

Five Universities One Strategic Health Authority Sixteen Professions The NHS Commercial Partners Service Users Students A shared vision

ALPS CASEBOOK —

A guide to Assessment and
Learning in Practice Settings

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A collaboration between the Universities of Leeds, Bradford & Huddersfield & Leeds Met & York St John Universities

Assessment and Learning in Practice Settings (ALPS) has involved and engaged so many staff and students across its five partner universities and participating practice settings that it is hard to realise that it only emerged as a 'big idea' seven years ago.



Patsy Cullen
Emeritus Professor of Learning
Innovation York St John University
ALPS Contributor 2003–2010

Assessment and Learning in Practice Settings (ALPS) has involved and engaged so many staff and students across its five partner universities and participating practice settings that it is hard to realise that it only emerged as a 'big idea' seven years ago following the HEFCE consultation on the CETL (Centres for Excellence in Teaching and Learning) initiative – one of the sector's responses to the 2003 White Paper 'The future of higher education'.

One of ALPS's prime movers was Professor Dianne Willcocks CBE, the recently retired Vice-Chancellor of York St John University, who had the vision of a collaborative project in the area of health education and who enthused her fellow institutional heads to set up a broadly based steering group consisting of health and education specialists, with a remit to develop (and win!) a project bid. The support and contribution of senior staff from the five HEIs (Universities of Bradford, Huddersfield, Leeds, Leeds Metropolitan and York St John) and their belief that the partnership would create an influential critical mass and enable real innovation played a vital part in getting ALPS off the ground.

The aim of the CETL initiative was 'to strengthen the strategic focus on teaching and learning by directing funds to centres that reward high teaching standards, promote a scholarly-based and forward-looking approach to teaching and learning, and where significant investment will lead to further benefits for students, teachers and beyond'. With this in mind, the Steering Group identified areas of common strength and aligned these to emergent thinking in professional health and social care practice. The result was the ALPS bid's focus on inter-professional learning and the potential for development of a common competency framework.

CETLs were, from the beginning, encouraged to be visionary and to take risks. ALPS did indeed have a big vision: it aimed to create assessment tools which could be used across the various professions in order that, for example, a nurse might assess the communication skills of a medical student or a physiotherapist the team working ability of a dietician. In addition, it sought to deliver these tools to staff and students via mobile technology which, in 2004, was very much in its infancy. Led by ALPS Director, Professor Trudie Roberts, we hoped to demonstrate that inter-professional working would improve the health and social care experience and outcomes for service users and that the use of new technology would engage students in the assessment process in new and interesting ways.

The process of moving towards the ALPS vision has been endlessly fascinating. There have been challenges: for example, negotiating common ground between the different professional cultures, addressing complex technical problems with the hardware and software, and overcoming attitudes to using mobile technology in the workplace. The success of ALPS has been that every challenge has been used as a learning opportunity, creating a substantial body of research and understanding of the process of innovation in a complex environment.

The obvious question to ask of any innovatory initiative is whether it has made a difference. I believe that the following case studies demonstrate that ALPS has had a positive influence on practice and attitudes in learning, teaching and the professional workplace for students, academic staff, health and social care professionals and service users. To all who have contributed so enthusiastically and generously to ALPS, thank you.

I believe that ALPS has had a positive influence on practice and attitudes in learning, teaching and the professional workplace for students, academic staff, and health and social care professionals

Engagement with students, staff, service users and practice colleagues has been an integral part of the ALPS programme.



Collaboration_____The support and contribution of senior staff from the five HEIs (Universities of Leeds, Bradford & Huddersfield and Leeds Met and York St John Universities) and their belief that the partnership would create an influential critical mass and enable real innovation played a vital part in getting ALPS off the ground.



University of Leeds ^{06/} **University of Bradford** ^{08/}
University of Huddersfield ^{10/} **Leeds Metropolitan**
University ^{12/} **York St John Un** **iversity** ^{14/}



The CETL initiative, launched in 2005, was undoubtedly one of HEFCE's most enlightened projects, giving funding to learning and teaching on a scale previously only associated with research.

University of Leeds

The CETL initiative, launched in 2005, was undoubtedly one of HEFCE's most enlightened projects, giving funding to learning and teaching on a scale previously only associated with research. It comes to an end in a rather different financial climate, but I'm very proud that both of the CETLs led from Leeds (ALPS and Interdisciplinary Ethics Applied), together with the White Rose CETL for the Teaching of Enterprise have established strong foundations and are looking confidently to a future beyond their HEFCE funding.

HEFCE's intention, as described in their call for proposals, was that at the end of five years CETLs would have had 'a discernible impact on teaching and learning within their institutions and on how excellence in teaching and learning is valued and recognised across the sector'. That dual impact – not just on the institution but more widely – is one of the key achievements of the ALPS CETL. As Chair of the ALPS Advisory Board, I'm very much aware of the way in which this impact has been felt well beyond ALPS's five partners in the HE sector. ALPS has also been a catalyst and focus for multi-professional change across the sixteen health and social care professional, statutory and regulatory bodies (PRSB) who have also been key partners – one key example being the unprecedented collaboration across the ethics committees of those 16 PSRBs, brought about by the ALPS initiative.

In their launch document, HEFCE also expressed the hope that, by 2010, a good number of the CETLs would have 'taken risks, pioneered innovative learning approaches and significantly extended the use of new technology'. ALPS has fulfilled all those expectations. As Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Learning and Teaching, I'm delighted by the major influence ALPS has had both in the School of Medicine on the delivery of the MBChB, and in other areas of our Healthcare teaching. The ALPS competency maps are a major innovative tool for delivering inter-professional assessment of core skills, and have the potential to be adopted more widely in vocational settings. And ALPS's daring use of service users as assessors, aided by mobile assessment aids, significantly enhances the process of learning how to become a healthcare professional: the difference, if you like, between just learning medicine and learning how to become a doctor. Furthermore, through the delivery of assessment outcomes to an e-portfolio, the ALPS mobile learning methodology offers vital support, encouraging reflection and providing an evidence base for career progression as the student builds their CPD.

All this, and a state-of-the-art Group Study Area in the Health Sciences Library too! I think we can safely say that ALPS has more than justified HEFCE's enlightened (and, sadly, unlikely to be repeated) investment.

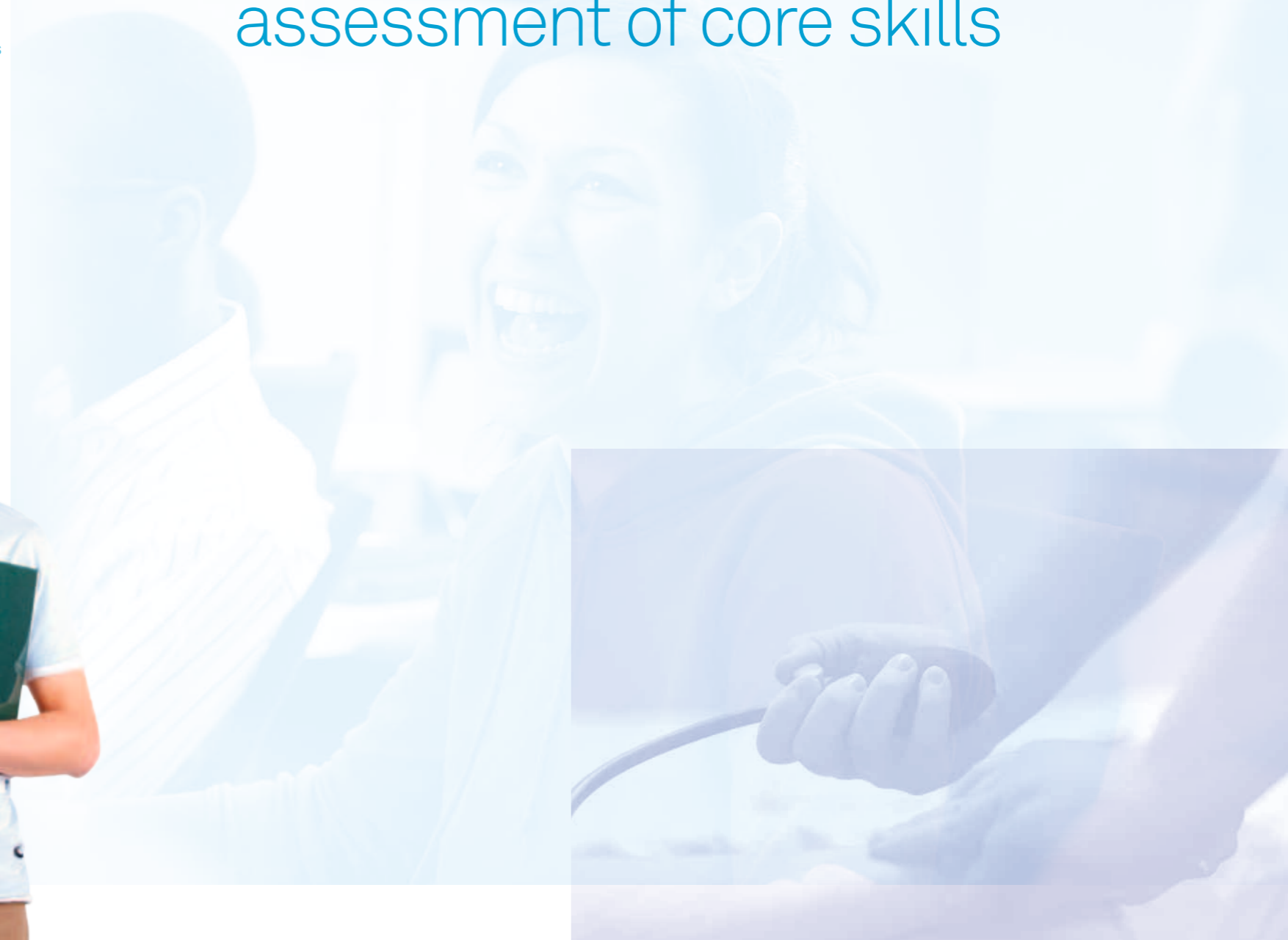
Professor Vivien Jones
Pro-Vice-Chancellor
University of Leeds



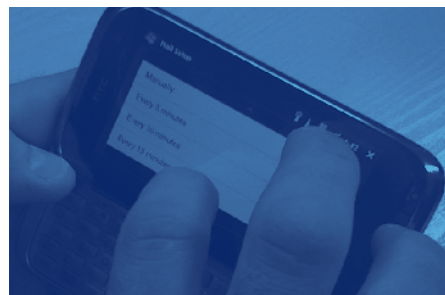
ALPS Impact
At Leeds, the impact of ALPS will continue to benefit students across the whole campus.



The ALPS competency maps are a major innovative tool for delivering inter-professional assessment of core skills



ALPS has helped the University of Bradford to deliver on more effective team working, better communication and enhanced professional respect



Embedding Learning
The challenge now for Bradford is to embed the learning from ALPS across the whole University.

We are proud to have been involved as a key partner in a development that clearly has such potential to benefit a wide range of professional training programmes.

University of Bradford

ALPS has been strategically important in terms of pedagogic development for the University of Bradford. It has facilitated our work on inter-professional education across the health professions, and allowed us to engage in a structured dialogue with professional, statutory and regulatory bodies about working across professional boundaries. The University has also had access to assistive technologies as we move more towards using SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time) administrative processes in off-campus learning environments.

We are proud to have been involved as a key partner in a development that clearly has such potential to benefit a wide range of professional training programmes.

The programme has clearly taken managed risks in clinical learning environments, where it is apparent we need better understanding of the roles and responsibilities of individuals from different health and social care professions. ALPS has helped the University of Bradford to deliver on more effective team working, better communication and enhanced professional respect, as well as the benefits of e-portfolios and mobile learning. ALPS has also informed my role as an author of the Statement of Common Purpose for the NHS and the Quality Assurance Agency benchmark statements.

Our greatest challenge is now to embed the learning from ALPS and commit to the onward investment. The programme has significantly shaped our future thinking about course mix, faculty structures, e-learning and placement education.

Having taken a lead on the mobile technology strand of the work we feel we are now better able to incorporate assistive technologies into our teaching and learning strategies, in particular our assessment processes. We have received support from ALPS partners and colleagues in the NHS, and going forward we can use our experience of involvement in the CETL to guide the use of additional resources, such as the non-medical service increment for teaching in practice settings.

As Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Planning and Resources) and the University's strategic link with the NHS and the Health Regulators, I commend the work done in this innovative programme.

Professor Jeff Lucas
Deputy Vice-Chancellor
University of Bradford



Staff have been inspired to work with people from other professions and other universities and new partnerships have been forged along the way.

University of Huddersfield

The imperative for health and social care professions to work together to promote excellence in practice has never been more important. The ALPS CETL has been a significant vehicle for development at Huddersfield, spanning a period of major change for the professionals involved and the health and social care services which they support. Taken together with the expectation that such funding will not be repeated by HEFCE, we are proud to have had the opportunity to develop assessment and learning in practice settings through this vehicle and are committed to the continued inter-professional work that has been achieved.

ALPS has impacted on the School of Human and Health Sciences in a number of important ways:

Capital funding supported the continued improvement of our state-of-the-art clinical skills simulation suite, which allows students to practice skills in a safe and supportive environment.

Service user and carer engagement had been an important aspect of some areas of provision at Huddersfield prior to ALPS, and through ALPS a dedicated significant resource has been devoted to this strand of work.

The pace of change for e-learning and m-learning, plus the use of web technology is dramatic. ALPS has allowed us to experiment with new technologies, thus taking the risks that HEFCE encouraged in its vision for the CETLs and to learn from the IT procurement processes undertaken by the programme.

The common agreements reached regarding the shared competences of all 16 professions are unique and the subsequent learning materials produced have the potential to enhance curriculum delivery and student learning.

Each discrete area of work however does not properly illustrate the significance of the achievement. Sustained funding within the School and the imperative to work collaboratively, challenging institutional and disciplinary barriers has changed the way we do things here. For individual staff, secondment opportunities have led to the development of three PhDs. Staff have been inspired to work with people from other professions and other universities and new partnerships have been forged along the way.

As we face a financially and strategically uncertain future the legacy of ALPS will be the strengths gained from its learning and the collaborative approach it fostered.

Sue Bernhauser

Dean – Human and Health Sciences
University of Huddersfield



ALPS Funding

ALPS capital funding supported the continued improvement of Huddersfield's state-of-the-art clinical skills simulation suite (above).

The ALPS CETL has been a significant vehicle for development at Huddersfield





The potential for linking mobile assessment tools to students' e-portfolios is very exciting. The advantages are evident to students, practice educators and university tutors

ALPS Conference 2010

Leeds Met students volunteered to help at the ALPS Conference in March 2010, and were great ambassadors for the University (right). ALPS capital funding supported the development of Old Broadcasting House (below).



Our health and social care students have benefited significantly, particularly through the development of the ALPS Common Competency Maps and assessment tools.

Leeds Met

Leeds Met has been proud to contribute to the ALPS CETL, which has been highly successful in promoting excellence and innovation in practice and work-based learning and in developing powerful inter-professional assessment tools which can be used to enhance student feedback and improve the practice learning experience.

The main ways in which the University has benefited have been from opportunities to:

- Foster changes in assessment practice in a number of health-related curriculum areas;
- Network fruitfully with other ALPS colleagues regionally and with health and other subject community colleagues nationally;
- Benefit from the personal and professional growth of the seconded individuals working in the CETL;
- Develop closer working relationships with the practice environment across Yorkshire and our HEI Health and Social Care partners;
- Create additional capacity in using technology enhanced learning;
- Engage purposefully with ethical issues;
- Participate in practice learning groups, and
- Work closely with Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies.

Our health and social care students have benefited significantly, particularly through the development of the ALPS Common Competency Maps and assessment tools. These enable them to evaluate their strengths and weaknesses and identify their knowledge and skills gaps, particularly in key practice areas. This approach has also enabled students to seek more service user feedback, which is essential to improving the quality of care.

The innovative work of ALPS in introducing mobile learning and e-portfolios to the practice setting has enabled Leeds Met and the other four regional universities involved to better understand the complexities of embedding such an approach and has informed our e-learning and mobile learning strategies. Furthermore, staff have gained by building new competences and developing greater confidence.

Such work is likely in the long-term to continue to impact on health and social care assessment. The potential for linking mobile assessment tools to students' e-portfolios is very exciting and although there were some difficulties during the pilot stages, the advantages have become evident to students, practice educators and university tutors. Health and social care students traditionally rely heavily for support on face-to-face visits from their placement tutors: with the ALPS approach, tutors can be involved electronically and can give feedback via the student's e-portfolio, with cost and time saving potential.

The challenge for the ALPS team now is to sustain this creativity and to enhance quality whilst maximising productivity and innovation in challenging times, post-CETL funding. The Teaching Fellows, who have been crucial to the success of ALPS at Leeds Met, and who have significantly enhanced their research profiles and developed their own professional, pedagogic and networking skills through the programme, are well placed to take this embedded approach forward.

Professor Sally Brown
Pro-Vice-Chancellor
Leeds Metropolitan University

I am immensely proud that York St John has been a key partner in this venture, led by the University of Leeds. I believe that it opens up significantly new approaches to learning and assessment in workplace settings through its incorporation of two innovative elements:

York St John University

First through developing and mapping core competences for health and social care professionals, and second, through the use of new (award-winning) mobile technologies and the creation of flexible assessment tools.

Here at York St John, ALPS has contributed significantly to the University's emerging e-learning strategy. The initial challenges for the technological element of the project, around lack of access to computers and difficulty maintaining e-contact with students are resolving rapidly as communication systems continue to evolve. Strategic dialogue with the Learning Directorate ensures that ALPS-related systems have a high degree of compatibility with mainstream hardware that students will employ for future communications thereby obviating provision of dedicated mobile devices.

Traditional health and social care student support on placement has been reliant on face to face contact during visits by academic staff. This is an expensive, inefficient and increasingly ineffective approach to supporting students. York St John is now exploring how the ALPS system can be developed to provide a sustainable support system for students and placement providers. It is intended that by 2010/11 this development will be rolled out to provide high quality support to all health and life sciences students engaged in work-based learning.

In addition, ALPS technology has fostered formative assessment for use on placement and this has led to the introduction of what we are terming an "Intensive Care" approach for those students who are struggling to meet learning outcomes. This is being piloted, using the latest smart phones, with a small number of Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy students on placement at the Goole Hospital Inter-Professional Training Ward – representing an early intervention and individually targeted support scheme for all health and social care students at risk of failing a placement. This in turn links with an acceleration towards electronic Personal Development Portfolios (PDPs). ALPS has facilitated strategies for using electronic PDPs (e.g. PebblePad) in the curriculum in order to capture user/carer feedback that can contribute to formal student assessment and Continuing Professional Development.

Finally, the ALPS Common Competency Maps in communication, team working and ethical practice have now become embedded in core teaching on all health and social care courses, with colleagues in cognate disciplines evaluating the principle and practice of the common competences for other learner communities.

In summary, the ALPS CETL goes to the heart of what counts in teaching and learning, which is the evidenced excellence of professional practice through a negotiated approach to assessment that is relevant, replicable and reliable. At York St John the learning community will continue to engage with and draw on the lessons from this exciting programme as we shape our ambitions for the future graduate.

Professor Dianne Willcocks
Former Vice Chancellor
York St John University



Award winning building
Students learn in a simulated environment (top image). ALPS capital funding supported the development of the iconic and award winning De Grey Court building (above and right).

ALPS Common Competency Maps in communication, team working and ethical practice have now become embedded in core teaching on all health and social care courses



Across multiple health and social care professions, these tools allow students to gather feedback from both practice assessors from their own profession and other occupations.

ALPS Common Competency Maps

The work of ALPS is based on the hypothesis that if students receive feedback from different assessors (including other professionals, peers, service-users etc) in diverse practice situations, then confidence, competence, assessment reliability and inter-professional working skills will all be improved.

Communication, Team Working and Ethical Practice were selected as the initial competences to focus on as they are common across the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) benchmarks and professional bodies' regulatory occupational standards for all 16 professions covered by ALPS.

The three Common Competency Maps have been used as a framework from which the assessment tools have been built.

If you would like to learn more about the process of creating Common Competency Maps, or you are interested in adapting the ALPS Maps to suit your requirements, please contact alps@leeds.ac.uk

ALPS Assessment Tools

A fundamental part of the ALPS Programme has been the creation of generic assessment tools for use in practice. The assessment tools are mapped to the three ALPS Common Competency Maps, and cover:

- Demonstrating respect for a service user or carer
- Gaining consent
- Knowing when to consult or refer
- Providing information to colleagues
- Working inter-professionally

Across multiple health and social care professions, these tools allow students to gather feedback from both practice assessors from their own profession and other occupations, supporting the development of inter-professional collaboration. The tools include sections on self assessment, inter-professional peer and practice assessor assessment, and where appropriate, service user and carer assessment.

Before the tools were rolled out, they were used in simulations by student and service user volunteers to inform further development, and since their inception they have been reviewed annually. Thorough evaluation, including student, staff and service user focus groups and the application of reliability and validity techniques have fed into each phase of tools development.



16

Maps

All Maps were agreed across 16 health and social care professions including medicine, nursing and social work

ALPS Assessment Tools

Tutor view of the ALPS Assessment Suite (left), and ALPS Team Working Common Competency Map (right).

The helpdesk was integral to the success of ALPS, as it was essential that staff and students felt supported throughout their involvement in the programme.

Shared Services – the ALPS Helpdesk

Hundreds of students have been involved in ALPS across the five partner universities, and in order to support students and staff, an ALPS helpdesk was established at the University of Bradford.

The helpdesk had its own website from which students could log in to the ALPS Assessment Suite and access their e-portfolio. They could also download user guides and read FAQs, something particularly helpful for the students using ALPS mobile devices.

The helpdesk was manned Monday to Friday, and the helpdesk team were available to answer any questions from students across the programme about the assessment tools or mobile devices. As well as answering emails, the helpdesk could be contacted via phone, or Hotmail MSN – making it as easy as possible for students to get in touch.

The helpdesk was integral to the success of ALPS, as it was essential that staff and students felt supported throughout their involvement in the programme. Students often contacted the helpdesk if they encountered any problems with their devices – and if a solution couldn't be found over the phone or email a courier service was implemented to swap a student's device, ensuring the problem was solved quickly and with little or no inconvenience to the student.

Part of this programme of work was the delivery of the ALPS Assessment Suite to T-Mobile Vario I & II mobile devices via a shared Mobile Services Platform, a unique IT solution with a central mobile service that ties into the authentication, student data and virtual learning systems of each of the 5 partners. This IT model was jointly funded and centrally administrated, enabling the 5 HEIs to provide a more cost-effective and optimum service than if provided individually by each institution.

Join Fairhall from the University of Bradford, who managed the helpdesk said: '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. We have done our best to try and establish a cost effective shared service that staff and students want to use.'



ALPS Helpdesk

The Mobile Services Platform is a unique IT solution with a central mobile service that ties into the authentication, student data and virtual learning systems of each of the five partners.



Case Studies_____ALPS' mission is to ensure that students graduating from courses in health and social care are fully equipped to perform confidently and competently at the start of their professional careers.

The following case studies describe the different ways that ALPS has influenced and changed the assessment and learning processes for the 16 ALPS health and social care professions:

Audiology ²⁰ / **Clinical Physiology** ²² / **Dental Hygiene & Therapy** ²⁴ / **Dietetics** ²⁶ / **Diagnostic Radiography** ²⁸ / **Medicine** ³⁰ / **Midwifery** ³² / **Nursing** ³³ / **Occupational Therapy** ³⁴ / **Operating Department Practice (ODP)** ³⁶ / **Optometry & Pharmacy** ³⁷ / **Physiotherapy** ³⁸ / **Podiatry** ³⁹ / **Social Work** ⁴⁰ / **Speech & Language Therapy** ⁴² /

Audiology—Based on positive feedback collected in focus groups, the ALPS assessment tools are being rolled out to more Audiology students starting in September 2010.

Audiology

BSc Audiology students at the University of Leeds participated in the ALPS programme, in collaboration with clinical educators and clinical liaison tutors.

The existing BSc Audiology professional skills development objectives of; communication, team working and professionalism are reflected in the ALPS Common Competences of Communication, Team Working and Ethical Practice. The ALPS assessment in practice tool has also been identified as a potential provider of professional skills evidence gathering required for the Professional Development Portfolio (PDP) during the BSc Audiology students clinical practice.

Originally students used the mobile devices to access the ALPS assessment tools, gain feedback and received comments from their tutor at the University base. However, following student feedback the next cohort of students accessed the ALPS suite of assessments via a PC in the workplace.

The 'Gaining Consent' tool was selected as it was considered to be useful to both student and educator, time efficient, and complementary to the existing PDP guidance.

How the tool works in practice

Educators and students identify an opportunity in a clinical session to perform the assessment (e.g. taking the impression of an ear). Prior to the session a preparatory online tutorial is made available to students. This reviews what type of consent is applicable to different procedures (i.e. implied, informed or continued consent). The student/patient interaction is then observed by the educator.

After the session the student and the educator complete the ALPS assessment tool about the student's performance. There is also an opportunity for the patient, and potentially student peers, to provide feedback. The ALPS assessment tool has a comments box where qualitative feedback can be obtained. The students can then reflect and comment on their feedback.

Finally, the student and educator agree an action in order to progress the student's professional skill development. This is then uploaded to their ePortfolio in the ALPS Assessment Suite (password protected) using the mobile device. The university clinical liaison tutor can then access the student's submission and provide professional and clinical supervision for the student to view, whilst still in the practice setting.

95%

PC-based Assessment

In September 2010 PC-based assessment tools were rolled out to a full cohort of Audiology students and just one month later over 95% have returned assessments.



Evaluation

Feedback showed that students liked the paperless aspect of the ALPS assessment tool:

'It's easier for filing! ...not having notes everywhere and everything, in that sense it's really good.'

'...good for reflecting... writing up a quick note or remembering to look back at that or remembering to do this...it's better than having loads of paper.'

'...giving the device to a patient or getting them to recite to you while you type it in.'

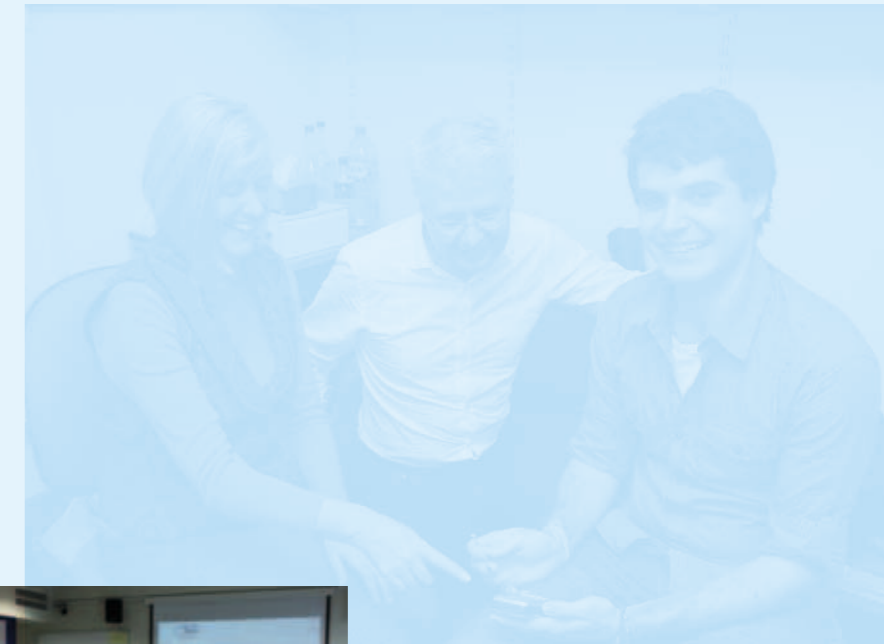
'...I think that's really good because then they can tell you their thoughts and reflections on how you've been... or record it on to the device... and I think that's really good as a morale booster as well'

The mobile devices offered a great advantage for communication, email and access to the internet, however the PC based system within every NHS Audiology Department provides the potential for a different method of assessment tool delivery.

What next?

'Based on positive feedback collected in focus groups, the ALPS assessment tools are being rolled out to more Audiology students starting in September 2010', said Paul White from the School of Healthcare. The implementation of the PC online version of the tools for the second cohort of students has proved to be very useful and the students have returned up to seven assessments each.

The success of this assessment tool for professional practice for Audiology students has created interest nationally and other HEIs are going to start using the tools electronically for their Audiology students.



Clinical Physiology ____ To date, the PC based versions of the ALPS assessment tools have been well received by the first year students, and their tutor hopes to develop further use of the tools in the future.

Clinical Physiology (Cardiology)

First year Cardiology students have been using the ALPS assessment tools to improve their reflective writing.

Cardiology students are required to write reflective essays in their second year, and the main challenge to their programme leader is that it can take some time for students to really understand how to write these essays in a way that makes them a meaningful learning experience.

In February 2009, second and third year students worked with the ALPS assessment tool "Demonstrating respect for a service user or carer". They used the paper-based version, and it was rolled out as a pilot to see how it worked. It was thought the ALPS assessment tool could potentially be used by students to provide additional evidence to support their generic assessment; "Support Patients, Colleagues and other Professionals in the delivery of care".

The students were trained in the use of the ALPS assessment tools and their practice assessors explained the purpose of the pilot. However, feedback from focus groups suggested that some students had not recognised the value to their reflective practice.

Some comments included the following;

'There's like eight questions and maybe two or three were exactly the same, just worded differently so you were writing exactly the same'

'To be honest the feedback part didn't get filled in...'

'...No I don't think any of mine did'

'They just signed it off and that was it'
(General agreement)

It became apparent that several aspects of the ALPS assessment tools were not clear to the students;

- They are student-led, not assessor-led;
- They are designed to get feedback from a variety of sources i.e. not just from their own practice assessor;
- And perhaps most importantly for this group of students, they are reflective in nature, therefore in order to benefit they needed to describe the "how" and the "why" not just the "what".

The key message above is that these aspects need to be reinforced in future training to prevent low levels of engagement.

Cardiology students in practice have access to PCs and this year it was agreed to take advantage of the developments within ALPS – specifically the ability for students to access downloaded versions of the ALPS assessment tools on a PC.

First year students have been asked to complete the first (self reflective) section of the tools whilst they are out in practice for comment by their tutor. The purpose behind this is to introduce students to reflective practice and reflective writing earlier, and before their second year when they have to begin producing reflective essays.

To date, the PC based versions of the ALPS assessment tools have been well received by the first year students, and their tutor hopes to develop further use of the tools in the future;

'...it (student use of the ALPS assessment tools) means I can provide feedback to the student for them to improve their reflective writing, next year we may be able to encourage them to get feedback from their service users as well.'



Students in Practice
Students learn and are assessed in practice (above).

ALPS assessment tools are reflective in nature, therefore in order to benefit, students have to describe the how and the why not just the what



The ALPS Mobile Assessment Suite is helping to enhance learning in clinical placements by re-enforcing reflective practice

Stuart Boomer

Assistant Director of the Dental Hygiene and Therapy programme
Leeds Dental Institute



Student Training

Dental Hygiene & Therapy students train in a simulated environment (above and left), as well as on supervised placements.

Dental Hygiene & Therapy_____The ALPS mobile devices were perfectly suited for use by the Leeds DCP students, who were able to collect evidence of the skills they were developing, and receive support and assistance from their tutor back at the university.

Dental Hygiene and Therapy

Dental Hygiene and Therapy students used ALPS mobile devices to complete assessments during their placements.

The University of Leeds offers a graduate Diploma in Dental Hygiene and Dental Therapy. The 15 module course is spread over 27 months, with students undertaking placements in clinical practice outside the University during their final year of study. The aim of the course is to train registered Dental Care Professionals (DCPs) who can work within a team framework taking on the role of both a dental hygienist and a dental therapist. The three areas of common competency identified by all 16 ALPS professions are essential for the DCP students at Leeds, who are required to demonstrate their communication, team working and ethical practice skills.

Clinical placements, by their very nature, are extremely varied and there is no guarantee that students will have access to a computer or the internet while they are out on work-based practice. What students can be sure of is that they will be required to gather evidence of the knowledge and competences they acquire throughout their placement.

The ALPS mobile devices were perfectly suited for use by the Leeds DCP students, who were able to collect evidence of the skills they were developing, and receive support and assistance from their tutor back at the university. Perhaps most significantly, they were also able to receive and complete assessments on the devices.

Mobile devices were handed out to 19 second year DCP students to use whilst on their paediatric clinical placement. They were asked to complete mobile assessments on 'Gaining consent' (i.e. asking for and being granted permission to perform a procedure on a patient) and to submit both peer assessment and self reflection on this subject.

Many of the students completed an assessment after performing a tooth extraction on a child for the first time, as this was an ideal situation to demonstrate their ability to 'gain consent'. The students worked through a set of questions designed to help them reflect on and learn from their experience, either using the keyboard or stylus to type, or the audio record feature to capture their thoughts aloud. Students then requested peer feedback, before reflecting again on the experience to develop an action plan to assist them next time they had to perform an extraction.

When a student completed an assessment, they sent it from the device to their e-portfolio where their tutor could access it back at the university. Their tutor could then send feedback and advice via the built-in blog feature. This enabled a dialogue between student and tutor which increased the level of remote support for students undertaking clinical placements.

As well as mobile assessment, the devices improved the access to learning material for the DCP students. Their tutor was able to send supporting material directly to the students, in a variety of formats. For example, students could receive video demonstrations of a tooth extraction or links to helpful websites. There has been a good response from students, with lots of dialogue emerging between the students and their tutor over blog posts and assessment responses.

Stuart Boomer, Assistant Director of the Dental Hygiene and Therapy programme at the Leeds Dental Institute, is pleased with the results. He comments;

'The ALPS Mobile Assessment Suite is helping to enhance learning in clinical placements by re-enforcing reflective practice. The graduate Diploma in Dental Hygiene and Therapy offered at the University of Leeds is very 'hands-on' and it can be easy for students to get wrapped up in physical tasks and procedures. By asking students to complete mobile assessments based on common competences such as communication skills, we are encouraging the type of essential reflective learning which will ultimately create more confident and competent professionals.'

Dietetics_____The students were already using T-Mobile mobile devices (with camera) as part of the ALPS programme and these devices were used in conjunction with their PebblePad e-portfolios to create a reflective digital story.

Dietetics

ALPS mobile devices helped Dietetics students at Leeds Metropolitan University to create digital stories.

The overall aim of the JISC Reflect 2.0 project was to pilot the use of Next Generation Technologies to enable students to collect and present multimedia artefacts to facilitate reflective learning. The Leeds Met case study involved a cohort of students on the postgraduate diploma in Dietetics who had previous experience of written reflection on their course. The challenge was to engage students who were used to a text based reflective assignment to use the more creative process of digital storytelling and to determine if this adds more meaning to the reflective process when part of a summative assessment.

The students were already using T-Mobile mobile devices (with camera) as part of the ALPS programme and these devices were used in conjunction with their PebblePad e-portfolios to create a reflective digital story. The stories consisted of images, audio recordings, and text based documents such as work products and assessment tools which were scanned and linked to their digital stories.

The pilot found that students need clear guidelines to help them create their digital stories. This included guidance on the reflective process, assessment criteria, a marking strategy that included a weighting for creativity, and support on how to use digital artefacts to evidence their learning.

The creative approach that was offered by the use of reflective digital storytelling was appreciated by students:

'...it was enjoyable because it was something different to what we normally do and can be more creative.'
Kate, Dietetics student

Some students were reluctant to engage in reflection, and, digital storytelling helped them to connect with their learning process:

'I'm not a natural reflector at all. So maybe I enjoy reflecting more because of this and I'll do it more.'
John, Dietetics student

Some students described 'added value' from participating in digital story telling and how it changed their professional practice:

'I did enjoy it. I felt quite proud of the final thing because I hadn't done it before and just to see a different representation of how I was feeling and everything fitting in.'
Jenny, Dietetics student

The additional use of images and audio media was considered to be useful to facilitate reflection:

'I think the voice recordings were good...you could express your emotions how you feel.'
Tom, Dietetics student

'...and so I took my little PDA out and just took not brilliantly artistic photographs but...I took a picture of a brick wall because I felt the patient had just put up a brick wall.'
Sally, Dietetics student

Not all students enjoyed this activity as for some they saw it as less valuable when coming from a strong science perspective:

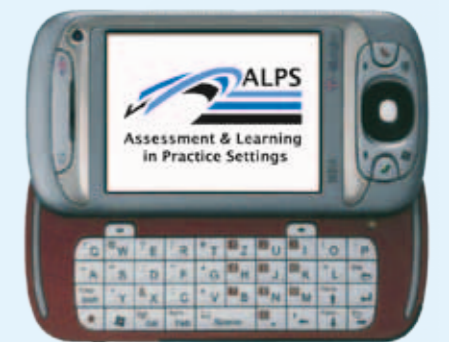
"Uncomfortable with the concept as am science minded"
Mary, Dietetics student

Despite the frustrations that some students felt with the hardware, most liked using PebblePad and still enjoyed the creative process involved in making a digital story. The power of digital artefacts and particularly the human voice added a new dimension to the reflective process which was borne out by tutor feedback:

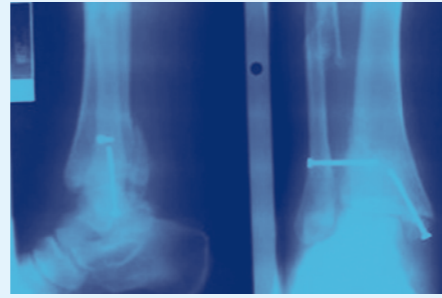
'As dietetic tutors viewing the digital stories, we were astounded by the quality of student work. We were able to experience the reflective learning journey in a way we have never done before just through text alone and we finally gained some insight to the intensity of student experience in practice learning which helped us to engage in a truly student centred approach.'
Dietetic Tutors



As dietetic tutors viewing the digital stories, we were astounded by the quality of student work. We were able to experience the reflective learning journey in a way we have never done before just through text alone



Digital Stories
ALPS devices (shown above) were used by Dietetics Students to create digital stories.



Overall for Radiography the ALPS experience has been a good one, with ups and downs but a great deal of learning, for students and staff alike

Nick Crohn
Department of Radiography
University of Leeds

Diagnostic Radiography____ALPS has made it easier to assess what is needed in a mobile device for students and also to consider what is needed, what is unnecessary, and the limitations of any mobile device that we choose to work with.

Diagnostic Radiography

Diagnostic Radiography students at the University of Leeds have been using ALPS tools and devices in clinical practice for the last three years.

Students from the September 2007 cohort were given ALPS mobile devices in their first semester at university ready to take out on placement in the October of that year. The students attended a briefing session on the ALPS programme and were taught how to set up and use the basic functions of the device.

The students took them out, with minimal software, on their first placement. In this time they were using the mobile devices for emails and web browsing, and also as a point of contact with the university and clinical staff. The aim was for the students to use the devices for accessing emails and web content without tying up the department computers.

Here the cohort encountered the first hurdle to overcome. X-ray departments, using radiation, are heavily shielded with lead and thick concrete/barium plaster walls. What this effectively creates is a very efficient method of blocking radiation, not just from inside but from outside as well. Unfortunately, radiation was not the only thing blocked and we found that in a number of radiography departments there was no viable mobile signal. This effectively cut the students off from web content.

This was overcome, from a content point of view, by developing a stand-alone, browser-based, interactive radiography positioning textbook. This ran within the mobile version of internet explorer, and was stored on the device. As this developed however, it became clear that the inclusion of images was increasing the file size considerably.

Fortunately, the devices came equipped with a memory card slot and inserting a 2GB memory card enabled the site content to be stored locally without affecting the operation of the devices.

Over the three years the students have also trialled the ALPS tools and custom packages for the radiography department. When these were trialled they worked very well and were completed in the departments quickly. However, one drawback was that the assessments were time stamped with the time and date they were uploaded to the server, which unfortunately due to the poor signal in some departments, could be hours or even days after the assessment was actually completed. Also, due to the small screen size, what were on paper short assessments, on screen became quite long.

Now in their final year, the students have been given logbooks for their CT (Computed Tomography) placements on the devices. Once the logbooks are completed, they are uploaded to the server meaning students do not then run the risk of losing their work.

Nick Crohn coordinates the clinical modules for the Radiography degree at the University of Leeds. He said:

'Overall for Radiography the ALPS experience has been a good one, with ups and downs but a great deal of learning, for students and staff alike.'

'The use of the ALPS devices and software has informed discussions within the department regarding the use of mobile devices in the clinical departments. ALPS has made it easier to assess what is needed in a mobile device for students and also to consider what is needed, what is unnecessary, and the limitations of any mobile device that we choose to work with.'

'In addition, the use of the ALPS Assessment Suite has contributed greatly to our discussions regarding the development of electronic portfolios, particularly their advantages and disadvantages over paper-based portfolios.'

Medicine_____As a result of the ALPS pilot, over 500 fourth and fifth year medical students now have iPhones to access their e-portfolio and submit assessments.

Medicine

Two hundred and fifty 3rd year medical students from the University of Leeds piloted the ALPS assessment tools via the mobile ALPS Assessment Suite or by using electronically scanned paper-based tools.

The students used three of the ALPS assessment tools: 'Gaining consent', 'Demonstrating respect for a service user or carer', 'Providing information to colleagues', and a specifically designed 'Physical examination' tool built using the ALPS tool authoring facility.

These four tools were delivered to mobile devices or copied onto paper for the students. Responses sent from the mobile devices were automatically uploaded to the ALPS Assessment Suite (on a password protected server) where tutors and students could review and give/receive feedback. Paper-based tools were collected, and then scanned into an electronic format. Written feedback was provided by tutors and e-mailed to the students.

Those students (148) allocated to use the mobile devices were trained in the use of the device in addition to the purpose of the formative assessment tools. The remainder of the students (108) used paper-based copies of the assessment tool, and were mainly chosen because the placements areas they were going to (at that time) had poor mobile reception, therefore it would be difficult to upload any assessments completed.

As there are 250 medical students in the third year, a number of tutors, not necessarily from the medical profession, were set up to provide feedback. An additional three medical tutors provided backup just in case there was a situation where specific clinical comments were required.

Additionally, a group of Patient Voice assessors who were already involved in communication training to this group of medical students, were trained in the use of the tools and provided feedback with support.

Results

Students were asked to attend a focus group. Those who attended had all used the mobile devices.

Students reported that the tools facilitated wider access to feedback opportunities:

'In the GP practice ...it opened up a bigger discussion and we ended up having a wider chat about sort of a mini-evaluation just from asking them to do it'

'You get opportunity to actually start discussing it...and I think anything like that kind of reminds them why you are there as well because they have to think "oh what are you learning?" and so that's quite good and to verbalise it'

'It was a good way of formalising it
Peer feedback

'I think it's some of the most helpful people to receive feedback from... I think from the people that I did speak to I think possibly I got most out of that because it's the other side to the story'
Service user feedback

The Patient Voice group were also invited to a focus group and they said;

'Our feedback is a teaching tool in itself'

As a result of this pilot, fourth and fifth year medical students now have iPhones to access their e-portfolio and submit assessments. Second and third year students are continuing to use the four assessment tools and can use the tools with iPhones, PCs in practice, or paper, depending on the situation.

250

Medical Students

Two hundred and fifty 3rd year medical students from the University of Leeds piloted the ALPS assessment tools via the mobile ALPS Assessment Suite or by using electronically scanned paper-based tools.



148 Students given mobile devices to complete assessments

108 Students given paper version of the assessments

46 Placement locations

6 NHS Trusts



Midwifery____‘I have actually bought my own device to use full time indefinitely. I found the ALPS device so useful, and once you integrate technology into your life it becomes normal, therefore it made sense for me to invest in my own device.’

Midwifery

The ALPS mobile devices have helped student midwives at the University of Bradford to stay connected to their university and feel less isolated whilst out on placement.

Tutors have a large number of students out on clinical placements to supervise, and with an ever increasing workload it can be hard for them to sustain communication with, and deliver support to each individual student. The advantage for students with mobile devices was that they were able to contact their tutors at any time, any place during their time away from university, improving the students’ overall experience on work-based practice.

One second year Midwifery student at the University of Bradford commented, ‘Contacting lecturers to organise appointments or things like that... it (the mobile device) is in your pocket and you’re instantly being able to get a response from them... And so I found that I had a lot better communication with my tutors who are now increasingly hard to get hold of.’

Rachel is studying Midwifery at the University of Bradford. She recognised the benefits of using a mobile device for learning and assessment: *‘I’m dyslexic, so anything where I don’t have to write stuff down is good!’* She continues: *‘I really liked using the calendar – especially setting reminders. I synced it to my PC at home so deadlines for essays and assessments would come up on both. It made life easier and helped me to be organised and plan ahead. I also looked at the library catalogue and used to receive emails to say books needed renewing or had been called back. It saved me a fortune in library fines!’*

‘I don’t drive – so I used my device to access the metro website. After a late shift I could access the ‘real time’ site, meaning I wasn’t stood at the bus stop late at night waiting for a scheduled bus that may or may not show up.’

‘I have actually bought my own device to use full time indefinitely. I found the ALPS device so useful, and once you integrate technology into your life it becomes normal, therefore it made sense for me to invest in my own device.’



ALPS Mobile Devices

The ALPS mobile devices have helped student midwives at the University of Bradford to stay connected to their university and feel less isolated whilst out on placement.



Nursing____During the NMC annual monitoring exercise last year, the HLSP held up the ALPS programme as a good example of strong partnerships across local trusts and universities.

Nursing

A number of Nursing cohorts have piloted ALPS assessment tools and mobile devices at the University of Leeds.

Initially, students were issued with mobile devices and asked to complete the ALPS assessment tools whilst out in practice. Unfortunately, it proved difficult to embed the tools and processes in such an established profession and engagement with the mobile devices was low. This was down to a number of factors including large student numbers, delays between training sessions and practice placements, and technical difficulties with the devices.

As a result of feedback from focus groups, there are several cohorts of Nursing students across the specialities now using paper-based ALPS assessment tools. ‘Gaining consent’ is being used by one cohort to provide stimulation for discussion during their ‘Ethics and Law’ module which commenced in September 2010.

ALPS tools are also being used by a cohort of third year students to enable them to reflect on a critical incident for future learning.

In addition to these specific cohorts, all Nursing students are benefiting from ALPS outcomes as curricula are revalidated to include ALPS Common Competency Maps as learning outcomes and the tools being used in Assessment in Practice documentation.

During the NMC annual monitoring exercise last year, the HLSP held up the ALPS programme as a good example of strong partnerships across local trusts and universities. In addition, ALPS was commended for its involvement of service users and carers, particularly the fact that service users were providing feedback to Nursing students about their skills and competences.



ALPS Competency Maps

All Leeds Nursing students are benefiting from ALPS outcomes as curricula are revalidated to include ALPS Common Competency Maps.



The development of the ALPS Common Competency Maps has given occupational therapy educators, for the first time, a common language to facilitate communication with other professions around students' development and achievement



Occupational Therapy

On its website The College of Occupational Therapists defines occupational therapy as a therapy that 'enables people to achieve as much as they can for themselves and get the most out of life'

The focus of pre-registration education in occupational therapy is on preparing newly qualified occupational therapists (OTs) to work with people in a way that facilitates their engagement as independently as possible in the activities which enhance their health and wellbeing. The broad range of occupations from self care through to paid employment that occupational therapists find themselves working with requires them to perform professionally in a wide range of clinical and non-clinical environments on appointment to their first posts. They have to be able to balance the challenges arising from functioning simultaneously as an autonomous professional and a member of multiple health and social care teams.

Competence and confidence on graduation is therefore a key issue for occupational therapy education. There is an unambiguous requirement for students to be able to self assess and monitor their developing competence so that their confidence can be built on a firm foundation of evidence. ALPS offered a unique opportunity for OT educators from York St John University to work with colleagues from other professions to develop a tool that facilitates students self evaluation and enables them to measure the students' preparedness to operate in a very demanding environment.

Occupational Therapy ____ In addition, the multimedia capabilities of the ALPS mobile devices made a real difference to Occupational Therapy students on community based placements.

By its very nature the profession demands that practitioners have excellent communication skills, work well in teams and are able to uphold the highest standards of ethical practice with minimal supervision. Working as a minority profession, in large health and social care teams OTs have always valued the input given by other professions to the education and training of their students.

Like all professions OT has developed a wealth of specific technical language relating to theory and practice that often hinders rather than helps communication. The development of the ALPS Common Competency Maps has given occupational therapy educators, for the first time, a common language to facilitate communication with other professions around students' development and achievement in relation to communication skills, team working and ethical practice.

The language of the Common Competency Maps has proved particularly useful in addressing deficits in student performance. Although experience has shown that OT placement educators usually have little difficulty in identifying whether students are performing at an acceptable level in relation to their communication and team working skills, identifying specific performance criteria that need addressing is much more difficult. The Maps have been used by OT educators at York St John University to engage students and placement educators in detailed analysis of where the students' performance was not meeting the required standards.

The Maps have also been used to structure graded interventions leading to improvement and meeting of learning outcomes for students who were in danger of failing a placement. This remedial approach has been well received by students who previously experienced only vague, sometimes conflicting, advice as to how to improve their communication and interpersonal skills.

In addition, the multimedia capabilities of the ALPS mobile devices made a real difference to Occupational Therapy students on community based placements.

The second year students from York St John University reported that they found the internet access useful, as well as the built-in camera and video player. Google Maps and online bus time-tables proved to be practical resources, while students also found it helpful being able to search the internet at service users' homes: *'If you're looking for lunch groups or things like that in certain areas for people then it's really useful just to, when you're there just say "don't worry, I'll just check" because they were older so they didn't have internet a lot of the time and so you could just do that, which was good.'*

The mobile devices also enhanced the students' work-based learning as they received informative videos (e.g. correct way to use a hoist) and were able to capture evidence of their acquired skills, *'I did use it (the device) for photos...so the splints I made, I took photos of the practice ones I did on my educator, so that was useful (to have a record).'*

Students also saw the benefit of using their mobile device on the wards: *'It can be tricky logging on to PCs in the hospital because you aren't always given a login and password – so being able to look something up, like what piece of equipment to use, on your mobile device is really useful and time-saving.'*



Operating Department Practice (ODP)_____At the time they were issued with their devices, few mobile phones enabled access to the internet and email. The ODP students used the devices to access the internet and to contact each other and their tutors, and this was truly innovative.

Operating Department Practice (ODP)

The success of the ALPS mobile devices with the ODP students at the University of Huddersfield centred around the fact that they engaged with the ALPS project as a group and used the devices in several different ways before they were asked to complete mobile assessments.

At the time the students were issued with their devices, very few mobile phones enabled access to the internet and email. The ODP students used the devices to access the internet and to contact each other and their tutors, and this was truly innovative. The group were motivated to use the devices for mobile assessments, and for the ODP students this entailed completing the standard ODP assessments that had been converted to a mobile-friendly format using the ALPS Assessment Suite.

One of the challenges encountered by the ODP students stemmed from the fact that the ALPS devices did not synchronise with IT systems at the University of Huddersfield as quickly as anticipated. This delay adversely affected the students' enthusiasm for the project. However, students were encouraged to use the devices in other ways and while the ALPS assessments were not available, students could utilise online learning resources such as useful websites, PDFs, online videos etc.

Huddersfield recently received funding through a B2B project which will be used to purchase more devices or to extend the airtime of the current ones, for further cohorts to use in the future.

As well as using the ALPS mobile devices in practice, the ODP students have been involved in an infection-control project led by Stephen White at the University of Huddersfield. Mobile devices can be kept clean using antiseptic wipes, unlike notepads, loose-leaf folders and textbooks, which could harbour germs, including the so-called hospital superbug MRSA. Data has been gathered on base-level contamination from mobile devices. The generation of evidence continues, as the project team have received ethical approval to sample students' personal devices to broaden the study.



Optometry & Pharmacy_____At a seminar involving Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies, representatives from both professions felt that the ALPS Common Competency Maps and assessment tools had potential to feed into the Modernising of Scientific Careers work programme.

Optometry and Pharmacy

ALPS has worked, and is continuing to work closely with Optometry and Pharmacy, where progress has been more difficult due to limitations in practice based learning at undergraduate level. In both professions however, this is now changing and there is an increased interest in the ALPS outputs.

At a recent seminar involving Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs), representatives from both professions felt that the ALPS Common Competency Maps and assessment tools had potential to feed into the Modernising of Scientific Careers work programme within the Department of Health.

As courses are being revalidated there is a real opportunity to embed ALPS tools and processes at the point of curriculum development. ALPS partners are driving this agenda forward in consultation with PSRB colleagues.



As courses are being revalidated there is a real opportunity to embed ALPS tools and processes at the point of curriculum development

Physiotherapy_____ At the University of Bradford, ALPS Common Competency Maps and assessment tools are being embedded within the School of Health Studies.

Physiotherapy

With funding through ALPS, York St John University was able to produce a series of Reusable Learning Objects (RLOs), with the aim of benefiting the other ALPS partners and the wider academic community. The RLOs included skills videos for Physiotherapy students and these proved to be a useful and valuable tool in providing learning material to students from several professions.

The video sequences were of physiotherapy demonstrations, parts of hoist equipment and demonstrations showing how to use a mobile hoist, among others.

In the summer of 2010 a cohort of Physiotherapy students used the mobile devices with the ALPS assessment tools in order to help develop their reflection skills whilst on placement. Jill Wickham (Physiotherapy Lecturer) monitored the responses the students submitted to the ALPS Assessment Suite and provided support and feedback to them.

Following an evaluation of the pilot she commented that "It seems obvious to me that the students who have used the ALPS devices are leaps ahead of those who have not." Based on this experience she intends to continue to use the ALPS tools with her students in 2010-2011, saying "I hope that if I can encourage reflection sooner then more students will engage in deeper more meaningful reflection.

At the University of Bradford, ALPS Common Competency Maps and assessment tools are being embedded within the School of Health Studies. Specifically, these elements will be incorporated into the core modules of the new curriculum for Physiotherapy, among other professions, with effect from September 2011.



Podiatry_____ Due to the nature of the course, it was agreed that students would not benefit sufficiently from the ALPS assessment tools which were designed for use in practice settings.

Podiatry

The University of Huddersfield offers an undergraduate course in podiatry. While students complete some external placements, the majority of their practice time is undertaken within the podiatry clinic and surgery suite on campus.

Due to the nature of the course, it was agreed that students would not benefit sufficiently from the ALPS assessment tools which were designed for use in practice settings. Although no podiatry students were directly involved in the programme; staff, students and representatives from the Health Professions Council have been kept up to date with ALPS developments and outputs through a series of consultation events.

The Division of Podiatry at the University of Huddersfield has responded to many changes in professional and educational practices over the past 30 years and in some areas has been innovative in curriculum change. It is anticipated that this momentum be a feature of future courses and, as the courses evolve, there is potential for ALPS processes and outcomes to feed into further curriculum development.



Social Work_____All five of the tools have already been mapped to the National Occupational Standards and have had a contextual introductory statement added.



Social Work

At the University of Leeds, the ALPS assessment tools have been integrated within the National Occupational Standards (NOS) required for Social Work undergraduate and post graduate students.

Alan Murphy, Social Work Lead at the Leeds Institute of Health and Social Work, is leading the project which aims to improve student learning and assessment, and enhance students' experience on placements by providing more useful evidence of achieved skills and competences.

Alan has been involved in ALPS since its inception and was a member of the Common Competency Mapping Working Group, whose task it was to agree common competences across all ALPS partners and professions.

'This was a huge undertaking, involving colleagues from five universities and 16 health and social care professions. While agreeing and creating the Maps and the tools was a massive achievement, it became clear early on that in order to encourage implementation and embedding, it was going to be essential to make the tools more relevant to specific professions.'

The ALPS tools are in competition with other tools and types of assessment, and both students and practice educators need to see examples of how they work and how using the tools will help them. By integrating the ALPS assessment tools within the current Social Work requirements, it is hoped that they will be more readily accepted by tutors, practice educators and students.

Students are required to complete three observations during their practice placements, and have six key roles and 21 units of practice requirements to demonstrate. This is where Alan saw potential to utilise the ALPS tools:

'I always had in mind that this is where the tools would be useful and where they would have the greatest influence and impact.'

All five of the tools have already been mapped to the National Occupational Standards and have had a contextual introductory statement added, and Alan piloted two of these with his first and second year students in 2008/09.

Social Work students at the University of Leeds use the paper version of the ALPS tools and Alan divided all the answer boxes into two parts, allowing students to write how they had hit their NOS roles in one section. Alan filled in a sample and gave this to students along with the blank assessment to fill out. These were then worked through in placement preparation workshops.

By providing them with a completed assessment as an example, students were able to see how they could potentially evidence their competences in an analytical and reflective way. During a focus group, one student said: *'... looking at the examples that we were given... it then made me think "ah right that does meet that role" when I would have thought my work actually wasn't meeting as many roles as it was. It helped me to reflect and actually I'm doing a lot more than I think I am.'*

The students completed the blank versions and discussed what they had written with their practice educator during supervision. The practice educator then had the opportunity to offer feedback and make additional suggestions of further NOS requirements the students may have demonstrated; bearing in mind students can claim several NOS units from just one experience.

Students have responded positively to the assessment tools, finding them a detailed way to gather evidence of their competences: *'...it just gives you that extra evidence rather than just writing it down in your journal... It's more focused evidence as well.'* Another student said: *'The structure was very good... it made you hit your role well, enabled you to hit your (NOS) roles.'*

Students also recognised the need to move away from descriptive writing and be more analytical;

'There's an increased emphasis on our reflective practice so it's very good for that.'

As well as students from Leeds, the tools have also been piloted with Social Work students at the University of Huddersfield. The work to map the ALPS tools to the National Occupational Standards, providing detailed example assessments was undertaken by a practice educator, which helped the embedding process across Social Work. Alan comments, *'Getting practice educators on board is essential. We can't expect adoption overnight. We need to continue promoting the ALPS tools to these key people at student placement preparation workshops and placement practice educator training events.'*



The message is that students and their practice educators don't have to complete five ALPS assessments, gathering feedback from peers and service users for each one during every observation. Instead they can pick and choose from the tools and who they ask for feedback from as appropriate.

Students agree that the tools are more readily accepted if practice educators are fully informed of their purpose and benefits; *'I think the best way for it to work, I think on days when we go to placement we have to introduce this to our practice teachers from the start so that they will know that this is what we're going to use.'*

The intention is to make the tools available electronically, allowing students to complete the assessments on a PC and upload them directly to their e-portfolio as well as on CD format for practice educators.

Getting practice educators on board is essential. We can't expect adoption overnight. We need to continue promoting the ALPS tools to these key people at student placement preparation workshops and placement practice educator training events

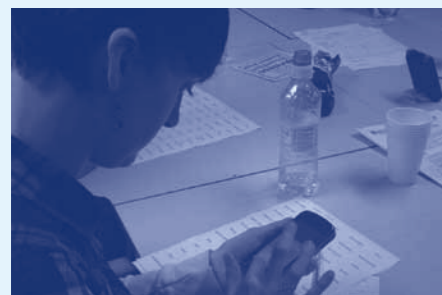
Alan Murphy
Social Work Lead
Leeds Institute of Health & Social Work



Speech & language Therapy_____The Maps also provided a framework which students could use to gather and illustrate examples of the skills and competences they were achieving whilst on placement.

Speech and Language Therapy
The ALPS Common Competency Maps were used by Speech and Language Therapy students at Leeds Metropolitan University to reflect on their ethical practice.

Over three years, students studying Speech and Language Therapy are required to develop and demonstrate core competences in ethical practice. The ALPS Maps were applied in Speech and Language Therapy practice to show students their expected level of competence at each stage of their training. The Maps also provided a framework which students could use to gather and illustrate examples of the skills and competences they were achieving whilst on placement.



Outputs & Research_____An unexpected and valuable outcome of ALPS has been the development of Globalised Skills and Attributes Maps which have been piloted in areas outside health and social care.

In addition to funded research projects and a detailed IT process report, ALPS has undertaken a cost benefit analysis – using an innovative and exciting model.

**Beyond Health & Social
Care ⁴⁴ / Research Capacity
Funding Projects ⁴⁶ /
Cost Benefit Analysis ⁴⁸ /
ALPS IT Process Report ⁴⁹ /
Working in Partnership ⁵⁰ /**

The process initially established within ALPS to map communication, team working and ethical practice has now been extrapolated to develop a new enterprise skills map to be used by students and staff at Leeds Met



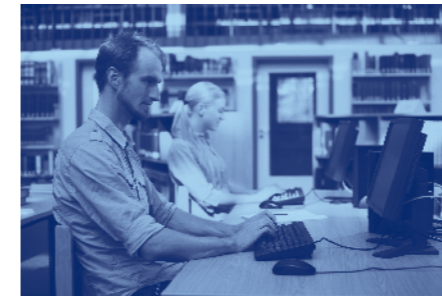
Beyond Health and Social Care

Developing more Common Competency Maps

ALPS and the Institute for Enterprise CETL at Leeds Met University are working collaboratively to develop the use of the ALPS Common Competency Maps.

The process initially established within ALPS to map communication, team working and ethical practice has now been extrapolated to develop a new enterprise skills map to be used by students and staff.

The mapping of skills is an interesting way to enable students and staff to navigate their way through competences in a user friendly format. Both ALPS and the Enterprise CETL have worked with MyKnowledgeMap, a local software company to facilitate this process and create interactive and creative user-friendly tools. The collaborative process involved in developing these maps can be lengthy and challenging, involving the generation of clusters and dimension statements, but the information gained in both processes provides a breadth of understanding around common language and the variations in terminology to build a mutually acceptable concept for professional groups.



‘Using the Maps definitely encouraged me to reflect on my time on placement more than I have in the past. All three Maps were relevant to my course and the skills I am expected to demonstrate in order to be seen as competent by prospective employers.’

The overarching context of this mapping process was that these performance criteria would ultimately form the content of common assessment tools for inter-professional learning, for the students and staff to gain an understanding of the different skills required for them to be enterprising. At Leeds Met these common competency maps have been embedded into the inter-professional learning strategy for students to use as an aid to developing practice competences during inter-professional group work and online learning sets. The enterprise competences will be embedded at the University in programme review documents to enhance curriculum development. Leeds Met University aims to develop similar tools for coaching skills and leadership skills.

ALPS Globalised Skills and Attributes Maps

Once ALPS became well known across the partnership, the programme received considerable interest in the Common Competency Maps from subject areas outside health and social care. Other disciplines recognised the benefits of being able to assess students’ competency-based skills and attributes.

In response to the interest from other subject areas, ALPS produced three new Globalised Skills and Attributes Maps which can be used by any discipline to assess students on any work-based placement. The Maps cover Communication, Team Working and Ethical Awareness. Subjects as diverse as Counselling and Events Management have utilised the Globalised Skills and Attributes Maps (see right):

Counselling Studies

Counselling Studies at York St John University provides a wide range of options for those wishing to pursue a career in counselling or in one of the many professions requiring well developed interpersonal and counselling skills – such as social work, offender support, the mental health sector or education.

Students are taught through a combination of lectures, seminars, small groups and tutorials. The counselling practitioner programmes require that, over the course of the programme, students undertake a minimum of 150 hours supervised practice.

During a staff development day, the counselling programme staff were introduced to the ALPS Globalised Skills and Attributes Maps for Communication, Team Working and Ethical Awareness. They were also introduced to the ALPS tools for developing specific assessments and mobile assessment.

The programme teams were keen to explore how the Skills and Attributes Maps could help students reflect on their own interpersonal skills level. They thought that the language was very clear and accessible to students at all levels and could be very useful to help structure the students’ skills development.

Events Management

Rosie is studying for a HND in Events Management. As part of her course she undertakes a full year of placements, during which she must provide evidence of the skills and competences she has gained. Rosie used the ALPS Globalised Skills and Attributes Maps in Communication, Team Working and Ethical Awareness to help her keep a record of her skills development:

‘The Maps were really useful because most of the time I don’t stop to think about the new things I’m doing on placement, the new skills I am gaining and demonstrating. So by trying to think of examples of times I have demonstrated or achieved a criteria or competence it really helps me reflect on how I am developing my skills and competences. Also, the criteria help the things I am doing day-in-day-out sound more professional and this will be useful for expressing my skills, in a CV for example.’

‘I found that I could supply examples for some elements of the Maps more readily than others, and this helped me recognise which skills I had yet to develop and evidence. Using the Maps definitely encouraged me to reflect on my time on placement more than I have in the past. All three Maps were relevant to my course and the skills I am expected to demonstrate in order to be seen as competent by prospective employers.’



Teachers across four universities have been collaborating with service users to develop their role in professional learning, during a Patient Learning Journey programme which enables users to learn from their experience and help others to learn from theirs.

Research Capacity Funding Projects

In 2007 ALPS awarded funding to three projects which were designed to advance the objectives of the ALPS programme and build additional research capacity within the partnership, to further the cross-institutional goals of ALPS.

Mobile Enabled Disabled Students (MEDS)

An investigation into the benefits, barriers and essential specifications of mobile devices used for learning and assessment purposes with disabled students

Dr Christine Dearnley, Senior Lecturer, Project Lead, University of Bradford

Stuart Walker, IT Officer for Disabled People, University of Bradford

John Fairhall, Mobile Technology Adviser, University of Bradford

Jak Radice, Learning Technology Adviser, University of Bradford

Carol Higgison, Senior Adviser on e-Learning, University of Bradford

This 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. Specific objectives were:

1. To investigate the range of impairments that affect health and social care students. This was then used to form guidance for "reasonable expectations"
2. To establish what works well for disabled students who currently use mobile devices
3. To identify the challenges that mobile technologies present to disabled students
4. To trial the use of new assessment methods as they were agreed by ALPS among disabled users to assess their impact and identify changes that needed to be made for disabled users
5. To test the accessibility of the learning objects developed by York St John and Leeds Metropolitan Universities, and propose equivalents where necessary (e.g. transcripts for an audio file or complex visual learning object)

The project has achieved this aim and these objectives and 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 project's final report can be viewed in full at www.alps-cetl.ac.uk

Hard copies are also available on request, subject to availability.

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

Penny Morris, Jools Symons, School of Medicine, University of Leeds

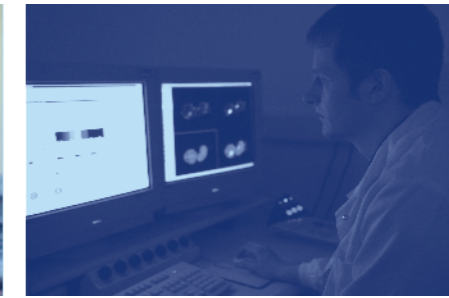
Chris Essen, Sam Samociuk, School of Healthcare, University of Leeds

Dr Caroline Plews, Jane Priestley, Faculty of Health, University of Bradford

Mike Bush, Sue Sherwin, Faculty of Health, Leeds Metropolitan University

Kath Padgett, Christine Rhodes, School of Human & Health Sciences, University of Huddersfield

Professionals need to learn how to support patients and their carers to play a greater part in care and decision making. Teachers across four universities have been collaborating with service users to develop their role in professional learning, during a Patient Learning Journey programme which enables users to learn from their experience and help others to learn from theirs. The work led to an enquiry into the attributes, behaviours and context that medical, health and social care students require for effective partnership working, and how to assess these.



Patients/carers met in groups (which were facilitated by university user involvement workers and recorded) during an iterative action research process, to examine and apply their experience to student assessment. Continued reflection was undertaken with support from an observer/reflector academic and the project team, drawn from the four universities involved. A modified Delphi study was then undertaken with more users, plus multi-professional students and clinical teachers.

Investigating competences from this perspective has revealed important differences from research undertaken in professional silos. This study supports holistic framing of teaching and assessment, incorporating notions of ethics, communication and team working into person-based practices. Without public engagement, there is a missing expertise in curriculum development, as in healthcare.

The project's final report can be viewed in full at www.alps-cetl.ac.uk

Hard copies are also available on request, subject to availability.

Service User Involvement in Mental Health Training, Education and Research in West Yorkshire

Dr Virginia Minogue and Sarah Hardy West Yorkshire Mental Health Research and Development Consortium

This was a study, undertaken in 2008, of service user and carer involvement in mental health training, education and research. The study examined the policy and practice of service user involvement from the perspective of the service user and carer. It aimed to define and measure effective and meaningful service user involvement, and identify the processes and strategies for service user involvement which are most effective in achieving meaningful involvement.

The study was lead by a multi-disciplinary group of health care professionals, researchers, and service users and carers from across the area covered by the West Yorkshire Mental Health Research and Development Consortium. It was supported by research managers from the Consortium and academics from the University of Huddersfield, Leeds Metropolitan

University, and the University of Bradford.

The project's final report can be viewed in full at www.alps-cetl.ac.uk

Hard copies are also available on request, subject to availability.



The return on investment for students has started to be realised and could be significantly increased by a number of factors including capital reinvestment and making assessments compulsory.

Cost Benefit Analysis

In 2009 ALPS commissioned a performance management company, The ROI Academy, to undertake a Cost Benefit Analysis (CBA) of innovative assessment and learning approaches arising from the ALPS programme of activity. This CBA would be a key input into the evaluation of the Value for Money achieved from the HEFCE investment of £4.8 million in the five ALPS partner Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). The CBA looks at the benefit accruing from the investment to date, and indicates the likely benefit accruing in the future.

The ROI Academy have delivered the final CBA report with the clear message that ALPS has produced a return on investment higher than envisaged at this stage of the programme. The original business case did not envisage substantial value arising from deployment until after the five year development phase. The fact that there is current payback at Spring 2010 of around 49% is more than had been expected. ALPS, as a learning and teaching project, can both demonstrate a return on investment of approximately 50% of the original investment and evidence that a cost benefit analysis has taken place. These are significant achievements in themselves.

ROI highlight that the greatest return at this stage has been the human capital asset base of expertise in collaborative, interdisciplinary and inter-professional working skills and expertise in mobile, e-learning and development of shared services. The methodology (the Performance Pound™) which ROI used demonstrates that the greatest impact has been made at an institutional and staff level. In a programme of change, which ALPS aims to be, it is expected that change would have to take place at these levels first, before students could then benefit. The return on investment for students has started to be realised and could be significantly increased by a number of factors including capital reinvestment and making assessments compulsory.

Visit www.alps-cetl.ac.uk to learn more about the results of the CBA.



ALPS now seeking to learn how to use the methodology for ourselves to continue to evaluate ALPS and other programmes

The ROI Academy has licensed ALPS to use the methodology for the next 3 years, and is providing a toolkit and training support

£6M

A commitment to funding

A programme as ambitious as ALPS, particularly in the aspects of mobile learning and collaboration, had to take risks as well as be innovative. Funding for the five year programme ran to **£2.5m revenue and £2+m capital**. These figures excluded the contribution, both direct and indirect, which the five ALPS partners made and which has totalled in the region of an additional **£1.5m**.

The report is written from multiple perspectives including the collaborating academics, the health and social care professionals, learning technologists, other support professionals and the commercial partners.

ALPS IT Process Report

The purpose of the IT process report, "ALPS – Implementing a large scale mobile learning programme: a report" is to talk about ALPS' experiences and learning from developing and implementing one aspect of the programme. In order to extend students' opportunities for assessment whilst in practice placement, ALPS developed a mobile learning and assessment programme to support students.

The software companies (ecommet and MyKnowledgeMap) chosen through the procurement process, became ALPS' commercial partners, working alongside academic, practice and support staff to design, develop and pilot the mobile services platform. In recognition of the wide range of stakeholders involved in the programme, the report is written from multiple perspectives including the collaborating academics, the health and social care professionals, learning technologists, other support professionals and the commercial partners.

The report is written from multiple perspectives, from the collaborating academics, the health and social care professionals, learning technologists and other support professionals.

The report does not record every detail of the ALPS programme but it provides a good outline of the complexity of not just implementing a large scale mobile learning programme, but the "unexpected" aspects which arose during the course of ALPS and which needed to be managed.

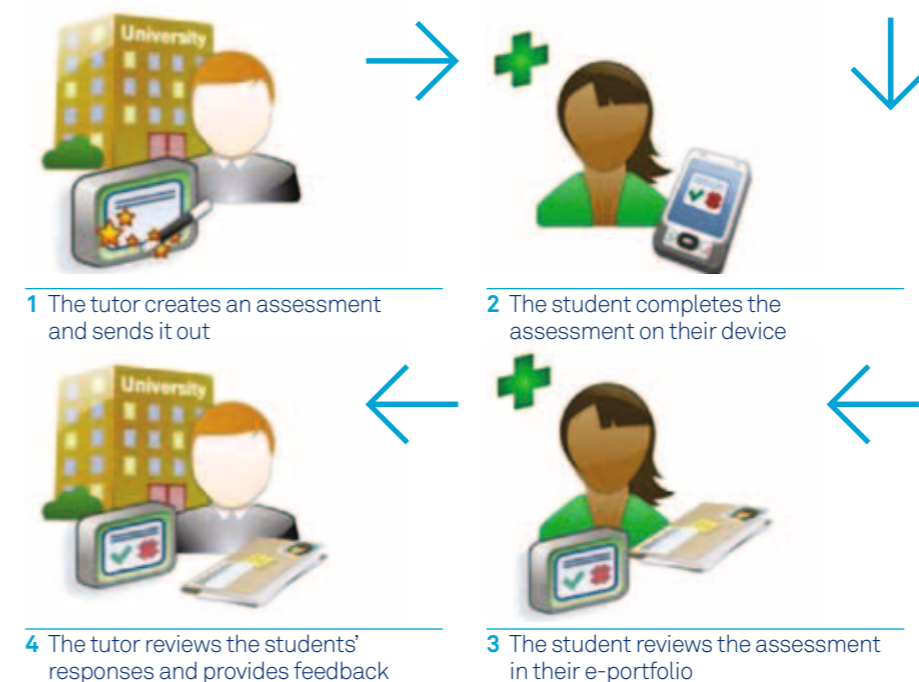
The report can be viewed in full at www.alps-cetl.ac.uk

Hard copies are also available on request, subject to availability.



IT Provision

Whilst Universities have control over the technology provided to their students whilst on campus they may have little or no control over IT provision within health and social care placements attended by their students. This was a motivating factor for examining mobile technology as a method for delivering assessment and learning in practice settings.



The Partner Site Implementation Groups at each university were then tasked with ensuring that appropriate strategies were developed to ensure students continued to be involved in the programme.



Working in Partnership

The ALPS partnership is vast, with five Higher Education Institutions, 16 health and social care professions, the NHS and strategic health authorities and MyKnowledgeMap, ecommnet and T-Mobile from the private sector.

One of the most successful features of ALPS has been the involvement of key stakeholders, including service users, students and Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs). The success that has been achieved in relation to stakeholder engagement can be attributed to the significance that was given to a process of full consultation and a commitment to gaining buy-in during the development of the original bid.

Service Users and Carers

Working in consultation with service users and carers is essential to ensure complete 360 degree feedback for students. Service user and carer involvement also ultimately contributes to an improved standard of care for all.

The ALPS Service Users & Carers Working Group was established to embed the service user and carer perspective in the work of ALPS. A crucial task was the development of an ALPS remuneration policy. This established a standard payment rate for service users and carers who offered their time and input. The value placed on this involvement was reflected in the provision of free conference places for service users and carers at the final ALPS dissemination conference in March 2010.

The Working Group also produced the ALPS Good Practice Guidelines for service user and carer involvement – an easily accessible online resource which can be used by other people and/or organisations concerned with service user and carer involvement. (see <http://www.alps-cetl.ac.uk/ServiceUsersCarers.html>)

Student Engagement

HEFCE made it clear to prospective CETL hosts that a successful bid would be required to provide evidence of student commitment to the aims of the initiative. Early in the development of the bid, partner leads were required to meet with the Student Union officers at their respective HEIs to share the ALPS vision, identify how students could be involved and gain a commitment to a partnership approach. Once the bid document had been finalised the Student Union at each HEI was required to formally sign off the proposal.

The Partner Site Implementation Groups at each university were then tasked with ensuring that appropriate strategies were developed to ensure students continued to be involved in the programme.

Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs)

Working in consultation with the PSRBs is essential to guarantee that students meet regulatory standards thereby ensuring a high standard of care and patient safety.

Seminars have been arranged with the PSRBs every one to two years. These sessions are used to discuss developmental issues of the ALPS programme which may need to be informed by the professional, statutory and regulatory organisations. Representatives contribute their views, and issues of relevance are shared between the PSRBs and ALPS. The most recent PSRB seminar took place in June 2010, during which representatives from the 16 health and social care professions involved in ALPS discussed how ALPS processes and outputs might be embedded and progressed in the future.

The participation of PSRBs is critical when it comes to achieving ALPS' aim of increased inter-professional collaboration. Whilst final assessment and signing off of students as being competent will still take place by a designated registrant from the same profession, ALPS is looking at ways in which formative assessment of some of the generic skills (e.g. communication) might be shared across a range of assessors in various health and social care professions.

Supporting Practitioners

The SLiP (Supporting Learning in Practice) programme is a module for those practitioners who assess undergraduate students in practice, leading to a University recognised qualification.

The programme is offered at all the ALPS partner universities and is also multi-professional. Therefore it is an ideal opportunity for aspiring practice assessors to be able to experience an ALPS assessment tool for themselves and their students. The ALPS assessment tool guides a novice practice assessor towards effective action planning with their students, following a completed assessment.

As a result, both the undergraduate student and the SLiP students can use the completed ALPS assessment tool as evidence for their portfolio. At the University of Leeds alone there are over 200 SLiP students each year, who represent at least five different professions. Between them they will support 400 (at least three each) undergraduate students to achieve their qualification.



One of the most successful features of ALPS has been the involvement of key stakeholders, including service users, students and Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs).

Research into Collaboration

At the core of the ALPS partnership are the five Higher Education Institutions, and research was undertaken to identify the impact of the ALPS programme with regard to collaboration between the five universities as perceived by ALPS participants.

Strength in Numbers?

A collaborative approach to innovation in professional education

Janet Hargreaves, Idah Nkosana-Nyawata University of Huddersfield

Viktoria Joynes University of Leeds

Luke Millard, Rebecca Freeman Birmingham City University

From its inception the ALPS programme has been predicated upon the need for a flexible, collaborative ethos between partners. The five universities, Strategic Health Authority and 16 professions had experience of working together in many ways but the scale, complexity and sustained engagement over the five year period was a unique experience for all parties. A matrix of management and working meetings was created in conjunction with a small central core team and highly devolved budget. This structure necessitated the sharing of work and mutual trust.

This study contends that a major outcome of the programme, additional to any processes or artefacts is the current and latent strength of collaboration. Thus it seemed to be particularly important to explore this in its own right. ALPS was an unusual & complex programme, defined by collaboration, the imperative for greater inter-professional working and the need to future-proof professional practice and education.

More detailed analysis and cross reference to other evaluations, including the Return on Investment (ROI) report commissioned by ALPS will reveal more subtle aspects of the collaboration which will be explored further.

The main message, articulated during the nominal group technique, remains that: **we got further than we would have done on our own.**

The final report from this research study can be viewed in full at www.alps-cetl.ac.uk

Hard copies are also available on request, subject to availability.

400+

Supporting Undergraduates

At the University of Leeds alone there are over 200 SLiP students each year, who represent at least five different professions. Between them they will support 400 (at least three each) undergraduate students to achieve their qualification.



Rewards & Recognition_____ALPS is pleased that the Higher Education and Health and Social Care sectors have recognised the value of ALPS' processes and outcomes. A welcome and unexpected bonus has been the positive response ALPS has received from the mobile learning and technology community.

ALPS & the QIPP Agenda ^{53/} Innovation Awards ^{54/} Conclusion ^{55/}

The five Universities, Strategic Health Authority and 16 professions had experience of working together in many ways but the scale, complexity and sustained engagement over the five year period was a unique experience for all parties.

Innovation

ALPS and the QIPP Agenda

The NHS is facing its greatest challenge since its creation in 1948. The NHS's funding growth has averaged 5.6% a year since 1991, but forecasts predict that by 2013/2014 there needs to be a real term reduction in the resources available to the NHS of between £15bn and £20bn. The NHS must therefore move from being geared for growth to being entirely focused on sustaining quality, improving services and meeting rising demand, within a shrinking budget. This requires a transformation in the way healthcare services are delivered and subsequent cost savings in the delivery of Health and Social Care education.

The Quality Innovation Productivity and Prevention (QIPP) agenda promotes the need to protect and promote quality whilst releasing savings everywhere by developing innovative, efficient systems which can improve the experience of the patient and the public. The Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) emphasis of the ALPS CETL is a good example of how health and social care practice education can benefit from innovative mobile assessment approaches which can ultimately save costs in healthcare education.

ALPS' influence on mobile assessment processes will have a big impact on health and social care assessment in the future. The potential for linking mobile assessment tools to the student's e-portfolio is very exciting and although fraught with difficulties during the pilot stages, most students, practice educators and university tutors can see the potential advantages of these developments for future practice learning.

Health and Social Care students traditionally rely on face to face visits from their HEI tutors whilst on placement but with the ALPS approach it is possible for the tutor to be involved and give feedback via the student's e-portfolio which has tremendous cost and time saving potential.

The challenge for ALPS is to sustain this creative approach in today's economic climate, and whilst the ALPS processes fit the current need to enhance quality whilst maximising productivity and innovation, the financial implications of implementing such a strategy across the wider student population will be a very demanding but potentially productive achievement.

ALPS has also developed the Competence in Practice Assessment tool (CIPA) which was received favourably by the Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies at the 2010 ALPS PRSB seminar, emerging as an effective tool to evaluate the quality of Health and Social Care education.

The tool assesses the student's perceived confidence and competence to practice at the point of graduation and in the first year of practice and ALPS aims to match these perceptions with employer satisfaction in the future. This is the first tool to evaluate competence to practice and has the potential for identifying knowledge and skills gaps which will aid graduates' CPD. Such innovative quality benchmarks of Health and Social Care education sit very well with the QIPP agenda.



Innovation Awards____The innovative nature of ALPS' work has been recognised by a number of prestigious organisations. Over the last two years, plaudits have included:

Finalist for ICT Initiative of the Year at the 2010 Times Higher Education Leadership and Management Awards

Winner of Best Innovation at the 2009 Handheld Learning Awards for Innovation

Finalist for Best Use of Mobile Learning at the 2009 E-Learning Awards

Winner of Mobility Project of the Year Award at Techworld 2008



Handheld Learning Awards
ALPS Director Professor Trudie Roberts accepts the award for best innovation from The Gadget Show's Jason Bradbury and guest presenter at the 2009 Handheld Learning Awards.

Conclusion____The value of the collaboration is demonstrated by the fact that the partners have chosen to adopt a model that will allow ALPS work to continue beyond the original funding timeline.

The outputs that ALPS has achieved are the source of great pride and satisfaction to all who have been involved in the CETL; students, staff and service users.



Professor Trudie Roberts
ALPS Director
University of Leeds

This publication celebrates the achievements of the West Yorkshire ALPS CETL. It has demonstrated the benefits from the collaborative working across institutions and professions: producing valuable outputs for the wider education community and developing the skills and expertise of the many staff and students involved in the programme.

The value of the collaboration is demonstrated by the fact that the partners have chosen to adopt a model that will allow ALPS work to continue beyond the original funding timeline. Six ALPS Collaborative Networks have been formed; these draw on the shared interests and expertise that have developed over the five years and focus on the following ALPS areas:

- Competency Mapping
- Mobile Learning and Assessment
- Service Users and Carers
- Accessibility with an IT focus
- ePortfolios
- Use of the CIPA tool in Personal – Development Planning

Each network brings together staff from across the whole ALPS Partnership and will continue the ALPS work, not only embedding the existing resources, but also working to understand and shape the future of Higher Education and practice-based education. The outputs that ALPS has achieved are the source of great pride and satisfaction to all who have been involved in the CETL; students, staff and service users, but the fact that this work is to be the foundation for new endeavours is particularly rewarding.

We hope you have found this publication of interest and further details of the ALPS work and the ALPS Collaborative Networks can be found on the ALPS website www.alps-cetl.ac.uk

More Information Contact Details

If you require any additional information
about ALPS please contact:

Tamsin Treasure–Jones
ALPS Programme Manager
ALPS
School of Medicine
Room 7.09
Level 7, Worsley Building
University of Leeds
LS2 9NL

0113 343 4860
t.treasure-jones@leeds.ac.uk
or visit www.alps-cetl.ac.uk