Developing capability in the university

Strategically enhancing the efficiency, effectiveness and well-being of the institution

Paul Blackmore & Andrew Castley

An output from the Strategic Staff Development Project
Promoting the strategic positioning and alignment of staff development in institutions

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Foreword

We are delighted to endorse this extremely important and valuable report with which we have both been closely involved from the outset. The external environment within which universities operate is both unpredictable and demanding. More than ever before institutions must be innovative, flexible, responsive and fast moving if they are to achieve their mission and excel. We all recognise that the staff that make up a university are its most important asset and fundamental to its success. Of central importance is the need to give high priority to extending the capabilities of staff at all levels. Organisations prosper through a commitment to a highly skilled and motivated workforce.

Despite the capabilities of staff being pivotal to the success of an organisation, all too often the development of staff capability has historically not always been a high priority for universities. This was one of the main reasons for producing this report.

Encouragingly, the strong relationship between a highly successful organisation and its commitment to developing the capabilities of its staff is well recognised. However, many institutions have a legacy of past approaches to development that are not as strategic, co-ordinated or effective as are essential in the modern and fast moving world. This report argues that it may be timely for institutions to review their approaches to staff development and the investment that they make for it.

The report has many strengths but, significantly, it takes a broad view on the development of staff. Based on case studies from the U.K. and overseas, it examines the different ways in which development can be viewed and organised. It suggests key points at which decisions can be made and the likely consequences resulting from particular choices.
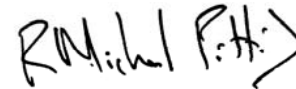
We believe this report will be of value to you. We are certain it will be an important tool in helping you to review the ways in which you are currently investing in the growth of staff capability. It will also help you consider how you might maximise the benefit of that investment in the future.

We commend it to you.

………………………………						………………………………

Ewart Wooldridge						Professor R Michael Pittilo
Chief Executive							Principal and Vice-Chancellor
The Leadership Foundation for Higher Education		The Robert Gordon University

Summary

The most vital assets of a higher education institution are the individual and collective capabilities of their staff. Development of these capabilities is centrally important, requiring key decisions to be made about development strategy, structures and resourcing. This document is written for those who need to plan or to review an institution's capability development. It is a highly practical analysis of the decisions that have to be taken about how to organise for development to take place.

Capability development describes all of the provision and processes that are designed to enrich the practice, and therefore enhance the efficiency, effectiveness and well-being of individuals, activities and the organisation. This process needs to occur within a system that is strategically managed and yet capable of responding flexibly and efficiently to change.

This briefing document forms part of a review process, to assist senior management in planning or evaluating capability development within their institution. Each institution is unique, so the document identifies key points where choices can be made and assesses the possible consequences of decisions.

Institutions are invited to consider how they develop their capability and who is responsible for it, to ask what development is intended to contribute and to strike a balance between detailed planning and autonomy.

Dimensions of organisation for development are considered: whether staff are worked with collectively or separately; whether the level of engagement is institutional, departmental or individual; whether the focus is internal to the institution or external; the role of a development department; the balance between on-the-job and off-the-job development and the ways in which engagement in development is recognised and rewarded.

Location of the development function is linked with purpose and may make a difference to its performance. It may be central or distributed. Clear links are recommended among internal providers. Two countervailing trends in development are noted: the growing importance of the

Human Resources (HR) function and the increasingly academic nature of much development, often with a base in research and/or scholarship.

Specific issues in key areas of activity are identified. In **educational development**, the choice between central and local provision is important, as is the link between student- and staff-facing activity and the emphasis on quality assurance or quality enhancement. **Leadership and management development** is a new and rapidly growing field. Key background matters include the degree of distribution of leadership and management in the organisation and the organisation's culture. Issues for decision are those of purpose, focus and level of intervention. The design of programmes is crucial to their success, as is explicit senior support**. Staff development for research** is another new and growing area. There are arguments for some local provision, given the nature of research, but strong central support is also vital. The nature of the research population makes it particularly important to ensure that development opportunities reach those who can benefit from them and that they are appropriate to their needs.

A number of development communities are identified, including mainstream and peripheral educational developers, HR specialists, organisational development practitioners and academic staff who retain a disciplinary base. The skills required of developers are identified, together with the need to attract able entrants and to ensure that appropriate development support is available.

The choice between central and local approaches to funding is considered, as are the strengths and weaknesses of a market approach. Finally, the purposes of and approaches to evaluation are examined.

The document can be used for reference and for ease of use the text is organised in a three-column format. Column one presents the key issues and points. These are discussed in the main body of the text in column two. It is not designed to be an exhaustive discussion but to lay out the broad range of options and outcomes. A number of extracts from case studies of UK and international institutions are included to highlight the range of current practice. The third column provides supporting references that allow the reader to obtain further information.

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1 Introduction

Why this report is useful

This report is a highly practical analysis of the decisions that have to be taken about how to organise for development to take place and how to fund it.

University leadership and management are probably more challenging now than ever before. Institutions must work among, and be responsive to, many different competing pressures. There are immediate concerns about changes that come from government. These include the impact of tuition fees, national student surveys, widening participation and employability initiatives, research assessment, third stream funding and a host of others. Beyond these immediate concerns are others that are much harder to deal with. These include the likely impact of globalisation, including the increasing openness of education markets, and the effects and costs of information technology in its many forms. Universities have to find their way through this much more uncertain world and to position themselves appropriately in an increasingly differentiated sector.

In this complex and demanding environment, university leaders and managers are aware that success requires imaginative and flexible policy formulation and implementation. Fast and accurate decision-making at all levels is essential. Opportunities have to be seen and seized. The best ideas have to be enabled to come to fruition.

Against this background, senior leaders will be highly aware that the capabilities of their staff, individually and collectively, are their most vital assets. They will be aware too that the development of these capabilities is a centrally important task. There is a powerful business case for paying them close attention. Key decisions have to be made about development strategy, structures and resourcing. Since resources are finite, choices have to be made between alternative ways of proceeding.

This document is therefore written for those who need to plan or to review an institution's capability development but who are probably not part of the staff development community. It highlights a range of choices and suggests the likely capability consequences of taking a particular path. The report poses key questions that highlight the kind of development provision institutions

already have and the kind they might wish to have. The likely consequences of some of those choices are suggested. This is illustrated by referring to a number of UK and international case studies. Ready-made solutions are not offered, as it is acknowledged that all institutions are different. Leaders will want to address and select options that are congruent with their own context and with their own conceptions of development. The document may be read at several levels. The main text sets out the issues. The left-hand column summarises main points and asks key questions. The right-hand column offers references to further reading.

Our approach

The effective development of staff capability is crucial to an institution's success. The activity that is commonly labelled as 'staff development' in institutions has traditionally been a relatively low status activity that may not engage with strategic institutional concerns. Whilst there are encouraging signs of a higher level of attention to development activity in recent years, it is noticeable that much of the enthusiasm and funding for this comes from central government and the funding councils. Developments such as the Teaching Quality Enhancement Fund (TQEF) and the Rewarding and Developing Staff (RDS) initiative are examples of this. Universities have on the whole been slower to invest their own funds or to view capability development as integral to their strategic thinking, although the support in many research-led institutions for the development of their core academic staff's research capability is an obvious exception.

It is argued here that the development of staff capability needs to be looked at afresh and suggestions are made about how this can be done. In doing so, the concern is much wider than the set of activities that is commonly labelled as 'staff development' and/or 'educational development' in an institution. It extends beyond the work of the units that have formal responsibility for it.

It is suggested that, whatever the culture, it is important to avoid undue organisational tensions by ensuring that the various aspects of development provision are as well aligned with one another and with the institution's way of working as is possible. Otherwise, there will be inefficiencies, frustration and wasted effort. However, this does not imply uniformity in development provision. Approaches have to take full account of the different ways in which a diverse staff with widely varying roles can most effectively develop their expertise. So effectiveness is the central concern and not uniformity.

A number of assumptions are made here:

- that institutions increasingly need to be managed strategically, that is to say with a clear sense of what they wish to achieve and in ways that make that achievement likely.
- that being strategic does not require increasingly detailed planning – a flexible, emergent approach to change is appropriate.
- that universities need to be able to respond flexibly and to work in ways that are consistent with a knowledge-based organisation.
- that an institution's staff are by far its most important asset, without whom nothing can be achieved.
- that the development of staff capability is a vital management function and that responsibility for this development should be widely distributed in an organisation.
- that one of the most effective ways of preparing for an uncertain and demanding future is to ensure that individuals, groups and the institution as a whole are highly capable, flexible and self-motivated.
- that there is immense diversity among staff and the kinds of work that they do, so variety in the approach taken to development is essential if provision is to be matched with context and need.

Lee, 2001;
McGoldrick, Stewart & Watson, 2001

2 Definitions

A term is needed that is inclusive and has a broad and strategic sense. The chosen term is 'capability development' which is used to describe all of the provision and processes that are designed to enhance the efficiency, effectiveness and well-being of individuals, groups and the organisation. It is intended to be inclusive, taking in all developmental activity. Capability development here includes: staff knowledge and skills development; support for teaching and learning; organisational development; and all other developmental support. Existing divisions are not accepted as givens, but instead, the field will be looked at afresh. Those who wish to pursue terminology further may find the Appendix useful.

This definition includes many people who are not usually labelled as staff developers and a range of activities that would not normally be thought of as staff development. Senior management teams are crucially concerned with the development of their institution. They do so by making plans, allocating resources (including staff), reviewing progress and so on. One could argue that all leading and managing activity is developmental. However, this is probably too broad for the purpose here. The question of interest here is not what is developed but how development takes place – whether the structures, systems, processes, attitudes and values of the institution help desired things to happen, and also whether leaders and managers are skilled in enabling development to happen. The 'how' of development is included in the definition and in the concerns.

It follows from this that, in reviewing capability development, senior leaders in institutions may be concerned not only with the performance of those who are formally designated as staff developers, but also with the institution's capacity to learn and grow and also with their own and their senior colleagues' capabilities in fostering development.

A further problem of definition is that the term 'development' implies that this is something done by one person, or group of people, to another and that it is part of a rational enterprise, bringing about improvement in a planned way. Yet most individuals are intensely interested in their own

The dangers of **paternalism** and **hyper-rationality** are recognised.

development and many complex changes take place in organisations without development intervention. The dangers of paternalism and hyper-rationality are recognised to be almost inevitable aspects of organised development in an institution. It is noted too that development, in the sense of staff learning, is a phenomenon that takes place in any case and can be helped or hindered by management action, even though this form of development sits outside our adopted definition.

Mintzberg, 1994; Wise, 1997

3 Purpose

The purpose of institutions using resources for staff development is **to enable the organisation to perform more efficiently and effectively.** A useful starting point is to be clear **about what one wishes the institution to achieve.**

There may be major **tensions among stakeholders**.

The purpose of any institution using resources for capability development is presumably to enable the organisation to perform more efficiently and effectively. Capability development may contribute to the achievement of institutional aims in a number of ways. In order to plan for it, an obvious starting point is the strategic planning process and the priorities which emerge from it. This, of course, is not as easy as it might seem. Whilst all UK institutions have mission statements and strategic plans, they do not always describe fully what key stakeholders are wanting to do, and among whom there may be major tensions. Some of the most significant tensions may be between the ways in which individuals and groups may perceive their roles, wants and needs, set against those envisaged in the institution's strategic plan, especially where the plan requires significant changes in staff roles. Neither does rational planning reflect the reality of much of institutional life, where opportunities have to be taken as they present themselves and some aspects are inherently unpredictable. So there are choices to be made. Many factors will affect the approach taken, including: the nature of the capabilities or skills that are to be developed; external requirements that the institution must meet; the expectations of staff concerning the form that development takes; and the culture of the organisation.

Blackwell & Blackmore, 2003 (p3)

What balance do you want to strike between detailed planning and autonomy?

A **rational approach** to planning may be preferred, but this has its limitations.

Development provision may aim at supporting **autonomous, self-regulating individuals** who reflect on their work and have broad capabilities.

Development provision may

Institutions must overtly adopt a rational approach to planning; they are increasingly subject to regulation, and a skills training approach may make it easier to deliver training that is targeted on specific concerns. The limits of rational planning, however, have been appreciated for many years. Another approach is to admit uncertainty and to sponsor development that helps people to cope with it and to be creative. If a higher education institution has knowledge creation and sharing as its core business, it can be argued that it must be a flexible and fast-moving organisation, in which decision-making is distributed. Development provision may therefore aim at supporting autonomous, self-regulating individuals who reflect on their work and have broad capabilities. It will aim to be broad in its effects. Such support may aim to develop capabilities that are of wide application, such as working in teams, networking and team building. Sometimes an even broader and less specific approach is taken, springing perhaps from a wish to be a good employer and from a belief in lifelong learning. For example, staff may be encouraged to enrol on any university programme, regardless of their work role. The continuum described here may perhaps be described as taking a direct approach through skills or an indirect approach through capabilities.

Blackwell & Blackmore, 2003 (p7); Duke, 2002

spring from a wish to be a **good employer** and from a belief in **lifelong learning**.

Some aims, of course, may not require support in their achievement. The prevailing culture, processes and resources may ensure success in any case.

Is development about policy formulation or implementation?

What is the relationship between staff development and policy? Is the purpose of development essentially one of implementation, delivering what has been planned? If so, it is likely to have a training and briefing orientation. Alternatively, should development contribute to policy formulation? Should development produce new ideas, subjecting any aspect of the institution to scrutiny? If so, development is likely to involve research, including survey work, and will require high level involvement if it is to connect with senior discussions.

Webb, 1996 (p65); Land, 2001

Is development aimed at quality assurance or enhancement?

One purpose of development may be to make sure that provision is up to a defined standard – a QA or quality assurance approach - or to make sure the provision is continuing to improve – a QE or quality enhancement approach. Depending on the nature of external inspection, a QA approach may make it easier to demonstrate competence institutionally. There is a risk, however, of focusing on compliance rather than enrichment.

Land, 2004 (p6)

Development provision may focus on **change** or **professionalisation**.

Another way of thinking of the focus of capability development is whether it aims predominantly to promote change or to promote professionalisation. During the 1990s, in educational development in the UK, there was considerable emphasis on curriculum and assessment innovation. Since that time, there has been a growing interest in professionalisation. The former activity is often in the form of development projects, with a group and strategic focus. The latter is oriented more towards individuals' capabilities and is thus relatively indirect in its approach to producing change.

Development activity may be largely symbolic or political, existing as a response to external pressure and expectation. It may even largely be financed through short-term external means – funding which, were it not ring-fenced, the institution would not have chosen to spend on development provision. The dangers of such an approach are obvious.

(Our objectives include ...)

...to provide organisational and staff development programs <u>in accordance with the strategic plans</u> of the University with particular <u>emphasis on growth</u> with excellence.…

University of Adelaide

...to provide a lead and support for <u>organisational development and change</u>, (and) to provide <u>support to staff during organisational change</u>

University of Hertfordshire

...to support faculty members' ….<u>teaching effectiveness</u> and to assist them in documenting that development for professional review

Cornell University

...to <u>help you do your job</u> and to help you <u>develop to your full potential</u>

Loughborough University

In post-apartheid South Africa, widening participation is clearly a social and political imperative...educational disadvantage affects the great majority of black communities. The growth of the (ethnic) equity imperative is thus drawing renewed attention to the need for mainstream educational capacity-building to be recognised as a strategic priority

University of Cape Town

1. To provide a framework for allowing appropriate development opportunities that are designed to improve knowledge, skills and attitudes of staff which will enhance personal growth and the effectiveness of individuals, teams and the University in the pursuit of excellence in all of its activities and strategies.
2. To facilitate the organisational development of the University in responding to external and internal challenges and to promote a developmental ethos.….

University of Ulster

The Centre for Higher Education Development (CHED) was established in 1999 as a means of supporting innovation in teaching and learning, particularly in relation to e-learning.…. In 2006 CHED became the Centre for the Study of Higher Education (CSHE), with a research and development mission in higher education practice.

Coventry University

4 Focus

Span of remit

Whether to deal with all staff together or separately is a key issue. Its importance increases as universities seek to extend their development provision in order to include previously under-supported staff or roles. So, for example, in the UK there has been a major increase in support for leadership and management and for research staff. Institutions have had to decide where to direct external funding and where to locate provision. Some parts of universities have for many years dealt with their own development needs, with little or no reference to a central development function. Development for Estates staff, for example, is frequently not part of a central unit's concerns.

There is increasing diversity in existing populations. For example, many universities employ a large and growing number of international academic staff. In applied areas, academic-practitioners are increasing in number, often with joint appointments, such as in medicine. Universities rely heavily in many areas on staff who have 'portfolio' ways of working and who may choose not to have a continuous engagement with the institution. Almost all university academic departments make use of part-time staff, who have often had less access to appropriate support than have their full-time colleagues. The growing complexity of university administration has drawn in large numbers of specialists of many kinds: in IT, marketing, business development and many other areas.

The boundaries of the university are widening in other ways. Technology makes it far easier for groups of staff to work together internationally. University franchise agreements and the establishment of overseas campuses raise complex logistical and cultural issues in relation to development support.

Institutions have to decide how to deal with this diversity. One aspect of this is whether to take a unified or a divergent approach to provision. **Working with all staff together** is attractively inclusive. It means that the span of expertise required within a single support unit will be very broad and it may be difficult to present an identity that appeals to all staff groups. **Working with staff separately** permits the development of a particular identity but it may appear divisive and it

is not uncommon under such an arrangement for development provision for academic staff to receive a very high proportion of the available resources.

There are other structural issues arising from diversity, dealt with in Section 5.

> *We think we are one of the more strongly integrated staff and educational development units in the sector, encompassing everything from active research into HE practice and the student experience through to skills training for manual staff. And each aspect draws strength from all the others.*
>
> University of East Anglia

> *We have a highly devolved system with the Teaching and Educational Development Institute (TEDI) providing overall coordination...In total there are 34 coordinators of the programs we run with many more presenters.*
>
> University of Queensland

> *Staff and Departmental Development Unit (SDDU) is located within the HR area and has a broad remit.... SSDU is a model that works well as it not only has 'critical mass' that makes for efficient operation in terms of streamlined management and administrative systems and processes but it also brings together staff with diverse yet complementary skills, knowledge and expertise, such that the whole is greater than the sum of the individual members and groupings.*
>
> University of Leeds

> *The Centre for the Study of Higher Education (CSHE) is positioned well as an academic department. The institution's education research is entirely in higher education and is centred in CSHE.*
>
> Coventry University

Level of engagement

Do you wish to engage at individual, departmental or institutional levels?

A principal decision on focus is the level of engagement – whether to work with **individuals, departments or the institution as a whole**. Classically, staff and educational development has tended to focus on **individual development**. Many staff developers prefer to work at an individual level – it may be this aspect of the work that they initially found attractive and fulfilling.

Land, 2004 (pp51-64); Stefani, 2003 (p13) quoting Gordon & Middlehurst, 1998

The advantage of an individual approach is that development support can be tailored. It may be expensive to deliver and may lead to frustration if an individual participant wishes to make change but cannot, because his or her department has remained the same. Staff development centres that work principally at an individual level tend to be liked by those who engage with them, but not to have the support of those who do not.

It may be focused on individuals or tasks.

If individual, do you wish to emphasise initial or continuing professional development, or pay equal attention to both?

A related question is whether the focus is on the **development of knowledge and skills** (which individuals may be helped to develop) or on **the accomplishment of particular projects or tasks**. The latter can, of course, enhance individuals' skills incidentally; much educational development activity has tended to have such a focus. Both **initial** and **continuing professional development** (**IPD** and **CPD**) ostensibly focus on individual staff members, preparing them for a particular role and helping them develop their expertise in it. Both can be used as vehicles for strategy implementation, by foregrounding particular aspects in the syllabus or programme. For example, institutions may give prominence to e-learning, research-led learning skills development, active learning, research skills, or employability in their provision for beginning teachers; and these themes might feature in programmes designed for all academic staff.

Clegg, 2004 (pp37-50)

If departmental, are you organised to do this?

Departmental engagement means that an **entire community of practice** may be helped to review its way of working.

Some institutions have moved away from a focus solely on the individual and have adopted a departmental development or an organisational development approach. Since both teaching and research are organised on a departmental basis, it is at this level that practices change – or remain the same. The advantage of working at a departmental level is that an entire community of practice can be helped to review its way of working. This means that all members of the community are involved, not only the development enthusiasts, thus increasing spread and ownership.

Knight & Trowles, 2000; Blackwell, 2003; Blackwell & Blackmore, 2003 (p9)

External policy drivers have greatly sharpened the institutional focus, so that **organisational development** is now a distinct area of expertise.

External policy drivers have greatly sharpened the **institutional** focus. That, largely, must be welcomed because it offers important opportunities to connect individual and institutional objectives. **Organisational development** is now a distinct area of expertise. As its name indicates, it has to do with ways in which the whole organisation can be helped to develop. Organisational developers are typically concerned with encouragement of networking and facilitation.

Thackwray, Chambers & Huxley, 2005

There are a number of systems-based approaches to organisational development currently in use in various parts of the sector:

- The Investors in People initiative, taken up in many institutions, has been an influential means of raising the profile of the development needs of all staff.
- The European Framework of Quality Management (EFQM) focuses on the collection and use of hard data to inform: iterative decision-making in the core areas of staff management and development; the organisation of work; clarity of policy and practice; effective communication; and the management of financial and other resources.
- The 'Balanced Scorecard' approach encourages a wider view of organisational performance than the 'bottom line' metrics and takes four perspectives: learning and growth; business process; the customer; and financial aspects.

Systems-based approaches may have the advantage of ensuring that the whole organisation and all of the staff within it are considered. The introduction of Investors in People, for example, has been found in a number of institutions to be a valuable means of asking fundamental questions about the institution's investments in its entire workforce. However, there is also a risk that such approaches can seem time-consuming and mechanistic, or that they may be seen as the whole answer to development.

(Our mission includes…)
To facilitate the <u>organisational development</u> of the University in responding to external and internal challenges and to promote a developmental ethos.

University of Ulster

The Director restructured this large unit (SDDU) in 2002 into three teams: Learning and Teaching; Research and Knowledge Transfer; and <u>Organisation and Management Development</u>, with experts in each team, and a Senior Management Team.

University of Leeds

…Involves quite a lot of negotiation and soft lobbying…..where there are not clear demarcations of responsibility…..Has worked reasonably well….for the 30 or so years that this model has evolved.

University of Queensland

> *Where needs seem to fall across the divide of responsibilities between two or more of the organisational units..., a working party... is formed to coordinate...such events. This frequently involves the sharing of budget, personnel and resources.*
>
> Macquarie University
>
> *Networking and partnerships are a key component of the current structural and reporting arrangements.*
>
> University of Adelaide

It is not only the university that seeks to engage with its staff in relation to development. Many staff are members of professional organisations that have their own requirements for entry and updating and that may provide sources of support. Indeed those staff may feel a stronger allegiance to their professional group than to their immediate employer. A major benefit in staff engagement in professional organisations is that highly appropriate development support may thus be available to many staff. It produces complications, however, in such areas as the development of continuing professional development frameworks, where there is a need to avoid duplication of processes.

What balance do you prefer between external and internal activities?

Do you wish to encourage regional collaboration?

Another focus for choice has to do with whether the approach is to work **within and/or beyond a home institution**. A unit may have little or no presence beyond its own institution. This reduces potential distractions, but may result in insularity and a lack of influence over aspects of the external environment. An external orientation may at times distract from internal efforts and activities, but may also permit useful networking that can lead to revenue-generating possibilities and to influence in national decision-making. Regional collaboration offers the possibility of cost-effective sharing of provision, including the coverage of minority areas.

Role

What balance do you prefer between internal and external providers?

Development professionals commonly adopt one or more modes of working. This makes a considerable difference to the nature of the service that staff in the institution receive and also to the skills that are required of the developers. It is worth paying these some attention, as mismatches in expectation and provision may easily arise if the role is not in alignment.

An internal **provider** role gives continuity and builds valuable tacit knowledge over time. On the other hand, variety of delivery may be limited and internal providers may have less credibility than external ones.

Development departments may have a **brokerage** role, making use of external providers, who can provide variety and staff development (SD) interventions which meet a quite specific departmental need. They may have higher credibility than internal providers. With significant numbers of external providers, the staff/non-staff apportionment of the budget will be different from the case of the 'development department as provider' model.

> *The Centre for Professional Development provides a coordinator role for all of the staff development that is offered by organisational units of the University.*
>
> Macquarie University
>
> *We have a highly devolved system with TEDI providing overall coordination.*
>
> University of Queensland
>
> *…the Professional Development Working Group (is) an informal grouping of representatives of CHED, the Research Office, Human Resource Development, and Academics Association. This grouping arose from the view that successful staff development needs to treat the academic career holistically.*
>
> University of Cape Town

Development work in the context of professional staff roles can often benefit from **facilitation**, in which the facilitator helps groups of staff (workshops) or individuals (coaching) to identify features of good practice or collective ways forward. This is invariably the predominant model in learning and teaching, and in research, and frequently the preferred approach in leadership and management development, where mentoring, coaching and action learning tend to figure prominently. The facilitator's role is frequently generic, which itself makes resourcing and staffing less problematic. This tends to be less the case in research development, where the subject discipline is extremely important.

In **dissemination** mode, the 'recipient' of the development is an equal partner in the process.

Dissemination may be for **awareness**, **understanding** and **action**.

Like facilitation, **dissemination** is a mode of development frequently used in professional contexts, when the 'recipient' of the development is an equal partner in the process, engaging in debate, adaptation and even transformation of the issue in question in their own specific context. This is distinct from an instructional model. It is important to adopt a purposeful approach to dissemination, which can otherwise be diffuse, with no measurable impact. One model proposes a tripartite analysis: dissemination for **awareness**, for **understanding** and for **action.**

King, 2003

Site

What balance do you prefer between on-the-job and off-the-job activities?

On-the-job development is focused on specific need and facilitated by people who are usually respected, who know the context and constraints, the people involved, and the job itself.

Much development happens **on-the-job**, facilitated by colleagues, either formally or informally. In many contexts, this can be the 'best' development. It is focused on specific need and facilitated by people who are usually respected, who know the context and constraints, the people involved and the job itself. Though on the job development happens naturally, gains can be made by actively encouraging it. For example, management and leadership courses might include components on staff enablement and on-the-job development; a mentoring policy for new staff might also be beneficial. In some institutions the mentoring relationship is actively encouraged to continue beyond the probation period. Other examples of on-the-job, or close-to-the-job development include: coaching, guided reading, involvement in quality circles, job/task/role rotation, peer observation, secondments, observing committees, and fact-finding visits to other departments or institutions.

Off-the-job development offers a deeper and more theoretically informed engagement with underlying issues.

Off-the-job development offers the advantage that a participant is able to give development activity undivided attention and may permit a deeper and more theoretically informed engagement with underlying issues. There may be advantages in working with others from different situations, in order to make comparisons, to network and to gather new ideas. On the other hand, off-the-job development may not be directly relevant, or be perceived not to be so. It may make unrealistic demands on time. Ideas gained on a course may prove impossible to put into practice back in the department. Examples of off-the-job development include courses, workshops, external and internal 'taught' courses, conferencing, fact-finding visits, networking and briefing. Specific briefings are frequently a useful form of development because they provide particular information required by the audience.

Reward and recognition

For those institutions wishing to emphasise their sustained commitment to continuing professional development, reward and recognition are important considerations.

To what extent do you wish to reward and recognise engagement in continuing professional development?

Institutions may offer **salary increments** to those who attain or improve their professional qualifications.

In terms of rewarding professional development, institutions may offer **salary increments** to those who attain, or improve their professional qualifications. In recent years, significant numbers of institutions have made these or similar awards in respect of **teaching qualifications.** Considerations of equal treatment may lead an institution to make the same provision in respect of **other professions**, for example in the fields of accountancy, librarianship, or human resources. On the other hand, it may be argued that academic work is the **core business** of the institution and therefore merits special consideration.

How important is accreditation of professional development to you?

Some institutions have put much effort into **accrediting** as much of their SD as possible.

Some institutions have put much effort into **accrediting** as much of their development provision as possible, perhaps to be consistent with a 'Lifelong Learning' approach, or to generate funding, because accredited courses tend to be less vulnerable and more permanent than **non-accredited** provision, or to make the experience more portable to other employment, or a combination of these reasons. One-off stand-alone workshops (i.e. sessions which do not in themselves constitute part of a larger development programme) tend to be far less effective in terms of improving role effectiveness. They can be effective, however, in terms of agenda-setting, awareness-raising and signalling priorities.

5 Location and Structure

General comment

The location of development support within the organisation may help or hinder it in achieving particular ends. Location is probably best determined by deciding who is to be served and what has to be achieved – explored above. Wherever it sits, it is necessary to be clear about who the stakeholders are, and to ensure that the activity and outputs of the provision are in line with needs and expectations. In the comments below it is assumed that there is likely to be a 'main' staff development provider, since this is the most common pattern, but it is acknowledged that development support is often widely distributed.

A head's position

The formal position of the head of staff development is significant. Whilst there are certainly exceptions, provision that is normally recognised and referred to as staff development is often delegated, in effect, to a relatively low level in an organisation. Heads of staff development are rarely members of senior management teams. External initiatives may sometimes bring staff developers into policy formulation, because specific inputs are required and because outputs have to be promised in order to secure external funding. It is very common, however, for most major developments in institutions to take place either without the staff development aspects of them being addressed or without heads of staff development being involved, or both.

Where they do not occupy senior positions, leaders of staff development may be doing very useful work at an **individual level**, but it is likely that they will not be strategically aligned or effective at an **institutional level** unless their line management is highly effective. This is not always a formal connection. Staff developers who are not senior in the institution may often have the ear of the relevant Pro-Vice-Chancellor (PVC) and thus be able to add value to senior discussions. This may work effectively but it is vulnerable to the chance nature of human relationships.

Location of provision

What balance do you prefer between central and local provision?

Central provision makes it easier to develop a critical mass of expertise and to put central initiatives into effect.

There are a number of common ways of locating development provision. Firstly a balance has to be struck between central and departmental provision. **Central provision** makes it easier to develop a critical mass of expertise in a central unit and may also make it easier to ensure that central initiatives are put into effect. However, although central staff will probably have experience within a disciplinary community of practice, they have to appeal to a range of other communities, with a different view of the world, which requires some breadth of understanding and an awareness of disciplinary differences.

> *The benefits….pertain to the advantages of maintaining a small number of specialist, central support services for staff or professional development, as opposed to establishing and maintaining a number of smaller, faculty-based staff and professional support units.*
>
> Macquarie University

The central unit may be – or be perceived to be – **disconnected from needs at departmental level and an agent of 'the centre'.**

There is a risk that the central unit may be – or be perceived to be – disconnected from needs at departmental level. It may also be perceived to be an agent of 'the centre'. Insofar as it mediates institutional policy, it may be viewed with the scepticism with which academics have traditionally dealt with bureaucrats. The staff developers' clients will often have higher status than they have themselves, whether through seniority or academic status or both. Any of these factors may reduce the acceptability of central provision and thus its effectiveness.

> *Other benefits relate to…the strength of having the formal programmes of the Centre for Professional Development housed in the Institute of Higher Education Research and Development (IHRD) and thus directly connected to the teaching and research infrastructure of ACES (the 'Faculty of Education')..it also provides a strong sense of credibility for the staff of the Centre, who hold academic posts in IHRD.*
>
> Macquarie University
>
> *CHED has the organisational status of a faculty, and is led by an academic dean. It now has some 75 full- or major-time academic staff at all ranks, and 30 professional and administrative staff.*
>
> University of Cape Town

These cross-boundary problems may be reduced, where the developer is faculty- or school-based. No doubt at least partly for this reason, the trend is for the development function to become more closely aligned with disciplines. Nationally, an obvious example is the network of Subject Centres of the Higher Education Academy. **Departmental provision** may be more responsive to local need. Those who are located in a department and who themselves have a similar disciplinary background may be more acceptable to their colleagues. They may understand issues in that context and have informal ways of making things happen.

Local provision, however, may not be as responsive to central intentions. Developers based locally may be well connected in their department but may have poor links with other developers. Postholders are often not influential in their department and may be isolated from others in the institution's development community and from a broader set of ideas. Staff development is now a complex field, given the range of agencies, sources of development opportunities and funding. Developers need to be linked into a number of networks if they are to act as brokers and make use of all available opportunities.

Many institutions have a hybrid approach where there is some local and some central provision or else, often through partial secondment, developers may belong both to the centre and to a home department. Many institutions second departmentally-based staff to central units, or make use of them in provision that is increasingly discipline-specific.

Many parts of an institution are formally recognised to have a development role, beyond those that are designated as staff and/or educational development centres or units. These commonly include: IT/audio-visual services, student services, library and research support services and quality assurance. These need to communicate freely with one another at an operational level to achieve a measure of co-ordination. If desired connections are not deliberately made, they are unlikely to happen. One key issue is to decide which of these are best brought together to achieve coherence and/or economies of scale, how tightly or loosely coupled the functions need to be and how this can best be done. This may be either through the restructuring of departments' responsibilities or through committee structures. It should be recognised, however, that each of these areas will have its own culture and ways of working. One approach is to adopt a dispersed structure in which SD is delivered by a variety of agencies and departments. These may liaise closely with one another and their work may be co-ordinated. A useful image is that of a 'semi-permeable membrane' among contributing departments. Collaboration might be achieved among, for example, Personnel, Registry, Student Services, Quality Assurance, an outward-facing Management School, and an SD department, to provide a comprehensive programme and resources for across-

Departmental provision may be more responsive to local need but may not be as responsive to central intentions.

Many institutions have a **hybrid approach.**

Many parts of an institution have a **development role**.

If **desired connections** are not deliberately made, they are unlikely to happen.

This may be either through the restructuring of **departments' responsibilities** or through **committee structures** or other means.

How tightly linked do you wish providers to be? Do the connections work?

the-board staff and educational development. This is most likely to succeed in a flat organisational structure, with good cross-departmental communications at a variety of levels and little territoriality. Some institutions try to achieve unity through communication. Even though contributing departments may remain separate, the whole staff development offer may be available in one place. The availability of the web has helped to foster such an approach. Clear co-ordination is essential if it is to succeed.

Integrating development provision for all staff within a single department may risk bringing together divergent cultures in an unhelpful way

A broadly-constructed department, containing all development support, will need to comprise a wide range of expertise, approaches and indeed cultures. The cultural 'stretch' required to accommodate, for example, Investors in People, basic skills training, procedural briefings, research supervision, middle and senior management development, and a postgraduate (PG) Certificate in Academic Practice, may cause significant tensions and may be difficult to manage as a single entity. This structure may, however, be appropriate for a smaller institution, especially one with a very specific mission; where it is used, it may be helpful to link parts of educational development (ED) (in particular accredited programmes) into a Department of Education.

What is the role of HR in capability development?
A recent trend locates development in **HR or Personnel** departments. Development may be closely **linked with some powerful aspects of an institution** that promote development and change but provision **may appear overly management-orientated.**

Location of central provision presents a number of options. There has been a trend recently in some UK institutions to relocate development into **HR or Personnel** departments. The allocation of central government funding, through the Rewarding and Developing Staff initiative in the UK, has probably been the main driver, providing substantial funding for growth of provision. It has the advantage that HR is increasingly linked into the strategic planning process in institutions, with the potential to ensure that the development aspects of planning are not overlooked. Through HR, development may be closely linked with some powerful aspects of an institution that promote development and change – probation, promotion and merit pay for example. This usually means that the unit has a whole staff remit. The disadvantage of an HR location is that provision may appear overly management-orientated, to academic users in particular. The 'training' approach that usually accompanies this location may facilitate the delivery of skills training but may be less suitable to more academically-based and discursive approaches to development.

A parallel trend places some aspects of development on an **academic** footing, particularly for teaching and learning.

There has been a countervailing trend towards placing some aspects of development on an academic footing, particularly for teaching and learning. Some institutions are aligning teaching and learning support more closely with student-facing support, such as skills training, and with other quality enhancement activity. Most institutions now have formally accredited programmes in teaching and learning in higher education and many have introduced full Master's programmes, some of which are linked with recognition and reward. Support for leadership and management development is also starting to be treated similarly, often within academic practice programmes that deal with the full range of academic work, although the cultures in many institutions may mean this trend will be slower to develop.

Blackmore & Blackwell, 2006

Some units report through an **academic line**, whilst others report through a Pro-Vice-Chancellor.

With location usually comes line management. Some units report through an **academic line**, usually a Pro-Vice-Chancellor. Others report through the **administration**, usually either to a Registrar or a Director of Personnel. Often, particularly where educational development forms a part of a larger unit, there is in effect dual reporting. Close liaison is required to make such an arrangement work.

> *The Centre has always been a wing of the Personnel Division, but with an additional reporting line to the PVC with responsibility for Learning and Teaching…*
> University of East Anglia
>
> *The director of the Centre for Academic Practice reports to the director of Personnel (and) is responsible (through) the PVC for teaching and learning, for leading the University's academic development policy and practice.*
> University of Warwick

Some units 'float' in an institution, which offers advantages but risks isolation.

Some development units 'float' in an institution, having a fairly independent existence and identity. The advantage of this is that the unit can present itself as it wishes and may be valued for its independence. On the other hand, it may run the risk of isolation if appropriate connections are not made and maintained and it may be disadvantaged if it is not championed at a senior level.

Basis of expertise

Structural location is related to intellectual location. Development may be: research-led; research-aware or informed; or non-research.

What are the roles of research and scholarship?

A research unit will contain active researchers, whose work informs and furthers part of the unit's provision. It is more costly to resource, but may attract higher calibre staff academically and may be revenue-generating, especially if the unit can attract research funding and make a contribution to the institution's research assessment. Where the unit engages in research within the institution, it may produce outputs that helpfully inform local policy and that have a high level of credibility. A **research-informed unit** will have a basis in scholarship only. In practice, of course, much of a research-led unit's provision will be supported by scholarship only, given the breadth of what normally has to be delivered. A **non-research unit** will probably be less costly to resource, but may tend to offer general rather than locally researched solutions and may carry less credibility, particularly with academic staff.

Land, 2004 (pp68-89)

Given the requirement to operate effectively with peers in a polycultural academic context, and to influence the 'systems thinking' of management, it may be felt that a **scholarly approach** to SD should be a key characteristic of the function. Such an approach may be in terms of the level of qualification and/or the ability to carry out research in an academic and/or a research and development context.

6 Educational Development

Background

Many educational development units were established in the later 1980s and early 1990s, particularly in post-1992 institutions, partly in response to Enterprise in Higher Education funding. In the last ten to fifteen years, external developments have shaped the organisational location and remits of such units. In particular, the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education's (QAA's) subject review methodology in the 1990s gave equal status in reporting to 'student support' and 'teaching, learning and assessment', strengthening the shift from input factors to output measures, thus encouraging a focus on student learning rather than on teaching as performance. These factors align with the sentiment of the vast majority of heads of educational development units that their overriding aim is to improve student learning.

The Dearing report's recommendations sought to establish greater equality between academic and academic-related staff roles in influencing students' learning. Consequently, in some institutions academic support staff, such as those in Library and IT Services, have been able to take part in development activities and gain accreditation in Higher Education (HE) teaching on a par with academic staff.

Most recently, the conditions under which Teaching Quality Enhancement Funding (TQEF) was made available to English institutions has led to the production of strategic learning and teaching plans in all institutions. The introduction of national post-course student satisfaction surveys has focused attention on evaluation and on ways of ensuring that students respond favourably.

Nationally, there has been a major growth in support for teaching and learning. At present, the HE Academy has a teaching accreditation and a research function. Its subject centre network offers discipline-specific support. The subject centres, together with the HE Academy's 'home' resources now provide an extensive resource and networking support at subject and at generic level to all those engaged in ED. Over fifty Centres for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETLs) were established in institutions in 2005.

There has been a sustained emphasis on learning and teaching development in Higher Education with support funding and extensive resources.

Gosling, 2001; Stefani, 2003

Dearing, 1997

Institutional responses

What connections do you wish to make between student-facing and staff-facing activity?

Some institutions have integrated student-facing and staff-facing development facilities.

The emphasis on student learning has led some institutions to **integrate,** at least to some extent, their learning centres or skills centres and their staff and educational development units, thus bringing **student-facing** and **staff-facing** roles together. This recognises the important contribution of support staff and may encourage a more co-ordinated approach. For those centres that deal with both staff and educational development, it widens the remit further and there may be a risk of loss of focus simply because of the span of activities.

Elton, 1995

Cornell's Center for Learning and Teaching (CLT) differs from similar centers throughout the US in that it is a central clearinghouse of programs serving both students and teaching staff aimed at the quality of the Cornell educational experience. It houses the Office for Instructional Support, serving teaching staff; TA development aimed at graduate teaching assistants; the Learning Strategies Center, that targets undergraduate students at academic risk; and Student disability services that provides and oversees mandated services for students with disabilities.

Cornell University

What balance do you prefer between central and local provision?

Most institutions have central development facilities; some complement this with local development posts.

Some institutions have **centralised** ED in a single department. Others have **decentralised**, by establishing a number of promoted posts in their schools or departments with special responsibility for teaching and learning development, and by reducing the resourcing of centrally-provided ED. In this way, ED can be brought closer to the 'chalk face' within each disciplinary community and may thus potentially be more effective. Another way of achieving a similar configuration is to second staff from schools part-time to a central unit, in the role, for example, of 'Teaching Fellow'. They would have a specific curriculum development support remit.

Blackwell & Blackmore, 2003 (p78)

There is a danger of isolation, fragmentation and a lack of focus on institutional priorities. This can be countered if these posts are in part accountable to the centre. By this means they can be related closely to the institutional strategy, with the postholders achieving targets that contribute to its attainment and meeting regularly with other postholders.

The alternatives of top-sliced funding for development, or a market model, or a hybrid.

Institutions may wish to **top-slice** development funding, which is the more traditional approach. Alternatively, they may wish to develop an **internal market** in which an ED unit responds to commissions from departments, effectively competing with external providers. There may be a requirement to generate external income. A **mixed economy** approach would provide top-sliced core funding, with a requirement to achieve income targets through internal or external consultancy or provision. This is dealt with at greater length in the 'Method of Funding' section.

How should quality assurance and quality enhancement functions be linked?

Locating development within QA or the Registry may encourage a compliance culture.

By **locating ED within the Registry** or within a **Quality Assurance** unit, the institution supports a culture of compliance with national norms. This policy may offer the benefit of aligning development activities with the requirements of external audit. On the other hand, ED staff may find themselves perceived by academic staff as having a controlling function and being 'part of the administration'. Even the most carefully crafted communications and internal relations may not succeed in countering this perception.

Locating development within Personnel may help to gear development to Personnel processes: probation, appraisal, promotion.

In a similar way, integrating ED with **Personnel** will enable ED to align with human resource policies on recruitment (role and person description, initial training/development), performance management (appraisal training, and aggregating development needs from the appraisal process), reward and promotion (teaching awards and promotion on grounds of teaching excellence) and succession management (academic leadership development). The disadvantage of this form of integration is that academic staff may see ED staff not only as not of their discipline group but also as lacking in academic credibility. This may make it difficult for ED staff to win the ear of their intended audience. The problem may be alleviated by de-emphasising the structural location of ED within Personnel when projecting it to the rest of the organisation. For example, ED may have its own logo, public identity and communication routes.

7 Leadership and Management Development

Background

There is a sustained national emphasis on developing management expertise in Higher Education, and a concomitant institutional response.

The development of leadership and management (LM) capabilities in Higher Education (HE) received little attention until recent years. Continually increasing demands on the sector, however, have helped to make the case for its importance. The 2003 White Paper made an explicit link with institutional enterprise in a freer market. The government would "invest in even more effective leadership and management, so as to be able to meet the tasks ahead and to take advantage of the greater freedom which will flow from new funding sources". All this would mean that people and resources within competing institutions would need to be carefully managed at local level. Significant funding was made available to institutions under the Rewarding and Developing Staff initiative, some of which was used by institutions to improve their LM provision. A Leadership Foundation for Higher Education (LFHE) was established in 2004 to provide a national body in the field.

> *Leadership and management skills are now seen as essential for both academic and general staff.*
> University of Adelaide
>
> *Our objectives are...to take a lead role in the provision of management development.*
> University of Hertfordshire
>
> *RGU has placed particular emphasis on leadership development over the past three years, and continues to do so.*
> Robert Gordon University
>
> *There is funding coming in (for) the..... HR Strategy and from Roberts funding. ....A lot of this money has been spent on senior management development.*
> University of Ulster

Defining and locating leadership and management

Lack of attention to the issue, arising partly from a strongly 'anti-managerial' tradition in academic life, makes it vital to be clear what is meant by leadership, management or, for that matter, administration. For this discussion, it is taken that leadership is about vision and general direction, whilst management is about how things are helped practically to happen. The extent to which leading and managing in higher education are distinctive is worth considering.

Middlehurst, 1993 (pp7-27); Partington & Stainton, 2003 (p120); Ramsden, 1998

How widely distributed should LM capabilities be?

Where the emphasis in the institution is on adherence to institutional strategy, procedures and norms, it may follow that leadership (sometimes referred to as 'transformational management') is required only **at the top**. In this situation, middle and senior managers may be expected to operate at a 'transactional' level only, operationalising set procedures or meeting prescribed and detailed objectives. Alternatively, emphasis may be given to encouraging the ideas and initiative of people **at all levels**, including managers. This may be because top management is secure enough to seek organisational development through the transformational potential of managers at all levels. It is noticeable that the language of management development (i.e. away from 'training' to 'learning' and 'development') nowadays tends to suggest an acceptance of roles at all levels involving at least the potential of transformational change. It is noted that it is counterproductive to develop transformational managers for organisational development, if there is no space for them to work in that way in the organisation.

It is important to identify the appropriate balance between transformational and transactional LM development.

Gordon & Middlehurst, 1998, cited in Partington and Stainton, 2003 (p121)

Alignment of management development with the institutional culture.

In designing the development of those who are to manage, the culture of the institution is highly significant. Several ways of describing organisational cultures are available. One of the most useful is a 'tight-loose' dynamic based on the twin axes of policy definition and control. These generate four types: collegium, bureaucracy, corporation and enterprise.

McNay, 1993, cited in Blackwell and Blackmore, 2003 (p108)

What aspects of the culture of the organisation do you wish to take into account and how?

Directive   **Supportive**

Tight control —————————————————— Loose control

Coaching   **Delegative**

Loose policy definition
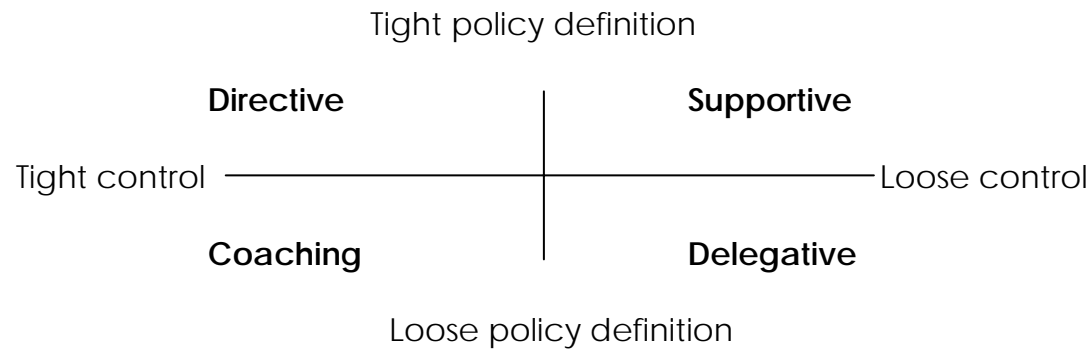
Managers and leaders are likely to adopt different approaches, according to these cultural contexts, the nature of the specific task and the expertise of the people to be managed. They may be **directive**, **supportive**, **coaching** or **delegative** in style.

Extent and integration of leadership and management development

Managers are key players in developing staff capability.

Appropriate leadership development is crucial, if an institution is to gain its potential benefits. The institution relies largely on the expertise of its managers to identify development need, to enable and encourage development to take place, implement the results of development, provide some on-the-job development themselves, and make development an integral feature of every job and role.

Blackwell & Blackmore, 2003 (p106)

There has also been a significant emphasis on each manager's responsibility for the development of employees, supported not only by the various staff development groups, but also, and in particular, by the HR client partners, who work with Heads of Schools and Departments, guiding the staff development process.....The University is striving to ensure that managers, at all levels, understand that they are responsible for the development of their people.

Robert Gordon University

What is the focus of LM development and what is its purpose?

It was suggested at the start that development can be viewed in a number of ways. The same applies to LM development. It may be directed at **individual**, **department**, **project** or **institutional** level. It may or may not be tied in closely to the achievement of a clearly articulated institutional mission. It may or may not have a **developing** and **critiquing** function in relation to it. One model suggests there are six identifiable stages of maturity from 'no systematic management development' to 'strategic development of the management of corporate policy'.

Burgoyne, 1998, cited in Partington & Stainton, 2003 (p122)

It is useful to analyse the level of integration of LM development in organisational development processes.

It may be useful to analyse the position of one's own institution on this trajectory.

Designing and delivering programmes

What should be the characteristics of a LM development programme?

Practical programmes vs. general course; individual vs. group/team development.

Many – perhaps most – of those who take part in LM development programmes have a preference for a **highly practical** approach that is focused on immediate issues, offering assistance for direct application. This is unsurprising, given their pressured work roles and a commonly high rate of change in institutional systems and procedures. In designing programmes there are tensions to be managed: **practical solutions** to specific problems set against more **powerful ideas** or **theories** that are potentially of much broader application; **individual assistance** set against the value of **working with colleagues** within and beyond the discipline or profession. Most successful programmes do not rely on group delivery. Action learning sets, coaching and mentoring are increasingly common.

Institutional focus can usefully be combined with a wider focus in LM development.

Provision may be **inward** or **outward facing**. Many institutions run programmes that are highly effective because they focus on that particular institution's systems and processes. Financial management for heads of department would be a good example where local provision would be most effective. On the other hand, there is much to be gained from regional and national collaboration. A 1994 group initiative, for example, brought together senior staff in that group of institutions, with a consequent benefit in the exchange of ideas and experiences – and also the provision of a 'safe' space for participants to discuss their home institutions. A Russell group university has chosen an international peer group of similar institutions with which to benchmark and exchange ideas.

Pros and cons of external and internal LM development provision.

Programme delivery may be handled by **internal** or **external** staff, or a combination. External consultants may bring fresh ideas and the ability to make comparisons. They may have high initial credibility, depending on their origin and experience. Internal staff may be better attuned to the culture and be able to offer sustained support, the length of which makes it more likely that desired results will be achieved. One approach which has been found useful for management programmes is to employ a consultant to help with the design of the programme, to enable the institution to 'do it for itself'. This model would be essentially a capacity-building exercise.

Departmental awaydays are now commonplace and can provide a valuable means of community building, and of reviewing and developing intentions, systems and processes. Many issues, however, cross departmental boundaries. Indeed they may be particularly difficult precisely because of this. The support of international students would be a good example, where a number of departments, both academic and administrative, have a part to play.

Integrating individual and team development through problem-solving groups.

Some of the most valuable programmes are problem-based. In the example above, a problem-solving group of managers from different departments would address the various aspects of provision for international students. In this way, individual and group development may be achieved at the same time as moving forward on real institutional issues.

Who 'owns' and who supports the LM development programme?

Pressures to introduce programmes may be **top-down** or **bottom-up**. Development programmes may come about because senior leaders want to delegate responsibility and/or achieve greater productivity. Alternatively, they may be a response to managers perceiving that their role has become more complex and pressed and requesting support or providing it from among themselves. Programmes may also be designed and managed in a top-down or a bottom-up way. There are examples of institutions that ensure that the heads of department, for whom a programme is designed, feel a real sense of ownership of the programme, with a steering group and a high level of inputs from among the group. Many others are less open and participative.

The need for commitment from the senior executive, and sense of ownership by participants.

Whichever approach is adopted, it seems widely agreed that the explicit, unequivocal and continuing, though non-directive, support of the chief executive is essential.

Blackwell & Blackmore, 2003 (p114)

8 Developing Research Capability

Support for research is now a rapidly growing area.

Development support for other areas of academic activity has been very thin until recently. Despite its central importance in many institutions, and the dominance of the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE), research has historically had little development support but it is now a rapidly growing area, prompted in part by the concerns of central government and the research councils. The main stimulus for change has been the Research Careers Initiative (RCI), which focused on the needs of fixed-term research staff and included 'exit' monitoring of contract researchers' experiences of staff development and training provision. 'Roberts funding' was subsequently allocated to institutions to facilitate support.

What should be the balance between central and local provision for supporting research?

Since research is discipline-based there is a case for **local provision**.

Some research capability development may best be dealt with **generically**.

The availability of funding has led to a number of appointments in institutions and a range of different ways of basing provision. Since research is discipline-based and requires a detailed understanding of the different ways in which disciplines work as research communities, there is a case for **local provision**. Indeed, departments in research-intensive institutions will usually have cultures and systems that strongly encourage research endeavour and the most effective approach may be to augment these and to encourage the sharing of effective practice. Some aspects of research capability development may be delivered more **generically**, for example, research supervision, thus obtaining economies of scale in the provision of support and making it more likely that there will be a cross-fertilisation of ideas.

> *In 2002 the Advisory Centre for University Education was reorganised…the University separated the programs offering support for research supervision and thesis writing into a separate unit, the Adelaide Graduate Centre.*
>
> University of Adelaide

Third stream, or applied research, is highly varied.

Have applied research audiences and needs been identified and met?

It may require **new skills** and **new support**.

Third stream, or applied research, activity may range from the highly practical, such as community-based projects, to work that may lead to RAE outputs. It is an increasingly important area to which central government gives a high priority. Many universities do too, and interest in it is likely to be heightened as the RAE continues to increase the concentration of research funding into fewer institutions. It requires new skills and new support to foster networking between business and the university, to enable sound judgements to be made about which ideas to back, to deal with issues such as intellectual property rights and so on. For staff who are used to a more traditionally academic way of working, it may also require a significant cultural shift.

This area is often less **well served by central SD provision**.

Staff may feel under even greater pressure to deliver in this fast-moving area, with new relationships and projects being formed rapidly, making it **harder to offer targeted provision but vital to do so**.

This area presents particular challenges for development functions for several reasons. Firstly, much of this activity takes place on the periphery of the traditional university and is thus less well served by central development provision. Therefore development that is aimed at full-time staff in mainstream academic departments may not reach those involved. Secondly, it is a new set of skills and a context with which many staff developers are not themselves familiar. Thirdly, those involved in it may be less willing to commit time to development activity because they feel under even greater pressure to deliver than do other university staff and they may work in a culture that is less collegial about the sharing of ideas. Finally, it tends to be a fast-moving area, with new relationships and projects being formed rapidly, making it harder to offer targeted provision. These difficulties make it all the more important to be clear what skills are needed and to make appropriate support available.

Short-term employment affects the target group and its needs.

Support for research capability development has not been evenly distributed in the past. Much disciplinary research is done by staff who are on short-term contracts (hence the RCI) and who have had little access to study leave, conference attendance or other development opportunities. So there are choices to be made about who has access to development provision. It is vital to ensure that support is targeted at all those who contribute to research performance.

9 The Developers

The profession of professional development

There are several interrelated development communities, reflecting some of the categories of development that were outlined at the start.

1) A very large educational development (ED) community coheres around the support of teaching. The role of educational developer took off in the late 1980s and early 1990s, particularly in post-1992 universities, with the Enterprise in Higher Education initiative. ED units were then established to help institutions address teaching and learning in the context of a reducing unit of resource. In both these phases the developers' role was significantly that of an **agent of change**. At this time, many units were relatively 'free floating', their activities not defined by institutional strategies.

The educational development community develops from change agents to enablers of good practice, to enablers of practice ……

With the 1999 Dearing Report's recommendation on professional association and qualification for teaching academics, and the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education's (QAA's) subject review, the agenda for many ED units began to alter from change agent to an exponent and **enabler of good practice** in teaching and learning. This role remains for many units. Interestingly, relatively few initial professional qualification courses appear to have migrated fully into education or continuing education departments. This professionalisation agenda continues to be strengthened by the impending developments through the HE Academy in recognised continuing professional development (CPD) for academics.

…….within a strategic context.

From the late 1990s the role for many developers shifted again, with the advent of the Teaching Quality Enhancement Fund (TQEF), to complement other streams of funding, such as the Fund for the Development of Teaching and Learning (FDTL) and the National Teaching Fellowships (NTFs), and Centres for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETLs). These projects have in common the importance of strategic fit within the institution. The developer has now to think strategically.

Development from within an HR Department: grown from

2) Another group has a human resources (HR) affiliation and may look to the Chartered Institute for Professional Development (CIPD) for its professional identity and accreditation. Development provision for other staff or, indeed, SD for other academic roles, has historically been much less

low-level skills training; developers may come from private sector; relevance of ring-fenced HR funding.

extensive than ED provision for academic staff. Development provision for other categories of staff has most commonly been dealt with by Personnel departments or closely associated units, although this is not universal and there are numerous examples of separate development units. Most Personnel and HR departments have had a training function for many years. Historically, this has focused on relatively low level skills training. Often, those dealing with development were not specialists. The most common format of provision was a taught course. Many courses were commissioned from external providers. HR departments have received significant assistance in recent years through the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) Rewarding and Developing Staff initiatives, which have made significant funding available to facilitate HR changes. Many institutions have used part of this funding to augment their development provision, particularly in relation to leadership and management development, and this has led to a growing development community around that concern, many of whose members have come into higher education from the private sector and who may or may not be HR-orientated.

Organisational development (OD) practitioners have connections with academically-oriented and HR-oriented SD units.

3) Others may have connections with both the above groups. A good example of this group is the organisational development practitioner. A growing number of institutions are taking an organisational development approach, focusing on the systems and processes that help the whole institution to develop.

ED practitioners based in funded projects.

4) Increasing numbers of educational developers have come, or 'semi-migrated' into the profession in roles associated with the ring-fenced initiatives referred to above (TQEF, FDTL and CETL).

ED practitioners based in academic departments.

5) Still others may be academic staff whose principal affiliation remains to their discipline.

Caution is advised about simple organisational structures for capability development.

One can conclude that there is no unified development community, but rather a number of overlapping ones. Given this complexity, making effective choices in organising what may be a dispersed development function is not likely to be straightforward; indeed administratively simple solutions are likely not to be as effective as more sophisticated arrangements.

What skills do developers need?

Who are the developers in your institution?

Developers now deal with many more issues and in much greater depth. With the accretion of these role requirements over the years, the skills required within a development department are

There has been an accretion of role responsibilities, and hence skills requirements, for the developer.

many. There has been reference above to the difficulty of stretch of expertise when the remit of a department is very broad.

There is also a trend to greater strategic engagement. There has been a distinct development from helping individual and groups of staff members address a particular issue, to systems thinking. This follows a recognition that individual practice is increasingly influenced by institutional strategy and policy. Since strategy and policy have become key levers of change and development, so a capability in strategy and policy has become necessary for many educational developers. Required skills may therefore include:

- technical
- organisational
- communications
- interpersonal
- political
- consultancy
- high level academic (research)
- external networking
- strategic thinking
- planning
- entrepreneurial.

Kahn, 2003 (p217)

Developers are likely to be in some sense agents of change. They will need the awareness and, depending on remit and so on, the skills that go with that. The more people are involved at senior level with strategy and policy, the more they will need support, involvement, and ability in strategic and systems thinking.

Fixed-term development posts increase the requirement for a systematic bidding infrastructure, to secure continuity.

Do developers have the capabilities that they need?

Fixed term posts in professional development are not of themselves problematic in terms of the credibility of developers among their clients. Many high-level academics are on such contracts but continuity may suffer. It has been seen that the interpersonal dimension is important in change programmes (at least in those which do not simply sweep away existing staff). Continuity of contact is important in this respect. Institutions are likely to want to have in place an infrastructure – **and the available skills** – to bid constantly for external funding, in order to minimise the disadvantages of frequent staff turnover in the development function.

Selecting developers

In designing development posts, a view should be taken on the capabilities that are required and their likely cost. If it is felt that development is a key component of organisational success and that it has a strategic dimension, it will be essential to attract high-calibre people into these high-skill roles, with appropriate reward and level of seniority.

Status can be earned as well as given. To an extent, developers will succeed and have high status if they can establish good working relationships with academic colleagues. Whilst contemporary concerns for the student learning experience are entirely understandable, developers have to balance this with an interest in the roles of those who are helping that learning to take place. Having a concern for the wider academic role can be immensely helpful in the gaining of acceptability.

Stefani, 2003 (p12)

Managing developers

Style of managing.

In thinking through the structure and style of the development function, it may be useful to bear in mind the style and culture of the institution as a whole. For example, the characterisation of collegium, bureaucracy, corporation or enterprise, as referred to earlier. If one of these sets of characteristics predominates in the institution, it seems likely that the most successful style of development provision would manifest similar characteristics.

Resource development commensurately with resourcing client departments.

Those parts of a development department, which address ED, which face academic departments and are of a scholarly nature, need to be resourced commensurately with a typical academic department. If learning materials, texts and online outputs are required, these must be fully resourced to have any measure of credibility with the academic client base.

Developing developers

Educational developers may arrive in that role, via an academic or support route, in three broad ways. They may have:

Three typical career trajectories of developers.	• been recognised as excellent teachers in their discipline over a number of years, and been able and willing to help others develop their academic practice in specific contexts; • joined a project team as a postgraduate student, or straight after qualifying, and thus developed an interest and expertise in capability development from early on in their career; • had a variety of fixed-term posts over a long period, built wide experience in many educational development contexts, and have strong interpersonal, 'soft' skills.	Kahn & Baume, 2003 (p221)

How effective is the professional development of the developers?

As indicated at the beginning of this section, others' career trajectory may well have been via a personnel role, often but not always in the public sector. They may hold a CIPD qualification. These development role holders, from experience, are much less likely to be active in engaging academic staff in academic development issues, and may specialise in management development, in generic skills, personal development, or in organising initiatives like Investors in People (IiP) or the European Framework for Quality Management (EFQM).

Opportunities, qualifications and CPD in capability development.

Paradoxically, the nature of development can easily lead developers not to pursue their own development as vigorously as others might. The opportunities for development can usefully be categorised into three domains:
- qualifications (PG Cert, Staff and Education Development Association (SEDA) Fellowship, CF/CIPD, LFHE, PhD);
- professional experience (secondments, funded development projects, research and publication);
- professional contacts (SEDA, HE Academy, subject network, CETL).

SEDA Fellowship; membership of CIPD.

Two significant CPD routes are available for development specialists: The Fellowship (or Associate Fellowship) of SEDA, and Membership and Fellowship of CIPD. The advantage of the former is that it facilitates extensive networking within the HE sector: always useful for joint applications, benchmarking, and synergies of various sorts.

10 Method of Funding

Two models are available. Funding may be **top-sliced** and retained centrally. Alternatively, it may be **distributed**, which may lead to local provision and/or an internal market.

Top-slicing

Advantages and disadvantages of top-slicing.

Most institutions choose to retain funding centrally. **Advantages** include the ability to direct funding to support strategic institutional initiatives, to gain economies of scale, to ensure uniformity of provision, (for example, where legislative or equal opportunities requirements make this necessary), to ensure the funding is spent on development and to monitor quality and quantity.

Disadvantages of top-slicing may include a tendency towards stasis, rather than continuous change. There may also be a lack of ownership by individual staff and departments and a reduction in client influence, leading possibly to poorly focused and inflexible provision.

In a **modified form of top-slicing** a proportion of the top-slice could be returned to the department or faculty, in return for a strategic plan. This approach is designed to produce both strategic direction and local ownership.

The internal market model

Advantages and disadvantages of an internal market model.

The internal market model was referred to earlier. In a pure market approach, the budget of a development unit would be **zero-based**, with all income having to be earned from internal and external contracts. There are a number of **advantages**. Quality assurance is built in, because if the provision is substandard, no one will buy it. It is focused on specific, immediate issues of importance to the external income earners – the academic departments. Finally, it ensures that financial prudence will predominate within the development unit.

Disadvantages include the possibility of market failure of various kinds, including budget constraints. Development may become focused on external contracts, including development projects that do not meet institutional needs but ensure the viability of the unit. This reactive approach may mean that strategic institutional change issues will not be dealt with.

In view of these potential difficulties, it seems likely that institutions will wish to moderate a market model, for example with guidance about the extent to which the development department faces outward, or by providing a threshold level of funding through top-slicing and setting objectives in relation to the generation of surpluses. In a **market model**, the head of SD can be expected to prefer a **brokering** role, in which expertise may be bought in to fulfil commissions, thus avoiding contractual problems, should commissions not be forthcoming.

Level of funding

What proportion of income do you wish to spend on development and how much do you actually spend?

The choice of how much to spend on development is perhaps the most significant of all and one of the most difficult. First of all, it is very difficult to evaluate the effectiveness of development. It is equally hard to estimate the cost of not engaging in development. So making an investment is partly an act of faith.

The difficulties of evaluating development and of comparing development spend across institutions. What counts?

It is very difficult to be precise about the actual level of development funding because of the problem of defining the boundaries of what counts as development. For example, is conference attendance counted, or on-the-job development such as project management or participation in committees and review groups? The problem is exacerbated when managers vire between budget heads, paying for a development activity from other sources. Significant proportions of ring-fenced funding might also be counted as part of the spending, such as Teaching Quality Enhancement Fund (TQEF) allocations, appropriations from the Rewarding and Developing Staff funding, or externally-funded single projects such as the Fund for the Development of Teaching and Learning (FDTL); the Centres for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) initiative and the National Teaching Fellowship Scheme (NTFS). These various possibilities make comparative analyses difficult too.

> *The USDC has a budget of....to support SD but this covers materials and catering and some consultants, but not staff time for those providing the service or those attending. And then there is conference leave, and attendance at external SD programs...All of these are drawn from the relevant Units' budgets and is not separately accounted for.*
>
> University of Queensland
>
> *The unit only holds a recurrent budget just for the functioning of the unit. Staff development costs for the institution are devolved down to the faculty and departmental levels. There isn't an internal charging principle, we are.....an overhead.*
>
> University of Ulster

Indicative level: 2% of payroll.

Notwithstanding the difficulties, a broad working guide to the level of funding for development has often been suggested to be around 2% of payroll. This would include central provision as well as the aggregated budgetary spend on development within individual departments and centres. Where development plays a part in significant change programmes (the alternative of sacking incumbent staff is far more expensive in cash terms and in disruption), the spend might be expected to be higher than this.

11 Evaluation

The effectiveness of much, though by no means all, development is hard to measure in detail.

Evaluating development is not easy. Even where desired ends are clear, it may be hard to measure whether they have been achieved or to know whether development activity produced the outcome. Therefore, it is vulnerable as it cannot fully quantify its effectiveness. However, it may still be very effective. Many examples of forms of development are in use that are believed to be ineffective. Part of the reason they survive may be the difficulty of evaluating them. A systematic approach to the selection of the **right methods for the right purposes, involving the right people in the appropriate ways,** is likely to achieve the desired benefits.

> *The university has been moving towards a model whereby effectiveness can be measured more precisely and needs met more directly....The key is to get the right resources in the right place at the right time.*
>
> Robert Gordon University
>
> *Good quality assurance and enhancement processes are in place so that responsibility is devolved but monitored. This is taken seriously and followed up and reported regularly, and taken notice of and advice followed up – it is not a matter of just moving paper.*
>
> University of Queensland

Development may be structured as a targeted intervention for immediate impact, or as part of a healthy organisational lifestyle, or both.

Evaluation is not so great a leap of faith as some might believe. The benefits of some development are readily identifiable. For example, staff training in the use of new software may enable a more efficient administrative system; or training in writing applications may bring in more external funding. But less focused continuing professional development (CPD) can be thought of as part of a **healthy organisational lifestyle** rather than as a **targeted intervention** with immediately measurable results. There are likely to be benefits, but it will inevitably be hard to prove they were caused by the development. It will be useful for senior management to take a view on the preferred balance between a healthy lifestyle approach and one of targeted intervention. This view will inform not only the evaluation of development but also the resource

allocation to it. For example, a teacher training course that sought primarily to have an immediate impact on students' learning would be differently designed and resourced from one that took a more staff-centred view and that aimed to equip the member of staff for a career as a teaching academic. The former would be a targeted intervention, producing changes in student learning experience that could be evaluated in a relatively short time. The latter might be very powerful in its effect but might be much harder to evaluate, in that the outcomes would be more diverse and would occur over a much longer period.

The broad purposes of evaluating SD include: to ensure the provision was up to expectations; to improve the provision; to ensure that learning has taken place; to strengthen the learning that has taken place, by asking participants to make it explicit; and to ensure that the learning leads or has led to change in working practice.

It is important to ensure that evaluation strategies are fit for purpose.

The senior manager should ensure that those directly responsible for development can devise strategies to provide evidence in all these dimensions routinely and with a frequency appropriate to the particular dimension. For instance, the dimensions lower down the list are likely to be evidenced less frequently and less directly than those higher up, because of the complexity involved. Yet they are the most important dimensions. Since benefits of development are often so difficult to identify, even less to measure, it is important to keep as tight as possible a grip on that which can be measured.

- It is important to select fit-for-purpose forms of evaluation, for example, depending on whether one is evaluating the quality of development, or its effect on improving working practices.
- Benefits might be highly qualitative, for example, a good quality assurance and enhancement (QAE) outcome, an increase in reputation, improved student performance. The value placed on intangibles such as these is very much down to senior management priorities.
- It is much easier to identify costs than benefits.

Senior managers who emphasise a **reactive intervention** orientation may feel it appropriate for SD departments to develop a fairly detailed **standard costing** framework and to set store by immediate client feedback. Universities with more emphasis on the **healthy lifestyle** may feel that such detail is less appropriate, valuing, for example, the kind of evaluative evidence that a **staff satisfaction survey**, or a '**down-the-line**' survey would reveal.

Partington & Stainton, 2003 (p215)

Concluding comments

This report proposes an agenda for discussion of an area that is vital to an institution's success. It seeks to raise key questions and to outline choices but not to prescribe solutions. It is for institutions to consider whether, when and how they would like to review their approaches to capability development.

We suggest the following actions:
1) Circulate the report for information to key staff.

2) Place the item on an appropriate senior strategic committee agenda. Prompts for discussion might include the following:
    - How satisfied are we with our broad approach to capability development?
    - What are our strengths?
    - Where are we less strong?
    - How might we do better?

3) Invite key staff to comment in writing or in person.

4) Consider whether it would be useful to you to have a more detailed discussion of all or some of the issues.

5) If appropriate, convene a working group or committee to take discussions further.

6) Consider whether to make use of the workshop outlines and other aids to review that are available on the project website.

Support is available in a number of forms:
- workshop outlines;
- a diagnostic tool;
- questions for discussion;
- facilitation of review (at a cost).

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Appendix: Terminology

A large number of terms are used to describe areas of and approaches to development. The meaning of the terms may vary considerably, according to context.

Staff development is often used as an overall term to describe the full range of development provision. The term 'development' has been used here for this broad sense. Sometimes the term 'staff development' is used more narrowly, such as within the phrase 'staff and educational development'. This mirrors a very common division in the way that many institutions structure their development support. It distinguishes the training of all staff, often organised from an HR base and reflecting HR concerns, from educational development. Occasionally, the term has been retained for the purposes of clarity.

Educational development is an activity that is usually academically based, often in a stand-alone centre or unit, especially in post-1992 universities, and concerned with the improvement of all aspects that relate to teaching and learning. It sometimes includes student-facing as well as staff-facing activity.

Academic development and **academic practice** refer to a focus of academic work. For some, the terms refer only to teaching and learning. For others, it includes the full range of work undertaken by academic staff including research, leadership and management and service.

Faculty development refers to the development of academic staff , usually relating to teaching, in the US.

Organisational development treats organisations as social systems and is concerned with organisational culture, as a means of enhancing their health and performance.