

Stories of impacts arising directly from the Reps' Forum/Reps' Network and/or other Centre activities

[Note: text in italics indicates text inserted by Centre staff for reasons of clarifying the Centre's involvement]

1) Comments from a Bioscience Representative from Scotland who attended the 2010 Reps' Forum

"As a result of the group activities we did in Cardiff [*at the 2010 Bioscience Representatives Forum*], I have started talking to colleagues individually more, in addition to sending out email alerts. I have prompted a colleague to apply for a Centre for Bioscience grant, and helped her find partners/critical friends through the reps' network. I have kept up contacts at the reps' network through facebook and twitter, and use twitter as a source to inform my teaching. I have asked several colleagues if they were interested in submitting an abstract to the HEA Bioscience conference in the summer, as they were engaged in development or evaluation activities. I am also talking to a colleague in Canada who has a great workshop which she would like to deliver at the Edinburgh conference, so she will also be submitting an abstract.

The postgraduate events that I started last year [*... with financial support from the UK Centre for Bioscience*] are continuing this year. At the reps' meeting I asked for volunteers to host events, and we are moving forward with an event in Aberdeen, Belfast and Reading.

The microbiology lab development that I did in collaboration with Mary Tatner and Elizabeth Kilbride [*developed with a grant from the UK Centre for Bioscience*] has been completed with first year students and we have been asked to teach a version of it for the PG cert. in Tropical Medicine.

The diary project that was the topic of my Ed Wood* application [*presented at the 2010 Bioscience Reps' Forum*] has been accepted for an HEA/QAA Scotland ScotPID case study, and we have expanded the project to include taught postgraduate students. I am also a member of the School of Life Sciences Honours Project review committee and have brought Martin Luck's HEA Centre for Bioscience publication, Debbie Bevitt's Ed Wood group project idea, as well as my own reflective writing project to the attention of the committee chair.

I also had the opportunity to contribute to the research of one of my colleagues who is looking at ways to support GTAs by showing her the HEA Centre for Bioscience GTA events, and also for two education PhD students, one of whom was looking at wellbeing and support, the other who was looking at active learning. I was observed and interviewed, and my students will take part in a focus group."

* Now renamed as Bioscience Teacher of the Year 2011 – national teaching award initiated and run by the UK Centre for Bioscience

2) Comments from a 2nd Bioscience Rep from England who attended the 2010 Reps' Forum

"I think what touched and inspired me most was Jon Scott's presentation on using video diaries to learn about student experiences. We all forget what a hard time it can be adjusting to student life. I made 2 changes this year to improve student support. For my programme (Medical Science circa 60 students) I issued them with a newsletter at the start of term updating about news and events relating to the university (which were quite dramatic over the summer). I also started running sessions so all the students can meet and share top tips and advice. This went down a storm.

Another gem from the forum was Dave Lewis' presentation on video clips to support ethics, and then further talking to Merryn Ekberg made me realise the importance of ethics as a subject, and made me reflect on the point that we don't include any ethics teaching in Medical Science or Biomedical Science. I contacted Merryn after the forum and she shared ideas with me that helped me develop an ethical debate session for first years using an electronic voting system. I aim to hold ethical debates more regularly."

"From my card, I think there were presentations on the use of student video to help with laboratory practicals, and it made me think of ways of getting more student input into teaching, to harness that enthusiasm. I've started with students using Flip cameras to capture any work experience and nuggets from placement experiences to share. I've also opened up one assignment where I ask students to produce a piece of health promotion information in any format."

3) Comments from a 2nd Bioscience Representative from England who attended the 2010 Forum

"The Centre for Bioscience has enabled me to become part of a community of practice that has shaped my personal development as a lecturer in HE Biology. Without the opportunities it has afforded me to attend and contribute to workshops, to disseminate my practice through bioscience education, to engage in active reflection, and to become part of networks of colleagues I do not believe that my career would have progressed in the way that it has, and I am certain that the experience of my students would have been a lesser one." *Comment from Dr Graham Scott, Head of Department, National Teaching Fellow & Bioscience Representative, Department of Biological Sciences, The University of Hull*

Other anecdotes of impact from the 2010 Reps Forum (arising from previous Centre events)

- Nick Freestone (Kingston University) – his 'swapshop' session shared details of some research on a curriculum intervention, prompted by his attendance at the June 2007 Differentiated Learning Forum: Stretching able students event; www.bioscience.heacademy.ac.uk/events/dlforum07.aspx
- Stephen McClean (University of Ulster) – when describing his experiences of trialling and using reflective videos in year one chemistry laboratory sessions with bioscience students (for which he was shortlisted for the Centre's Ed Wood Teaching Award in 2010), Stephen recalled: 'The work initially started after attending the 2007 Rep's Forum and hearing Phil Langton's talk 'Use of automated on-line quizzes as a means to engage and motivate students to prepare in advance of laboratory practical work'; www.bioscience.heacademy.ac.uk/ftp/events/repforum07/langton.pdf

[Type text]