

# **CITSCAPES Project**

## **Final Report of Phase I Higher Education**

The CITSCAPES Project is funded by the Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC) through the JISC Committee for Awareness, Liaison and Training (JCALT)

The Project may be contacted at:  
CITSCAPES Project  
IT Education Unit  
University of Glasgow  
Glasgow G12 8QQ  
Scotland

Tel: +44 (0) 141-330 2537  
Fax: +44 (0) 141-330 2602  
Email: [citscapes@gla.ac.uk](mailto:citscapes@gla.ac.uk)

The Project Web Site may be found at: <http://www.citscapes.ac.uk>

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## **How to use this book**

In presenting the report of Phase I of the CITSCAPES Project, we have tried to organise it in the form of a resource that may be deployed as efficiently as possible. We are aware that given the volume of project reports being published and the pressure of work on colleagues at all levels in higher education, very few people will enjoy the luxury of being able to read the report from cover to cover. Our guiding principle in structuring the report has then been to enable rapid and direct access by readers to those parts of the report which would inform their thinking and practice.

The report has therefore been divided into three parts, each containing a number of chapters. Part 1 is about the project itself: why it was important, what were its aims, and how they were addressed. Parts 2 and 3 are outcomes of the project's work, and are based on activities of the project team. Part 2 presents our perspectives on the issues within our remit, whilst Part 3 offers the tools which we have developed for use by the higher education sector. This is intended as a brief report, and the various sections are mostly gateways to more extensive resources. For instance, the case study summaries presented in Chapter 7 are based upon more extensive case study reports which we have published separately on the project website.

It may be observed that we have offered no recommendations in this report. This is not because we have shied away from such a responsibility, but rather because a second phase of the project is at present under way, focusing upon student C&IT training in the Further Education sector. We feel it would be premature to offer recommendations for the higher education sector at this stage, since as a result of the second phase of the project we may wish to draw attention to practices or experiences in further education which might influence practice in higher education (or indeed, vice-versa), and the study of further education will help inform our understanding of cross-sectoral issues. We therefore anticipate offering recommendations for the higher education sector in our Final Report at the end of Phase II of the Project.

We hope that you will find the report useful, and would welcome any comments (our contact address is on the previous page).

Allan Martin  
CITSCAPES Project Leader

## Acknowledgements

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We also thank all of our colleagues in higher education institutions across the UK who contributed to the project by taking the time to complete the Survey Questionnaires.

This report would not have come into existence without the regular and intensive input by the individuals associated with the project:

PROJECT LEADER	<i>Allan Martin</i>	<i>University of Glasgow</i>
PROJECT TEAM	<i>Karen Barton</i>	<i>Glasgow Caledonian University</i>
	<i>Debbie Davis</i>	<i>University of Gloucestershire</i>
	<i>André Reibig</i>	<i>University of Glasgow</i>
MANAGEMENT BOARD	<i>Peter Kemp</i>	<i>University of Stirling</i>
	<i>Allan Martin</i>	<i>University of Glasgow</i>
	<i>Terry Mayes</i>	<i>Glasgow Caledonian University</i>
	<i>Lyn Oates</i>	<i>University of Gloucestershire</i>
ADVISORY COMMITTEE	<i>Tom Browne</i>	<i>University of Sussex (and UCISA)</i>
	<i>Rachael Corrie</i>	<i>JISC Secretariat</i>
	<i>Jean Couper</i>	<i>Industry Representative</i>
	<i>Ursula Howard</i>	<i>Learning Skills Development Agency</i>
	<i>Maria Lee</i>	<i>Queens University Belfast (and JCALT)</i>
	<i>Robert Letham</i>	<i>Goldsmiths College (and JCALT)</i>
	<i>Paul Thomson</i>	<i>Jordanhill School, Glasgow</i>
	<i>Les Watson (Convener)</i>	<i>Glasgow Caledonian University</i>

## Executive Summary

1. Higher Education is at present undergoing a period of substantial change, in the context of which C&IT is becoming increasingly crucial as an underpinning tool for teaching and learning, for research, and for management. The induction of students into C&IT skills is thus an issue to be addressed in every higher education institution.
2. The CITSCAPES Project is funded by JISC to examine the current position regarding student C&IT skills training in the UK. In order to achieve this, the project has carried out a number of tasks, including five major case studies and a UK-wide questionnaire-based survey, and the setting up of a website offering information, news, publications, a searchable database of resource details, and links to other relevant sites. The main features of the project are described in Part 1 of this report.
3. The survey and the case studies have shown:
  - i. That student C&IT literacy is now perceived as an important issue by most UK higher education institutions;
  - ii. That most institutions now include it in their strategic planning process, and either already have or are in the process of, establishing provision for student C&IT literacy;
  - iii. That student C&IT literacy measures are offered within institutions by a range of providers, including both academic, service and support departments;
  - iv. That the aims of such provision vary, with the main reasons offered being to support student learning, to support particular subject learning, to prepare students for employment, to prepare them for the future (in general), and to increase competence with particular C&IT applications.
  - v. That there is a large degree of agreement between institutions over the choice of skills to be provided as part of such provision is, certainly as far as its core is concerned.
4. The project team has reported its findings in more detail in Part 2 of this report, and in the published full versions of the case study reports and the survey report. Part 2 of this report also includes contextual studies of the evolution of concepts of C&IT literacy, C&IT provision in the USA, and of the factors which affect successful development of student C&IT literacy provision.
5. To enable institutions to consider their own development needs in respect of student C&IT literacy, the project team has developed a number of tools and other facilities. The tools are a developmental positioning tool, a descriptive tool, and a skills focus tool. Facilities are a searchable database of details of resources, a website, an indication of major information sources, and a glossary of relevant terms. The tools and facilities are outlined in Part 3 of this report.
6. The project has been awarded an extension, to extend its focus to student C&IT training in further education. Part of this second phase will also be to compare experience in the higher and further education sectors, and to see what lessons can be learned by each from the other. It is also intended that the tools will be further developed during this phase. Because of this continuation, and the additional insights which it might offer, recommendations for the higher education sector have not been offered in this report, but will be offered at the end of the second phase.
7. This report is organised in such a way that users may move immediately to those elements which may be of value to them. It is hoped that in this way the report will be an efficiently usable document.

Authorship of chapters:

- 1: Allan Martin
- 2: Allan Martin and Andre Reibig
- 3: Karen Barton and Andre Reibig
- 4, 5: Allan Martin
- 6: Andre Reibig
- 7: Andre Reibig, Debbie Davis, Karen Barton and Allan Martin
- 8: Peter Kemp
- 9, 10, 11: Allan Martin
- 12, 13, 14: Andre Reibig
- 15: Allan Martin and Andre Reibig
- 16: Allan Martin

Lyn Oates, Tom Browne, Karen Barton, Paul Thomson and Terry Mayes proof-read material, captured many errors and offered numerous useful suggestions.

The members of the Advisory Committee provided valuable feedback on all parts of the report as they developed.

## **Contents**

### **Part 1. About the CITSCAPES Project**

1. Background to the Project
2. Aims of the Project
3. Actions and Methods

### **Part 2. Perspectives**

4. Concepts of C&IT Literacy in Higher Education
5. Student C&IT Induction: a Developmental Approach
6. Student C&IT Induction: a Cross-Sectoral Approach
7. Student C&IT Induction: some Case Studies
8. Student C&IT Induction in the USA
9. Key Factors in Developing Student C&IT Induction

### **Part 3. Tools**

10. The CITSCAPES Developmental Positioning Tool
11. Descriptive Tool
12. Skills Focus Tool
13. The CITSCAPES Website
14. Resource Database
15. Information Sources
16. Glossary

### **Appendices**

- Appendix A. Institutional Student C&IT Induction Profile: blank form  
Appendix B. Institutional Student C&IT Induction Profile: example