

An Evaluation of the Implementation of Personal Development Planning

Ioanna Palaiologou

University of Hull

Corresponding author: Ioanna Palaiologou
Email: i.palaiologou@hull.ac.uk
Tel: 01482466693

Abstract

This paper aims to explore the role of personal development planning (PDP) tutorials in non-QTS Education Studies degrees. PDP tutorials were implemented in order to help students improve their academic skills and to enhance their employability. Based on an evaluation of the PDP tutorials by students over a period of three years and through interviews with academic staff, this paper investigates the role of PDP tutorials in supporting those students.

The first part of this paper explores the students' evaluations. An analysis of students' comments has revealed that students found attendance at PDP tutorials very helpful in terms of improving their academic skills. A large number of students believe that PDP tutorials have helped them to explore their career options and/or to focus in greater detail on their professional development.

The second part of the paper focuses on the analysis of data from interviews with the academic staff. It considers potential problems with the implementation of PDP.

In conclusion, in the light of the theoretical and practical issues raised by staff and students, this paper will emphasise the need for flexibility among institutions in terms of PDP implementation.

Introduction

This paper describes a research and development project of three years' duration, carried out in order to produce and implement progress files and personal development planning in an Education Studies (non-QTS) undergraduate degree.

Progress files (PF) and Personal Development Planning (PDP) were introduced into the Higher Education agenda by the National Committee Inquiry into Higher Education (HE), as recommended by the Dearing Report. The report suggested:

The file should consist of two elements: a transcript recording student achievement which should follow a common format devised by institutions collectively through representative bodies... and... a means by which students can monitor, build and reflect upon their personal development.
(National Committee of Inquiry into Higher Education (NCIHE), 1997)

These are known as the “transcript” and the “Personal Development Planning”, terms now commonly used in undergraduate programmes to describe this process.

The Policy on Personal Development Planning is defined as:

A structured and supported process undertaken by an individual to reflect upon their own learning, performance and /or achievement, and to plan for their personal, educational and career development. (QAA, 2001, p. 3)

The main theories underpinning PDP are that it should be a structured process, that it offers students the opportunities for holistic learning (academic and non-academic), and that it requires providing guidance and support for individual students. Reading the intentions of the PDP, the emphasis is on the student as a learner who makes plans and records, and who reflects on the learning process. The QAA expected transcripts to be used from 2002/2003, and for the Progress files to be implemented for HE education students by 2006.

The Dearing Report included a proposal whereby HE would establish systems for students’ Personal Development profiling in order to aid the development of reflective skills in relation to the students’ academic, personal and professional progress through HE awards. Outcomes are said to be enhanced learning, as students are clearer about what it is expected of them and what they in turn can expect; in addition, there would be development of the full range of graduate skills and enhanced graduate marketability and employability (Learning and Teaching Support Network (LTSN) , 2002).

However, Ward (2001) argues that PDP is not a new concept in HE. Prior to the Dearing Report recommendations (1997), several institutions had practices where activities such as “reviewing and recording learning and achievement and action planning” (p. 2) were fully implemented. Schon (1983), as well as a later study by Huntington and Moss (2004), demonstrated that in vocational courses, in particular, these activities were part of the development of practitioners. Reflection, action planning, and reasoning were central to and embedded within the curricula of certain fields of professional training orientation, such as in Nursing, Social Work, Teaching, and other Human Service professions (Slight and Bloxham, 2005).

Clegg *et al.* (2003, 2004) supports the above argument; she adds that educators in HE have been developing elements of this process for a long time. Nevertheless, it had not been formalised, and commonality across HE was not achieved. Consequently, it may be argued by policy makers that consistency in students’ experience across HE was lacking and, as a result, quality could not be measured and compared.

Similarly, Jackson (2001, 2002) argues that there is nothing new about the basic activities on which PDP is based. The required processes of reflecting, reasoning and revising what has been learned, in order to crystallise newly acquired knowledge, was – and still is – central to effective Student Learning. PDP will help students to capture the intellectual skills and behaviours that underlie these processes then apply them to help students review and evaluate their development in a structured manner, towards the aim of enhancing self-understanding.

Although at a policy level PDP now is part of the broader agenda across HE, with its focus on employability and the acquisition of transferable skills (Clegg, 2004), there is at a practical level a plurality of understandings of PDP, given the complexity and diversity of ideas underpinning PDP and the intentions of PDP. For example, QAA describes the intention of PDP as being:

[T]o help students to become... independent, confident, self-directed learners... [to] understand how they are learning and relate their learning to a wider context... [to] improve their skills for study and career management, articulate their personal goals, and to evaluate progress towards their achievement... [and to] encourage a positive attitude to learning throughout life. (QAA, 2001, p. 3)

In addition to QAA guidance, The Generic Centre of the Learning and Teaching Support Network (LSTSN) has produced six "Guides for Busy Academics" on PDP (LSTN, 2003a). There are other guides that offer help in writing programme specifications for integrating PDP (LSTN, 2001, LSTN Generic Centre, 2002). In brief, there is a plethora of literature on and step-by-step guides to how PDP can be implemented in HE programmes.

Before the era when PDP was formalised, the pedagogy used during lecture time was towards that of direction; now, though, it has become formal and needs to be recorded. At the level of administering practical and quality issues around an undergraduate degree, the PDP policy may offer help and guidance in such programmes. However, at a philosophical and pedagogical level the "plethora of terminology, purposes, contexts and processes being captured underneath the deceptive idea" (Clegg, 2004, p. 290) of this policy may result in confusion, as well as the creation of scepticism among academics. Fry *et al.* (2002) claims that: "several concepts that are ill-defined are often used with multiple meanings, are under-researched, poorly problematised, and very often dependent on context." (p. 108)

The philosophy of asking students to reflect upon and evaluate their own practice is to be applauded in HE. However, the issue remaining is whether it is a matter of time before the intentions of PDP policy will become measurable, and consequently part of students' assessment. To measure a process (for example, with a formative assessment of PDP) may distract students from the nature and purpose of PDP. Edwards and Usher claim that:

[S]hifts within education, such as shifts towards open learning, outcomes-based assessment, etc., therefore provide the possibility for disturbing the pedagogical practices for the formation and maintenance of other disciplines and, with that, the subjectivities of learners. (Edwards and Usher, 2000, p. 55)

The PDP policy aims to place the students at the centre of their learning and invites them to become autonomous and independent learners in order to develop the capacity for reflection then to be able to engineer their own learning process, and progress to being able to project themselves as marketable and employable. It is thus difficult to conceptualise how these skills could be translated into formative assessment.

On the one hand, at a theoretical level there are concerns in the literature with regard to the motivation of PDP policy in HE; on the other, there are also practical issues. As mentioned above, it must be asked whether the PDP will be assessed and, if so, whether this needs to be in a modular environment. Implementation of PDP in a modular environment requires learning outcomes that are measurable. Consequently, how these will be measured must be addressed.

There is a need to question in depth some of the issues raised by the formalising era of PDP. The main point is that PDP is a reality in HE, and institutions try to implement this policy in various ways. However, there is a distance between having a policy, and creating a reality around that policy. Policy implementation may be difficult in certain environments; consequently, a number of practical problems associated with providing PDP opportunities for students can be raised. A further problem derives from the actual definition of the PDP. As mentioned above, PDP is defined as “a structure and supported process undertaken by an individual to reflect upon their own learning, performance and/or achievement, and to plan for their personal, educational and career development” (QAA, 2001, p. 3). This definition is open to a number of interpretations that can lead to a variety of different realities/practices and thus implementations. While this may be viewed as a disadvantage for institutions, and for academics in particular, an academic contribution of PDP is that, this paper will attempt to argue, it actually offers flexibility in terms of implementation. This flexibility is important for PDP to contribute to and extend the pedagogical practice that has long taken place within HE.

Thus far the PDP policy has been discussed with scepticism. Firstly, there is an emerging discussion that the next step is to introduce PDP in a modular environment requiring formative and summative assessment. Secondly, the plethora of guidance and explanations can create confusion. Thirdly, there are a number of practical problems such as the workload of the academic staff in the implementation process. It may therefore be argued that PDP can become another academic burden although it should be a process that supports students in their learning process throughout their degree.

A critical approach of the definition of PDP is now required in terms of the pedagogical and philosophical ideas which underpin the individuals' practice, in order to subvert the notion that PDP is merely an academic chore. The development of reflective practitioners as educators aims to lead to the creation of life-long learners, rather than simply focusing on subject knowledge and the creation of an expert practitioner. While it may be conceded that “reflective practice has come to enjoy a cult following amongst curriculum planners” (Ixer, 1999), and therefore needs critically to be deconstructed as a concept if we are to avoid the simplistic acceptance of shared understanding and use of the term, its central importance as an educational goal cannot be denied.

This paper is focused on the issues surrounding PDP policy and its implementation. In order to understand and locate the PDP within the pedagogical practice, it is very important to set the scene in terms of values in teaching, support and assessment. As demonstrated in the discussion above, in order to implement PDP it is necessary for it to become an extension of pedagogical practice and the pedagogical framework. The overall impact of PDP is to create and encourage autonomous learners at the centre of Higher

Education. Clegg (2004) argues the purposes of PDP and she suggests that the focus of PDP should be on the “production of students as autonomous learners oriented towards future employment” (p. 287). Within this paradigm, learning and personal development in Higher Education should not be seen as “dogma”. “Dogmata” (“truths”) in education may become obstacles for learning cultures and environments. Instead, education should be underpinned by scepticism about the possibilities of questioning pedagogy. Learning is here viewed as a process and not as a product, because learning cannot be measured as a product. What is learned today becomes modified by contextualised experience tomorrow. Rejecting ideas internally and externally is a lifelong process and, from a personal perspective, is the central aim of Higher Education.

The policy underpinning PDP is concerned with reflection, reasoning, recording and planning: skills that can become a powerful tool towards reversing ideas, and in subverting generalisations and truths (Pepper, 2000). From a personal perspective, the pedagogical practice of Higher Education is to provoke cynicism, the rational evaluation of knowledge, and exploration of theories and facts – elements of which are viewed as a subversion of the learning process. Creating autonomous learners and placing them actively in control of their learning process requires PDP to become the facilitator for a rejection of traditional values and identities, leading to the learners’ questioning of these values. This process may lead learners to embrace an embedded cultural relativism, and indeed learners are able to return to these ideas as values of an intellectualisation process and self-evaluation. This was felt to be the ultimate purpose of PDP.

In this context, and given that all students on the course will have the opportunity to attend PDP tutorials and reflect upon, evaluate and plan their learning processes, the aim will be for the students not to adopt “mimic reflection” (Clegg, 2004); rather, they need to confront themselves and conceptualise their learning process which, as contributors to the social capital and economy, they will be asked to engineer.

Cognitive constructivism, as a pedagogical tool, is similarly concerned with explanation of the acquisition of knowledge (Rogoff, 1998, 1990; Wood and Wood, 1996; Wood, Bruner and Ross, 1976). The learning process is viewed within the social environment. Constructivism argues that in order for learning to be effective learners must be active in the process. From a personal perspective, learning is an active process with constant interaction with the environment (the term ‘environment’ is used in a broader sense, meaning ‘human beings and nature’). This idea seems to be similar to the post-Modernist paradigm. Both theories from the different epistemological disciplines are concerned with the construction of reality and the rejection of “dogma”. They concern themselves with learners in this paper’s context, of being able to understand the learning process, to critically reflect in the micro-cosmo (-/micro-context) of Higher Education, and be able properly to apply these skills in their full sociality: for example, when students as graduates contribute to the economy, as well as to be able to locate and apply these ideas to their lives. Thus, the purpose of PDP should be determined by an emphasis on the importance of learning as an interactive accomplishment, and to recognise the complementary nature of teaching and learning in cultures and contexts.

PDPs as a practice and implementation “should not fail to take account of the complex realities of higher education practice, and will serve an ideological rather than a

pedagogical function” (Clegg, 2004, 290), offering opportunities to reject any “truths” or “dogma”, to question practices, and to promote learning as a social activity.

As has been mentioned, learning is viewed as a process. This applies, however, not only to the students, but also to the educators. Nevertheless, it is essential that the educators should construct and deconstruct, and adopt and reject their practices and pedagogies, in a social environment. Through such constant intellectual conflict the educator is able to develop an identity that can be translated into pedagogical practice. This process may, similarly, be transferred to the students/learners, for whom PDP may become the powerful tool in order for purpose to be achieved. This idea is not far from the actual intentions of PDP, according to the QAA document.

To conclude, in the micro-context of Higher Education, PDP will encourage students to take ownership of their learning and confront the difficulties of reflecting and contracting themselves with the new ideas they explore; in the macro-context of professional development, the aim is to construct their practice as contributors to the economy, providing them with the opportunity to reflect on an exploration of learning and how this applies to life-long learning processes, alongside the particular concerns of self-exploration.

Viewing PDP as an ideological function as described by Clegg (2004), and underpinned by the synergy explored above, it is felt that PDP has a pedagogical value above that of merely being a burden for the staff. The purpose of this research project was to evaluate the PDP implementation in order to investigate whether PDP, as part of the learning process and an “ideological function rather than pedagogical function”, could lead to its being simply an academic chore or whether PDP has a valid pedagogical function.

Methodology: Implementation

This research project took place over three years, and the focus group used was the 2005/06 cohort of a BA (Honours) Education Studies degree. Two main methodological traditions were employed: qualitative and quantitative methodologies. The first element of this research project was to be able to capture the staff’s responses throughout the process of the PDP implementation. Group interviews and focus groups with academic staff and students were carried out during the three years of monitoring within the degree the new PDP policy.

Secondly, in order to be able to evaluate students’ perceptions of PDP, a questionnaire was designed. The questionnaire began with background questions about pastoral care, academic writing and career support at the beginning of undergraduate studies, and ended with open-ended questions; students were invited to comment on their attendance at PDP tutorials and offer their opinions of them. Due to time constraints there was no piloting; instead, colleagues from the team were asked to comment on PDP using criteria regarding what they were seeking to discover through PDP evaluation by the students.

The 2005/06 student intake were followed until their graduation in July 2008. It was decided to administer the questionnaires in the final session of a core module, in order to achieve as high a return as possible. The questionnaires were distributed during the end of

each year of study. At this stage of the investigation information on gender and age were eliminated, as the focus was to investigate the purpose of PDP and the students' perception of it.

Prior to the implementation of the PDP a module was developed to work alongside the PDP. The module was designed for Level 4 (Y1). It was felt that it is important to establish the foundations of PDP from the beginning of the student's experience in HE.

The main aims of the module were to help students develop an understanding of the processes that underpin learning, and actively to engage in the learning process. It also focused on encouraging students to reflect, criticise, and question: valuable skills that would help them with their academic writing. The ultimate goal of this module was to offer opportunities to develop self-management skills by continually reflecting on the students' learning, and to develop effective study skills and strategies that could be utilised throughout their academic career, as well as being transferable to their professional development.

The taught sessions emphasised relevant, practical activities to enhance learning, and were underpinned by theory of and relevant research into the learning process. There was an emphasis on the value of reflective practice; students were thus asked to complete reflective activities in relation to individual learning, on-line learning, and group work. Feedback on self-learning to other course members was an integral feature of the module, demonstrating collaboration in group-learning processes.

The second step was to design and develop progress files. These files were developed in an attempt to comply with the QAA's suggestions. It had an Introductory Section where students were asked to add their current qualifications; the second section was a record of learning and achievement, and the final section was for students to add any progress and achievements. These files were given to all students from the 2004/05 undergraduate academic group.

The third step was to allocate a personal tutor to the group. The personal tutor engaged with the students formally twice a year, and attendance at these meetings was mandatory. However, the students could request an extra meeting, if deemed necessary.

Results: Discussion

Students' responses

As it can be seen in the following table, 84% of the students in their first year felt that the pastoral care was helpful. However, as the course progressed students needed less pastoral support. The qualitative part of the questionnaire revealed that most of the students felt that the help and support was there, if needed. Moreover, as the years progress students mature and they utilise and engage in University life; thus, they do not need as much pastoral support as in their first year of study.

Moving to academic support: this was divided into critical, analytical writing and reflection. As may be seen in Table 1 in items B1, B2, and B3, in the first and second year the percentage of students who felt that they were helped in these aspects was relatively high.

However, when students moved to the second and third year of the study, their response decreased. There are two main reasons for this: firstly, students found guidance from relevant services in the university such as the Study Advice Service. This is concluded by the remaining high percentage during the research, which asked students whether PDP tutorials directed them towards the appropriate services and information to support their academic performance. Secondly, the students started developing and contextualising the concept of academic writing and analytical thinking, as well as reflection. They did not, therefore, need as much support in the second and third years.

In the final aspect - the career support of PDP - the Year 1 students have rated PDP very high (Table 1, C below). However, as they progress through the years, career advice from a PDP tutor is rated as lower. Students with clear career aspirations such as Teaching or Social Work could clearly be guided. However, students who wished to study Educational Studies as a discipline were left with some confusion in terms of their future career development.

Questions	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
A. Pastoral care			
The pastoral support was helpful	84%	66%	60%
B. Academic Development			
PDP tutorials helped me to improve my academic writing in terms of:			
1.critical thinking	52%	37%	27%
2. analytical thinking	63%	60%	35%
3. reflection	63%	55%	35%
PDP tutorials directed me towards the appropriate services/information to support my academic performance	95%	87%	87%
PDP helped me to develop my learning style	55%	41%	39%
C. Professional Development			
PDP tutorials directed me towards the appropriate support to find out information on career options	94%	35%	21%
PDP tutorials helped me to focus on what to do after University	60%	35%	19%

Table1: Students' responses to PDP

In the question on alternative formats of PDP, students suggested the following:

1. Group tutorials (67%)
2. Voluntary and not mandatory (56%)
3. On-line (43%).

It is interesting that in the PDP implementation, space for individual tutorials was created. However, 67% of students recommended group tutorials - especially in academic writing and professional development focus meetings with tutors. Some students felt that on-line PDP tutorials would have benefited them more as it would have been better suited to their timetable and their life style.

Overall, students found PDP tutorials helpful, commenting that they took advantage of this opportunity. Here are some quotes that precisely describe this:

"I found the PDP tutor quite approachable and very helpful in the way they deal with comments and queries."

"Enjoyed the tutorial very much and felt like I could tell her if I had any problems. Very welcome and easy to talk to"

"Support in PDPs was excellent - more PDPs may have helped."

Overall, students have rated PDP as being helpful to their academic progress, yet there were still some concerns with the aspect of professional development.

Staff's responses:

In the first group interview the Academic Staff raised a number of issues to be considered. There were both scepticism and consideration regarding the implementation. On the one hand, all staff agreed that students should be encouraged to produce PDP files; on the other, a number of issues were raised: firstly, whether PDP should remain a voluntary or a compulsory activity was among the main concerns of the staff. Secondly, to what extent PDP should become the students' responsibility and be student-driven. Questions such as 'How can staff and students be motivated to engage with the initiative?' and 'Should PDPs be assessed?' were asked. Finally, the staff felt that due to personal values and different experiences among staff, the PDP might allow opportunities for inconsistency within the student experience.

Ward (2001) discusses the "psychological engagement" of staff and students with PDP. Indeed, both elements need to be engaged in this process, although staff questioned how this was to be achieved.

Data from the group interviews over the three years revealed that staff perceived PDP as time-consuming and that PDP should remain voluntary and not be assessed; furthermore, the staff felt unable to help all the students with queries regarding their career support.

Staff suggested that PDP would not be assessed. If it were to be assessed then it becomes part of the pedagogical practice and, consequently, a "pedagogical function" rather than an "ideological function", where students are invited to reflect on their learning processes. If it became an assessed product, however, this contradicts the purpose of PDP, which is to work alongside the academic process/learning process. Studying within HE is about exploration, intellectual adventure and, despite the financial burden that has troubled students in recent years, enjoyment. PDP can eventually become part of the intellectual adventure. PDP, as has been mentioned, is a reality for all programmes. However, as part of the intellectual adventure, it should remain removed from any form of assessment. If there is a policy move for an assessment of PDP there is a fear that it would become an academic burden for the students, and an extra activity for the already over-worked academic staff. In such an environment PDP serves as an academic chore rather than as serving any pedagogical value, and formal assessment would obliterate its original nature. Any assessment of PDP would divorce the PDP from its true nature, which was to place learners at the centre of their learning, and for them to gain independence, reflection and reasoning.

Regarding the nature of PDP, it aims to offer students a view of preparation for employability, and is fully linked to their subject studies, and also offers a preparation for integrated sociality; staff subsequently felt unable to help students fully. This suggested that integration of career advice into PDP is essential. However, this should be implemented *via* effective and efficient use of the resources of the institutions' Career Services, towards which students would be guided by staff.

Data from the staff interviews not only revealed practical and theoretical problems; it was also felt that PDP could help academics. In the final interviews, when the students were in their final year, staff suggested that PDP had helped them indirectly. Guiding students towards independence of learning and acquiring practical and cognitive skills - such as reasoning and reflection - improved the quality of the students' performance.

Conclusions

In the final section of this paper there is a need to acknowledge that this method of PDP implementation is not to be considered as a model to follow, nor is it by any means perfect. The current paper does not attempt to suggest an implementation model in competition with existing ones, as this would contradict the theoretical principles underpinning the implementation of PDP throughout this project. As was mentioned at the beginning of this paper, post-Modernism deals with the rejection of truths; consequently, this paper could not possibly conclude by suggesting another model. Learning is viewed in this paper as a process, and PDP is to facilitate this process. Offering a model would codify the process, which was not the goal of the project.

On the contrary: the findings of the evaluation of the implementation of PDP policy, and the issues raised by students and staff, suggest that institutions should be freed from models of PDP implementation. Institutions should retain flexibility in terms of how they decide to use PDP. PDP is either part of the curriculum, an extension of the pedagogical practice, or an activity offered to the students, and should remain the decision of individual institutions and programmes. PDP is about encouraging individualisation from its students. This individualisation should be retained in the implementation.

So far we have seen that students found the PDP experience helpful to their learning processes, and staff have confirmed that this was the stronger contribution of PDP. During the project PDP remained a pedagogical act, rather than a pedagogical activity embedded in or as an extension to the curriculum.

Both staff and students offered a number of alternatives of how PDP could be implemented. This paper concludes that flexibility of PDP implementation should be retained among institutions and by individual institutions' learning cultures. PDP as a policy is to be celebrated in Higher Education. However, to prevent having another policy imposed as a burden, either on staff or students, the implementation should remain flexible. In such an environment the ideological practices of PDP can contribute to the pedagogical value of its purpose and contribute to the institution's learning process, rather than becoming merely an academic chore.

References

Clegg, S. (2004) 'Critical readings: progress files and the production of the autonomous learner', in *Teaching in Higher Education*, vol.9, no 3, pp. 287-298.

Clegg, S. and Bradley, S. (2006) 'Models of Personal Development Planning: Practice and process', in *British Educational Research Journal*, Vol. 32(1) pp. 57-76.

Clegg, S., Hudson, A. and Steele, J. (2003) 'The Emperor's new clothes: Globalisation and e-learning', in *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 24(1), pp. 40–53.

Clegg, S., Tan, J. and Saeidi, S. (2002) 'Reflecting or acting? Reflective practice and continuing professional development in the UK higher education', in *Reflective Practice*, 3(1), pp. 131–146.

Cosgrove, P. (1996) 'Ecological Modernisation: Ecological Modernities', in *Environmental Politics*, 5(3), pp. 476-500.

Edwards, E. and Usher, R. (2000) *Globalisation and Pedagogy: Space, place and identity* (London: Routledge).

Fry, H., Davenport, E.S., Woodman, T., and Pee, B. (2002) 'Developing Progress Files: A case study', in *Teaching in Higher Education*, vol. 7, no.1, pp. 97-111.

Huntington, A., and Moss, B. (2004) 'Personal Development Planning: Into a Brave World?', in *Social Work Education*, vol. 23, no. 1, pp. 51-62.

Ixer, G. (1999) 'There's no such thing as reflection', in *British Journal of Social Work*, vol. 29, no. 4, pp. 513–527.

Jackson, N. (2002) *Guide Curriculum Design: Personal Development Planning, first draft*, York: LTSN Generic Centre, web resource (www.ltsn.ac.uk/genericcentre).

Jackson, N. (2001) *Personal Development Planning: What Does it Mean? An Interactive Working Paper*, www.ltsn.ac.uk/genericcentre/projects/pdp, accessed (19 May 2007).

LTSN Generic Centre (2001) *Guide for busy academics no. 2. Example of a programme specification written for students highlighting the role of PDP in a course.* http://www.ltsn.ac.uk/application.asp?app_resources.asp&process_full_record§ion_generic&id_67 (accessed 23 May 2007).

LTSN Generic Centre (2002) *Guide for busy academics no. 1. Personal development planning.* http://www.ltsn.ac.uk/application.asp?app_resources.asp&process_full_record§ion_generic&id_66 (accessed 23 May 2007).

LTSN Generic Centre (2003a) *Guide for busy academics.* http://www.ltsn.ac.uk/genericcentre/index.asp?id_16907 (accessed 24 May 2007).

Learning and Teaching Support Network Generic Centre (2003b) *Guide for busy academics no.3. Using personal development planning to help students gain employment.* http://www.ltsn.ac.uk/appli298cation.asp?app_resources.asp&process_full_record§ion_generic&id_68 (accessed 24 May 2007).

NCIHE (1997) *Higher Education in a Learning Society. Report of the National Committee of Inquiry into Higher Education*, 2 volumes, HMSO, London.

Pepper, D. (2000) *Understanding Contemporary Society*, Milton Keynes: Open University Press.

Quality Assurance Agency (2001) *Guidelines for Progress Files*. Available online at: <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/crntwork/progfileHE/guidelines/progfile2001.pdf> (accessed 18 May 2007).

Rist, R.C. (1997). On the relations among educational research paradigms: from disdain to détente, in *Anthropology and Education Quarterly*, vol. 8(2), pp. 42-49.

Rogoff, B. (1998). *Apprenticeship in Thinking: Cognitive development in social context*, (2nd edn.), New York: Oxford University Press.

Rogoff, R.C. (1990) *Apprenticeship in Thinking: Cognitive development in social context*, New York: Oxford University Press.

Schon, D. (1987) *Educating the Reflective Practitioner*, New York: Basis Books.

Slight, A., and Bloxham, S. (2005) *Embedding Careers Advice and Personal Development Planning into the Social Sciences*, paper presented in the Ninth Quality in Higher Education International Seminar in collaboration with ESET and the Independent, Birmingham 27-28 January 2005.

Ward, R. (2001) Developing and Implementing Institutional Policy on Personal Development Planning in Ward, R., and Jackson, N., (Eds.) *Personal Development Planning: Institutional Case Studies*, York: Learning and Teaching Support network.

Wood, D., and Wood, H. (1996) 'Vygotsky Tutoring and Learning', in *Oxford Review of Education*, 131, pp. 135-145.

Wood, D.J., Bruner, J.S., and Ross, G. (1996) 'The Role of Tutoring in Problem solving', in *Journal of Child psychology and Psychiatry*, 17, pp. 89-100.