



**ltsn**  
Learning and Teaching  
Support Network

**Bioscience**

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## Departmental Contacts Briefing No. 6 Autumn 2002

A warm welcome to those of you receiving a Departmental Contact Briefing for the first time and "hello" again to the rest of you. This Briefing is also being sent to you by email to make it easier for you to forward information directly to colleagues. If you would prefer to read this Briefing on-line (and avoid having to type in all the URLs) it is also available in PDF and rtf formats from: [ftp://bio.ltsn.ac.uk/departmentalcontacts/brief6/](http://bio.ltsn.ac.uk/departmentalcontacts/brief6/).

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### "Departmental Contacts" no more!

We were delighted that around twenty five of you were able to join us in September for our first Departmental Contacts Forum. We were very glad to have the opportunity to meet a number of you face-to-face for the first time and have the chance to thank you for your support and contributions. The Forum also provided plenty of time for formal and informal discussions amongst colleagues who share an enthusiasm and commitment for learning and teaching, and was a useful opportunity for us to find out about more about your Departments and receive your feedback and input on our activities (which we always welcome!).

At one point talk turned to whether or not 'Departmental Contacts' was the most appropriate title for you all. Many of our Departmental Contacts work in Divisions, Schools and units with other titles. It was decided that '**LTSN Bioscience Representative**' was a more appropriate title, catering for units that have contacts with more than one LTSN subject centre as well as those working in Divisions, Schools etc. We hope that those of you who weren't there will approve! **To reflect this change, in January, we shall send out a replacement for the 'Your Departmental Contact is...' poster and an updated publicity pack for your learning and teaching notice-boards.**

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### \*\*\*New Opportunities for Publication: for you and your colleagues...

Attendees at the Forum put an electronic journal for articles about learning and teaching in the biosciences at the top of their 'wish list' of additional services that the Centre might provide. We are now in the process of establishing an E-journal: **BEE-j** (Bioscience Education E-journal) will be published twice a year with a first issue in **May 2003**. The e-journal aims to: promote, enhance and disseminate research, good practice and innovation in tertiary level Learning and Teaching within the bioscience disciplines. It is intended to encourage and facilitate greater understanding and exchange of ideas through being freely available on-line, fully archived and peer-reviewed. Dr Allan Jones (University of Dundee) has been appointed as Editor-in-Chief.

Full details, including instructions to authors, will be made available on the Centre's website in early January. **In the meantime, we would strongly encourage you to alert colleagues to the development of this new bioscience education journal and the potential opportunities it will bring for publication of articles on aspects of learning and teaching.**

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## Ethics in the Biosciences

Many thanks to those of you who have already completed or passed on details of the ‘**Teaching Ethics to Bioscience Students - survey of current and planned provision**’ (details were circulated recently by email on behalf of our Special Interest Group on ‘Teaching Ethics to Bioscience students’). We failed to mention that the closing date for survey returns is **Friday 17<sup>th</sup> January**, and would appreciate it if you would encourage the relevant colleagues to complete and return the survey before then. A report on the data collected (anonymised) will be published on the LTSN Bioscience website in due course.

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## What can you tell us about Learning and Teaching Developments in your School or Department?

You will be aware that the Centre funds a number of small teaching development projects. We are very keen to find out about all the other developments in learning and teaching taking place in your Schools/Departments, and the projects (big or small) supported by local institutional funding, e.g. by e-learning committees and staff development departments. Please send details of activities and contact names to us at [itsnbioscience@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:itsnbioscience@leeds.ac.uk) or encourage colleagues to contact us directly.

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## Learning and Teaching Away Days? Departmental Visits?

In addition to the events hosted by the Centre as part of our Professional Development Programme, we are happy to visit departments on an informal basis and can also facilitate presentations or workshops tailored to your requirements. For example, in the summer, Prof. Ian Hughes, LTSN Bioscience Co-Director, contributed to a residential workshop as part of the University of Lancaster’s Department of Biological Sciences Learning and Teaching Away Day. The theme of the workshop was Assessment in Biological Sciences and Ian’s session covered ‘Assessment of Laboratory Practical Skills’: [http://www.lancs.ac.uk/users/hedc/talltales/biol\\_2002.htm](http://www.lancs.ac.uk/users/hedc/talltales/biol_2002.htm)

If your unit would be interested in a visit of some sort, or would like specific materials or other contributions for an away day, please get in touch with your requirements and we will do our best

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## Practical Compendium for the Biosciences – contributions requested

This project is identifying examples of successful laboratory and field work practicals across the life, biomedical, and food and agricultural science discipline areas, and promoting sharing of this expertise amongst UK HE teaching and technical staff through provision of the **Practical Compendium** and associated web pages <http://bio.ltsn.ac.uk/resources/bioscience/compendium/>.

Practicals ranging from examples of instructor-directed activities through to student-centred learning and more open-ended investigations and research-based project topics are all welcome as are exercises focussing on the development of particular practical or generic skills.

As well as a description of the practical, contributions can include electronic versions of the practical briefing/instructor notes; the student handout; demonstrator notes; technical notes; datasets, etc.

Approximately forty potential contributions have so far been identified, but we are looking for more. **Please consider contributing and encourage your colleagues to do so too.** Contributions (text and electronic files) can be made directly using the on-line form:

<http://bio.ltsn.ac.uk/imagebankuploads/compendium/search/insertpage.asp> or alternatively, by email to Jackie Wilson: [compendium@itsnbioscience.leeds.ac.uk](mailto:compendium@itsnbioscience.leeds.ac.uk).

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## **SOCIETY FOR EXPERIMENTAL BIOLOGY UNDERGRADUATE COMPETITION 2002**

Each year the SEB runs a competition for Biology undergraduates. This year the theme is BIOETHICS and we are asking students to design a POSTER on any aspect of Bioethics which can include images and diagrams as well as text. The winner will receive £200 as well as a year's subscription to the *New Scientist* (as do the runners up). Selected posters will also be exhibited at our Annual Main Meeting as part of our Bioethics debate which will take place on Wednesday 2 April in Southampton (see [www.sebiology.org](http://www.sebiology.org)).

Please could you announce the competition to your students and encourage them to enter by going to <http://www.sebiology.org/BUGS>. The closing date is 31 January 2003.

With many thanks.

Sarah Blackford  
Education & Public Affairs Officer  
Society for Experimental Biology  
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### **And finally.....**

**Please pass on the enclosed documents to colleagues who might be interested or display them on your notice boards. We will happily provide additional information or further copies of items upon request.**

- **LTSN Bioscience Spring 2003 Events Programme poster**

This poster outlines the forthcoming series of events in our Professional Development Programme. Further details of individual events can be found on our website <http://bio.ltsn.ac.uk/events/>. Registration is free and interested individuals may register online or by completing and returning an event registration form (copies also enclosed).

- **Ecological Project Compendium – Invitation to Contributors flyer**

This leaflet, forwarded on behalf of the British Ecological Society gives details of the compilation of a new peer-reviewed resource for those involved in teaching ecology in Higher Education.

- **Using C&IT in small-group activities**

This leaflet reports on the work of the ASTER Project which was funded by HEFCE under phase 3 of the Teaching and Learning Technology Programme (TLTP).

- **SEB poster**

A poster advertising the 'SOCIETY FOR EXPERIMENTAL BIOLOGY UNDERGRADUATE COMPETITION 2002' (as outlined at the top of this page).

- **Access All Areas: disability technology and learning**

This book outlines and describes how technologies can be used to meet the needs of disabled students. Access All Areas is forwarded on behalf of TechDis <http://www.techdis.ac.uk/>).

**With many thanks and best wishes,**

**All at LTSN Bioscience**

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