Executive Summary

This report summaries the activity during the academic year 2012/13. It demonstrates the wide remit of the Centre and gives examples of how Faculties and Directorates have engaged with our developers and services. As our work becomes increasingly tailored to the changing needs of the University much of the staff development which offer is bespoke. We hope that this report provides University staff at all levels with ideas and examples of staff development that they might commission for their team, or undertake individually.

Section 1 highlights what we consider to be our achievements this year and demonstrates how our offer is evolving and expanding. New initiatives launched this year include: a dedicated offer for colleagues in our Associate Colleges, the Virtual Projects Office, Participate Process Reviews, Certificate in Coaching and Mentorship, Personal Development Review Refresher, Pathways to Senior and Principal Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy, Accredited Open Online Courses, and free e-books. This section also explains our partnership approach to working with faculties and directorates with examples of how OCSD staff and educational developers work through their link roles with Faculties and Directorates.

Section 2 reports on our work to improve the student experience through initiatives to reward and recognise the very many excellent teaching staff at Oxford Brookes, and through our contribution to the implementation of the Strategy for Enhancing the Student Experience. This year we created rich, dynamic, web resources to support the PETAL scheme and the 150th Anniversary celebrations. We supported individuals and teams to apply for teaching fellowship awards through a variety of local and nationally recognised schemes. Our accredited courses remain in demand from staff at Oxford Brookes and beyond. Overall, we awarded 35 Associate Teaching Certificates, 27 Postgraduate Certificates in Teaching in Higher Education, 7 Senior Fellowships of the Higher Education Academy, and 7 Principal Fellowships of the Higher Education Academy.

Section 3, Technology Enhanced Learning is a new section this year to recognise our growing expertise and activity in this field. We supported the move to Moodle, the ePioneer staff/student partnerships, and prompted and University wide conversation on our ambitions resulting in ‘5 objectives for digital learning environments’ agreed by Faculty Academic Enhancement and Standards Committees.

Section 4 focuses on developing the employee experience. This is an area of work that we expect to grow in response to the new Human Resources Strategy (2012-16) which makes a commitment to generating activities which deepen employee engagement. This includes existing initiatives which require ongoing attention such as the maintenance of our Gold Investors in People status, training for all staff on the Personal Development Review process, induction and career development for all staff, including providing access to work based qualifications.

Section 5 explains our philosophy of a coaching approach to leadership and management, and the activities to embed this at Oxford Brookes. We rolled out a short PDR refresher to all managers which introduced coaching, and included a ‘Manager as Coach’ workshop and peer coaching sessions in the Core Management and Leadership Programme. For those wishing to further develop their skills we launched a Certificate in Coaching and Mentoring,
accredited through the Institute for Leadership and Management. Managers are also encouraged to take advantage of the comprehensive suite of Project Management courses and qualifications. A new addition to our offer this year is the Participative Process Review – a team based activity which aims to equip team members with the knowledge and skills to conduct a process review in their own area.

In Section 6 we recognise the achievements of OCSLD staff in research and publication, and how these are contributing to our ambitions to make a substantial contribution to excellent pedagogic research nationally and internationally. We were involved in three externally funded projects this year and numerous internal institutional evaluations. We welcomed two part-time researchers to the team to support our institutional evaluations, particularly in support the Programme for Enhancing the Student Experience. Our two national special interest groups in the fields of internationalisation and technology enhanced learning, continue to flourish.

In the final section we reflect on how our own processes and services are developing, in order to maintain our reputation for providing sector leading services to Oxford Brookes and the wider higher education community. We have invested in developing rich media and online resources to support both flexible delivery of staff development and open academic practices. The intersection of this is particularly of interest – this year two new 10 credit open, online modules were validated as part of the Postgraduate Certificate in Teaching in Higher Education. We ran also ran five unaccredited online courses with 64 participants (15 from OBU, 53 external). We continue to offer consultancy to other institutions, this year running three course design intensives and 36 workshops in the UK and Australia.

The objectives we set after our portfolio review of courses in 2011/12 have been revisited and remain largely the same. In 2013/14 we will undertake a review of three areas of our activity: management and leadership development, pedagogic and institutional research, and external consultancy administration.