

Student Transitions

Learning and Teaching Enhancement Project Report, June, 2015

Project Title: The Illusion of Memory

School & Department: School of Textiles & Design and EGIS

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1	<u>Names and Heriot-Watt University contact details of project team (please identify the project lead/ report author):</u> Fiona Pankhurst f.m.pankhurst@hw.ac.uk (project lead) SoTD Alison Hamilton-Pryde a.hamilton@hw.ac.uk EGIS Alex Maclaren alex.maclaren@hw.ac.uk EGIS James Sprint james.sprint@butefabrics.co.uk (industrial partner) MD of Bute Fabrics Ltd
	Key words: Collaboration, transition, dementia design, conceptualisation, industry involvement
3	The problem being addressed, with background and context: <i>The key issue being addressed is how to ease the transition of Direct Entry students between F.E. and H.E. and improve the quality of their learning experience at the SBC, while also helping to ease the transition of Final Year students into the workplace on graduation, through industry involvement.</i> <i>All students on the Interior Design programme at the Riccarton Campus are Direct Entry students into 3rd Year, who have completed the first two years of their degree at a variety of FE colleges. The transition from FE to HE is difficult for these students for a number of reasons: they are required to work more independently in HE than was expected in FE; they need to integrate with other students who have already been 'in situ' at the University for two years and have established friendships and social networks; the Interior Design students spend one day per week on the Scottish Borders Campus in Galashiels, which involves an additional transition and a new student group to interact with.</i> <i>An additional consideration is the articulation agreement, that Textile Design have with Glasgow Clyde College, to bring a significant number of Associate students onto the Campus over the next few years, initially into Woven Textiles, then later, into Printed Textiles and Fashion. The joint project with Interior Design, provides a positive project model for future collaborations, with students working together creatively to solve design problems, while integrating with existing HWU students at the Borders Campus in a very natural and informal way. It is hoped that this practice will aid student retention. The project also builds stronger working relationships between staff teaching at SBC and Riccarton to enable ongoing collaboration in future years.</i> <i>Teaching staff on Interior Design feel their students can sometimes struggle a little with design conceptualisation, something the Textile Design students at the SBC tend to be better at. By collaborating on the same design project, it is intended that the good design practice of Textile Design is shared with the Interior Design students, while, at the same time, making them feel more at</i>

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	home on the Borders Campus and strengthening their relationships with the other HW students. Lastly, the project builds on a previously established strong relationship with Bute Fabrics. It uses the input of their industrial expertise and and specific knowledge to help the students understand the requirements of the industry they will eventually enter, easing their transition into the world of employment.
4	Project overview & aims: <i>“The Illusion of Memory” project asked the students to produce creative design solutions for the interior of a care home for people with dementia, exhibiting good design practice in their design choices, with industrial expertise provided by Bute Fabrics Ltd.</i> <i>The project aimed to:</i> • <i>Improve the transition for Direct Entry Interior Design students on their journey from FE to HE and ameliorate their experience of the Scottish Borders Campus where they spend part of their time in 3rd Year.</i> • <i>Enable a collaborative project, designing interior solutions for people with dementia, working with colleagues and Industry partners to enrich and enhance the students’ learning experience as they transition through the Textile Design and Interior Design programmes and on to employment on completion of their degrees.</i> • <i>Bring together and strengthen relationships between Textile Design and Interior Design staff, who teach on different programmes and campuses, sharing creative skillsets, approaches and expertise.</i> • <i>Use group tutorials, peer-assessment, critiques and industry expert input to develop and enhance students’ design processes and transferable personal skills, as recognised by the University as desirable ‘Graduate Attributes’.</i>
5	Activities and details of project steps taken to achieve aims: Students were given a design brief to design a venue/ home for dementia sufferers • <i>Joint brainstorming exercise with Textile and Interior staff and students –first introduction of the student groups to each other and an opportunity to begin working on initial design concepts for interior design solutions for people with dementia.</i> • <i>Presentation to all students of Fiona Pankhurst’s drawing research project work to help with visualisation of abstract concepts.</i> • <i>Overnight trip to the Isle of Bute to visit Bute Fabrics Ltd – bonding experience for the students and industrial input from the Bute Design Team on commercial practice for the design and production of woven upholstery fabrics.</i> • <i>Presentation to both student groups by industry expert, Jane Chrumka of Harmony Ridge Designs, about good design practice for the interiors for people with dementia – Jane used a</i>

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	variety of interactive techniques to help the students try to understand how it feels to have dementia. She then provided them with lots of useful guidance and ideas on the best colours, fabrics, patterns, fixtures, fittings and finishes to select to design functional interior solutions for the care home residents. • Sharing of design concepts between students through a Tumblr blog and Twitter - to allow for the exchange and discussion of ideas and work. • A site visit by the Interior Design students to the former Duns High School building • A talk to the Interior Design students, on relevant staff and PhD research in ageing, by staff from HWU's Health and Wellbeing Dept. • Collaborative compilation of a Power Point presentation of the project process and outcomes shown to invited University and Industry guests and other guests from relevant charitable organisations, such as Alzheimer's Scotland, at an MSP sponsored drinks reception at the Scottish Parliament at end of the project. • Production of a booklet published online to record the project and design process through text and visuals, to be sent out to everyone on the invite guest list, following the drinks reception, to act as a reminder of the event in anticipation of taking the project further next year. Also for use by the University at Open Days, for recruitment purposes, and by the students for their portfolios on graduation.
6	Key points including challenges: • There were insufficient opportunities for the students to meet and, as this was an important feature of the project, it needs to be addressed if the collaboration is to continue in future. • The project raised timetabling issues and the need to ensure staff and students are available at the same time, in the same place • If staff and students are timetabled on the same day but on different campuses, the issue of transport to and from SBC becomes a consideration too. • Sufficient time is required for staff to prepare for the collaborative project. This time, the project took place over a relatively short time frame (a 6 week project for the Textile students and a 12 week project for the Interior students in terms of teaching time, with additional time during the holiday and assessment periods for the organisation of the drinks reception and the preparation and publishing of the online booklet). The funding application needed some revisions and revised application had to be for the 9th of January, while the student project began on the 12th January, leaving little time for preparation and organisation. • Project length was different for each group of students, due to existing project commitments prior to the receipt of QAA funding, but this can be addressed given more planning time. • Industrial collaboration was an important aspect of the project and the timing had to work for all parties, while fitting in around Bute Fabric's business needs. • The project took up a great deal more time than initially anticipated and future management of this is vital since all staff involved in the project are part-time, with other responsibilities at the University.

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7	Describe specific project outputs so far: • <i>Practical student design work in response to “The Illusion of Memory” project brief</i> • <i>Increased contact and collaboration between students and staff from Textile Design and Interior Design and between the Scottish Borders and Riccarton campuses.</i> • <i>Opportunities to: engage with Alzheimer’s Scotland, the key charity for people with dementia in Scotland; raise awareness at the Parliament of the need for good design for care home residents, both ageing and with dementia; engage with architects who design care homes and other environments for dementia patients; establish potential for future collaboration with colleagues at the DSDC (Dementia Service Development Centre) at the University of Stirling; engage with the Design Adviser for Health at A+DS (Architecture + Design Scotland); engage with a colleague from the School of Health at Edinburgh University, with a professional interest in dementia.</i> • <i>Production of a Power Point presentation delivered by staff and students at a drinks reception at the end of the project. This was an MSP sponsored event at the Scottish Parliament, to invited guests from textile/interior/architecture industries, education, MSPs and relevant charitable bodies.</i> • <i>Production of a booklet about the project published online and to be distributed to all guests from the Parliament event.</i> • <i>Positive verbal feedback about the project from the students and invited guests at the final reception.</i>
8	Please describe how your project has contributed to the to the Heriot-Watt University strategy and priorities for Enhancement: 1. Shorter time to completion for Post-graduate Research students (PGR) 2. Improved retention and progression of undergraduate students: <i>The project has made a start in addressing the issues faced by students transitioning as Associate students from FE, with Direct Entry into HE in 3rd Year, and then from University into the workplace on graduation. The opportunities offered by this project have helped the students engage, feel a valued part of the University and see the benefits of the education we offer in relation to their eventual employment. It is hoped this will strengthen student retention as a result. The successes of the project will be shared with staff at the FE colleges too, so they can let future cohorts of Associate students know about the opportunities and benefits of moving to HWU.</i> <i>Experiences gained during the project and the subsequent dissemination of information at the Parliament event have given the students valuable transferable skills and a greater understanding of the demands of the workplaces they will join on graduation. It has also made some of their future employers more aware of the University’s work and the excellent quality of graduate we produce.</i>
9	How you will share good practice within Heriot-Watt and beyond (e.g. plans for papers, attendance at conferences): • <i>Power Point presentation of the project at the drinks reception at the Scottish Parliament</i>

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	building, to invited guests from textile/ interior design/architecture industries, education, including key HWU staff, and other relevant bodies e.g.dementia-related charities. • Booklet published online for dissemination to key participants, guests from drinks reception and for potential use at Open Days/for student recruitment/retention in Libraries on both campuses. • Exhibition of student project design work at the Degree Show on the Scottish Borders Campus – staff from Alzheimer's Scotland (Borders), who didn't attend the Holyrood event, are already interested in seeing the work there. • Exhibition of student project design work at the Riccarton Campus, w/c 22nd June • As a result of the Holyrood event we have been invited to show work and get involved with a Health & Wellbeing event in August (this is still to be discussed and potential benefits weighed up) • Presentation of project at the HW L&T Symposium. • Compilation of a report documenting the project for dissemination to other University staff.
10	Next steps: • To reflect upon and evaluate the project, through student questionnaire and discussion between staff and industry partners. • To improve the project model: organise for the Textile Design students to undertake the project over 12 weeks concurrently with Interior Design; enable the Textile Design students to take part in the site visit and attend talks by HWU staff from Health & Wellbeing up at Riccarton; enable both groups of students more time to share ideas and develop good working and social relationships. • To develop links made during this project with external educational colleagues and relevant dementia charity contacts for future collaboration: Alzheimer's Scotland are keen for us to involve their carers group to assess the practicalities of the student design ideas; staff from the DSDC (Dementia Services Development Centre) research unit at Stirling University are keen to meet to discuss how we might work together in future; Dr Liz Taylor at Edinburgh University is also keen to see how things develop and see if there are any shared areas of interest that we can develop; the Design Advisor for Health at A+DS (Architecture + Design Scotland) has sent links to further useful information and ideas we can look at and possibly take forward in the next project. • To build on staff relationships forged through the first experience • To plan more ways to improve the student experience of transition from FE to HE and on through University. • To establish the successes of this project, and areas for improvement, to help with the transition of the new Associate Weave students starting in Textile Design at HWU in September. • To find ways to bring the two student groups together earlier in the year in Semester One, just post-transition, rather than only later in Semester Two when funding is available for developing the project. The idea currently is, potentially, to put the students into small groups, consisting of : one existing HWU Textile Design student, one new Associate Textile Design

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	<i>student and one new Associate Interior Design student (or a similar model), to allow maximum interaction between the different groups of students.</i> <i>• To improve the student experience of the project for the Interior Design students on the Dubai Campus</i> <i>• To develop a project-specific 'FaceBook' page, potentially, for more informal interaction between the students, to allow the Dubai students to engage more fully and replacing the 'Tumblr' blog used this time; use of 'Tumblr' being forbidden in Dubai.</i> <i>• To explore the use of 'Blackboard Collaborate' as an interactive system which meets the needs of the project to aid the sharing of images, ideas, work and discussion. To work effectively, it will need to be in place, with relevant staff and student training, on all three campuses: SBC, Riccarton and Dubai.</i> <i>• Find ways to make the workload manageable for the staff who are all part-time with other considerable responsibilities at the University</i>
11	Additional information: