

## TOWARDS FLEXIBILITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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### Title and Presenter:

**Using technology to provide on-demand support in the studio.**

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### Sub Theme & Paper Type:

Flexible Delivery – Showcase

### Abstract:

Previous research (King, 2008; 2007) has investigated how students collaborate and problem-solve during a short session in the recording studio using technology as a contingent (Wood & Wood, 1999) support tool. In addition, Naidu & Oliver (1999) asked students to use online message boards to record problems encountered when completing a prescribed task (critical-incident recording).

This case study examines the use of a virtual learning environment (VLE) to support the completion of a recording workbook and audio examples over a 10-week period. The VLE provided contingent (on demand) support to studio users for technical problems encountered in the completion of four recording tasks: 1) Vocal recording; 2) Stereo recording; 3) Drum kit recording; 4) Post production (mixing and mastering). The VLE also contained three message boards: *creative recording*, *musicians wanted* and *technical help*. Sixty four undergraduate level 4 (year 1) music students took part in the project.

A mixed-methods case study approach was used in this study. A pre-test was conducted to determine the students' current level of studio knowledge. The students interactions within the VLE were logged (i.e. frequency, time, duration, type of support) and their feedback was elicited via a user questionnaire at the end of the project. A thematic analysis of the online message boards is being conducted to ascertain what type of critical incident support the students required, how they discussed creative aspects of the project, and how artists were found. Data for this study is still being analysed and this will inform the use of online technologies to support formative assessment in the music studio. This will be achieved by examining the type and frequency of students support needs, and the themes that emerge from the online message boards.