Evaluating Practice-based Learning and Teaching in Art and Design

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Abstract

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The University of the Arts London is host to the Creative Learning in Practice Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CLIP CETL), which has funded a number of small course-based evaluative and developmental projects. These projects have been designed by course tutors in conjunction with the CLIP CETL team, who are evaluating them to better understand and extend the pedagogies of practice-based teaching and learning. Practice-based learning is a way of conceptualising and organising student learning which can be used in many applied disciplinary contexts. Such pedagogies we argue are founded on the claim that learning to practice in the creative industries requires engagement with ***authentic activities in context*** (Lave and Wenger 1991, Wenger 2000).

This short paper will describe some of the initial evaluation and research activities in two colleges; identify and define practice-based activities in the context of the courses where the research is being carried out; identify emerging pedagogic frameworks; and discuss implications for further development.

Activities identified in the projects undertaken include:
- Opportunities to develop students' direct contact with industry
- Simulating work-based learning in the University
- Event-based learning
- Enhancing professional practice and PPD

The authors are seeking to elicit, analyse and evaluate what is often implicit in practitioner-teachers, and the experience of developing pedagogies for extending practice-based learning. We will be theorising from statements made by practitioners in semi-structured interviews and evidence provided in progress reporting from the project teams.

Introduction

In January 2005 Chelsea College of Art and Design (CCAD) and London College of Fashion (LCF), constituent colleges of the University of the Arts London, were designated as a Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (UAL) in recognition of excellent practice-based teaching and learning within the art, design and media sector. The Creative Learning in Practice Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CLIP CETL) is one of 74 Centres for Excellence in Teaching and Learning throughout England and was established with £4.5 million of funding over 5 years from the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE).

The CLIP CETL approach to its activities targets the development of scholarship and research into learning and teaching through working with tutors and students, building on excellent practice in areas linking work-related learning in the creative industries and Personal Development Planning (PDP). The aims of the CLIP CETL programmes are:

- To identify, evaluate and disseminate effective practice-based teaching and learning in the context of the creative industries
- To embed the scholarship of learning and teaching into the colleges and the University, better to inform our practice with students
- To reward teacher/practitioners for excellence, for pedagogic research and for scholarly reflection on their practice
- To exploit exchange of experiences between education and practice in the creative industries to enhance the student experience
- To integrate the student voice into the processes of reflection, development of learning and dissemination of creative learning in practice
- To promote an environment to innovate and take risks to improve the student experience within the context of learning and teaching in the creative industries

In addition to a capital spend on a range of equipment and the creation of careers development and audio-visual support posts, CLIP CETL activities focus on the establishment of a pedagogic research culture and increasing the value and status accorded to teaching in the UAL. A Rewards for Excellence programme has been established in the form of support for professional development of teaching practice and pedagogic enquiry specifically for the course teams and staff at CCAD and LCF identified as having excellent practice and cited in the original bid for CETL funding. Students currently benefit from collaborative and consultancy projects, simulated work placements and event-based learning supported by practitioner teachers, enabling engagement with authentic activities in a professional context and gaining first hand experience in a range of disciplines. The aims of the Rewards programme are to provide course teams with the opportunities to enhance or explore the nature of their pedagogic practice and to evaluate their particular success in practice-based learning in context. The outcomes of these projects are to be disseminated in order that they may contribute to a wider understanding of teaching and learning and inform practice in Art and Design in Higher Education.

This paper discusses the theoretical approach to learning adopted by the CLIP CETL and reports on the progress and outcomes of the activities as at the end of the summer term 2006. At this stage several but not all of the eleven projects have completed their activities or are near completion and are writing reports, so limited summative evaluation data is available. However, there is ample opportunity for

discussion of evaluative processes and frameworks, illuminated by case studies and narratives, and identification of further work and directions.

Practice-based Learning – Definitions and Rationale

Practice-based learning has long been part of Art and Design education, although not always explicitly linked to curriculum outcomes. At the University of the Arts, London and historically in the wider Art and Design education field the majority of the teaching staff are currently or have been practitioners in their field and offer a range of approaches and experience in teaching and learning. The expertise of these practitioners is highly valued, particularly when combined with opportunities for students to learn and gain experience in a professional context, often referred to as practice-based learning. The recently created Practice-based Professional Learning Centre (PBPL) at The Open University offers a useful generic definition of practice-based learning:

> *By 'practice-based learning' we mean learning which arises out of, or is focussed on, working practice in a chosen job, voluntary work, career, or profession. This encompasses courses and learning activities which are linked to formal work placements, those which require the application of course ideas in a work setting and those which build on experience gained in a work setting. (PBPL website, http://cetl.open.ac.uk/pbpl/, 2006)*

'Practice-based' is sometimes used interchangeably with 'work-based' learning. Boud et al (2001, p 4) suggest that work-based learning brings together 'universities and work organisations to create new learning opportunities in workplaces' (p4). Ives et al (2005, p 3) offer a similar definition:

> *… work-based learning is defined as incorporating a range and variety of student engagement with employers including industrial placement and live industry focused projects.*

The characteristics of work-based learning Boud et al (2001) go on to describe (partnership with organisations, learners are actual employees, work is the curriculum, projects are undertaken directly in the workplace, work outcomes rather than learning outcomes as the criteria for assessment) are not specifically the case for most art and design subjects, where the college studio rather than a commercial enterprise provides the context for practice-based learning and activities. A defining condition of the formal educational environment is that assessments are linked to the curriculum.

Lawson's (2004) definition (in Ives et al, 2005) is less limiting in that it includes work in a simulated work environment as work-based, along with actual work-based learning in a workplace and working in an educational setting on live briefs or case studies prepared by employers, industry and/or education. This is relevant in the context of the creative industries, where opportunities for placements are decreasing as production and design become sited away from the UK.

Barrie (1999) suggests that:
> *In essence, professional practice involves some degree of learning in the context of actual work experiences rather than the context of the university classroom or laboratory. The 'work' involved is not necessarily restricted to paid employment activities but is typically drawn from the range of work contexts graduates of the degree may be expected to encounter.*

The studio is a work context fine artists may be expected to encounter in professional practice. It might be interesting to note a Fine Art tutor's conception of practice- or work-based learning:

> *I think it's learning through doing… it's that 'hands-on-ness', that dealing with the practicalities of the subject and dealing with the fear of the subject but in practice. So no longer sort of quietly dreamily sort of dreaming up projects but the nitty-gritty of it and struggling with those fundamental aspects of practice... It doesn't matter what it is, what you're grappling with something, with materials... whether it's, you know, "How does an audience encounter your work?" Dealing with all that, that's what I think it is.*

> (from an interview with Reward project staff)

In this conception of learning in practice the students are conceived as learning through acting as fine artists. Although generic definitions do not indicate or imply any underlying pedagogic frameworks or assumptions about the way learning and teaching will take place in work-based learning. However, Boud (2001b, p47) suggests:

> *Work-based learning not only focuses on the exigencies of work. It also provides an excellent example of a learner-centred approach to the curriculum. It could not be envisaged in any other way to meet its objectives. The focus is what students wish to learn, not what is provided for them to learn.*

In addition to operating on assumptions that learner-centred learning through practice is a good thing, further rationale for practice-based learning comes from a variety of national, industry and institutional drivers.

The DFES (2003), in *The Future of Higher Education*, states:
> *In a fast-changing and increasingly competitive world, the role of higher education in equipping the labour force with appropriate and relevant skills, in stimulating innovation and supporting productivity and in enriching the quality of life is central.*

Ball (2003) suggests changes in the workplace, ie trends toward 'portfolio' careers, are not new to Art and Design graduates. Harvey, Locke and Morey (2002) in Ball (2003, p8) suggest that to be able to manage these changes, graduates need a set of desirable skills gained through learning in practice:

- *Interactive attributes: communication, interpersonal and teamwork*
- *Personal attributes: intellect and problem-solving; analytic, critical and reflective ability; willingness to learn and continue learning; flexibility, adaptability and risk-taking… An understanding of the world of work, some commercial awareness, and an appreciation of work culture.*

The Draft Strategy for Student Learning at the UAL (2006) supports the University's Medium Term aim of supporting students to achieve their intellectual and creative potential and enhance student satisfaction, retention, and employability. Ball (2003, p27) suggests that the pursuit of creative practice is not necessarily incompatible with employability. Her main finding in researching current practice in encouraging employability is that:

> "…*it is not appropriate to separate employability-related projects from other learning and teaching initiatives, rather they should – in line with employability thinking – integrate within the student learning experience. There should be a direct alignment between employability learning for all and institutional strategies.*"

To summarise, we have introduced some definitions of practice-based and work-based learning and teaching, and how they might be conceived in the context of art and design education and the creative industries. We have suggested that practice-based learning has a long history in Art and Design, evolving from the Apprentice/Master model in which novices learn to *be* experts *from* experts. How-ever, historically in this model the power and knowledge is vested in the expert. In socio-cultural theories of learning, the role of the expert is conceptualised as one of facilitator, enabler and co-learner (ie a reflective tutor/practitioner). Further, peer learning, exchange of ideas and support are encouraged, which Boud (et al 2001, 2001) suggests contributes to educational outcomes and has social and cultural benefits. Our theoretical position in regard to pedagogic issues and the value of learning through engagement with authentic activities in context will be discussed more fully in the following section.

Socio-Cultural Perspectives on Learning and Teaching

The CLIP CETL approach is underpinned by socio-cultural perspectives on learning and teaching, based on the assumption of learning taking place through engaging with authentic activities in context.

Tusting and Barton (2006, p13) suggest that social constructivism theorises that
> "*…interaction with other people and cultural artefacts, not just new ideas, is crucial for learning.'*

That this takes place in an unavoidable and historically produced context is supported by theories of Situated Cognition. (Lave and Wenger 1991; Chaiklin and Lave 1993; Lave 1996) The nature of engagement in the world is one in which learning is a central condition of everyday life. However, in a formal learning situation, such as those provided in higher education, learning is often seen as something which is specific to certain kinds of knowledge, most often associated with transmission, declarative or embrained knowledge ((Blackler 1995). In art and design it is the procedures of becoming a practitioner which are important, knowing how and knowing that within a context of a professional practice beyond the confines of a formal learning environment. The concept of progressive inclusion through legitimate peripheral participation (Lave and Wenger 1991) in the practice is a more sympathetic way to view our students' learning. Further elaboration of this theory by Wenger (Wenger 1998) stresses the importance of developing an identity, learning the ways of being and behaving in a particular community of practice (CoP).

Wenger argues that learning has to consist of a regime of competence allied to a context of meaning in order to be anything other than a mere short-lived performance. Tennant and Pogson (1995, cited in Tusting and Barton 2006, p16-17) suggest that real-life situations require problem-finding as well as problem-solving skills, often in conjunction with others:

> "*A significant point made here is that it is important to maintain a distinction between expertise and as an outcome and the acquisition of expertise as a process. It is by initially behaving as novices that experts finally develop expert-type behaviour.*"

The theories of '*legitimate peripheral participation'* (LPP) in '*Communities of Practice*' (CoPs) (Lave and Wenger 1991, Wenger 1998) extend the experiential and reflective factors and situate learning in a social context where *learning to be* as well as *learning how* takes place.

In 'legitimate peripheral participation' the learner participates in actual practice, for example fashion design or fine art, but in a limited way. Limitations are reduced as full participation develops. Lave and Wenger (1991) suggest that *'participation frameworks are structured expert performance in a system'* (p17), but the kind of system and structure needs consideration and may vary. That these engagements can take place in a variety of settings is evidenced by the range of Art and Design disciplines and contexts represented by the Rewards activities.

Whether participation is in a group or an individual activity, formal context (eg course of study leading to formal qualification) or informal (eg students discussing a course event over coffee) learning takes place in an immediate or wider social setting, which can be described as a Community of Practice (CoP). Wenger (1998) suggests CoPs are characterised by

1. ***Joint Enterprise.*** The members of a CoP have some kind of shared task and purpose in common. This is evident to the members of the CoP.
2. ***Mutual Engagement.*** The members of a CoP actively engage with one another, for example to exchange knowledge and ideas, achieve goals, clarify understanding and negotiate roles and tasks.
3. ***Shared Repertoire.*** The members of a CoP share a history of a practice which may include methods, tools, techniques, language, stories and behaviour patterns. There is a cultural context for the work. The repertoire may change as the community or practice changes.

Communities of practice are not centred on traditional student/teacher or apprentice/master relationships. However, Lave and Wenger (1991 p21) suggest LPP is a form of apprenticeship in that the apprentice learns to understand the master's performance through "*engaging in the performance in congruent ways*" and the master '*provides for growth on the part of the student'.*

Shreeve (2006) suggests that the emphasis on mutual engagement has

> "*profound implications for changing the position of the 'expert' tutor, from one of centrality to a position of supporter and co-participant in practice.'*

Conversely, implications for learners are that in order to fully participate they must actively engage in the community and be accountable to the enterprise. In this approach, the CoP not only perpetuates the culture and practices of the community, but has the opportunity for all members to learn, grow and change.

Tusting and Barton (2006) suggest that learners are already engaging in social practice in their everyday lives, and these are implicated in situated models of learning, including Communities of Practice. Lea (2005) suggests that students in higher education are simultaneously members of several CoPs, often with conflicting cultures and use of language. These should be taken into consideration in negotiation of meaning and have further implications for success and retention, for example in developing valid modes of assessment. Barton and Hamilton (2005) argue that Wenger (1998) overlooks issues of power and gender which may affect

full participation in CoPs. Alternative models based on the concept of a 'Speech Community' (Creesse, 2005) or 'Affinity Space' (Gee 2005) take issues of language, internationality and 'hybrid' situations into consideration and offer potential additional dimensions to CoPs. Research into the emotional relationships in the studio (Austerlitz and Aravot 2002, Austerlitz 2006, in press) may also help to inform teaching practice.

Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle (1984) provides another model for how learning may take place in a cycle of action (practice) and reflection. Much has been written supporting and critiquing the use of Kolb's cycle in a variety of disciplines and contexts and it is not the intention of this paper to examine this in depth. However, Wright and Hearn (2006, in press) suggest that experiential learning and reflective practice (Schön 1983) are intuitively implicit in Art and Design education and seek to make this explicit in their recent study. While providing a framework for consideration, the experiential learning cycle does not fully take into consideration the structure and systems (ie social context) in which Lave and Wenger (1991) theorise learning takes place.

In the context of practice-based learning there will always be issues around determining what is 'authentic' and conflicts between employer and educational criteria. However much authentic contexts aspire to emulate 'everyday life', ultimately this will be subjective and down to individual's to engage with based on their own experience. Further, defining communities of practice and reconciling sometimes conflicting demands and cultures of multiple membership are discussions for further debate. However, legitimate peripheral participation in communities of practice offers a reasonable model for providing contexts in which to understand and learn from engagement with social practices.

The Rewards for Excellence Programme

Background
In the CLIP CETL's first year, course teams that were previously identified in the CETL funding bid as having excellent approaches to practice-based learning were invited to submit proposals to initiate and/or extend learning and teaching projects and to develop evaluative approaches to understanding:
- underlying and emerging pedagogies and assumptions
- what learning was taking place or how and why learning was taking place?
- criteria for success – why students found particular approaches successful?
- how the activity outcomes mapped to the needs/interests of students and demands of the course

We were also interested in identifying further learning opportunities and potential for adaptations and dissemination to other courses, college and UAL communities.

Rewards Projects
The Rewards for Excellence projects were conceived to meet the CLIP CETL aims *'To identify, evaluate and disseminate effective practice-based teaching and learning in the context of the creative industries' and 'To reward teacher/practitioners for excellence, for pedagogic research and for scholarly reflection on their practice.'*

The projects are described briefly below with an overarching descriptive category positioning them in either understanding or extending the pedagogic practice of excellence:

Understanding industry/curriculum links:

1. What do we have that industry wants?

This project is based upon the notion of connectivity - that through certain practices formulated within graphic design communication the course has aligned itself to the needs of innovators within the industry for student placements and 'live' briefs. The aims are to map the fit between the curricula and outside agencies and try to articulate what particular practices within the course have engendered this match.

Improving industry/curriculum links

1. Making the Fashion Industry Visible

A project to visually contextualise the world in which fashion design, production and management courses are situated. A fashion product will be followed on a critical path from conception to sales. The aim of the project is develop a series of interactive DVDs, which demonstrate the practical aspects of the fashion industry to large groups of students.

2. Using Consultancy as a tool for Teaching and Learning

This project investigates what the practical and educational elements are that lead to a successful Fashion Consultancy Project (FCP), where the students participate in live consultancy projects with real world clients. The results will be shared in a report that will act as a guideline to students, tutors and clients. A DVD for use by staff and students will demonstrate key stages in the FCP process.

3. Professional Companies Project

This project works with students to involve them in the preparation and planning of an industrial project. Historically the course has had a stand at 'Indigo', a trade fair for textiles/fashion in Paris. This is being developed from a tutor-centred activity to a sustainable student learning activity in which the whole course becomes involved and will act as mentors to the following year's cohort, passing on to them their compiled resources and experiences for them to build on and evolve. This will provide key PPD skills development in learning how textile practitioners manage professional participation in such events.

4. Increasing student opportunities for collaborative learning with industry partners

This project is working in collaboration with the Fashion Business Resource Studio (FBRS) at LCF to develop the opportunities for students on this large course to work directly with companies on negotiated projects. Company mentors will work directly with students in their final term, developing a new way for this course to provide additional work based learning experiences, extending the current excellent practice of simulated practice-based learning.

Improving the way students become a practitioner

1. A digital resource to develop students' visual research for textiles

The key objective of this project is to inspire and enrich the teaching and learning of visual research processes for textile design students at undergraduate levels 1 and 2. Students are increasingly recruited from a wide range of previous experience, and frequently lack confidence in primary

research skills - drawing, painting, the use of colour and mixed media. The project will develop ways to incorporate the Blackboard® VLE 'organically' to encourage the use of primary visual research for textile students. The development of blended learning – reinforced by practical experience - will help to instil and reinforce a wide range of approaches to the gathering of visual information.

2. Virtual Artschool: Collaborative E-Learning Projects

Online collaborative project with artists in the Occupied Palestinian Territories and Melbourne, Australia. The students will work with artists and students to exchange ideas and work as individuals and in groups collaboratively in the studio and online, in real time as well as asynchronously. The project examines the considerable potential e-learning has both within these projects and for Fine Art. The research will look at the different challenges and possibilities offered by synchronous and asynchronous collaboration, it will address the issue of individuality and creative expression in exploring the technology, and it will consider the use of the art school paradigm within a website that acts as a virtual community for artists.

3. Using the Cross-Discipline Research Topic Group to Enhance Theory and Practice

The project is looking at the research topic groups and monitoring the learning which takes place in the fluid structures of the groups, seeking to understand why some are very successful and others fail. Exploring the questions: What is being shared and how? How are collaborative connections made? How are groups formed? How are super-ordinate goals and collective actions formed? Why do particular groups of students appear to be problematic?

Improving the way students become a practitioner (with a focus on PPD):

1. Enhancement of Fine Art Professional Practice and PPD

Development of a programme to enhance employability skills in Fine Art with PG Certificate and MA level students. A programme of seminars with emerging artists/curators/gallerists etc plus supporting workshops to introduce students to ideas about 'survivability' as practicing artists after graduation.

2. Enhancing the first year tutorial

Enhancement of the induction/tutorial programme through linking PPD to course activities as part of the tutorial process. Emphasis on pastoral and support aspects of the student experience, but enabling the more abstract PPD learning outcomes to be linked to actual experiences raised in both formal and social learning situations.

3. Event-Based Learning

This project is aimed at developing opportunities for students to engage with exhibiting their work and to examine the learning element of student exhibitions, studying both self-initiated and the institutional exhibition opportunities across all years and groups of Fine Art BA. Further aims of this essentially student-led project are to develop independent learning and PPD.

The projects represent a wide range of contexts, experience, values and approaches to developing or extending PPD and learning in practice. The approach has been to build on current practice in existing course contexts and to explore practice-based learning in light of the teachers' conceptions of teaching and learning in relation to communities of practice and how/why they value what they are doing. They further sought to make explicit what is often implicit in learning and teaching in their contexts:

> *So… they're asked the question in the first place "What is consultancy?" We're then moving on and we're looking at historically by talking to tutors, industry and the previous (cohort)…"What made that a good consultancy? What did you learn out of it? Why did the tutor think it was a good consultancy? What does the client think made a good consultancy? What can we do?" And now we're moving onto how we can improve it "What can we do to make it better? So what recommendations would you work?"*

A challenge for the CETL team was to introduce the CLIP CETL approaches of student-centredness, authentic activities and linking education to industry and to encourage the teams to recognise the implicit and explicit pedagogies underpinning their own practice and how they aligned. For example, while the value and implementation of practice-based learning may be part of their practice, they might not appreciate or understand student-centred learning.

It is further evident from the projects that people don't talk about learning in theoretical terms and seldom refer to how their students learn:

> *I think to be fair we're possibly slightly maverick… we didn't ever sort of formulate a very specific set of initial objectives. This is exactly what we're attempting to, if you like, investigate. It was much more a process of responding to what we were doing as we went along which is how we're used to working anyway.*

And

> *I'm totally happy, it's really helpful, it's actually extremely helpful on a personal level to be, if you like, made to articulate these things. What I find slightly problematic is the notion that one might have to, if you like, engage on a level that I don't feel particularly sort of comfortable qualifying engaging on in terms of sort of the, if you like, the demonstrable learning and teaching.*

> (from interviews with Reward project staff)

Many staff were novice researchers and inexperienced in scholarly, reflective and evaluative processes. The previous quote highlights the problem of using academic learning and teaching language, or developing a discourse of teaching and learning as part of 'normal' more widespread practice in HE tutors. Whilst course directors and key team members were part of the initial exploration of the rewards projects most teams delegated the actual work or curriculum initiatives to part time team members who arguably had less experience, though in some cases were responsible for the specific aspect of the curriculum being developed or explored.

There are however examples of people who have engaged with the process in more theoretical ways:

F: *I don't know. I'm interested... I suppose the thing is that whenever anybody has mentioned pedagogy to me in the past I saw it as something that was sort of obstructive to learning and I saw it as something that was to teaching and I think that, you know, my opinion towards that has mellowed over the years and I've ... been on a few courses where teaching delivery has actually been discussed and I've found some of it useful. So my sort of initial disdain for theory that was actually about the practice of teaching as opposed to actually teaching itself has sort of waned over the years and I'm... actually quite interested in the possibilities of addressing how, I don't want to use the word knowledge transfer but...*

M: *How learning happens?*

F: *Yes*

F: *Obviously the pedagogy and the sort of me actually having to sort of – it's not something to be honest that I would choose to read as a matter of light reading and it's not something within my position that I would read anyway as such... I think that sort of information about the process of learning and the process of learning through social interaction is something that I'm quite keen to have a knowledge of.*

And

So we're looking now to produce this as a paper... and hence I mean the reading that I'm doing at the moment is reading around papers and reports and – but also researching where we might publish, aim to publish next year and where we might actually deliver this as conference.

(from interviews with Reward project staff)

The task of the CETL team was to support the rewards team in gaining knowledge of pedagogic theory and experience of applying research and evaluative approaches.

Although not explicitly modelled on a specific approach, the projects have mainly taken a reflective, action research approach, where they have made changes to existing practices and are evaluating the success of the changes. This approach can be defined as follows:

Action research is a form of collective self-reflective enquiry undertaken by participants in social situations in order to improve the rationality and justice of their own social or educational practices, as well as their understanding of those practices and the situations in which the practices are carried out. (Kemmis and McTaggart, 1988:pp 5-6)

from The Encyclopedia of Informal Education
http://www.infed.org/thinkers/et-lewin.htm

The term Action Research is attributed to Lewin, whose basic model (see figure 1 below) illustrates the framework emergent in many of the projects.
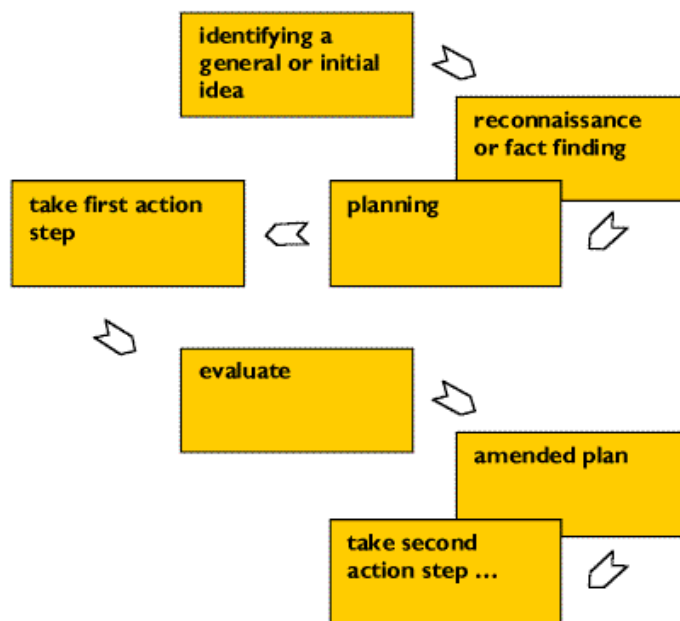
Figure 1. Adapted from Lewin's Model of Action Research

As pointed out earlier the projects build on existing practice, which provided the initial ideas. The next stage of 'reconnaissance or fact finding' involved a range of activities, for example investigating the process and practicalities of development of an instructional DVD (*Making the fashion industry visible*); investigating and establishing partnerships (*What do we have that industry wants, Increasing student opportunities for collaborative learning with industry partners, Virtual Artschool, Professional Companies Project, Using Consultancy as a tool for Teaching and Learning*); reflection on current practice, conceptions and learner needs; and building an understanding of socio-cultural perspectives.

Each project team produced a plan which set out the activities and evaluation processes. The wide range of activities is illustrated in the project descriptions and exemplified by the 'deliverables' and outcomes, including DVDs, artefacts and guides for use with future groups, art works, exhibitions, and virtual networks. Consideration of the roles of students and teachers in the learning process was reflected upon at the outset of the projects. Opportunities for students to engage with the process at various stages was analysed by the teams in addition to their participation in the learning activities. In the *Fashion Consultancy* and *Indigo* projects students were given responsibilities for planning and organising that were previously the domain of staff, and thus became acting practitioners in the process, although with guidance. However, students took control of other areas in unexpected ways, for example in the *Event-based Learning* project the plan was to use Blackboard as the main tool for communication and dissemination of materials. However, this was soon seen as limiting by the students as it was tutor controlled and they opted for the use of a WIKI, where any participant could contribute to and view resources.

This stage was also an opportunity for teacher reflection on their conceptions about learning and engagement with theory. Although there was an agreed framework of student-centred learning in a community of practice, approaches to the projects did

not always reflect this. Drew (2004) found this to be the case in research into teacher conceptions of practice-based learning. Tutors who report spending more time on industry related, 'real life' activities adopted a more student centred approach to their teaching. In our study some of the projects were conceived of from a tutor focused, content transmission viewpoint initially (Drew and Trigwell 2003; Drew 2004). For example the initial approach to *Making the Fashion Industry Visible* was content driven; adequate consideration was not given to what the students were going to *do* with the resource. This was in part due to inexperience of the tutors as to the possibilities of learning technologies. Later iterations of the project included more interactivity and student feedback was incorporated into the development process.

Conclusion
In this paper we have defined and provided a working rationale for practice-based learning, noting it's historic role in art and design education whilst re-examining the opportunities and situating it in a context of socio-cultural theory. In describing the projects and participants we have highlighted the tensions between creative practice, teaching practice and pedagogic research and explored some of the underlying assumptions and conceptions of learning and teaching.

There have been many challenges in the development of an evaluative framework for these projects. One challenge has been the clarification of what is being evaluated. We have not simply been trying to establish whether educational aims have been achieved but whether the approach is sound, and in what contexts. Although generally accepted as potentially having great educational benefit, evidence for the development of appropriate and effective practice-based learning in a specific curriculum is still emerging and requires further consideration.

As part of the process of developing an evaluative framework we must consider our own underlying assumptions and theories of learning, teaching and evaluation. In introducing the CLIP CETL approaches of student-centredness, authentic activities and linking education to industry are we imposing rather than encouraging course-based solutions?

Issues around appropriate methods of evaluation have arisen, particularly when being carried out by staff new to pedagogic research. Course teams and project participants have been conducting formative, continuous and summative evaluation of the project processes and outcomes using a range of methods including individual interviews, focus groups, case studies and reflection on the learning by staff and students and in some cases the materials and artefacts produced. It has been anticipated that student feedback would be sought in the evaluation processes, providing feedback for example on the usefulness and usability of electronic resources produced by the *Making the Fashion Industry Visible.*

An evidence base may evolve as the project outcomes are disseminated and adapted/introduced into other contexts. However, this is not in the initial scope of the projects. Debates are occurring in the wider education research arena about the usefulness and suitability of systematic, evidence-based research in education and on the other hand questioning the validity of reportage or narrative evidence. The outcomes of these projects may at some point contribute to a larger body of evidence that may be generalisable. However, taking into consideration the scope of the projects, the range of research experience and planning of the practitioners, and the local audience for the initial outcomes, a qualitative, narrative approach supported in some cases with quantitative data has been deemed adequate. Reports are still in progress but we are hoping to receive well-documented case studies including rich narratives and reflection.

We have asked the project teams to consider:

- Has the idea that you originally proposed changed? How? Why?
- Can you identify context-specific findings and outcomes? What are the generic ones? How can these be sign-posted for others to analyse and apply to their own contexts?
- What has doing this project changed about you and your practice?
- What are some of the underlying beliefs, values, assumptions operating in your project? eg, What do you understand about how students learn? How is this reflected in how the project is designed?
- What do we think the students need to know ('stuff' or 'how to do stuff')? What is worthwhile teaching/learning in your area? Why? How does this relate to employability?
- Can the projects be mapped to theory (eg of learning, teaching, activity etc)?
- Is the student experience at the heart of the project? What do you/we understand to be of value about the project? What is the benefit to students?
- How do you get the balance right about directed and non-directed support from tutors?

More specifically we need to examine:

- Non-participation: possible reasons for it; how to encourage participation; assuring equal opportunity/access
- Quality of simulations – how to achieve and recognise authenticity
- Alignment – with external 'working' world, assessment needs, student needs, institutional needs
- Encouraging thinking – lateral, out of the box (project members and students!)
- Effects of shifting roles and responsibilities and locus of control
- Teaching and learning strategies –Have they been properly considered? Do they match the philosophical point of view (eg if student-led learning is a good thing, are there opportunities for it to occur in the project? If not why?)
- Emotions affecting attitudes towards work and study
- Space – defining, using. Physical, emotional and virtual environments
- Work – how is it defined?
- Developing language in practice

Overall we need to be thinking about how the project outcomes both for staff and students are meeting the aims and objectives of the CLIP CETL and contribute to the wider debates and knowledge about learning in the creative industries at HE level through exploration of emerging pedagogies and evaluative methods and identification of areas for further development.

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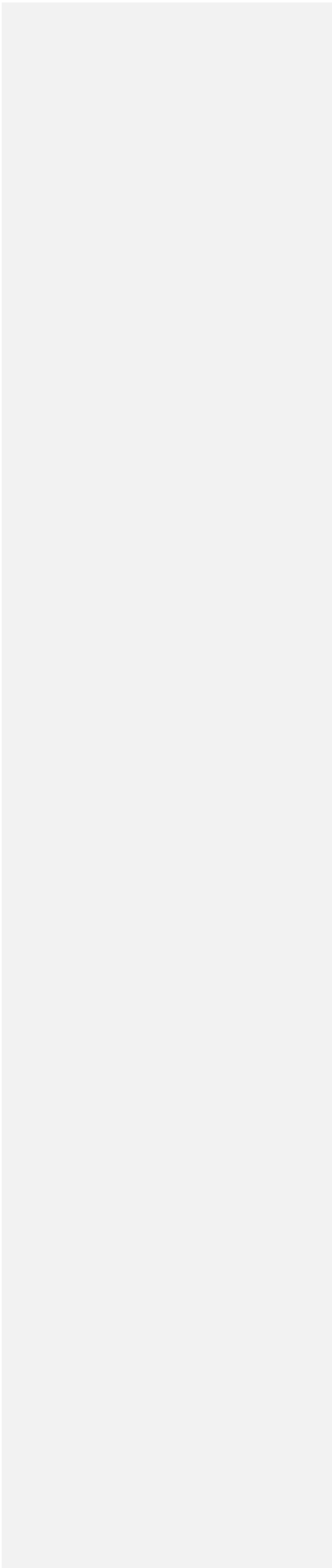
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