FELTAG AND BEYOND

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What a difference a year makes

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In February last year, FE was seen as lagging behind technologically, and Skills Minister Matthew Hancock set up the Further Education Technology Action Group (Feltag) to discover how the sector could do more.

You can find more about who was involved, and their final recommendations, published this month on pages 2 and 3.

The report was previewed at the Education Innovation Conference in February (pages 4 and 5).

Now FE is looking to lead the way, with a cross-sector Education Technology Action Group

set up to emulate Feltag's success (page 6).

Feltag member Paul Rolfe urges the government to support the report to unleash the sector's innate innovation and creativity (also page 6).

Creativity is also important to artist-turned-Association of Learning Technology chief executive Maren Deepwell, profiled on page 7.

Technology has potential to help disadvantaged learners (pages 10 and 11), but it is only helpful if we use it innovatively, as Steve Molyneux points out on page 12.

Jayne Stigger of Nescot talks about how maths teaching can be enhanced with technology on page 13, where Dawn Buzzard of the Education and Training Foundation also tells us its digital plans.

Shane Chowen of the Institute for Learning looks at how tech-savvy learners' knowledge can be harnessed (page 14), while Susan Easton from the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education warns we must avoid simply ticking boxes.

Technology is about connecting and sharing resources — an idea promoted during Open Education Week (page 15).

We've also provided handy teaching and learning app suggestions (all are free) on each page — you can discover more through the links provided.

As always, you can tell us what you think (digitally, naturally) on the *FE Week* website and on Twitter @FEWeek.

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TRIBAL

Feltag recommendations

The headline recommendation of the Further Education Learning Technology Action Group (Feltag) was a requirement that all publicly-funded courses should have a minimum of 10 per cent wholly online content by 2015/16.

It was one of a number of recommendations made by Feltag in a report published this month and put to Skills Minister Matthew Hancock with a view to increasing the use of technology in education.

He said: "I think we can harness technology to drive up standards. It's about empowering teachers and using technology to improve and strengthen teaching.

"That may mean there are some changes to how teaching happens, for instance becoming more mentoring and more imparting of those very human characteristics you can't get from the internet."

Among the recommendations focussed on learners, employers, providers and their capabilities, regulation, and funding, the Feltag report urged the system to move to "encourage 'learner presence' rather than physical attendance".

As part of that aim, it recommended that before colleges could gain government approval to spend money on expanding their buildings, they would have to evidence that they had considered "alternative delivery methods… including mediated by learning technology".

The recommendation could mean providers would be able to use technology to expand provision without extending their campuses.

Ofsted would be required to ensure "all providers… explicitly embed learning technology in their teaching and learning strategy" and to train their inspectors to identify good practice.

However, Mr Hancock warned that providers should not simply go through the motions to fulfil the report's recommendations.

"I don't want to be overly prescriptive on the government side of things, but there's a question of how do you implement [increased technology use] without leading to a tick box response," he said.

"But we'll look at that and think about

it and come back with our response in the next few weeks."

The education watchdog should also ask learners about their experience of their college's technology, according to the report.

As well as 10 per cent of provision being delivered online, the report suggests more exams could be delivered in this way too, recommending that awarding bodies should aim to have "half of all VET [vocational education and training] assessments to be online by 2018/19".

The report also looks at what staff development would be necessary in a more high-tech FE classroom and called for an annual national learning tech development day to train tutors and learners in using the technology at their disposal.

Further training for teachers on how to effectively use digital technology and online tools should also be included as a mandatory practical module on all teacher training courses, the report said.

In addition, the report said providers should "be made responsible for identifying, supporting and developing learners' digital capabilities so that they can demonstrate their online skills to employers".
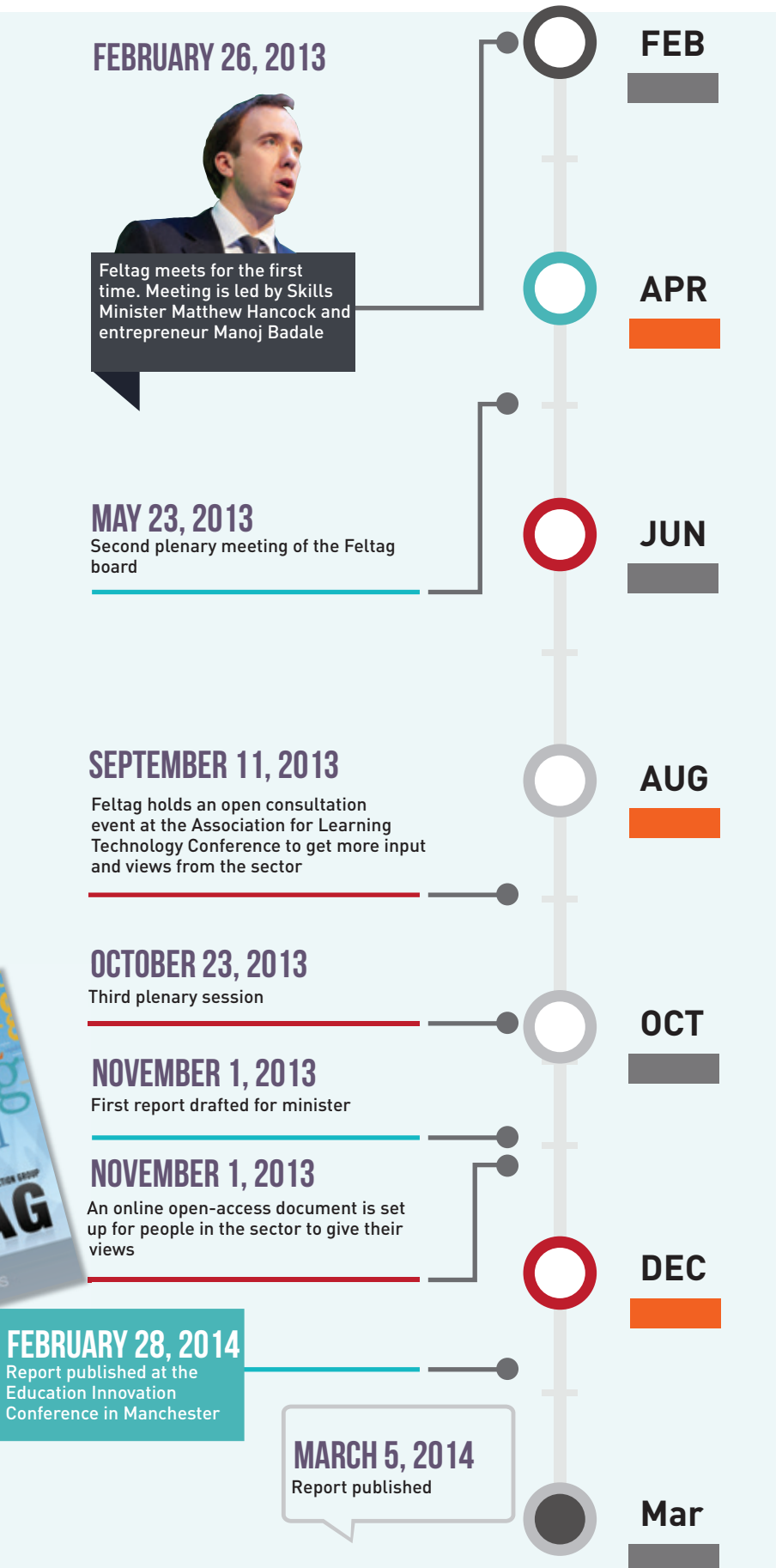
It also called for employers themselves to get involved in the development of online courses, such as Moocs (Massive open online courses), alongside providers, awarding bodies, employers and e-learning companies.

Overall, the report concluded, "good progress is already being made" and its recommendations were designed to build on that progress.

It described Feltag's ambition as "radical" — "to enable the system to become continually adaptive to an environment that creates new challenges for learners and teachers".

Mr Hancock's response to the Feltag report is believed to be due in early May.

FEBRUARY 26, 2013
Feltag meets for the first time. Meeting is led by Skills Minister Matthew Hancock and entrepreneur Manoj Badale

FEB

MAY 23, 2013
Second plenary meeting of the Feltag board

APR

SEPTEMBER 11, 2013
Feltag holds an open consultation event at the Association for Learning Technology Conference to get more input and views from the sector

JUN

AUG

OCTOBER 23, 2013
Third plenary session

NOVEMBER 1, 2013
First report drafted for minister

OCT

NOVEMBER 1, 2013
An online open-access document is set up for people in the sector to give their views

FEBRUARY 28, 2014
Report published at the Education Innovation Conference in Manchester

DEC

MARCH 5, 2014
Report published

Mar

FELTAG — Further Education Learning Technology Action Group

When Feltag was set up last year, Skills Minister, Matthew Hancock wanted to transform the sector through the use of technology. To help him on his mission he enlisted representatives of groups from across the sector. So who is in Feltag?

BOB HARRISON
Education advisor for Toshiba

DIANA LAURILLARD
London Knowledge Lab chair of learning with digital technologies and chair of the Association for Learning Technology

GLENYS STACEY
Chief executive of Ofqual

SARAH JONES
Chief executive of Learndirect

MARTIN DOEL
Chief executive of the Association of Colleges

Who's who

The group was chaired by Mr Hancock and entrepreneur Manoj Badale. They were joined by Bob Harrison, education adviser for Toshiba, Martin Doel, chief executive of the Association of Colleges, Sarah Jones, chief executive of Learndirect, Glenys Stacey, chief executive of Ofqual, Diana Laurillard, London Knowledge Lab chair of learning with digital technologies,

Edward Baker, founder of education technology company Edmix, Rod Bristow, UK president of Pearson and interim chief executive of Pearson International, Mark Dawe, chief executive of OCR, Maren Deepwell, chief executive of the Association for Learning Technology, Sunita Gordon, group head for education at The Guardian, Andrew Thompson, chief executive of Plotr, AQA chief executive Andrew Hall, head of Jisc Martyn Harrow,

Learning College, Chris Jones, chief executive of City & Guilds, Rajay Naik, director of government and external affairs at the Open University, Dick Palmer, chief executive of Ten Group, Paul Rolfe, chair of the 157 Group technology and innovation network, Andrew Thompson, chief executive of Plotr, AQA chief executive Andrew Hall, head of Jisc Martyn Harrow,

former Federation of Awarding Bodies chair Isabel Sutcliffe, Nick Lambert, Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, as well as representatives for innovation charity Nesta and the British Educational Suppliers Association.

THE FELTAG REPORT AT A GLANCE

The Feltag report made 39 recommendations across six different headline areas, including learners, employers and regulation. Here's a taster of some of their key suggestions for widening the use of technology in FE.

LEARNERS
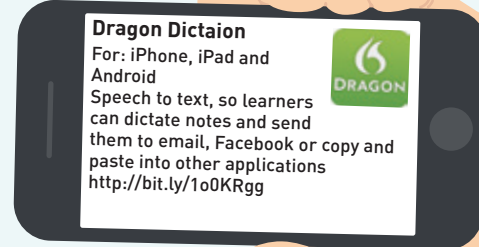• Providers to be made responsible for identifying, supporting

and developing learners' digital capabilities so that they can demonstrate their online skills to employers

EMPLOYERS
• Employers should play a more integrated role in the development and delivery of FE curricula. These employers should specify which digital skills they need

CAPABILITY AND CAPACITY OF FE AND SKILLS PROVIDERS
• A national annual 'Learning Tech Development Day', in colleges where teachers and learners are trained

INVESTMENT
• Ensure that colleges provide evidence they have considered using technology to expand

their provision before they capital expenditure on college building expansion is approved

REGULATION
• Ofsted's inspection framework to include a requirement for all providers to explicitly embed learning technology in their teaching and learning strategy

FUNDING
• The funding methodology should encourage 'learning presence' not 'physical attendance'

• All publicly-funded learning programmes should have a minimum of 10 per cent online content from 2015/16 with incentives to increase this to 50 per cent by 2017/2018

Dragon Dictaion
For: iPhone, iPad and Android
Speech to text, so learners can dictate notes and send them to email, Facebook or copy and paste into other applications
http://bit.ly/1o0KRgg

Education Innovation conference

The Education Innovation conference attracted people from across the education sector, but among the Raspberry Pi computers, the computer controlled Lego crocodiles and 3D printers, there was plenty for FE practitioners to discuss.

Digital literacy is a phrase that is often used when discussing education technology but, asked Richard French, director of educational policy at the Chartered Institute for IT, what does it actually mean?

"If I ask a hundred people I'll probably get a hundred definitions," he said during his seminar, entitled Digital Literacy — the time is right.

"In my mind, having digital skills gets you to the point where you are digitally literate."

He added that digital literacy should be thought about, both in schools and colleges, like other transferrable skills, which are used across other subjects not simply as its own subject area.

"It's got to start becoming the norm across the board, it's got to be the way we deliver things and by using it as an everyday skill, by assuming it is an everyday skill, then we start to get a little bit further into the value of what it can bring.

"And if we don't have it, if we don't have young people with an adequate form of literacy we're not going to get as many of them into jobs as we should."

He warned there was a risk of "sleepwalking" into creating "an underclass" of digitally illiterate people.

"There are 11m people in the UK without basic digital skills— that's only recently gone down from 13 or 14m, so it's a problem that's easing but it is a problem," he said.

He pointed to problems they encounter in everyday, such an interacting with government online services.

"And that 11m, or the 6m without access, are probably the ones who need those services," he said.

"What you can't measure is that fear and isolation and discomfort they have about just engaging in society and actually these people are losing out on a lot of money because they can't get the extra skills they need.

"It's not about schools, it's not about college, it's not about accessing services, it's not about isolation — it's about all of those things."

He said ICT should be given the same status as English and maths, with young people having to gain at least a level two qualification.

"We can't deliver a solution but we can say it's time for everyone to come together, government , employers and education — if those three are all pushing for the same things then we've got a chance but only if we're all on the same programme," said Mr French

"There has never been a better time than now to get everyone digitally literate.

"It's not an opportunity, it's a must and we've got to do it now."

Geoff O'Neil, director of Newcastle College digital skills academy and Janet Richards, programme manager at e-skills, the sector skills council for IT, agreed that employers had a role to play, which is why they had organised a tech trial day at Newcastle College.

Ms Richards said: "We all know technology is everywhere, whether we're talking about media, music retail or transport.

"We as adults recognise that because we use it day in, day out, but it's not something young people recognise.

"So, one of the key things was to encourage the students to actually get their hands on some technology, through employer involvement."

Mr O'Neil said: "We've industry saying the college is not providing the students ready, while colleges are saying 'well employers aren't telling us exactly what they want' so it's something we've got to work through in partnership."

Kevin Campbell-Wright, digital project officer at the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education, looked at how the increasing importance of digital literacy in everyday life was affecting adults.

"The skills that we're teaching people are still based around Microsoft Office — Word, databases and spreadsheets, but they need a whole set of different skills if they're going to access new online tools," he said.

"They say by the end of next year 90 per cent of jobs will require ICT skills, not just generating spreadsheets but generalised ICT skills — meaning those without digital skills will be shut out from 90 per cent of jobs.

"Suddenly it's not just about technology helping adults learn, it's essential to adult learning because adults need it in everyday life."

Adult learning had a particular role to play here, he said.

"Getting people online is about skills, it's about motivation, it's about confidence and it's also about access and that's where adult learning works really well, because we have an ability to engage with people."

He said: "It's no good using technology to help adult learning if adults aren't being helped to use technology."

Skills Minister Matthew Hancock appears at the conference via videolink

education innovation CONFERENCE AND EXHIBITION

Above: Speaker and Pauline Odulinski interim, director of leadership, management and governance at the Education and Training Foundation, Richard French, (right) director of educational Policy at the Chartered Institute for IT, and Bis head of Feltag Nick Lambert (far right)

Feltag report unveiled

The most crowded FE event at the conference was the announcement of the Further Education Learning Technology Action Group (Feltag) recommendations.

Skills Minister Matthew Hancock appeared at the Manchester conference via live videolink to share his initial impressions of the report.

Among the audience members were Shane Chowen, policy officer at the Institute for Learning, Pauline Odulinski, interim director of leadership, management and governance at the Education and Training Foundation, City & Guilds trustee David Clark, Yousef Fouda, chief tech officer at Warwickshire College, Department for Business, Innovation and Skills official Nick Lambert and Education Technology Action Group member James Penny.

Mr Hancock said the report and the Feltag process was "all about raising standards and empowering teachers to raise standards".

Mr Lambert said the Feltag report should be seen as a "catalyst and something to focus our minds, so we can see what's needed to deliver".

"We've picked up a lot of these ideas and the present process needs to allow us to design in more of these mind focussing exercises," he said.

Mr Fouda offered a college's point of view on the most talked-about recommendation, the mandatory 10 per cent online content for all courses.

"Having an initiative like this will help us, but it puts the ball in our court," he said.

"Because it's on us to make it interesting, because... we can't just assume that online experience will be great — we have to be innovative to make it interesting and exciting."

Ms Odunlinski agreed, saying she welcomed the "push" to use more technology.

Mr Chowen said the teaching profession was ready to take on the challenge presented by Feltag.

"We need to get over the idea that teachers are technophobes," he said. "It's the link between technology and pedagogy, rather than seeing them as competing, that I think teachers are increasingly attuned to."
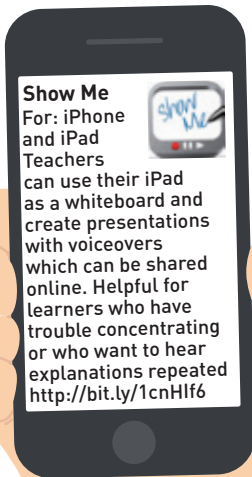
EXPERT

PAUL ROLFE

HEAD OF TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION AT HIGHBURY COLLEGE, PORTSMOUTH, AND CHAIR OF THE 157 GROUP TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION NETWORK

Unlocking classroom potential with technology

The FE sector has been criticised for its "analogue mindset". It's a criticism to which Paul Rolfe offers a defence.

Digital technologies continue to develop at breakneck speed and there are a number of innovations on the horizon for those willing to harness and exploit them for teaching, learning and assessment.

More and more colleges are adopting systems to support the 'Bring Your Own Device' (BYOD) culture as well as implementing elastic cloud services to improve flexibility. These have been hot topics and trends for a while, but what is next?

Wearable technologies, such as Google Glass, present huge opportunities as well as 'threats' to the traditional teaching models.

Another technology to watch is Smart TVs. These, in my view, are still yet to mature but there could, in the future, be opportunities for FE institutions to set up interactive subscription-based learning channels that would be capable of reaching the mass worldwide market. They offer new collaborative models for providers.

Massive open online courses (Moocs) have also been the subject of much publicity in recent months.

With the UK already having invested in FutureLearn, established by the Open University for Higher Education, it would be good to see a platform established for FE which would give rise to new delivery models and markets.

Attempting to exploit these opportunities is the ultimate aim of the

recently published report by the Further Education Learning Technology Action Group (Feltag) which I was fortunate to be part of (interesting to note that I was one of

> **I recognise the assets of untapped potential in our colleges if staff are given permission to be even more creative and innovative**

only two members that currently work in a college).

It was not only the report that was of interest, but also the flurry of commentary on the social networking sites that followed.

One commentary stated the view that FE has an 'analogue mindset'. I would fundamentally disagree with such views.

As chair of the 157 Group technology and innovation network, I am fortunate to have the opportunity travel to many colleges, speak to students and staff, and have

consistently been astounded by the level of innovation and creativity in the sector.

However, I recognise the assets of untapped potential in our colleges if staff are given permission to be even more creative and innovative.

In today's colleges staff are often busy doing those routine tasks which technology could automate.

Where staff do have the opportunity to be creative and innovative they usually embrace it. Where this is rewarded and recognised it creates its own virtuous circle — far exceeding the cost of any upfront investment.

The government's response to Feltag should be to support its recommendations.

The key priorities for me would be firstly to ensure targeted capital programmes enabling all colleges to have access to modern technologies including high speed wireless networks and secondly, to ensure that current funding regulations incentivise rather than penalise providers for using technologies innovatively.

In addition, I would wish to ensure that awarding bodies improve the quality and reliability of online exams software by working together with providers; and finally I would want to ensure that students and practitioners can showcase innovation and creativity through an appropriately funded and empowered technology exemplar network.

Following in the footsteps of Feltag

A number of FE and Skills figures who contributed to the Further Education Learning Technology Action Group (Feltag) have signed up to be part of the wider education sector's version of the group.

A preliminary membership list of the Education Technology Action Group (Etag), which was set up to mirror the Feltag process across schools and further and higher education, has been released.

The new group, headed by Skills Minister Matthew Hancock and Education Secretary Michael Gove (pictured), will also include David Hughes, chief executive of the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education, Maren Deepwell, chief executive of the Association for Learning Technology, and Bob Harrison, education adviser for Toshiba Information Systems UK Ltd.

Mr Hancock said: "I'm delighted with what's come out of Feltag… and I'm also glad

that we've now got a wider education-wide technology group including Michael Gove and [Universities Minister] David Willetts, to cover the emerging role of technology, drawing from FE, where FE leads the way."

The group, which had an early stages meeting last month, is chaired by Stephen Heppell, professor of new media at

Bournemouth University.

A Department for Education spokesperson added that a full list of group members would be published "in due course".

He added: "We want the Etag process to be collaborative and there will be opportunities for schools, colleges and others in the sector to contribute.

"I think for me as a contributor to both groups, I hope there'll be a greater emphasis on learning from each other as contributors," she said.

"The group will build on the model established by Feltag, and take into account their findings.

"We want it to have a similar collaborative and open approach that is driven by the sector."

Professor Diana Laurillard of the University of London, Jill Lanning, chief executive of the Federation of Awarding bodies, Brian Mathers head of learning technology at City & Guilds, and Professor Peter Twining, of the Open University, are further Feltag members who have signed up for Etag.

They are joined by entrepreneur Manoj Bidale, who co-chaired Feltag with Mr Hancock.

Dr Deepwell said: "I'm very excited about this as a cross-sector group, because I think it's actually harder to get across the message that schools, universities, colleges, private providers and adult learning can learn from each other than you imagine, so I think the more awareness and the more support from

government and other agencies the better."

She added that she hoped Etag would employ similar methods to Feltag, which used online open access documents to engage the sector.

"Feltag was focussed on FE and that's a very varied sector but because Etag also includes schools and universities and has a broader remit I very much hope that we can come up with practical ways of working across the sectors, have some joined up thinking between the sector to a greater degree than we have so far.

"With Etag but obviously there are other sources of input but I think certainly the Feltag recommendations will feed into it."

Also on the Etag group are Mark Chambers, from IT association Niace, Professor Angela McFarlane, of King's College London, Ian Fordham, co-founder of the Education Foundation thinktank, and James Penny, solutions director at European Electronique.

Phil Richards, chief innovation director at Jisc, Pauline Odulinski, principal of Aylesbury College, Ofsted leader on ICT David Brown and Niel McLean, of e-skills UK, are also members.

Maren Deepwell ~ her story

The chief executive of the Association for Learning Technology talks to FE Week.

Despite being the chief executive of the Association for Learning Technology (ALT) aged just 33, Maren Deepwell is a long way from what might be considered a stereotypical computer geek.

She arrived at technology via a BTec and degree in fine arts, and an MA and PhD in a branch of anthropology.

Deepwell is also aware she's not necessarily what someone might expect of the chief executive of a technology organisation.

"I think it can be an advantage not to fit the norm because I'm far more likely to bring a fresh perspective to the table," she says.

"At times I think sometimes it more usual to have someone slightly older — I've not had that long a career yet — my student days aren't that far behind me and I have a fresh memory of what it's like to be 17 and not know what you want from life."

Deepwell may not have known what she wanted from life back then, but she wasn't going to let it hold her back, and at 17 she left home, near the industrial town of Stuttgart in South Germany, to study at London's Kingsway College.

"That was the beginning of my more grown up life," she says.

"It was the right choice for me, it was a bit unorthodox, but it was really satisfying, and the course was really practical and you could use your hands and experiment, which I loved."

But it wasn't just the course which attracted her.

"I loved living in London, just how big it was," she says.

"I've spent as much time here now as I had in Germany so I very much feel it's my adopted homeland. I think it's fair to say that I'm a bit of an Anglophile.

"I suppose I found it different from Germany, but I just found myself at home really quickly — I really like English things, I like cricket and English foods, and English traditions."

After finishing her college course, Deepwell moved to Goldsmiths University for her BA and then went to Athens for a year to learn how to carve marble.

"That was something I was really passionate about at the time and I was trying to decide if I wanted to be an artist for a career," she says.

"I really enjoyed doing all of that, but I didn't really feel like I could fit it to what I wanted to do.

"In some ways it gave me a love for experimenting and creating things and but it's a very individual thing, it's a solitary pursuit and I wanted to do something with people so I didn't feel that becoming an artist was the answer."

She returned to London to study material

Inset: Maren Deepwell in her garden in Oxford

culture — "the idea is really that you study how people and things relate to each other," she explains.

She stayed on to do a PhD, and it was here she was introduced to learning technology.

"I came to learning technology as a student discovering how it can make a difference," she says.

"In anthropology a lot of students go away to do fieldwork and they travel all around the world and they do their research for a whole year — I had a friend doing her fieldwork in South America and she was away from the university for 18 months and they'd just introduced what was then quite a fancy new VLE [virtual learning environment] and she was able to keep in touch.

"And I think that opened my eyes to how important it was to support people when they weren't there but also to give them the chance to be in touch and I think that's how I got interested in it.

"And I've always liked computers generally — I really like learning new things and computers change all the time."

Her time at UCL also introduced Deepwell to her husband, Oliver, who took the same MA and PhD course, and is now a maths teacher.

"I think we're both interested in lots of different things which is why we get on so well — he came from maths and I came from art and we met in a discipline that was about understanding how people work

and how they live together," she says.

"I've always had a more creative approach to life and he's more interested in logic so it's a meeting of very different mindsets."

The couple married in 2008 and moved to Oxford when Deepwell became membership services manager at ALT.

"It wasn't a planned career move, but once I started finding out more about what we do, I just got really fascinated," she says.

"I thought 'this is where I can make a difference'. I've always had lot of different interests and this combined quite a few of them and I realised this was what I wanted to do."

Ultimately, she tells me, "technology is

> **I came to learning technology as a student discovering how it can make a difference**

about people".

"We might be able to be quite good at delivering content, but it's the small things that make being in college what they are that we really need to think about," says Deepwell.

"Technology is changing the way we work and we can't ignore that in preparing individuals to be successful in life."

She's optimistic about the future of technology in FE, the Further Education Learning Technology Action Group report, and about ALT's new three-year strategy and tells me several times how much she loves her job.

But it hasn't left her with much time for art.

"I've transferred my desire to do things with my hands into the garden and growing vegetables," she says.

"I suppose that's the one thing I do miss about my current job, you can't be as messy as you can in your art studio."

IT'S A PERSONAL THING

What's your favourite book?
Sherlock Holmes, all of them. I started reading it when I was little and I really enjoyed the adventures and then when I got older I liked how it all fitted together. Also, I liked reading about London before I moved there. I just really admire Sherlock Holmes — I think he's probably my favourite fictional character

What do you do to switch off from work?
Gardening, walking and spending time with family and friends
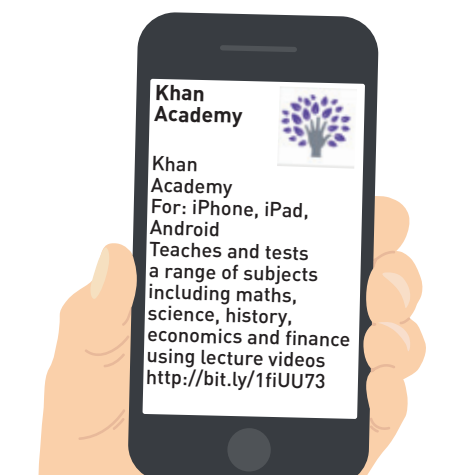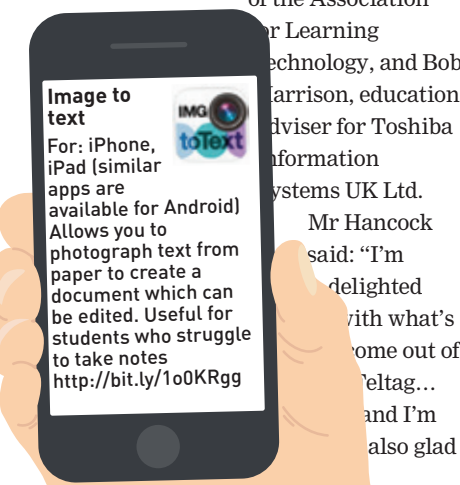
What your pet hate?

Fried bacon that isn't crispy – that's something I really dislike

If you could invite anyone to a dinner party, living or dead, who would it be?
People who are good at storytelling, so Terry Pratchett (his older self and younger self), Stephen Fry and Michael Palin

What did you want to be when you grew up?
When I was very little I wanted to be an astronaut, and then when I was a teenager I wanted to be a judge — I think I just thought they sounded like fun

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IMG➔toText
For: iPhone, iPad (similar apps are available for Android)
Allows you to photograph text from paper to create a document which can be edited. Useful for students who struggle to take notes
http://bit.ly/1o0KRgg

Khan Academy
Khan Academy
For: iPhone, iPad, Android
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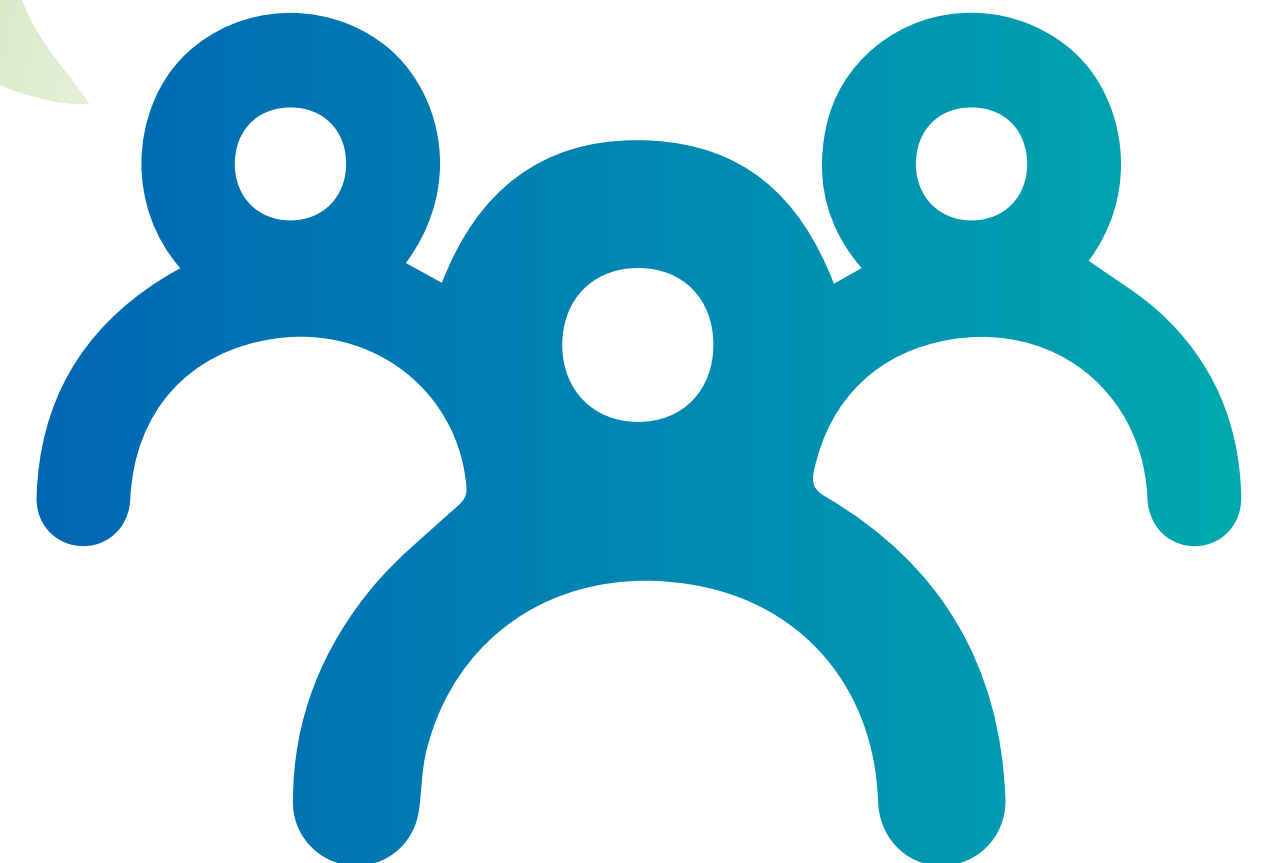
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email sales.technology@tribalgroup.com

"Using e-track is an essential part of the College's operations. All our assessors are in the field so it's an essential tool for us, our assessors can upload every learner's progress to their laptops and then synchronise them at the end of the day. I don't know how we would manage without it."
Newcastle College

"The college's ability to turnaround its financial position has been greatly assisted by the benchmarking and curriculum expertise provided by Tribal."
Vice Principal, Coleg Gwent

"Implementing ebs4 enabled the college to consolidate systems, reduce double data entry and improve business processing which has resulted in staff having more time to concentrate on college priorities."
Chris Richard, Merthyr Tydfil College

"[With Maytas] We can treat the data as gospel as it's gone through validation. Having accurate information on learners is essential - less errors equals better cash flow for the College."
MIS Manager, Newcastle College Group

Technology as a bridge and a barrier for disadvantaged learners

@RebeccaKCooney
rebecca.cooney@feweek.co.uk

When Skills Minister Matthew Hancock spoke at the unveiling of the Further Education Learning Technology Action Group (Feltag) report, an audience member asked him whether its recommendations might exclude disadvantaged learners.

They were worried that access to technology could be a problem.

Mr Hancock acknowledged the issue, but said it was important to move ahead, while dealing with accessibility issues.

He said: "But the evidence does show that online learning helps those who are most disengaged the most."

So what can technology offer disadvantaged learners? And will it create barriers, or will it help to bring them down?

"Many disadvantaged learners come from the most excluded group, and we could risk creating more barriers," said Sue Easton, senior project manager for the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (Niace).

"This may be some people who don't have basic digital skills for their everyday lives, and then we're asking them to apply those skills to learning.

"Learning skills are also an issue — if you have asked someone to learn online we have to have ways of helping them to develop learning skills. You can then transfer them online, but we do have to think about it.

"With physical disabilities it's important that learning material online is accessible. It's not universal at the moment, and when providers are developing content it's even more important to embed accessibility in whatever they put up."

However, she said, for learners who struggle to get out of the house or into college, online learning can be helpful.

"People can do things at their own pace and often completing one bit of learning gives them the boost they need to carry on learning," said Ms Easton.

"It can also be really useful for women from cultures where they aren't able to get out and access education, for example."

Allowing learners to "work at their own pace" can also be helpful for those who are in education, as they can go back and check things as often as they like without being embarrassed, says Alastair McNaught, senior FE adviser at Jisc TechDis.

"One of the most exciting things with technology is the ability to access an enormous amount of content online," he said.

"Smart phones open up the world of learning because for many students reading textbooks is difficult — many students struggle to use contents pages effectively, whereas ebooks are easily searchable.

"There are also those students who find it very difficult to use print because there are issues of self-esteem.

"They don't want to be seen to be a swot but if they can access it from their phones, especially for 16 to 19 year olds, it's a very discreet way of working.

"They still haven't got the confidence to be seen studying but they can sit there and no-one knows if they are on Facebook or studying or listening to a podcast from their tutors."

Students with learning difficulties and dyslexia can also benefit from being able to access digital content from a portable device.

"The advantage with iPads and econtent is that it can be personalised to the reader," said Abi James, assistive technology consultant and researcher at the British Dyslexia Association.

"Different colours and fonts can be used which can make a real difference for some dyslexics, it can read out loud for them — and some find it less intimidating than a book, because they can't be put off by how thick it is.

"Tablets have been a game changer on a number of levels because devices like these before were very expensive and stood out but now tablets come replaced them."

She added: "These devices can also be used for exams — which is really important, but I don't think all colleges realise that."

Again, the everyday nature of a tablet can be helpful for students.

"It's a very discreet device, it doesn't make students stand out and they can access it in different contexts – it's a levelling platform," says Ms James.

Lisa Featherstone, Jisc TechDis adviser, agreed.

"It's a huge push for learners who struggle with studying because this technology is part of their lives," she said.

She adds that online text is also important because it can be multimedia — links and videos explaining more about the subject can be embedded in the text.

"If a young person can't read there are ways which you can get the text to speak to you," she said.

"So in a book they won't look and they don't understand, so as soon as the text talks back it becomes accessible, because you can do things to it."

However, the technology in question doesn't have to be the latest smartphone to have a huge impact on someone's learning skills, she said.

"Even the most basic phones will have calendars, alarms and reminders on them to help them keep themselves organised," said Ms Featherstone.

But, she warned young people may not always be as tech-savvy as they are given credit for.

"There is this idea of young people being digital natives born in the digital generation and they know it all — no, they don't," she said.

Clockwise from left: Sue Easton, senior project manager at Niace, Lisa Featherstone, Jisc TechDis adviser, Abi James, assistive technology consultant and researcher at the British Dyslexia Association, and Alastair McNaught, senior FE adviser at Jisc TechDis

"They can use technology to watch YouTube videos but they don't have a clue about how to use it for learning.

"Things like using Outlook calendars posting things on shared calendars — this sort of thing's not taught in schools and if you haven't ever worked in an office, why would you know you can do that?

"It's no good just telling people — you need to work with young people and not tell but demonstrate to them and empower them so they see the value."

Ultimately, said Ms Easton, the barriers can be overcome, but only if we recognise they're there.

She said: "The more learning we have and the better leaders make it, the more it's an opportunity to expand learning, rather than putting people up to fail — but we have to smart about it."

Tablets vs e-readers

For learners with dyslexia or reading difficulties, electronic versions of books can be less daunting and much easier to read than paper. But which e-reading device is better — the e-reader (Kindle, Nook, Kobo) or the tablet computer (iPad, Samsung Galaxy, Kindle Fire)? The answer depends on the learner and their needs — but here's a quick rundown of the advantages of each.

Tablets from left: iPad Air, Kindle Fire and Samsung Galaxy

E-readers from left: Kindle, Kobo and Nook

TABLET

- Personalisation — for learners with dyslexia, sometimes changing the colour of the text or background can help to make reading easier
- Apps — tablets, particularly iPads or Android-run tablets like the Samsung Galaxy, have access to an almost unlimited range of apps, many of which are free. These can include text to speech apps to read the text out and let the reader follow it on the page, and speech to text apps which can help with note taking
- Cameras — take photos of lecturer's slides if writing is difficult
- Different texts can be added — with e-readers you're bound to the manufacturers library (although this will include hundreds of thousands of titles), with tablets you can draw texts from anywhere and create your own with apps
- Internet connection — as well as allowing you to browse online, and access email and social media, teachers could create texts with embedded links to videos and other multimedia content to explain difficult concepts
- Making notes on texts you're studying and going back to find them is easy on tablets
- Zoom in and out to make the text as big as you like
- The bright, colourful screens are good for viewing graphics in textbooks

E-READER

- Generally a much cheaper option
- Adjustable font size can make texts easier to read
- Long battery life — because e-readers use e-ink, which only uses battery when it turns the page, the battery can last for up to a month without charging. A tablet battery is unlikely to last more than a day
- The e-ink screens are easier to look at — the glare from a tablet screen can start to irritate the eyes after a while. There's also evidence to suggest that e-readers, even backlit models are easier to read before going to sleep as studies have shown the glare from tablets can disrupt your sleep
- Generally e-readers are lighter than tablets, making them easier to hold — great if you're reading for long periods
- They don't allow internet surfing (although you can buy models with wifi, to download books on the go), so you can't get distracted
- Amazon's Kindle comes with an embedded dictionary, so difficult words can be looked up easily. The highlighting function also allows you to see the parts of a book other people have found interesting
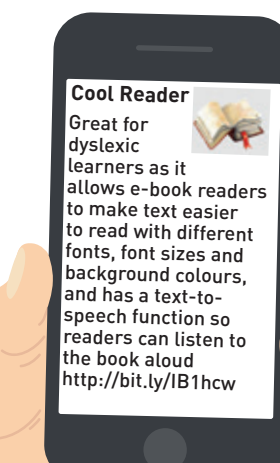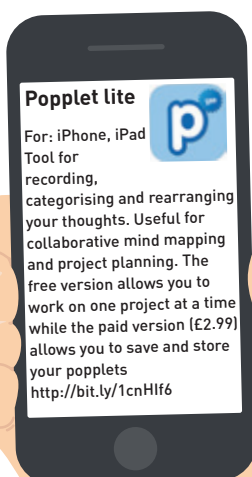
EXPERTS

STEVE MOLYNEUX
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF THE TABLET ACADEMY, AN INDEPENDENT DEVICE DIAGNOSTIC CONSULTANCY AND TEACHER TRAINING ORGANISATION

Getting the right tech strategy

Bringing technology into the classroom has not necessarily been the problem, says Professor Steve Molyneux. He thinks using it in the right way has been the issue.

Mobile technologies, from smartphones to ebook readers and tablets have impacted on all of us over the past 10 years. There are more than 25 million tablets being used by people across the UK.

The rapid increase of tablet use in schools will lead to a pool of FE students adept at using such devices to manage their life, widening the digital divide between staff and student.

The challenges we now face with a shift from the age of the educator to an age of the individual are even larger than when we first started to introduce ICT back in the 1990s, with the promise it would transform teaching and learning.

But we have not yet achieved this, because we used ICT to automate our existing systems and practices, but not to innovate and transform.

We did not explore potential new pedagogic and didactic models — we shifted the cost of printed hand-outs to students by putting them online and Virtual Learning Environments became, for many institutions, simply content repositories for Word and PowerPoint documents or webpages.

The focus now, when learners bring in their computing mobile device in the same way I brought my pen and paper, is to explore new pedagogies and IT-based learning mechanism and systems that support deeper learning.

Funding has always been an issue but as demonstrated by our colleagues in the secondary sector many parents (and therefore our students) are willing to purchase the 'right' device at competitive education prices, assuming the institution provides the rest — apps, software, access to systems and connectivity.

> ❝ The focus now, when learners bring in their computing mobile device in the same way I brought my pen and paper, is to explore new pedagogies and IT-based learning mechanism and systems that support deeper learning

This will transform many colleges' IT Strategies. Some are looking at BYOD (Bring Your Own Device), others at CYOD (Choose Your Own Device) — a provision by the institution but funded by the individual, which allows the institution more control and standardisation.

Such new strategies are paramount, especially when bonded so tightly with the teaching and learning vision for the institution.

Getting the right software is vital, such as programs offering institutions a learning environment with similar functionality to that students expect from their social environment.

The uses of social networking and messaging, video conferencing and collaboration working and synchronised multiple-media notebooks and real-time collaborative document creation offer the lecturer many more ways to engage with the student, and offers students many more ways of working both as individuals and collaboratively.

There are of course many other challenges our institutions face as they move to supporting mobile learning in its truest sense, such as obtaining staff buy-in, staff knowledge, insufficient time or money for training, real or perceived gaps in instructional technology support and many more.

The key thing is to take your time, ensure your IT and teaching and learning strategies are coherent, that a strong CPD plan is in place and most of all, engage with your students.

They will lay the path that future students follow — not us as 'IT specialist educators'.

Remember in the use of mobile technologies we are encroaching on their space — not them on ours.

NICK PIDGEON
MANAGING CONSULTANT, TRIBAL

The data may be there, but how hard is it working for you?

Technology is leading to a huge growth in the scale, size and sheer number of different types of data, says Nick Pidgeon, who also points out that technology is providing new ways of handling the deluge of new data.

The explosion of data in the past 20 years has resulted in increased knowledge and efficiency across society. But it can also make it difficult to see the wood for the trees.

Every education and training provider has many powerful and growing datasets.

Learner data shows your learners' background, achievements, attendance and predicted success.

Financial data shows how your resources are organised to help learners maximise their potential. Estates data shows where you will teach and assess those learners.

The quality and variety of data is continuously improving, becoming more far-reaching and sophisticated.

Clearly such development is welcome, but the sheer scale of the data can quickly become daunting.

With data held in different systems it is difficult to see how one dataset influences another.

In an ever changing and increasingly challenging policy environment, can you afford to not make best use of the data you already have?

The key is cutting through the complexity of the data to focus on what is important.

For example, by looking at a learner's attendance, background, and how often they access the virtual learning environment (VLE), we can predict a learner's outcome with greater accuracy than we previously thought.

By looking at all these factors, and others, together, you can build a picture of the specific problem and how it could be solved.

And to that picture we can add financial data, such as staffing levels within a learner's main curriculum area, spend on teaching equipment, and average group size.

Increasing numbers of colleges and training providers are turning to technology providers to help them effectively use the data they already have, in order to enhance strategic and financial decision making.

> ❝ The data is there, so the question is, do your existing systems already collect it and how do you get it out and combine it with the other datasets?

The data is there, so the question is, do your existing systems already collect it and how do you get it out and combine it with the other datasets?

Your benchmarking solutions should bring together financial, staff, student and estates data to give an objective evidence base for strategic and financial decision making.

Such tools should also help you address future challenges by enabling you to build different financial scenarios.

On top of that, predictive analytics is starting to reveal just how accurately learner outcomes can be modelled for individual learners and cohorts of learners. It is a relatively new technique but there is clear excitement at its potential.

With the right systems in place and the means to combine datasets, the hard part of making objective and insightful comparisons is made so much easier, and the subsequent decisions made will undoubtedly have greater effect on your college's strategies.

For you — rather than be led by existing software, systems and historical processes.

Bringing such separate datasets together to see how they interact reveals patterns that were previously hidden — are your learners underachieving in curriculum areas that use the VLE extensively, and do they complain about a slow VLE? Are they receiving lower than average contact hours with the expectation of some independent learning? Is the level of investment in the VLE and supporting IT infrastructure high or low versus sector norms?

The challenge is to make your data work

TRIBAL

EXPERTS

SUSAN EASTON
DIGITAL LEARNING PROGRAMME MANAGER, NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF ADULT CONTINUING EDUCATION

Avoiding the 'tick list' view of technology

Susan Easton calls for a positive approach to technology that embraces the Further Education Learning Technology Action Group recommendations as a spur to innovation.

Technology has had a huge impact on almost every facet of our lives. It has changed how we communicate and it has the potential to transform how adults can access learning as well as how that learning takes place.

The Further Education Learning Technology Action Group (Feltag) report and the eagerly-awaited ministerial response are set to place technology centre-stage for FE and Skills.

This is not the first report which has attempted to prompt innovation through technology, but it is the first to have been driven by the Skills Minister and developed through grass-roots consultation.

Use of games and simulations, interactive, accessible content, online peer support, increased tutor-learner interaction, mobile access, online learning at scale, cloud services and more can support better learning for more learners.

However, increased online learning could result in a 'learning divide', where socially excluded adults are excluded from learning through internet access, digital skills and literacy or language barriers. We can address these issues, but this is dependent on whether providers interpret Feltag as a spur to learning innovation or a tick list to fulfil inspection and funding criteria.

While many providers welcome the recommendations, many are concerned that they cannot fulfil the conditions, in particular the mandate of 10 per cent wholly-online provision in every publicly-funded learning programme from 2015/16 with incentives to increase this to 50 per cent by 2017/18.

There is a danger that, in the rush to 'tick the box', some providers publish more PDFs and poorly-constructed online learning courses, neglecting quality, inclusion and innovation.

Many providers already have creative development strategies which could be adapted and replicated more widely. For example, in Milton Keynes College, offender learners create online resources, and many tutors support their learners to produce their own content Web 2.0 technologies and applications.

Some providers support the development of tutor-created content, with tools such as Google's Oppia, allowing them to create interactive online educational activities with immediate, personalised feedback.

Others focus on 'curated not created', identifying useful content from the vast amount already published, making them accessible and contextualising it to support specific learning outcomes.

Open Educational Resources (OER) permit their free use and re-purposing. They include courses, course materials, modules, learning

> ❝ There is a danger that, in the rush to 'tick the box', some providers publish more PDFs and poorly constructed online learning courses

objects, textbooks, streaming videos, tests or software. There is a strong rationale for their use to produce cost effective online content.

To support this, the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (Niace) has published Maths Everywhere, a professionally developed maths app for adults, under Creative Commons and Open Source licenses, which allows providers to re-use, re-contextualise and re-purpose.

Replicating this approach would increase sector access to stimulating online learning content while decreasing development costs.

Niace has long supported the use of technology to widen access, participation and achievement in adults learning.

Feltag offers the opportunity to put these ideals into practice, but we will only achieve this if we foster and support a culture of true innovation and sharing. As we enter the era of 'the Internet of Things', the world as we know it will undergo further and dramatic changes.

To keep pace with that change we must rethink how technology can help more adults to learn throughout their lives.

DAWN BUZZARD
LEARNING TECHNOLOGIES ADVISER, EDUCATION AND TRAINING FOUNDATION

Picking up the Feltag gauntlet

The Education and Training Foundation is aiming to help the FE and skill sector keep pace with technology with a number of works streams, says Dawn Buzzard.

The Further Education Learning Technology Action Group (Feltag) has certainly thrown down the gauntlet to the education and training sector.

Perhaps the most attention-grabbing recommendation is to mandate 10 per cent wholly online delivery by 2015, rising to 50 per cent by 2017 for publicly-funded learning programmes.

Add to this the idea of 'learning presence' rather than 'physical attendance' and we have not only a series of funding recommendations but the prospect of radical changes to teaching, learning and assessment methodologies which will significantly impact on the role of teachers and trainers and challenge leadership teams to prepare and support them.

The education and training sector is not totally unprepared for these changes.

In my last college, vocational courses were already using technologies to underpin learning.

Hair and beauty students and joinery students were both using college created video and recording snippets of their own to learn techniques, reviewing the steps as often as they liked, maximising their time in the salon or workshop as they didn't need to wait for tutor input.

Teachers and trainers were using Google communities to collaborate and Google Docs to facilitate quicker, trackable feedback to learners.

Our recent sector consultation came across numerous excellent examples, including learning technology play pits for educators and linking up alumni with current students using web conferencing, but the sector as a whole is not yet using these technologies consistently.

The foundation is responding proactively both to the sector's concerns and Feltag's challenges.

We recently announced a tender to secure a delivery partner to run a series of provider-led projects.

This programme of work will focus on four key themes — supporting governing bodies, boards, leaders and managers to implement effective learning technologies strategies; enhancing of teachers', trainers' and assessors' confidence and expertise in using learning technologies; encouraging

> ❝ The sector as a whole is not yet using these technologies consistently across the full range of courses and training on offer

collaborative arrangements between teaching and technical teams that lead to the excellent technical support focused on further improving teaching, learning and outcomes for learners; building education and employer collaborative partnerships to further improve access to industry standard technologies.
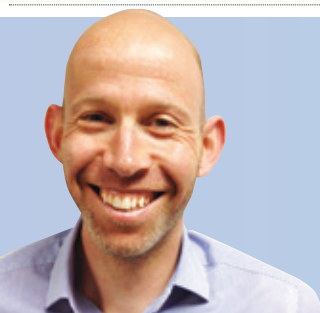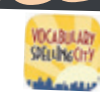
A competition for the provider-led projects will launch in May. Partnerships involving different provider types including employers and or small e-learning providers will be particularly welcomed.

Those interested in the competition should look out for our strategic consultation report due to be published next month or follow us on Twitter @ ET_Foundation for regular updates.

A second tender was launched this month for a project to embed a learning technology self-assessment methodology for the whole education and training sector called Review and Planning for Technology in Action. It will also respond to the Feltag recommendation to raise the profile of a self-assessment tool, and help providers and leadership teams build a strong understanding of where they are now and both plan and take action to build capacity and capability for their organisations digital future.

EXPERTS

SHANE CHOWEN

**POLICY OFFICER,
INSTITUTE FOR LEARNING**

Learning technology in FE — the revolution or evolution?

The future of FE will not just be one in which learners are aided to use technology. It will, explains Shane Chowen, also be one in which learners enter FE with a repertoire of technological skills that the sector must be ready to harness.

Learning technology has the potential to revolutionise the way that we teach, train and learn.

Having been involved in the Further Education Learning Technology Action Group (Feltag), and as a learner representative working with Becta, I have seen how talented teachers use learning technology effectively, to tailor the learning experience, include a huge range of new and transferable skills and, crucially, widen participation in learning.

But the conversation about learning technology has, for me, always been blighted by inconsistency, caution and sometimes resistance.

The Feltag report published at the beginning of the month offers some inspiring and challenging ideas for the sector, and the reactions have ranged from extremely enthusiastic to somewhat cynical.

We are not all starting from the same place when it comes to our understanding of what learning technology can offer teachers, trainers and the learners of today and the future.

Time is running out though for a coherent and deliverable learning technology strategy that has the backing of cash and capital, and the commitment of sector leaders. If you look at the new national curriculum for schools, and some of the changes to the computing curriculum in schools not subject to the national curriculum, you will see that the entire post-16 sector is facing a generation of future learners with computing skills and abilities, and in turn expectations for their future education. We must be ready for this.

In key stage three, for example, pupils should be taught to "use two or more programming languages, at least one of which is textual, to solve a variety of computational problems; make appropriate use of data structures; design and develop modular programs that use procedures or functions".

Just think about the opportunities when the FE learners of the future come to us with these kinds of skills: the solutions that can be found in vocational areas, new ways that project work can be designed and assessed, and the additional value that apprentices and work-based learners can offer their employers from their time in our sector.

The Feltag recommendation that perhaps drew the most discussion was that there should be some kind of target for the proportion of a programme delivered online: 10 per cent in 2015/16 to 50 per cent by 2017/18, with a caveat that this will not be possible with certain programmes or suitable for some learners. I believe that plenty of teachers would say they are probably already at that 10 per cent mark.

Institute for Learning's recent research on the implementation of 16 to 19 study programmes shows that learning technology is increasingly being used throughout the learner journey and that elements and techniques such as initial assessment, exam preparation, portfolio evidence and some formative assessment processes are already partly or fully online or using learning technology in some way.

The FE teaching and training profession has always evolved to meet the changing needs of society, learners, employers and our communities. What we now need is that coherent and deliverable strategy providing teaching and learning professionals with the tools, training and space to learn, grow, experiment and deliver.

Members of Feltag were charged with reporting radical and innovative ideas to the skills minister. It is now his turn to be radical and innovative in the government's response.
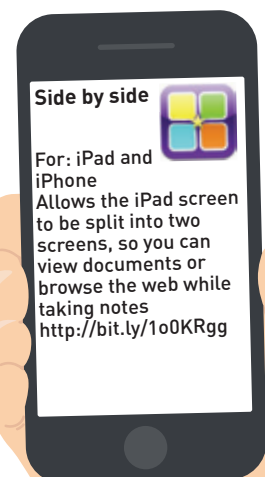
Side by side

For: iPad and iPhone
Allows the iPad screen to be split into two screens, so you can view documents or browse the web while taking notes
http://bit.ly/1o0KRgg

JAYNE STIGGER

**HEAD OF MATHS AND SCIENCE (HE)
AT NORTH EAST SURREY COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY (NESCOT)**

Visualising today's technology in action

The technology to aid learning is there, but is it being used in the right way, asks Jayne Stigger.

The Further Education Learning Technology Action Group (Feltag) made many sensible recommendations in its recent report.

Some are longer term goals but recommendations one, two and four [see page 3] are fundamental to improving maths learning and employability.

Adopting these Feltag recommendations is an opportunity for the government to truly improve standards of maths education. The sector must keep abreast of change.

Students need to use technology in maths the way they use technology in real life; in sticking to the old GCSE mantra and introducing weaker qualifications alongside to try to boost level two

> **There are so many ways to teach maths with technology**

achievement, everyone is cheated.

Our students are a generation who have never been 'offline', have always been 'connected' and use technology the way we breathe.

Maths should be taught in a way that reflects this; to engage, stimulate and entice the learner yes, more importantly, to reflect the way maths is used in the world.

Business, research and employers expect digital literacy as well as mathematical fluency — so why not combine them?

Every day they use Google, but do they understand the algebra behind a search engine?

Appreciate the value of calculating the discount on items they buy, of comparing energy prices in their first flat, how to apply ratios of sand and gravel, bulbs for planting, chemicals for making plastic and drug ratios for patients' weight? Often, no; but they do have a grade C GCSE.

Students should be encouraged to visualise their calculations, learn how to apply that calculation to other problems, not just to get the right answers. Technology can do this.

There are so many ways to teach maths with technology: avatars, robotics, video problems, Skype, Voocs [Vocational open online courses], Google hangouts, chatrooms, collaborative places, apps, IWBs [interactive whiteboards], Moocs [Massive open online courses], Socrative, simulations, mobiles, iPads, tablets, programmes which allow a student to manipulate curves and equations to demonstrate the relationship, so they could design a new car or new road surface.

Solving real problems in a visual, interactive, collaborative way replicates issues that will be faced in employment.

Dry, sequential, rote learning without context combined with 'teaching to the test' can only produce exam passes; we need to produce students who can apply their learning.

Let's ensure that any curriculum review does not hinder the use of digital technology in teaching, learning and assessment of regulated qualifications; let's work with awarding bodies and review the maths curriculum, build technology into it, develop a qualification that will allow our students to be employable, mathematically literate, digital experts.

The government owes our students the right to mathematical literacy, to be employable, to be taught this fundamental subject in a way that reflects the world we live in, not one that has suede patches on its elbows and chalk in its back pocket.

Maths education is too important to be stuck in the 1960s — how can we continue to allow them to walk out of a lesson, log onto their smart phone and yet still not have the basic maths needed to decide which contract to take out?

Being open to the potential of learning technology

Colleges, schools, universities and libraries around the world marked Open Education Week with events, seminars and webinars between March 10 and 15.

Open Education Week was coordinated by the OpenCourseWare Consortium, an association of hundreds of institutions and organizations around the world dedicated to promoting open education.

This year was the third time this international annual event, celebrating the power of open access educational resources, was held.

OpenCourseWare Consortium director of communications and community Meena Hwang (pictured) said it had been the most successful year yet.

"We've had people contacting us to hold their own event from all around the world — we've had web traffic from 158 different countries, with people signing up in more than 150 languages," she said.

"It was individuals and organisations staging both online and offline events — our role wasn't so much to organise the week as to co-ordinate and promote the different events."

Unfortunately, UK FE had very little involvement in the project this year although Nigel Ecclesfield, head of change implementation support programmes at Jisc, said he hoped that would change next year.

"The reason that's come up time and again in the Feltag studies is that the ability for providers to release staff for conferences and research is quite limited at the moment, and while government offers capital funding for activity what the sector feels it really wants now is the release for people to undertake development activity," he said.

"We were hoping to have a group of projects presenting at this year's conference but weren't able to pull them together but we've got very strong policies on supporting Open Education Resources and open access and we're just in the process of finalising the grant projects for next year."

From Mooc workshops in Delft to lectures on using ICT to teach physics in Indonesia, creating Open Education Resources (OERs) in ten steps or fewer in Canada, and using and reusing OERs in Southampton, as well as webinars on how to introduce them to classrooms or libraries, the sheer scale of the geography of the events meant there was almost always an event going on somewhere in the world.

Many of the events were geared towards helping educators to develop and use OERs, but there were also events to help people access them for use in their own lives.

"We had a library in Romania which was inviting local people in to find out more about the open education resources they could access, but then most the events were available as webcasts too," said Ms Hwang.

It is difficult to gauge who is using OERs, as their open format means people are rarely required to sign up to use the resources, so relatively little data can be gathered.

But, said Ms Hwang, resources are primarily used by teachers and independent learners.

"Teachers and lecturers want new and different ways to explain things to their students, and then sometimes more able students go looking for OERs themselves if they feel they're not being stretched enough — or if they don't quite understand

something," she said. "And then there are people who'll do a little bit of learning from home and that'll give them enough courage to sign up for a course and go back into education, or to do some more training and get a better job."

The profile of open access education is slowly growing, said Ms Hwang, and she thinks that is why this year's Open Education Week was so successful.

"The last two years it's been a lot of work to get the event out there, to promote it and get people involved," she said.
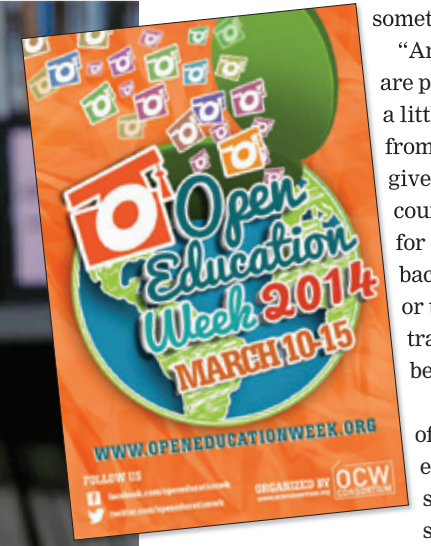
"This year we've had so many people coming to us with ideas and events that they want to put on, it's been really interesting to see how it's taken off."

Next year's event could be even bigger, if Mr Ecclesfield has anything to do with it.

"One of my ambitions is to make sure that we have a strong presence through our projects at Open Education Week next year," he said.

"The interest is there for the sector, it's about trying to get the conditions right so people can participate, and Jisc has a role to play to move things along.

"Our view is that OERs are major way forward if we meet all the challenges."

Evernote

For: iPhone, iPad, Andriod
Web service that links notes from the computer and iPhone, iPad or Android device whether they are text, audio or images. Store them on one device and they will automatically update across your others
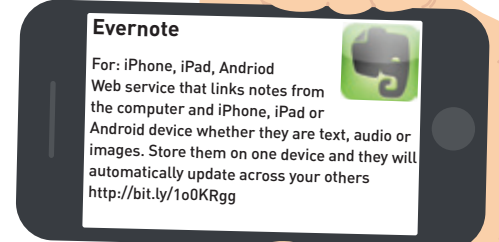http://bit.ly/1o0KRgg

What is Open Education?

Open Education Resources (OER) refers to educational resources, available online that are free to access. But crucially, they must also have an open license, which means they can be shared, copied, modified and redistributed freely (although normally the original author is acknowledged). This might be a video, a set of slides, a lesson plan, a worksheet — anything that can be used to help with the teaching and learning process.

For more details …

www.openeducationweek.org
www.oercommons.org
www.jisc.ac.uk/publications/programmerelated/2013/Openeducationalresources.aspx
www.open.edu/openlearn

E-learning resources from Tribal

As a leading technology organisation Tribal can offer a wide portfolio of online learning resources, packed with high-quality, rich vocational content.

Gain4Work

Our range of personal development courses, produced in collaboration with ASDAN, are designed to provide learners with short courses as part of their Study Programme. They cover a range of areas, including careers, finance, nutrition and enterprise.

The Business Game

This visually engaging, educational game experience is ideal for learners following GCSE or an equivalent qualification in business or a related subject. 'Playing' the role of someone starting a new manufacturing company, learners will work through five 'stages' and be introduced to key business concepts such as pricing, marketing and sales.

ExperienceWorks

This innovative game is a perfect solution for helping learners to gain virtual work experience as part of their Study Programme or Traineeship. Learners enter a rich graphic interface of a business park environment and choose from a range of industries to apply for a work experience placement.

GoLearn

Endorsed by NCFE, GoLearn is a bespoke Functional Skills solution comprising full learner journeys for English and maths, as well as an ICT initial assessment.

GoLearn+

GoLearn+ combines all the features of Tribal's standard GoLearn solution with online support from our team of specialist English and maths tutors.

We can also offer a range of online VRQs on our VLEs, Trained4Work and EnrichZone. Filled with user-friendly and fully interactive content, each nationally accredited programme is presented in bite-sized modules allowing learners to undertake their learning in manageable amounts.

The functionality of Trained4Work and EnrichZone give providers access to instant tracking and reporting of learner progress. At the end of each course, learners complete an online assessment which is saved within the system via Tribal's Assessment Player. This enables marking and feedback to be undertaken online, saving time for both learners and tutors.

Trained4Work

- Principles of Business and Administration
- Contact Centre Operations
- Principles of Sales
- Customer Service Knowledge
- Equality and Diversity

EnrichZone

- Sexual Health Awareness
- Learning to Learn
- Safeguarding in a Learning Environment
- Exercise Studies

"Being able to work online really suits me, it's a very convenient way of learning. It's easy to use, you can log in wherever you are and the work is available instantly.

"I have nothing but praise for the system, it's a superb way of learning and I would recommend it to anyone."

Paul J Abbott, online learner, Brockenhurst College

For more information and to request a demo of Tribal's online resources, please contact:
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