

John Traxler, Wolverhampton University, Centre for Learning and Teaching, United Kingdom

John Traxler is Learning and Teaching Research Fellow in the Centre for Learning and Teaching at the University of Wolverhampton. He is currently responsible for several projects that explore and develop the potential of technology in further and higher education. One of these projects will produce and evaluate accessible low bandwidth virtual learning environments running on "smart-phones" whilst the other projects to develop and evaluate different strategies to embed mobile technologies within university and community settings. He is a regular presenter at computing, educational and learning technology conferences and organises national workshops for computing academics, mostly on mobile learning, including educational texting, educational podcasting. He has worked with Sony to develop an increased role for handheld computers in education, and with DfID to explore the potential for mobile learning in sub Saharan Africa. He was the Evaluator for the EU mLearning Project and has had several roles in the Quality Assurance and Evaluation of technology supported learning and web-based learning, including the EU-funded Broadnet Project delivering training to SMEs in the West Midlands. His recent research and publication interests include the ethics and techniques of evaluating technology supported learning, mobile learning and social inclusion, factors affecting the nature and extent of lecturer take up of virtual learning environments, the use of "contrived" techniques in evaluation and the diffusion of learning technology innovations within educational organisations.



Using Mobile Technologies to Support Learning in Sub-Saharan Africa

In developing countries, mobile technologies have the capacity to deliver and enhance learning in ways that are completely different from mobile learning in countries where mains electricity, computer hardware and internet connectivity are stable, cheap and abundant.

This poster describes work currently under way in Kenya to support in-service teacher training nationally with a distance learning programme specifically developed locally to meet the infrastructural and organisational requirements of an environment. Alongside audio and video cassettes developed with BBC support and print material developed with Centre for Educational Leadership (CEL) at the University of Manchester support, John Traxler from the University of Wolverhampton has been working to bring together Kenya policy-makers, technologists and educationalists to develop a bulk SMS system for the 200,000 in-service teacher participants that will help structure the study programme, address the isolation of distance learners and deliver learning simply, sustainably and cost-effectively.

The project is supported by DfID, who are interested in the relevance of appropriate mobile learning for other countries of sub-Saharan Africa, and is intended not only to deliver regionally relevant solutions but more importantly to build capacity locally.

