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DEVELOPMENT OF TEACHING AND LEARNING IN ACADEMIC DISCIPLINES. VISIONS, LESSONS LEARNED AND STRATEGIES.

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ABSTRACT
The Engineering Subject Centre was created in January 2000 as one of 24 centres for supporting the development of Teaching & Learning across the UK by engaging through the academic discipline. The initial vision was to enhance teaching and learning in engineering degree programmes and this evolved to enhancing the student learning experience as the higher education environment changed. The engagement with the engineering academic community has been through a variety of mechanisms, including organising specific events, providing resources, providing funding for small projects and special interest groups. It is a challenge to engage with a large community with a small number of core staff and methods to achieve ‘value added’. Our approach have included commissioning work through academics at different universities who became associates of the centre and working with professional bodies on larger national projects. Demonstrating impact has always been a high priority and the centre has conducted evaluation of many of its activities and this has in some instances led to changes in strategy. The Higher Education Academy in the UK is restructuring, partially in response to cuts in government funding, and is closing the subject centres but continuing to provide discipline based support through its base in York. The Higher Education environment continues to change rapidly in the UK with increasing emphasis on student satisfaction and from 2012 tuition fees increasing threefold to £9000. The provision of high quality teaching and learning is of increasing importance in the UK and discipline based support will continue to have an important role in achieving this.