E learning mini symposium

VLEs in art and design
Why have a VLE or online learning?

- the new technologies are improving access to learning, not just for minority groups but for all students; computers provide improved flexibility of study, allowing students to learn at different paces and according to different learning styles; the learning process itself can be enhanced through imaginative use of ICT

Pringle, Mike. (2005). Report on e learning, AHDS
Course issues

- Overcrowded noticeboards
- Handout overkill
- Communication breakdown
- Students feel they don’t get enough technical support
- Attendance issues
- Pressure of time
- Where to find information for their course
What do students want?

- Single search boxes like Amazon and Google giving instant satisfaction.
- More contact time with their tutors.
- Opportunities for social networking (MSN, Youtube, blogs, wikis.)
- Virtual access to information at times they want.
- Opportunities to learn from each other.
- To be able to learn at their own pace.
What do they get?

- Pigeon holes
- Student Portals
- Blogs
- Email
- VLEs
- Wikis
- Texting
- Lots of workshops
Some examples at the University College for the Creative Arts

- http://www.blackboard.ucreative.ac.uk/webapps/login/
Why is takeup of VLEs in art and design so small?

- Lack of time to develop programmes
- Misconception that e learning is a replacement for studio teaching
- No technical support
- Perception that a VLE has limited role to play in an art and design curriculum.

“Well, it’s just a big filing cabinet isn’t it?.”
Constructivist viewpoint (Malins and Pirie (2006))

- knowledge and understanding are not acquired passively but in an **active manner through personal experience and experiential activities**, 
- learning is based on problem solving and **active engagement** with ideas. 
- three ‘generations’ of VLE’s, from passive transmission through to active collaboration and reflective development.

http://www.elia-artschools.org/_downloads/publications/EJHAE/Malins.doc
Courseware and pedagogy

Research by **Goodyear (2001)** and **Mayes (2005)**

Suggestion that courseware can be divided into 3 types – *Primary, Secondary and Tertiary*

- **Primary** = documents that convey information (i.e. handouts, lecture notes)
- **Secondary** = Online tests or quizzes to question and apply new concepts
- **Tertiary** = captured online discourse (i.e. discussion board) providing opportunity to engage in collaborative working

.....*students input could then be used to drive further discussion and learning.....*
So what are the benefits of using a VLE?

- It develops independent research skills
- Increases flexibility of provision
- Enhances capacity of integrating study with work and leisure.
- On screen learning can be made visually exciting (i.e. YouTube, flickr, podcasting, wikis, etc)
- Ease of access to course materials and lecture notes
- Opportunity to share knowledge with peers.....
What aspects of Blackboard did you find most helpful?

- Checking timetables, and getting lecture notes
- Notes from the lectures, reference details and copies of attachment sheets in lectures
- Everything was easily accessible
- The notes from the lectures. And bits of information from the lectures and briefs for other projects that is put on there.
- Reading lecture notes and handouts again
- Essay notes and announcements
- Access for info lecture notes from Wayne martin – bubbles & skulls – too long to photocopy
- Lecture handouts
- The lecture handouts and essay questions
- Timetables of term dates, essay on critical histories subject and Dutch painting
- The posting of lecture handouts in the critical histories unit
- Extended lecture notes
- Being able to retrieve a lost handout
- Lecture supplements e.g. Wayne martin essay enlightenment
- Lecture notes being available on-line
- Its pretty straightforward to use and all the information is easy to find
- Notes
- Having the briefs and project information/ lecture handouts etc.
- Essay notes
- Catch up on notes you have missed out on
- Helps you catching up if you have missed out
- Briefs etc
- Lecture notes
Accessibility

2 main issues – accessibility of the **learning platform** and **accessibility of the content**

- The VLE itself should be included in the institutions inclusive teaching and widening participation strategies, as well as teaching and learning strategy and ILT strategy.

- See Ferl/TechDis/JISC RSCs publication ’Inclusive learning and Teaching’
Future directions

- He Scanning Licence
- Embedding learning objects (using a Mac, How to use Photoshop, etc)
- JISC Mail discussion group
- E learning Strategy
- Learning technologists x 2
- Develop and share pilot projects
- Ringfence photocopying budget and convert to print credits for students.
- Regular newsletter
- Lunchtime roadshows demonstrating ‘building blocks’