

University of London External System
Centre for Distance Education Advisory sub-Committee (CDEAS)

The Centre for Distance Education 2009-2012

New challenges, new communities, new direction

SUMMARY

This paper sets out a workplan and priorities for the activities of the Centre for Distance Education (CDE) to 2012, developed in consultation with members of the CDE Advisory sub-Committee (CDEAS), Distance Education Fellows, EISA staff and stakeholders in the Colleges and Institutes.

The Centre is now a well-established and well-regarded component of the External System with growing levels of recognition in the international distance learning community that work to the benefit of the University. Evaluation has confirmed that stakeholders are broadly content with the purpose and activities of the CDE, and would like to see continuity of services and support from the Centre.

Over the seven years since it was first established, however, the operating context and the external environment have changed significantly. Colleges have developed their own capacity for teaching development, and distance education processes have moved into the mainstream of teaching and learning. The emphasis of the Centre's work has shifted towards research and evaluation and to provision of specialist expertise in support of programme and policy development.

The workplan seeks to retain core features of the current Centre, but with a more selective focus that takes account of reduced funding and altered priorities, through the following actions:

1. Renew and extend the Fellowship as an expert group across the University
2. Maintain a Research Group and a Professional Development Group within the Centre
3. Develop and maintain a flow of information about research findings and external funding for research that are relevant to the work of the External System
4. Provide small funds to continue to support and encourage institutional research and development
5. Extend research and Fellowship opportunities to practitioners in the wider network of the External System
6. Provide structured professional development for distance teaching practitioners
7. Replace the Centre's current web site with a suitable repository for CDE output and suitable social software to support a community of practice online
8. Continue its practice of formative self-evaluation to inform future decision-making.

These proposals were considered and agreed by the Advisory sub-Committee at its meeting on 15 January 2009, in the light of the sub-Committee's consideration of a report of the Evaluation of the Centre.ⁱ

The External System Academic Board and Finance Committee are invited to consider and approve the proposed strategic objectives and workplan for the Centre for Distance Education for 2009-12.

Brian Sayer
Distance Learning Adviser
January 2009

CONTEXT

1. The Centre for Distance Education provides a focus for professional development and scholarly activity amongst academic and other staff engaged in distance education in the University of London. It coordinates research and development through a University-wide network coordinated by staff in the central University, working with a group of Distance Education Fellows who offer specialist expertise in aspects of distance learning and who are key actors in a community of practitioners in the Colleges and Institutes. It is a unique resource designed for the distinct environment of the federal University of London and its External System for transnational, distributed learning.

2. The Centre is part of the External System and was designed as a scalable service to support programme development, quality enhancement and the development of online learning. Its working style is flexible and responsive (See Annex 1). Since 2001 it has made significant strategic contributions to the External System, by:
 - Providing professional and technical support for programme development and strategic initiatives including infrastructure developments
 - Building and sustaining a community of practice across the federal University
 - Promoting and managing research in distance education and reflective practice amongst practitioners
 - Raising the University's profile within the sector as a distance-learning provider, nationally and internationally.

Evaluation highlights the need for continuity of services from the Centre, which should now be a relatively mature component of the External System. It deals on a daily basis with a diverse range of practitioners with differing expectations, who know about the Centre through a variety of channels and interactions.

3. The workplan for 2009-12 reflects these needs whilst taking account of major changes in the operating environment that have taken place in the HE environment and within the University since the Centre was first established, including:
 - Changing educational priorities and learner profiles
 - Increasing emphasis on the role of the academic as a professional educator
 - An accelerating rate of change of technologies and their applications
 - Modernisation and capacity growth within the University of London.

The plan reflects reduced resources available for the Centre from 2008/9 onwards, and a recent classification of the Centre as a 'non-core' service of the External System, from which Colleges can choose to opt out. This is counterbalanced by increased capacity in the Colleges to support teaching development. The workplan envisages a closer working relationship with teaching development groups in the Colleges, facilitated by the Fellowship, allied to a continuing role for the Centre in stimulating research and evaluation that is accessible and relevant to the External System's growing global community.

ACTION PLAN

4. The focus of the Centre's work to 2012 will be to:

- Provide an expert resource to stimulate and support distance education developments
- Support an active community of practice across the University, working wherever appropriate in harness with academic development units and centres in the Colleges
- Contribute to continuing professional development for a large and dispersed group of practitioners
- Provide a hub and clearinghouse for University research in transnational and distributed learning.

In doing so it will engage with three main constituencies: distance teaching practitioners in the University and elsewhere; teaching development centres in the Colleges; students, alumni and third-party institutions.

5. The panel below updates the Centre's aims and goals to reflect this refocusing, developed from the current Centre strategic plans for Research and Training/Consultancy (see Annex 2). These agreed aims and goals will provide a framework for planning and for future evaluation and performance review.

6. Priority for Centre development activities in the next three years will be attached to working with Colleges to support self-evaluation and quality enhancement, and with EISA Directorates to engage with third-party teaching institutions supporting students registered with the University of London. But it will also strive to continue to be an innovation centre through active engagement in research and evidence-based practice.

In the light of the last Institutional Audit of the External System, the Centre will also give priority in its work to issues concerned with academic guidance and personal support of students in the economy of the External System. In doing so its working practice will seek to ensure that the student voice is prominent.

CENTRE FOR DISTANCE EDUCATION: STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Overall purpose

To promote and support professional development and scholarly activity amongst practitioners in distance education in the University of London

Strategic goals

- 1 Promote **excellence in distance teaching** that is informed by research
 - Ensure that those teaching by distance learning in the University of London have ready access to research knowledge about pedagogy and instructional technologies
 - Promote an active research culture in the External System and support reflective self-evaluation by programme teams, service providers and policy-makers
 - Expose University practitioners to practice elsewhere (e.g. through conferences and visiting scholars)
 - Work with teaching development groups in the Colleges to raise awareness of good practice in distance and transnational education
 - Emphasise and investigate issues of diversity and inclusion that are inherent in transnational distance learning provision and their impact on policy and processes
 - Encourage and facilitate participatory research with teaching institutions, alumni, students and tutors
 - Develop structured Continuing Professional Development that is quality assured and standards-based to complement CPD available to teachers within the Colleges and teaching institutions
- 2 Foster **pedagogic and technological innovations in distance education** and evaluate their reception by students
 - Build on existing research studies and capabilities to work at the leading edge of practice and policy
 - Encourage and enable teachers within the External System to research and assess alternative approaches and explore the use of leading edge technologies
 - Work with teaching development specialists in the Colleges to broaden understanding of flexible and blended learning opportunities and methods
 - Engage with alumni and students to inform and contribute to research and development activities
 - Build research capacity and embed research into policy and practice
 - Monitor and review the impact of research
 - Encourage interdisciplinary and intercollegiate research activity
 - Provide opportunities for staff and students to communicate relevant research and teaching strengths and innovations and to deploy their knowledge for the benefit of the federation and the sector.

The Fellowship

7. The Distance Education Fellows have become integral to the work of the Centre and the External System. The Fellowship brings together an academic group of specialists, who can engage with issues in a way that is distinct from, and complementary to, the usual pattern of academic engagement through the committees and groups that constitute the governance and academic management of the System. The quality of this expert group is assured through appointment and review processes.

The Fellows provide expertise to programme and project teams, and help to integrate academic and professional expertise in the Colleges with development expertise at the centre. Continuation of the Fellowship is seen as being essential to the Centre's continued ability to provide development support for the External System, particularly in the light of reduction of central staffing associated with this work.

8. However, the Fellows were recruited to a particular model of working that is unusual when compared with more typical academic fellowships. The approach has served the Colleges and the Federation well, but it has also become clear that the specific requirements of the existing Fellowship have deterred some otherwise-eligible people. More flexibility is needed to ensure a wider range of experts can contribute to the work of the Centre without requiring the same levels of engagement from all.
9. A further group that needs to be considered in the context of the Fellowship is the panel of consultants, originally recruited by the Centre in 2001. When the Centre was first established the consultancy team was its main source of specialist professional expertise in distance education, contributing to development projects and providing executive consultancy services to the Colleges and the central administration. Today this expertise is available from the Fellows and from teaching development groups within the Colleges. However whilst the work has diminished, consultants continue to contribute to programme and policy development and have much to offer to the Fellowship and the External System.

Proposed actions

- A new Fellowship scheme will be established with a target of maintaining and recruiting a Fellowship of at least 20 people. An appointments panel comprising permanent staff and external members of the Advisory sub-Committee will consider applications.
- The Distance Education Fellows should, demonstrably, continue to be a group that offers proven expertise and experience in distance education and closely-related specialist areas.
- Fellowships will be open to staff in the Colleges and the University who are engaged with the External System, and to those working outside the University who are similarly qualified and experienced and can demonstrate substantial engagement with the University's distance education provision.
- All existing Fellows and CDE consultants will be invited to apply for new Fellowships, accompanied with a wide call for interest in joining the Fellowship throughout the University.
- Individual Fellows will be able to claim up to £1,500 per annum for participation in the activities of the Fellowship, including termly meetings and an annual conference.
- Appointment to a Fellowship will entitle individuals to use the title and to undertake additional paid work for the Centre. A standard tariff of payments for consultancy work will be established.
- Fellows are normally appointed for a three year term. Continuation as a Fellow from year to year will, however, be dependent on active engagement in Centre activities during the previous 12 months.

Working groups

10. From 2005, strategy groups were established within the CDE to address key areas of activity including research, training and consultancy, knowledge management and evaluation, reporting to the Advisory Board of the Centre. These groups developed, proposed and subsequently implemented agreed strategies and plans in these areas.

11. This has been a successful method of working, and has exploited the potential of the Fellowship to the full, ensuring that a broad spectrum of views is brought to the task and enabling other views to be sought from within the Colleges. The strategy groups also provided an effective sub-structure to the former Advisory Board for the Centre, enabling issues to be considered in-depth prior to consideration by the Board, and providing more detailed monitoring of activities.

Proposed action

Two working groups will be established, with a focus on the key areas of Research and Professional Development. They will undertake planning and support implementation as before, reporting to the sub-Committee. These groups will be led by Fellows, but include representation of Programme Directors and the central EISA Directorates, with specialist input where appropriate. Where it is practical, they will be chaired by Fellows who are also External Programme Directors or senior academics.

Research development

12. Since 2005 the Centre has had an important focus on developing a strong research component to the work of the External System. What has been achieved is a portfolio of research projects, characterised by their close association with teaching practice, and an emphasis on action research. The Teaching and Research Awards have been an important development for the External System, promoting a culture of research and enquiry and addressing areas of strategic importance to distance education within the University. A Research Review conducted by the Academic Board in 2006/7, reported the value and benefits derived from the Awards.
13. The initial investment in research capital is showing signs of return beyond the research outputs. There is evidence that research groups and funders are now aware of the External System as a potential research partner with access to expertise and to unique research samples as well as its own vibrant programme of research activity.
14. To continue to stimulate research, however, the CDE must increasingly identify external funding, from the Research Councils and other bodies, whilst promoting and assisting action research by programme teams with the resources that are available to it. It must manage research cost-effectively and with limited resource.
15. The External System's Quality Assurance Framework includes provision for research funded from Reserves and this will be the more appropriate route for future major research proposals that are related to the External Programmes, now that the original investment in the Teaching and Research Awards is largely completed. However the proactive nature of the current Awards Scheme, which supports more exploratory work, is valued and should be sustained as far as is possible. The evaluation and other discussions have revealed that small funding can be very useful to initiate or consolidate such work.

Proposed actions

The CDE should continue to make allocations from the remaining development funds for research. Two forms of Award are envisaged:

- Research Honoraria, to promote scholarship and create, develop and inform innovative theory and practices. Small grants of up to £1000 would be made available to members of External Programme teams to initiate or complete studies (See Annex 5 for an outline)
- Research Awards, to provide evidence-based examples of innovative and effective practice in learning, teaching and assessment. Awards up to £5000 will be made for desk or field research studies. (Annex 4)

These new forms of research support will provide a positive message about continued commitment of the External System to promoting and supporting a research culture. Management of these funds can be more light-touch, and need not demand a substantial overhead in research administration.

Professional Development

16. The Centre is widely recognised and appreciated for its long-standing output of workshops, seminars, and occasional conferences. These have been an important part of the way it has promoted and supported development of distance education within the University, working responsively and inclusively. Its flexible approach has served the System well: each programme is at a different stage of development, and a less bespoke service would not match many users' needs at one time.

However, while the approach has clear value to participants, we cater mostly to a core group who are actively engaged and/or can easily attend events in Bloomsbury. For the Centre to reach across the University and to new constituencies, its activities must be compatible with the work of College units and accessible to the wider global network.

17. A new departure for the Centre will be to strengthen the professional development agenda for distance education in the University in ways that are congruent with the UK Professional Standards Framework for teaching and supporting learning in higher education; and that can be accessible to practitioners throughout the External System, using online learning as well as onsite.

The Professional Standards Framework (Annex 5) provides an open model that can be adapted for different institutional and professional contexts. CDE provision can be related to the specific operating contexts of the External Programmes, supplementing professional development provided in-College. Recognition of participation can be provided for those who require it. Individual events and activities can continue to be open to all, as at present and offered without charge. The overall goal will be to offer professional development that is informed by the Academy framework and that demonstrates leading edge practice.

Initial indications are that such an approach would also be attractive to some of the teaching institutions and individual tutors associated with the External System, although there is also evidence that we would eventually need to offer an approach to teaching development that is associated with a recognised UK 'benchmark' standard through HEA recognition. The likely demand, learning needs and a viable business model will need further investigation.

Proposed actions

The Centre will seek to work with Teaching and Learning groups in the Colleges to offer specialist provision that can augment their programmes, in order to meet the needs of College-based practitioners engaged in transnational or distance education. At the same time we will draw on College expertise and provision wherever possible to meet learning needs of practitioners working elsewhere with the External System.

- The Centre will develop and offer short online CPD provision addressing practical matters of strategic or topical importance, accessible to practitioners throughout the System
- Occasional seminars and workshops will be offered face-to-face in London or elsewhere as at present, but organised to be accessible to remote participants (either in real time through conferencing or to be followed offline or asynchronously in the learning environment)
- Development funding will be used to develop modular provision for cohort-based and flexible self-study , drawing on resources which will include content from the former MA in Open, Distance and Flexible Learning, accessible through the Centre as an open educational resource. Recurrent funding will be used as at present to cover the costs of running open courses, workshops and seminars. The Professional Development group will develop and monitor the programme of activity.
- The programme will require consultation with College teams and market testing of the proposal in the first quarter of 2009, and engagement with HEA during this academic year in order to offer an enhanced programme from the start of 2009/10.

- Individual online open courses and other events will be offered in the first half of 2009 to meet current needs and to assist market testing and development of templates. Costed and tested proposals will be put to the Advisory Board for its second meeting in 2009, with the aim of launching an extended service in the 2009/10 academic year.

CDE online

18. The Centre's website and online presence has become problematic for two reasons:

- The External System is unable to support the content management system. Updating the site has become increasingly difficult since the beginning of 2008. We have employed various solutions, but the existing site must now be closed because it is out of date and cannot be repaired.
- The original specification for social networking components was never realised. To some extent, the Centre has been able to operate satisfactorily without the desktop access to the network that was originally specified. Nonetheless, social networking is now commonplace and for the Centre to reach the wider communities identified in this paper, it is a necessity.

Proposed actions

Plans have been made and work is in progress to redevelop the site through four actions:

- Relaunching a smaller CDE web site that utilises the External System web infrastructure, templates and processes and that can then be managed by the CDE team.
- Migrating course development documentation from the CDE to the External System 'Policies and Procedures' site. This content is now part of the mainstream of practice, and better managed within the core System site.
- Developing a new repository for CDE output to replace the existing content management system. A dSpace repository is appropriate for this purpose and is technology that is supported by the University
- Using the IBM technologies acquired by the External System to provide a suitable portal, login and social networking facilities. IBM Connections should be available from January.

This plan maximises the use of available technology and involves only two new costs: an initial outlay of £10k to establish the repository and reformed website, and recurrent costs of £5k per annum thereafter.

COSTING AND FUNDING

19. There are two main strands of funding associated with the CDE:

- recurrent funding for CDE-related expenditure
- development funding for the Research Awards and community of practice, from External System Reserves.

Recurrent funding for CDE expenditure has provided the core budget for Centre activities since 2000/1. This was originally budgeted at the equivalent of two full time staff, but was progressively reduced until 2008. The funding is used to cover the cost of specialist advice and consultancy, event management, materials/equipment and CDE related travel costs. For 2008/9 the budget allocation is £85k but some of this budget has been ring-fenced to provide consultancy support for programme development activity. CDE recurrent funding for the proposals in this paper has therefore been reduced by £40k a year to allow for this and other requirements.

Development funding has provided a significant boost to the Centre's finances since 2005. The majority of this money has been distributed to Colleges in the form of Teaching and Research Awards and Fellowships. However it has also covered central costs including the salaries of the Knowledge Manager and part time Research Coordinator, development costs for the Online Centre, and the operating costs of

Centre committees and some services (e.g. development-related events). This has further reduced the demand on recurrent budgets in the last three years, accounting for some of the underspend during this period. The residual amount from the original allocation of development funding will be the main source of funding for the Centre's baseline activities during the next three years.

Costs related to these funding stands are included in the table below. Salary costs for the central staff involved are not included as they have until now been absorbed in the general EISA staff salary budgets. However in future they will be identified separately, attributed to individual services, and charged to College programmes according to a banding formula. Direct salary costs for the Centre in 2008/9 will be significantly reduced over those reported to Colleges in 2007/8, as a consequence of the end of activities funded from External System Reserves and reorganisation within EISA.

The Centre also generates internal and external project-related funding for various activities including, for example, consultancy assignments, management of Scholarship funding, the Study Skills Project and the Online CPD project. These generally have discrete budget income and expenditure, and project and contribute to External System surpluses.. Consequently they have not been included in the budget plans here. However in almost every year since 2001 this income has at least been equivalent to the recurrent budget of the Centre.

RESIDUAL DEVELOPMENT FUNDING

20. The original allocation of External System Reserves for CDE activity was £1,341,000. In January 2009, £1,117,000 had been distributed or contractually-committed, leaving a residual fund of £224,000 to be allocated to future development costs (subject to confirmation).

FINANCIAL PLAN FOR THE CDE (ALL COSTS AT 2008 PRICES)

| Expenditure | 2009 | 2010 ^(See note i) | 2011 ^(See note i) |
|----------------------------------|--------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Fellowship fees and honoraria | £45k | £47k | £49k |
| Event costs | £10k | £10k | £10k |
| Travel and miscellaneous costs | £10k | £10K | £10K |
| Website and online centre | £15K | £5k | £5k |
| Research Honoraria | £10k | £15k | £15K |
| Research Awards | £10k | £15k | £15k |
| Research dissemination | £5k | £5k | £5k |
| CPD programme development | £15k | £15k | £15k |
| Total | £120k | £122k | £124k |
| Funding | | | |
| Core funding (recurrent budgets) | £45k | £47k | £49K |
| Development reserves | £75k | £75k* | £75k* |

- Notes**
- 1 Development reserve funding and related expenditure in 2010 and 2011 is subject to confirmation of these figures at the end of the 2008-9 financial year
 - 2 Consultancy and management fees will be additional to the figure stated here, and will be paid from programme and project budgets

OUTLINE WORKPLAN 2009-2012

| | 2009 | | 2010 | | 2011 | | 2012 | | |
|---|--|--|---|--------------------------|--|--------------------------|--|-------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Centre for Distance Education Advisory sub-Committee | Consider and approve work programme | Consider Fellowships and research awards | Consider research output. | Consider work programme | Consider Fellowships and research awards | Consider research output | Consider Fellowships and research awards | Consider work programme | Consider proposals to ESAC/ESB |
| | Establish CDEAS working groups for Research and Professional Development | | Consider proposals for CPD framework | | Announce awards | | Announce awards | | Announce awards |
| Fellowship | Invite applications for new and continuing Distance Education Fellowships | | | | Announce Fellowships | | Announce Fellowships | | Announce Fellowships |
| | Annual convention | | | Annual report and review | Annual convention | | Annual report and review | Annual convention | Annual report and review |
| Research | Disseminate outputs from the Teaching and Research Awards (Research conference in February 2009) | | | | Review and disseminate previous year's research awards | | Review and disseminate previous year's research awards | | |
| | Manage completion and reporting of the current Teaching and Research Awards | | Monitor and disseminate external research and development opportunities and coordinate proposals where appropriate Coordinate proposals for research and development funding and manage funded research and development projects (ongoing) | | | | | | |
| Professional development | Consult with College educational development units on appropriate support models and learning needs of distance learning practitioners | | Conduct training needs analysis and assess demand for professional development in third party teaching institutions | | | | | | |
| | Develop proposals for CPD framework | | Consult with Colleges on proposed CPD framework | | | | | | |
| | | | Commission and run first open professional development courses on a pilot basis | | | | | | |
| | Promote CPD programme for launch | | Launch and manage structured CPD provision | | Review and develop CPD provision; publicise for the next academic year | | Review and develop CPD provision; publicise for the next academic year | | |
| Online Centre | Establish a repository for research and other CDE output using supported repository software(dSpace) | | | | | | | | |
| | Launch interactive web components using supported enterprise social software (Connections) | | | | | | | | |

ANNEX 1 CDE operating principles and values

From the bid to HEFCE for CETL funding

The [Centre] draws on the expertise residing within 'clusters of excellence' in the Colleges and Institutes, augmenting this where necessary with staff or external expertise.

The characteristics of its approach have been:

- **'small centre'** – no more than one full time equivalent in the central University; mobilizing resources within the Colleges
- **'light touch' interventions** – facilitating and empowering practitioners through brief inputs at critical points, and without the imposition of models or standards
- **demand-led** – the activities of the Centre have usually been responses to requests or initiatives of the Colleges
- **catalytic** – making small injections of resource at the formation and planning stages, and providing matched funding to support investigations or the provision of training
- **networking** – drawing people together in small groups and teams to address issues of common interest
- **developmental** – building on acknowledged good practice to develop services or benchmarks for the programme as a whole
- **scaleable** – operating on an outsourced, consultancy model which has enabled us to accommodate wide variations in demand patterns

From a discussion of core values at one of the first meetings of the Fellowship

To what extent can a strategy/initiative:

- Promote collaboration and knowledge sharing?
- Enhance the quality of the student experience?
- Extend access for non-traditional populations?
- Support and encourage voluntary engagement?
- Demonstrate good practice?
- Add value to what could be achieved by a College, department or individual acting alone (the subsidiarity principle)?
- Achieve openness – in communication and dissemination?
- Be innovative?
- Take a global perspective?
- Improve from evaluation?

ANNEX 2 Current CDE strategy for research and training/consultancy

RESEARCH STRATEGY

Overall purpose

To lead, engage in and access high quality research

Strategic goals to achieve this

1. **Establish a CDE research portfolio** Identify primary research questions; fund research in line with defined research areas; invite and commission research to fill knowledge gaps
2. **Monitor and administer the Teaching and Research Award scheme** Set up and review procedures and criteria for assessing bids for potential funding and setting targets for achievement; implement a systematic approach to collate evidence from research projects, appraise studies, and document conclusions; ensure that CDE funded research projects achieve goals in terms of presentation of findings
3. **Coordinate activities and develop partnerships to widen research impact** Coordinate and provide support for research initiatives and bids from individuals and consortia within the University of London; establish a policy for research collaboration to build on the CDE research portfolio established through the awards scheme; build partnerships and networks with other research groups through inter-University and international collaboration
4. **Build research capacity** Develop and maintain a comprehensive web-based register of current and completed research projects ; Maintain a database of researchers and workers in the field of distance education that can be used as a contact point for collaborative work and expert advice or consultancy; enhance capacity through the expertise of contracted academic advisers; create forums for discussion and debate through and via regular seminars workshops and symposia; Convene an annual conference to disseminate significant distance education related research findings and showcase recent research activities of the CDE and its partners
5. **Embed research into policy and practice** Disseminate research findings via conferences and seminars directly targeted at identifying and supporting links between research and practice; develop the Centre web presence to allow policy makers and educators in the field of distance learning to draw on key research findings.
6. **Review and evaluation** Monitor the implementation of the research strategy, as a whole; embed review mechanisms to evaluate the impact of the CDE research activities across policy, practice and the student experience; review the CDE research priorities on an annual basis; ensure research outcomes remain in line with the core purpose and activities of the CDE.

TRAINING AND CONSULTANCY STRATEGY

Non-formal professional development goals

Provide appropriate training and support focused on distance learning pedagogy and best practice. Develop non-formal professional development support on an incremental basis; provide on-line tutor training for new programmes; commission user-focused literature reviews

Formal training and professional development goals Develop and coordinate a viable professional development agenda for distance education across the University of London. Establish fully-costed formal professional development provision Use the MA in Open Distance and Flexible Learning as a foundation for incremental development of programmes; develop proposals for implementation, market testing, an advertising strategy, and a viable business plan; respond to market demands for CPD provision; build towards postgraduate qualifications up to full Masters. Develop and maintain a viable formal training and professional development programme

ANNEX 3 Example call for Research Honoraria

The Centre for Distance Education invites proposals for research honoraria from staff or student members of the University who are engaged in the External System. The Honoraria are intended to support investigations that will inform good teaching and good learning practice for borderless and distributed learning through research of a high standard that advances:

- theories and conceptual frameworks; definition and development of distance education as an academic activity
- knowledge of Issues, tensions or problems in the theory / practice of borderless distance education
- understanding of innovative practice in distance education

Acceptable proposals can include pilot studies and research scoping exercises

In this round of funding, we anticipate that up to ten such awards will be made for research which focuses on student support and student guidance in borderless distributed learning. Up to three further awards will be made for research that focuses on minimum standards for the University's External Programmes.

Whilst each award is normally capped at a maximum of £1000 modest exceptions to this will be considered. The award can be made to individuals or teams in institutions that are members of the University of London or registered with the Centre for Distance Education.

Proposals will not be accepted which simply seek financial assistance to complete formal research degrees.

An important goal of the Honorarium is to help broaden participation in the Centre's research activity. Normally, therefore, the applicant should not be the holder of research funds from the CDE.

The Honorarium should enable commencement (or completion) of work that might not otherwise be possible to be undertaken and which contributes to promoting distance education as a field of study and professional practice. The award will be paid on satisfactory submission of agreed outputs

TIMESCALE

The first round for applications is open now. The closing date is 1 May 2009. All applications will be reviewed by a panel drawn from the Centre's Fellowship. Awards will be made by 1 July 2009. Ideally, outputs should be delivered by the end of December, 2009

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Applications should:

- Indicate the goals of the research,
- Explain the value the proposal has for research in distance education
- Outline any methodology/methods involved
- Provide an outline work programme,
- Propose realistic outputs to be achieved (for example, dissemination seminar; conference paper; journal article etc)
- Indicate the researchers who will be involved in the work and what qualifies them to do it

Submissions should be a maximum of two pages (excluding short cvs)

ANNEX 4 Example call for Research Awards

The Centre for Distance Education is able to offer a small number of Research Awards in 2009 to support original pedagogic research studies that can provide evidence for innovative and effective practice in learning, teaching and assessment in the University of London's External System.

The Research Awards are a continuation of the Centre's Teaching and Research Awards Scheme that provided support from 2005 - 2008 for research activities that enhance knowledge about, and methods of implementing, distance learning and teaching. They are open to staff throughout the University of London and have a value of up to £5000. Proposals must be fully-costed and be supported by the Head of the proposers' Department or Faculty.

The Awards provide funding for desk-based or field research studies that can:

- foster and provide evidence of the effectiveness of new innovations, both pedagogic and technological, within distance learning, or:
- facilitate dissemination of good research-informed practice within the community of London Colleges (for example through literature reviews or meta-analysis of previous studies).

Studies should comprise a major piece of work leading to the advancement of knowledge by original enquiry, and normally followed by publication. Priority will be given to proposals that address the Centre's current research priorities (for details see www.cde.london.ac.uk/research)

Topics for Research Awards may be subject related, department or College-based, or University wide, so long as the intention is to improve the distance learning experience in some way

Applications are welcome from any staff member involved in the planning and/or the delivery of distance learning at either undergraduate or postgraduate levels within the University. Applications may be from individuals or groups within or across Colleges. Where a group is involved in the submission, the application and award must be channelled through a named individual.

TIMESCALE

The deadline for applications is 1 April 2009. Awards will be available from July 2009 and studies should be substantially completed and written-up by March 2010. A condition of holding an award is that grant holders review and disseminate their work through the Centre for Distance Education; meet and engage with other grant holders; and propagate their within the University and beyond.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Applications should:

- Describe the goals of the research
- Explain how the research will provide new knowledge or insights to effective distance education
- Outline any methodology/methods involved
- Provide an achievable work programme with clear outputs
- Provide evidence of the capability of the Researcher(s) to complete this work.

ANNEX 5 Professional Standards Framework for teaching and supporting learning in UK higher education

AREAS OF ACTIVITY, CORE KNOWLEDGE AND PROFESSIONAL VALUES

ACTIVITIES

1. Design and planning of learning activities and/or programmes of study
2. Teaching and/or supporting student learning
3. Assessment and giving feedback to learners
4. Developing effective environments and student support and guidance
5. Integration of scholarship, research and professional activities with teaching and supporting learning
6. Evaluation of practice and continuing professional development

CORE KNOWLEDGE

Knowledge and understanding of:

1. The subject material
2. Appropriate methods for teaching and learning in the subject area and at the level of the academic programme
3. How students learn, both generally and in the subject
4. The use of appropriate learning technologies
5. Methods for evaluating the effectiveness of teaching
6. The implications of quality assurance and enhancement for professional practice

PROFESSIONAL VALUES

1. Respect for individual learners
 2. Commitment to incorporating the process and outcomes of relevant research, scholarship and/or professional practice
 3. Commitment to development of learning communities
 4. Commitment to encouraging participation in higher education, acknowledging diversity and promoting equality of opportunity
 5. Commitment to continuing professional development and evaluation of practice
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