
Changes in economics teaching practice and the role of the Economics Network – Results of the Economics Lecturer Survey 2011



Contents

Executive summary	1
Section 1: About the respondents.....	4
Section 2: About teaching Economics	6
Section 3: Change in teaching practice	8
Section 4: Most important issues in teaching.....	10
Section 5: Support from the Economics Network	12
Section 6: Specialist areas networks	16
Section 7: Conclusions	17

Executive summary

This is a summary of the report and analysis of the Economics Network Lecturers survey, carried out in March to April 2011.

This survey, along with the Student, Alumni and Employers surveys, is part of the centre's research programme into teaching and learning in Economics. The main objectives of this survey included clarifying current practices and issues of concern to Economics lecturers and their students, as well as providing the Economics Network and its stakeholders with information about how Economics lecturers use our services and what impact it has on their teaching.

This is an observational survey and was conducted online for ease of use and low cost. The majority of questions (18 out of 21) were already used in the 2009 survey and are divided into three sections, including free-text commentary.

Profile of respondents

There were 145 respondents from 57 HE institutions across the UK. The results of the survey describe our typical respondent as:

- Male (71.0%)
- First language English (66.9%)
- In the post of Lecturer or Senior Lecturer (60.7%)
- With more than 10 years of experience in teaching in HE (57.3%)
- Having one or more of the administrative roles (93.1%)
- Not a member of the Royal Economic Society (75.0%)
- Publishing at least one article in the past five years (75.2%)
- Not having authored or co-authored any books in the past five years (87.1%)
- Not edited or co edited any books in the past five years (95.2%)
- Not written chapters, published in volumes edited by someone else (55.1%).

Key results

A. About teaching Economics

When asked about support or advice for their teaching, the majority (69.6%) report receiving advice from colleagues; 40.0% from a central university Education Development/Support Unit; 44.8% from the Economics Network; and 8.9% stated that no support was required. Respondents also commented on various sources of advice and support.

When asked about funding received for a teaching/learning project, more than three-quarters of respondents report that they have not received any. Among those who succeeded in obtaining funding 13.1% received funding from the Economics Network and 11.7% from their university.

Respondents were asked if they had received a teaching award and 23.4% gave a positive answer with the awards coming from the Economics network, HE Academy and institutions.

B. Change in teaching practice

Since 2003 in all our lecturers' surveys we have asked respondents if they have changed their teaching practice in the past two years. This year had seen the highest number of those who have changed it: nearly three-quarters of respondents reported some change in teaching practice. Reasons for change included: students skills and abilities (46.2%); feedback from students (44.8%); support to large number of students (40.0%); suggestions from workshops (25.5%); and colleagues' suggestions (24.8%).

In their comments lecturers described their reasons for change and their actions. This continuing trend for change of teaching practice due to various reasons increases the demand for services and resources provided by the Economics Network.

C. Most important issues in teaching

Respondents were offered a list of current teaching issues and asked to select those which they and their colleagues consider very important (they could select as many issues as they thought relevant in their current teaching). Nearly three-quarters of respondents chose *Student motivation* as the most important issue; while two-thirds chose *Student math's skills* and more than half of the respondents mentioned *Plagiarism and Large number of students in lectures* and *Large tutorial groups*. Another issue mentioned by more than a third of respondents is *Specific needs of international students*.

As well as commenting on these issues, respondents wrote about various pressures on their time and differential rewards for success in research and teaching.

D. Support from the Economics Network

Respondents were asked about the Economics Network's services and resources. More than half of them (57.2%) replied that they use Economics Network services and resources and positively assessed their value.

We asked lecturers who had not used Economics Network resources to comment on their reasons. The majority stressed "time" as a major barrier (*I am severely time-constrained*) as well as lack of knowledge about the resources (*I didn't know all the possibilities*).

Those who had used Economics Network resources and services were asked to comment on how it had influenced their teaching and what improvements this made to student learning or educational experience. In their replies many respondents praised the work of the Economics Network (*Overall, it's the cumulative effect of EN in stimulating regular rethinks of all aspects of student learning in my subjects and in my environmental context*) and provided suggestions for its future developments.

The Economics Network works with potential and current students by providing resources through <http://whystudyeconomics.ac.uk/> and <http://www.studyconomics.ac.uk/>. The majority of respondents were aware of these sites and encourage students to use them (*Helpful links to topical issues – important in communicating economics to non-economists*).

Respondents were also asked to share the websites they recommend to their students and their replies will be used to update resources on the *Studying Economics* site.

E. Specialist area networks

At the time of the survey the Economics Network was supporting the DeSTRESS project (<http://economicsnetwork/projects/destress>) which intends to share and create resources to support statistical literacy in economics and other social sciences. More than a third of respondents were positive when asked if they would be interested in contributing to this project and their names were passed to the leader of the specialist group.

Respondents were also asked if they make use of openly licensed resources and nearly half of them replied that they did not know what openly licensed means.

F. Conclusions

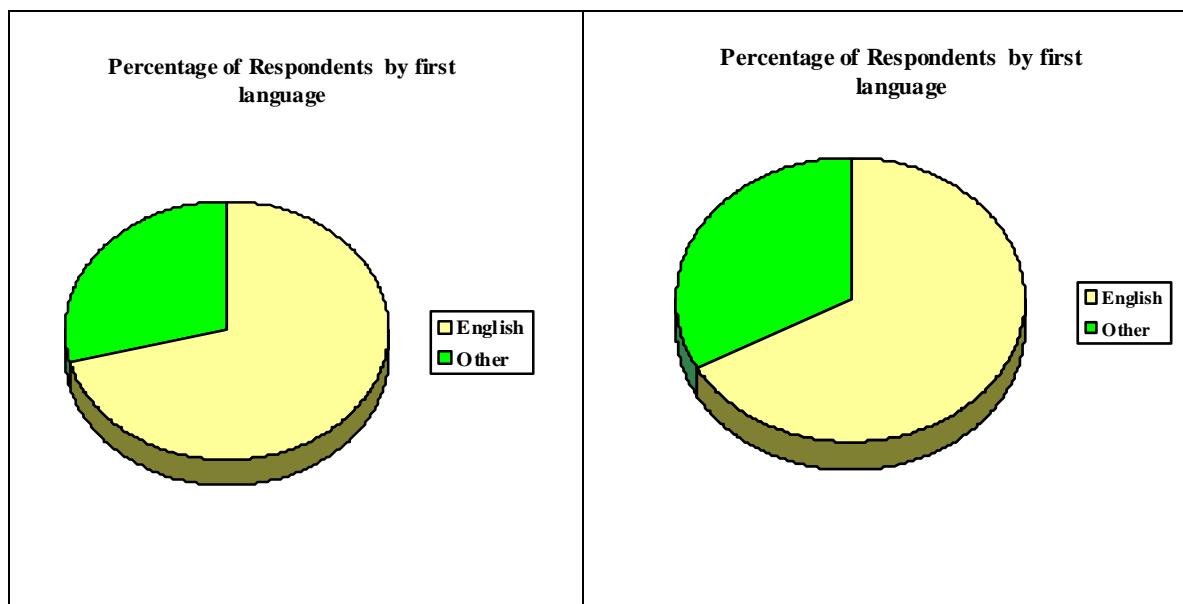
Results of the survey demonstrated positive support from the community for the work of the Economics Network. They will also inform the centre's strategy and planning of the events, resources, briefings and publications in support of economics lecturers.

Section 1: About the respondents

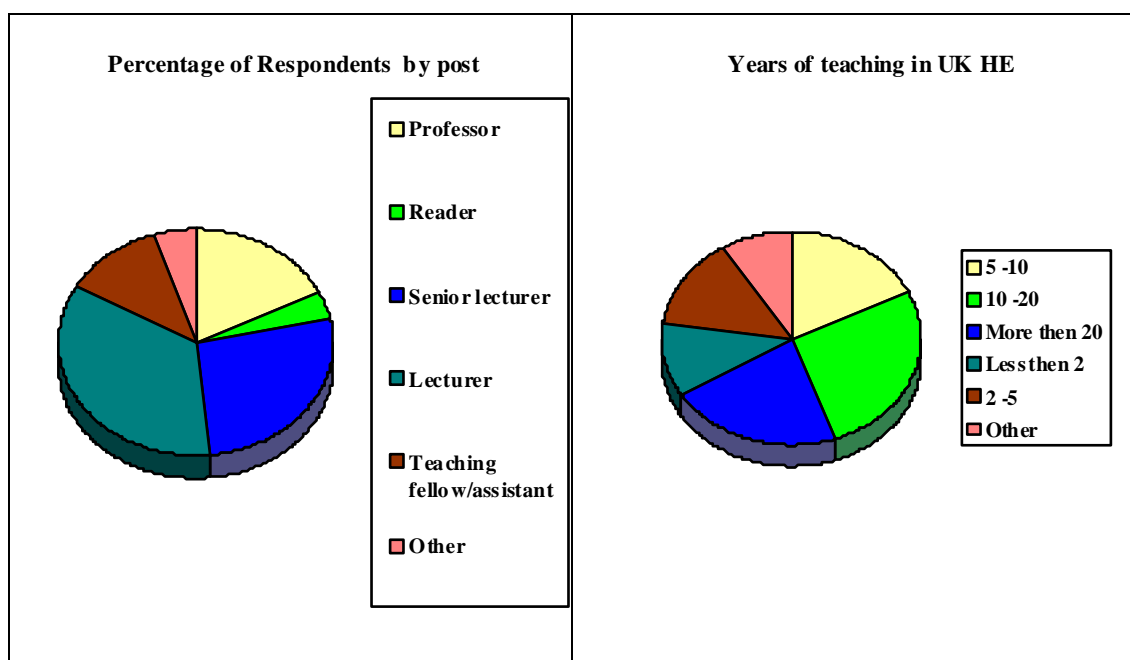
The survey was conducted online, using BOS (<http://www.survey.bris.ac.uk/>) and consisted of 21 questions focusing on changes in teaching practice over the previous two years; their membership in RES and SES and research activities; use of Economics Network (EN) services; and specialist areas networks. It included open questions with free-text commentary. Representative quotes from these responses are included in the report.

One hundred and forty-five respondents from 57 UK universities completed the survey, which is less than in the two previous surveys. It was intended as an observational study and not as a controlled experiment. The respondents do not constitute a random sample of all Economics lecturers in the UK, but a self-selected group. As a result, their views may not fully reflect the opinions of all Economics lecturers.

Among the respondents 71.0% were male and 29.0% female.



Two-thirds regarded English as their first language. More than three out of five were lecturers and senior lecturers, 17.2% were professors and 11.7% were teaching fellows and teaching assistants.



When asked about their administrative roles only 6.9% replied that they do not have any. Among the mentioned roles were Economics Network departmental contacts or associates (less than a quarter); 21.3% were either Head of Department or Director of Undergraduate or Postgraduate studies; 16.5% were year tutors. Other roles included teaching and learning coordinators, module leaders, placement coordinators, etc.

The majority of respondents were very experienced teachers: 21.4% have taught for more than 20 years; 26.9% between 10 and 20 years and 17.9% between 5 and 10 years. Only 1 in 10 has taught for less than 2 years in UK HE.

This year we included three additional questions in our survey about the research and publications of our respondents. We ask them whether they are members of Royal Economic Society (RES) or Scottish Economic Society (SES) and how many articles, book chapters or books on Economics they have written, edited or published in the past five years. Only one-quarter of the respondents were members of the RES and less than one in 11 member of SES. Among other memberships mentioned were the Chinese Economic Association (UK), Institute of Economists of Nigeria and the International Union for the Taxation of Land Values and Free Trade. Less than a quarter of the respondents have published no articles in Economics in the past five years, while nearly a half published between 1 and 5, and more than 1 in 10 published more than 10 articles.

Section 2: About teaching Economics

When asked about support or advice for their teaching, the majority (69.6%) report receiving advice from colleagues; 40.0% from a central university Education Development/Support Unit; 44.8% from the Economics Network and 8.9% stated that no support was required.

We ask the respondents to provide details, including how useful the given support has been. Respondents commented on various sources of advice and support.

From colleagues:

- *Colleagues are a very useful resource for general teaching issues*
- *Colleagues are always a good sounding board on assessment issues in particular*
- *Colleagues support was very important when I started*
- *Peer observations: sometimes useful comments are given, such as make better contact with the audience.*

From central university units:

- *The University has a very active Teaching Development Unit which specialises in helping students who are experiencing difficulties*
- *Completed PGCHE when employed as an hourly paid lecturer, which provided me with some important and useful insights into teaching in HE (as well as skill development)*

From the Economics Network:

- *I really enjoy the practical ideas and online exercises off the Economics Network site*
- *Economics Network information was integral for improving on teaching content and quality*
- *residential seminar for new lecturers in Economics, 2010: excellent, entertaining, and very useful (plenty of tips learnt!)*

- *EN support is particularly invaluable*
- *I have attended a number of DEE conferences and had the benefit of info provided and insights gained from ensuing discussions.*

There were some negative comments about teaching advice and support:

- *University Learning Unit Support was useless, ineffective and demoralising*
- *mixed results – some internal courses on teaching have been useful, others a total waste of time.*

When asked about funding received for a teaching/learning project more than three-quarters of respondents report that they haven't received any. Among those who succeeded in obtaining funding 13.1% received funding from the Economics Network and 11.7% from their university. Projects that got funding include:

- *various projects for developing teaching software*
- *university grants to purchase two PRS (clicker) systems*
- *Learning and Teaching funding for online learning – producing mini videos for students*
- *an investigation into the potential for blended learning approaches in enhancing students' assessment experience on an Introduction to Economics and Statistics Module*
- *Survey of alumni on use of strategy tools*
- *TRUE project – teaching heterodox economics*
- *small project relating to the rise of international students in higher education.*

We ask respondents if they need any additional support/help with dissemination and 17.5% were positive in their reply. EN will try to provide help with dissemination of those projects.

We asked respondents if they had received a teaching award. Nearly a quarter of them had received a teaching award, which included:

- *Economics Network teaching and student nominated awards*
- *UCL Provost's Teaching Award, 2009 Academy Inspirational Teaching Award*
- *Best Teaching Fellow in Economics Award of York University*
- *Internal – star award for best teacher*
- *for the use of Twitter to support learning on an introductory economics module*
- *European Academic Software Award 2004 (special prize for teaching tools).*

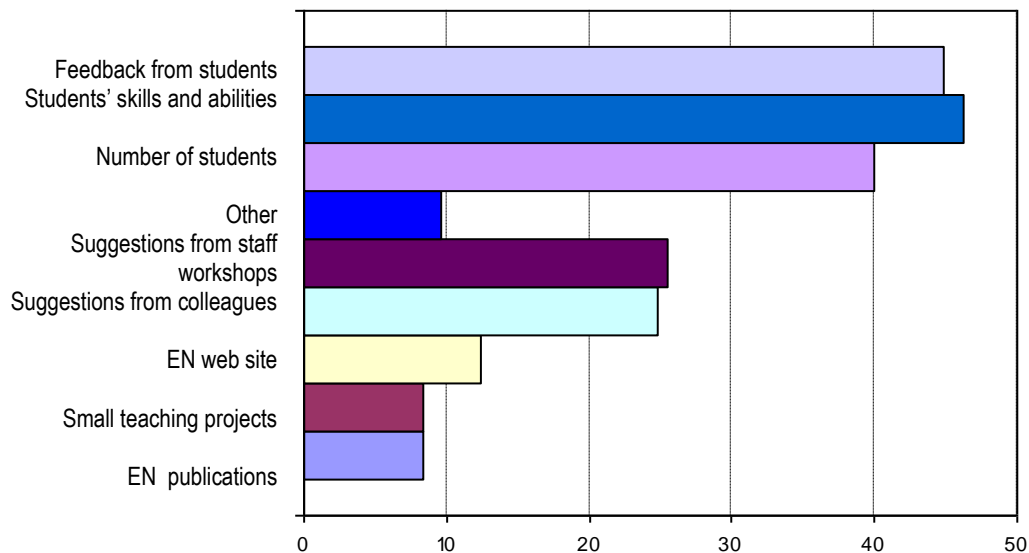
One of the respondents commented: *I am not keen on awards to be honest but I guess with teaching it is hard to get noticed.*

Section 3: Change in teaching practice

Since 2003 in all our lecturers' surveys we have asked respondents if they have changed their teaching practice in the past two years. More than half of the respondents in all previous surveys answer positively to this question and the 2011 survey results follow this trend, with nearly three-quarters of respondents reporting a change in teaching practice. One of the respondents commented about this: *There's always lots to improve, but never any time!* This continuing trend for change of teaching practice due to various reasons increases the demand for services and resources provided by the Economics Network.

Reasons for change included: feedback from students (44.8%); sStudents' skills and abilities (46.2%); number of students (40.0%); suggestions from workshops (25.5%); colleagues' suggestions (24.8%).

Reasons for changing teaching practice in the past two years



Other reasons included: changes in technology; personal reflection on teaching; a larger number of low-ability students; further promote transferable skills that employers identified as important; pedagogic literature; increase in number of international students.

When asked to provide details lecturers described their reasons for change and their actions. Among them, those who changed practice due to student feedback:

- *The quality of feedback has been an issue raised by students. I have attempted to introduce more opportunity for timely feedback and face-to-face feedback that there is more chance of them "taking on-board".*
- *Introduced peer feedback on formative oral presentations. This peer feedback (alongside my own) is then used by students as the basis of a summative assessment which requires students to reflect on their individual learning experience.*

Change due to students' skills and abilities:

- *Poor analytical skills of calculation or of thought mean that a three-hour examination is out of the question. This serviced course is 100% coursework assessed, with 10 MCTs and 1 presentation.*

Change due to the increase number of international students:

- *more adaptable to foreign students*
- *explaining the meaning of words and phrases; slowing down in my delivery; providing far more written material; testing at a more regular interval.*

Many respondents try to make their teaching more interactive:

- *more interactive methods*
- *more emphasis on experiential learning, writing*
- *introduced: more demonstrations/user engagement into lectures and peer marking*
- *use of blogs, wikis, quizzes, group work, econometrics cafe for answering student questions*
- *incorporating different types of activities in seminars so students were able to work with varied people and groups within the class*
- *used an audience-response system to involve students*
- *requiring more active student participation and following their progress on session-to-session basis through home assignments*
- *continual revision to increase engagement: introduction of in-tutorial mini-tests, increased practical sessions when teaching econometrics*
- *group work rather than individual at UG level, focused more on “telling the story”*
- *made greater use of PBL/issue-based approach to delivery and integrated more economic data/evidence.*

Some made changes to the assessment:

- *a more “engaged” active research-oriented set of assessments*
- *thinking of introducing a course test mid-semester as a means of encouraging greater attention to and more precision with economic concepts*
- *experimentation with and evolution of assessments (some more successful than others to date)*
- *online formative assessment using resources from Economics Network.*

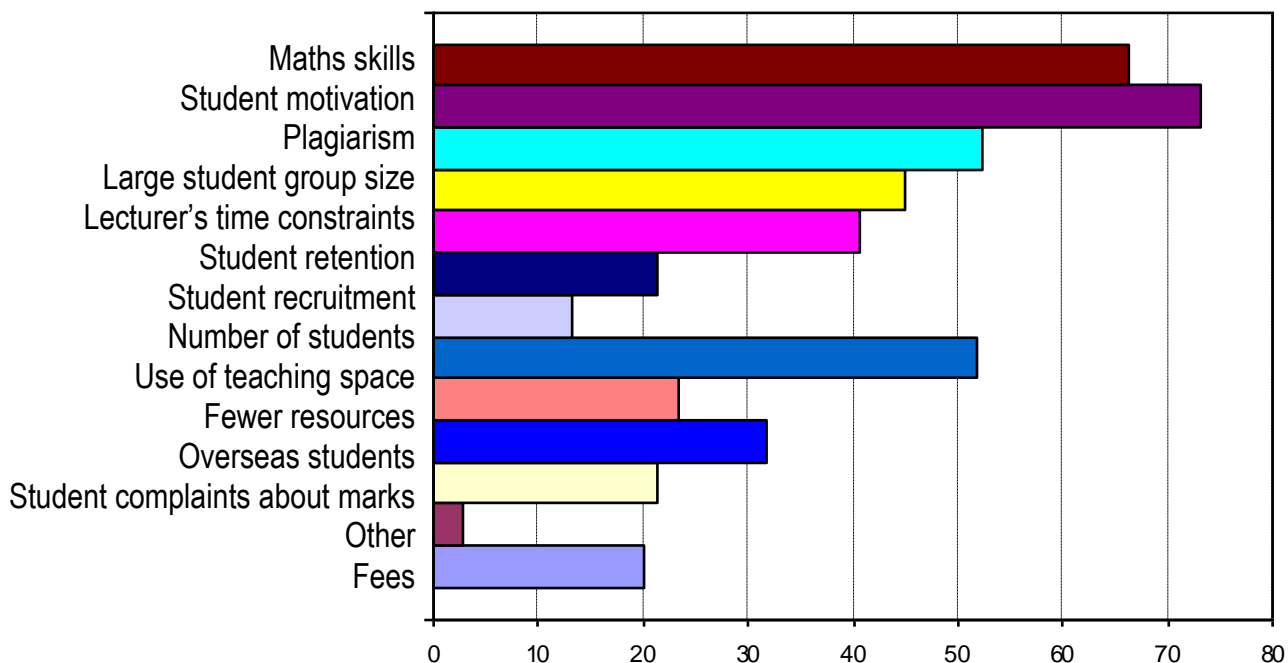
Incorporating new technology:

- *greater use of various Web2.0 applications (e.g. Twitter, delicious, etc.)*
- *electronic marking and feedback*
- *incorporated more blended learning, i.e. audio power point slides and WIMBA.*

Section 4: Most important issues in teaching

Respondents were offered a list of current teaching issues used in the previous survey and asked to select those which they and their colleagues consider very important (they could select as many issues as they thought relevant in their current teaching). Nearly two-thirds of respondents chose “Student maths skills” and “Student motivation” as the most important issues, with half of the respondents mentioning “Large number of students in lectures” and “Plagiarism”. Another issue that has seen its importance increase significantly in the past four years is “Specific needs of international students”. “Student’s fees” has seen its importance rising more than four times in the last two years due to the introduction by government of the new student fees from 2012.

Most important issues in current teaching in Economics in 2009



Respondents described the issues in more detail.

Maths skills of students:

- *At BSc level the clear problem is that an A grade in Maths doesn't signify very much nowadays. At MSc level, large number of overseas students just aren't at the UK level (although the best overseas students are outstanding).*

Student motivation:

- *difficult to motivate students and to engage them: their main focus is the exam*
- *difficult to get them to participate in the classroom*
- *no motivation*

Number of students and large size groups:

- *Time constraints and large groups require adjusted teaching approaches, especially interactive approaches, reflective approaches and practical using computers.*
- *I am teaching an Economics module of up to 900 students on a non-economics degree. Key issues include: motivation/engagement, assessment and being sensitive to needs of international students.*
- *Undergraduate and postgraduate numbers in the department have roughly doubled in three years.*
- *Student numbers get ever larger and time gets more pressured. The physical infrastructure is under ever-increasing pressure and university procedures (which remain fine for the majority of departments – being smaller) are becoming unworkable.*

Specific needs of overseas students:

- *One of the greatest areas of difficulty is related to the huge increase in overseas students. The English skills test seems inadequate in some cases which makes it difficult for lecturers, but also for the students themselves whose English skills impact their success.*
- *Overseas students often struggle with English and find participation in seminar discussions challenging. This is an issue in subjects like Economic History which rely on essay writing skills. Large seminar groups make it difficult to assess students and undermine participation.*
- *Plagiarism is a major issue with overseas students.*

There were also comments from respondents regarding fees, assessment and developing skills:

- *You list the well-known issues HE teaching throws up and these issues will be even more to the fore if students are going to leave university with £40K of debt in the future.*
- *My main pedagogic and practical problems are about managing student assessment (both the student-centred aspects and the institutional accountability aspects): costs of doing so even adequately well now far exceed the workload plan provision.*
- *Adverse impact of search engines on research/analysis skills (more quotation than critical thinking). Culturally-mediated differences in attitudes towards plagiarism, group working, use of lecturer's time for questions, willingness to do reading before asking questions, etc. Leads to inefficient teaching and learning and to gross inequities.*

Section 5: Support from the Economics Network

Respondents were asked about their use of services and resources provided by the Economics Network. More than half of them (57.2%) replied that they use Economics Network services and resources.

Of these, more than a half (51.8%) read the email newsletter, more than a third use IREE, the Handbook for lecturers, and other web resources, memory stick with resources and attend Economics Network workshops.

Respondents positively assessed the value of the resources and services provided by the Economics Network – *Overall, it's the cumulative effect of EN in stimulating regular rethinks of all aspects of student learning in my subjects and in my environmental context.*

They commented on the focus groups, run by the Economics Network:

- *The focus group was great for identifying student concerns.*
- *Focus group was fantastic. Really useful input for our programme development and student support.*

On the website and other resources:

- *just generally with suggestions/resources for improvements in T&L*
- *lecture material/sources/references etc*
- *used some questions to compile study material*
- *diffusion of practices across universities*
- *IREE journal articles and Economics Network handbook extremely useful for PG Cert course and learning and teaching research*
- *information about module contents.*

On sharing practices and developing ideas:

- *sharing practice with colleagues in the sector; developing new test/exam questions; trying new technology tools in teaching*
- *given me ideas that I could adapt into my own style of teaching*
- *increased awareness of alternative approaches to teaching*
- *Case studies and Questionbank stimulate ideas for innovations*
- *it is important to learn from others' approaches: this stimulates constructive reflection on my own work*
- *case studies and handbook are great resources for new ideas on teaching.*

We asked lecturers who hadn't used Economics Network resources to comment on their reasons. The majority stressed "time" as a major barrier (*Not enough time to find out what resources are available and how useful they are; I am severely time-constrained*).

Those who had used Economics Network resources and services were asked to comment on how they had influenced their teaching. Among the responses:

- *access to some sources on experiments in the classroom very useful*
- *maintained motivation to update teaching methods and quality of delivery*
- *no major changes, but the information flow contributes to the knowledge base on which many small changes are based: larger-scale changes are made difficult due to the lack of time to make discretionary changes*
- *provided a further dimension of relevant, up-to-date topical information*
- *not directly, but have encouraged me to have a go at trying to improve and change my approach*
- *they have confirmed rather than changed my approach (IBL)*
- *developing, in teaching, the idea of 'data' as involving a production process that uses up scarce resources, so can be subjected, critically, to standard economic analysis. This change directly attributable to funded EN projects. In addition, more generally, I now use screened slides in a different way than I did three years ago. This change is attributable to a combination of: teaching economics to newly various cohorts of students; teaching new and innovative modules and the cumulative effect of contacts with the EN*
- *ideas of new things and new procedures.*

Respondents were asked to comment on changes or improvements this made to student learning or educational experience. Among their replies:

- *more material on environmental and resource economics; more on institutional economics and on evolutionary economics*
- *enhanced their learning experience*
- *find courses more interesting/motivating*
- *more diverse teaching and assessment methods, improving overall student result;*
- *increased the ability of student engagement, as well as dispelling some myths about electronic tools*
- *flexible learning*
- *more active learning*
- *students can see the relevance of what they are studying*
- *improved the failure rate a little!*
- *surgery hours, student-led practical lab sessions, data-based exercises...*
- *ask the students! From my perspective, my teaching is more systematic: different parts of my teaching provision have simpler and clearer roles to play in student learning, though not every innovation is always appreciated by all students at the time.*

After the discussion on the most important issues to the respondents and their colleagues we asked them how the Economics Network could support them with these issues. Some of the respondents argue that the issues are local and the Economics Network could not help:

- *Thank you, but I would argue the issues I have stated are for the university to develop strategies for, not the Economics Network.*

- *You can't, especially when we control the intake of neither our own degrees nor the serviced courses.*
- *Little. The issues are essentially local.*
- *I wish I knew – lobby for an end to the A-level system? Help remove the present government?*

Among suggestions for future developments of the Economics Network:

- *case studies for simple computer practical's*
- *techniques to make learning more active in large groups*
- *start interesting the children early and support their (premature) ideals*
- *recognising various practices across the industry, including the differentiated weighting of various years' results towards the final honours degree*
- *plausible suggestions for reconciling the maintenance or enhancement of pedagogic standards and outcomes with time-resource and reliability constraints.*

Support for students is also a key objective for the Economics Network. To this end in 2004 the Economics Network developed a website to encourage potential students to study economics – *Why Study Economics?* <http://whystudyeconomics.ac.uk> and in 2009 developed a website to support current students – *Studying Economics* <http://studyingeconomics.ac.uk>. More than half of the respondents (50.3%) were aware of this work and 53.4% actively encourage their student to use resources from these sites. In their comments some of the respondents mention that they have used videos from “Why Study Economics?”; found helpful links to topical issues – important in communicating economics to non-economists; and added link on blackboard for students who need additional support or would like to explore more.

Respondents were also asked to share the websites they recommend to their students and their replies will be used to update resources on the *Studying Economics* site.

The last question in this section of the survey was about possible resources and services that the Economics Network should provide in the future. In answering this question many respondents praised the work of the Economics Network and would like to see it maintained:

- *I think the Economics Network is providing an excellent service. Thank you.*
- *It provides a huge amount of support, and via this, encouragement. I cannot think of any additional resources.*
- *Very helpful links to a resource bank should be maintained.*

Among the practical suggestions:

- *empirical case studies; templates for computer assisted modelling*

- *richer subject sections (i.e. Public Economics, Industrial Organisation), with case studies, question banks*
- *support and foster communication among members*
- *maybe short videos (or other material) on simple and easy to implement ideas that people have attempted in their teaching and that have worked well*
- *support with links for research paper publications or related information*
- *simple ways of modelling the form and changes of the macroeconomy*
- *advertising rather than providing links to sites for jobs and courses for staff and students; also MSc,PhD opportunities/placements/internship research area might attract new interest.*

Funds permitting, the Economics Network will explore some of the suggested ideas and look to provide the community with further resources and services.

Section 6: Specialist areas networks

At the request of the ‘Teaching Resources for Undergraduate Economics’ (TRUE) project, one of a HEFCE-funded [Open Educational Resources programme](http://www.economicsnetwork.ac.uk/projects/oer) (<http://www.economicsnetwork.ac.uk/projects/oer>) we included a question specifically addressing attitudes to OERs. The question and options had embedded explanatory links, allowed multiple responses and had a free text option. Half of the respondents were not aware of what is meant by “open licence” or “Creative Commons”. Among the comments:

- *Knowledge should be unrestricted in its availability, including what I have to offer!*
- *I generally write my own notes, but may draw on individual resources from elsewhere.*
- *I get the University Library to supply access to digital resources I need and sort out the copyright issues unless I find something which is public domain, in which case I'll copy it to the Virtual Learning Environment for the module.*
- *I have some idea of Creative Commons but do not make use of it.*
- *I was unaware of this site but I do know what is meant by open licence.*
- *I haven't known of them before but will almost certainly use them in future.*
- *Intend to look into these, but have not had time to do so.*
- *I am not that aware of this resource to be honest; I do look at MIT courseware and the like but often it is not suitable.*
- *Did not know and on a brief glance just now the materials as is often the case, do not appear suitable.*
- *There has not been much useful stuff under CC, but I would like to explore more.*
- *Unlikely to be useful.*
- *Getting them to read and use the textbook is a big enough challenge.*
- *I sometimes use utube clips in lectures.*
- *I use images from flickr but underuse such resources.*

Economics Network is supporting the DeSTRESS project (<http://www.economicsnetwork.ac.uk/projects/destress>) which intends to share and create resources to support statistical literacy in economics and other social sciences. Respondents were asked if they would be interested in contributing to this project. More than a third of the respondents replied positively and their names were passed to the leaders of the project. Among the comments:

- *This is a good initiative. Quite often however, the students have difficulty relating theory to practice, wonder where theory comes from and how data has been obtained. Qualitative economics is poorly featured.*
- *Highly relevant resource!*

- *Given my current teaching focus (Business Economics) I won't have material which would support this issue, though in general I think it is a good idea.*

At the end of the survey we asked respondents for any further comments. Many of these were positive comments about the Economics Network: *In my opinion Economics Network was one of the active and productive subject centres of the HE Academy with a creative, practical and supportive team and I hope that Economics Network will continue existing in its current capacity;* while others raise a values issue: *There is a need to prioritise subjects according to their strategic values! Knowledge of basic macroeconomics comes close to that of sex!*

Section 7: Conclusions

The Economics Network conducted its biennial national lecturer survey in March to April of 2011 as part of its research programme into teaching and learning. The main objectives of this survey included clarifying current practices and issues of concern to Economics lecturers and their students, as well as providing the Economics Network and its stakeholders with information about how Economics lecturers use our services and what impact it has on their teaching.

One hundred and forty-five respondents from 57 UK universities completed the survey, which is less than for the two previous surveys. Data analysed in this report do not represent the opinions of all Economics lecturers and reflect only the views of those who replied to the survey.

The survey confirms a trend amongst increasing numbers of lecturers to change their teaching methods over the past two years due to changes in students' skills and abilities, larger classes and feedback that they receive from students. This continuing trend for change of teaching practice increases the demand for services and resources provided by the Economics Network.

When questioned about the most important issues in their current teaching, nearly two-thirds of respondents reported *Student maths skills* and *Student motivation* as the most important issues, with half of the respondents reporting *Large number of students in lectures* and *Plagiarism*. Another issue that has seen its importance increase significantly in the past four years is *Specific needs of international students*. Student's fees has risen in importance more than four times in the past two years due to the introduction by government of the new student fees from 2012.

Due to various reasons, slightly more than half of the respondents have used existing services and resources of the Economics Network.

Respondents who do use Economics Network resources and services very positively assessed their value and the impact on their teaching. They also reported on their impact on students' learning: *Enhanced their learning*

experience; Find courses more interesting/motivating; More diverse teaching and assessment methods, improving overall student results; Increased the ability of student engagement, as well as dispelling some myths about electronic tools; Students can see the relevance of what they are studying; Improved the failure rate a little!; Surgery hours, student-led practical lab sessions, data-based exercises...; Ask the students! From my perspective, my teaching is more systematic: different parts of my teaching provision have simpler and clearer roles to play in student learning, though not every innovation is always appreciated by all students at the time.

When asked about possible resources and services that the Economics Network should provide in the future some of the respondents refer to specific areas, while others praised the current work of the centre. Funds permitting, the Economics Network will explore these suggestions further.

The last section in the survey was included in support of the De-STRESS: Depository of Resources for Statistics in Social Sciences project funded through HEFCE. More than a third of respondents responded positively to contributing to this project. Among the comments: *This is a good initiative. Quite often however, the students have difficulty relating theory to practice, wonder where theory comes from and how data has been obtained. Qualitative economics is poorly featured; Highly relevant resource! Given my current teaching focus (Business Economics) I won't have material which would support this issue, though in general I think it is a good idea.*

Results of the survey demonstrated positive support from the community for the work of the Economics Network. The results will also inform strategy and planning.