The Higher Education Academy Medicine, Dentistry and Veterinary Medicine

Project focus: REHASH

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St George's, University of London, has led a consortium of Higher Education (HE) and Further Education (FE) partners in the Re-purposing Existing Health Assets to SHare (REHASH) project, which has adapted existing large collections of high-quality, web-based, health resources for different educational contexts. This project is funded by the JISC as part of the Distributed eLearning programme under the theme of supporting collaborative teaching and sharing of resources across institutions. The partner institutions include King's School of Medicine, Kingston University and Croydon College. The re-purposed resources were specifically tailored to support student learning at several distinct educational levels including courses in FE which widen access to nursing, medicine and healthcare, and continue these resources through into HE undergraduate courses in medicine and nursing.

The aim of REHASH was to provide teachers with a fast and economic way of developing attractive educational course units, and to provide students with learning resources that would be consistent when progressing, moving up through different educational levels, from FE to HE. The intention was that a *resource escalator* would play its own part in promoting a feeling of familiarity, and reducing anxiety in adult learners moving into the HE sector (Figure 1).

It was envisaged that discussions between FE and HE institutions over resources could promote a higher level of interaction between teachers on FE Access courses and their counterparts in HE.

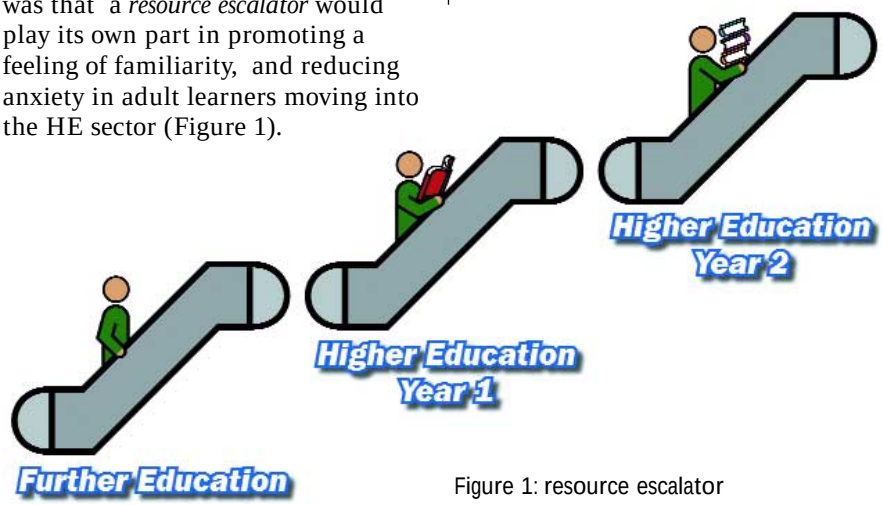

Figure 1: resource escalator

A re-purposing model was devised which consists of a six-step process involving teachers, learning technologists, and technical staff (Figure 2).

1. Existing resources are mapped to new objectives by the learning technologists.
2. Relevant teachers are contacted and the resources are subsequently reviewed in order to meet new objectives.
3. Under the guidance of the teachers, the resources are re-purposed by learning technologists.
4. Re-purposed resources are quality assured by following the various guidelines and also checked for scientific and editorial discrepancies.
5. These resources are content-packaged by using the RELOAD tool to ensure interoperability (both SCORM and IMS compliant) and then assigned metadata to increase search functionality.
6. The completed resources are uploaded into respective virtual learning environments, repositories and websites.

The primary target of the project was to re-purpose existing resources which mapped to approximately 60% of the learning objectives from the cells, tissues, and organs component of the basic and clinical science theme for years 1 and 2 of medicine, and approximately 30% of the learning objectives from the one-year access to nursing course and the foundation course for medicine. In both cases, the original targets have been exceeded, with a greater than expected coverage of learning objectives.

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In addition, the following supplementary objectives were considered in the original proposal and are beginning to emerge as project outcomes:

- Resources do compete ergonomically and in quality with the existing rapid and efficient process used for assembly of teacher's lesson plans.
- Resources are attractive to both teachers and students.
- Resource sharing has strengthened existing collaborative relationships between the FE and HE partners.
- Institutions that have not created these resources are willing to use them in their own courses.

REHASHed resources have been embedded in several ways, one of which was to create an opportunity at both the regional and national level for sharing across the FE/HE boundary. As a result, and due to the multi-foci nature of this project, it required the development of guidelines and methodologies for the pedagogical, technological, and societal elements underpinning re-purposing, all of which are already being made available to the wider community via the project website.

The resources were intended as supplementary resources for self-directed learning (SDL), as adjuncts to the taught/delivered material. However, in an experiment which drew upon the REHASHed resources, a tutor delivering a lecture to access to nursing students at Croydon College used the re-purposed web-based resources as the lesson materials for presentation in the classroom. These were used deliberately without modification, even though they were primarily intended to assist with SDL. These resources were heavily image-based, and the theory was that students would gain from the fact that the identical resources displayed in the classroom (including the text) would be available online later for review and revision. This one-off process anecdotally proved very successful for both students and staff.

In summary, the project has already demonstrated that resources can be effectively re-purposed to different educational levels, made sufficiently *generic*, and shared by courses in different institutions. There is also genuine enthusiasm on the part of teachers to utilise these resources, regardless of the institution where they are made, so that the resources are not restricted to web-based learning but can also be used in the classroom, thereby forming a *blended approach*.

The natural obvious extension of this project is a formal evaluation of the embedding experience (as mentioned above), to address issues such as:

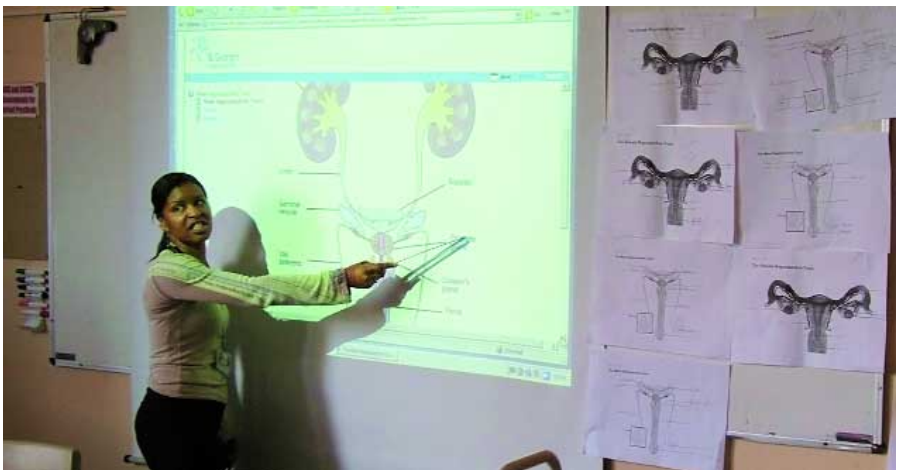
- do students and teachers value the resources?
- how do students use them?
- what is their impact on teacher/student practice?
- are resources as easily adopted by institutions who were not involved in their preparation?

These issues form the backbone of a separate Academy case study currently being undertaken by the REHASH team with students and staff at Croydon College. This will explore the possibility of taking web-based resources, primarily intended as supplementary support for HE students, directly into the post-16 classroom and structuring a lesson plan around the resources. This case study will also evaluate whether:

- students and teachers find advantages or disadvantages in using identical resources for both lesson presentations and supplementary materials?
- these resources can be easily shared by teachers throughout the FE sector particularly in relation to access to health professions course?

For up-to-date information on all REHASH project developments and how to access these resources please visit **www.etu.sgul.ac.uk/rehash** or contact **cbalasub@sgul.ac.uk**

Figure 2: the six steps



A teacher using REHASHed resources to form a blended approach in an FE classroom