

**Applying the seven principles of good practice: archives in the 21st century university**

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## **Applying the seven principles of good practice: archives in the 21st century university**

Through working with the Swansea Academy of Learning and Teaching (SALT) the Richard Burton Archives has become more consciously engaged with pedagogical practice, building upon its experience of providing ad-hoc sessions for students. Based on an updated version of Chickering and Gamson's principles, SALT developed the *Seven Characteristics of Good University Teaching* programme. The use of archives in learning and teaching will be mapped across the seven principles, giving practical examples of teaching sessions and exercises demonstrating how pedagogical theory and working in partnership with learning and teaching facilitators, can enable archive services to better demonstrate impact, gain new advocates and target wider audiences across many disciplines. It concludes by examining how this will develop in the future (raising issues of digital learning versus learning through encountering), and how feedback is collected and implemented (one of the seven principles).

Keywords: archives, learning and teaching, collaboration and co-creation, impact, higher education

### **Introduction**

The Swansea Academy of Learning and Teaching (SALT) and the Richard Burton Archives (RBA) have worked together over many years combining their areas of expertise to enhance the learning and teaching experience at Swansea University. Through this partnership the RBA has become more consciously engaged with pedagogical practice, in particular Arthur Chickering and Zelda Gamson's seven principles of good practice in undergraduate education,<sup>1</sup> which SALT has developed into a programme of seminars and workshops for University staff entitled the *Seven Characteristics of Good University Teaching*. The use of archives in learning and

teaching will be mapped against these, giving practical examples of teaching sessions which demonstrate how pedagogical theory and working in partnership with learning and teaching facilitators, can enable archive services to better demonstrate impact, gain new advocates and target wider audiences.

SALT helps Swansea University teachers improve their own practice, and consequently the student experience, by supporting learning and teaching enhancement. SALT provides staff with a range of help and ideas, face to face and online, to enable development. This includes the provision of seminars and workshops which seek to develop pedagogy and the showcasing of good and developing practice across the University in its annual excellence in learning and teaching conference.

The RBA is the corporate memory and archive repository of Swansea University. Through its holdings and the expertise of its staff the RBA actively supports the mission of the University to provide an environment of research excellence, to deliver an outstanding student experience with teaching of the highest quality, and to enrich the community and cultural life of Wales and beyond. The creation of new BS5454:2000 compliant facilities in 2009 gave the RBA its own identifiable space, with increased visibility and access to the service for students, staff and the general public, as well as enabling the RBA to provide an increased and enhanced range of opportunities, including learning and teaching. For example, although the RBA had worked with a small number of academics before, the new facilities enabled groups to experience a visit to an archive, rather than documents transferred to a classroom environment, therefore enhancing learning and teaching. The professional and positive work of the RBA was recognised in 2014 by the service being the first archive service in Wales and

the first university archive service in the UK to be awarded Archive Service Accreditation. This was reviewed and confirmed in 2017.

### **SALT and the RBA: working together in the past**

Perhaps the most famous teacher connected with Swansea University is Ludwig Wittgenstein, although he did not actually teach at Swansea, and the RBA holds a number of his letters. When teaching in Austria in the 1920s, Wittgenstein started his teaching with curiosity; getting students to gaze at the sky in astronomy classes, building steam engines in engineering and assembling skeletons of cats in anatomy. He did this in order to arouse in his students the same sense of curiosity he brought to everything that interested him.<sup>2</sup> Actively involving the learners and stimulating their curiosity in order to stimulate their enquiry of the collection, has been at the centre of the approach used when using the RBA in teaching at Swansea. However, this is based on more than Wittgenstein's inter-war experiences.

Jean Piaget argued that people construct mental models of the world.<sup>3</sup> According to Piaget, this is a process that develops through interaction with the world. Each new experience is interpreted in relation to previous experience and a new understanding is constructed. If, as Piaget argues, learning takes place when a learner interacts with the world and creates new meaning from this interaction, the best learning experiences should be active ones that involve the students. First outlined in a 1976 paper<sup>4</sup> and developed in much of his work, Jerome Bruner furthered Piaget's idea of construction of mental models by arguing that there is an additional and important social context. He referred to this as 'scaffolding', where the student, with the support of a more experienced other, is able to carry out a task which is beyond their unassisted efforts. Bruner argued that such scaffolding does more than help the learner achieve a task but

enables them to learn at a pace that would far outstrip their independent efforts. An example is learning to ride a bike. The learner sits on the bike and support is provided by someone walking or running alongside. This support is gradually removed until the learner is riding unaided. In the RBA context the archivists provide the scaffolding; heavily supporting the early work but gradually reducing this support as the students gain more skill and confidence.

Seymour Papert, a former student of Piaget's, extended this by arguing that the construction of mental models can be aided by learners actually constructing things.<sup>5</sup> He argued that the teacher's role is to provide scaffolding through a process he calls debugging. The learner attempts to create something through trial and error with the teacher asking Socratic questions to prompt the learner as they debug. In the RBA context the students construct in a number of ways such as creating websites, running a conference and retelling stories.

Although there are debates around Malcolm Knowles' work on andragogy<sup>6</sup> (a theory of adult learning), there are elements of his work that relate to using the archives in learning and teaching. One of the incidents that inspired his work was an ultimately successful astronomy class, somewhat similar to Wittgenstein. Here, after a previous failure with a traditional course syllabus, a new instructor asked the students 'what do you see and what arouses your curiosity?'<sup>7</sup> Their answers were then used as the basis for the course. In an archives service context this would involve students exploring the collection, finding what arouses their curiosity and then developing projects and assignments from there.

This approach is, therefore, not about more traditional didactic (one-way, teacher centred) teaching methods, although this is not being argued against, but using the archive collection to arouse the curiosity of the students, stimulate enquiry and

involve them in the development of their learning, in partnership with archivists and academics. A word of caution: a number of popular ‘theories’ are often used to support this style of approach. Two of the most pervasive, learning pyramids<sup>8</sup> and learning styles,<sup>9</sup> have been widely discredited because of lack of evidence to support these ‘theories’ and the rise of counterevidence. However, these still have credence in some areas of academic development. The literature disputing these is now so wide that using these ‘theories’ as any part of the rationale for working in the archives in this way risks undermining the valuable work that could be done.

The RBA had welcomed a small number of student groups for many years, but in 2011 the service participated in modules that approached archives in a different way. *Victorian Domesticities* was run by Lucinda Matthews-Jones, a temporary tutor in Modern British History. This course used a range of primary sources to explore the love affair the Victorians had with their homes, and was enriched by using Singleton Abbey, now the administrative hub of Swansea University, as a case study. The students were given a tour of the Abbey and then visited the RBA to view primary sources relating to it. Comments from the students, such as ‘I had never used the Archives before and wasn’t aware of the amount of material I was missing out on’, indicated how the course was delivering far more than was expected.<sup>10</sup>

In the same year the RBA collaborated with Louise Miskell on the *Researching and Retelling the Past* module. This was an archive-centric module, in which students focused on the then recently deposited records of the Swansea University Students’ Union. Miskell received a grant from SALT in conjunction with this module in which the students explored the communication of historical information to public audiences, with assessed outputs in the form of a banner, a leaflet and a website,<sup>11</sup> as well as more conventional oral presentations and written work. The increased contact with a variety

of professionals, including archivists, gave the students an enhanced appreciation of the transferable skills they were developing and was seen as something to be particularly proud of. One student commented that ‘it actually made me feel like a historian’. The success of the module was apparent in the student’s marks and feedback, and this contributed to the redesign of the compulsory second year undergraduate module, *The Practice of History* (HIH237).

In the 2012 SALT conference the then University Archivist, Elisabeth Bennett, spoke with Miskell and two of the students about the module. The RBA also presented a poster for the conference - *Retelling the Past Inspiring Futures: Employing Archival Material as a Tool for Learning* – that promoted the benefits of engaging with archives and the RBA for students and staff. Since then the RBA has become more involved in modules taught within the History Department, as well as developing new connections to other departments.

### **SALT and the *Seven Characteristics of a Good University Teacher* seminar and workshop programme (7Cs)**

SALT’s 7Cs programme was initially conceived by Simon Gibbon, then Senior Academic Developer at SALT. Having analyzed student feedback comments from the 2013/14 academic year, ‘improving’ modules were identified, determined in relation to factors such as an increase in first class marks, decrease in failure rates, above the average department marks or above average student’s marks in other modules. The free text comments of over 200 modules were coded and it was established that they inadvertently aligned to Chickering and Gamson’s seven principles.

Chickering and Gamson initially published “The Seven Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Education” in 1987, and in 1991 they published a book titled *Applying the Seven Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Education*. These

principles grew out of a review of 50 years of research on the way teachers teach and students learn supported by the American Association for Higher Education, the Education Commission of the States and The Johnson Foundation.

The Seven Principles:

- Encourage contacts between students and faculty
- Develop reciprocity and cooperation among students
- Use active learning
- Give prompt feedback
- Emphasise time on task
- Communicate high expectations
- Respect diverse talents and ways of learning

The principles ‘are intended as guidelines for faculty members, students, and administrators ... to improve teaching and learning. These principles seem like good common sense, and they are — because many teachers and students have experienced them and because research supports them. They rest on 50 years of research on the way teachers teach and students learn, how students work and play with one another, and how students and faculty talk to each other’.<sup>12</sup>

Given the connections between the module feedback and Chickering and Gamson’s seven principles, a themed seminar and workshop programme was created, called *Seven Characteristics of a Good University Teacher*, which would consist of regular sessions throughout the academic year 2017/18. The popularity and success of the programme led to its extension through the 2018/19 academic year. Responsibility for coordination was handed over from Simon Gibbon to Rhian Ellis in January 2018.<sup>13</sup>



### **Archives across the seven principles**

Working with SALT, the RBA examined the seven principles and found that although some were more explicit than others, such as encouraging active learning and time on task, all the principles identified by Chickering and Gamson were addressed during sessions arranged for students.

### ***Encourage contacts between students and faculty***

Contact between students and faculty is augmented through work in, and with, the RBA. Sessions held in the RBA are led by academics and introduce students not only to the archival resources but also to the archivists. Students are encouraged to make return visits to the RBA and to ask the archivists questions directly. Academics value the additional contact that is enabled through the students working in the RBA. The postgraduate *Communicating History* module (HI-M77) is a particularly strong example of this in practice, as the student group needs to garner information about the provenance of a collection, deal with copyright and data protection challenges, and demonstrate an understanding of how to use archives for a wide range of purposes. These aspects of the module necessitate good dialogue between the academic, the students and the archivists. Through contact with archivists, the students are also encouraged to think about future careers. The RBA have been pleased to host various placements to give students additional experience of the archives.

### ***Develop reciprocity and cooperation among students***

Opportunities for reciprocity and co-operation, particularly for group work are enhanced by sessions being held in the search room, which can act as a neutral area as most students have not previously worked in such facilities. The search room can

accommodate twelve readers, and the smaller numbers enhance the opportunity for close discussion. Students are encouraged to discuss the items that they are examining, and to place items within broader historical contexts. The students are urged to share relevant material with other members of their groups and to discover how archives can be used as the basis not only for their current studies but also for future projects.

### *Use active learning*

One of the key benefits for the students is that rather than using physical or digital surrogates, such as published versions or photocopies of documents, they get to handle original material. This sensory experience can bring a previously distant, in time and space, study to life. For example, letters home from volunteers who joined the International Brigades during the Spanish Civil War raise questions about motives for participating in the conflict and life in south Wales during the 1930s, particularly family, work and political awareness. There can also be emotional reactions and connections prompted by handling an original item, sometimes referred to as 'magical contagion'.<sup>14</sup> The students also have a sense of empowerment as they are directly involved with their learning experience in a different environment.

A tour of the strong rooms, where the students hear about, see and experience the conditions required for the preservation of archives enhances their understanding. The feel of cooler air in the strong rooms, the hum of the air-conditioning units, the sight of the chart of insect pests and the blunder traps. The smell of grass and changing rooms from the documents of a rugby club and the warning given to students not to lick their fingers to turn pages because of the risk of tasting coal dust from pages of colliery records, all add to a sense of the real and unique.

Interaction with archival items raises questions about the benefits and disadvantages of physical and digital access to archives. Students are encouraged to use both online and hard copy catalogues to learn about how these ways of accessing information may offer different experiences and results. This aspect can be developed further with students and archivists discussing the cataloguing process. Discussions between academics, students and archivists pertaining to preservation and access, including born digital and digitized documents, allow for analysis and reflection on broader issues.

### ***Give prompt feedback***

Visits to the RBA usually include an opportunity for students to handle archival material. This is usually a first-time experience and the archivists are keen to ensure that the students learn how to handle documents. Wearing nitrile gloves when handling unprotected photographs, using weights and cushions, keeping documents flat on a table are all new skills that the students develop. Giving prompt feedback when things are being done well or need improving is very important not only for the student but also for the items.

For the postgraduate *Communicating History* module (HI-M77) the archivists work with the academics to review drafts of work so that the students have an opportunity to develop their assessed work prior to submission. The archivists also contribute to the marking of modules, by commenting on individual and group submitted work. Academics and archivists are prompt with all types of feedback and will discuss points raised so that students fully understand the comments and can consider acting upon them.

The RBA also takes the opportunity to gather direct and indirect feedback from the students. As well as listening to students throughout visits, informal feedback is requested in written form, with postcards being distributed for short anonymous comments. Together with formal module feedback shared by academics this informal feedback has enabled the sessions to be developed in considered ways.

### ***Emphasize time on task***

Most initial visits to the RBA are organized by lecturers, and students visit within set lecture and seminar periods. During visits the students are encouraged to make follow-up visits and they are made aware that appointments will be required. The archivists, supported by the academics, also explain that archival research can be time-consuming and that students need to factor in time for appointments to be made, for research to be undertaken and, if required, for copies to be provided. The need for the students to consider fully their academic workloads and other pressures on time is emphasized. The need for planning and preparation is extended to include potential visits to other archives when researchers may need to identify collections, complete access procedures such as getting letters of introduction from their supervisors and consider travelling time in conjunction with research time.

### ***Communicate high expectations***

One of the first things explained to students is how the RBA is different to the University Library. This includes discussions about why the RBA has different rules, which do not apply to the rest of the building, such as food and drink being prohibited. A tour of the strong rooms prior to handling archives gives the students a better understanding of how the material is cared for and the measures that are in place to ensure the long-term survival of the collections. This is built upon when the students

enter the reading room, with another 'contraband' check and the issuing of pencils and paper. As documents are placed on the table the archivists talk about good handling techniques and how the various aids should be used to minimize risks to the items. The students recognize that they are handling unique material and act with a sense of privilege and respect, developing confidence to explore archives elsewhere.

The students are also encouraged to consider the inclusion of original material within their assessed work. This is taken further with the *Communicating History* postgraduate module (HI-M77), because it is based on collections within the RBA. The high expectations of both archivists and academics are made clear, as well as how staff may assist the students to fulfil their potential. For example, students are not expected to have an in-depth knowledge of copyright and data protection issues, but they would be encouraged to refer to these, if appropriate, within their assessed work and to seek clarification with the archivists about these and other archival matters.

### ***Respect diverse talents and ways of learning***

The students have an opportunity to interact with the archives in various ways, as individuals, small groups and whole classes. For many students this scaffolded approach, in which they are introduced to the archives through an organized and directed session, enables them to gain confidence in an unfamiliar location and with new types of material, with the academic and archivists then able to 'step back' offering support as required.

The change in setting from the seminar room or lecture theatre to strong rooms and search room can also enable different ways of learning. Physical interaction with archival material can be a first time and memorable experience for many students. Students are encouraged to ask questions and make comments about what they find within items but also how they feel about the experience more generally. The different

types of document encountered also enable diverse talents and ways of learning to be developed and respected, such as map reading skills, analysis of imagery and interrogation of the materiality of an item. Other learning opportunities have included ‘strong room bingo’, a light-hearted activity where students have cards with different images for them to link to the information being shared by staff.

### **Archives within learning and teaching SALT 7Cs workshops**

Swansea University staff workshops were jointly hosted by SALT and the RBA on 18<sup>th</sup> April and 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2018.<sup>15</sup> The primary aim of these events was to inform participants of the ways in which the RBA could be used for learning and teaching across a range of academic disciplines (not only those more traditionally linked to archives) corresponding with Chickering and Gamson’s seven principles for good undergraduate education. The workshops formed part of a themed programme of events organized by SALT in the academic year 2017/18.

Although all university staff would be eligible to attend, the expectation was that they would appeal to teaching academics interested in developing learning and teaching methodologies in collaboration with archivists. The workshops would take place at the RBA, including time in the reading room. Therefore, registration was set at a maximum of twelve places per workshop to allow adequate space as well as an appropriate ratio of archivist to participant during one stage of the workshop, for one-hour (standard for lunchtime Continuing Professional Development (CPD) sessions).

It was also felt that the involvement of already established users of the archives for learning and teaching would be beneficial in achieving the aim. This would result in meaningful, authentic illustration as well as opportunity for participants to engage in professional discussion with teaching colleagues e.g. about the benefits and student feedback. The involvement of three academics in the project was easily arranged, due to

their enthusiasm and praise for the use of archives for learning and teaching, and the way this had been supported by the RBA archivists. The three academics were Peter King (Public Health, Policy and Social Sciences, Childhood Studies), Stephen McVeigh (Political and Cultural Studies) and Louise Miskell (History).

A planning meeting with all involved took place, when the structure and content of the workshops was agreed as follows:

- (1) Welcome to the RBA and explanation of archive protocols. (5 mins)
- (2) A tour and explanation of the strong rooms, to include strong room bingo, a game to encourage active listening. (15 mins)
- (3) Regrouping to the reading room, brief introduction to the 7Cs programme and its pedagogical origins, followed by presentations from each academic (with illustrative archives) then time to engage with a pre-selected document relevant to the participant's own subject area/university role. (30 mins)
- (4) Round up, reflection, questions/discussion and signposting to additional resources (a Padlet collection of publications on the use of archives for learning and teaching, as well as an Adobe Spark page on the workshop programme). (10 mins)

The workshops were advertized by SALT throughout the University and were well attended, nine staff in the first and seven in the second workshop, from a range of subject/university areas:

<b>Academic Area</b>	<b>Number of Participants</b>
Business and Economics	1
Engineering	1
Geography	1
Health	2

Languages/Linguistics	4
Medicine	1
Osteopathy	1
Psychology	1
Software Development	1
Student Academic Support	2
Student Experience	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>

Each workshop ran smoothly and achieved the primary aim of informing participants of the ways in which the RBA could be used for learning and teaching across a range of academic disciplines (not only those more traditionally linked to archives) corresponding with Chickering and Gamson's seven principles for good undergraduate education. SALT and the RBA received positive feedback in the form of informal, verbal comments during and after the workshops, posts on the social media platform Twitter and email messages.

The RBA and SALT subsequently received enquiries from a several academic staff members wishing to pursue collaborative learning opportunities for students. One of these is explored in the first case study below. The second case study was prompted by a staff induction visit to the RBA and an awareness of SALT CPD.



**Case study 1: the use of archives within learning and teaching in linguistics**  
**Dr Alexia Bowler, Lecturer, College of Arts and Humanities, Department of Applied Linguistics**

***Background***

Bowler's work with the RBA forms a valuable case study in assessing the value of the SALT 7Cs CPD workshops as a catalyst for teaching and learning innovation in linguistics. The workshop in May was attended by Bowler with a view to developing learning and teaching for first year undergraduate students studying *History of the English Language* module (ALE116).

Bowler is a qualified, experienced lecturer who continually reflects upon the effectiveness of her teaching methods in motivating students to be intellectually curious, teaching in an enthusiastic and engaging manner. Students are given many opportunities to actively learn in creative and experiential ways and are encouraged to study independently to extend their knowledge, understanding and skills. Bowler aims for learning to be an 'affective' as well as a cognitive experience, i.e. concerned with feelings, emotions appreciation, motivation. This is argued to draw attention and channel strong residual memory.<sup>16</sup> Mindful of avoiding boredom and over predictability, Bowler aims for students to make deep connections with what they learn through new experiences, and to reflect on these experiences in order to stimulate further learning.

***SALT/RBA workshop***

Having considered the possibility of using archives for learning and teaching for some time, Bowler was keen to attend the workshop in May. Bowler has since explained that the possibility of collaborating with the RBA acted as a catalyst to explore ideas to innovate in and outside of the classroom. Her creative methods were also 'legitimized'

by the contribution to the workshop by McVeigh, Director of Learning and Teaching in the College of Arts and Humanities.

### ***Student RBA visit***

Building on her prior knowledge of the RBA and following her attendance at the workshop, Bowler contacted Assistant Archivist Katrina Legg. A return visit to the archives, accompanied by sixteen students, was arranged for 7<sup>th</sup> February 2019. The visit replicated the insight into the cold room that Bowler had experienced herself at the workshop, providing students with a ‘behind the scenes’ tour and explanation archive storage. Students were then given time in the reading room to engage with a variety of documents and manuscript types ranging from the 16<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> century. Students were able to handle the paper and parchment items examining the physical qualities of the items as well as orthography, morphology, lexis, grammar and syntax.

A selection of student feedback comments capture the emotional reactions (affective learning) as well as the knowledge gained (cognitive learning) from the RBA visit:

‘A fantastic experience. I really enjoyed getting to see things I’ve never seen before and getting the chance to touch real parchment.’

‘Visiting the archives was very interesting. It was fascinating to actually handle the old manuscripts and read the love letter with pictorial symbols. It was amazing to think that I was actually holding manuscripts from the seventeenth century.’

‘I have previously tried to acquire work experience at an archive facility and this opportunity has made larger my wish to do so, with hopes of a potential future career.’

After the session, Bowler tweeted:

'had so much fun collaborating with @SwanUniArchives, looking at old manuscripts, so glad I went to the @sususalteam session on 7 characteristics of good university teachers last year! #language #teamswansea #Swansea\_AppLing'.<sup>17</sup>

### ***The 7Cs***

These reactions comprehensively demonstrated the 7Cs, from the perspective of both student and lecturer. Contact between students and the faculty was encouraged, in a different learning environment. Students reciprocated observations and questions about their archive materials, participating in processes and involving themselves in the experience, rather than passively listening. Students were expected to rise to the challenges of the experience. They were also introduced to the professional environment of an archive and the role of archivists, to encourage career aspirations. Alongside more conventional ways of learning, this approach is more inclusive of diverse preferences. Students had a set amount of time in the archives which they were encouraged to use wisely and they were provided with, and they provided feedback on, their archives experience. The value and impact of the original 7Cs workshop on both staff development and consequential student learning is clearly illustrated.

### ***Beyond the archives - seminar innovation***

Inspired by the success of the RBA visits, Bowler felt confident in building upon the foundations of this rich experience with a carefully planned seminar involving hands-on learning about writing technologies and how they contribute to, or constrain, the development of the English language. Calf vellum, sheepskin parchment and mock parchment was sourced and purchased from specialist providers, along with calligraphy pens, Indian ink and feathers to make quills.

The seminar took place on 21<sup>st</sup> March 2019; the first stage of learning involved the watching of a video presentation on the process of making medieval illuminated

manuscripts.<sup>18</sup> This provided the impetus for group discussion, along with a range of other helpful videos to aid the practical element of the seminar.<sup>19</sup> Students were then given mock vellum to practice with, before writing excerpts from a choice of poems, rune messages or script from calligraphy guides on the calf vellum and sheepskin parchment.

Through this activity, students built upon their archives experience. They were prompted to apply and extend their knowledge and understanding of Latin, handwriting styles, case endings, and the evolution of language and writing technologies, as consistent with intended module learning outcomes. Students were able to benefit from first-hand experience of limiting errors and correction techniques on the parchments. They further developed their learning of dialects, non-standard English and historical developments of the English Language in a creative fashion.

Photographs were taken of the lesson and posted by Bowler on the social media platform Twitter along with the Tweet:

‘Thanks to @susaltteam for the connect with Katrina and the team @SwanUniArchives& the ‘7 Characteristics of Good University Teachers’ programme to provide inspiration, support & creativity for innovative activities to bring old concepts to life’.<sup>20</sup>

Students were sent the instructional video clip of the quill making so that they could also create one independently if they wished,<sup>21</sup> film the process and build a video into an assessed wiki.

Thus, the implementation of the 7Cs continued beyond the RBA workshop, with additional creative, active learning taking place inside and outside of the classroom.

### ***Related developments***

Students were taken on a trip to see the Standing Stones with Celtic script and Roman lettering at Carmarthen Museum to reinforce what they had learnt.

Legg was invited to give an employability talk to Bowler's students, on 27<sup>th</sup> November 2018. Welsh, English Literature and History students were also invited. The 45-minute informal talk was co-delivered by Ben Jones (PhD in Applied Linguistics) and consisted of a PowerPoint presentation and interactive exercises.

Bowler is currently considering offering similar learning and assessment opportunities to second year undergraduates, as well as prospective students in taster sessions offered in departmental outreach work in schools and colleges as well as University open days.

These further developments in learning and teaching contributed to an application for funding from the British Library for Bowler to attend a masterclass in Old English for further training. The application was successful and the masterclass was attended in June 2019.

Bowler will be presenting a poster at *What does learning and teaching look like through a future lens?* SALT's 2019 Learning and Teaching Conference. The poster, *Back to the Future: From the Archives to Experiential Education*,<sup>22</sup> will promote thinking about using a variety of methods (archives, visits, practical work) for subjects that might not seem to facilitate these approaches.

### ***Further pedagogical value***

There are numerous established and emerging pedagogical models to which the above case study can be aligned. In terms of some already discussed, it illustrates Piaget's construction of mental models and Bruner's concept of scaffolding in several, inter-related ways.<sup>23</sup> Firstly, the 7Cs workshop provided the interaction with the archive

world that enabled active learning to take place on behalf of the participant (initially Bowler's own professional development). This was then repeated in the context of Bowler's students having a similar learning experience. The 7Cs workshop provided the important social context for scaffolded staff development to take place, the RBA archivists being the 'more experienced other' assisting the less experienced. Bowler was then able to develop her teaching methods at a faster pace than if unassisted. To use the analogy of learning to ride a bike, by the end of the students' visit, Bowler was able to independently plan and implement her seminar activities with skill and confidence, outstripping the previous learning that had taken place. In turn, Bowler offered similar scaffolded learning to her students, in the context of the seminar content, activities, materials and resources, which encouraged and enabled the students to continue to learn in this manner for themselves in their own time. Both staff and students thus experienced active, scaffolded learning.

Additionally, as Papert argued,<sup>24</sup> the construction of mental models was aided by all learners constructing things through trial and error (i.e. by Bowler and her students) and Bowler 'debugging' in the discussion and guidance through the practical tasks. In this context, the constructions were the quills, manuscripts, wikis and self-made videos.

Additionally, David Kolb's 'experiential learning' is also relevant.<sup>25</sup> Kolb suggested that ideas are not fixed but formed and modified through experience. In the context of this case study, learners

- are encouraged to become involved in new experiences e.g. archives visit and seminar activities (concrete experience),
- are allowed time to reflect on their experience from different perspectives e.g. feedback on the day and in their wiki assessment process (reflective observation),

- form and process ideas and integrate them into logical theories e.g. application of knowledge in formative and summative assessment (abstract conceptualization),
- use their acquired knowledge to solve problems, make decisions and then test in new situations e.g. developing and extending knowledge in own, independent learning (taking them into the cycle again).

### **Case study 2: archives and online resources**

**Sara Jolly, Lecturer and Programme Director MSc Enhanced Professional Practice, College of Human and Health Science (CHHS)**

#### ***Background***

In July 2018, Sara Jolly had attended a Swansea University *ABC Learning Design* workshop led by Melanie Hainke, then Senior Learning Technologist on Swansea University's *Blended Learning Pilot*.<sup>26</sup> The workshop featured the work of Laurillard,<sup>27</sup> including a discussion of the complementary nature of 'acquired' knowledge from digital sources e.g. online resources, alongside the more conventional e.g. books. Jolly began to think about ways in which she could present information 'beyond bullet points' in a digital manner, which were accessible, asynchronous and which encouraged students to think differently. The resource was created with the needs of students on the *Enhanced Professional Practice Programme* in mind,<sup>28</sup> and had been discussed informally with the CHHS Senior Lecturer in Online Learning, Rebecca Pratchett. The resource needed to suit inter-professional students by being self-paced, accessible and

inclusive. It would need to aid the development of critical thinking skills in evidence-based practice and link to module learning outcomes.

Having attended a Library induction by Elen Davies, Subject Librarian for the CHHS, in September 2018, Jolly was introduced to Legg. From this meeting, it became clear that there was scope to work collaboratively, given the nature of archive material at the RBA relevant to Jolly's areas of teaching. The subsequent project that took place thus continued with and developed the ethos of using archives within more diverse areas of learning and teaching.

Further meetings between Jolly and Legg led to the creation of a Microsoft Sway, a digital story telling application that can be used to distribute learning resources. Two archive documents – 'A much approved recipe for a violent cold' found in handwritten notes within a copy of *The Pennsylvania town and country-man's Almanack for the year of our Lord 1768* belonging to William Dillwyn of Burlington, West Jersey, and the *Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health for Aberavon, 1893* - were selected, digitized and embedded. The Sway, entitled *Looking back to inform the future: instigating change in practice*,<sup>29</sup> was designed with the primary aim of developing critical thinking skills for those undertaking various modules relating to professional practice (SHGM96, SHG3057, SHG291, SHGM94, SHG3060 and SHG289).

The resource includes a link to the RBA website and a 360 degree virtual video tour of the strong rooms, encouraging students to visit the archives independently. It was published on 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2018 and is offered to students on six modules, two each at second and third year undergraduate, and at postgraduate level.



### ***The 7Cs***

This learning resource aligns with the 7Cs. Contact between students, the academic and the RBA is encouraged in a digital environment. Students are encouraged to reciprocate observations and thoughts about their use of the resource, or even work with the Sway in pairs or small groups. Students are expected to actively engage and involve themselves in a way of learning that may be new to them, rather than passively receiving information. Alongside more conventional ways of learning, this approach is inclusive of diverse preferences and includes an accessibility view. The resource can be visited repeatedly, and time on task can be identified and analyzed via Microsoft analytics. Students are asked to provide feedback at the end of the resource.

### ***Further pedagogical value***

Biggs categorized approaches to learning at different levels, three which indicate a surface approach (increasing knowledge, memorizing and acquisition of procedures).<sup>30</sup> Two of the levels indicate a deep approach to learning (abstraction of meaning and understanding reality). Students who adopt a deep approach are interested in learning for its own sake and wish to learn by transforming. McKimm explains that this tends to involve relating ideas to previous knowledge and experience, looking for patterns and underlying principles, being actively involved and interested in course content, adopting evidence-based approaches and critically examining arguments.<sup>31</sup> By contrast, students who adopt a surface approach to learning often want merely to get through a course and learn by reproducing. They tend to study without reflecting on purpose or strategy, memorize facts and procedures by rote, treat a course as unrelated knowledge sets, have difficulty in making sense of new concepts and ideas, and feel pressured about the

amounts of work involved. The Sway produced by Jolly, therefore, encourages deep learning as opposed to surface learning.

### ***Future steps with online resources***

The Sway *Looking back to inform the future: instigating change in practice* is still in the early stages of being used by students. The aim moving forward is to gather analytics and feedback relating to usage, in order to inform the RBA and Jolly of its perceived value. Sways of a similar nature on other topics have also been created by Jolly and the relative usage analytics will be analyzed.

A Padlet of CPD resources for relating to the use of archives for learning and teaching has been created to share with academic staff throughout Swansea University and beyond.<sup>32</sup>

SALT is in the process of working collaboratively with the RBA and the Audio Visual and Media Services team at Swansea University to create a video resource, *Use of Archives for Learning and Teaching*. Filming has taken place, featuring contributions from King and McVeigh, together with archivists from the RBA. The video echoes the message of the workshops and is being published in the academic year 2019/20.

The RBA are keen to produce more online resources using digitized materials with staff from across the University. To raise awareness of this, an abstract has been accepted for Jolly and Legg to present at *What does learning and teaching look like through a future lens?* SALT's 2019 learning and teaching conference, and it is hoped that this paper, *Looking back to inform the future: Instigating change in practice*, will inspire further digital collaborations.<sup>33</sup>

## **Conclusion**

Collaborative working between the RBA and SALT has led to an increased appreciation of its value and that it can be shared with academics involved with learning and teaching across the University. The support of existing champions, as well as the emergence of new advocates because of introductions to the RBA via SALT initiatives, has resulted in a cyclical development of partnerships and audiences across disciplines. Whereas interaction with archives had previously been centred on learning through experiencing the physical, and this is still recognized as being deepest experience, the development of digital access, interpretation and evaluation is now being aligned so that broader audiences can be reached, and new, more inclusive ways of interaction are made available. Students are also being challenged to think about the differences in documents, both born digital and digitized, as well as physical. The collection and analysis of feedback from students, academics and colleagues will continue to be key to ensuring that the RBA supports learning and teaching at the University in the most appropriate manner, working in tandem with the pedagogical support from SALT. The seven principles of good practice act as an indispensable touchstone that can be taken out of the academic world of the university, and easily and beneficially be applied to all learning and teaching activities undertaken by archives.

## **Notes**

1. Chickering and Gamson. "Seven Principles", Chickering and Gamson. "Applying the Seven Principles".
2. Monk, *Wittgenstein*.
3. Piaget and Inhelder, *Psychology of the Child*.
4. Wood, Bruner and Ross, "The Role of Tutoring".
5. Papert, *Mindstorms*.
6. Merriam, "Andragogy and Self-Directed Learning".

7. Knowles, Holton and Swanson, *The Adult Learner*.
8. Letrud and Hernes, "Excavating the Origins."
9. Coffield, Mosely, Hall and Ecclestone, *Learning Styles and Pedagogy*.
10. This module was written up as a SALT case study Matthews-Jones, et al., no date.
11. <https://swanseauniversitystudentunion.wordpress.com/>.
12. Chickering and Gamson, "Seven Principles", 3.
13. <https://spark.adobe.com/page/vUuxhmKq2iJkz/>.
14. Cooper, Katherine. "Magical Contagion."
15. <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/salt-7-characteristics-workshop-archives-within-teaching-and-learning-tickets-43880657227?aff=erelpanelorg#> ;  
<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/salt-7-characteristics-workshop-archives-within-teaching-and-learning-tickets-44222300090#>.
16. Krathwohl, Bloom and Masia, *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives*.
17. <https://twitter.com/FilmNFeminism/status/1093890544089137152>.
18. Bowler selected <https://www.bl.uk/medieval-english-french-manuscripts/articles/how-to-make-a-medieval-manuscript#> as a credible and comprehensive video source to meet diverse learning preferences and that could be returned to independently by the students.
19. <https://www.bl.uk/medieval-english-french-manuscripts/articles/how-to-make-a-medieval-manuscript#>; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z20qNVsk3xE>;  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?time\\_continue=1&v=y7k4-wj8mZ8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=1&v=y7k4-wj8mZ8);  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?time\\_continue=9&v=aEPpURAI5W4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=9&v=aEPpURAI5W4).
20. <https://twitter.com/FilmNFeminism/status/1108770611378163714>.
21. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u8LTei\\_AIs0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u8LTei_AIs0).
22. <https://saltconference2019.wordpress.com/2019/06/05/x-40/>.
23. Piaget and Inhelder, *Psychology of the Child*; Wood, Bruner and Ross, "The Role of Tutoring".
24. Papert, *Mindstorms*.
25. Kolb, *Experiential Learning*.
26. <https://salt.swan.ac.uk/blended-learning-pilot/>.
27. Laurillard, *Rethinking University Teaching*.
28. The *Enhanced Professional Practice Programme* is a work-based programme for registered healthcare professionals.
29. <https://sway.office.com/hGP8d8ba8zxsNiEX?ref=Link&loc=play>.
30. Biggs, *Student Approaches*.
31. McKimm, *Learning Theories*.
32. [https://padlet.com/r\\_e\\_ellis/archivesforlearningandteaching](https://padlet.com/r_e_ellis/archivesforlearningandteaching).
33. <https://saltconference2019.wordpress.com/2019/06/05x-42>.

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