



RSCtv:

Five Top Copyright Law Tips for Colleges and Universities

If you missed our recent RSCtv copyright session then you'll be pleased to know the session has been recorded and you can watch it again.

During the session, Jason Miles-Campbell from JISC Legal gave us five top copyright law tips. The recording can be watched again by visiting our website.

<http://tiny.cc/w23h6>

Events

	<p>April 20th – RSCTv: JISC TechDis Toolbar 12.30 – 1.00 FREE online webcast</p>
	<p>May 4th – RSCTv: JANET Update 12.30 – 1.00 FREE online webcast</p>
	<p>May 14th - JISC InfoNet: Project Management 9.30 – 3.45 £60</p>
	<p>May 18th – RSCTv: Edina 12.30 – 1.00 FREE online webcast</p>
	<p>June 1st – RSCTv: Managers Update 12.30 – 1.00 FREE online webcast</p>
	<p>June 3rd - Best of the West 2010 conference 9.30 – 4.00 £50</p>
	<p>June 10th - Bank on Success: e-Assessment Project 9.30 – 4.00 FREE</p>
	<p>June 11th - Bank on Success: e-Assessment Project 9.30 – 4.00 FREE</p>

Learning Technologists— 15th June—book now! Creating Accessible Learning Objects using Xerte

Staff at the RSC have developed a one day workshop on using Xerte, the content creation tool supported by TechDis.

Xerte is designed to generate highly accessible learning objects that can be easily personalised and compatible with screen readers, switches and keyboard controls.

Contact Details

JISC Regional Support Centre Scotland South & West,
1 Todd Campus, Acre Road, Glasgow G20 0XA.

Tel: 0141 585 0022/23.

Fax: 0141 585 0020.

Email: support@rsc-sw-scotland.ac.uk.

Website: www.rsc-sw-scotland.ac.uk.

JISC RSC Scotland South & West Team

Manager - Fionnuala Carmichael

f.carmichael@rsc-sw-scotland.ac.uk

Administrator - Kirsty Menzies

k.menzies@rsc-sw-scotland.ac.uk

Senior e-Learning Advisor

Curriculum Management - Joan Walker

j.walker@rsc-sw-scotland.ac.uk

e-Learning Advisors:

Technical Infrastructure - Mark Clark

m.clark@rsc-sw-scotland.ac.uk

HE Coordination - Theresa Duffy

t.duffy@rsc-sw-scotland.ac.uk

Accessibility & Inclusion - Margaret McKay

m.mckay@rsc-sw-scotland.ac.uk

Staff Development & e-Resources - Celeste McLaughlin

c.mclaughlin@rsc-sw-scotland.ac.uk

