

# *ALD*<sub>in</sub>*HE* *Bulletin*

Newsletter of the Association for Learning Development  
in Higher Education | November 2010 | **Issue 1**

## **Welcome to the first issue of the ALDinHE Bulletin**

Our newsletter will be produced periodically and will report on the work of the Association and how it supports the Learning Development Community.

### **Challenging Times**

As this newsletter goes to press we are all in the process of attempting to digest what the Browne review will mean for the UK's universities, and for learning development in particular. If adopted, the recommendations on fees and the proposed cuts in the funding for teaching will have major implications. One thing we feel certain about is that our work with students and staff to facilitate learning and to promote an accessible and equitable higher education will be more and more vital. A key challenge for us will be to do whatever we can to resist the development of a divisive 'two-tier' view of higher education, and to continue to promote the underpinning values of learning development for all.

### **Planning for the Future: Steering Group Meeting, September 2010**

The ALDinHE Steering Group spent two days in Bournemouth a few weeks ago. We took advantage of a rare opportunity to be together to draw up

both short and long-term plans to guide our work as ALDinHE enters an exciting period of expansion and transition.

Key issues discussed included

**Governance:** how to ensure we have a robust constitution and organisational structure so that the Association continues to be sustainable and represent the needs of its members.

**Membership:** how to extend what we offer to both individual and institutional members and help the Association reach as many people as possible within the LD Community.

**Funding:** how to generate and apply for funding to enable us to deliver our aims and objectives; how to use such funding to support our members in their research, continued professional development and other activities.

**Short-term and long-term planning:** how to achieve our aims and represent the values of the LD community in the future, ensuring that our long term goals inform our decision making processes.

## Working Groups

One of the ways the Steering Group is already helping the sustainability and continued development of the Association is through the establishment of working groups, each focusing on a different 'theme' within the Association's work.

- Membership and Promotion
- Continuing Professional Development
- Conference and Events
- ALDinHE Journal
- Research and Funding
- LearnHigher Forum

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Earlier in the year we asked for expressions of interest from members who would like to become more involved in our work e.g. reviewing journal articles or supporting the work of the CPD group. Thank you to those of you who gave your names in our earlier call. We will be returning to this list and we hope to add to it in the future.

Included in this newsletter is a summary of discussions we had in relation to the different working groups.

## Membership and Promotion Group

Whilst individual membership is conferred to delegates who attend the annual ALDinHE conference (and as a result is renewed in Spring), institutional membership follows the university's academic year.

### **Institutional membership is now payable for the 2010 – 2011 academic year.**

The ALDinHE steering group is keen to encourage and grow institutional membership in order to demonstrate strategic commitment to learning development within institutions and give greater collective voice to impact on the political spectrum. At a recent meeting, the steering group revised the benefits available to institutional members to include:

- subsidised conference attendance for up to three members of staff
- free or priority subsidised bookings at CPD events
- free road show visits to explore LearnHigher resources
- learning development consultancy at institutional, departmental and individual levels
- political leverage through a co-operative and collaborative community of practice
- access to consultancy/contribution to learning and teaching programmes
- on-line resources linking to accreditation

Individual membership will continue to run from AGM to AGM and all delegates of the annual conference will be granted individual membership. Members will be invited to renew membership following the conference if they were unable to attend.

The current renewal rates for membership are £150 for institutional and £30 for individual.

There is now a dedicated link on the website for members to request a reminder of their membership number. You will need to quote your membership number when booking CPD or conference events.

The Membership and Publicity Working Group would welcome more support from the ALDinHE membership to help promote its activities which include:

- Administering membership of the Association in accordance with the constitution
- Encouraging growth of individual and institutional membership
- Developing the branding of the Association through associated materials and media
- Supporting the processes of governance of the Association with regard to the election of the steering group.

The current ALDinHE Secretary is intending to stand down from the post at the next AGM, so if you are interested in taking on this role or in contributing in any way to the group please contact Caroline Cash [caroline.cash@falmouth.ac.uk](mailto:caroline.cash@falmouth.ac.uk)

## **LearnHigher Forum**

Following the recent adoption of the LearnHigher Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning by the Association, we are in the process of establishing a forum and working group to oversee the CETL's future development. The LearnHigher Forum will be made up of representatives from the institutions who make up the partnership (currently 16 universities). Whilst many representatives are existing learning area co-ordinators, there will be some new names and faces joining the Forum.

Representatives from both LearnHigher and ALDinHE are meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> - 27<sup>th</sup> November to set the new arrangements in motion and to hold the first meeting of the new Forum. In addition to discussing governance and organisational structures, the meeting will give opportunities for members to discuss recent developments in the LearnHigher website. These include a shift in responsibility of website maintenance and design to our new web provider ICO3. The Forum will also discuss possible redesign or redevelopment of the existing learning areas and look for ways to attract new contributors to learning areas and the associated resources.

Through the LearnHigher Forum ALDinHE will ensure that LearnHigher continues to be seen as a vehicle for sharing excellent materials and resources and building capacity within the learning development network.

## **Conference and Events Group**

The key responsibility for this group is to organise the annual conference. Whilst this will be the 8<sup>th</sup> conference we have organised, it will be the first one to be held under the name of ALDinHE. Our event next year, for which the call for papers has recently been issued, will be held at Queen's University in Belfast on April 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> 2011.

The group is also thinking ahead to arrange a venue for 2012 and an email will be sent out calling for expressions of interest in hosting our 2012 event. If you would to be involved please contact a member of the conference and events working group (see below for contact details). In addition to planning and organising the annual conference, discussions are being held about how best to support other working groups in planning and organising events – e.g. the CPD group

Conference and Events Group members

Christine Keenan [CKeenan@bournemouth.ac.uk](mailto:CKeenan@bournemouth.ac.uk)

Julia Braham [j.braham@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:j.braham@leeds.ac.uk)

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## **The JLDHE**

We published the first edition of the Journal of Learning Development in Higher Education (JLDHE) in 2009. Since then we have produced one further edition, and a special issue on PDP is now set for publication in November this year. We will also publish our third regular edition in early 2011. Our aim in establishing the JLDHE is to support accessible, high quality, peer- reviewed writing in the field of learning development. Feedback on the journal so far has been excellent and we have a good number of papers currently in review and awaiting publication.

In recent discussions, ALDinHE agreed we would seek to include more reviews of books, new technologies and annotated bibliographies in future editions.

We are always keen to receive draft material for the journal on any aspect of learning development in higher education. We are looking for innovative and scholarly material including:

- academic papers
- research reports
- reviews of books or online materials for learning
- opinion pieces
- case studies

Visit us online at <http://www.aldinhe.ac.uk/ojs/>

Register to create an account and you can choose to be a reader, author, reviewer – or all three!

For further information please contact

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## **Research and Funding**

The research and funding group is a new working group which will seek opportunities for funding and potential sources of support for learning development research.

Possible collaborative research projects could include ones based around key themes such as STEM subjects. The group is keen to attract experienced bid writers and others interested in exploring research opportunities leading to publications in learning development.

For further information contact Terry Finnigan at [t.finnigan@fashion.arts.ac.uk](mailto:t.finnigan@fashion.arts.ac.uk)

## **Professional Development Group**

The ALDinHE Professional Development Working Group aims to provide direction, opportunities, and support to further the continuing professional development (CPD) of those working in learning development roles.

This Working Group has been in action for 10 months and has already hosted a very successful Training and Networking Day at the University of Reading in July 2010. The group intends to build on the interest and enthusiasm generated both by this event and the forthcoming re-run of the event in Leeds on 14<sup>th</sup> January 2011.

At the ALDinHE Residential we identified the following activities for the group:

- Develop an annual programme of CPD events for learning development
- Create resources to support the professional development of people working in LD roles
- Establish and support initiatives for networking and sharing of best practice, such as regional groups, peer observations, and mentoring schemes.
- Develop an outline framework of skills and expertise for working in learning development roles
- Work towards an ALDinHE endorsed professional LD accreditation for both individuals and institutions.
- Collaborate with other relevant professional development organisations such as SEDA.

If you are interested in joining the Professional Development Working Group, please contact the Chair, Michelle Reid, at [michelle.reid@reading.ac.uk](mailto:michelle.reid@reading.ac.uk)

## **And Finally**

You may have noticed in an earlier email that John Hilsdon announced he will be standing down as Chair of ALDinHE at the 2011 AGM. His vision for Learning Development in HE was recognised by the award of National Teaching Fellowship in 2004, since when he has brought this wonderful community together primarily through the LDHEN JISCmail list. The association was officially launched at the [2007 LDHEN Symposium](#), where the inaugural meeting adopted the constitution and elected the first steering group. Since then, John has been an influential Chair of the Association and we are all very appreciative of the huge amount of time and effort he has so enthusiastically put in on behalf of the membership.