

## A brief guide to developing and disseminating your learning and teaching ideas

This guide is intended to support colleagues looking to identify and develop learning and teaching ideas and then disseminate through conferences and publication.

### WHY IS LEARNING DEVELOPMENT AND DISSEMINATION IMPORTANT?

It is crucial that we continue to enhance our provision. We want to create a dynamic and exciting environment within which students learn and within which we deliver our teaching. Enhancing our provision might involve a wide range of different activities, from experimenting with new, exciting technologies, embedding graduate attributes into our curriculum, creating new staff student partnerships, arranging community building events or more.

Spending time sharing our experiences and findings internally or externally via conference or publications also helps colleagues to develop the practice of others and contributes to the development of knowledge across the entire sector.

Activities which improve our provision will also impact on career progression. This work will support applications for internal promotion and University, or Student Union led teaching awards. It will also help to secure external recognition through disciplinary specific teaching awards and fellowship of the HEA and even any future applications for National Teaching Fellow.

Finally, by undertaking this kind of work, and sharing our experiences across the sector, we are working to maintain and enhance the University's reputation and standing.

### WHAT ARE THE STAGES INVOLVED IN DEVELOPING AND DISSEMINATING A LEARNING AND TEACHING IDEA?

Learning and teaching projects can be seen as having five distinct areas of activity. These are outlined in the diagram below. This guide will explore each in turn.



## IDEA

As part of our practice, we're often identifying issues and thinking about what we could do to help. You may feel that large group teaching can sometimes feel impersonal or passive and be looking for an approach to improve this. You may feel that many of your students don't seem to know each other and want to develop more of a sense of academic community in your school/department. You may have noticed that students don't seem to be looking at or engaging with your feedback and want to find a way to address this.

Once you have an idea, a broad plan in mind, and a willingness to take this further, you need to develop this thinking into a project. Key questions to consider at this point are:

- What is your rationale for undertaking the project?
- What are your objectives?
- What will the project actually involve?
- How long will your project take?
- What is the scope of your project? Are you focused on a particular group of students or staff, for example?
- Are there any opportunities for student consultation, participation or partnership?
- What do you expect the impact of your project to have on our provision and the student experience within your school/department or across disciplinary areas?
- How will the impact be evaluated? Do you need any ethics approval?
- How will you know if your project has been a success?
- How will you share your findings?
- Are your findings helpful for other stakeholders internally or externally, in the broader sector? Why?
- How much will your project cost?

If you're able to answer each of these areas, you will be able to create a project plan.

## IMPLEMENT

To get your project up and running you may be able to secure funding within the University. FHMS often supports small-scale projects. Look out for any calls for project proposals from the Associate Dean (Education). Colleagues looking to run collaborate projects with student partners may be able to secure funding from the PVC (Education). The Surrey Institute of Education (SIOE) may also offer funding and will be able to provide additional guidance.

For inspiration, you can look at work currently being supported on the [FHMS Education research site](#) or the [SIOE Digital Learning Projects page](#).

It may be harder to secure funding from sources outside the University, but opportunities do exist! Have a look at the following as a starting point:

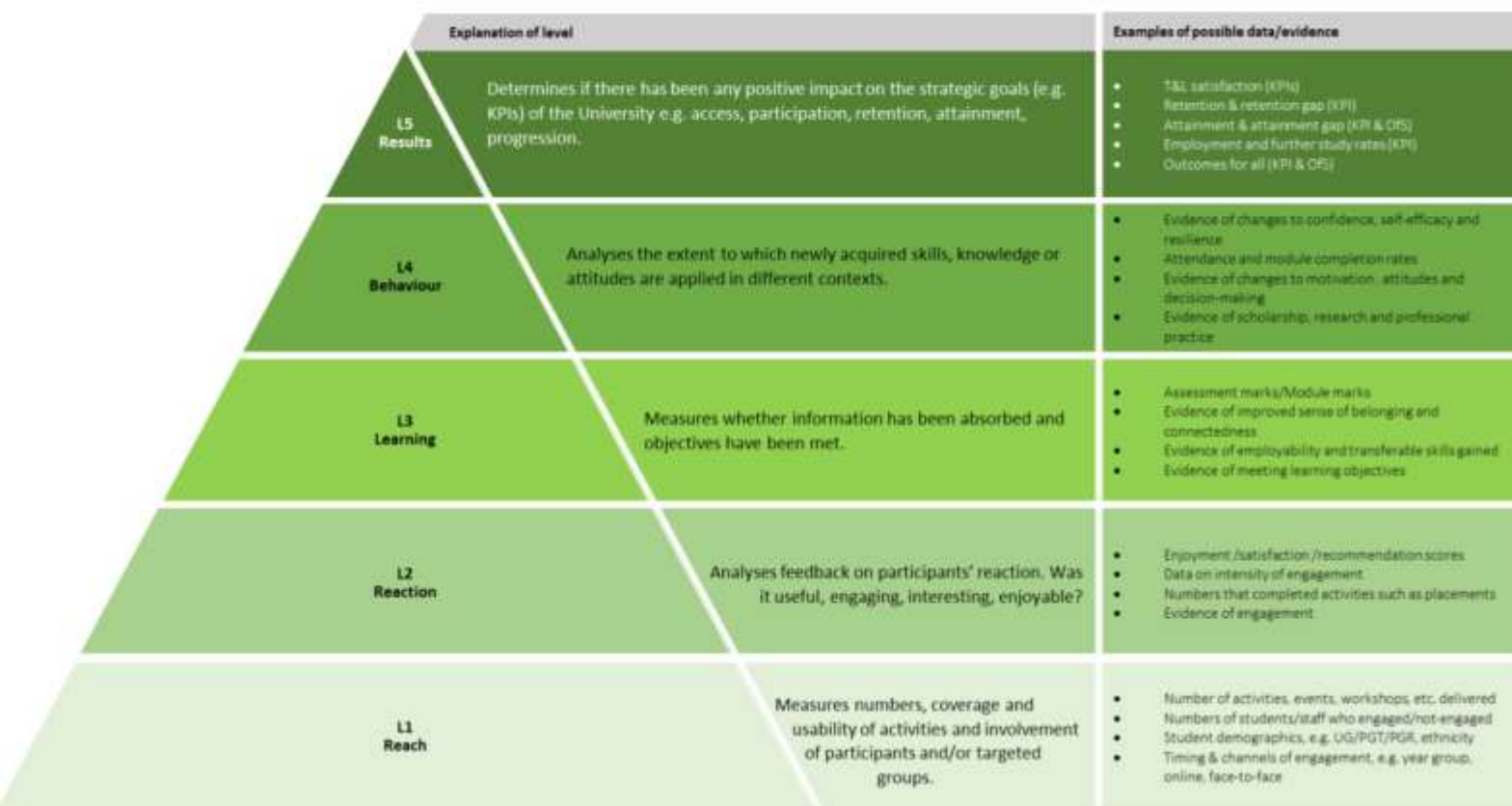
- [ALDinHE](#) often issues a call in June each year. They will fund up to a maximum of £1,000 per project.
- [SRHE](#) usually issues an annual call for proposals for project support worth between £5,000 and £10,000.
- [SEDA](#) normally issues an annual call for proposals. They will fund up to £1,000 for educational research projects.
- BA/Leverhulme small research grants
- Society for Educational Research small grants

Try also to look out for special calls from [Advance HE](#) or [OfS](#) as well as L&T grants from disciplinary societies.

## EVALUATE

A useful starting point, when thinking about evaluating a change in learning and teaching practice, is to consider what level of impact you might be looking at. This could range from how many students or staff the change has impacted, how the change was received, whether the change has an impact on learning, on behaviors and even a range of key performance indicators. Colleagues at the University of Reading have created this useful diagram

to show different levels of impact and suggestions around how these might be measured. You may need to zoom in to read the detail in this diagram.



University of Reading, [Five levels of Impact diagram](#)

Surrey benefits from a range of easily accessible data, often in Power BI reports, which colleagues could use to show impact at each of these levels:

- Module Evaluation Questionnaire results
- View rates and other information on viewer behaviour around online materials, such as the length of viewing, repeat views and timing of view e.g. on Panopto or using [Google Analytics](#)
- Module marks
- Progression, awards and good degrees including attainment gaps
- Graduate outcomes in terms of employment and destinations
- NSS and PTES qualitative and quantitative data
- League tables

Some of the most popular methods which colleagues could use to demonstrate impact, are listed below:

- Short student surveys
- Semi structured interviews
- Focus groups
- Content analysis

In terms of your methodology, it is essential that you find out if you need ethics approval to undertake any evaluative work. At Surrey, research evaluating educational practice is usually considered a low risk but you must complete a [Self-Assessment Governance and Ethics form for Humans and Data Research \(SAGE-HDR\)](#). Your responses to this form will indicate whether or not you need to move ahead with an ethics and/or governance application. If you don't, and your project doesn't need a full ethics review, you can start your research immediately but do be careful to adhere to the University's Code on Good Research Practice. If you need any further help, please do go to the [RIGO page](#) or contact your Faculty ethics contact:

- [fhmethics@surrey.ac.uk](mailto:fhmethics@surrey.ac.uk)

## PRESENT

There are a number of ways to share the work that you have done and the impact that it's had. You can present at a school/department or faculty wide event.

If you are looking for institutional reach, you can speak at a monthly institution wide ADE/SIoE monthly showcase event. These are arranged thematically. Your Associate Dean (Education) may send out a call to DLTs for relevant presenters. The Surrey Institute of Education runs the annual Surrey ExciTeS conference. The team will send out a call for contributions during the year. You could also write a short article or create a short video for the University's new Learning and Teaching website.

For national or international impact there are a very wide range of exciting conferences to choose from. The first step is to identify the right conference to attend. Some of the major learning and teaching conferences are listed below:

- [Advance HE Learning and Teaching Conference](#). This is one of the largest conferences and normally runs in July each year. The call for proposals will usually open the previous September.
- [Assessment in Higher Education Conference](#). This conference tends to run in the Summer months with a deadline for submissions in January.
- [British Educational Research Association annual conference](#). This usually runs in September each year with calls for abstracts closing the previous February.
- [Assessment in Higher Education conference](#). This usually takes place in June or July each year. The call for proposals is sent out in October.
- [Society for Research into Higher Education](#). This is normally run in December with a deadline for submissions in July.
- [Association for Learning Technology](#). This annual conference runs each September. A call for proposals usually closes in May.
- [EDUCAUSE annual conference](#). This is normally held in the US each October. The call for proposals runs between April and May each year.
- [HERDSA annual conference](#). This event is usually held in Australia each July.
- [Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education](#). This society normally runs an annual conference in June each year, in Canada.
- [RAISE annual conference](#). This group runs an annual conference each year in September with a focus on student engagement.

Normally you only submit a short abstract outlining what you plan to speak about during your conference presentation. There is usually no need to submit a full academic paper either before or after your presentation. Many conferences offer a choice of proposal. These can range from a short and snappy 5-10 minute session through to 20 or 30 minutes. You may be part of a longer workshop or present an academic poster. You may also be asked to chair a panel.

Why attend a national or international conference?

- Conferences are fun!
- You'll be able to share your own work and get some very useful feedback from your audience
- These are a great opportunity to meet likeminded colleagues and potentially form new collaborations
- You'll probably walk away with ten times more ideas that you'll have time to implement

## PUBLISH

Developing the work that's already been done here into a piece of pedagogic research is the final step in this process and an important one which ensures that the critical reflection that's been undertaken on current or new practice is shared through publications, with other educators beyond the conference circuit.

It is helpful if you have already identified a gap in the existing pedagogic literature and can outline how your own work fits within this. It is also helpful if you have in mind, how your work will be of use to other educators or other institutions. It is also important to consider the theoretical position underlying your work from the start.

You can work by yourself or you could consider working with one or more colleagues within Surrey or across the sector to undertake your project and write up your article. You can draw on a range of strengths, keep the momentum going and enjoy the process together.

There are numerous journals focusing on pedagogic research. You may like to keep the following in mind:

- It is important to choose the right journal for your research. Look carefully at the aims, scope and requirements before you submit your work. Look also at the articles already published, especially if you can build on a previous piece.
- Look at the impact factor of the journal. These will vary significantly.
- Try to get a sense of the acceptance rate of a journal. These also vary significantly.
- There are often calls for different types of submission including short opinion pieces, reviews and case studies all the way through to longer 6,000-8,000-word research articles. If you want to get started in publishing, consider writing a short review of a book or new platform.
- Look at the journal [open access](#) policy. Because open access means that your article will be freely available to access online, this usually means that more people read it. This can lead to more citations and impact.
- When you submit a piece of work, always follow the guidelines for authors very carefully.

Just a small selection of possible journals that you may like to look at are included below:

- [Active Learning in Higher Education](#)
- [Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education](#)
- [British Educational Research Journal](#)
- [Frontiers in Education](#)
- [Higher Education](#)
- [Higher Education Quarterly](#)
- [Higher Education Research and Development](#)
- [Innovations in Education and Teaching International](#)
- [International Journal for Academic Development](#)
- [Journal of Further and Higher Education](#)
- [Practitioner Research in Higher Education](#)
- [Research in Higher Education](#)
- [Research in Learning Technology](#)
- [Student Engagement in Higher Education](#)
- [Studies in Higher Education](#)
- [Teaching in Higher Education](#)

In addition, some discipline specific journals also welcome pedagogic research. Examples relevant to colleagues in FHMS include:

- [Chemistry Education Research and Practice](#)
- [Advances in Health Sciences Education](#)
- [Teaching of Psychology](#)
- [CBE-Life Sciences Education](#)
- [Journal of Veterinary Medical Education](#)
- [Journal of Geography in Higher Education](#)
- [Biochemistry and Molecular Biology Education](#)
- [Advances in Physiology Education](#)
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For more, see others associated with your disciplinary societies and see:

<https://teaching.charlotte.edu/learning-resources/sotl/sotl-journals>

## FURTHER INFORMATION AND SUPPORT

For more information and support on any aspect of developing and disseminating your learning and teaching ideas, please do speak with your Director of Learning or Teaching or contact the [Surrey Institute of Education](#) for a wide range of advice, including pedagogic research surgeries.

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### **Educational Research theme:**

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