

LLM IN LEGAL PRACTICE

Creating a critical thinking toolkit for LLM- LPC (Legal Practice) distance learners

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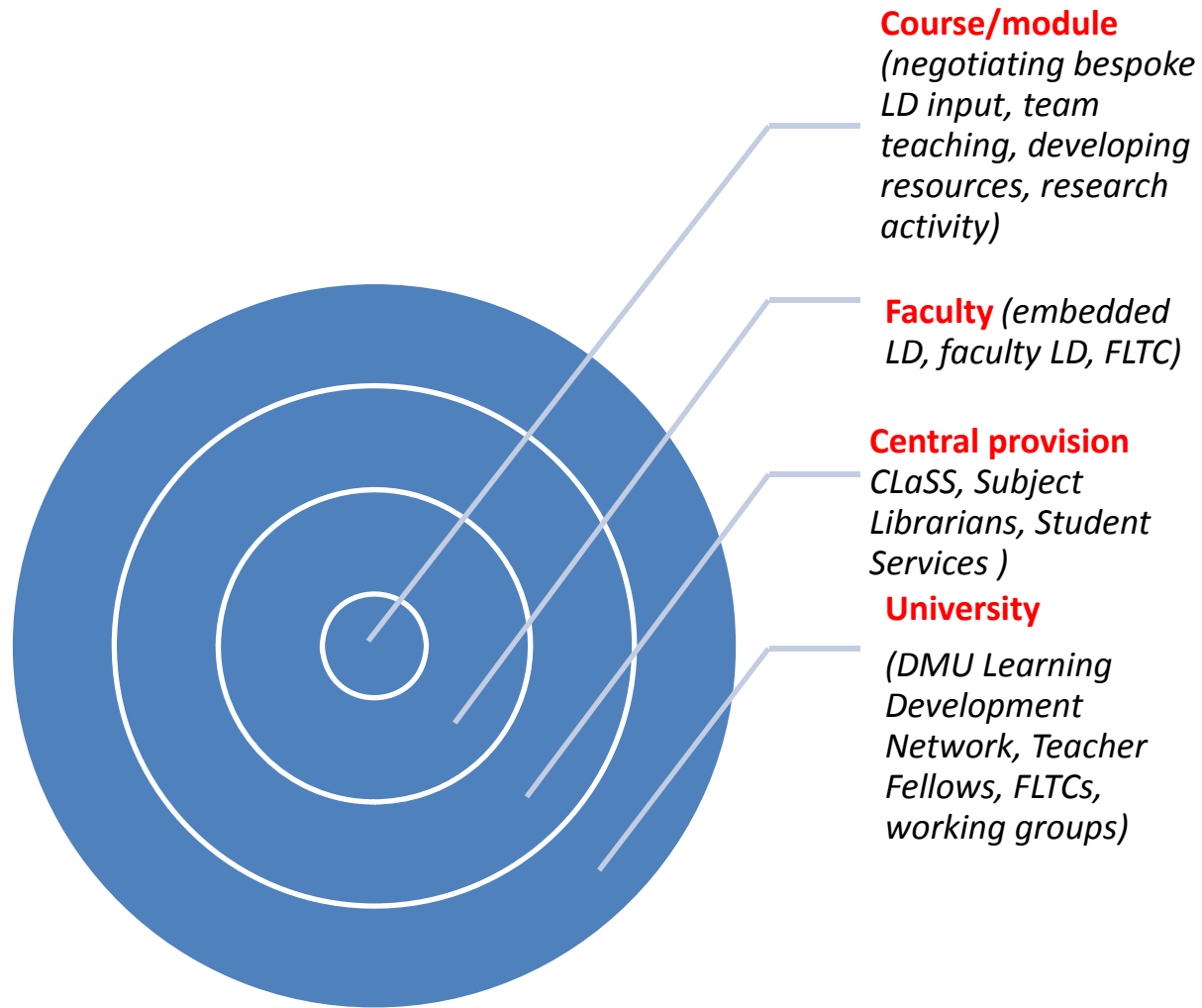
Project bid - starting point

- *‘The development of provision, and on-going support, for on-line study skills guide for the LLM in Legal Practice programme, to assist in the transition to studying at Master’s level and potentially rolled out to other programmes in the Faculty.’*

Background

- Teacher Fellow project bid
- Involvement of faculty and central learning development staff even at this early stage
- DMU Learning Development Network
- Clear vision, confident leadership and effective project management
- Defined time scale and resources

Networks



Over 50% of collaborations in HE fail - so why did ours work? (Kezar, 2005)

- Diversity of participants' experience and perspectives on student learning experience
- Shared goal and clarity of purpose
- Clear roles and areas of expertise leading to ...
- ... confidence respect and trust
- Enjoyment, enthusiasm

The critical thinking toolkit – component parts

- Handbook/ module outcomes/course structure
- Formulating the question and effective reading
- Critical voice/ thinking/writing
- Writing style/developing argument/ signposting/ structure
- Planning work/ drafting
- Literature review
- Research methodology
- Referencing

Principles of effective collaboration

- Personal attributes
 - Experience, expertise, communication, networking, commitment
- Team attributes
 - Effective leader, clarity of expectations, shared values and objectives, clear roles, timelines and outcomes, trust, effective delegation
- Resources
 - Realistic analysis of available and required resources
 - Transparency re constraints and barriers
 - Acknowledgement of interdependency
 - Implications of working with external third parties
- Review
 - Enhance the impact of embedded reflection and evaluation by and drawing on diverse perspectives of the team

Vygotsky's 'Zone of Proximal Development' (1978), further developed into the 'Zone of Reflective Capacity' (Tinsley and Lebak 2009)

'Reflective capacity is constructed in the interaction between participants engaged in a common activity ... The Zone of Reflective Capacity further expanded as trust and mutual understanding among peers grew.'

Action planning

- Individual reflection to identify a collaboration scenario you would like to initiate - or with which you face challenges
- **In groups of 3, each member to take**
 - 5 minutes to present your collaboration scenario (other group members listen)
 - 5 minutes for constructive questioning, feedback and suggestions from remaining group members

References

- Kezar, A. 'Redesigning for collaboration within higher education institutions'. ***Research in Higher Education***.Vol.46, No. 7 November 2005
- Tinsley, S and Lebak, K (2009) Expanding the Zone of Reflective Capacity: Taking separate journeys together. ***Networks 11*** (2)
- Vygotsky, L S. (1978) **Mind and Society: The development of higher psychological processes.** Cambridge. Harvard University Press.