

Personal Profile for his National Teaching Fellowship 2008
Dr Stephen Bostock

Stephen Bostock has had several careers in university teaching, and with every sort of student. His first permanent post in HE, in 1978, was in Adult Education, teaching environmental science to the general public around Staffordshire, in evenings and weekends. Next, he was university Director of Short Courses at Keele, helping academics provide professional courses to local business, and teaching short professional courses in IT himself. Then he ran an IT unit providing courses for disadvantaged adults, both short and postgraduate courses. In 1992 he joined a computer science department, and taught web-based courses on campus, and IT courses on part-time postgraduate courses in Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Mauritius, and other hot places.

For the last ten years he has concentrated on staff development and educational development, passing on his wide teaching experience to others. He now heads Keele University's Learning Development Unit where he manages, amongst other things, staff development for teaching, innovation projects, and the development of the institution's online learning environment.

Throughout his career he has researched the uses of computers for learning. Since 2000-01 he has led the postgraduate course Teaching and Learning with Technology. He wrote the SEDA Paper, *e-Teaching: engaging students through learning technology* (2007). His interest in e-learning was never about the technology, but about how the technology could save time and provide new opportunities for students to engage with the subject, with other students, and with teachers.

He was an early adopter of using the web to support active learning for students on campus. He is equally enthusiastic about technology in the classroom, especially electronic voting handsets, or clickers. Clickers are expensive and can be inconvenient, so he invented a way for teachers to interact with large numbers of students in lectures using paper: CommuniCubes. Printed on card, they are cheap enough for any university but they support similar 'interactive lectures' as clickers. Most students like them: "They make the lectures more interesting"; "a more fun way of learning!!"

His teaching philosophy? "Fun helps deep learning."