

August 2005/37

Special initiative

Outcomes of bidding processes

This report is for information

This report provides summaries of the projects funded under phases four and five of the Fund for the Development of Teaching and Learning (FDTL). FDTL aims to stimulate developments in teaching and learning, and to involve institutions in implementing good practice. Each summary includes contact details for further information.

Fund for the Development of Teaching and Learning

Phases four and five funded projects

Fund for the Development of Teaching and Learning: phases four and five funded projects

To	Heads of HEFCE-funded higher education institutions Heads of HEFCE-funded further education colleges Heads of universities in Northern Ireland
Of interest to those responsible for	Learning and Teaching specialists, those responsible for subjects assessed by the Quality Assurance Agency after September 1998
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Executive summary

Purpose

1. This report provides summaries of the projects funded under phases four and five of the Fund for the Development of Teaching and Learning (FDTL).

Key points

2. FDTL aims to stimulate developments in teaching and learning, and to involve institutions in implementing good practice.
3. A total of 43 projects were funded under phase four, at a cost of £7.8 million over three years. A total of 32 projects were funded under phase five, at a cost of £6.9 million over three years.

Action required

4. This report is for information: the descriptions of projects in phase four (Annex A) and phase five (Annex B) provide contact names for further details.

Background

5. The FDTL was launched by HEFCE and the Department of Education, Northern Ireland (DENI) in December 1995. Responsibility for higher and further education in Northern Ireland has since passed to the Department for Employment and Learning (DEL).

6. The aims of the FDTL are to:

- stimulate developments in learning and teaching
- secure the widest possible involvement of institutions in the take-up and implementation of good practice.

7. Funds have been awarded to projects that show the potential to contribute to the development and improvement of learning and teaching through the transfer of information and ideas. This was the first time that HEFCE and DEL had linked the results of the quality assessment process to the allocation of funds in the higher education (HE) sector. Bids could only be made by institutions that had demonstrated, through quality assessment, high quality in their educational provision.

Phase one

8. In December 1995 bids were invited under phase one of the FDTL programme. Phase one covered the 15 subjects assessed under the quality assessment method used between February 1993 and June 1995: anthropology, applied social work, architecture, business and management studies, chemistry, computer sciences/studies, English, environmental studies, geography, geology, history, law, mechanical engineering, music, and social policy and administration.

9. Forty-four projects were funded at a cost of £8.5 million under phase one, as listed in HEFCE R1/97 'FDTL Phase One: HEFCE and DENI Awards'.

Phase two

10. Bids under phase two were invited in December 1996. This phase covered the eight subjects assessed between April 1995 and September 1996: chemical engineering, sociology, linguistics, French, German and related languages, Italian, Iberian languages and studies, and Russian and Eastern European languages and studies.

11. Nineteen projects were funded at a cost of £4 million over three years. These projects started in October 1997 and are listed in HEFCE 98/34 'FDTL phase two: funded projects'.

Phase three

12. Projects in phase three included 16 subjects assessed between autumn 1996 and autumn 1998: agriculture, forestry and agricultural sciences; food science; mechanical, aeronautical and manufacturing engineering; civil engineering; electrical and electronic

engineering; general engineering; materials technology; building; town and country planning and landscape; land and property management; American studies; Middle Eastern and African studies; East and South Asian studies; history of art, architecture and design; communication and media studies; and drama, dance and cinematics.

13. A total of 33 projects were funded under phase three, at a total cost of £6.8 million over three years. These projects are detailed in HEFCE 01/50 'FDTL phase three: funded projects'.

Phases four and five

14. Phase four of FDTL covered the 13 subject areas assessed between October 1998 and September 2000: medicine; dentistry; veterinary medicine; anatomy and physiology; pharmacology and pharmacy; molecular biosciences; organismal biosciences; nursing; other subjects allied to medicine; physics and astronomy; psychology; mathematics, statistics and operational research; and art and design. The call for bids was published in October 2001. In total, 43 projects have been funded at a total cost of £7.8 million.

15. FDTL phase five covered the 11 subject areas reviewed between October 2000 and September 2001: archaeology; business and management studies; Celtic studies; classics and ancient history; economics; education; hospitality, leisure, recreation, sport and tourism; librarianship and information management; philosophy; politics; and theology and religious studies. The call for bids was published in September 2003. In total, 32 projects have been funded at a total cost of £6.9 million.

16. The FDTL projects are engaged in a range of activities related to teaching and learning. Dissemination of the outcomes of the projects takes many forms: for example training events, workshops, production of training materials including text and CD-ROM web-sites, e-mail discussion groups, conferences and newsletters.

17. There is a natural link between many of the projects working in the same subject area, and many projects have come together because they are working on similar educational themes such as:

- assessment
- employability
- widening participation
- problem based learning.

Programme management

18. The Higher Education Academy, on behalf of HEFCE and DEL, undertakes day-to-day management of the programme, taking on the role of the former national co-ordination team (NCT).

19. The academy carries out these responsibilities by:

- visiting projects
- running workshops
- publishing briefs on common themes such as project management, dissemination and evaluation
- sharing information across projects through a newsletter and web-site
- organising an annual FDTL conference for all projects.

Further details about the work of the Higher Education Academy can be found at www.heacademy.ac.uk.

Evaluation

20. Within the portfolio of FDTL projects, a range of evaluation strategies are in operation, including detailed arrangements for internal and external evaluation. The continued funding for projects is subject to there being satisfactory and sustainable progress, and each project has to submit an annual progress report.

Further information

21. Enquiries regarding the FDTL programme should be addressed to the Policy Officer, David Kernohan, tel 0117 931 7446, e-mail d.kernohan@hefce.ac.uk. Specific queries regarding individual projects should be addressed to them directly.