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**Report on work from April 2010 to July 2011 as Cass Learning Development  
Associate  
Angela Dove**



Wordle of my blog. <http://knowledgespacelibrary.blogspot.com/>

## **Introduction**

On taking up this post I soon realised there were very high, and possibly slightly unrealistic expectations of what could be achieved in a one day a week post. There was such a need for innovative learning and teaching development that the main challenge was to identify the areas where most impact could be made, and, to manage the time available. Early discussions with Professor Holtham were essential and priorities agreed for my LDA work. These were broadly to help towards embedding employability in teaching programmes: particularly at undergraduate level, engaging colleagues, including senior faculty, in innovative and effective forms of assessment, and thirdly, research into teaching and learning innovation, and, dissemination of this. I had clear objectives, to:

- assist academic staff towards developing confident learning and teaching innovations,
- enhance the student experience, with particular attention to the difficult undergraduate transition,
- help to embed employability across the teaching programme.
- engage colleagues in effective and innovative forms of assessment.

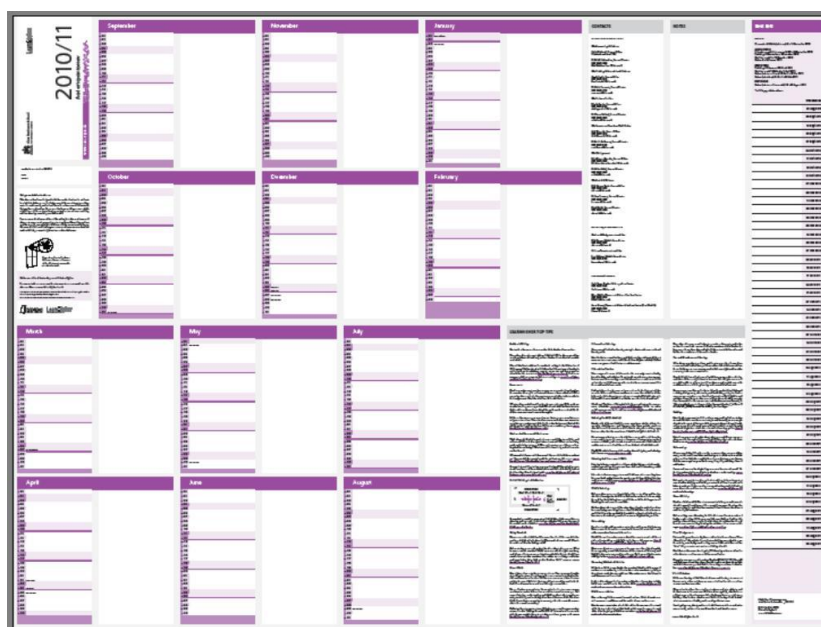
There are the following broad areas to my work over the year: project managing the introduction of an undergraduate year planner to assist students with the difficult transition to independent study, teaching and learning research and development, and, disseminating this, pioneering work on Reflective Practice, and close involvement with curriculum review. These were all underpinned by forging relationships within and outside the school, both with teams and individuals and also by keeping up to date with Cass and City University

### **The Undergraduate Programme Year Planner**

The aim of managing this project was to develop time management dissemination materials for undergraduates and the faculty/staff supporting them (essentially a campaign.) Research showed that undergraduate students struggle with balancing their study with other commitments and find it hard to get an overview of ongoing deadlines and daily tasks. Students are not all necessarily moving towards electronic time management devices and many use a combination of tools, depending on their preferred way of working.

Further research into the successful use of year planners at The University of Brighton and elsewhere, led to the Cass Year Planner, a purpose designed time management tool, in the size, format and folding of an Ordnance Survey map. It is designed and produced to a high specification with Cass branding and colour (purple). It is flexible, interactive, and supports different ways of working, designed for the Cass academic year, and has overview time lines and weekly views. It can be hung on the wall and /or carried like a diary.

It was issued to undergraduate students and lecturers at the beginning of September Term 2010 and a campaign run to promote its use. I kept Course Directors and faculty in the picture through presentations including the Course Directors meeting on September 14th. 2010



**Cass Undergraduate Year Planner: unfolded**

## Teaching and Learning Research, Development and Dissemination

Attending the Leeds Metropolitan University Assessment Conference, 2010 First Level Assessment and Feedback Project Conference: *Taking the Ass out of Assessment*.

Background: a £200,000 NTF project to develop first year Assessment. Eight university teaching fellows are appointed each year. The aim is to make the transition for first year students easier, better and enriched.

Key ideas I brought back and shared with colleagues included opening up the “Secret Garden” of assessment: many students don’t know what feedback and learning outcomes are, and that it can disadvantage students to take them towards independent learning too quickly, i.e. in the first year. The National Student Survey on Feedback, raised an important question, why do some departments in the same university get it much better than others? And I was particularly interested in how the Cass research agenda faces towards pedagogic research (Innovation, Research, and Development.) After attending a workshop on using reciprocal peer coaching as a formative assessment strategy to enhance feedback for first year students, I developed and used these ideas with first year Management students, and it proved to have great potential in also building employability skills. I returned with Key Resources and weblinks to discuss with colleagues, including Susannah Quinsee: LDC Director.

I attended the 2010 Imperial/RCA conference on facilitation (only open to experienced facilitators), and The University of Kent Canterbury’s Creative Campus Event as a member of The Creativity in Professional Practice Research Network. In these cases I have been able both to make useful contacts, and quickly to feedback relevant lessons to the school.

I co-presented (with Dr. Ann Brown, Dr. Martin Rich and Prof. Clive Holtham) at the HE Academy Business Subject Centre (BMAF) annual conference: Graduates with Impact through Excellence in Business. The title of our workshop, *After the Financial Crisis, Preparing Graduates for a Dramatic Change in Employers Expectations*, was grounded on issues already raised with employers and recent graduates. It provoked a great deal of engagement, with participants designing learning experiences to help graduates have impact on business particularly through the application of general intellectual and interpersonal attributes. The BMAF conference is a rare opportunity to share with and learn from other professionals engaged in innovative learning in Business Studies nationally.

The June 2011 Learning at City Conference gave an opportunity to further present a paper to colleagues: viz. Holtham, Clive and Dove, Angela: Brown, Ann: Rich, Martin (2011) *Meeting rapidly-changing employer needs - challenges to Transmissive Learning*, which was voted by peers as a most informative and stimulating presentation.



**After the Financial Crisis,  
Preparing Graduates for a Dramatic  
Change in employers Expectations**

Martin Rich, Anne Brown, Angela Dove  
Clive Holtham



### **Other papers and conferences**

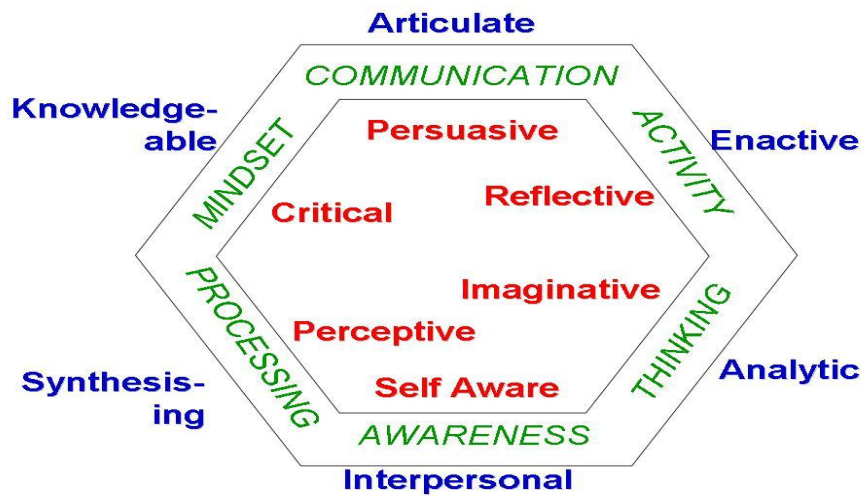
Holtham, Clive; Dove, Angela and Neugarten, Michael (2011) "Developing critical and imaginative thinking as core dimensions in management education: key roles for visual expression" EIASM Workshop: "Reflecting on visibility, performances and materialities in practices of management, organising and governing", 19-20th May, Segovia

Holtham, Clive; Owens, Allan and Dove, Angela (2011) "Building on cultural spaces and places for enhancing the intuitive capabilities of students of business and management" EKSIG Conference: "Skin-deep - experiential knowledge and multi sensory communication", 23rd-24th June, Farnham

### **Curriculum Development: pioneering work on self awareness, self expression and reflective practice**

In 2010 reviewing outputs from the MSc Management "I the Manager" portfolio led to the development of coursework that further encouraged visual expression and persuasive communication skills in promoting their management skills. This coursework: *The Back of the Envelope* was a central part of the students' final exhibition, and I assisted students in displaying their work in an innovative fashion, as an art installation. There followed an ongoing contribution to a Learning Development Project which sought to rebalance transmissive learning versus reflective learning. This was in the context of professional development extending its scope far beyond pure technical skills. I co-presented our resulting paper at the 2010 Learning at City Conference (Hee Yu Lee, Paul Palmer, Clive Holtham Sue Douthewaite Angela Dove). Approached after the presentation by two senior recruitment managers from PWC, I was told that even with top class Business Graduates they find two essential skills are missing: the ability to stand back and reflect, and also self-awareness. This valuable contact led to further discussions and research, and together with Clive Holtham, the development of a pioneering 11 week module: the Reflective Practitioner. The final course exhibition was well attended by the University and by high level external visitors. More research led to a revised and partly printed version of The Reflective Journal. Further dissemination of this work including with senior faculty has now led to two strands of the module to be run at Undergraduate level in 2012.

Image: Model for The Reflective Practitioner. A.Dove. C. Holtham



### Keeping up to date with Cass and City University

Part of my remit has been to work with individuals and teams to think through curriculum design and lesson and assessment planning. In March 2011 I contributed to discussions in The School of Informatics on how innovative practice and personal development can be embedded within the curriculum. During 2011 I became a member of the design team for a new BSc Business Studies double module in management practice, drawing on the BSc Management experience, and also contributed to the Cass Summer Showcase on Assessment and Feedback (June 2011).

Attending a variety of School events, most importantly the teaching and learning Away Day for the core T and L team proved a highly valuable experience. Liaising both with other LDA's and the LDC has been most useful as it has contributed to a wider net of connections.

### The Reflective Journal

A brief cameo of one learning development innovation may serve to illustrate my approach as an LDA. The starting point for this was the APOM MSc In management March 2010 feedback, which I was not involved in, saying the students found a blank reflective journal too challenging to work with. I suggested that a partially printed journal might be a better way forward, which we came to call a "sketchprint journal". In April and during a four week period I helped to conceive design and implement a first draft "sketch print" journal. This was used live at the University of Kent's Creative Campus events, where we tested it on fellow academics.



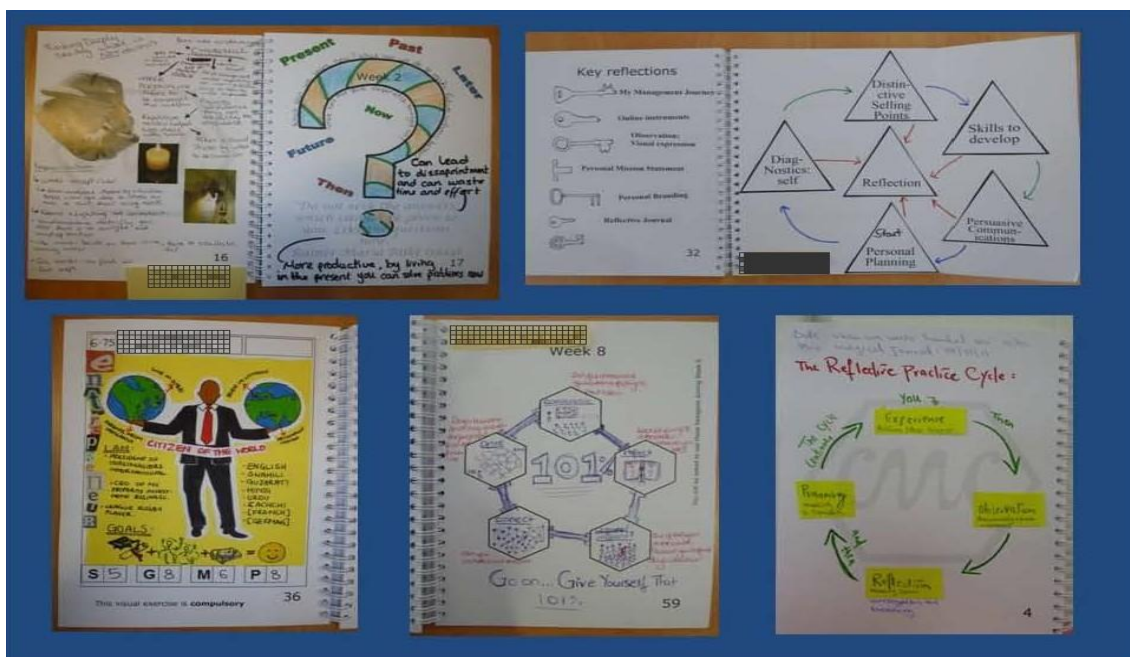
## Sketchprint book testing



The Creative Campus  
19 May 2010

The early results were presented at the LDC conference in June 2010, gaining interest from other Schools. Then a version was produced for the MSc in Management in Autumn term 2010. Following this an evolved version was designed and produced for the new BSc Reflective Practice module in January - March 2011. The project was presented at various research conferences during 2010 /2011.

The space and resource enabled by being an LDA was instrumental in both being able to create the May prototype very quickly (necessary as it was important for live use with 160 students in the autumn) and then being able to evolve and disseminate it.



Examples of BSc. Students' pages of their reflective journals

### **Next Steps to Sustain my Work in the School**

- the ideas in the reflective work are now embedded in the two new modules
- the curriculum review of the business and management undergraduate programme is ongoing and I would expect to see the principle of integrating the rational and the intuitive ripple all the way through the review
- the year planner - the undergraduate programme has had an offer to provide ring bound journals free to students, so the year planner, which validated the concept, is being continued in another form
- assessment and feedback remain very high priorities for the School so they will continue to be able to draw on the research and development undertaken

### **Conclusion**

In revisiting my original objectives and drawing all the above together, these are the ways in which I have worked to achieve them throughout the year as the Cass LDA

**Assisting academic staff towards developing confident learning and teaching innovations.** Workshops, presentations, one to one meetings

**Enhancing the student experience, with particular attention to the difficult undergraduate transition.** The undergraduate year planner project

**Helping to embed employability across the teaching programme**

Forging contacts/discussions with major recruitment organisation. Co-developing the Reflective Sketchprint book

**Engaging colleagues in effective and innovative forms of assessment.** Attending conferences and quickly returning to share the learnings with faculty.

My experience has been that even with the constraints of time and the high expectations of the role, it has turned out to be possible to achieve focus. In part this has been through developing relationships: such as with the undergraduate programme. This in turn led to close involvement in curriculum review.