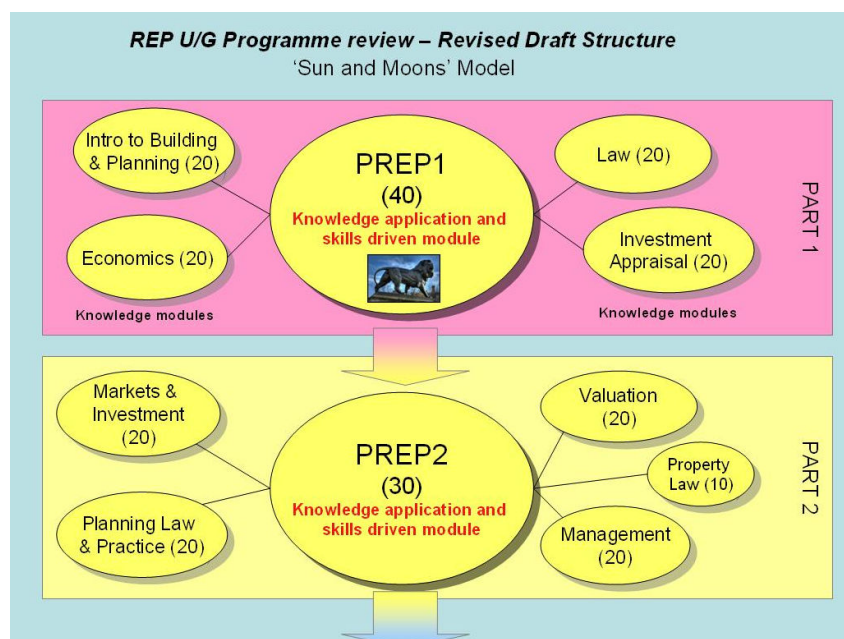


## Narrative 1

Joe is a senior lecturer in Urban Planning and Development in the School of Real Estate and Planning, where he is also director of teaching and learning and the School's e-learning manager. The School sits within a prestigious Business School development at his HEI; the School's graduates are highly sought after and their academic rigour and 'near market application of knowledge' has been remarked upon by external examiners.

Despite the School's excellent track record, Joe and his colleagues felt it might be time refocus some of their teaching priorities when it came to challenging part one students and to better take into account changing demands and expectations of both the students themselves and their potential employers. In addition, some recent internal feedback had suggested that existing courses would benefit from an overhaul to better meet students' needs. Although accustomed to working collaboratively through the School's Teaching Strategy groups for undergraduate and postgraduate programmes, which have generated the PREP (Projects in Real Estate and Planning) models, on this occasion the teaching staff decided to kick start the redesign process with a team away day, and over a number of brainstorming sessions constructed a visual representation of the course structure on a whiteboard which the team called 'The Sun and Moons model'.

Following the away day, the Sun and Moons design was drawn up in PowerPoint:



**Fig 2. The team's 'Sun and Moons' design represented in PowerPoint**

This plan was used as the basis for their group activity at an OULDI led Short Course Design Challenge workshop at their HEI, where staff were given an opportunity to explore some of the OULDI Learning Design tools with support from the team.

In the workshop the course team used CompendiumLD, to develop their ideas for the course redesign in greater detail, taking forward their original concept and constructing the modules components in a visual way.

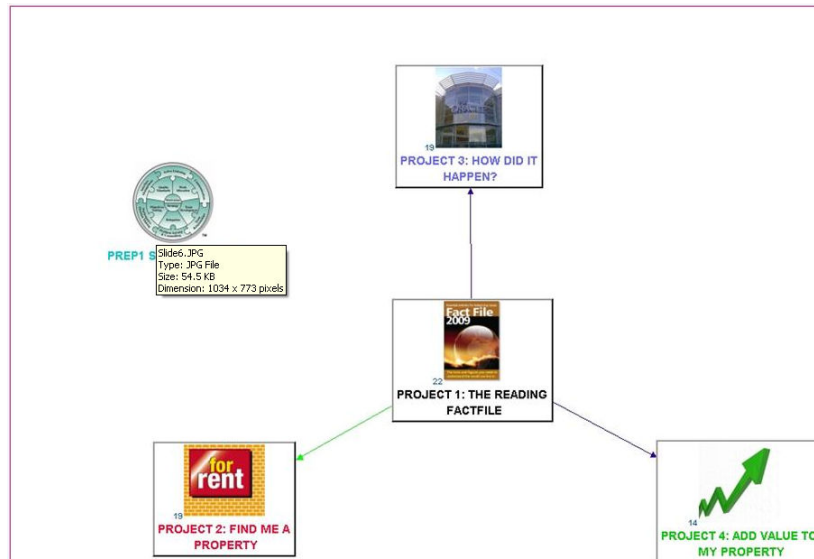


Fig 3. Layer2: The Four Projects (and Skills Matrix) represented in CompendiumLD

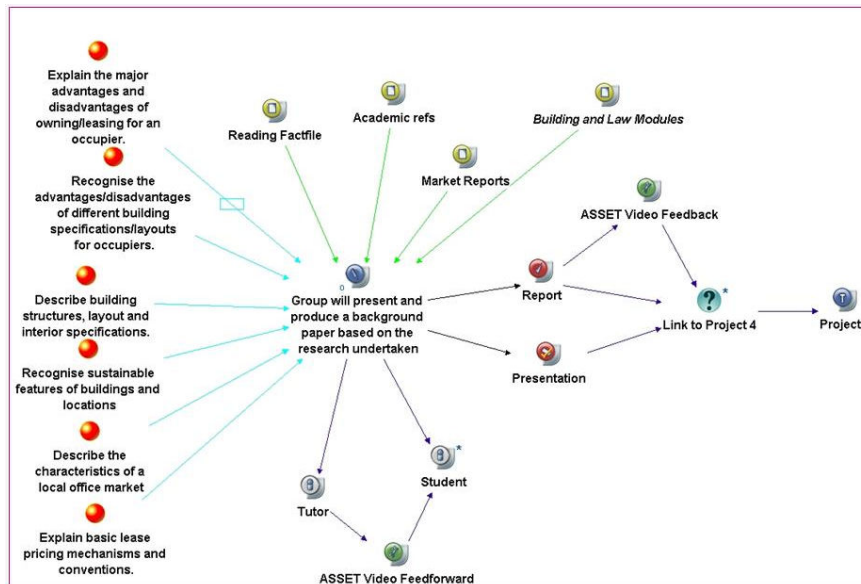


Fig 4. Layer 3: Design of 'Find Me a Property' represented in CompendiumLD

Joe discovered a number of benefits to using CompendiumLD and the learning design approach, most notably that 'it makes you think about the different components of the learning process in a way that is structured, and it makes people address these issues and discuss them'. The team were already engaged in a process of brainstorming in a diagrammatic way prior to the workshop, but Joe observes that Compendium LD really helped with visualisation and making the process of curriculum design explicit, bringing sophistication to the course design practices already embedded in the School. Since the appointment of new members of staff who were 'open books' in terms of trying out new ways of working and adopting new technologies for teaching, the team had gravitated towards a more collaborative dynamic that was supported by the software.

*"Compendium LD and course design is a mode of thinking and I think that we were implementing it beforehand and it permeated the course. The thoroughness [of the process]...thinking through the learning objectives and what we wanted to get and what we were trying to do... was aided and abetted by the software process."*

Positive student feedback and outcomes seem to indicate implementation of the course designs has been effective.

The impact of Learning Design tools and methodologies on his School has, remarks Joe, been nothing short of revolutionary. “My view is that it’s revolutionised our thinking...to learning and teaching, and now ‘PREP’ is in everyone’s minds.” A Learning Design ‘attitude’ had become widespread among staff, and specific tools such as Compendium LD have provided them with a tighter framework within which to refine existing processes and practices, as well as opportunities for detailed and directed discussions.

Certain background factors have proved conducive to the School’s uptake of the tool: Joe’s enthusiasm for technology; that he already routinely uses visualisations to express himself; and that Joe (the ‘champion’) is in a senior position within the school. In addition, he had recently recruited a number of new staff he describes as “open rather than closed books”, and already identified the need for collaborative design activities at the beginning of the process. Compendium LD arrived at the right time for them and they were ready for it.

Joe’s enthusiasm for Compendium LD has led him to share his experiences and design with other academics from across the University, and also to repurpose it as a visualisation tool in other contexts – using it to represent some ideas in a recently published journal article, for example. He observes that its value lies in its ability to articulate the structure of a design to support discussion and innovation, rather than as a communication method in itself.

One of the most significant outcomes of the design process for the School has been to focus the minds of teaching staff more keenly on the benefit to students – to which the students have responded well. However, notes Joe, this ‘raising of the bar’ has proved very demanding: “There’s no doubt that certain members of staff have had to work very hard on this... and we have put a lot of effort in and committed our personal resources.” So following a review of the current offerings, he and his colleagues have decided to ‘refine it down a bit’. “There is an element of coming down to earth with the implementation processes,” he remarks. “It works, but there are things we can do without.”