

## Practice Models for Learning

### Starting point: practice models

Practice models describe a range of learning designs that are found to be effective, and offer guidance on their use. They support sharing, reuse and adaptation of learning designs by teachers, and also the development of tools, standards and systems for planning, editing and running the designs.

However effective a learning design may be, it can only be shared with others through a representation. They must convey the information that teachers need in a form that the teachers can understand. Thus practice models should be both *representations of effective practice*, and *effective representations of practice*

### Method and Data Collection

The project took a practitioner-centred approach, working in close collaboration with a focus group of 12 teachers recruited across a range of disciplines and from both further and higher education. Information was gathered from the focus group through two face to face workshops, and through their contributions to discussions on the project wiki. This was supplemented by an activities with teachers at two conferences in the autumn of 2006. Through these we gathered the information requirements of representations that support sharing and reuse, and evaluated nine types of representation against these requirements, mapping them also against four different stages of sharing and reuse.

### Conclusions

The use of taxonomies, ontologies and controlled vocabularies in conjunction with visual representations such as concept maps or the AUTC temporal sequence was suggested as a potential way forward which might bring together the needs of teachers and technical developers. However a problem emerged with the recognised definition of practice models. Practice models were expected to do at least three things:

- Be generic

- Detail sequence and orchestration
- Inspire teachers to implement them and hence change practice

While we found plenty of examples to show that any two of these requirements can be realised together, achieving all three at once appears to be a holy grail. We developed a conceptual understanding of why this proves so difficult, viewing design for learning as a process, or as loosely coupled processes, rather than as a static blueprint.

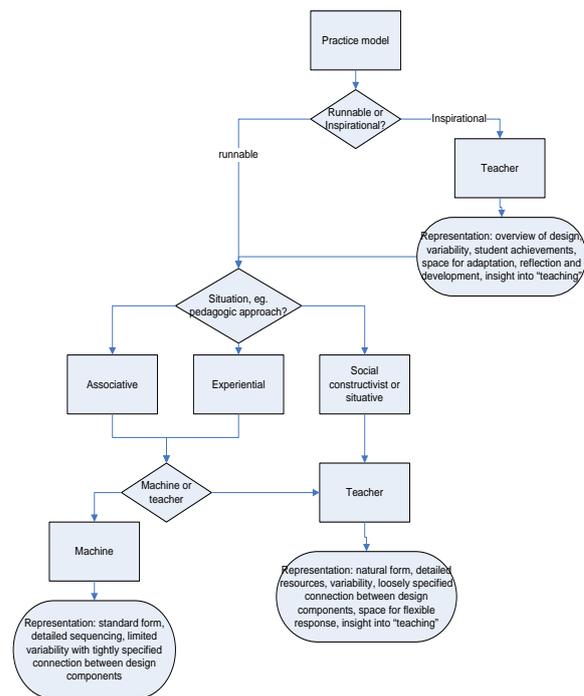


Figure 1: Process model through which we analysed the conflicting requirements of practice models.

### Project team

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### The Caledonian Academy

The Caledonian Academy is a research centre in Technology Enhanced and Professional Learning at Glasgow Caledonian University.