



University of Chester

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Sticking Plaster or Cultural Shape-shifter?



Study Skills on the New HEI Horizon

Support Models

- Sink or swim
- Remedial
- Generic/remedial
- Integrated (inexplicit) We are here!
- Embedded (explicit) Is this where we are going?
- Fully embedded (explicit: e-portfolio)

In the beginning...

- Struggling transition
- Student Improvement & Development Service (SIDS)
- Voluntary tuition by staff
- Study for Success booklet
- 1992- Carol Thomas- Study Skills Service
- 2001-02 one funded full-time member of staff
- One dyslexia tutor
- Based in SGSS- Carol Thomas & Andy Lilley

Learning Support Unit (2003)

- Demand increased
- Learning Centre approach
- 1 to 1 tutorial support
- Handouts
- Dedicated Study Skills Workshops
 - Access
 - Induction
- “Bolt-on” Workshops in a few Schools
- School of Health & Social Care sites

Deficit Model

- Medical v social model
- Students arrive ill-equipped
- Difficult to reach large numbers
- Self-referring- those needing help do not always come to workshops/ seek support
- Gender issues
- Isolated from curriculum

Learning Support Services 2005

- Need for new Dept recognised through Academic Board
- Study Skills Service, Dyslexia Tuition & IT Training Services

Study Skills Tutors

- 1 to 1 tutorial support
- Dedicated Study Skills Workshops
 - Access
 - Induction
- Generic Seminars – up to 10 students
- Drop-in sessions (10 mins)

Academic Skills Tutors

- SENDA- BDA qualifications
- 1 to 1 SpLD support
- ASTs appointed to faculties
- Study Skills Workshops built in to some programmes- timely, appropriate
- Mainly “fly-in” sessions
- (Subject staff- discipline specific)
- Dedicated Study Skills workshops
 - Access
 - Induction

2006

- Staffing restructure
- Shift from individual support
- Small group teaching- generic
- Large group teaching- embedded
- Academic Skills Tutors liaise closely with academic staff
- Effective pedagogic delivery of contextualised study skills

Disadvantages

- Skills disassociated from discipline context
- Students did not value the session unless linked to assessment
- Piece-meal and often generic
- Poor attendance unless credit-bearing
- “Up-front” sessions did not engage students readily
- Concentration on Level 1 students disadvantaged direct entry students

*Today's students are no longer the people
our education systems were designed to
teach*

Marc Prensky, 2001

*They live their lives in a different space and
time*

Prof David Rhind cited in Gilly Salmon, 2001

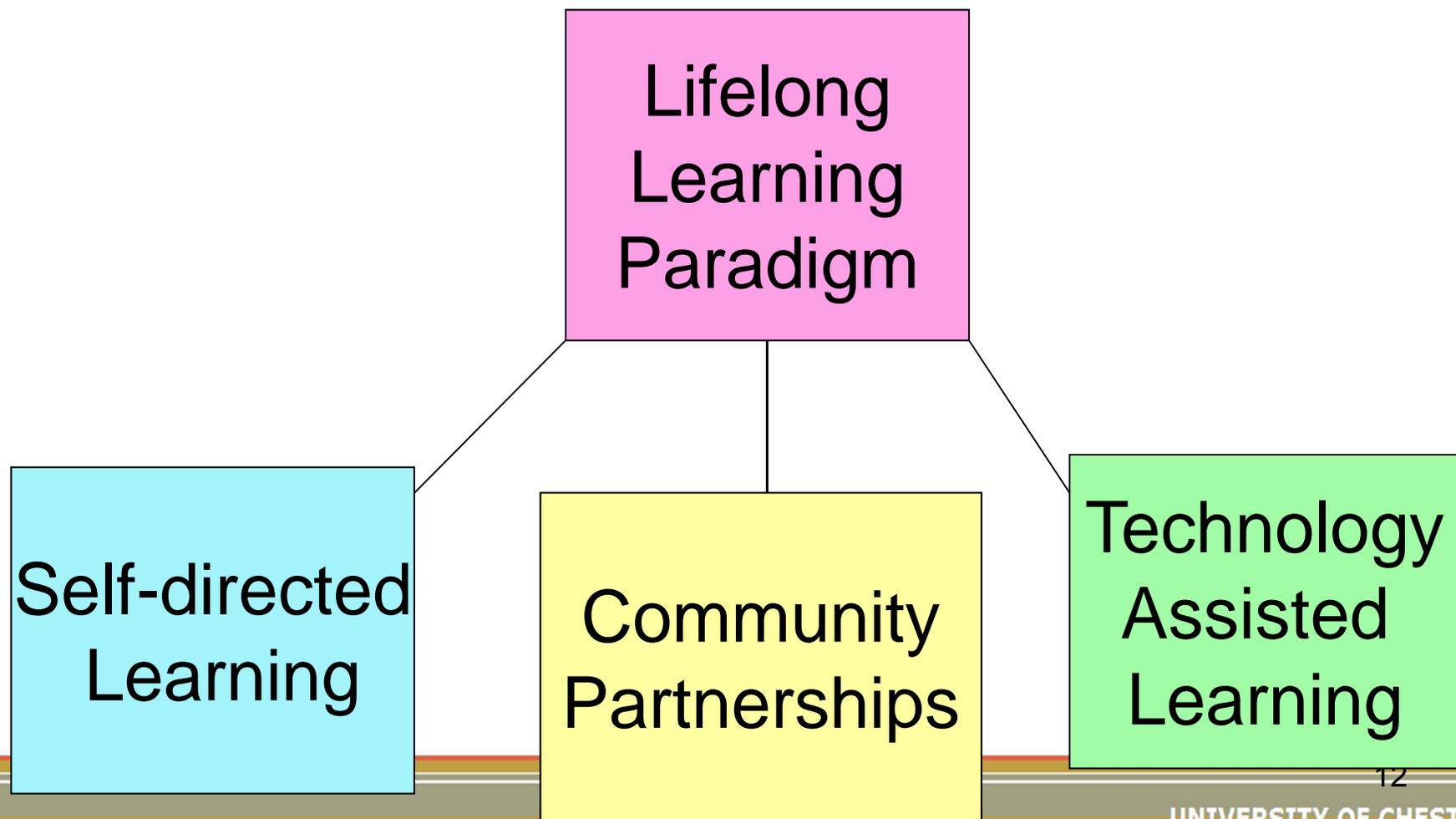
What is going on in the gap
between student understanding of
HE level learning and our
expectations?

Are teaching practices moving
towards more student-centred
pedagogies?

21st Century HEIs

- Globalisation
- Flexibility in modes of delivery
- Marketization of HE
- Funding
- Accountability
- Competition from research
- Increased diversity
- Changes at management and policy level
- Increase in technology facilitated delivery
- More corporate styles of management
- Higher staff/student ratios
- Broadening social base of undergraduate study
- Changes in students values, expectations & attitudes
- Closer links to industry based needs

Towards a New Approach to Education





Geography, History, Counselling, Psychology, Biology 2006

- Group work
- Project work
- Field work
- Oral presentations
- Peer- and self-assessment
- Student-led activities
- Independent learning
- Work-based activities
- Volunteering
- Using new communication technologies in teaching
- Student articulation of “hidden skills” on e-portfolio

History, Biology, Psychology - 2007- Designing Teaching

- Student-centred learning
- Interventions are:
 - Timely
 - Appropriate (progression)
 - Incremental (continuity)

Real World 'Connexions'

- Trend towards creating partnerships between
 - HE institutions
 - Public corporations
 - Private corporations
- Tailor-made programmes of study

Learning Support Services 2007

Study Skills Tutors

- 1 to 1 tutorial support
- Dedicated generic Study Skills Workshops
 - Access
 - Induction
- Generic seminars – up to 10 students
- Drop-in sessions
- [Online support](#)

Academic Skills Tutors

- 1 to 1 SpLD support
- Dedicated Study Skills Workshops
 - Access
 - Induction
- Some links with departments, still “fly-in”

E-portfolio

- Can support study skills development
- Embed the process of PDP in curriculum
- Students reflect on learning
- How they learned (meta-skills)
- Study skills made explicit

Challenges

- Requires a broader concept of curriculum design to include meta skills
- Insufficient time and space in curriculum
- Additional start-up costs
 - Resources
 - Development of staff expertise
- Departments may need study skills support

One Way Forward ???

- Programme and course teams working with Learning Support Services
- Make Study Skills requirements explicit
- A programme-wide approach
- Development of study skills alongside subject knowledge and understanding

The Future at University of Chester

While following the strategic directions of
the University...

...what is the developing role of Learning
Support Services at Chester University?

Is **LSD** legal at University?

- Learning Support **Unit**
- Learning **Support** Services
- **Learning Skills Development** ???
- Learning development is more effective within discipline-specific contexts
- The future name of the service?

Thank you for participating

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