



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

# University library

The Library Chameleon: changing spaces for  
21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning

Trish Walker and Liz Waller



## University of Leeds



## Centres for Excellence in Teaching & Learning (CETLs)

To reward excellent teaching practice and to invest in that practice further in order to increase and deepen its impact across a wider teaching and learning community

*(Centres for Excellence in Teaching and Learning. Invitation to bid for funds. Higher Education Funding Council for England. April 2004)*

## Assessment & Learning in Practice Settings (ALPS)

- 5 university collaboration
- 16 health & social care professions
- Aim – more confident & competent students
- More opportunities for assessment in practice placements
- Generic competences – communication & teamworking
- Interprofessional working

## Libraries in the UK

- JISC – Learning Spaces
- New libraries
  - Sheffield
  - Glasgow Caledonian
  - Warwick Learning Grid





## Working together

<b>Vision</b>	By 2015 our distinctive ability to integrate world-class research, scholarship and education will have secured us a place among the top 50 universities in the world			
<b>Purpose &amp; Values</b>	We are a research intensive university which strives to: ■ create, advance and disseminate knowledge   ■ develop outstanding graduates and scholars to make a major impact upon global society			<b>Our Values</b>
<b>Stakeholders and Partners</b>	Our research sponsors expect...		Students - as lifelong members of our University community expect...	
<b>Key Themes</b>	Enhance our international competitiveness <span style="float: right;">More</span> T1 Increase the impact of our international activities  T2 Create sustainable recruitment of high quality international students  T3 Create new research and innovation led international strategic collaborations	Achieve an influential world-leading research profile <span style="float: right;">More</span> T4 Deliver international excellence in all our areas of research  T5 Develop selected peaks that deliver world-leading performance  T6 Translate excellence in research and scholarship into learning opportunities for students	Inspire our Students to Develop to their full Potential <span style="float: right;">More</span> T7 Deliver excellent and inspirational learning and teaching  T8 Provide an exceptional student experience  T9 Increase participation of those who can benefit	Enhance Enterprise and Knowledge Transfer <span style="float: right;">More</span> T10 Enhance performance and value derived from enterprise and knowledge transfer  T11 Contribute to the enrichment of society on a local to global scale
<b>Strategic Enablers</b>	Improving our effectiveness - <span style="float: right;">More</span>			
	E1 Build strategic partnerships that add significant value	E2 Provide first class facilities	E3 Create time for academic development	E4 Improve core systems and processes
	Financial sustainability - <span style="float: right;">More</span>		Valuing and developing all our staff - <span style="float: right;">More</span>	
	F1 Aggressively grow research income	F2 Grow additional sources of profitable income to invest in our future	S1 Develop leadership skills in a wider range of staff	S2 Ensure effective communication and ownership of values and strategy at all levels
	F3 Manage resources to deliver strategic priorities	F4 Ensure all faculties and schools are able to generate surpluses for re-investment	S3 Proactively attract and retain high quality staff	S4 Manage performance and support the development of all staff

## ALPS Group Study Area

- Principles of design
  - Flexible – to accommodate both current and evolving pedagogies
  - Future-proofed – to enable space to be re-allocated and reconfigured
  - Bold – to look beyond tried and tested technologies and pedagogies
  - Creative – to energise and inspire learners and tutors
  - Supportive – to develop the potential of all learners
  - Enterprising – to make each space capable of supporting different purposes
- Facilitating communication & teamworking skills





## Evaluation

- The aim of the evaluation is part of ongoing work to assess this space for learning to see whether it meets the expectations of students and how it has affected their work practices

## Evaluation

- Focus groups
- Questionnaire
- Medicine, dentistry & healthcare
- Ethical approval

## Evaluation

- A very basic analysis was done by creating a very 'loose' coding frame, following Ryan and Bernard (2003) by looking for repetitions and key words in context

*Ryan, G.W. & Bernard, H.R. (2003). Techniques to Identify Themes: Field Methods, 15, 1, 85-109.*

## Evaluation

- Most students who responded used ALPS Group Study Area at least once per week
- ALPS Group Study Area in same building where majority of lectures takes place

## Evaluation: Work Environments - Noise

- Choice of work environments
- Different areas for different activities
- Many favoured background noise



## Evaluation: Work Environments - Noise (cont)

If I'm actually intending and serious about trying to get some work done then I go as far away from other people as possible – I have to pick the most deserted area because I get distracted quite easily

It depends sometimes where you are and what you're doing – sometimes you need noise and sometimes you don't

## Evaluation: Work Environments - Noise (cont)

It's really good to sit in a group there where you can have a discussion and it's good having a little area like that. It's also quite good in this bit having like little sections that are really quiet, so if you've got some really important work to do you can really focus on it rather than be in that room where it's quite loud



## Evaluation: Furniture, Lighting and Comfort whilst working

- Discussions focussed on the physical environment
  - Furniture
  - Lighting
  - Colour scheme



## Evaluation: Furniture, Lighting and Comfort whilst working! (cont)

I know there's no windows in here um, but the lighting's good so you don't really need it...

...and the area is casual enough for us to feel comfortable in our work, the chairs are fabulous!

## Evaluation: Group working in the ALPS Group Study Area

- Students' views on ideal group working areas
- How the ALPS Group Study Area measured up
- Comparison between the new and the old



## Evaluation: Group working in the ALPS Group Study Area (cont)

The way they orientate the tables – I mean it's round, so everyone can communicate easily with each other, whereas if you've got a table like this, or a square one, you've got to talk loud so they can hear you. And it's easy to reach across the table as well. At the same time you've got a lot of space – so in that sense it's good.

## Evaluation: Group working in the ALPS Group Study Area (cont)

See that's another great thing about the ALPS area now, because you can be sitting and doing group work and it's like...right, let's just move over to the computers and do the presentation, and you only need to move a short way

## Evaluation: Group working in the ALPS Group Study Area (cont)

It's useful to be able to sit together and discuss...who was going to do what, so that's good to have an area...last year it was just long tables so it was really difficult. Because you'd either have to find space to sit next to each other or you'd be sitting at an awkward angle to be able to see each other or you'd have to kind of shout across the table because they were quite wide

## Evaluation: Group work and skills development

Student perceptions on the skills they are developing when working in the ALPS Group Study Area:

- Communication skills
- Organisational skills
- Confidence
- ...and tolerance!



## Evaluation: Challenges

- Resourcing
- IT
- “Appropriate” use (flexible and individual/group)



## The Chameleon? – lessons for the future

- Links to teaching, learning and assessment
- The student voice
- IT drivers
- Collaboration is key
- JISC criteria

# Why the Chameleon?



## Final comments from our students



## Citations

- [http://www.jisc.ac.uk/eli\\_learningspaces.html](http://www.jisc.ac.uk/eli_learningspaces.html)
- Stothart, Chloe Student Library visits fall 20 per cent in a decade Times Higher Education Supplement October 12 2007 p14
- Ryan, G.W. & Bernard, H.R. (2003). Techniques to Identify Themes: Field Methods, 15, 1, 85-109.