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Extending and Embedding Work Based Learning across the University: Change Strategies in Action

Dr Barbara Workman – b.workman@mdx.ac.uk

HEFCE CETL initiative - 2005

Work Based Learning
at Middlesex University

Purpose of the CETL's

- To reward excellent teaching practice

- To invest in that practice to increase and deepen its impact across the wider teaching and learning community

- Defined by HEI's themselves

- Evidenced by scholarly practice and successful track record of excellence in T & L

- Demonstrate how excellence will be reflected & advanced by the focus of the CETL

Builds on previous HEFCE work to enhance T & L activity

The CEWBL Aims

CEWBL aims

- To maximise the impact of excellent practice in Work Based Learning within Middlesex University and to provide a catalyst for dissemination of good practice in partnerships with other CETLs and the Higher Education Academy.

Within MU:

- To enhance, extend and customise WBL into each school and across the University by building upon previous award winning work.
    - Impacts on learning resources, WBL research, teaching and learning, curriculum innovation, reward strategy, partnership working
    - Curriculum components – APEL, Learning agreements, Research & development for WBL, Projects

CEWBL hub & spoke
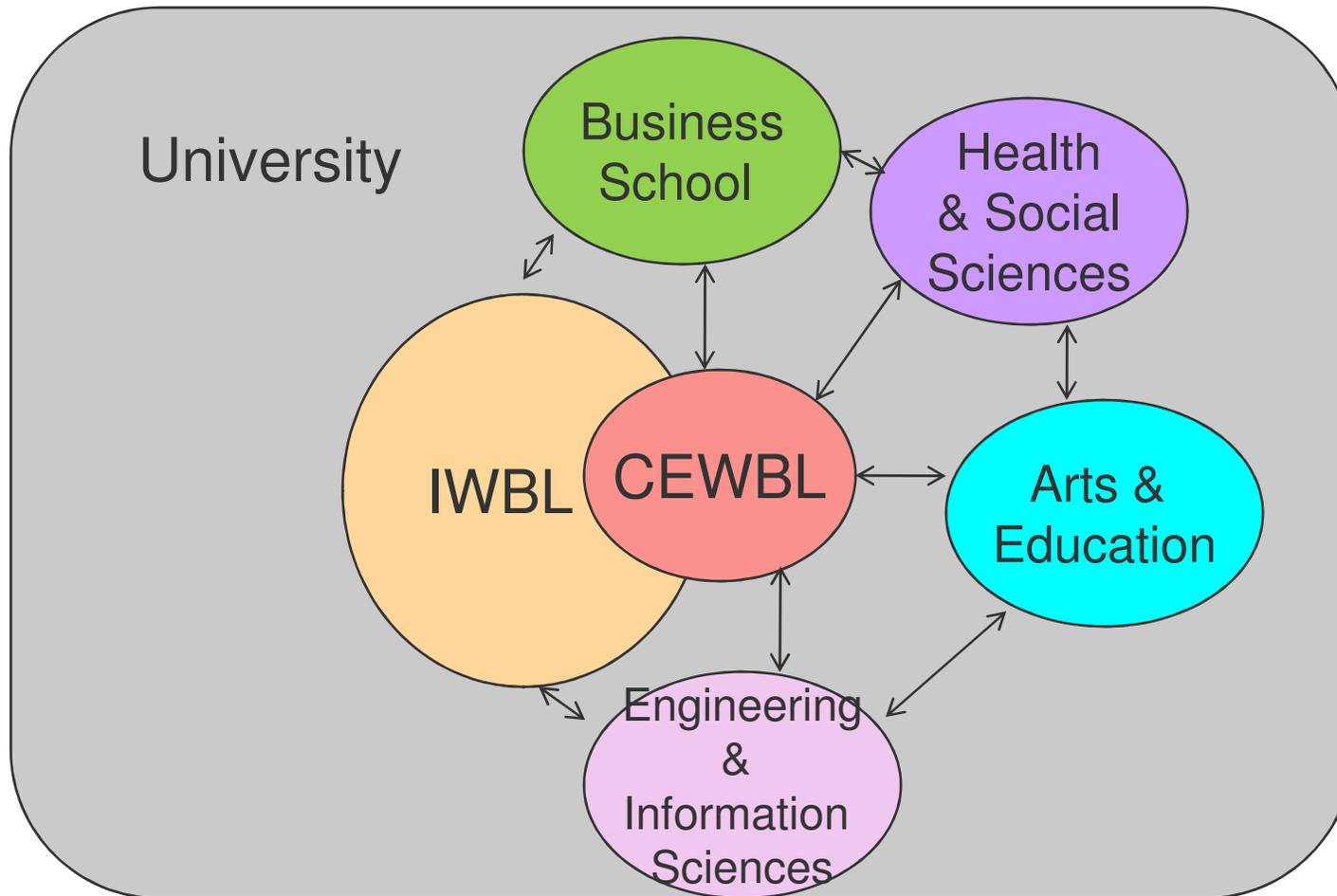
School positions then & now

School	2005	2010
Health and Social Science	Active use of WBL modules in some disciplines, Accreditation	New subject areas & joint validations
Business	PT work modules, use some WBL modules	DProf, MYSAKE model, employability modules, Additional titles, Accreditation
Arts & Education	MA Professional Practice, Ed placements & WBL Graduate Teacher Training	BAPP, Early yrs, extended use of WBL, Accreditation
Engineering & Information sciences	Sandwich yr & placements, no WBL	MSc validation, portfolio MScs

Agency & Change (Land 2001)

- **Political drivers & strategic plan** –
  - culture & context: management centralised & hierarchy, policy i.e. ETLA & Corporate plan, interim evaluation
- **High level champions**
  - strategic influence, 'top down & bottom up', unfreezing/ moving ...
- **Key champions within schools**
  - CEWBL Co-ordinators: discipline focused, activist-modeller, diffusion, reflective practitioners
- **Communication**
  - Normative-re-educative, power-coercive, rational-empirical
  - awareness & profile raising, personal networking
- **Specific strategies**

  - building on current practice; project funding, curriculum models

Some strategies

School Project funding

Personal, professional growth & development, opportunistic 'cracks', diffusion by demonstration, ownership

- MYSAKE – skills, knowledge and attitudes from part time work, (BS)

- Development of e-portfolios for Art & Drama teacher preparation students, & video recording equipment (A & E)

- Evaluation of Web 2.0 WBL teaching pedagogies BAPP (A & E)

- Using learning contracts to embed theory into practice: module designed to support changes in the curriculum (HSS)

- Supporting students to teach IT in the voluntary sector – employability skills (EIS)

Facilitation factors…

- **Recognition of WBL** opportunities at high level – what's in it for operational managers?

- **Innovators and adopters** are risk takers, encouraging creativity and academic initiatives

- **Compromise** – start where others are, work with opportunities, incremental gains, diffusion

- **Technology investment** initially a sweetener but quick obsolescence. Cautious adoption, skill development

- **Gaining additional funding** through HECFE for Employer engagement – added impetus to sticking points

- **Staff skills** – developing skills through support, development & sabbatical relief, limited by resource pool

- **Exemplar projects** showed possibilities for future initiatives

Embedding factors

- **Individual academics:** interested and engaged, keen to improve the student experience, creative 'cracks'
- **Personal networks:** through university systems & academic developers
- **School projects**: gained interest and cooperation, some lasting results through investment
- **Demonstrator projects:** inspire others, particularly with technology and application to practice (using IT)
- **Resistors respond eventually:** willingness to re-interpret products to gain entry, i.e. Award titles
- **Length of CETL's:** incremental gains, longer lasting effect?
- **University policies:** ELTA, Corporate plan, Interim evaluation

Implications for the future in MU

- **Employability strategy** – takes WBL into the full range of programmes, e.g. Business school, *'academic planning in all schools'*

- **Teaching and Learning approaches for Part Time Learners**: – Web 2.0, on-line services & technology, modes of learning delivery and approaches - *'improved flexibility in delivery'*

- **Organisational development**: MODNet project pan university

- **IWBL University framework**: *'a growth in the market for University WBL and on-line courses'*

Others – yet unforeseen....