

Part A Introduction to the Final Report

Professional development for e-learning: A framework for the New Zealand tertiary education sector

Table of Contents

PART A INTRODUCTION TO THE FINAL REPORT	2
THE AIMS OF THE RESEARCH PROJECTS	3
OUTLINE STRUCTURE OF THE FINAL REPORT	3
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	4

Professional development for e-learning: A framework for the New Zealand tertiary education sector

Part A Introduction to the final report

Since 2003 the Ministry of Education has supported a number of related projects to inform the strategic development of e-learning for tertiary education organisations in New Zealand.

This is the joint final report for two 2006/2007 Tertiary e-learning research projects funded by the Ministry of Education, New Zealand. The two projects are;

Otago University

Professional development for e-learning in the tertiary sector

Project team; Professor Kerry Shephard, Dr Sarah Stein and Irene Harris.

and

Massey University

Professional Development for e-learning: Adoption, Implementation and Improvement

Project team: Dr Juliana Mansvelt, Duncan O’Hara and Gordon Suddaby

In association with

Sue Dark and Cheryl Brown (Open Polytechnic); Bronwyn Hegarty (Otago Polytechnic); Teri McClelland, (Southern Institute of Technology); Alison Holmes and Derek Chirnside (University of Canterbury) and Dr Amanda Gilbert (Massey University).

This final report is presented by both project teams.

Each of these projects submitted a separate, successful bid in response to the Ministry of Education’s invitation for proposals for tertiary e-learning research in 2006. As each project had a different but complementary focus on aspects of professional development for e-learning the Ministry was keen for the projects to collaborate. This collaboration has led to the production of a framework for professional development for the New Zealand tertiary education sector – this is included as Part F of this final report.

The Aims of the Research Projects

The Otago project started with a review of practices in the United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand and then focussed on conceptions of e-learning and professional development for e-learning. The research study set out to highlight the range of conceptions of e-learning and professional development for e-learning held by teachers and support staff within a range of New Zealand tertiary institutions.

The Massey-led project focussed on the factors that influence the uptake and delivery of professional development (PD) in institutional contexts and involved an on-line survey and interviews to examine the beliefs, experiences and practices of individual staff. It was intended to explore base-line capabilities for the adoption of e-learning by New Zealand Tertiary Education Organisations (TEOs) and their teaching staff, and to consider the implementation and embedding requirements for adoption of and continuous improvement in PD for e-learning. The research was also intended to draw on experiences of staff to help identify priorities for e-learning PD to support teaching staff. A further aim was to identify strategies and any tools/material which could be used by New Zealand TEOs to inform current and future need, priorities and practices associated with e-learning PD.

It was the intention of the researchers that these aspects be brought together in the form of a framework which could be applied to TEOs, produced jointly by both teams.

Outline Structure of the Final Report

In accordance with their projects plans each research team produced a number of separate reports. These are included as part of this final report – Parts B-E.

In addition, the teams jointly produced the framework for professional development and the Ministry arranged a workshop for the teams, to assist this process – Part F. Following the joint production of the framework the teams decided to produce a single final report to cover both projects which would include the individual projects reports, the framework and a jointly produced discussion and recommendations. This report comprises:

Title page and executive summary

Part A: Introduction to final report

Part B: Otago literature review. An international environment scan of e-learning professional development initiatives

Part C: Massey literature review. Professional development for e-learning: adoption, implementation and improvement

Part D: Otago research report. Phenomenographic research and analysis

Part E: Massey research report. Beliefs, experiences, preferences and practices of e-learning in institutional contexts

Part F: A framework for professional development for e-learning

Part G: Project findings and framework implementation: discussion, synthesis and core principles for framework implementation

It is important to note that Parts B-E of this final report have been written as separate and stand alone outputs from the two projects. As such, readers may find that there is some overlap in these reports. However the outcomes from the project are complementary and the collaboration across two different approaches has proved to be valuable in informing the framework for professional development and the direction of future work in this area. For most readers we expect that the executive summary and the framework (Part F) and the discussion and recommendations (Part G) will prove to be of most interest with reference to the supporting detail in Parts B-E as required.

Acknowledgements

Both project teams appreciate the funding made available by the Ministry of Education for tertiary e-learning research and the advice and support of Danny Wolters and Peter Guiney during the projects.

The Massey-led research team wishes to acknowledge;

- The time, effort and contribution of the survey and interview participants, without whom the research would not have been possible.
- We are hugely grateful for the input of colleagues in our partner institutions: Sue Dark and Cheryl Brown (Open Polytechnic); Bronwyn Hegarty (Otago Polytechnic); Teri McClelland, (Southern Institute of Technology); Alison Holmes and Derek Chirnside (University of Canterbury). Their assistance in developing and administrating the survey, soliciting interview participants and in providing feedback and advice on the research was invaluable.
- We wish to acknowledge and appreciate the assistance of Dr Amanda Gilbert (Massey University) who produced the first draft of the Massey literature review contained in this report. Thanks also to Dr Alistair Noble and Maris Isidro of Massey University for their help in analysing the online survey.

The Otago research team would like to thank all participants for their time and contribution to the survey and the interviews for the phenomenographic research. In the early stages of the research a number of colleagues at Otago helped in the development and trialling of the on-line survey and their assistance was very much appreciated.