

The CITSCAPES Project

Project Background and Remit

In its *Circular 4/99* (November 1999) the Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC) invited proposals for a project which would *'find out how students' C&IT skills development will affect HE and whether, in light of these different skills, HEIs will need to change the nature of their training provision. It will also involve assessing the way in which the HE community thinks things are changing and how they are planning in the medium and long term to cope with these changes...The final outcome will help JISC, HE providers and the Funding Councils assess the level and nature of support that students might need in the future in order to enhance their already acquired C&IT skills.'*

The CITSCAPES Project was a response to this call, and has been running since May 2000. In March 2001 the CITSCAPES Project Management Board was invited by JISC to propose extending the project remit into the Further Education sector with means appropriate to the characteristics and requirements of this sector. It is also hoped that the findings and resources of the HE Phase of CITSCAPES would benefit the FE sector. In turn, it is hoped that the investigations into ICT/ILT provision for students in FE would inform and stimulate discussion on current issues in Higher Education.

Actions and Products of the Higher Education Phase

A quantitative **UK-wide survey** was carried out in order to obtain information on a number of key issues and was designed to address strategic issues as well as practical considerations of C&IT induction provision. The analysis of the survey data allows an overview of current practice and future intentions to be presented.

In order to add a qualitative dimension, a number of **case studies** were carried out. Five case study sites were selected in order to represent the range of types of HEI and of cross-institutional activity. The highly complex pictures that emerged provide examples across a range of institutional sizes and alternative approaches to student C&IT induction.

A set of **focus tools** is being developed which will enable higher education institutions to: a) consider their position on development paths; b) focus on appropriate bundles of skills to be delivered; c) identify key factors to enable any desired transformation; and d) compare themselves with other institutions in the sector. In addition the developmental tools provide a perspective through which discussion of the issues can continue, and which will also help JISC and the funding bodies identify the main areas of strategic importance in this area.

Other actions and products are development of a project **website** (<http://www.citscapes.ac.uk>), an on-line **resource database** and a **news group** about C&IT literacy. There are also a number of **dissemination workshops** in planning for spring 2002 and an **international conference** in IT & Information Literacy has been organised and will be held in Glasgow, 20-22 March 2002 (<http://www.iteu.gla.ac.uk/itilit/>).

Actions and Products of the Further Education Phase

An **overview** study will be carried out gain a picture of overall relevant developments in the FE area across the whole UK.

A **survey** will be carried out involving questionnaires addressed to all UK FE colleges, based on the indicators developed from the first phase of the project with appropriate modifications to take into account different circumstances in the FE sector. This will provide a detailed picture of practice of ICT/ILT skills provision.

Four **major case studies** will be carried out, including colleges from all four UK countries in order to address the regional diversity of ICT/ILT skills provision. A number of smaller self-completed case studies will complement this activity, and enable developments of particular interest to be presented.

This quantitative and qualitative research will enable us to further develop and customise the **focus tools** for the FE sector.

A number of **dissemination workshops** are planned, at which the results will be presented and the tools demonstrated. The **project website** will form the main information route, and offer access to the resource database, project publications, information, useful links, and other facilities.

Project Partners

Main partners are the University of Glasgow (lead institution), the University of Gloucestershire, the Learning Skills Development Agency, Lauder College, Dunfermline, and Gloucestershire College of Arts & Technology. Glasgow Caledonian University and the University of Stirling are associate project partners.

CITSCAPES Phase II will run until September 2002. The project website offers information regarding all the project activities and is regularly updated.