

MASTERS &
DOCTORATES
IN THE 21ST
CENTURY AND
THE IMPACT OF
THE DIGITAL AGE

Making Sense of E-Learning

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KEY ISSUES:

- How can pedagogy flourish on the Internet?
- Truth and fiction about e-learning.
- Demystifying the digital domain.
- Find your academic comfort zone.
- Rival constructs: teaching and learning.
- Everything in moderation?
- If it's digital, it must be right.
- Myths of the Virtual Learning Environment.
- Defining a quality threshold and the implications for post-graduate education.
- What have today's administrators to fear?

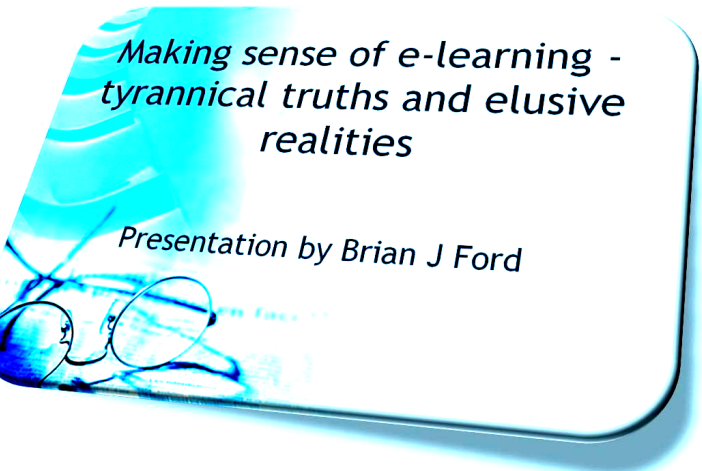
Paper for the UKCGE Summer Conference 2007

E-learning is a subject that spells discomfort to many academics, for it signals the end of those comfortable orthodoxies and brings with it the need to acquire new skills.

The converse is the case if you happen to be working in the field. In that situation, then the subject is nothing but good news. It is so rich in potential as a source of funding, personal prestige, empire-building and novel theorizing.

Specialists create new forms of jargon as a way of keeping outsiders at bay; small ideas assume the majesty of major mental constructs when couched in this new specialist language, and needless fears are used to taunt the tyro.

How useful are the new courses?



Are they now being adequately assessed? Can we rely on the accuracy and reliability of course content? What new levels of understanding do academics now need to acquire?

What will be the impact on postgraduate education, in

terms of didactic and assessment imperatives? We can peer through the obscurantism and try to perceive where the topic has come from, and what it can offer (or threaten) for the future of higher education in British universities and also in the colleges of higher education.

The Speaker (below right) presented with the distinguished lecturer award in Singapore last month.



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Brian J Ford first wrote articles on computers more than thirty years ago.

He is currently a Fellow of Cardiff University, Member of Gonville & Caius College at Cambridge University and Visiting Professor at Leicester.

He has been a Fellow at the Open University where he was creating on-line resources for writers and is author of over thirty books on topics including computers and several text-books and reference books for students.