

# 25 years of the Group for Learning in Art and Design: A context

Journeaux, J.

Post-print deposited in [Curve](#) November 2015

**Original citation:**

Journeaux, J. (2015) 25 years of the Group for Learning in Art and Design: A context. Art, Design and Communication in Higher Education, volume 14 (2): 111+. DOI: 10.1386/adch.14.2.111\_7

[http://dx.doi.org/10.1386/adch.14.2.111\\_7](http://dx.doi.org/10.1386/adch.14.2.111_7)

Intellect

**Copyright © and Moral Rights are retained by the author(s) and/ or other copyright owners. A copy can be downloaded for personal non-commercial research or study, without prior permission or charge. This item cannot be reproduced or quoted extensively from without first obtaining permission in writing from the copyright holder(s). The content must not be changed in any way or sold commercially in any format or medium without the formal permission of the copyright holders.**

**CURVE is the Institutional Repository for Coventry University**

<http://curve.coventry.ac.uk/open>

## **25 years of the Group for Learning in Art & Design: a context**

Jill Journeaux, Coventry School of Art & Design, Coventry University, UK.

In order to inform planning for and discussions at the 2015 Group for Learning in Art & Design (GLAD) Conference, which celebrated the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the group, I compiled a brief chronological account of key events in that period. This is an edited version of the original, which is offered as an aide memoir about the recent history of UK art and design higher education (HE). I recognize that educational policy is not uniform across Northern Ireland, England, Scotland and Wales, for example, in relation to student tuition fees, which are not charged in Scotland. However, for the purposes of clarity this article uses the term UK to point to general policy positions that relate to some or all of the UK.

1988 – 2014:

1988 - ‘On Not Sitting With Nellie’, a seminal publication, was drafted by a group of people who were part of the Council for National Academic Awards (CNAA) and the Council for Higher Education Art & Design (CHEAD) Steering Group for Teaching and Learning. Those individuals became founding members of the Group for Learning in Art & Design. The paper evolved from a presentation by Cal Swann, which he had previously given at a CHEAD meeting, in which he argued the need to reconsider the then ‘sitting with Nellie’ one-to-one approach to teaching in art & design, in the context of increasing student numbers and reductions in staffing. See [www.gladhe.org.uk/conferences](http://www.gladhe.org.uk/conferences), for the paper and GLAD Times on the same site which offers a history of the group since 1988.

1989 - 1<sup>st</sup> GLAD Conference held at Liverpool Polytechnic: Teaching and Learning in Art & Design HE.

1990 - 2<sup>nd</sup> GLAD Conference held at Manchester Polytechnic: Teaching and Learning in Art & Design HE.

*1991 – Government Statistical Service data indicates c.1.176 million students in the UK in HE, with c.748,000 in full time study, and c.428,000 in part-time study. The increase in student numbers from the early 1980’s onwards had occurred mainly in the polytechnics and colleges sector and these institutions had absorbed the greater numbers by accepting a reduced unit of funding per student.*

*As a result student numbers in polytechnics and colleges overtook those in the university sector by the late nineteen eighties and early nineteen nineties, with c.625,000 students in the polytechnic and colleges sector against c.524,000 in the university sector. This imbalance in numbers contributed to the decision to abolish the so called ‘binary divide’ between the two types of higher education institutions, and in 1991 the Conservative government issued a White Paper – Higher Education: A New Framework, announcing the abolition of the division between universities and polytechnics and introducing a new quality assurance regime for the unified HE sector, thus bringing all UK HE institutions teaching and learning activities into a centralized over-arching statutory framework.*

*1992 - the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) included those institutions that had previously been polytechnics or colleges thus including many Art & Design staff for the first time.*

1992 - GLAD Conference: Bradford University – Assessment: Present Practices and Future Developments.

*1993 - a two-tier quality assurance regime was introduced consisting of an assessment of teaching and learning at subject level, followed by an audit of all institutions' quality control mechanisms and procedures. This was rapidly replaced by a single quality assurance agency regime following lobbying by the Council of Vice-Chancellors and Principals (CVCP), and thus the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) came into existence. The QAA established the process of Academic Review, which operated on the basis of 'variations of intensity' of external scrutiny.*

*Following the move to university status, and in response to the need to widen participation rates many institutions began to introduce modular award structures that allowed for increased student numbers, greater flexibility of and access to provision for students.. The move to a particularly UK form of modularity was also driven by the need to adhere to the evolving demands of the QAA in terms of transparency and the Academic Framework, and subsequently by the Bologna Declaration of 1999.*

1993 - GLAD Conference held at Oxford Brookes University: Maintaining the Quality of Student Learning in Art & Design.

1993 - GLAD Conference held at The London Institute: After the Starting Gate.

1995 - GLAD Conference held at The Liverpool John Moores University: External Examining in Art & Design.

1996 - GLAD Conference held at the Nottingham Trent University: Learning for Living in Art & Design.

*1997- in response to the publication of the Dearing Report, the New Labour government education secretary David Blunkett implemented a system of means tested tuition fees beginning in 1998, and abolished the student maintenance grant, replacing it with student loans. The Dearing Report also recommended the establishment of a professional training body for university teachers.*

1998 - GLAD Conference held at the Nottingham Trent University: Demonstrating Good Teaching in Art & Design.

*In the period 1998-2000, as part of the QAA Subject Review process, UK Art & Design programmes went through a process of external peer evaluation, which used a numerical outcome as the sum of the assessment of 6 components, which were scored 1- 4 giving a maximum score of 24.*

2000 - GLAD Conference held at Manchester Metropolitan University: Learning From Reviews.

2000 - the Art, Design & Media Subject Centre was established at the University of Brighton, to support and enhance learning and teaching in art & design HE. It was set up with the help of GLAD, and chaired by Professor David Vaughan, who was also the Chair of GLAD. The Centre was taken over by the Higher Education Academy in 2007, who funded it until 2011.

*In 2000 the Institute of Learning & Teaching in HE (ILTHE) was established as a result of the 1998 Dearing Report, and in the same year the National Teaching Fellowship Scheme (NTFS) was established to celebrate and reward outstanding achievement by individual teachers, in learning and teaching in higher education.*

*The 2001 RAE followed quickly on the heels of the 1998-2000 QAA Subject Reviews and taken together the results of these assessments offered clear indicators of the health of an institutions provision in Art & Design.*

*The QAA Art & Design Subject Benchmarks were published in 2002, and were updated in 2008. The subject benchmark statements addressed undergraduate art and design HE and recognized that the breadth of disciplines that constitute art and design exist in a continuous state of change and development. Written by a group of senior academics representing the diversity of UK art and design HE provision, the benchmarks were drafted to accommodate a wide and evolving range of provision. The benchmark statements were intended to offer institutions the flexibility to place more or less emphasis on particular aspects of art and design study whilst also remaining within the stated expectations for the subject, thus allowing them to update and innovate in relation to curriculum design, content, delivery and assessment.*

2003 - GLAD Conference held at the University of the West of England: At The Watershed: succeeding with 50%’.

*2003 - the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE), Universities UK and Standing Council of Principals (SCOP) recommended the establishment of a single body responsible for standards in teaching in HE. In response the ILTHE, the Learning & Teaching Support Network (LTSN) and the National Coordination Team for Teaching Quality Enhancement and Funding were merged to form the Higher Education Academy (HEA).*

*2003 - HEFCE introduced the Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education survey (DLHE) a statistical survey which aims to contact UK and European Union (EU) domiciled graduates from HE courses 6 months after graduation to establish the nature of employment or further study that they are engaged with, and their income, on a specific day within the survey period. The survey is conducted by the UK Higher Education Statistics Agency. It takes the form of a questionnaire, which is conducted on-line, by telephone or through the post. Target response rates are set to ensure the validity of outcomes.*

*Following the Comprehensive Spending Review of 2004 it became clear that universities needed to be able to increase their income to make up for shortfalls in public funding. In 2004 Charles Clarke the then Labour government education secretary took a bill through parliament, which allowed universities to set their own tuition fees up to a level of £3000.00 per annum.*

*2005 – the National Student Survey (NSS) was introduced by HEFCE, who published the results on the HEFCE website alongside the DLHE results. The NSS is a census of mainly final year undergraduates which is completed by students at all publicly funded HE institutions in England, Scotland wales and Northern Ireland, which gathers opinions from those students about their experience of their courses. It asks 23 questions relating to 6 aspects of their learning experience and includes one question about overall student satisfaction and another regarding satisfaction with the students' union. The NSS results are made available to prospective students through the Unistats website.*

*2005 - 2010 HEFCE funds the Centres for Excellence in Learning & Teaching (CETLs). These were established to 'reward excellent teaching practice and to invest in that practice further in order to increase its impact across a wider teaching and learning community'. Institutions had to bid for CETL status in a specific area of work and a total of 74 Centres were established in England to reward and recognize excellent teaching in a variety of disciplines and cross-disciplinary practices. This represented 'an investment of c.£315 million pounds over 5 years by HEFCE in the enhancement of learning'.*

The 2007 GLAD Residential Conference was held at Cambridge University which resulted in the book, 'The student experience in art and design higher education: drivers for change' edited by Linda Drew, and published by Jill Rogers Associates, Cambridge, in 2008, which included a set of papers written by participants at the event.

*2007 – The first Complete University Guide compiled by Mayfield University Consultants was initially published in The Daily Telegraph under the title The Good university Guide. The ranking currently uses the following 9 criteria to which a statistical technique is applied to give a total score for each university: academic services spend, completion, entry standards, facilities spend, good honours, graduate prospects, research assessment/quality, student satisfaction and staff: student ratio.*

2008 - GLAD Conference held at the Nottingham Trent University: The student experience in art & design: drivers for change.

*2008 - the last RAE, which is then replaced by the Research Excellence Framework (REF).*

2009 - GLAD Conference – Dialogues in Art & Design: promoting and sharing excellence, which showcased the work of the Centres of Excellence in Teaching and Learning, in art and design was held at York St John University.

*2010 - the higher threshold for tuition fees was raised from £3,290 to £9,000 per annum following the Browne Review into the future of Higher Education Funding and the publication of 'Securing a Sustainable Future for Higher Education'. The Browne report recommended that more investment should be available for Higher Education, student choice should be increased, everyone who has the potential should be able to benefit from H.E., and that no-one should have to pay until they start work and when payments are made they should be affordable.*

2011 - GLAD Conference held at Coventry University: Resources of Hope: facing the future of learning and teaching in HE art & design.

*2011 - HEFCE introduced the publication of Key Information Sets (KIS) for every undergraduate course. Unistats brings together comparable information sets in key areas to inform prospective applicants and assist them in making key decisions about what and where to study. The core information is called the Key Information Set, and includes: NSS student satisfaction data, DLHE data, how the course is taught and study patterns, how the course is assessed, the accreditation status of the course and the costs associated with each course such as tuition fees and accommodation. Applicants can compare these and other data for courses they are considering applying to.*

2012 - GLAD Conference held at Kingston University: It started with a KIS.

2104 - GLAD Conference held at Sheffield Hallam University: The Studio: where do we learn? Where do we teach?

2014 - 1<sup>st</sup> Research Excellence Framework (REF).

Over the last 25 years UK HE has faced challenges of increased accountability and transparency. Some commentators have argued that these challenges, alongside the massification of HE and the introduction of student tuition fees, have led to increasing consumer awareness on the part of parents and students, and the increasing commodification of university education. The use of published metrics in the form of the NSS, DLHE, the establishment of university league tables, KIS, the RAE and REF, has arguably shifted HE from being a self and peer regulated sector, to a centrally assessed one.

However, if one looks at the period through the perspective of advances in learning and teaching in art & design HE, a positive narrative emerges around the successes of the art & design sector overall in the QAA Subject Review assessments of 1998 - 2000, the outcome of RAE 2001, and the development of the Art & Design Subject Benchmarks in 2002. Alongside these there is the investment made by HEFCE in 2005 in the CETL's and the NTFS and the work of the Art Design and Media Subject Centre from 2000 - 2011.

References:

Browne, E. (2010) *Securing a sustainable future for higher education funding and student finance*. Department of Business Innovation and Skills. London, Her Majesty's Government.

Buss, D. (2002) 'Benchmarking Art and Design'. *International Journal of Art & Design Education*, Vol. 21 (2), 175

Dearing, R. (1997) *Higher Education in the learning society*. London, Her Majesty's Stationery Office.

Drew, L, (Ed), Last, J., Lewis, S., and Wade, S. (Associate Eds), (2008) *The student experience in art and design higher education: drivers for change*. Cambridge, Jill Rogers Associates Ltd.

Department for Education and Skills (2003) *The Future of Higher Education*. London, Her Majesty's Stationery Office.

Group for Learning in Art & Design (2015), <[http:// www.gladhe.org.uk](http://www.gladhe.org.uk) (25 July 2015).

Gillard, D. (2011) Education in England: a brief history  
<<http://www.educationengland.org.uk/history> (10 August 2015).

Higher Education Funding Council for England <<http://www.hefce.ac.uk> (25 July 2015).

Higher Education Statistics Agency <<http://www.hesa.ac.uk> (10 August 2015).

Klemencic, M. (2011) 'The public role of higher education and student participation in higher education governance', pp.62-73, in *Higher Education and Society in Changing Times: looking back and looking forward*, Eds. Brennan, J. and Shah, T. Centre for Higher Education Research and Information (CHERI) London, Open University.

HEA National Teaching Fellowship Scheme  
<<https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/professional-recognition/awards/national-teaching-fellowship-scheme-ntfs> (10 August 2015).

Quality Assurance Agency (2002). Subject benchmark statement: Art and Design.  
<<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/Subject-benchmark-statement---Art-and-design-.aspx>. (2 May 2015).

Quality Assurance Agency (2008) Updated Subject benchmark statement: Art and Design. <<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/Subject-benchmark-statement---Art-and-design-.pdf> (10 August 2015)

Research Assessment Exercise <<http://www.rae.ac.uk/aboutus/background.asp> (10 August 2015)

Research Excellence framework <<http://www.ref.ac.uk> (10 August 2015)

Swann, C. (ed.) Crouan, K., Callaway, W., Lewis, S., Marshall, T., Thorne, S., Vaughan, D., Wilson, M. (1988) *On Not Sitting With Nellie*, CNAA/ CHEAD working party paper at [www.gladhe.org.uk/conferences](http://www.gladhe.org.uk/conferences) ( 23August 2015)

Unistats <<https://unistats.direct.gov.uk> (10 August 2015)