eSharp

HANDBOOK

eSharp is...
Activities & calendar
Board & Teams Structure

eSharp is…

eSharp is most fundamentally a **project**, based at the University of Glasgow, designed to provide independent, experience-based skills training for postgraduates in the arts, humanities, social sciences and education. Run entirely by graduate students, it aims to enhance postgraduates' skills and employability by providing opportunities for its members to run an international academic journal, organise conferences, deliver training seminars, bid for funding and work in a team. eSharp intends to provide a gateway to academic research and publication for postgraduates by both encouraging excellence in research through peer-reviewed publication and interdisciplinary exchange, and enhancing postgraduates' journal related skills in management, editing, reviewing, and publishing.

Objectives

- Provide a permanent publishing opportunity to postgraduate students of the University of Glasgow and beyond
- Promote excellence in research amongst the postgraduate students of the University of Glasgow
- Provide a permanent opportunity to postgraduates to gain experience of administering a journal
- Offer bespoke training to academics and other postgraduates
- Promote the project as an asset to the University of Glasgow and continually attempt to increase its presence upon the local, national and international academic stage
- Attract sources of funding and official recognition from within and outside the host institution.

Journal

eSharp is an **international online journal** for postgraduate research in the arts, humanities, social sciences and education. Based at the University of Glasgow and run entirely by graduate students, it aims to provide a critical but supportive entry into the realm of academic publishing for emerging academics, including postgraduates and recent postdoctoral students. Its key aim is to encourage the publication of high quality postgraduate research; therefore all submitted articles are anonymously double-blind peer reviewed as part of the acceptance and feedback process. This rigorous and constructive process is designed to enhance the worth of postgraduate and postdoctoral work.

History

eSharp began in July 2002 in the Graduate School of Arts and Humanities (following a conference, whose proceedings became the first issue, 'Magic'). This first issue of the self-titled journal *eSharp* was launched on 31 October 2003. Alongside the second issue ('Trailblazing,' May 2004), the board began delivering training workshops, and the project quickly expanded to incorporate the then Faculty of Social Sciences (which afterwards merged with the Faculty of Law and Financial Studies to form the Faculty of Law, Business and Social Sciences, necessitating a further expansion of eSharp's remit similar to that required when the Faculty of Divinity merged with the Faculty of Arts in late 2002). In 2005,

the project created its first spin-off, SharpEdge, which organises training seminars independently of eSharp under the purview of a former General Editor. Since then, other members of eSharp have gone on to compose and deliver their own seminar courses for the University, such as the popular 'PhD Survival. In 2006, eSharp incorporated the graduate school of the Faculty of Education into its scope and completed its growth into the Arts-side of the University. eSharp now runs an annual seminar series for the Education faculty, covering topics such as critical writing, attribution and referencing, and public engagement. Not long after this final subject-area expansion, a new spin-off journal specifically for academic book reviews was created. Titled *The Kelvingrove Review*, this sister-journal offers University of Glasgow postgraduate students the chance to publish an academic book review, and each issue is accompanied by workshops to guide students in their review writing.

The conferences organised by eSharp have included: *Magic* (2002), *Trailblazing* (2003), *Borders and Boundaries* (AHRC-funded, 2005), *The Future of Postgraduate Journals* (2005) and *The Cultural Value of Oral History* (AHRC-funded, 2007). The two previous seminar series (run by students with established academics speaking) were *Publish or Perish: Writing for Scholarly Journals* (2006) and *Academia: The View From Within* (2007). The first of these resulted in the journal's first eBook, entitled *Writing for Scholarly Journals*, 'a compendium covering some pertinent issues relating to postgraduates writing specifically for scholarly journals. The book's main aim is to begin to make plain some of those things that are often unexplained; those things the individual academic is supposed to learn through trial and error'.

eSharp was given an award in 2005 by the Enhancing Student Employability Co-ordination Team (ESECT), who are funded by HEFCE in collaboration with the Higher Education Academy, and eSharp has also hosted training events by professional publishing bodies for postgraduates at Glasgow.

Principles of Good Practice

The following guidelines are of high priority in maintaining and enhancing eSharp's quality of output, and thus its respect within the academic community.

- A strong commitment to the peer reviewing process is essential if *eSharp* is to continue to publish a high standard of work. The effort needed to keep the system up to date and functioning is directly related to the quality of articles we receive and publish. This makes the role of Peer-Review Co-ordinator and the recruitment of new peer reviewers crucial to the success of the journal.
- Continued emphasis on improving the internal skills of those involved with *eSharp* through training and increased responsibility is a key source of innovation and quality for the future. Taking time after the publication of each issue to get feedback from all those involved and reflect on the experience ensures *eSharp* will continue to improve.
- *eSharp* has always used technology to meet the aims of its work. With this comes responsibility: *eSharp* will continue to comply with the University's policy on data protection. *eSharp* will also be considerate in its use of unsolicited email.
- Open communication between all members is essential if everyone is to know the direction of the journal and understand their role in its development.
- Relationships with those outside *eSharp* are vital to the success of its initiatives. These relationships should be managed in a professional manner to ensure that the

expectations of both parties are articulated and addressed. All external arrangements should be at the discretion and agreement of the board.

- The board needs to have a firm commitment to innovation. Keeping up to date with the developments of other journal providers and developing relationships with these providers has been an invaluable source of best practice.
- Clear and careful strategic and financial planning is a key role for the board and one which needs to be regularly addressed.

Activities & calendar

Publications

eSharp – Two issues published per year, normally June and December.

TKR – Two issues a year, each themed after the *eSharp* issue it follows. *TKR* publication is aimed for 3 months after each *eSharp* launch

Special Issues – e.g. conference proceedings and eBooks. These are ongoing, with peer-reviewing, formatting and uploading preferably scheduled for quieter periods; a current list of all those planned for publication is on the wiki.

Events

Induction meetings – at least once a year, in October, three to four weeks after start of term to allow for publicising the event at the Faculty-run postgrad inductions, some of which don't take place until a month in to term. Faculty representatives should say a few words at all Grad School PG welcoming events.

Launches – accompany the publication of each issue of *eSharp* and *The Kelvingrove Review*; launches for special issues and conference proceedings are not organised or funded by eSharp.

Conference Attendance and Papers – occasionally arise, and are good for promoting eSharp outwith the Glasgow community.

Workshops and Training

PR Workshops – contractually two per year per faculty. The Arts workshop is part of the Arts Research Training Course (and is paid for by the Faculty of Arts), while the four joint LBSS/Education workshops are conditions of our funding from those faculties. Usually split in to three in first semester and three in second.

Education Workshops – Arranged with Niamh Stack at the start of the academic year. In 2008/9 these included Funding, Critical Writing, Attribution and Refererencing, Abstract Writing, Public Engagement, Journal Publishing and Reviewing.

Other workshops – Occasionally, on request, for other PG communities setting up journals and one off Grad school requests.

Other Important Points

Funding bids – eSharp receives a set amount from various sources every year, however we can bid for money for new training initiatives, advertising etc. at any point.

PR Newsletter – Two times a year, at some point after Issue launches.

Board & Teams Structure

eSharp's structure is relatively flexible, and is regularly adapted to meet the requirements of varying board sizes. The following is a general guide to the current structure, but should not be considered to be necessarily a permanent arrangement. Past boards have found that named positions are important, and that loosely delineated teams are sufficient for most activities. The exception, however, are editorial teams, and both the current issue of *eSharp* and that of *TKR* should have a very distinct group of lead editors.

eSharp currently consists of a central Board and individual Teams. These Teams focus on specific areas of organization and need to facilitate the publication of the various projects under the eSharp umbrella. These Teams will consist of:

- Editorial Team – *eSharp*
- Editorial Team – *TKR*
- Promotions, Web & Recruitment Team
- Training Team

Teams will exist as part of the eSharp Board, the members acting as both part of their individual Team and the Board. Board meetings are currently scheduled once a fortnight, but may be more regular at busy times of the year. It is requested that the Teams arrange meetings in the intervening weeks between Board meetings. These meetings may be less formal than Board meetings without the need for minutes, for instance, and should usually be chaired by the Team co-ordinator. At least one person from each Team should be capable of attending each meeting of the Board. An individual should only hold one editorial/named position at any given time for reasons of avoiding excessive workload, and to allow a distribution of opportunities around the Board; however individuals are welcome to participate in multiple teams if they wish, and gaining experience in several through the course of involvement with eSharp is actively encouraged.

Each Team of eSharp will have an individual Googlegroup for communication purposes, and the General Editor(s) will have access to all the Team Googlegroups. Teams should be in regular contact, especially to clarify any difficulties prior to full Board meetings. The rule of the Team structure should not be considered tyrannical; the over-riding concern is still that eSharp manages to achieve its goals, and not to enforce meetings which may be unproductive. Proposed changes to Team structures will be considered at any point to ensure the smoothest possible running of the project.

Board Structure

General Tasks
- Ensure teams run smoothly and effectively, both individually and as a group
- Check for general updates, consistency and accuracy in all areas of the board
- Ensure all major decisions are presented to the board before a final verdict is reached
- Co-ordinate social events

General Editor

Maintain and supervise Board

Act as *eSharp* figure-head in meetings and public forums

Ensure all incoming communication is dealt with, delegating when necessary.

Treasurer

Maintain records of all financial transactions

Advise Board on availability of funds.

Liaise with faculty administration staff as necessary.

In charge of budget spreadsheet.

Liaise with HoGs re. budget

Ensure members submit claim forms correctly and Richard receives them

Convene annual budget meeting

Bi-annually report back to the board on all financial transactions

Financial projections

Faculty Representative (Arts, Education, Social Sciences)

Liaise with Heads of Graduate Schools, including for funding and feedback

Maintain awareness of what's going on within the Faculty; in particular through regular contact with Faculty Employability Officer

Help with recruitment drives in faculty

Ensure promotional materials and information are readily available within faculty

Work with recruitment, finance, workshop, etc.

Faculty reports to Board

Promote eSharp during induction week (promotional materials in Fresher's Packs; promotional talk) and other Faculty events

Coordinate Faculty Team (if required)

eSharp / TKR **Issue Lead Editor(s)**

Coordinate Editorial Team for relevant publication.

In charge of all aspects of issue production.

Work should be divided amongst lead editors in a suitable fashion.

Web Editor

Coordinate Promotions, Web & Recruitment Team

Ensure maintenance of up-to-date website

Publicity Coordinator

Coordinate Promotions, Web & Recruitment Team

In charge of coordinating Promotions roles

Peer-Review Coordinator

Participate in *eSharp* issue Editorial Team when required.

Coordinate with Training Team re: workshops/PR Training

Maintain database of PR volunteers

Training Coordinator

Coordinate Training Team

Ensure suitable tutors are found for seminars and that rooms are booked.

Recruitment Coordinator

> Responsible for making sure new members are regularly recruited from each faculty.
> Distributing eSharp handbook to new members
> Replying to queries from potential new members.
> New recruitment ideas.

Conference Proceedings Coordinator

> Provide a link between the Board and outside editors of conference proceedings and special issues.
> Delegate the handling of such projects to other members of the Board as and when necessary.

Teams Organization

➢ **EDITORIAL TEAM(S) – *eSharp* and *TKR***

Coordinators: Issue Lead Editor(s)
- Ensure smooth running of editorial process from CfP to final publication
- Maintain contact with submitters and peer reviewers throughout process
- Arrange permission letters, translation (as needed), maintain database of permission requests and ensure publisher's permission guidelines are met

➢ **TRAINING TEAM**

Coordinator: Training Coordinator
Co-ordinate workshops (minimum 2 PR workshops per faculty per year)
Co-ordinate seminars within faculties
Training via *eSharp* Moodle site?
Regular training sessions for all *eSharp* members (workshops run by experienced board members in all aspects of *eSharp* – opportunity to be trained in as many areas as desired)
Maintain information packs for new members

➢ **PROMOTIONS, WEB & RECRUITMENT TEAM**

Coordinators: Publicity Coordinator, Web Editor
General Tasks
> ▤   Responsible for the outward face of *eSharp*
Specific Tasks
Coordinated by Publicity Coordinator
> ▤   Design, create and distribute publicity materials (flyers, bookmarks, posters, etc.) and liaise with graphic designers and printers where necessary
> ▤   Advertising
> ▤   Maintain mailing list
> ▤   Organise launches (events, catering, etc.)
> ▤   Plan publicity campaign
> ▤   Biannual/Annual Newsletter
> ▤   Maintain image database

- Format and maintain web news and wiki
- Deal with graphic support unit for web splash graphics
- Update and maintain Google group
- Co-ordinates issue formatting
- Improve and develop website

Meetings & Decision Making

Meeting Structure

Meetings will follow a central agenda, which the Chair of the meeting will circulate at least 24 hours prior to the meeting. If amendments are to be made, they can be done either by e-mailing the Chair prior to the meeting, in which case a revised agenda will be presented prior to the meeting starting, or the individual proposing another matter of business can request it be added to the agenda at the beginning of the meeting. The agenda section of Other Business will be for minor updates, information, or follow-ups on previous decisions, rather than for actionable matters or votes.

The standard agenda for the meeting will be as follows:
1. Review of Agenda, minutes of previous meeting and opening the floor for amendments, matters arising
2. Matters of business for the Board (votes or pertinent discussions)
3. Reports of Teams
4. Other Business

Minutes taken will be notational and action-based, rather than verbatim. Team Reports will be the same.

Meeting Requirements

Meetings will take place fortnightly, unless a meeting is called for a matter of pressing business (upcoming publication deadline, launch, etc.)

Each Team is required to present a brief and informal report at each meeting and have a representative member in attendance who will be able to speak for the Team. This is not necessarily the Coordinator, but can be any team member. The representative member will then be required to provide information to the rest of the Team regarding decisions and details of the meeting.

Each Board member makes a commitment to being present at Board meetings when joining eSharp. Although eSharp activities should not become a burden to postgraduate study, should not be seen as an obligation, and apologies may be offered occasionally, regular attendance of Board meetings is crucial for making eSharp run smoothly and getting things done.

Meeting Practices

Meetings will be run by a rotating Chair, and minutes will be taken by a volunteer, who will act as Chair the following meeting. The Chair will, following the agenda, address the matters of the meeting, guide the discussion, watch the time and ensure the fairness and efficiency of the meeting. When necessary, the Chair can use a Speaker's List to ensure everyone has a chance to speak.

Decisions will be reached by consensus; however, should a discussion become cyclical or non-productive, the Chair is at liberty to call for a vote on the matter. Voting will take place via Doodle and Board Members will have 48 hours to vote from when the Chair sends out an e-mail after the meeting.