

## **Chapter VII**

# **A Research-Led Approach to Technology Enhanced Learning: Strategies, Programmes, Projects, & Pedagogies in UK Higher Education**

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### **Introduction**

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This chapter focuses on national and institutional initiatives in UK higher education (HE) to support and embed technology enhanced learning, and in particular with regard to the development in undergraduate students of research-oriented capabilities. The term “research-led” is widely used in the HE sector to describe universities that demonstrate a high capacity for good quality research whilst claiming that their research informs and enhances their teaching. The approaches described are based on the premise that developments should be led by clear pedagogical objectives coupled with the opportunities afforded to the curriculum by the technologies.

The chapter begins with an overview of technology enhanced learning (TEL) initiatives in UK higher education, though it should be noted that the term “TEL” is not used ubiquitously; other terms have been in fashion, such as C&IT (following the Dearing report, 1998) and e-learning (following international trends). The first part outlines national policies and programmes that have had a significant impact on TEL practice, development of accreditation schemes to standardise and recognise teaching and learning practice, and, recently, a national benchmark exercise to review institutional progress in TEL and find new paths for future policy and practice.

The second part of the chapter focuses on the importance of good pedagogical models for TEL as a means to foster, support, and assess specifically students’ development of research-based learning. Finally, based around a study in eight research-led or research-informed UK universities and the aforementioned national e-learning benchmarking exercise, the approaches to working with faculty to embed these ideas into their everyday use of technology are explored.

Keywords: Teaching and Learning Technology Program, Research-Led Learning, Benchmarking E-Learning, Strategies and Pedagogies, Pedagogical Models for TEL

## **Technology Enhanced Learning Initiatives in UK HE**

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### **The Rise of National Policy and Programmes**

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Over the last 50 years, the impact that technology has made on our lives and work is remarkable. More remarkable still is the relatively low impact that it has had on teaching and learning practices. While technology has been used in universities and colleges since the dawn of computers in the late 1940s and early 1950s, for the first 30 years or more it was mostly used to support research analysis and improve the efficiency of administration.

In the United Kingdom, several national schemes were established in the 1980s and 1990s that put TEL into vogue. At this time, the terms used were computer assisted learning (CAL) and computer based training (CBT) and some interesting educational software developments began to emerge. Of these, the Computers in Teaching Initiative (CTI), set up in 1989 as one of the first publicly funded HE teaching support networks, was most significant. It comprised 24 discipline based support centres around the country that assisted in sharing expertise and TEL materials across the community.

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