

**Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> October 2007**

Penthyn Road Main Building Rm 196

**Dr Richard Waller – Senior Lecturer in Post-compulsory  
Education and Training and Lifelong Learning at UWE, Bristol**

***Empathy, Relationships and Social Capital:  
Influences on student experience(s)***

This session reports preliminary findings from an ongoing project into the experiences of undergraduate students at a provincial 'new' university. It employs a range of research methods including questionnaires, the use of disposable cameras, focus groups and one-to-one interviews to 'capture, acknowledge and activate non-verbal and *affective* dimensions impinging upon student experience(s)'. The research concludes by tentatively proposing four typologies of student experience, informed by factors both inside and outside the university's control. It also reflects upon the use of 'real' and 'virtual' social networks by the student body and how these impact upon the 'community of practice'.

Dr Richard Waller is a Senior Lecturer in Post-compulsory Education and Training and Lifelong Learning at UWE, Bristol. Originally trained as a sociologist, he has taught widely in further and higher education for a dozen years. He has published on a range of topics around identity, class, risk and biographical research methods. He is currently engaged in a number of small scale projects around student experience(s).