

JISC Grant Funding: e-Learning programme Embedding Benefits

Cover Sheet for Bids <i>(All sections must be completed)</i>			
Name of previously funded JISC project:		Peer Evaluation in Education Review (PEER)	
Name of Lead Institution:		University of Strathclyde	
Name of Proposed Project:		Learning by Reviewing	
Full Contact Details for Primary Contact:			
Name: Ms Catherine Milligan			
Position: Head of Learning Technology Enhancement			
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Address: University of Strathclyde, 16 Richmond Street Glasgow, G1 1XQ			
Name(s) of Project Partners(s) including JISC services, associations, etc (except commercial sector – see below)		JISC RSC (Grainne Hamilton, Advisor, e-Assessment) JISC CETIS (Sheila MacNeill, Assistant Director) Strathclyde Students Association, Rebecca Maxwell-Stewart (Vice President Education and Representation)	
This project involves one or more commercial sector partners NO		Name(s) of any commercial partner company(ies) n/a	
Length of Project:		12 months	
Project Start Date:		1 st May 2012	
Project End Date:		30 th April 2013	
Which category of funding are you submitting this proposal under?		A. Micro funding £5000 B. Single project C. Collaborative capacity building D. Take-up pilots	
Total Funding Requested from JISC:		£ 15,000	
Institutional Contribution:		£ 3,654	
Total Project Costs:		£ 18,654	
I have looked at the example FOI form at Appendix A and included an FOI form in this bid		YES (delete as appropriate)	
I have read the Funding Call and associated Terms and Conditions of Grant		YES (delete as appropriate)	
Summary Description			
Describe your proposed idea in 3 sentences			
This project will package and disseminate the findings of the PEER project by developing promotional material, briefing papers and a 'how-to' guide for those wishing to implement peer review in a classroom, department or institution. The resources will be evaluated by representative user stakeholders and by students. The project team will work with partners who have relevant experience to disseminate and share these resources and findings across UK HE and FE sectors.			

Proposal Form

1. Benefits and audience

What are the project benefits you wish to embed and who is the proposed audience?

The PEER project investigated the benefits of engaging students in peer review activities. In particular it piloted and evaluated the relative benefits of students (i) producing feedback on the work of peers and (ii) receiving feedback from peers on their own work. The results showed that these two different feedback processes result in qualitatively different learning benefits. These differences have never been reported before and they have profound implications for the design of feedback practices in HE and FE.

The main findings were that in producing feedback, students engage in acts of critical evaluation (of others' work), they actively exercise assessment criteria and they rehearse and reflect on their own understanding in order to produce a written response. These thinking skills, elicited and developed through feedback production, are valued in higher education but are not usually explicitly taught. Also, when students make judgements about the work of peers they inevitably compare that work against an internal representation of their own work. Hence reviewing inevitably results in students reflecting back on their own work, and using the feedback they generate from that comparison to update their own knowledge and understanding (e.g. 'when giving feedback on theirs, it gave me greater perception about my own work...by listening to my own advice'). Students also reported benefits from receiving reviews, but most believed that they learned more from giving feedback as this was a 'self-learning process'.

The PEER findings are very important from an employability perspective. In HE/FE the prime source of feedback is usually the teacher, whereas in employment settings feedback rarely comes from a single authoritative source. Rather, faced with multiple sources of feedback, the task is usually to evaluate, reconcile and respond to different and sometimes quite contradictory feedback perspectives. Also, in such settings, graduates will not just be consumers of feedback, they will also be producers: they will invariably be required to evaluate and comment on the work of others from a range of different perspectives. Arguably, these skills – interpreting multiple sources of feedback and producing feedback – are not being explicitly developed through higher education curricula. Peer feedback, if designed appropriately, can address these gaps.

The original outputs from the PEER project are available at www.reap.ac.uk/PEER.aspx However, many new findings from PEER have been produced since the project ended, with some written up in publications. The 'Learning by Reviewing' project, if funded, will package and disseminate the benefits and resources from the PEER project for those wishing to implement enhanced peer feedback practices across the HE/FE sector.

Who is the proposed audience?

This work is relevant to all HE and FE institutions. All institutions are concerned about the impact that the National Student Survey (NSS) has had upon student satisfaction, particularly in the area of feedback. Senior/middle managers wishing to enhance feedback practices within the context of the NSS or to roll-out peer feedback strategically will be provided with practical advice on how to encourage commitment to peer review processes within staff and student communities. Teachers/practitioners seeking to implement peer review and feedback will be provided with practical, 'how-to' guidance and advice relevant to their discipline. Student bodies seeking to proactively promote a wider range of feedback opportunities will benefit from resources created from the student perspective. Learning technology and educational development support staff will benefit from reusable resources for application in their own institutions.

2. Evidence

What evidence do you have of the interest/demand/need from other institutions?

Evidence of demand is reflected in the concern across the HE sector about feedback which is rated by students in the NSS as the aspect of their course that they are least satisfied with. Peer feedback offers new thinking about feedback, its purpose and complexity, and as such it will be of considerable interest across HE and FE. From a practical perspective, members of the PEER project team have made presentations in the UK (e.g. Greenwich, Strathclyde, Staffordshire) and Australia (Curtin, Swinburne, University of Queensland) where a great deal of interest has been shown in this topic. David Nicol has also provided webinars on this through the JISC RSC and for the projects involved in the JISC Assessment and Feedback programme and there was a high level of interest as reflected in the attendance and response to the events.

3. Deliverables

What are the proposed deliverables (please list outputs and outcomes)?

Outcomes

- Better understanding of the value and potential of peer feedback processes for learning amongst managers, academic staff, students and support staff across the FE and HE sector.
- A better understanding of how to design peer feedback activities for maximum benefit in the context of different disciplines across the HE and FE sector and how to support it using technology.
- An evaluation of the resources and materials produced to support the promotion and implementation of peer feedback in HE and FE by relevant stakeholders, including students, new and experienced academic staff and senior managers.

Outputs

- A '**how-to**' **guide** on the implementation of peer feedback within technology-based peer review scenarios, including how to bring the students on-board, the design decisions that need to be made and examples of different implementation approaches. This guide would include a conceptual framework to support implementation and a set of dimensions to inform design decisions. It would also include a set of 8 technology-based case examples of implementation spanning both numerate and text based disciplines. The guide would be web based and interactive and could lend itself to subsequent delivery as an infoKit.
- Development of **promotional materials** to 'sell' peer feedback as a new way of conceptualising and implementing enhanced feedback practices across HE/FE institutions; examples include short videos and online guides explaining peer feedback and its benefits in simple language, etc. Paper materials will be developed in ways that can be adapted and used by other institutions.
- In collaboration with the University of Strathclyde's Student Association Vice President (Education and Representation), produce a set of **resources for students** – promotional materials and workshop plans – that would enable students and Student Unions to share this new thinking with student bodies in other institutions through their conferences and planned events.
- Deliver a series of 4 **webinars** on peer review delivered through JISC RSC, CETIS JISC network and the JISC Pedagogy Expert Group meeting.
- Explore with CETIS and JISC RSC other innovative ways to disseminate and share ideas about good practice in peer review supported by technology.
- Two face to face workshops intended to get feedback from stakeholders (staff and students) on the resources produced.

- Presentations will also be made at the QAA Scotland annual enhancement themes conference and the JISC online conference.
- A **briefing paper** for senior/middle managers on how to encourage the roll-out of improved feedback practices using peer review processes across a faculty or institution.

4. Activity Plan

Provide a description of the activities you plan under each of the following activity areas (as applicable). Include the role of any partners and show the anticipated outputs (described above)

Packaging

- Creation of a 'how-to' guide on peer review and peer feedback on a web platform so that it can be easily explored. This would include a framework, dimensions, information about design decision, pitfalls to be avoided and advice on how to introduce peer feedback to students.
- Promotional materials (paper and audio/visual) tailored to practitioners (teachers) implementing peer feedback and also specifically tailored to students wishing to promote the benefits of peer feedback to academic staff.
- A briefing paper for senior managers.

Capacity/events

- Work with JISC CETIS and JISC RSC partners to provide a series of 4 webinars to raise awareness of approaches modelled, showcase the resources and incorporate feedback to build capacity across the sector.
- Presentations at two conferences to further disseminate key messages and showcase the approach.
- Two face-to-face workshops intended to get feedback from different stakeholders on the resources that are developed for academic staff – feedback would be sought from students, from academics new to peer review and feedback and those more experienced and from middle managers.

5. Details of Partners

Names and contact details for all partner institutions, services, existing JISC projects or other who are to be involved in the idea. State for each the level of commitment e.g. supporting letter attached, existing project partner, interest expressed by email, no contact made.

- JISC RSC (Grainne Hamilton), verbally agreed, written confirmation to follow.
- JISC CETIS (Sheila MacNeill), verbally agreed, written confirmation to follow.
- USSA – University of Strathclyde Students' Association (Rebecca Maxwell-Stewart), verbally agreed, written confirmation to follow.

All partners are committed to supporting the dissemination of technology-based peer feedback practices across relevant networks in HE and FE. The JISC CETIS partner will help the project team make links with other projects where there are synergies. The JISC RSC partner will promote the project and support dissemination especially through the FE sector. The USSA partner is an active member of the UK wide network of NUS and is already engaged in a number of practices to enhance feedback practices from the student perspective.

6. Exit and Sustainability

How will any outputs listed above be sustained beyond the funding period e.g. outputs deposited in the design studio could be seen as sustainable through JISC services

We will develop resources in a platform at Strathclyde. They will be openly available online to all HE and FE. Other institutions and JISC will be able to adapt these resources with suitable acknowledgement for other purposes. We will explore with JISC the best way of developing an 'InfoKit' if deemed appropriate.

The work proposed is being led by the Learning Technology Enhancement Team at the University of Strathclyde. This key team with 9 permanent members of staff is part of the Student Experience and Enhancement Services Directorate and has an ongoing remit to promote and support technology enhanced learning at the University. Therefore, key outputs developed as part of this proposal will be embedded in the ongoing development and dissemination work of the team, thus ensuring sustainability beyond the proposed project's end.

7. Evaluation

How will you ensure that the resources are fit for purpose, determine the success of capacity building activities and evaluate any take-up pilots?

We will use the webinar events to do some of the evaluation of the materials we present. We will organise face to face meetings to share resources and get feedback from stakeholder groups. We will pilot the materials at the University of Strathclyde and modify them as needed and this will ensure they are usable in other HEIs. We will identify an experienced peer within the sector from existing contacts to review the materials and comment, and also seek review from those new to thinking about peer review and feedback to gain a range of perspectives.

A draft of the Senior Managers' briefing paper will be reviewed by established contacts within the sector.

8. Risk assessment

How will you manage risks and maximise the successful embedding of benefits?

The risks associated with this project are considered to be very low. As the project would be a continuation of the previous JISC-funded PEER Project, the project team is confident that the proposed outputs are appropriate and feasible within the proposed timescale. Risks relating to availability of staff are very low as the work will be carried out by permanent staff in the University's Learning Technology Enhancement Team, 2 of whom were directly involved and responsible for delivery of the preceding PEER Project outputs. In addition, the project consultant named was the lead academic on the PEER Project and is able to seamlessly continue with this work. Furthermore, there are other members of the Learning Technology Enhancement Team who, although not named and costed in this project, will provide additional support as part of their ongoing remit. Although unlikely, should any issues relating to staff availability occur, the other members of the team would be able to provide effort and appropriate expertise as an alternative to those named.

As with any project, the proposed work would be appropriately managed throughout. This would include evolving the project plan depending on reviews of progress and circumstance should it be necessary.

Overall, the risks are low and there are a number of contingency measures should issues arise.

9. Work Packages

Give brief details of the project timescale, project team, key work packages and outputs. Provide details of the work packages that will lead to your proposed outputs in full and who is responsible.

Tasks	Start / End dates	Outputs	Responsibility
Work Package 1:			
Project Management	1/5/12 – 30/4/13	Project plan; project reports.	CM, DN
Work Package 2:			
Desk Research	1/5/12 – 1/7/13	Report (internal): Consolidation of key messages to underpin resource creation	DN
Work Package 3:			
Generation of Resources	1/5/12 – 30/4/13	Scope and generate range of support/development materials as outlined in section 3 - Deliverables.	SB, AJ, CB with input from DN, CM
Work Package 4:			
Implementation / Engagement	1/6/12 – 30/4/13	Planning and delivery of resources for stakeholder liaison as identified in section 3 – Deliverables.	SB, AJ, CB with input from CM, DN
Work Package 5:			
Events	1/9/12 – 30/4/13	Workshops, online webinars.	DN, SB and AJ
Work Package 6:			
Dissemination	1/9/12 – 30/4/13		DN, SB and AJ
Work Package 7:			
Project Evaluation	1/10/12 – 30/4/13	Internal promotion of resources. Project website. Present & share findings at JISC programme events, workshops & conferences. Adapt resources for external use.	ALL

Note that programme level activities as required by the project (specified in the call as 4 days) are considered to be part of the listed activities above; i.e. Project Management, Implementation/Engagement and Dissemination.

Project Team Members

Name	Institution/Organisation	Role
Ms Caroline Breslin (CB)	University of Strathclyde	Learning Technology Advisor (Faculty of Engineering)
Ms Catherine Milligan (CM)	University of Strathclyde	Head of Learning Technology Enhancement
Dr Sue Barnes (SB)	University of Strathclyde	Learning Technology Advisor (Faculty of Science)
Mr Aidan Johnston (AJ)	University of Strathclyde	Learning Technology Advisor (Evaluation and Dissemination)
Prof. David Nicol (DN)	University of Strathclyde	Emeritus Professor

Appendix: FOI Withheld Information Form

We would like JISC to consider withholding the following sections or paragraphs from disclosure, should the contents of this proposal be requested under the Freedom of Information Act, or if we are successful in our bid for funding and our project proposal is made available on JISC's website.

We acknowledge that the FOI Withheld Information Form is of indicative value only and that JISC may nevertheless be obliged to disclose this information in accordance with the requirements of the Act. We acknowledge that the final decision on disclosure rests with JISC.

Section / Paragraph No.	Relevant exemption from disclosure under FOI	Justification
n/a		

Please see <http://www.ico.gov.uk> for further information on the Freedom of Information Act and the exemptions to disclosure it contains.