

# 1: Introduction

## *The aim*

This book aims to provide material which will be helpful for those in Higher Education who wish to take advantage of the benefits that can arise by implementing Learning Technology (LT) materials into their teaching. Learning Technology, the application of technology for the enhancement of teaching, learning and assessment, offers many benefits for staff and students in Higher Education. Hopefully you will find the contents of this publication interesting and useful and that you will want to embark on a new implementation, to review your existing usage of learning technology or to plan an evaluation of the use of technology in your teaching.

This book is focused on issues concerned with **implementing** learning technology materials into the curriculum, specifically excluding issues concerned only or primarily with the development/authoring of LT materials. This focus reflects the aims of LTDI, stressing the value to be obtained from using LT materials that have already been developed. The emphasis on implementation does not imply that LT material development is unimportant. It clearly is, as without development/authoring there would be no LT materials worth implementing. However the costs (time, money and other resources) of development can be extensive and the benefits to be gained are most likely to materialise when the materials are widely used and thoughtfully implemented into the curriculum. It is, however, hoped that this book will also be of interest to developers of LT as implementation is an important aspect of LT material development.

## **Using ‘Implementing Learning Technology’: Structure and content**

The chapters in this book are of various types. Some are very practical, even pragmatic, accounts of certain aspects of the use of Learning Technology in teaching. Others are more theoretical in their approach and are intended to provide a context for the more practical material and to initiate thought about the processes involved in the implementation of learning technology.

You are encouraged to ‘navigate’ your way around the material in this book in any way in which you see fit. In addition to the detailed contents page, and the description below of the order and content of the chapters a ‘map’ of the chapters is presented below to help you to decide which chapters are most relevant to your needs.

General Material	Overview of the Implementation Process	Process Stages/Details	Evaluation	Associated Topics
1: Introduction	3: <i>A conceptual framework</i>	5: Thinking about using LT		6: LT to support student study skills
2: <i>What is learning technology?</i>	4: Experiences and best practice of using LT	7: Choosing courseware		
		8: Practical implementation issues		
		9: Motivating students to use LT		10: Computer based assessment
			11: <i>Conceptual introduction</i>	
			12: practical guide / methods	
13: Where do we go from here?				
App 3: Contributors	App 1: UseIT		App 2: Evaluation Instruments	

The order of the chapters in the book broadly follows the order in which the implementation issues are likely to be addressed or encountered. Chapter 2 provides a concise survey of the various types of applications that are considered as learning technologies. Chapter 3 presents a conceptual framework of the process of learning technology integration, providing a map of the process. Many of the issues addressed in this chapter are covered in greater detail &/or from different perspectives in other chapters. Chapter 4 presents a personal view of the practical issues that arise from the use of LT and how LT might best be used within the curriculum.

Chapter 5 address several important issues related to recognising that there is a potential role for LT in teaching. Chapter 6 explores the nature of the study skills LT materials that are available and how they can be used to support students in their studies. Chapter 7 aims to help you to choose LT based course materials. Chapter 8 addresses some of the important practical issues concerned with the implementation of LT within the course curricula, concentrating on pragmatic and political issues. Chapter 9 addresses one of the most crucial aspects of the use of LT in teaching - Student Motivation. Chapter 10 details the main ways in which computers might be used in the assessment process.

The important issue of evaluation of the use of LT within a course are discussed in chapters 11 and 12. Chapter 11 provides a theoretical discussion of the nature of evaluation whilst chapter 12 provides a practical guide on how to carry out evaluations. The final chapter lists some resources that may be useful to you in the process of implementing learning technology into your teaching and evaluating the efficacy of your implementations.

In line with the different emphasis of the chapters the styles of presentation vary, consequently I have not attempted to fully standardise the styles of presentation. I have included a brief editor's introduction to one chapter (4) and references to other relevant chapters at the end of closely linked chapters.

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***Greg Stoner***

**Editor**

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