

Assessment & Learning in Practice Settings

ALPS Conference

The ALPS Conference took place this Spring at Weetwood Hall in Leeds. The event, entitled 'Work-based Learning and Assessment for the Next Decade' was well attended and succeeded in stimulating discussion around the conference themes and disseminating the work of ALPS



Huge thanks to our students from Leeds Metropolitan University who helped so much during the Conference!



Sessions were a mix of presentations, round table discussions and interactive workshops

A mix of presentations, workshops and round table discussions were well received by the delegates who numbered almost 200 over the two days. Other highlights included the keynote speeches delivered by Professor Sue Proctor and Professor Peter Chatterton.

Sue, who is Director of Patient Care and Partnerships at NHS Yorkshire & Humber spoke about the importance of working in partnership and used the disturbing and case of convicted murderer Colin Norris to highlight the extreme consequences of failure to communicate across practice and education environments.

Peter, Technology Consultant & Visiting Professor at the Learning and Teaching Institute, University of Hertfordshire discussed the challenges and the opportunities for sustaining and embedding innovations in Higher

Feedback about the Conference has been extremely positive, with delegates interested in the progress ALPS has made over the last five years in the areas of interprofessional assessment and the use of mobile technology in clinical and practice settings. Going forward, it is hoped the ALPS Common Competency Maps, assessment tools and other outputs will be embedded further across health and social care and beyond. Comments from delegates included the following;

“The ALPS workshops were very interesting ...and enabled me to understand why the ALPS tools are used and what has been done to develop them into useful assessment tools”

“A very useful and stimulating event...I will continue to reflect for some time”

“A great interprofessional conference to share ideas and strategies”

Kate Murphy

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For the benefit of new readers...

... and as a reminder to everyone else, ALPS is a collaborative programme between five Higher Education Institutions with proven reputations for excellence in learning and teaching in health and social care: the Universities of Bradford, Huddersfield, Leeds (lead), and Leeds Metropolitan and York St John Universities. There are 16 professions across the partnership from Audiology to Social Work and a wide range of partners including NHS Yorkshire and the Humber and practice networks. We are also working in consultation with the Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies.

ALPS named finalist in Times Higher Education Awards



ALPS has been shortlisted for ICT Initiative of the Year. The Times Higher Education Leadership and Management Awards have recognised the programme's innovative use of mobile learning technologies

The University of Leeds has been nominated, as lead partner of the ALPS programme. All five universities involved have worked collaboratively to develop an interprofessional mobile assessment and e-portfolio system which allows health and social care students on work placements to use mobile devices to complete and upload assessments.

As well as mobile assessment, the devices have also been used to improve students' access to learning material, including videos, PowerPoint presentations and quizzes.

ALPS has been selected as a finalist in the ICT Initiative of the Year category, sponsored by the Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC). The THE Leadership and Management Awards showcase leadership, management, financial and business skills in universities, and the ALPS programme has produced an ICT initiative which demonstrates a positive effect across the five universities involved, as well as the potential for wider impact across the UK.

Professor Trudie Roberts, Director of ALPS and the Leeds Institute of Medical Education said, 'The Faculty of Medicine and Health at the University of Leeds is delighted to receive this nomination for the ALPS programme. To be named a finalist at such an exciting and renowned event is wonderful, especially coming on the heels of the ALPS Conference, which was such a success.'

ALPS in the running for two best paper awards!

Congratulations to Jill Taylor and Catherine Coates from Leeds Met University and Chris Dearnley (University of Bradford) and Julie Laxton (University of Leeds) who have been singled out by the organisers of this year's EDEN Conference

Their paper; 'Promoting the concept of competency maps and interprofessional assessments linked to e-portfolios to enhance the student learning experience

in preparation for work based learning, employability and life long learning' has been selected to be forwarded as EDEN's nomination into the IMS annual Learning Impact Award Competition.

The same paper has also been shortlisted in the EDEN Conference Best Research Paper Competition. Julie, Jill and Chris will be presenting the paper at the conference in Valencia and we wish them the very best of luck!

ALPS Team at the University of Bradford Win Knowledge Transfer Award!

Congratulations to Chris Dearnley, Stuart Walker, John Fairhall and Jak Radice from the University of Bradford who last month won the prize for Interdisciplinary Working at this year's Excellence in Knowledge Transfer Awards at their University

The quartet won the award for their Mobile Enabled Disabled Students (MEDS)

project which over the last few years has informed the development of ALPS tools and mobile software.

The project aimed to inform the ongoing work and development of ALPS in relation to the specific needs of disabled students when using mobile technologies for learning and assessment in practice settings.

The MEDS project has contributed significantly to the development of the ALPS assessment software in addition to providing an insight into the general use of mobile devices among disabled people.

The aim of the Interdisciplinary Working award is to reward and celebrate where areas of the University are collaborating to develop innovations with a positive impact on the external environment that would not have been possible by working independently.

Find out more about the MEDS project at:

<http://www.alps-cetl.ac.uk/capacityfund.html>



Chris Dearnley, Stuart Walker and John Fairhall collect their award

Technology to the Rescue!

Jill Taylor, ALPS Teaching Fellow from Leeds Metropolitan University, reflects on an eventful trip Down Under...

The natural world often gives us cause to reflect. During my return journey from the All Together Better Health 5 conference in Australia, where I presented a poster on the work of ALPS, I was stranded in Dubai by the Icelandic volcanic eruption. I thought about how mobile technology does indeed solve problems and keep us connected: I got news updates and stayed connected to work and family by email and social networking; I rebooked my flights and arranged a hotel room all from the palm of my hand in the airport lounge in Sidney – as the crisis unfolded in Europe! But how could I present at the Leeds Met CETL conference whilst stranded abroad? Technology to the rescue again! I recorded the presentation in my Dubai hotel room on my laptop using Camtasia, then emailed the file to make a virtual conference appearance instead. Problem solved!

Interprofessional competences was one particular focus of the conference and the ALPS poster attracted a lot of interest from delegates. Of particular interest was the innovative approach ALPS has developed to assess these competences in context,

in the practice placement setting using the mobile delivery of the ALPS assessment tools. Other groups, notably the group at Toronto University, also presented their frameworks which included Values and Ethics, Communication, and Collaboration along with the self assessment tools they have developed to measure these.

I was struck by how many of the conference presentations described how technology was supporting students to achieve their potential. From students interacting with simulated patient avatars in second life, to building a National Interprofessional Education Network across Norway using Facebook and twitter, and the excellent “Stilwell” community; a multimedia approach that brings communities to life. Students are able to access interactions between health professionals, patients and families. Through the interactive virtual clinical experience the students learn from one another in ways similar to the actual clinical situation – technology is indeed providing solutions.

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Festival of Learning, Napier College Edinburgh 2010

Julie Laxton, Abdul Kapdi and Voyin Pantic from the University of Leeds braved bad weather and landslides(!) to present an ALPS poster at this year’s Festival of Learning

This year’s conference promised to be a good “do”. We collected together all our ALPS software, hardware, posters

and, of course, our kilts for the promised Ceilidh after the Conference dinner. The beginning didn’t bode well with the train being delayed from Leeds, but we arrived in good spirits, with Voyin using the time diligently (and unsociably!) doing some marking on the train.

The Conference venue was a very



Although the snow was pretty – we worried about being stuck in Edinburgh!

large baronial hall and was magnificent, although very cold. It was extremely busy – probably due to the fact that there was also a very strong contingent from the School of Healthcare at Leeds. Three of us attended the Conference for ALPS and we were all needed! We were very busy at every interval and unfortunately crowded out the people next to us – it was pretty squashed!

By the time of the Conference dinner (which was really good) we were watching Christmas-like scenes outside as snowflakes drifted down over the Edinburgh landscape, and sticking, much to our consternation(!)

I'll gloss over the details of the Ceilidh – suffice to say everyone joined in.....

The poster we displayed (along with leaflets, devices and demonstration laptop) linked with the three key themes of the Conference; Collaboration, Communication and Connection, and was specially designed for the Conference, credit mainly due to the hard work of Abs and Voyin.

We took feedback in a variety of ways – face to face, on paper, via the mobile devices, through the ALPS assessment suite and e-mails after the event. I think people were impressed with the ALPS message. There were also students attending the Conference who found many aspects of the ALPS programme interesting and useful for them.

One person we spoke to had been following the ALPS programme and had used some of the ALPS concepts to support her own work in supporting students.

Some of the feedback we received included;

“Colourful, engaging, informative snapshot of the initiative”

“Thank you for explaining more about ALPS at the recent Festival of Learning at Edinburgh – as a non-technical person, I appreciated your patience and clarity”

“The ALPS website is impressive and it was interesting to clarify which professions and institutions are already involved”



Voyin, Abs and Julie during a rare moment of quiet!

There was a lot of interest in all aspects of ALPS; the ALPS Common Competency Maps, the assessment tools and the technology.

We struggled homeward on the Friday and were very lucky to get the last coach heading south to Newcastle (trains were cancelled due to a landslide). We were tired but very happy – we got 3rd poster prize for our efforts...

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Championing ALPS at the University of Huddersfield

As the CETL programmes nationally come to the end of their initial funding, at Huddersfield a number of initiatives are being developed and embedded.

The university holds an annual research festival in March at which members of the ALPS team at Huddersfield have been regular presenters each year. For 2010, Niall Dew from the School of Human and Health Sciences, along with Clare Thorpe (student nurse and project team member) presented their work: 'ePortfolios – what students want: A guide for would-be implementation' which is funded by the Strategic Health Authority and ALPS. For this project, students have engaged in a number of workshops, discussion boards and a google group to come up with their ideal ePortfolio and what it should comprise of. A joint JISC bid with other ALPS collaborators has followed, which is currently at the short listed stage. Niall's involvement with ePortfolio development and Stephen White's (School of Human and Health Sciences) interest in developing the use of mobile technology has led to their successful bids to university learning and teaching innovation funding. They are exploring the best means of delivering ePortfolios across the university and developing an i-phone application to enable more effective use of mobile technology for delivering learning and assessment activities.



Niall Dew and Christine Rhodes from the School of Human and Health Sciences

Whilst service users and carer engagement has been an important feature of provision at Huddersfield for some time, the ALPS programme has enabled more dedicated funding and staff involvement leading to many new initiatives. Collaboration with other universities through ALPS has been really positive and has raised the profile of involvement. Kath Padgett (Head of Mental Health Division) and Christine Rhodes

(Senior Lecturer, Nursing) have been involved in the ALPS funded collaborative research – What Matters to US (Users of Services): 'Discovering and applying user and carer perceptions of the requisite skills and attributes of health and social care students to enable shared care and decision making'

An important outcome of the research is the production of re-usable learning objects to develop insight into the communication process from the service user and carer perspective, which will enhance the support of students prior to practice and in the practice setting. The service user and carer forum, PIPELINE, which is chaired and run by service users and carers meets regularly and its membership contributes to many ALPS related activities.

For example, in March the School hosted its second annual Support for Learners in Practice Conference, which is designed and delivered by the Kirklees and Calderdale based Practice Learning Facilitators. In addition to disseminating ALPS progress through bulletins and leaflets, a service user and carer panel supported by Christine Rhodes addressed the 80 –strong delegate group of mentors and practice educators from around the region. This was a rare and valuable opportunity for service users and carers and practice educators to meet to discuss assessment and learning in practice from their different but equally important perspectives.

Further service user and carer involvement has been with an ALPS-funded embedding project led by Steve Lyon and Lisa Ward from the School of Human and Health Sciences. Service users, students and staff from the mental health nursing course have used the ALPS assessment tools to integrate service user and carer feedback on students' communication skills. The project has also led to improved self and peer assessment for students.

As we face the end of ALPS as we know it, these projects are ensuring that the legacy of our involvement influences future practice.

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CETLs Five Years On: What have we learnt and what can we share?



**Social Policy
and Social Work
(SWAP)**

Alan Murphy from the University of Leeds attended a national conference on behalf of ALPS for all the CETLs around the country hosted at Birmingham (on behalf of the Social Policy and Social Work network (SWAP) which is funded by the Higher Education Academy)

The purpose of the conference was to share the work of the CETLs, and each representative presented aspects of their work. I gave some background on the ALPS programme, along with material on the development of the ALPS assessment tools in line with social work national occupational standards. The conference provided an excellent opportunity to consider ALPS alongside the other CETLs. All of the presentations demonstrated innovative and practical developments to support professionals across health and social care. The work of the ALPS team stood up well to comparison with the outputs from other programmes and projects.

In listening to the presentations it occurred to me that there were a number of common themes that ran through the CETLs:

- Process is as important as outputs; each CETL had a story around the importance of how people worked together and what was learnt about each other and different professions along the way
- Overcoming reluctance to participate and to engage with change; each project encountered issues of resistance within the target audience for the project, both in terms of its production and its dissemination

- External recognition increases internal recognition! All projects found that whereas there was reluctance to engage sometimes internally, their work was welcomed externally and this often had the effect of increasing the project's profile and acceptance internally.
- Geography; the use of technology had clear advantages where the professional and service user /care groups were geographically widespread
- Tails and dogs! Where technology was involved there was common concern around whether technology or learning was driving the project
- Future proofing; in particular where technology was an important part of the project there was concern about how to continue to fund the inevitable technology changes
- Resources; there was concern about how to continue to make the work of the CETLs available in the future. Where there were web based materials there were issues of hosting and updating materials so we were not left with yet another 'orphan' website
- Equal access; there were concerns about whether or not each project had successfully addressed the issues of access and disability – something ALPS has investigated substantially with the MEDS project
- Space as a means of developing activity. A number of projects appeared to gain more momentum because of the development of specific space within which project activity could take place. Physical space appeared to have an impact on psychological space for those engaged with the project

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ALPS students experience interprofessional training ward

Following a successful bid for Strategic Health Authority funding, York St John University, in conjunction with North Lincolnshire and Goole NHS Foundation Trust and Hull York Medical School (HYMS), appointed a physiotherapy and occupational therapy learning facilitator to an interprofessional training (inpatient rehabilitation) ward at Goole and District Hospital (GDH)

This appointment enabled physiotherapy and occupational therapy students to experience a two week period of interprofessional training, as part of an existing professional practice module. Working a shift pattern, they participated in clinical learning, tutorial and reflection sessions with medical, nursing and physiotherapy students.

The aim of the project was to enhance clinical skills education, embed the ethos of interprofessional learning within the curriculum, and improve the responsiveness of the curriculum to service redesign and development.

A systematic evaluation of students' experiences of interprofessional training revealed that it enhanced students' learning experience and

positively impacted on their clinical skills development. Students valued the opportunity to learn with other practitioners. They also achieved a better appreciation of their complimentary, yet distinct roles and gained more confidence in profession-specific skills.

Working a shift pattern enabled students to engage with patients and carers and develop a more meaningful understanding of patients' needs beyond traditional 9-5 working hours.

Health and social care practitioners are expected to develop their skills of working with others and across professional boundaries, and this project enabled students to learn effectively in an innovative training environment. It is hoped that in the future ALPS tools and mobile technology can be used on the ward to further the goal of improved interprofessional working among students.

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Introducing... **In this issue of the ALPS Bulletin we interview John Fairhall from the University of Bradford...**

...What is your role in regards to ALPS?

“ I represent the University of Bradford on the ALPS Tools/IT Group. Separate to the Group work, I'm the manager of the ALPS Helpdesk which is based at our University. I've also been involved in a number of projects looking at the accessibility of the ALPS IT solution. ”

How did you become involved in ALPS?

“ Around December 2005 I was working at the School of Health Studies at the University of Bradford doing general IT support work. There were quite a number of PDAs within the school at that time so I'd started to develop a bit of a specialism (and was soon to apply for my current post). It was at this time that ALPS put a call

out to the partner HEIs asking for people to carry out pilot mobile projects. The people that were involved in ALPS at the school asked me along to help with the project. That sparked my interest in ALPS and I asked if I could attend the IT Group meetings. ”

Tell us about more about your role and what you are trying to achieve within ALPS

“ I’m a member of the Tools/IT Group, which has been involved in the tendering and selection of IT solutions and influenced some of the development work. We’ve provided the link between ALPS and our own HEIs IT departments and tried to keep things aligned while still meeting our organisations’ needs and goals. What I’ve been trying to achieve in ALPS is to work with the developers to get a usable and stable solution that’s well rounded so that it has the typical features and functionality that we’d normally look for in our HEI IT department when procuring new software. I’ve also been working with our site lead, Bradford’s other ALPS representatives and our HEI’s internal stakeholders to get the work of ALPS embedded so that we continue to use mobile technology for teaching and learning once ALPS ends. I’ve got to say that despite a tight timeline, work is going really well so I’m really excited about what we’ll be doing from September.

My work managing the ALPS Helpdesk has really been about organising the setup of the service itself and the hosting of the ALPS servers, then just making sure that it’s running smoothly. To be honest it’s my colleagues who run the Helpdesk who have done all the work, I just got the ball rolling. I’ve done my best to try and establish a cost effective shared service that staff and students want to use.

What is the biggest challenge you are facing with regards to ALPS?

“ Embedding ALPS in a sustainable way, especially given the current financial situation that the whole of HE is now facing. I’m afraid that answer is a bit of a cheat as there is a whole host of factors that contribute as to whether or not it will be sustainable, so really it’s a series of challenges: what infrastructure do we provide and how do we pay for it? How are devices and air time provided and paid for? I believe there’s also an issue with getting some students (and also staff) to engage with the technology again for a variety of reasons. ”

Tell us more about your job/role outside of ALPS

“ I’m the Mobile Technology Adviser for the University. I seem to have become a strange hybrid of:

Technical support person – I’ve got a small team that looks after our corporate Smartphones and push system.

Project Manager / developer – I’m working on our University E-Strategy to deliver a “web enabled campus supported by mobile technology” and this is certainly the part where my ALPS work ties in and why I’m so keen to get ALPS embedded. ”

Do you have examples of how your work with ALPS has benefited learning and teaching?

“ Without having been involved in ALPS I doubt I would have gained a lot of the knowledge and experience that I now have. As I’m from an IT background and not teaching, I’d probably still be trying to implement a mobile system for learning and teaching without ALPS, but I wouldn’t have as clear an idea of the learning and teaching requirements of the system which is an important part of the specification. On top of that, chances are that I would be dealing with all the same problems ALPS has had to battle through but without the collective brainpower of everyone involved in ALPS!

I’ve also been involved in a number of projects with colleagues at Bradford that have been funded by ALPS. Quite a lot of dissemination has come out of that, maybe four or five papers, two book chapters, and we’ve spoken at a number of conferences. With any luck we contributed, at least a bit, to some of the work that is going on out there for using mobile technology in learning and teaching across the sector. ”

Where do you see the work of ALPS having the biggest impact?

“ I really don’t want to jinx myself and count my chickens before they’ve hatched, but I think at Bradford we’re now in a really good place to start using mobile technology for teaching and learning on a University wide basis. A big part of that is down to our involvement in ALPS. It’s a strategic goal of ours so the impact for us is potentially huge.

ALPS is bound to have an impact on Universities that haven’t been involved in the project but are looking to implement mobile learning. It’s a large scale project; I’m certainly not aware of other HEIs doing any mobile work on this scale. I think it’s only when you get such a large implementation that some of the problems and pitfalls become apparent. There will be a lot of lessons that these other HEIs will be able to take from the ALPS findings. ”

Finally tell us an interesting fact about yourself you think people would like to know

“ I was in the local paper (Uttoxeter Advertiser, I think) when I was at school for being age 12 and having size 12 feet. They were running a piece on how parents were paying VAT on shoes for children when they were supposed to be exempt. It featured a half page picture of me and three other lads with our feet up at a rather unflattering angle designed to make us look like Big Foot. ”

Announcements

ALPS extension

ALPS is pleased to have been awarded an additional £150,000 by the NHS Yorkshire & Humber to extend their work. A Patient Safety Common Competency Map will be produced along with work to further embed the assessment tools and mobile learning. ALPS will continue to involve the five HEI partners and with a smaller Core Team until September 2011.

Staff Changes

ALPS would like to say a huge thank you to Programme Assistant, **Rosemary Porter**, who left the University of Leeds at the end of last month. Rosemary has been an integral member of the ALPS Core Team since the programme's inception, and for the last five years has provided ALPS with invaluable support and organisation! We wish her the very best of luck with life after ALPS!

This month we also say farewell to **Trish Walker**, who has been Programme Manager since ALPS began in 2005. **Trudie Roberts**, Director of ALPS says: 'It is with pleasure tinged with sadness that we will be saying goodbye to Trish Walker as manager of the ALPS CETL. Pleasure at seeing Trish be very successful in the advancement of her career by being appointed to the post of Head of Performance and Planning at the National Institute for Health Research Clinical Research Network Coordinating Centre (NIHR CRNCC); sadness at losing Trish as an immediate colleague. Since she started nearly five years ago Trish has been a wonderful friend and colleague. She is hard working, conscientious and professional. It has been a pleasure and a privilege to work with her and I have learned a huge amount from her wisdom and insights.'

Forthcoming Events

JSWEC 2010: 'Shaping the future of social work: priorities, challenges, opportunities'

21-23 July 2010,
Robinson College, Cambridge –
For more information visit:

<http://www.jswec.co.uk/>

ASME Annual Scientific Meeting 2010

21-23 July 2010, Robinson College,
Cambridge – For more details visit:

<http://www.asme.org.uk/>

AMEE 2010

4-8 September, Scottish Exhibition
and Conference Centre (SECC),
Glasgow – For more details visit:

<http://www.amee.org/>

ALT-C 2010: 'Into something rich and strange' – making sense of the sea-change

7-9 September 2010, University of
Nottingham – For more details visit:

<http://www.alt.ac.uk/altc2010/>

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Future Bulletins

The Bulletin is distributed electronically and via the ALPS website three times a year to keep colleagues up to date and involved with the work of the ALPS Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning. For further information on the articles featured visit our website at: www.alps-cetl.ac.uk

We are looking for keen readers and contributors to the Bulletin, in order to make it a valuable, relevant and collective resource. You can contribute by emailing the ALPS Core Team at

alps@leeds.ac.uk with brief details of events, links to articles and other information.

We'd be delighted if you would forward this Bulletin to your colleagues especially those in practice. Equally, if you've received this in error, or if you don't wish to remain on our circulation list please let us know – alps@leeds.ac.uk