

CHRISTMAS COMPETITION

Subscribe to the RSC Newsfeed before January 30 2006 and you will be entered into a prize draw with a chance to win a USB Flash Drive .



The News Feed is a fortnightly service, from the two JISC Regional Support Centres in Scotland, designed to keep the FE community informed about the latest ICT-related news, events, resources and training. It has been designed to minimise the amount of email traffic into your inbox by collating all relevant information and presenting it concisely with electronic links to the full articles - all this delivered straight to your desktop every other Tuesday afternoon

Subscribe at: <http://www.rsc-sw-scotland.ac.uk/newsfeed.htm>

E-skills for E-learning (Practitioner's toolkit)

This is a 4 day course comprising of 8 x 3 hour modules which cover the essential skills and knowledge which are needed by teaching practitioners to enable them to use technology for teaching & learning. A certificate will be awarded to each practitioner on completion of the course which can contribute to their CPD portfolio

Sessions will comprise of a mixture of presentations, discussions & practical activities

Module 1 An Introduction to E-Learning

Module 2 Interactivity – MSWord

Module 3 E-Resources & The Internet

Module 4 Interactivity - MSPowerPoint

Module 5 Accessibility & Legal Issues

Module 6 E-Tutoring

Module 7 E-Assessment

Module 8 Virtual Learning Environments



Back row —Charles, Margaret, Claire, Kirsty, Celeste, Andy.
Front row — Theresa, Fionnuala, Joan.

All the Staff at RSC Scotland South and West would like to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Happy new Year

JISC regional support centre

Scotland south & west
Supporting the use of ICT in teaching & learning



In Contact
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Merry Christmas!

RSC Scotland S &W pilots first UK RSC "ePlan" support package

We are now approaching our sixth year of support activity to our colleges and we have for the past six months been assessing whether continuation of our current methods remain wholly appropriate in a rapidly changing educational environment. We have concluded the time has now come to quite substantially alter our approaches.

The relentless march of technology, its impact on education and educational processes together with emerging concepts in Learning Space design have compelled us to look closely at our provision.

While there is a clear and continuing need for training across all college staff groups, we have concluded we need to provide colleges with a more holistic approach than that presently offered. This does not mean we will reduce training opportunities but instead we intend to provide an additional coherent package of support measures to our colleges offering a series of activities to assist colleges embed eLearning. There are five strands to our "ePlan" which is offered to colleges completely free of charge.

Full description of the "ePlan" is enclosed.

Introducing our newest member of staff

Celeste McLaughlin



Celeste joins the RSC on secondment from Glasgow Metropolitan College where she co-ordinated Open Learning and ECDL courses, as well as delivering VLE training for staff. She previously worked at the University of Paisley where she developed online content for a digital repository, and until recently worked as a part-time lecturer teaching multimedia. Celeste graduated with a BA (hons) in Social Sciences in 1997 and went on to complete an MSc in Information Technology, then gained her TQ(FE) whilst at Glasgow Metropolitan College.

During her time at the RSC Celeste will work alongside other RSC staff to help support colleges in their use of ICT for teaching and learning and will concentrate specifically on integrating e-resources within online content. Celeste's post is funded by ESF.



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What goes oh, oh, oh?
Santa Claus walking backwards!



What qualifications has father Christmas got?

Ho Ho Ho levels



JISC Regional Support Centre Scotland South & West, 1 Todd Campus, West of Scotland Science Park, Glasgow G20 0XA





*What do you get if you cross Father
Christmas with a duck?*
A Christmas Quacker!



Information and Learning Technology as an Enabler

The e-learning potential!

There has been some concern amongst teaching staff that in digitising and transforming their learning materials, they may in fact be creating barriers for students with disabilities and/or learning difficulties, in most cases however this is not the case. Learning and teaching materials provided electronically are almost always more accessible than 'traditional' alternatives. E-learning resources allow for flexible access, and offer solutions to many of the accessibility issues that may have existed with paper based alternatives.

A crucial factor in ensuring inclusive learning and teaching is the development of materials that have been created with accessibility in mind at the point of design. This inclusive approach helps teaching staff to meet the legal requirements placed on them. Firstly, by anticipating the needs of students with learning difficulties, and also by saving valuable time and resources by preventing the need to re-design or 'retro-fix' materials at a later date.

Inclusive design methodology has been central to all our training seminars here at the RSC this year. By helping staff to develop accessible e-learning materials supplemented with rich media, such as animation, video or audio clips, the learning process can be greatly enhanced for **all** learners not just those with disabilities and/or barriers to learning.

Usability and Comfort – Microsoft and Mac Accessibility Awareness

Here at the RSC, we are also eager to raise awareness of the built-in accessibility options available within Microsoft and Mac operating systems. Following the success of the Benevolent Bill training sessions in 2005, our MAC:cessibility training event is scheduled for 19th January 2006. This will explore the wide range of 'universal access' resources and the emerging assistive technologies available within Mac computers. Check our website for more details!

Technology as an enabler – Are you kitted out?



Last year TechDis secured funding to provide every UK RSC with a 'kit box' of resources featuring a wide range of assistive technologies. These resources have become an integral part of the training we deliver here at the RSC. We are also in the process of producing a series of videos promoting the 'kit box' demonstrating how assistive technologies might be used in

practice by students with additional support needs. These video resources will be available to view at the beginning of 2006 on the accessibility section of our website. For further information: <http://www.rsc-sw-scotland.ac.uk/accessibility.htm>

Margaret McKay, Accessibility Officer



VLE Open Source Alternatives – “No salesperson will call” Joint Scottish RSC Moodle Event

The JISC Regional Support Centres for Scotland South & West and North and East ran a highly successful joint “Moodle Awareness” event at the West of Scotland Science Park in Glasgow on December 12th, 2005. The purpose of the event was to bring together educators in Scotland who wanted to know more about Moodle and to launch a Scottish Moodle User Group (SMUG).



There are many Open Source VLE alternatives freely available for download on the web, but how can you learn about them? Who can you turn to for advice? Open Source products do not advertise - there simply are no sales reps to give presentations, demonstrations and hand out brochures. Information about Open Source VLE's tends to be passed by word of mouth, based on the personal experience one individual has had with the product... or something anecdotal that they heard from someone else! The one universal attraction of Open Source software is that it is FREE... but is it any good?

Why Moodle?

Moodle is a world leading Open Source software package. Designed by educators to create effective online learning communities, Moodle is currently used by more than 2,000 educational organisations around the world to deliver online courses and to support blended and face to face learning.

The recent announcement of a merger between Blackboard and WebCT, coupled with version upgrades and concerns regarding possible price rises has led to many educational institutions in Scotland reassessing their current Virtual Learning Environment.

Moodle and the OU

The Open University, experts in distance learning, announced a £5 million investment to build a comprehensive online student learning environment. The new development, incorporating Moodle, will first appear in May 2006 and will be fully operational for February 2007 courses. Innovations added by the OU will be available to the entire Moodle community.

Moodle Awareness Event

Over fifty educators from across Scotland attended the event in the Kelvin Conference Centre of Glasgow University. Like the audience, the speakers were from both sides of the country, from HE and FE, with experience of using or setting up and running Moodle. The absence of sales reps ensured that the event was a “warts and all” session and offered an ideal opportunity for frank discussion, best practice and most importantly, pitfalls to avoid!



For further information on VLE's or for joining one of the VLE user groups, please contact Theresa Duffy at: t.duffy@rsc-sw-scotland.ac.uk

Theresa Duffy, VLE Support Officer



What goes Ho, Ho, Swoosh! Ho, Ho, Swoosh?
Santa caught in a revolving door!

