

winner of the 2005 ICTEV educator of the year:

LEANNE LAMB, BENDIGO SENIOR SECONDARY COLLEGE

Leanne Lamb, Bendigo Senior Secondary College, Bendigo is the 2005 ICTEV Victorian Educator of the Year.

Working across three curriculum area and with the broader educational community, the integration of information and communication technologies is essential to my teaching practice.

SOSE ONLINE LEARNING PROJECT

In 2004 a formal report on the findings of the SOSE Online Research Project, begun in 2002, was submitted to the Bendigo Senior Secondary College Council. The SOSE Online research project for VCE Unit 1 and 2 Classical Societies and Cultures aimed to explore ICT in the SOSE curriculum, enhance student outcomes and engagement, 'electronify' resources and share findings. The action research included students utilising a range of ICT tools and specially designed learning objects to complete class work tasks, promote reflective and independent learning strategies and develop specific skill sets.

The most successful aspect of the project for students in my Classical Societies and Cultures classes has been the incorporation of forum discussions and utilisation of other peer education strategies, such as email 'study buddies' and the inclusion of exemplar student work on the extranet. Student reflective and analysis skills have also been heightened, through the use of regular skills-checklists and assignments that require them to apply higher order thinking skills to their research – such as formally analysing the reliability and usefulness of websites.

Some of the work from the Classical Societies and Cultures course, for example the skills checklists, has informed the development of a cross-curricular 'Researching Together' package developed by the College library. Equally, the success of the forum discussions has been a key factor in this tool being adopted in a range of other humanities based subjects in the school. Informal WIKIs, operated using the insert comment function on Word, have also been trialled to explore content in more depth and collectively analyse passages. The SOSE Online Project has been at the forefront of educational innovation, utilising new and emerging technologies in a variety of classroom contexts.

VCAL INVOLVEMENT

2004 was the pilot year of a specialised Foundation VCAL Programme, where at-risk students were skilled in the use of basic ICT tools, mobile phones were used extensively to track students in an applied learning context and games were employed to develop skills in literacy, numeracy and team work. The highlight of the Foundation VCAL Programme has been the successful integration of learning from leisure. Students were encouraged to bring in their X-Box, PS2's and CD Roms for specific classes.

The 'Team Eye Toy' was a particular success for students to develop communication strategies, especially with a deaf-autistic class member, and it served to cement team relationships and provided an applied learning format for reflecting upon team processes. In Literacy, the use of PS2 sports games provided the impetus for written 'Sports Reports' that were constructed after the 'captain' and 'manager' of each team/event were interviewed in a mock press conference. The CD of the Sims, projected onto the whiteboard, encouraged students in a variety of writing formats, such as bibliographies and diaries and assisted in their numeracy budgeting and personal organisation outcomes.

Aside from games, students were skilled in the use of digital cameras, uploading class notes from the Mimio, scanning and software such as Word, Outlook, Excel, and Publisher. Students produced professional standard brochures for the College open day and shared their experiences with local 7 -10 college students. Mobile phones were used by groups and by staff to monitor the progress of project work and the whereabouts of students working off campus.

Integrating the technology utilised in student leisure activities for classroom learning experiences enabled students unfamiliar with the more traditional ICT tools to feel comfortable asking other class members for assistance and encouraged students to recognise the opportunities for learning in everything they do.

My Foundation English class undertake the 'ICT and Communication' area of study where they produce a digital resume using FrontPage or DreamWeaver. The resume is used in conjunction with mock job interviews that are initially applied for via email and the completion of a web form. This initiates students into processes such as applying for Coles Myer positions online and is supported by our MIPS staff who provide constructive feedback on the entire process.

Within the region, the Goldfields portal is utilised to communicate and share VCAL resources, quality assurance information and curriculum materials. The Goldfields portal is the most efficient means to share information about VCAL in our area. It is accessible to all local 7 -10 schools and I operate forums with other providers, such as Mildura Senior Secondary College, to build an online community for the relatively new VCAL course.

As ICT is fully integrated into my classroom and professional practices, I work to ensure that parents remain informed of student progress via email and sending home completed examples of class work burnt to CD. This extensive contact with parents has resulted in some students with mental health issues being able to complete course work and meet unit outcomes where they otherwise would have failed to successfully complete a subject. It is also an efficient means to keep parents informed of what is happening at school and, for at risk students, provides a connection between home and school that is essential for their success.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Within BSSC I deliver formal and informal professional development sessions about integrating ICT into classroom pedagogies, but I also provide students with the opportunity to 'have their say' through presenting to the College leadership team and to other educational stakeholders in the local area. Consolidating ICT skills is essential and to ensure these skills are transferable, so I encourage students to prepare the invitations and electronic presentation for the VCAL Graduation ceremony, which serves to share both their skills and the work they do in classes with the broader community.

My Classical Societies and Cultures students have utilised digital media to present their experiences to College Council in support of the SOSE Online Project and in conjunction with a cross-curricula study tour that involved contact with the art and history courses available in Prato, (a Monash campus in Italy). It is imperative that colleagues can 'see' the value in integrating ICT into classroom practice through watching the professionalism with which students approach presentation tasks.

The Goldfields Portal and VCAL discussion forums provide a collegial context for discussion of educational issues and for the sharing of resources. It supports teaching practice because the online community is broader than any particular school, TAFE or ACE context, where VCAL and vocational programmes can operate in isolation, and

a range of opinions and resources can be 'traded'. Some of the sharing on the VCAL forum has resulted in students on farming work placements being able to meet Work Related Skills Outcomes through using GPS and the emerging, but internationally popular outdoor pass-time, of geo-cache is being considered as a personal development project that will operate with a range of providers.

ONLINE LEARNING CENTRE: NETSchool

My experience with online learning and integrating ICT into classroom practice for applied learners has also meant that I've been able to consult extensively with the online learning centre, NETSchool Bendigo, in their development of a student interface including the use of forums, blogs and WIKIs for educational purposes.

LODDON CAMPASPE MALLEE REGIONAL INVOLVEMENT

As a VCAL Quality Assurance Panel Member for the LCM region, I have shared my expertise about VCAL and the different ICT tools applicable within classroom and project contexts. Teaching the integrated Foundation VCAL Programme has enabled me to present workshops about our course, and the strategies we utilise to encourage successful outcomes, at a variety of Professional Development programmes across the state. These include the North Eastern Region VCAL PD in Benalla, the Learning & Literacy PD for ACE and FE providers in Wangaratta and at the VCAA New Providers VCAL Induction day at Moonee Valley racetrack.

As part of the SOSE Online research project team, I have also presented about curriculum design and delivery at the Navigator Schools conferences in Christchurch and Adelaide (NavCon2K2 and NavCon2K3).