

Are we waving or drowning??

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The existence of a Government framework with the aim to achieve 50% entry into Higher Education by 2010 has resulted in a diverse student population in all Higher Education institutions. Widening access policies have enriched universities whilst creating new problems that need to be addressed. Mass higher education has transformed the nature of the university experience for students (Quality Enhancement Themes doc). Against this backdrop, SPLASH – Student Personal Learning and Study Hub – was established at the University of Surrey in 2007.

In April 2007, Learning Development staff from SPLASH presented a “work in progress” paper at the 4th Annual LDHEN Symposium in Bournemouth. The paper outlined the establishment of SPLASH and how we listened to and acted on the student voice when setting up the resource. This paper is a reflective account of our journey since then and an illustration of how we are attempting to meet the challenge of Learning Development both practically and strategically. It will discuss the development of initiatives which focus on the student experience - particularly the first year experience - and will once more draw upon the student voice. The paper will also discuss tensions which have arisen as a result of establishing the service and how we are rising to those particular challenges.

Reference will be made to the literature but the paper will also highlight the influence of the Learning Development community via the LDHEN network and the important role it has played in supporting this development.