

# Managing Teaching Innovations

Boyle, Jim

j.t.boyle@mecheng.strath.ac.uk  
Head of Department, Department of Mechanical Engineering,  
University of Strathclyde, Glasgow

## ABSTRACT ONLY

*Higher education has been facing a major challenge for the past thirty years: despite significant advances in our knowledge of what works in learning and teaching and the widespread (and inexpensive) availability of new learning technologies, teaching in universities has been slow to change. The reason for this inaction is easy to identify and can be articulated by most academics: the 'system' emphasizes the relative importance of research at the apparent expense of innovation in teaching. Since the 'system' is difficult (if not impossible) to change in the short term, the solution to this problem must lie elsewhere. This presentation describes how teaching innovations can be successfully introduced and argues that the key to success lies in how this change is managed – not only from the perspective of university administration and the department head, but also from that of the individual academic. The experience of the University of Strathclyde, and in particular the Department of Mechanical Engineering, will be used as an example. Strathclyde has been through the process of introducing pilot innovations in teaching and learning, and spreading these through the institution by way of the creation of innovative 'teaching clusters' – managed teaching suites with new styles of teaching space. The focus of the presentation is on how this was achieved, the effect (and development) of academic and support staff, the effect on students (and retention in particular) and on continuous improvement of the educational experience.*

Video archive capturing the presentation of Prof Jim Boyle's keynote speech during the symposium can be assessed through <http://celt.ust.hk/tlsymp04/papers.html#1>