

RSC Northwest News

JISC Regional Support Centre of the Northwest



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

<i>New Virtual Training Suite Tutorials</i>	1
<i>Task Based Learning Materials from North Trafford College</i>	2
<i>FREE "LIFT" Website Accessibility Checker for all FE Colleges</i>	3
<i>An Introduction to TASI</i>	3
<i>RSC NW – The First Three Years In Pictures</i>	4
<i>Becta Beacon Award for Online Learning</i>	5
<i>News in Brief</i>	5
<i>Competition Time! with Oxford University Press</i>	6
<i>Education Media Online</i>	7
<i>Technical Training and Lancaster University</i>	8
<i>RSC Events – Summer 2003</i>	8



Some of the RSC NW team at the RSC UK Conference in Birmingham, March 2003

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Video Conferencing:

01253 350877

From Project to Service and Beyond!

Regional Support Centres are here to stay! This issue of the newsletter celebrates the first 3 years of operation and marks the beginning of what is now being seen as a mainstream service for FE. When RSCs were first set up through the JISC they were something of an experiment. The model of support that RSCs offer has been seen as an effective mechanism for supporting colleges. The challenge for the Learning and Skills Council and the JISC is now to see how this model can be replicated or extended to meet the needs of small HE institutions and other areas of the post-16 sector. Whatever the future may hold for RSCs, the funding councils have now committed to funding for another three years with the expectation that funding will be continued beyond 2006.

In this issue of the RSC Newsletter we focus on North Trafford College who have produced a range of interactive task based learning materials. The project team would like your help evaluating these materials and is willing to make the materials available to you, turn to page 2 for further details.

On page 4, we take a look back in pictures and remember some of activities that have taken place over the last three years.

Tameside College was recently awarded the Becta Beacon Award for its involvement in the e-learning project "Passport to Learning". We would like to add our congratulations and present an article by Liz Shercliff the project manager for Passport to Learning.

Has your college had success with an ILT project or would you be willing to share your experiences of implementing ILT related activities good or bad? Please let us know, as we would gladly include your article in a future edition of this newsletter.

Here's to the next three years!

Jonathan Day - RSC Manager
jday@rsc-northwest.ac.uk

New, free Internet tutorials for FE students – from the Virtual Training Suite

At the start of June 2003 the Virtual Training Suite from the Resource Discovery Network launched five new Internet skills tutorials for Further Education.

[Internet for English Studies](#)
[Internet for Science](#)
[Internet for Maths and Adult Numeracy](#)
[Internet for Learning Languages](#)
[Internet for Health and Safety at Work](#)

Building on the success of the 56 tutorials already available in other subject areas, the 5 new "teach yourself" web tutorials will enable students in Further Education to find high quality information on the internet to support their course work.

The new tutorials are available from www.vts.rdn.ac.uk

Don't forget the free posters to download and print available from www.vts.rdn.ac.uk/posters and of course, feedback is always welcome – via the online feedback forms on each tutorial, or to: rdn-vts@bristol.ac.uk

Emma Place, Service Manager, Virtual Training Suite

Task Based Learning Materials from North Trafford College

Computer-based learning has come a long way since the early days of CD-ROM deployment. Rapid technological advancements in the development of Managed Learning Environments (MLEs) and Virtual Learning Environments (VLEs) have created the possibility of delivering compelling learning material that is truly interactive, engaging and media-rich.

Creating and delivering online learning material is a complex time consuming task including diverse topics as instructional design, multimedia, authoring software, subject authors, data tracking, and pedagogical issues.

Summary of the project

North Trafford College successfully bid to use Standards Fund to disseminate good practice in Task Based Learning in the Engineering Curriculum by developing multimedia tools to be used by staff and students in other Colleges via a VLE.

The main objective was to continually improve the quality of the individual's learning experience at the college.

The National Diploma for Engineering (ND) was chosen as the course for which materials would be devised. Six core units applicable to all ND options were selected.

The team decided early on in the project to use vector based graphics to keep file sizes small for downloads and scalable to fit different resolutions.

The college VLE is used to host the materials. This enables:

- Easy updates to curriculum topics
- Guest access via secure login so students can login to any internet capable PC to use the material
- Feedback & tracking of the learning resource was possible as these systems are 'dynamic'
- The interface is pre-built but customisable so the institution does not have to deploy resources on software development but can concentrate on curriculum content and instructional design.

Materials Available for

- Business Systems for Technicians
- Communications for Technicians
- Mathematics for Technicians
- Science for Technicians
- Software development
- Health, Safety and Welfare



Project Team – from left to right, Jim Rowles - Flash Developer, Peter Crowe - Project / ILT Manager, Andrew Richardson - Project Co-ordinator / Web Manager, Matthew Ramirez - Flash / Web Developer.

Pedagogic criteria

The interaction of the learner with the materials was one of the most significant factors affecting how the learner progresses. A clear pedagogical approach needed to be demonstrated in the design.

In developing materials the design team also needed to draw on:

- knowledge of how the subject is taught
- knowledge of students' problems in learning the subject
- appropriate feedback from potential users.

The units also had to be re-usable in other areas as standalone learning objects, therefore four main activities were adopted in an instructional design model. Analysis, Design, Build and Evaluate.

Evaluation

As this was a project to disseminate good practice across all colleges in FE, the project team decided to conduct a survey using 2 questionnaires, essentially one for staff and another for students to gain valuable feedback on the learning objects. In return all participating colleges will receive all the learning objects.

There has been a phenomenal response to the evaluation and there are now over 200 colleges involved. If you would like to evaluate the material, please visit www.rsc-northwest.ac.uk/curriculum/ntc where you can download the evaluation material and register your interest.

Andrew Richardson – Project Co-ordinator
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FREE "LIFT" Website Accessibility Checker for all FE Colleges

EduServ is delighted to make this announcement about Assistive Technology Licences. Arranged under the forthcoming EduServ Grants Programme, EduServ has reached agreement with UsableNet, the supplier of LIFT, whereby EduServ will fund the provision of site licences for one of three products **free of charge** to all Further and Higher Education sites in the UK and Ireland.

Full details can be found at

<http://www.chest.ac.uk/software/lift>

Eligible sites may select one LIFT product now or at any time up to 30th April 2005, and will own that product in perpetuity. The chosen product will be supported by UsableNet until 31st July 2005. Sites may choose to purchase continued support and maintenance for their chosen product thereafter under the EduServ LIFT Purchase Plan Agreement.

About LIFT

One of the following products can be obtained free of charge:

LIFT for Dreamweaver
LIFT for Frontpage
LIFT Online

LIFT helps ensure that websites meet current standards for accessibility and usability and creates accessible web content as you go. LIFT from UsableNet tests your website for compliance with the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (SENDA), web accessibility standards and, if you use Dreamweaver or FrontPage, will automatically enhance accessibility as you build your website. LIFT is already used by over 40 educational sites in the UK and is the leading web accessibility solution in the United States.

How to Order

Full details of the agreement can be found at <http://www.chest.ac.uk/software/lift> or for further information you can contact Jenny Carroll at CHEST. jenny.carroll@chest.ac.uk tel:01225 474339

Jenny Carroll
CHEST

An Introduction to the Technical Advisory Service for Images (TASI)

The Technical Advisory Service for Images has been funded by the JISC to help the FE and HE community on all aspects of digital imaging and is hosted at the Institute for Learning and Research Technology at the University of Bristol.

TASI provides a number of useful facilities that include:

- The TASI Website – this provides resources for those who are creating and using digital images for learning and teaching (see www.tasi.ac.uk)
- An Enquiries Helpdesk – if you have a burning question about digital images or how to convert your analogue teaching materials e.g. photographs and slides into digital format, then we can answer those questions and help guide you through the processes. We can also provide help and advice about using digital images within teaching materials. Contact the Helpdesk at info@tasi.ac.uk
- Online technical documentation – an extensive range of reports and FAQs that cover all areas of digitisation and provides specific guides on creating and using images are made available from the TASI web site (see www.tasi.ac.uk/advice/advice/html)
- Training workshops – specific and practical hands-on training is provided to encourage people within the education community to engage with creating, delivering and using digital images.

If you would like any further information about how TASI can help you within the FE sector then please contact the TASI Helpdesk (info@tasi.ac.uk).

Alternatively, if you have particular ideas about how TASI could support you further, then the TASI Director would be very pleased to hear from you – please email karla.youngs@bristol.ac.uk



Karla Youngs
TASI Director

JISC Regional Support Centre of the Northwest

RSC NW - The First Three Years - In Pictures



Current RSC NW team (from l-r) Jonathan Day, Keith Wilson, Chrissie Mason, Navin Panchal, Yvonne Ferrell and Benita Wiseman. (Inset - Mandy Topping)



The original RSC NW team - December 2000



Video Conference with Sal Cooke - May 2001



Kevin Brennan - Catering Workshop 20th June 2002



Visit from Peter Heilbuth, East Gippsland Institute of TAFE, Australia - 26th September 2002



Robert Prabucki from UKERNA at the RSC Conference 2002



JISC Innovative Initiatives in Action, St Helens College 27th November 2001



David Robinson officially opening the RSC Office - 6th December 2000

JISC Regional Support Centre of the Northwest

Becta Beacon Award for Online Learning in College and Community



The Becta Beacon Award goes to Tameside College for its e-learning project.

Passport to Learning is an online learning project set up in 2001 by Tameside College and Tameside Council and funded by the Treasury through the Invest to Save Budget. The aim of the project was to increase the college's expertise in online learning to build capacity in Basic Skills by developing online learning materials with a local flavour.



Project manager Liz Shercliff came into post in July 2001. "I spent the first six weeks touring the Borough talking to people involved in learning and training about how they might view the project," she says. "As a result of this activity the structure of the project was changed. Originally the vision was that existing basic skills tutors would develop materials for the project as well as carry out their normal duties. It quickly became apparent that this would not happen, and so a team was employed to develop materials and market the project. Rather than attempt to work through existing tutors the team went out into local voluntary and community organisations and local businesses to talk about the advantages of online learning."

"The greatest need identified by both types of organisation was for an interesting and effective induction package" Liz explains. "Induction isn't very inspiring either for the person delivering it or the person being given the information, and certainly there is no evidence about how much has been learned." Working with two local businesses Passport to Learning developed an online induction based on existing materials. Employees were very positive about the experience. A Basic Skills screening tool was added to the induction and this led to further training within the business. One company was reporting 56% errors going out of the warehouse every week in early 2002. The screening process identified basic skills needs in the warehouse and some online materials were developed. The errors were down to 18% in October 2002 and to 6% in January 2003.

The project was based upon the good practice already developed within Tameside College. Ownership of the online learning by ordinary teachers is regarded as a key to success and Passport to Learning transferred this lesson to the community by encouraging training managers and others to develop their own materials. A local care company – Access Homecare – saw the potential of the project but their training manager, Lesley Horton, had no experience of using computers at all. With support



Claire Gill from Becta presenting the award

from the Passport to Learning team Lesley has successfully written an induction course mapped to NVQ 2 and is now in the implementation phase.

Partnership was also key to the success of the project. Not only partnership at steering group level, where several local bodies were represented, but partnership with users and developers.

Tameside College was among the first colleges in the country to fully commit to online learning and the work done by e-learning manager Andrew Quarmby has been showcased at conferences on both sides of the Atlantic. "Through their pioneering use of e-learning, Tameside College has extended the benefits of higher education to the surrounding community," said Carol Vallone, President and CEO of WebCT. "Tameside's Passport to Learning project, delivered through WebCT's e-learning system, provides Tameside residents with improved employment prospects as well as courses for personal enrichment and pleasure. This is truly a unique e-learning initiative, and we are proud to work with Tameside to support its success."

Liz Shercliff

Passport to Learning – Project Manager

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News in Brief

NW CMIS Group

The group's April meeting was attended by 28 members. Business included the election of officers to serve for a period of five years. John Burke of JISCInfoNet and John Taylor of St Helens College were returned unopposed as Chair and Secretary of the group whilst Ian Rigby of North Area College takes over from John Nugent, formerly of Stockport College, as Treasurer.

NILTA NW

NILTA ran a series of very successful events throughout June entitled "Embedding Independent Learning Skills". This current series is a pilot for what is hoped to be a national series of events - another example of the North West leading the way!

JANET Multi-site Connectivity Advisory Service

The new JANET Multi-Site Connectivity Advisory Service will be launched on the 1st August 2003. Further details can be found at

<http://www.ja.net/mcas/>

Artifact - new RDN hub

The website for Artifact the new RDN hub for Arts and Creative Industries will be available from mid-July at www.artifact.ac.uk The major public launch will be in November.

Win a year's subscription to an Oxford Online database!

Choose from:

- Oxford English Dictionary Online (www.oed.com)
- Oxford Reference Online (www.oxfordreference.com)
- Grove Music Online (www.grovemusic.com)
- Grove Art Online (www.groveart.com)

Simply answer 20 questions by visiting the web sites and email your answers to onlineproducts@oup.com by 31 July. The winner will be the first correct entry drawn on 1 August.

Oxford English Dictionary Online

"the ultimate authority on the English language" The Times

Find out...

- Just how much the meaning and usage of words changes over time e.g. the original meaning of the adjective "nice" was foolish, stupid and senseless!
- How much English borrows from other languages e.g. over 30,000 words have a French origin
- How many words and phrases are much older than you think e.g. "mobile phone" dates back to 1945!
- That words can mean different things in different parts of the world e.g. in South Africa, a "robot" is a traffic light

Go to www.oed.com, click on the Enter OED Online button (bottom left of screen)

User name: [jiscoed](#)
Password: [oxford](#)

- 1 What is the original meaning of hotpot?
- 2 When did "text message" first enter the English language?
- 3 A Lancashire is a breed of which bird?
- 4 Who was the first to use the term "Girl Power"? (It wasn't Posh Spice!)
- 5 Was Homer Simpson the first to say "doh"? If not, who was?

(Handy hint: as the OED is a historical dictionary, the oldest meaning of each word comes first. Check out the quotation evidence for each sense to find out the context and the year in which it was first used.)

NEW JISC 3-YEAR DEAL STARTS 1 JUNE 2003...Full details are available on the JISC website at www.jisc.ac.uk/collections/oed

Oxford Reference Online: The Core Collection

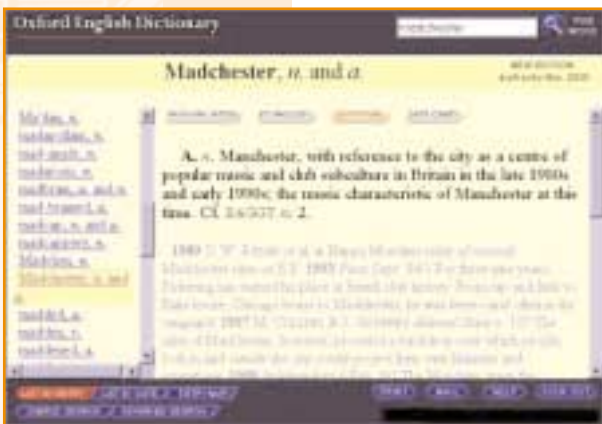
Winner of Internet Magazine's Site of the Year award!

Access 100 authoritative dictionaries and reference works across the subject spectrum in a single cross-searchable database. An invaluable source of reliable reference material.

Go to www.oxfordreference.com
User name: [jiscoro](#)
Password: [oxford](#)

- 6 When did the Manchester Ship Canal open?
- 7 What is the capital of the Faroe Islands?
- 8 What does TCP/IP stand for?
- 9 What was the original meaning of Preston as a place name?
- 10 In Italy, if you were doing the "totocalcio" what would you be doing?

2ND YEAR OF JISC DEAL STARTS 1 JUNE 2003...Full details are available on the JISC website at www.jisc.ac.uk/collections/oro



Screenshot from Oxford English Dictionary Online



Screenshot from Oxford Reference Online

Grove Music Online

"By far the most comprehensive music site on the web" The Sunday Times

This multi-award winning service is the unsurpassed authority on all aspects of music.

It contains the 29-volume New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians, the 4-volume New Grove Dictionary of Opera, and the 3-volume New Grove Dictionary of Jazz – plus lots of new material and thousands of web links.

Go to www.grovemusic.com

User name: [jiscmusic](#)

Password: [oxford](#)

- 11 One of the members of Steeleye Span was born in Blackpool - which one?
- 12 Which famous contralto was born on 22 April 1912?*
- 13 When was the Halle Orchestra founded?
- 14 Which city has been called "Nashville of the North"?
- 15 Which rock group was formed in Blackpool in 1967?

(*Handy hint: to find people with particular occupations, birth dates etc, select *Biographies* from the Home Page or from the *Advanced Search* screen)

Grove Art Online

"A masterpiece" New York Times

The ultimate authority on all aspects of visual art from prehistory until the present day, Grove Art Online contains the full text of the acclaimed 32-volume Grove Dictionary of Art plus newly-commissioned material and over 100,000 links to images in collections worldwide.

Go to www.groveart.com

User name: [jiscart](#)

Password: [oxford](#)

- 16 What was L.S. Lowry's job in 1910?
- 17 Which architect was born in Manchester in 1935?*
- 18 Which sculptor produced the "Angel of the North" in Gateshead?
- 19 Who painted the murals in Manchester Town Hall?
- 20 Which famous photographer recorded everyday life in Bolton?

(*Handy hint: to find people with particular birth dates, occupations etc, select *Biographies* from the Home Page or from the *Advanced Search* screen)

GENERAL SEARCH TIPS:

- If you want to find a **definition** or **information** about a particular term, use Quick Search/Find Word
- If you want to find **all references** to your search terms, use Full Text Search in Advanced Search
- If you want to search for an exact phrase, put the phrase in quotation marks eg. "Flight of the Bumble Bee"
- Wildcards:
 - If you are unsure of a single letter in a search term, use ? eg P?casso will find Picasso
 - An asterisk denotes any number of missing letters e.g. *phobia will find all words ending in phobia

Susanna Lob and Anne Kail
onlineproducts@oup.com

Education Media Online – Free licences for FE

Education Media OnLine is a JISC-funded set of ten collections of film and video, hosted by EDINA and cleared and digitised through the JISC's Managing Agent and Advisory Service (MAAS), who are also producing associated metadata. That work is ongoing, and should eventually result in about 300 hours of material becoming available. The films are of high quality and are fully downloadable, either in full or as segments, and can be used freely in learning, teaching and research.

The following collections are available now with more due in 2003:

Anglia Television Library

Two series: "Who Were the British?" (1965) and "The Lost Centuries" (1968)

Educational and Television Films Ltd, the ETV Collection**Films of Scotland****Healthcare Productions****Logic Lane****St George's Hospital Medical School Collection****Sheffield University Learning Media Unit Collection****The Trials of Alger Hiss (1980)**

Collections due soon include [Imperial War Museum](#) and [IWF Knowledge and Media GmbH](#)

Education Media Online is initially available free of charge to UK Further and Higher Education Institutions via Athens accounts, after the completion of an institutional sub-licence document. Full details can be found at www.emol.ac.uk

ICT Focus: Technical Training and Lancaster University



ICT Focus at Lancaster University offers first class advanced training covering applications, systems and network administration and developer skills. Initially established in June 2000 as the Microsoft Training Centre we are now expanding our programme of courses and will soon be offering a range of accredited courses, from University Certificates to Vendor Certified Training.

We work closely with the RSC NW and consider the support of staff in schools and colleges in the North West as one of our major roles. Some of the existing courses and new developments include :

- Our Certificate in Network and Systems Administration, developed in partnership with the RSC NW, covering a wide range of topics. It combines instructor-led training with hands-on experience, self-study and the collaboration of like-minded people from similar backgrounds.
- A new Certificate in IT for Administrators (available Oct 2003) is aimed at administrative staff in schools and colleges and will offer the support needed to gain Microsoft Office Master accreditation, at the same time contextualising the use of office applications in the workplace and covering issues such as effective file management, security and virus protection.
- Our on-going programme of courses following the Microsoft Official Curriculum (for more details see www.lancaster.ac.uk/microsoftcentre)
- Our role as a Regional Centre for the Microsoft and Cisco Academy programs (for more details see www.mccademy.org.uk and www.cisco.com/edu/emea)
- A seminar/workshop on 9th July entitled 'What can .NET do for you?' which will define and introduce the basic elements of .NET, outlining the potential benefits of deploying .NET and how to get there.
- The development of new certificates for November 2003/January 2004 , including a Certificate in Networking Essentials (incorporating the CCNA curriculum), a Certificate in Microsoft Systems Administration (incorporating the MCSA curriculum) and a Certificate in Network and Systems Engineering (offering 8 separate modules on topics such as firewalls, security, network monitoring, remote access, configuring operating systems, an introduction to Linux, etc).

Interested? If you are interested in any of the courses/seminars/developments at Lancaster University please do not hesitate to contact us: E-mail ICTFocus@lancaster.ac.uk, or phone 01524 593 689 and talk to Rachel

RSC Events - Summer 2003

Date	Event	Venue
June		
27th June 2003	RSC NW Annual Conference	Bolton Reebok Stadium
July		
2nd July 2003	Tasty Tools for Interactive Learning	Bolton Sixth Form College
7th July 2003	A Introduction to E-learning: Using the NLN Materials within a Virtual Learning Environment	Tameside College
10th July 2003	ILT in the Science Curriculum - the formula for success	Winstanley College
August		
	Education Media Online Workshop	To be confirmed

For further information or to book a place on any of the above events please visit the RSC website www.rsc-northwest.ac.uk or contact the RSC directly on 01253 504070.

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