

SPECIAL TEWT EDITION ON LAMS AND LEARNING DESIGN

VOLUME THREE

INTRODUCTION

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One of the main aims of this third edition on Learning Activity Management System (LAMS) and Learning Design is to draw attention to what a growing number of researchers are now doing, and to provide an important point of reference for those interested in building on what has already been done.

In a world of increasing turmoil and growing uncertainty, new and abrupt changes now threaten to skew educational priorities and it seems that in many countries immense upheavals in education may be approaching. Part of the great challenge that those in education will be facing will be finding effective ways of addressing issues such as how education can be delivered in an energy efficient way, how the cost of education can be reduced, how more people of all ages can develop themselves further by participating in educational study, and how the effectiveness of online learning can be improved. Thus this publication also emphasises how a closely-knit community of dedicated researchers working within their fields of interest may be helping to provide greater understanding of the ever more strategically important issue of online learning in the 21st century. In this way, the papers in this volume also evidence commitment to trying to address the overriding, overarching and multifaceted issue of improving our understanding of how humans really learn online.

This third edition on LAMS and Learning Design[1] comprises thirteen papers. The first paper, which is by Eva Dobozy of Edith Cowan University (Australia), explores the utility of interactive lecture podcasting in LAMS and the impact of structured dialogue design. It reports how curriculum renewal and innovation were greeted with scepticism by teacher education students enrolled in a compulsory curriculum unit at an Australian university. Paper two, written by James Dalziel of Macquarie University (Australia), describes the assumptions behind the LAMS visual authoring environment at the levels of both educational theory and software design. The paper also presents a review of implementation experiences among educators, including

experiences from the LAMS Community. The paper concludes with reflection on future directions for visualisation of Learning Design, particularly in the area of annotation and time-based visualisation.

Paper three is written by Rebecca Galley and Gráinne Conole of The Open University (UK) and by James Dalziel and Ernie Ghiglione of Macquarie University (Australia). This paper explores how Cloudworks might be used as a ‘pedagogical wrapper’ for LAMS sequences thus supporting the sharing of ideas across professional boundaries and facilitating collaborative design, evaluation and critical reflection. In paper four, Dejan Ljubojevic and Diana Laurillard of The London Knowledge Lab (Institute of Education, UK) describe the two aims of the work in which they are engaged. One of the aims is to understand the critical factors regarding what makes good teaching and learning activity design so that it can be fore-grounded in a representational format. The other aim is to define a computational model for representing the pedagogy inside the learning design. In paper five, Matt Bower and Maximillian Wittmann of Macquarie University (Australia) discuss how both open-source educational systems LAMS and Moodle provide a range of tools that can be used to support the development of pre-service students’ learning design capabilities. An analysis of how sixty-eight teacher education students were surveyed to gauge their perceptions of each of these systems as frameworks for designing learning experiences is presented.

Paper six, by Jill Fresen of Oxford University (UK), reports on two research projects one of which is completed and the other being a partial follow-up study in the early stages of investigation. The first study investigates a range of factors that directly affect the quality of web-supported learning opportunities. The outcome of that study is a taxonomy of critical success factors for quality web-supported learning based on six categories: institutional factors, technical factors, pedagogical factors, instructional design factors, lecturer factors and student factors. The new study takes as a starting point one of the categories of the taxonomy, namely lecturer factors. In paper seven, Karen Baskett of The National Prescribing Curriculum (NPC) in Sydney (Australia) reports on a series of online, case-based modules designed to improve prescribing performance and confidence in emerging Australian prescribers. The modules mirror the decision-making process outlined in the WHO Guide to Good Prescribing and were developed as an initiative to combat emerging data that, increasingly, medical graduates demonstrate shortfalls in basic pharmacological knowledge and prescribing skills.

In paper eight, Chris Alexander of The University of Nicosia (Cyprus) presents a report-like paper which describes significant LAMS work currently being undertaken at The University of Nicosia in Cyprus. The paper concludes with the assertion that LAMS can be used to deliver local and international full e-learning courses effectively and inexpensively within a supportive and dynamic administrative and organizational super-structure. Paper nine is written by Chris Campbell of The University of Notre Dame (Australia) and by Leanne Cameron of Macquarie University (Australia). In this paper the authors look at area of introducing Learning Design and LAMS to pre-service education students. In paper ten, Spyros Papadakis of The Hellenic Open University (Greece) and Maria Kordaki of The University of the Aegean (Greece), present a pilot evaluation study of LAMS performed by Greek computing teachers. The aim of this study was twofold: to investigate the usability of LAMS as a whole context of tools, and to evaluate a Questions & Answers Cognitive Skills Wizard (Q&A CS-Wizard) tool from the teachers' perspective.

Paper eleven is written by Muesser Cemal Nat of The University of Greenwich (UK), Simon Walker of The University of Greenwich (UK), Mohammad Dastbaz of The University of East London (UK), and Liz Bacon of The University of Greenwich (UK). This paper describes two different approaches for the design of personalised and non-personalised online learning environments which have been developed to investigate whether personalised e-learning is more efficient than non-personalised e-learning. Maria Kordaki of The University of the Aegean (Greece) is the author of paper twelve. This study presents an experiment aimed at the design of short learning courses in the context of LAMS, using a number of specific context-free collaboration design patterns implemented within LAMS. The final paper in the volume is by Antonio Brenes Castaño, Candela Contero Urgal, Gregorio Rodríguez Gómez, Miguel Ángel Gómez Ruiz, Beatriz Gallego Noche all of The University of Cádiz (Spain). In this paper the authors describe how LAMS might help English language teachers to design and implement e-learning-oriented e-assessment and to enhance the techniques they employ to provide complete assessment units embracing all linguistic skills.

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Notes

1. The original call was announced in a LAMS newsletter on <http://lamscommunity.org/dotlrn/clubs/educationalcommunity/forums/message-view?message%5fid=985063>; the call is also available on <http://dl.unic.ac.cy/TeachingEnglishWithTechnology/TEWT2010CALL.doc>

2. Please cite as: Alexander, C. (2010). Special TEWT Edition on LAMS and Learning Design Volume Three – Introduction. In J. Dalziel, C. Alexander, J. Krajka & R. Kiely (Eds.), Special Edition on LAMS and Learning Design. *Teaching English with Technology*, 10(3), i-iv.