

A Roadmap to Maximising Student Success:

An Overview of the Work of The Centre for Learning and Teaching

Professor Ruth Pickford

Summary

Leeds Beckett University's Centre for Learning and Teaching (CLT) is an academic service. CLT's remit is to work with all Schools and Services to maximise student success. If CLT's work is to have impact on student success, then that impact will be channelled through others – through academic and professional service colleagues and through institutional decision-makers. In order to work through others' agency requires agents to know what we do and why.

This document outlines explicitly and unambiguously what the Centre for Learning and Teaching does and why.

Version: V1.7

V1.7: In this document, the CLT service is explained.

Target audience: LBU community

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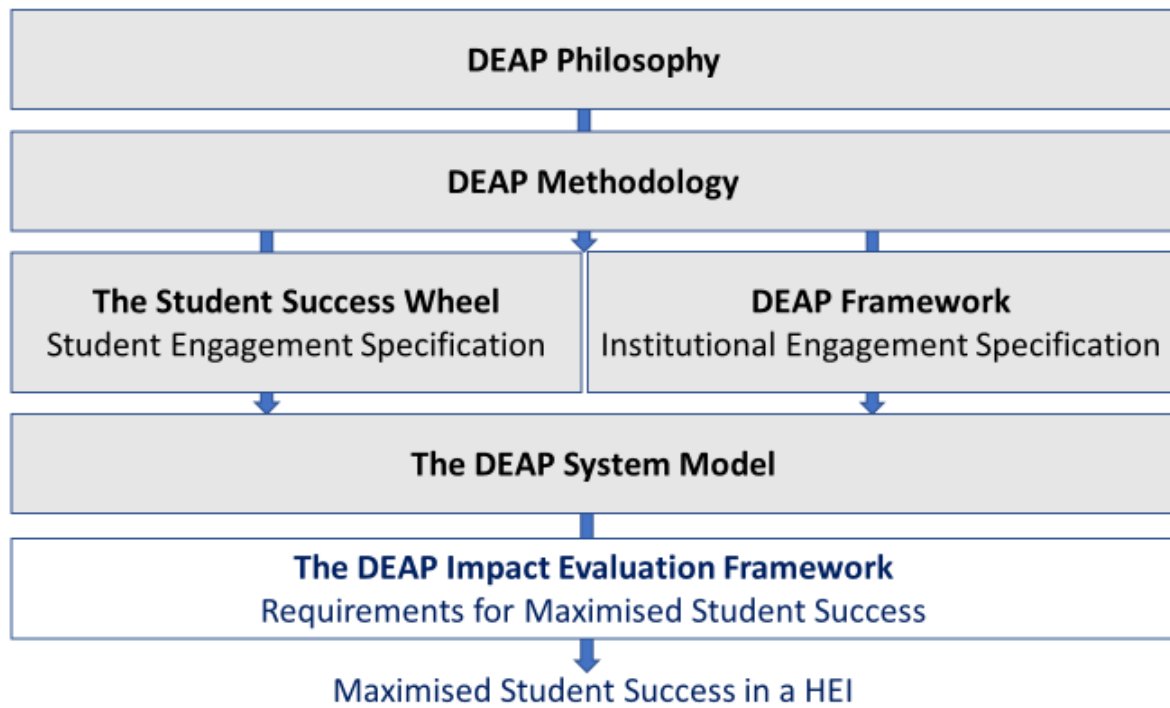
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CLT's Approach to Maximising Student Success

CLT works with Schools and Services to maximise student success at LBU. The approach we use is referred to as Developing Excellent Academic Practice (**DEAP**). This short overview explains why we work in the way we do. Figure 1 outlines our approach and the structure of this document.

Figure 1: Developing Excellent Academic Practice (DEAP)



DEAP Philosophy and Methodology

CLT's research and development (R&D) is underpinned by the DEAP philosophy and methodology.

THE DEAP PHILOSOPHY

ENGAGEMENT is an individually owned and personal concept

- Engagement can be conceptual, personal, social, emotional and/or behavioural
- Individuals engage differently at different times

STUDENT SUCCESS can only happen if students with their course of study

- Courses should ideally provide opportunities for students to engage conceptually, personally, socially, emotionally and/or behaviourally throughout their course

DEVELOPMENT OF EXCELLENT ACADEMIC PRACTICE (DEAP) is most likely to happen if we all work together to develop practice

- **CLT** provides opportunities for staff to engage conceptually, personally, socially, emotionally and/or behaviourally in developing excellent academic practice.

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THE DEAP METHODOLOGY

1. STUDENT SUCCESS

The focus of CLT's research is practice that enables students to engage with their course:

behaviourally through	Best practice in course planning
	Best practice in course management
personally, emotionally and socially through	Best practice in student support
	Best practice in course community
conceptually through	Best practice in student development
	Best practice in student challenge

2. DEVELOPMENT OF EXCELLENT ACADEMIC PRACTICE

CLT works with colleagues to develop our collective expertise in maximising student success through providing integrated opportunities for colleagues to engage in development of excellent academic practice (DEAP):

behaviourally through	Educational enhancement
	Professional practice
personally, emotionally and socially through	Support and development
	Collaboration and community
conceptually through	Innovation
	Research and scholarship

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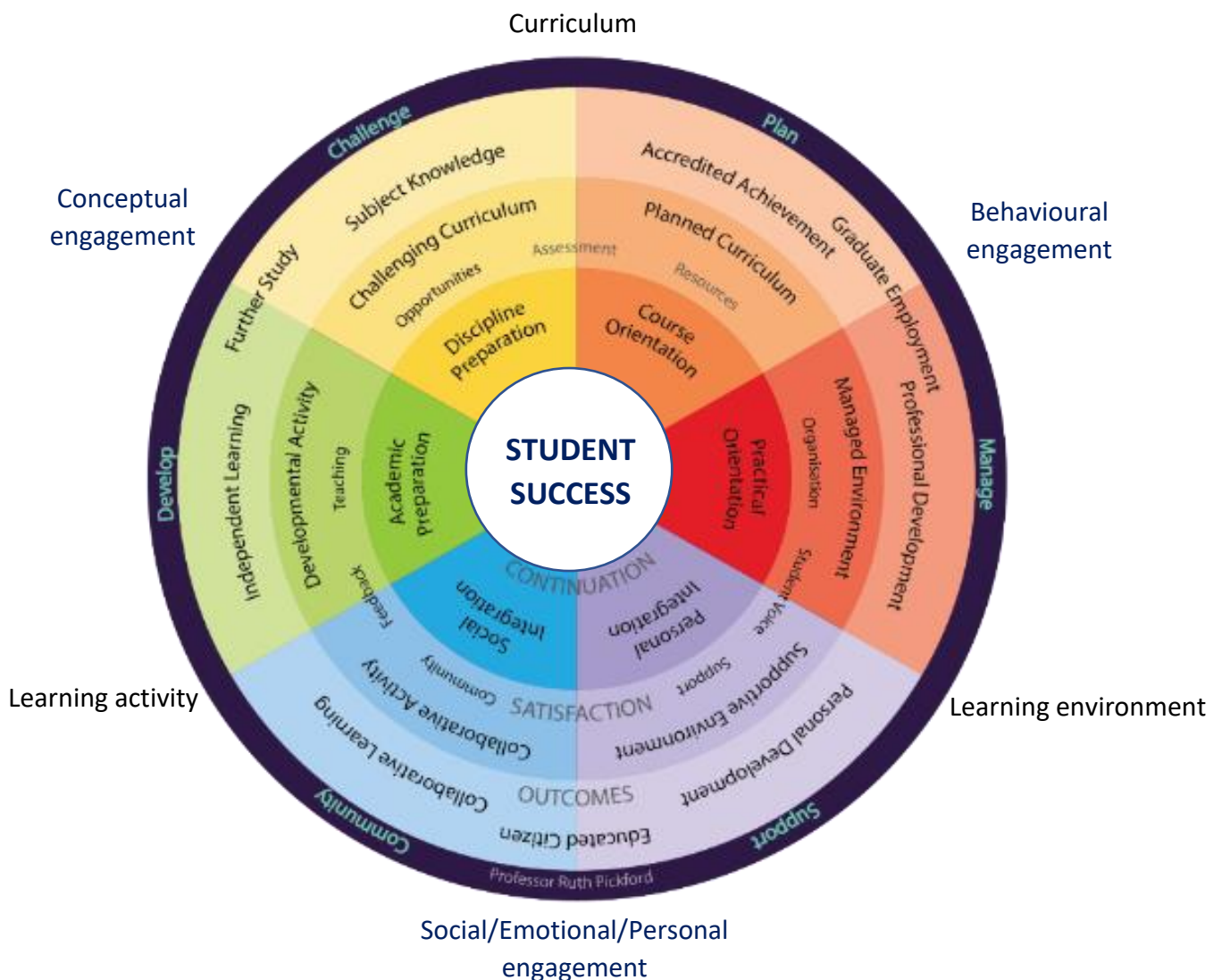
Student Success Wheel ('The Wheel')

As explained above, CLT believes that a **student's** behavioural, personal, social, emotional and conceptual engagement can be scaffolded through supportive, managed **learning environments**, collaborative, developmental **learning activities** and challenging, planned **curricula**.

The Wheel, (Pickford, 2018a, Figure 2) is an integrated specification of **course-level opportunities** (working from the centre of the wheel outwards), required to maximise opportunities for individual student engagement in learning. The inner ring specifies conditions for maximum continuation (Harvey, Drew and Smith, 2006; Bourn, 2007; Yorke and Longden, 2008, Pickford, 2017). The central ring focuses on student engagement with curriculum, learning activities and learning environments (Pickford, 2016). Student feedback gathered through, for example, the NSS can be a useful indicator of student engagement (Yorke, 2009; Trowler 2010; Thomas, 2012; Pickford, 2013). The outer ring considers related student outcomes (Kuh, 2009; Popovic and Green, 2012).

CLT use this wheel to frame our research, our guidance and our resources.

Figure 2: The Student Success Wheel (Student engagement with a course of study)



DEAP Framework

Maximising student success requires us to engage as a community in developing excellent academic practice to positively impact on courses (specifically, on course planning, course management, student support, course community, student development and student challenge, Figure 2).

CLT works to provide **developmental environments, activities and opportunities for colleagues to create and apply knowledge** (Pickford, 2018b, Figure 3), to maximise our expertise through our collective

- Conceptual engagement (innovation, research and scholarship);
- Behavioural engagement (educational enhancement and professional practice) and
- Personal, social and emotional engagement (support and development, collaboration and community)

in developing excellent academic practice.

Figure 3: The DEAP Framework (collective institutional engagement in DEAP)



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DEAP System

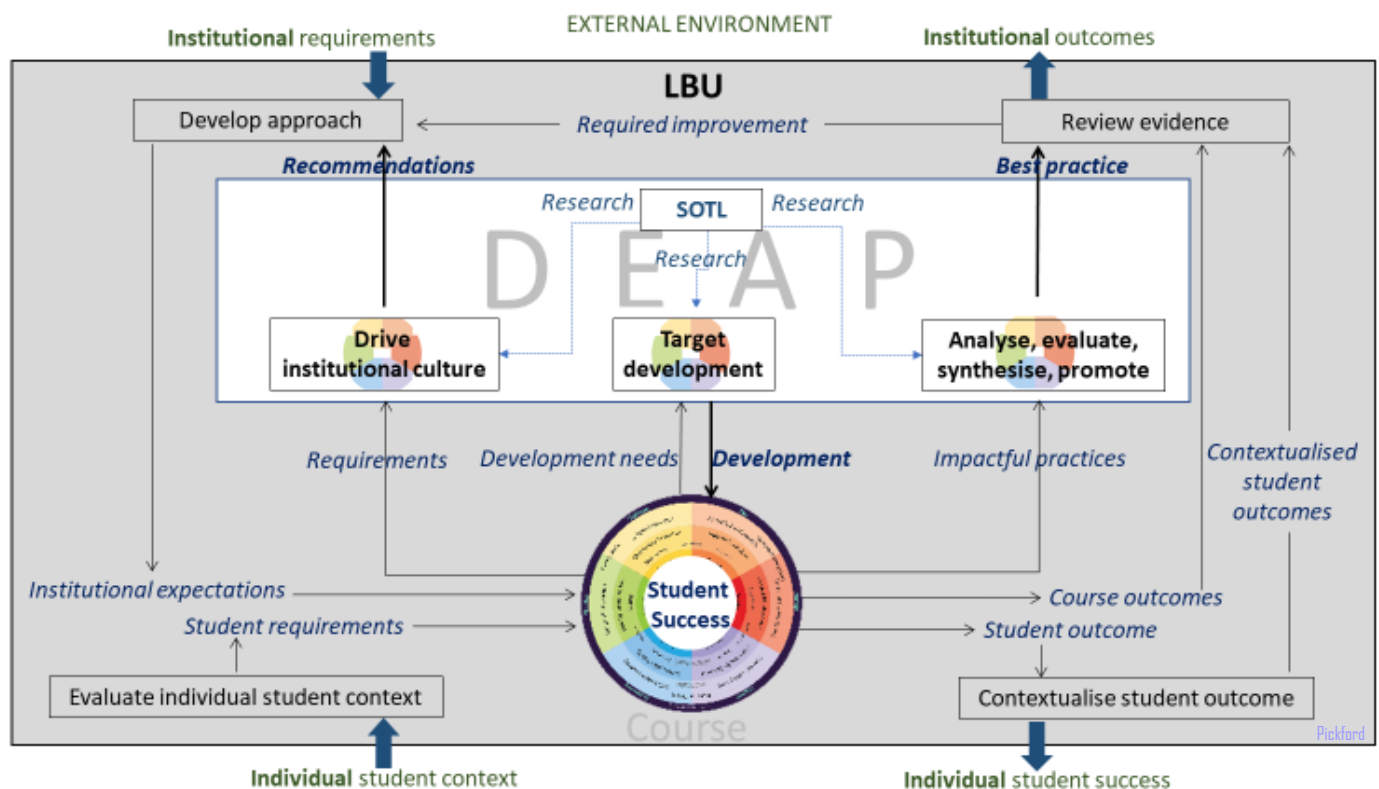
CLT have developed a systems approach (Pickford, 2019), to focus our R&D activity and to determine how we allocate our resources to achieve maximum impact on student success.

We work to:

- **Drive institutional culture:** In partnership with colleagues from across the University we identify requirements and make research-informed recommendations;
- **Target development:** We look to respond to and meet development needs;
- **Analyse, evaluate, synthesise and promote impactful practice:** We interrogate impactful practice wherever it may be and share best practice.

A high-level view of CLT's R&D activity and the way we work with LBU colleagues to support DEAP is highlighted in white in Figure 4:

Figure 4: Taking a systematic approach to DEAP



DEAP Impact Evaluation Framework

CLT has devised and uses a DEAP Impact Evaluation Framework (summarised in Figure 5) to monitor and manage our work. The Framework maps:

- what we need (Figure 4) to generate useful recommendations, meet development needs and to identify and share best practice relating to course planning, management and community, and student support, development and challenge (columns)
- against
- the different types of development that we are engaging in, as a community, to develop our expertise (Figure 3) – considering levels of engagement, demand, gaps and outputs of engagement (rows).

This allows CLT to identify areas that it needs to focus on to increase our collective impact on student success.

Figure 5: The DEAP Impact Evaluation Framework (strategic overview)

		System requirements to maximise student success through course planning, management, support, community, development, challenge		
		Drive required institutional culture	Target development	Analyse, evaluate, synthesise and promote
Development requirements to maximise student success through whole institution engagement	Innovation	CREATIVE	CHANGE-AGENCY	INNOVATION
	Research and scholarship	RESEARCH-INFORMED	RESEARCH	RESEARCH FINDINGS
	Educational enhancement	EVIDENCE-BASED	COURSE-LEVEL	COURSE OUTCOMES
	Professional practice	ACCOUNTABLE	ROLE/CAREER-STAGE	EFFECTIVENESS
	Support and development	ENABLING	CAPABILITY	ACHIEVEMENT
	Collaboration and community	COOPERATIVE	COLLABORATION	SYNERGIES

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What CLT Does

CLT works closely with Schools and Services to develop an aligned culture, provide development opportunities and to analyse, evaluate, synthesise and promote best practice. The targeted development opportunities CLT provides each year depend upon the institutional context and available CLT resource and are outlined in the CLT Digest and on the CLT website. The list below indicates examples of the types of targeted development opportunities CLT typically provides.

Innovation

Experimentation/innovation is scaffolded through initiatives and projects. Advantage is taken of context and circumstance (Baume, Martin and Yorke, 2002; Ashwin, 2005).

Example CLT opportunities:

- **CLT Associate scheme;**
- **Teaching Excellence Projects (TEPs).**

Research and scholarship

Explicit use is made of research/SOTL to address messy problems which defy technical solutions and of research findings to support research-informed decision-making (Breen, Brew, Jenkins and Lindsay, 2002; Cousin, 2008).

Example CLT opportunities:

- **Doctoral supervision;**
- **DEAP Research and Writing Group.**

Educational enhancement

Needs identified, workable solutions developed, and practitioners are facilitated to work as agents of learning environment, learning activity and curricula change at disciplinary level (Gibbs, 1996; Race and Pickford, 2007).

Example CLT opportunities:

- **Guides e.g. The Course Development Principles, The Inclusive Practice Toolkit;**
- **Bespoke consultancy/support e.g. Course Pre-arrival Questionnaire.**

Professional practice

Practice is aligned with the institutional mission, relating business need, role-accountability, recognition and reward (Saroyan and Trigwell, 2015; Spowart, Turner, Shenton and Kneale, 2015; Smith, 2017).

Example CLT opportunities:

- **Professional reflection e.g. HEA Fellowship Scheme;**
- **Role preparation e.g. Academic Advisor training.**

Support and development

Best practice is modelled through created/curated resources/inputs to support individual academics' personal/professional growth and impact (Rogers, 1969; Land, 2004)

Example CLT opportunities:

- **DEAP Educational Development Programme;**
- **Wheel-mapped resources e.g. Academic Continuity/online and blended L&T guidance.**

Collaboration and community

Networks, contacts, strategic alliances, trust, collaboration, dialogue, interpretation and reinterpretation are used to systematically build collective expertise through peer-learning and deliberative academic development (Webb, 1996; Fremstad, Bergh, Solbrekke and Fosslund, 2020).

Example CLT opportunities:

- **Events e.g. DEAP Conference, DEAP Fora; DEAP Digital Week;**
- **Networks e.g. Course Director Network, Digital Enhancement Network.**

Impact on Student Success

CLT adopts a disciplined approach to R&D. We do not rely on inference measures of development impact such as the extent of staff participation in, or satisfaction with, development (Kreber and Brook, 2001; Ackoff, 2006; Bamber and Stefani, 2016; Jones et al., 2017).

CLT's approach is to tightly align our work and evaluation with the focus of the desired change and intended impact (student success). Whilst the impact of R&D on student success is indirect, we evaluate impact and modify what we do accordingly by:

1. specifying the requirements for maximum student success
2. strategically implementing measures to meet these requirements and
3. continually monitoring system outputs.

To support this we look to establish a clearly understood purpose (DEAP philosophy), a shared repertoire, or taxonomy, in relation to teaching (DEAP methodology) and “theoretically robust, systematic... strategic models” of research and development (Gunn and Fisk, 2013, p. 47) that can be used to drive development, evaluate impact and modify activity.

The purpose of this document is to **outline**, at a high level, **what** the Centre for Learning and Teaching does and **why**; to explain the connections between orientations and opportunities, between external and internal system environments, between scholarship of teaching and learning and development of excellent academic practice and between excellent academic practice and student success.

About the Centre for Learning and Teaching

CLT is an academic service. For more information about CLT's programme and resources please email CLT@Leedsbeckett.ac.uk

About the Author

Professor Ruth Pickford is Director of Learning and Teaching at Leeds Beckett University. For more information about the DEAP philosophy and methodology please email: r.pickford@leedsbeckett.ac.uk

Recommended Reading and References

Recommended Reading

CLT's approach to developing excellent academic practice is research-informed and draws on systems, organisational and educational literature. The following texts may be helpful to colleagues in understanding why CLT works in the way it does:

Systems

- Ackoff, R. L. (1994), Systems Thinking and Thinking Systems, **System Dynamics Review**, 10 (2-3) 175-188.

Organisations

- Wenger, E. (1998), **Communities of Practice: Learning, Meaning, and Identity**. Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511803932>
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- Boyer, E. L. (1990), **Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate**. Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.
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- Jones, A., Lygo-Baker, S., Markless, S., Rienties, B. and Di Napoli, R. (2017), Conceptualizing Impact in Academic Development: Finding a Way Through, **Higher Education Research & Development**, 36:1, 116-128, DOI: 10.1080/07294360.2016.1176997

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