Teaching Shakespeare
A Survey of the Undergraduate Level in Higher Education

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By
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Foreword

Every so often, we get a mild media frenzy about the 'dumbing down' of both secondary and tertiary education which, in so far as it relates to English teachers, tends to be accompanied by assertions that students are reading supposedly 'easy' contemporary writers and are not being required to read 'difficult' writers from the past. Most of us who have taught first-year students at university would probably agree that they come to us with quite a narrow range of reading experience and that one of the very few pre-1800 authors they have read is Shakespeare. So is Shakespeare an exception to the 'dumbing down' theory and can teachers in Higher Education build on what students have learnt at school?

This Report on Undergraduate Shakespeare Teaching in Higher Education in the U.K. had its origins in a session on 'Shakespeare and the Curriculum' that I chaired at the English Subject Centre Advisory Board Awayday in June 2005. We discussed a range of topics such as how teachers in universities manage the transition from A and A/S level to degree level work, whether Shakespeare courses are compulsory, whether they are popular if they are optional, how much emphasis is put on the plays in performance, what resources and support are available, including what the Subject Centre provides now and could offer in future. The session also included a report from representatives of the Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning at the University of Warwick which is conducting research on the teaching of Shakespeare. There was sufficient interest in the general topic that we felt it would be useful to commission a survey, which has now been conducted by Neill Thew.

The result, with responses from 51 institutions, provides a snapshot of current practices in the teaching of Shakespeare. It addresses the questions mentioned above and also provides information about when Shakespeare is studied during a standard three-year degree programme, how Shakespeare courses are organized, which texts are studied, how students are assessed and so forth. Some of its findings are surprising and some are encouraging – not least in the demonstration that a great deal of Shakespeare teaching is going on throughout the sector and that here, as elsewhere, teachers are experimenting with new approaches to student learning and to methods of assessment. Despite the perception that students come to us at best 'adequately' and in many cases 'poorly' prepared, colleagues are clearly working hard to remedy these shortcomings and to enable a real and exciting engagement with what are genuinely, for us as well as for the students, demanding and 'difficult' texts.

Ann Thompson

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Humanities
King's College London
July 2006

Executive Summary

A survey investigating undergraduate Shakespeare teaching in Higher Education English Studies was commissioned by the English Subject Centre, and carried out between March and June 2006.

- 51 institutional responses were received, representative of the sector (Section 2)

- There is a widespread concern about how well our students are prepared to study Shakespeare – with 89% of respondents considering their students at best adequately and often poorly prepared for their studies. However, a range of strategies has been developed in response to this problem. (Section 3)

- There is a great deal of Shakespeare teaching going on across the sector. Fully 73% of respondents run one or more compulsory courses including significant study of Shakespeare at Level 1. 80% of respondents offer optional courses devoted to Shakespeare at Levels 2+. Many of these courses have very large student enrolments. At Level 1, for example, over half of the respondents are dealing with groups of over 150 students. (Section 4)

- There is a surprising degree of variety in how Shakespeare courses are structured, especially at Level 1. Lectures and seminars remain the most commonly used teaching modes – but newer methods (such as learning through performance) are being introduced. Courses are commonly organized chronologically, by genre or by theme – with fewer organized by critical approaches. The majority of courses at all levels are taught by Shakespeare or Renaissance/Early Modern specialists. There is increasing innovation in assessment, though such innovation is largely concentrated in the post-92 sector. (Section 5)

- In 2005-06, every single Shakespeare text was being taught in full somewhere in the UK. (Section 5)

- The majority of respondents use film, electronic/internet resources, and theatre performances as part of their teaching. About one third of respondents use some element of student performance or reading in class – though there is a rising interest in learning how to develop such techniques. (Section 6)

- A number of useful ideas emerged about developing Shakespeare teaching in the future. (Section 7)

Considerations for the Future

This section is headed "considerations" rather than "recommendations", because it is neither the intention nor the purpose of this report to prescribe how Shakespeare "should" be taught.

We hope that readers will find that the ideas and strategies presented throughout this report will resonate with their own in a variety of productive ways. In this section we have highlighted those aspects of teaching Shakespeare where there seems to be increasing thought, innovation and activity. Strategies are not always simply transferable, of course, so it is our hope that some of these items for consideration will provoke new thinking; new strategies and help create satisfying teaching and learning for faculty and students alike.

The areas for consideration and debate are:

- Further developing our strategies for supporting generally rather unprepared students;

- Instituting a policy of not teaching the texts that have recently featured on the A-Level syllabi;

- Looking at the order in which texts are taught;

- Teaching methods are always under some degree of ongoing review, of course, but two themes emerged clearly in the survey:

    - *Instigating a review into the use of seminars with larger groups of students;*

    - *Developing the use of in-class student performance/reading activities;*

- Learning from those institutions that have already diversified their assessment regimes, and considering how a wider range of appropriate assessment methods might help promote high quality student learning;

- Continuing the increasing trend of making productive use of film, electronic/internet resources and theatre performances, and supporting the minority of institutions not yet using such resources in thinking about if and how they wish to begin;

- Considering the development ideas identified by respondents in Section 7 of the survey.

1. Introduction

Professor Thompson's Foreword to this report has already set out the origins of this survey into the teaching of Shakespeare in higher education at an English Subject Centre Advisory Board away-day in 2005. As a result of interest shown at this meeting, a research project into teaching Shakespeare was commissioned. An online questionnaire was produced and responses were solicited during March – June 2006. The aim was to produce a snapshot of the Shakespeare teaching taking place in English Departments during the academic year 2005-06. It should be noted that the focus was specifically on undergraduate Shakespeare teaching in UK institutions of higher education, and that we requested institutional rather than individual responses to the questionnaire.

We were delighted to receive a total of 51 responses – and would like to thank colleagues for their time and interest without which, of course, this investigation could not have been undertaken. Of these 51 responses, two came from overseas and one institution responded twice. (Their two responses were in all essentials identical, so they have been conflated for the purposes of analysis.)

We have not included the responses from overseas in our statistical analyses of survey data, but have incorporated useful comments from those respondents. Therefore throughout the report, responses are calculated against a total maximum number of 48 responses. (51 responses minus two from overseas minus the one duplicate response, making 48 responses.) In general most questions elicited fewer than 48 responses, and the number of responses per question is noted where relevant.

The original questionnaire is reproduced in full in Appendix A. Throughout this report, the convention has been adopted of presenting the statistical data with percentages rounded to the nearest whole number.

We hope that readers will find this report interesting in and of itself, and that it will also provoke further thought and debate as we continue to develop our expertise in finding ways to teach Shakespeare to new generations of undergraduate students using approaches that are at once lively and accessible yet also critically acute and intellectually engaging.

2. Your Institution

2.1 Where is your institution located?

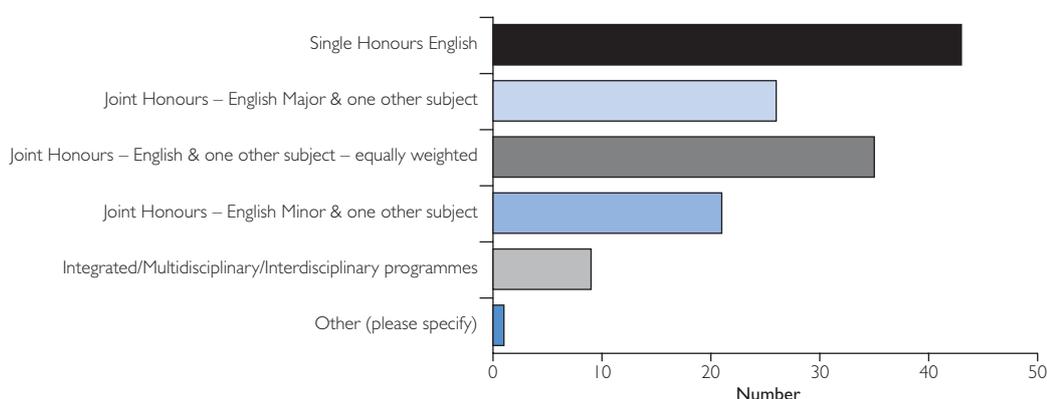Chart: Vertical bar chart. Y-axis labelled "Number" ranging from 0 to 45. X-axis labelled "Response total" with categories England, Northern Ireland, Scotland, Wales.
- England: 44
- Northern Ireland: 2
- Scotland: 2
- Wales: 0

2.2 What kinds of English Degree Programmes does your Department offer?

Chart: Horizontal bar chart. X-axis labelled "Number" ranging from 0 to 50.
- Single Honours English: ~43
- Joint Honours – English Major & one other subject: ~26
- Joint Honours – English & one other subject – equally weighted: ~35
- Joint Honours – English Minor & one other subject: ~21
- Integrated/Multidisciplinary/Interdisciplinary programmes: ~9
- Other (please specify): ~1

Other:
• Part-time Level One degree course in English Literature.

2.3 Please identify your department and institution. (Optional question)

Approximately half of the respondents did identify themselves, and it was clear from those responses that the survey had attracted responses from right across the sector. We are therefore confident that the snapshot we have been able to produce is indeed representative of the sector as a whole, as it includes a fair sample of replies from pre- and post-1992 institutions; from large departments and small; from colleagues working in research intensive and teaching intensive contexts and from colleges of Higher Education. The one part of the sector that does not seem to have been represented, unfortunately, is HE in FE.

3. Your students' prior education

3.1 Do you try to determine students' prior levels of experience of studying Shakespeare before you teach them?
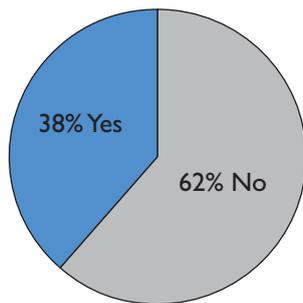

Sixteen respondents shared ideas about how they attempted to determine their students' prior levels of experience. The key points to emerge were:

- The majority of the comments in this section refer to courses at Level 1 – but some do refer to higher levels as well.

- The great majority of respondents discussed their sense of needing to help students examine and challenge their prior assumptions about Shakespeare; his literary and historical contexts; and the nature of the theatre / playtexts in general.

- In the majority of cases, informal mechanisms are being used as staff are using seminar/workshop time to question students about their prior experience. Some respondents told us that they asked their students to discuss texts they had studied in the past and/or talk about plays they had seen in performance. Other respondents took a broader approach, and got their students to brainstorm everything they knew, or thought they knew, about Shakespeare. This was seen as a useful strategy to help bring myths and misconceptions about studying Shakespeare into the open at an early stage of the course.

- All respondents felt that the time spent on these activities was a useful investment for the rest of the course.

- Two respondents ask their students to fill out a written survey, and one institution has commissioned an educationalist to produce a report on the preparedness of their first year Shakespeare students.

- One respondent reported that the first seminar on their course is devoted to discussing Shakespearean posterity, currency in the popular culture and manner in which he is presented in secondary curriculum. This is a productive activity.

3.2 In general, how well prepared to study Shakespeare at H.E. level do you find those students with school leaving qualifications in English literature? (A/AS Levels; Highers; IBs; etc.)
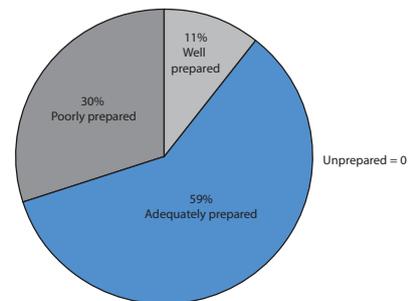
Whilst it is obviously pleasing – and comes as somewhat of a relief! – to see that nobody regards their students as completely unprepared to study Shakespeare, nevertheless a full 89% of us regard our students as at best "adequately" and in many cases "poorly" prepared for their studies with us, so there is clearly a widely-held perception that there is a significant challenge facing us. However, as responses to the next question reveal, problems relating to the prior experiences and preparation of our undergraduate students are not unique to Shakespeare courses.

Having worked in many institutions and across many disciplines over the past decade, I find the issue of student preparedness to be a common one, and one that tends to arouse strong (emotional) responses. Demonising secondary education seems neither a fair nor in practical terms a productive strategy. The fact remains that students find shifting gears to a higher level of study very challenging. Students drop out at the end of Level 1 for a wide variety of reasons and difficult personal circumstances, but having failed to make a successful transition to higher education study remains a common one. Fully successful strategies to help students make the shift need to be embedded at institutional and faculty levels – but all too often, to be frank,

these involve initiatives imposed on sceptical or resistant academics by administrative colleagues. However, we can also make powerful interventions at a course / module level – and these are often interventions towards which we feel a stronger sense of personal commitment. Responses to the previous and following questions revealed that quite simple interventions (often early on) in a Shakespeare course can be highly productive. It seems that many of us are already using such strategies, and that considering how to introduce Shakespearean study to students in the first two or three course / module sessions is a topic we could all usefully (re)consider.

3.3 If you do perceive that there is a problem with students' preparedness to study Shakespeare, how do you try to handle this ?

This question clearly struck a chord, as there was a high level of 28 responses. Responses fell into two categories: those diagnosing reasons for students' difficulties in studying Shakespeare; and those offering strategies to help students overcome their problems.

Reasons for students' difficulties in studying Shakespeare:

- Most respondents felt that the main problems concerned students' lack of linguistic, historical and cultural knowledge. Respondents were also clear that this was not a problem unique to studying Shakespeare:

  – *They are no worse prepared to study Shakespeare than they are to study any historically remote author*

  – *Students lack confidence in handling close reading and analysis of Shakespeare's language, but also in how to read playtexts more generally*

- Students' anxieties about studying Shakespeare were also mentioned frequently. Many respondents commented on students' (dangerously self-fulfilling) expectations that they would find Shakespeare difficult, and that students often feel a sense of inadequacy when starting the course, because of Shakespeare's status in English Literature.

- Respondents also felt that students' prior experiences of studying Shakespeare were often unhelpful when it

came to reading Shakespeare at university. Problems were identified both in foundation degrees – which only sometimes include some elementary Shakespeare – and also in more traditional school qualifications – particularly A2s. The comments relating to foundation degrees focused on the lack of coverage of Shakespeare, whereas the negative comments made about A-level study centred on the ways in which Shakespeare is taught:

- *Much of our teaching goes into unpicking bad habits, in particular naïve character-based criticism or flat-footed A2 "context"*

- *Biggest challenge tends to be in drawing the students away from a provisional, over-generalised and over-simplified conception of genre (especially tragedy) which they may have used, quite legitimately, as a scaffold during their study of a set text at GCSE/A Level*

Strategies to help students to overcome their problems:

- The most commonly cited strategies were variations on the theme of increasing students' knowledge and frames of reference by obliging them to read more widely. Given that many students find this activity extremely challenging, many respondents also stressed that the requirement to read widely needed to be supported by patient faculty encouragement. Respondents variously stressed the importance of increasing students' sensitivity to Shakespeare's language; to historical context; and to genre.

- The single most popular response was to emphasise the importance of exercises in close reading carefully selected extracts as a way of building students' knowledge and confidence. Three respondents noted that they use close readings of *The Sonnets* early on in their courses.

- Several respondents also commented on the importance of carefully selecting which plays to study early on in a course. Decisions appeared to be made largely on the grounds of which plays most commonly engage student interest by resonating against contemporary social and/or political concerns (race/gender/sexuality etc). A typical comment here was:

  Selection of plays to study important. Othello a good start. Questions raised need to be relevant to con-

temporary issues. Some close reading of selected extracts needs to be done to cover approach to understanding language.

Interestingly enough, *Othello* was the only play to be nominated here by name (though with only two mentions).

- Many respondents also wrote about their emphasis on the nature of theatres and performances. Film screenings; theatre trips; and in-class student readings or dramatizations of scenes were all mentioned as useful teaching techniques. (A fuller account of these is to be found in Sections 6.2 – 6.4)

- A much smaller number of respondents mentioned the use of group work; group projects and peer teaching. These techniques were seen as effective, but do not yet appear widespread. It appears that such teaching techniques are more common in institutions with larger student cohorts (largely post-92 universities). Where respondents commented on why these techniques were seen as useful, it was because they helped increase confidence; encouraged students to work together outside lectures; and to do more reading than when left to their own devices. These approaches also encouraged students to take responsibility for solving glossing problems by themselves.

- The majority of responses focused on what might be described as "short-term" interventions, at the level of what can be done within an individual teaching session or (more generally) in the early part of a course. There were two interesting responses from institutions that were also exploring longer-term, and more structural innovations:

  – *We teach a long-thin module which takes students from fairly simple literary and generic issues through to theoretically-informed discussion. We also require two group-work projects on Shakespeare. We provide a theatre trip.*

  – *We ask them to think about a wide range of Shakespeare plays from the first week of the first year of the degree. We have developed a Shakespeare pathway through the undergraduate degree with a first year compulsory course leading to a second year option which in turn leads to a third year course. This allows students to specialize in the subject progressively, building their critical and textual knowledge incrementally.*

# 4. The place of Shakespeare courses in the undergraduate curriculum

4.1 When do your students get the opportunity to study Shakespeare? Please indicate the number of courses/modules your department offers AT LEVEL 1.
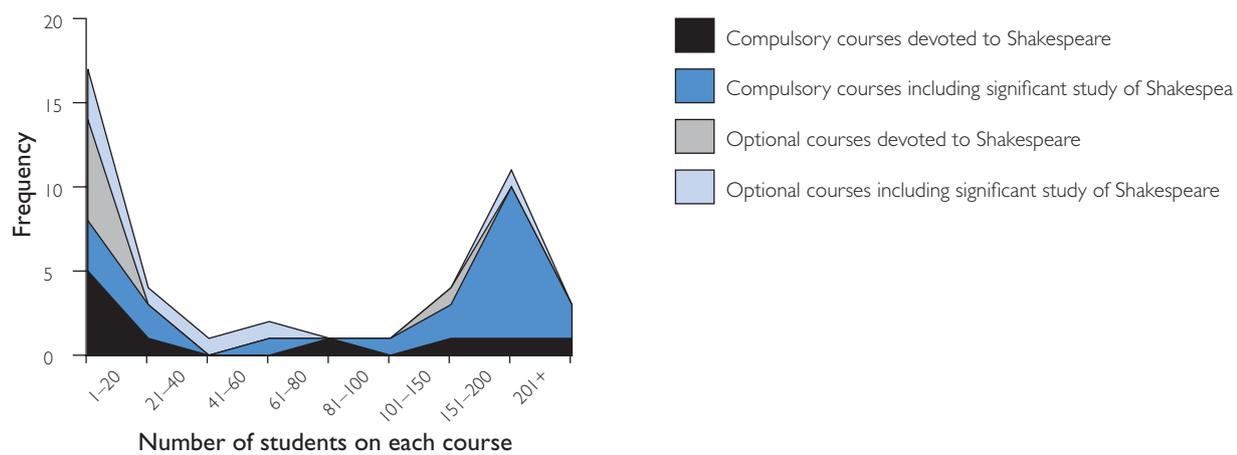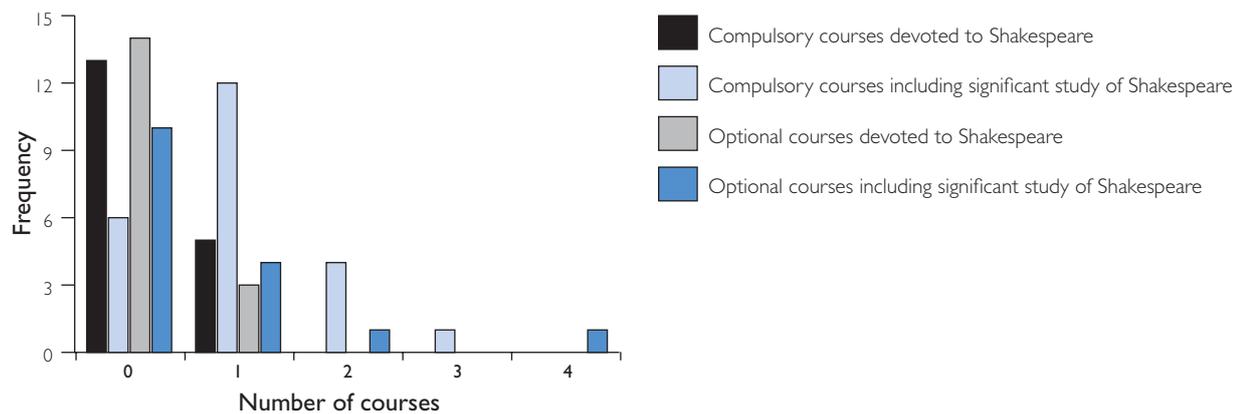
4.2 Now please indicate the number of courses/modules your department offers AT LEVELS 2 AND ABOVE.
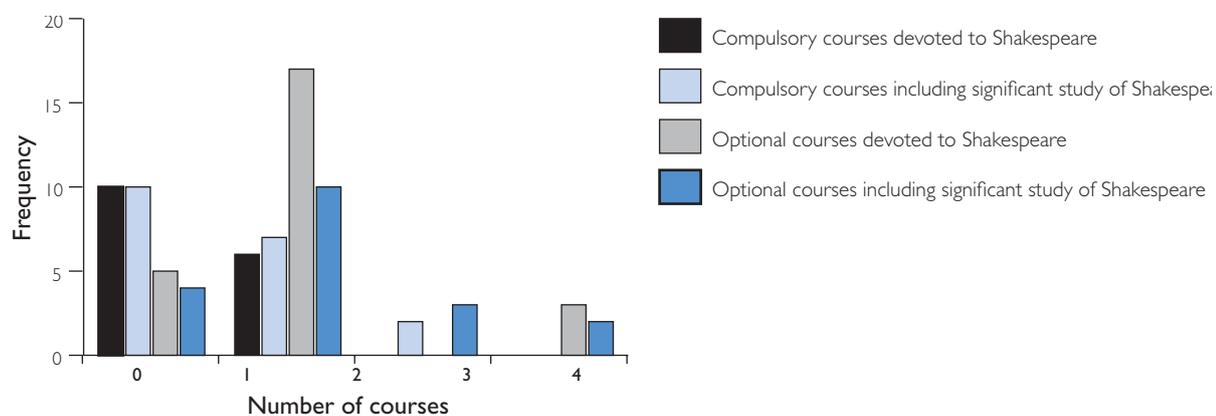
## 4. The place of Shakespeare courses in the undergraduate curriculum
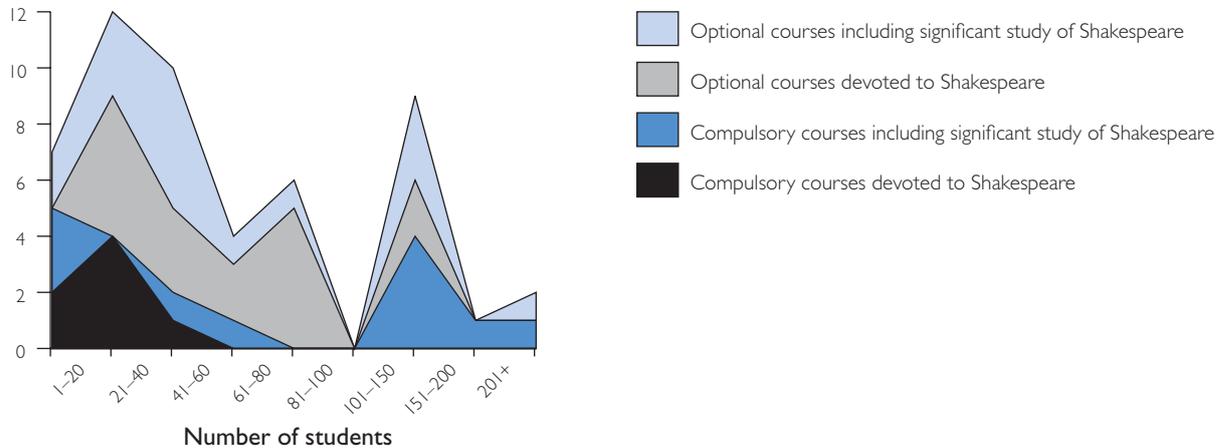
It is clear that there is a high level of Shakespeare teaching going on across the sector. Fully 73% of respondents run one or more compulsory courses including significant study of Shakespeare at Level 1, and 80% of respondents offer optional modules devoted to Shakespeare at Levels 2 and above – with the same percentage also offering further optional courses including significant study of Shakespeare. Unsurprisingly perhaps, courses appear more likely to be compulsory at Level 1, and optional at Levels 2 and above.

One of the most significant findings here concerns the large numbers of students enrolled on our Shakespeare courses. Looking at those compulsory Level 1 courses including significant study of Shakespeare, we see that 55% of respondents are dealing with cohorts of over 150 students. Nor do numbers tail off very sharply at Levels 2 and above: over half of our respondents are still dealing with cohorts of over 100 students in their compulsory Shakespeare courses at the higher levels. As might be expected, there is more of a spread in student enrollments on optional courses at Levels 2 and above, but large numbers are still often involved. A quarter of the optional courses which involve significant study of Shakespeare at Levels 2 and above enroll over 100 students each. As for the optional courses devoted to Shakespeare at these higher levels, the groups are as likely to consist of 61-80 students (29%) as they are to consist of under 20 students (also 29% of responses).

Some respondents noted an ongoing trend towards ever larger cohorts. Interestingly, there were virtually no comments from any respondents explicitly addressing strategies for coping with large teaching groups but, as becomes evident in Section 5.10 below, there is evidence that increased group sizes are beginning to impact on assessment.

4.3 Do the courses/modules at Levels 2+ have prerequisites?

- Even where there are prerequisites at Levels 2+, these are usually general progression requirements (in particular, the need to pass at Level 1 to proceed to Level 2).

- Only two respondents mentioned prerequisites that were specific to their Shakespeare courses, where students were required to take and pass specific relevant courses.
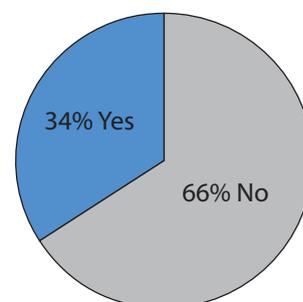
4.4 How popular are your optional Shakespeare courses with your students?

(In the tables below, please take "Joint Honours" to refer to the study of English and ONE other discipline, and "Multidisciplinary Honours" to refer to students reading English plus TWO or MORE other disciplines. Please tick all responses that apply.)
Please tell us here about the popularity of your department's LEVEL ONE OPTIONAL courses/modules DEVOTED to Shakespeare.

The very small number of responses to this question make it impossible to draw properly meaningful conclusions.
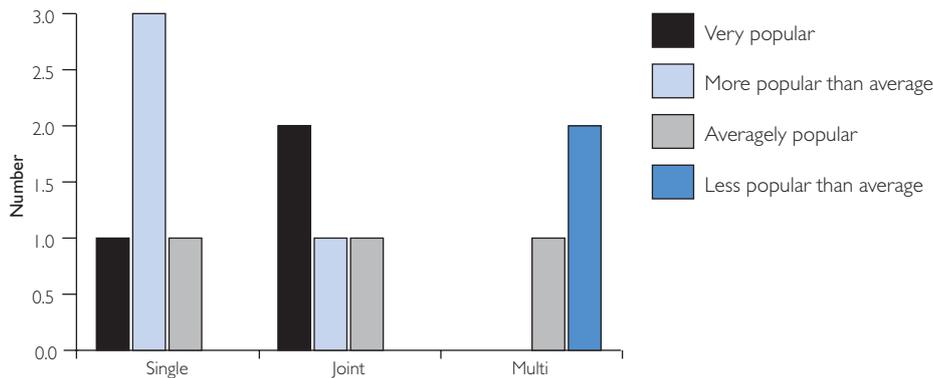
A tentative comment we can make, however, is that it appears that Shakespeare courses may be less popular in the contexts of multidisciplinary programmes. We would hypothesise that this may be because students on multidisciplinary courses take a relatively low number of English Literature modules; therefore they are likely to have less experience of historically remote authors and close reading of dense, challenging texts; so studying Shakespeare is likely to seem particularly "hard".

4.5 Now please tell us about the popularity of your department's OPTIONAL courses/modules DEVOTED to Shakespeare at LEVELS 2+
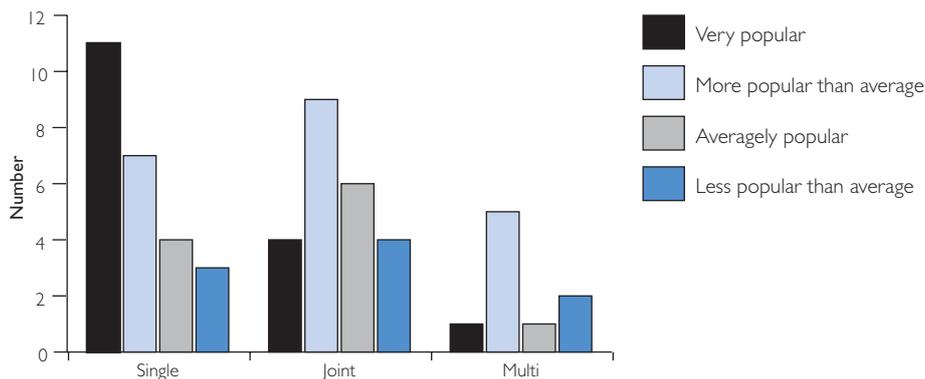
Views are clearly quite mixed here. It would appear that Shakespeare courses are most popular with students taking Single Honours Degrees – but we cannot tell from this data whether this effect applies particularly to Shakespeare, or to Literature courses more generally.

5. Your department's approach to designing undergraduate Shakespeare courses

5.1 How many weeks long is/are your Level 1 Shakespeare course(s)/module(s)?

There were 19 responses to this question. Respondents described an astonishingly wide range of course patterns – with courses ranging in length from just 2 to 24 weeks. While the most common course length was 12 weeks, this was still only the case for 5 out of the 19 respondents.

5.2 What is/are the standard weekly teaching pattern(s) for such courses?

(e.g. 1x1 hour lecture plus 1x1.5 hour seminar in groups of 15-20 with student-led presentations, etc ...)
Given the range of responses to question 5.1, it was then unsurprising to find a range of approaches revealed by the 17 responses to this question.

- The majority of respondents (12) used a mix of lectures and seminars or classes or tutorials, but the amount of contact time with students varied from three 1 hour lectures plus two 90 minute seminars per week at the upper end to a 1 hour lecture plus a 1 hour seminar per week at the less time-intensive end. (We should note that there may well be an under-reporting factor at play in this question. Respondents who felt that their contact hours were rather low were disproportionally more likely to skip the question. We certainly know of several other institutions with less contact time than that reported here, and two respondents did comment that the time allowed for the course was less than they would have wished.)

- Unsurprisingly, the courses with higher weekly contact hours tend to be the shorter ones. (We should further note that it is not clear that we are comparing like-with-like here as we did not ask what credit volumes the various courses have, so some are likely to be designed to be relatively "small" courses in any case.)

- Lectures remain the most commonly used teaching mode overall.

- Only two respondents did not use lectures, but ran weekly classes and workshops instead.

- Some element of individual or pair tutoring was present in 3 cases.

- Seminar group sizes ranged from 5–25, with 14–20 being the most commonly mentioned range.

5.3 How many weeks long is/are your Shakespeare course(s)/module(s) at Levels 2+?

The 26 responses to this question demonstrated far less variation than those for Level 1. All respondents reported courses in the range of 8–20 weeks, and nearly half of those (12 out of 26) were 12 weeks long.

## 5.4 What is/are the standard weekly teaching pattern(s) for such courses?

(e.g. 1x1 hour lecture plus 1x1.5 hour seminar in groups of 15-20 with student-led presentations, etc ...)
The 24 responses here did not reveal any significant differences between teaching patterns at Level 1 and those at Levels 2 and above. Significantly, however, seminar group sizes are no smaller at higher levels than at Level 1 – with many optional final year courses still having seminar groups of up to 20 students.

In the light of these responses, it would be interesting to hold a conversation across the sector to debate what we now mean by the term "seminar". It would be useful to discover to what extent patterns of seminar teaching – and in particular the types and level of interactions held with students during seminars – conform to any norms across the sector and are, or are not, changing as pressure on numbers increases. Details of strategies to maintain student interaction and responsibility during seminars, and to resist the temptation or pressure to deliver "mini-lectures" in seminar time, would be particularly welcome.

5.5 How do you organise your courses?

In the table below, please indicate how many of your department's courses are organised in each way, using the drop-down menus.
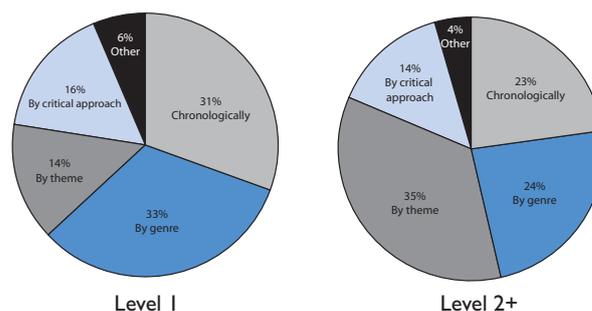
Level 1

Level 2+

These responses include multiple entries from several institutions which have simply been aggregated in the table.

The most significant increase from Levels 1 to 2+ is in the number of courses described as arranged by theme, but overall there is a relatively even split across the different approaches – with perhaps a few fewer courses arranged by critical approach than one might have expected.

5.6 Please describe any other ways in which any of your department's Shakespeare courses are organised.

Of the 8 courses described as "other", half were forms of hybrid courses, combining chronological, genre and critical approaches.

One course was structured by linking Shakespeare's plays to modern plays (e.g. Bond's *Lear* and Stoppard's *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern*). Another course studied cinematic adaptations of Shakespeare.

5.7 Who teaches on your department's courses? (Please tick all that apply)

(Note – The following options were also offered, but all attracted a zero response: taught postgraduate student; undergraduate student; other.)
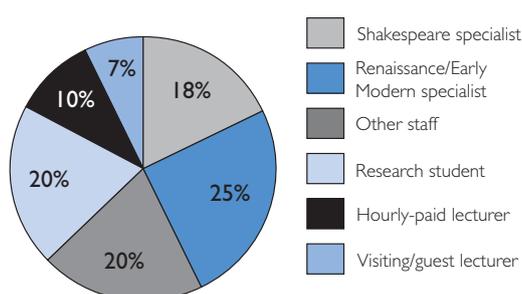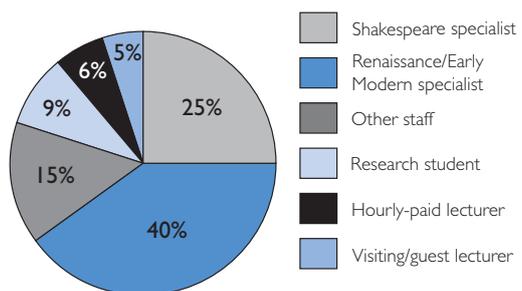
Several institutions are currently debating how best to use postgraduate teaching assistants in humanities subjects. Typically, postgraduates have taught on Level 1 courses – and in several institutions are banned from teaching at higher levels. However, this policy appears to be quite widely under review. Several institutions are now asking themselves whether it might not be more effective to have more experienced faculty specialists offering (hopefully) high quality teaching at Level 1 as a way of trying to address students' problems with making the transition into higher education and improve retention and progression rates. This survey has discovered that the shift of emphasis in staffing between Levels 1 and 2+ is less than might have been expected, and that there is no evidence to support the idea that specialists are being deployed only to teach higher-level, more specialist courses.

Unsurprisingly, there is a strong correlation between institutional type and staffing patterns. Those courses being offered by Shakespeare/Renaissance/Early Modern specialists on the one hand, and research postgraduates on the other, are clustered in pre-92 institutions – a trend which clearly reflects research concentration.

5.8 Which texts are your students studying this year across the courses offered by your department?

(Please tick all that apply)

A full table of all responses is to be found in Appendix B – presented first alphabetically, and then ranked by popularity. The 10 most commonly taught texts overall are, in descending order:

> *Hamlet*
> *The Tempest*
> *Poetry: the Sonnets*
> *Twelfth Night*
> *Midsummer Night's Dream*
> *Othello*
> *King Lear*
> *Henry V*
> *Measure for Measure*
> *Winter's Tale*

Level 1

Pie chart legend:
- Shakespeare specialist
- Renaissance/Early Modern specialist
- Other staff
- Research student
- Hourly-paid lecturer
- Visiting/guest lecturer

Values: 18%, 25%, 20%, 20%, 10%, 7%

Level 2

Pie chart legend:
- Shakespeare specialist
- Renaissance/Early Modern specialist
- Other staff
- Research student
- Hourly-paid lecturer
- Visiting/guest lecturer

Values: 25%, 40%, 15%, 9%, 6%, 5%

There are some differences in the top ten lists for Levels 1 and 2+:

Level 1	Levels 2+
Hamlet	*The Tempest*
Twelfth Night	*Hamlet*
As You Like It	*Twelfth Night*
Henry IV, Part 1	*Henry V*
Merchant of Venice	*King Lear*
The Tempest	*Othello*
Winter's Tale	*Measure for Measure*
Poetry: the Sonnets	*Midsummer Night's Dream*
King Lear	*Winter's Tale*
Macbeth	*Richard III*
Midsummer Night's Dream	
Much Ado About Nothing	
Othello	
Richard II	
Taming of the Shrew	

(These are both the "Top Ten" lists, but the list for Level 1 contains a large number of texts tied in ninth place.)

Some interesting facts emerge:

- Every single Shakespearean text is being taught in full at Levels 2+. (We might suggest that this range and level of ambition give the lie to the media cries of "dumbing-down" to which Professor Thompson refers in her Foreword.)

- Unsurprisingly, a somewhat narrower range of (more predictable) texts is being taught at Level 1.

- At Level 1, whole texts are generally taught. There is a more widespread use of extracts at Levels 2+.

- A small number of respondents explicitly stated that they banned their students from writing on any plays they had previously studied at GCSE/A Level. This was seen as a strategy for helping students to recognise the different ways in which Shakespeare needs to be studied at university. However, the list of most commonly taught texts at Level 1 corresponds to those texts commonly used as set A-Level texts. It is worth institutions considering the merits of a policy decision not to teach recently used A-Level texts at Level 1.

5.9 To what extent are the texts indicated above "set texts", and to what extent are the texts chosen by students?

- The majority of our students get no, or very little, choice over which texts they study.

- Of the 27 responses to this question: 22 indicated that all texts are set; 3 respondents adopted a mixed model; and 2 allowed completely free student choice. Oxbridge students get by far the greatest degree of personal choice.

- Of the 22 respondents who said that all the texts were set, 5 also commented that when students came to writing their essays, they were required to include some discussion of texts not on the course.

- Three other respondents also commented that Shakespeare proved a popular choice for final year dissertations, which opened another opportunity for some students to pick their own texts.

- Two respondents reflected that the question had caused them to think about how they might increase the amount of student choice possible on their courses.

- There is an unsurprising positive correlation between those courses taught by Shakespearean specialists and those with greater degrees of student choice. Interestingly, however, this positive correlation does not extend to Renaissance/Early Modern specialists.

5.10 How do you assess your students?

In the table below, please indicate how many of your department's courses are assessed in each way, using the drop-down menus. For courses with multiple modes of assessment, please fill as many boxes as apply.
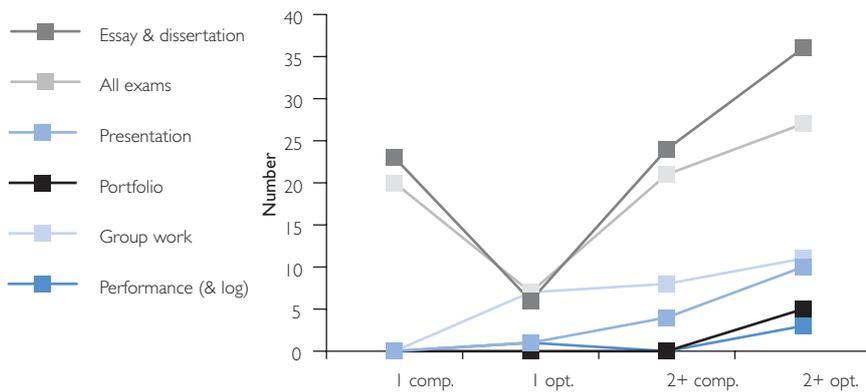
Given that these numbers are based on reports of courses that frequently use multiple modes of assessment, and that we did not ask for information about the relative weighting of modes, then what we have produced is a relatively crude, and possibly slightly impressionistic, measurement of the frequency with which these modes are used.

However, even so, an interesting story emerges from these figures. If we take the modes of assessment from "presentation" downwards as being examples of "innovative" assessment techniques (noting that no value judgment is intended by the use of the term "innovative"), then it might seem from these figures as if quite a lot of innovation in assessment is taking place. However, while the number of courses using these innovative assessment methods is high, these courses are concentrated in a relatively small number of institutions.

	Number of courses at Levels 2+ (Combined totals for compulsory and optional courses)	Number of institutions
Presentation	14	4
Portfolio	5	2
Group work	19	5
Performance	2	1
Performance diary/log	1	1

The clear majority of institutions adopting these newer assessment methods have large student cohorts: but with quite large cohort sizes in many other institutions and with several respondents commenting that their groups are ever expanding, it might be a good time for the sector to review the assessment methods we are using, and to debate the merits of using some of these innovations, where appropriate. The first three methods listed above can certainly be helpful in managing large student numbers.

Our experience suggests – and there appears to be evidence in this survey to echo this experience – that educational innovation often occurs in response to worsening conditions, as when "old" ways of teaching and assessing become unfit for purpose and/or unsustainably demanding on faculty time. However, we also know that there can be very positive reasons for planned educational innovation. Well chosen assessment methods can have a powerful influence on student behaviour and learning – particularly levels of student engagement outside class. A significant challenge, then, is to consider how useful developments in teaching and assessment can be considered, chosen and implemented before they are forced upon us all of a sudden when crisis points are reached. We would suggest that a debate about assessment methods in teaching Shakespeare would now therefore be very timely – particularly in the light of the interesting innovations that were

revealed in the responses to question 5.11 (below).

It is also worth noting that this survey has revealed less evidence of innovation in teaching and learning methods than in assessment. However, the distinctions between innovations in teaching, learning and assessment are not in reality so clear-cut. Changes to assessment often result in subsequent modifications to teaching and learning.

Essays and unseen exams remain the most commonly used forms of assessment. Here, the reverse case from that above applies: the use of essays and unseens is widespread across a large number of institutions of different types.

5.11 Please describe any other ways in which any of your department's Shakespeare courses are assessed.

Further interesting ideas shared by colleagues were:
- Creative projects

- Theatre review assignments

- Keeping a course journal – containing in-class writing exercises (e.g. extract analyses); performance reviews; reading notes etc

- Option to write a "Shakespearean dialogue" instead of an essay (with, in one case, the further requirement to write a critical commentary on one's own creative dialogue, analysing it alongside a Shakespearean extract)

- Review of a production or a film

- Review of an adaptation of a Shakespeare play

- Student peer marking of draft essays

- Passage analysis

- A Virtual Learning Environment exercise entitled *Images of Violence in Lear, Othello and Titus Andronicus*. This exercise is hosted on the English Subject Centre's website, along with a very useful parallel resource on "Performance Approaches to *King Lear*". Both can be accessed at: **http://www.english.heacademy. ac.uk/designshake/completed/index.htm**

5.12 Do you have any further comments you would like to add about the ways in which your department sets about organising its Shakespeare courses?

Further ideas mentioned in this section were:
- For curricula to take account of what was being performed locally

- To arrange film screenings

- To ensure that e-learning materials were now made SENDA compliant (i.e. made accessible to students with different learning needs)

6. Your department's approaches to teaching Shakespeare to undergraduates

Introduction:

Before looking at the different teaching resources and approaches in detail, it is helpful to see an overview of responses. A comparison is valid since the response rate for the four questions covered here only varied from 25–27 responses.
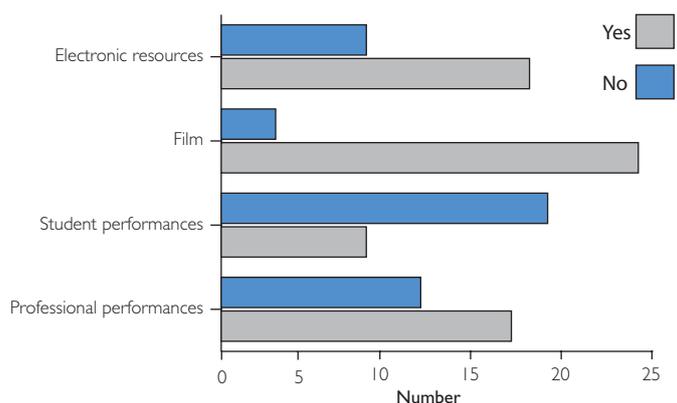
- So, in order, the most commonly used resources/activities are:
  - *Film/video*
  - *Electronic resources (e.g. internet resources/text databases)*
  - *Performances by professional actors (mainly theatre trips)*
  - *Student performances/performance workshops*
- Other than student performances, all the other categories were used by the majority of respondents.

6.1 Does your department make use of any electronic resources (e.g. internet resources/text databases) for teaching?

Please identify any resources you have found particularly useful and describe how these are used.
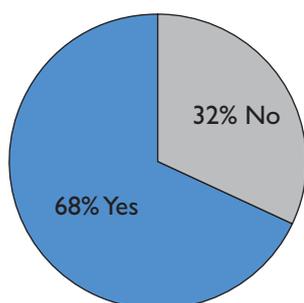
- Some institutions have created bespoke course websites. These are especially common where departments also engage in other forms of e-learning and/or blended learning, and/or where institutions have well established (and well functioning) Virtual Learning Environments.
- One department has produced a CD-ROM of electronic resources for students.
- One department has produced its own on-line glossing tool.
- On-line academic resources that colleagues found useful were JSTOR, EEBO, the Folger Library and OED. These were all mentioned several times.
- Colleagues also made productive use of websites produced by the BBC, RSC, Shakespeare Birthplace Trust, The Globe Theatre and the Designing Shakespeare Database. (See Appendix C for details.) Again, these were all mentioned several times.

6.2 Does your department make use of film/video for teaching?

Please identify any resources you have found particularly useful and describe how these are used.
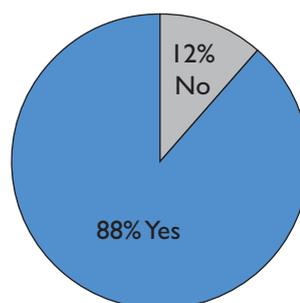
- A variety of film resources are in use. The most cited resources (in order of numbers of citations) are:
  - *BBC videos*
  - *Open University videos*
  - *Kenneth Branagh's films*
  - *Olivier's Henry V*
- It is most usual for clips/extracts to be used in the classroom – *usually 20 mins per session, but very*

effective – and for students to be invited to watch complete films in their own time.

- Modern film adaptations of Shakespeare (e.g. Baz Luhrmann's *Romeo + Juliet*) were mentioned elsewhere in the survey, but – perhaps surprisingly – not here.

6.3 Does your department make use of student performances or performance workshops involving students for teaching?

Please identify any activities you have found particularly useful and describe how these are used.
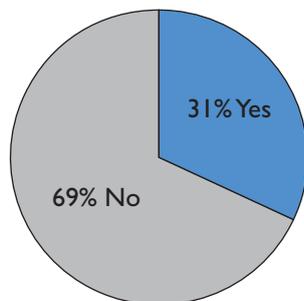

There were only two comments here – one respondent observed that performance activities were used in joint English/Drama courses but not in Single Honours English Degrees, and one mentioned the use of *student dramatisations in class of select passages*. It would appear, then, that performance activities are relatively little used at present, and that we do not yet have a clear sense of how such performances are used in teaching. What has emerged is that several colleagues do get students to read out or dramatise extracts in class, and that this activity is seen as useful, but it is not clear whether any more complex/ evolved teaching activities are being used beyond that.

Several respondents commented in Section 7 that they would like to make more use of performance in their teaching. However, many colleagues also felt that they lacked the experience or confidence to do this. It would be timely to consider the development of a resource devoted to helping interested colleagues incorporate performance elements into their teaching and to look at such exercises as another way of helping students consider interpretative issues in Shakespeare. Re-presentation of the text in per-

formance necessarily involves the student actors in making a number of decisions about that text, and their decision making processes and discussions – even more than their performance itself – can provide a creative stepping-off point for lively seminar discussion.

6.4 Does your department make use of performances by professional actors for teaching (e.g. theatre trips/visits from actors to campus)?

Please identify any activities you have found particularly useful and describe how these are used.
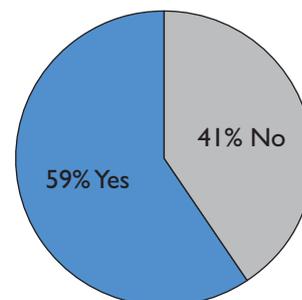
- Only 9 colleagues added a comment to this section, but they were universally positive about the usefulness of theatre trips. A typical comment was that *theatre trips are an essential resource*.

- One colleague was *shocked to discover a couple of years back that some final year students had never seen live theatre*, and now runs regular trips.

- Respondents did identify financial issues as blocks to students being able to attend theatre productions, but only some institutions were in a position either to pay for or to subsidise student tickets. Other institutions found that simply organizing ticket booking and/or laying on transport was sufficient incentive to encourage students to join theatre trips. Several respondents made it clear that because of these financial constraints, they did not make theatre trips compulsory.

- Theatre-based discussions were also found to be highly valuable. Students have found it useful to attend pre- and post-performance workshops and discus-

sions with directors. One respondent described such talks as *invaluable*.

- The degree to which such events are available depends on where you are located in the country. The main concentration of activity mentioned by respondents was in the North of England, with glowing references for several regional theatres. The RSC also received highly favourable reports. There were no reports from London, Scotland or Wales.

6.5 Please identify any other resources you have found particularly useful, and describe how these are used.

Two resources were mentioned here that have not been covered elsewhere:

- Theatre programmes
- Production photographs (which used to be harder to come by, but which are now more readily available on line).

6.6 Do you require or recommend any particular editions of Shakespeare's texts? If so, which editions do you use?

There was more diversity of opinion expressed in the 24 responses to this question than to any other in the survey!

All the main editions of individual texts had their supporters, with pretty much equal support for New Cambridge and Arden, followed by Oxford. There was less support for the Penguin editions – and two voices were actually raised against them.

However, the majority of respondents also noted that for reasons of cost, they recommended that their students purchase a single volume edition. The Oxford edged into first place here, though the Norton and Riverside also had a good number of enthusiastic proponents.

6.7 Are there any other non-Shakespearean literary or non-literary Renaissance/Early Modern texts that you find particularly useful for teaching Shakespeare?

There were 12 responses to this question.

- Nine of the respondents used texts by other Renaissance dramatists; four encouraged their students to read more widely in English Renaissance literature; one drew on continental European Renaissance authors; and one on Aristotle.

- Some of the respondents noted that teaching texts in particular pairings could be very productive. The pairings mentioned were:

  – *The Changeling/Antony and Cleopatra*

  – *Faustus/Lear*

  – *Jew of Malta/Merchant of Venice*

  – *Volpone/Tempest*

  – *Volpone/Othello*

6.8 Are there any other features of your department's course(s)/module(s) or approaches to teaching, learning and assessment that you would like to highlight here?

There were 12 responses to this section. Most provided extra information to further explain ideas introduced earlier in the survey. A number of new ideas were introduced, however, which could all usefully be adapted to different contexts.

  – *The learning contract and creative project have provided stimulating forms of assessment that often enable students who have not succeeded in traditional forms of assessment to explore the subject in greater depth.*

  – *The Year 3 course states that students' bibliographies to their essays are an assessed component: tests research methods, skills, ability to compile a focused and relevant bibliography, in which every item must be justified.*

  – *Exact paraphrasing of select passages before analysis helped students with diction, imagery and understanding context in terms of clarifying meaning. Doing sonnet explication before studying the plays helps understanding and explication enormously.*

  – *We examine students' ability to gloss words from the set play. They hate it, but we persist, and it is mostly good for them.*

7. Developing Shakespeare teaching in the future.

7.1 Do you have any current plans to change how you teach Shakespeare?
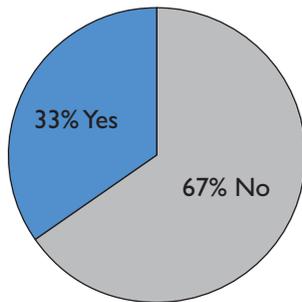
- Eight respondents made comments. The majority of these related to changing the length of courses or creating new modules. There were no specific comments relating to changing teaching, learning or assessment methods.
- There was a thread of interest in creating new modules on Shakespeare and Film (2 responses).
- One respondent commented that they wanted to start to teach a wider variety of plays.

7.2 Are there any other resources/events/other activities you would like to see developed by the English Subject Centre, or by other organisations or publishers?
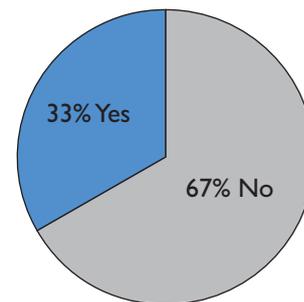
- Ten respondents made comments.
- Three commented very positively on the resources already provided by the English Subject Centre, and had no further resources to request.
- Ideas for future resource development were:
- Workshops/day-long events on:
  - *How to deal with critical theory*
  - *How to use performance in teaching*
  - *The place of feeling in academic literary study*
  - *Teaching Shakespeare*
- Further development of electronic resources and a compendium/database to inform colleagues about the resources that do already exist.
- Further development of visual resources to support the teaching of Shakespeare.
- Affordable, student-friendly editions of plays by some of Shakespeare's contemporaries.

Appendix A: The Survey Questionnaire

Survey of Undergraduate Shakespeare Teaching in Higher Education (commissioned by the English Subject Centre, March-May 2006).

1. Introduction

Tell us about your Shakespeare teaching and win a mixed case of 12 bottles of wine worth £100!

The English Subject Centre is conducting a survey into the ways in which Shakespeare is taught to undergraduates. As a result of this survey, we will produce a report and co-host a two day conference in Stratford on September 14th & 15th, to enable colleagues to share ideas and practices.

To gain maximum publicity for our project, we are sending this information to Heads of Department, Shakespeare specialists, and English Subject Centre contacts. However, we would request, please, that you only produce one response per department.

Please contribute to the survey below. The questionnaire should take no more than 10-15 minutes to complete if you are already familiar with the Shakespeare courses offered by your department. Provided that you use the same computer each time, the software even lets you save your answers and return to the questionnaire at a later date, so you don't even have to complete it in one sitting! Answers will be treated in the strictest confidence and all respondents will be contacted with details of the final report.

If you reply by the (extended!) deadline of May 1st, you will be able to enter our prize draw to win a mixed case of 12 bottles of wine worth £100.

If you have any queries about this survey, please contact Neill Thew at n.d.thew@sussex.ac.uk.

Thank you very much for your time!

2. Your Institution

2.1 Where is your institution located?

- [ ] England
- [ ] Northern Ireland
- [ ] Scotland
- [ ] Wales

2.2 What kinds of English Degree Programmes does your Department offer?

- [ ] Single Honours English
- [ ] Joint Honours – English Major & one other subject
- [ ] Joint Honours – English & one other subject – equally weighted
- [ ] Joint Honours – English Minor & one other subject
- [ ] Integrated/Multidisciplinary/Interdisciplinary programmes
- [ ] Other (please specify)

2.3 Please identify your department and institution. (Optional question)

3. Your students' prior education.

3.1 Do you try to determine students' prior levels of experience of studying Shakespeare before you teach them?

☐ No

☐ Yes

If yes, please tell us how you do this

3.2 In general, how well prepared to study Shakespeare at H.E. level do you find those students with school leaving qualifications in English literature? (A/AS Levels; Highers; IBs; etc.)

☐ Well prepared

☐ Adequately prepared

☐ Poorly prepared

☐ Unprepared

3.3 If you do perceive that there is a problem with students' preparedness to study Shakespeare, how do you try to handle this ?

4. The place of Shakespeare courses in the undergraduate curriculum.

4.1 When do your students get the opportunity to study Shakespeare?

Please indicate the number of courses/modules your department offers AT LEVEL 1.

	Number of courses	Approx total number of students (if known)
COMPULSORY course(s)/module(s) DEVOTED to Shakespeare		
COMPULSORY course(s)/module(s) INCLUDING SIGNIFICANT STUDY of Shakespeare		
OPTIONAL course(s)/module(s) DEVOTED to Shakespeare		
OPTIONAL course(s)/modules INCLUDING SIGNIFICANT STUDY of Shakespeare		

4.2 Now please indicate the number of courses/modules your department offers AT LEVELS 2 AND ABOVE.

	Number of courses	Approx total number of students (if known)
COMPULSORY course(s)/module(s) DEVOTED to Shakespeare		
COMPULSORY course(s)/module(s) INCLUDING SIGNIFICANT STUDY of Shakespeare		
OPTIONAL course(s)/module(s) DEVOTED to Shakespeare		
OPTIONAL course(s)/modules INCLUDING SIGNIFICANT STUDY of Shakespeare		

4.3   Do the courses/modules at Levels 2+ have prerequisites?

☐   No

☐   Yes

If yes, please tells us about the prerequisites

4.4 How popular are your optional Shakespeare courses with your students?

(In the tables below, please take "Joint Honours" to refer to the study of English & ONE other discipline, and "Multidisciplinary Honours" to refer to students reading English plus TWO or MORE other disciplines. Please tick all responses that apply.) Please tell us here about the popularity of your department's LEVEL ONE OPTIONAL courses/ modules DEVOTED to Shakespeare.

	Single Honours	Joint Honours	Multidisciplinary Honours
Very popular			
More popular than average			
Averagely popular			
Less popular than average			
Unpopular			
Not applicable			

4.5 Now please tell us about the popularity of your department's OPTIONAL courses/ modules DEVOTED to Shakespeare at LEVELS 2+

	Single Honours	Joint Honours	Multidisciplinary Honours
Very popular			
More popular than average			
Averagely popular			
Less popular than average			
Unpopular			
Not applicable			

5. Your department's approach to designing undergraduate Shakespeare courses.

5.1 How many weeks long is/are your Level 1 Shakespeare course(s)/module(s)?

5.2 What is/are the standard weekly teaching pattern(s) for such courses?

(e.g. 1x1hour lecture plus 1x1.5 hour seminar in groups of 15-20 with student-led presentations, etc ..)

5.3 How many weeks long is/are your Shakespeare course(s)/module(s) at Levels 2+?

5.4 What is/are the standard weekly teaching pattern(s) for such courses?

(e.g. 1x1hour lecture plus 1x1.5 hour seminar in groups of 15-20 with student-led presentations, etc ...)

5.5 How do you organise your courses?

In the table below, please indicate how many of your department's courses are organised in each way, using the drop-down menus.

	Level 1 compulsory	Level 1 optional	Levels 2+ compulsory	Levels 2+ optional
Chronologically				
By genres				
By themes				
By critical approaches				
Other (please describe below)				

5.6 Please describe any other ways in which any of your department's Shakespeare courses are organised.

5.7 Who teaches on your department's courses? (Please tick all that apply)

	Level 1 compulsory	Level 1 optional	Levels 2+ compulsory	Levels 2+ optional
Member of staff – Shakespeare specialist				
Member of staff – Renaissance/ Early Modern specialist				
Other member of staff				
Research postgraduate student				
Taught postgraduate student				
Undergraduate student				
Hourly-paid teacher (otherwise external to dept.)				
Visiting / guest lecturer				
Other				

5.8 Which texts are your students studying this year across the courses offered by your department? (Please tick all that apply)

	Whole text: Level 1	Extract: Level 1	Whole text: Levels 2+	Extract: Levels 2+
All's Well that Ends Well				
Antony and Cleopatra				
As You Like It				
Comedy of Errors				
Coriolanus				
Cymbeline				
Hamlet				
Henry IV, Part 1				
Henry IV, Part 2				
Henry V				
Henry VI, Part 1				
Henry VI, Part 2				
Henry VI, Part 3				
Henry VIII				
Julius Caesar				
King John				
King Lear				
Love's Labours Lost				
Macbeth				
Measure for Measure				
Merchant of Venice				
Merry Wives of Windsor				
Midsummer Night's Dream				
Much Ado About Nothing				
Othello				
Pericles, Prince of Tyre				
Richard II				
Richard III				
Romeo and Juliet				
Taming of the Shrew				
The Tempest				
Timon of Athens				
Titus Andronicus				
Troilus and Cressida				
Twelfth Night				
Two Gentlemen of Verona				
Winter's Tale				
Poetry: the Sonnets				
Poetry: other poems				

5.9 To what extent are the texts indicated above "set texts", and to what extent are the texts chosen by students?

5.10 How do you assess your students?

In the table below, please indicate how many of your department's courses are assessed in each way, using the drop-down menus. For courses with multiple modes of assessment, please fill as many boxes as apply.

	Level 1 compulsory	Level 1 optional	Levels 2+ compulsory	Levels 2+ optional
Essay / term paper				
Dissertation				
Unseen exam				
Seen exam				
Take-home paper				
Oral exam / Viva				
Presentation				
Portfolio				
Group work				
Performance				
Performance diary/log				
Other (please describe below)				

5.11 Please describe any other ways in which any of your department's Shakespeare courses are assessed.

5.12 Do you have any further comments you would like to add about the ways in which your department sets about organising its Shakespeare courses?

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6. Your department's approaches to teaching Shakespeare to undergraduates.

6.1 Does your department make use of any electronic resources (e.g. internet resources/ text databases) for teaching?

☐ No

☐ Yes

Please identify any resources you have found particularly useful and describe how these are used.

6.2 Does your department make use of film/video for teaching?

☐ No

☐ Yes

Please identify any resources you have found particularly useful and describe how these are used.

6.3 Does your department make use of student performances or performance workshops involving students for teaching?

☐ No

☐ Yes

Please identify any activities you have found particularly useful and describe how these are used.

6.4 Does your department make use of performances by professional actors for teaching (e.g. theatre trips/visits from actors to campus)?

☐ No

☐ Yes

Please identify any activities you have found particularly useful and describe how these are used.

6.5 Please identify any other resources you have found particularly useful, and describe how these are used.

6.6 Do you require or recommend any particular editions of Shakespeare's texts? If so, which editions do you use?

6.7 Are there any other non-Shakespearean literary or non-literary Renaissance/Early Modern texts that you find particularly useful for teaching Shakespeare?

6.8 Are there any other features of your department's course(s)/module(s) or approaches to teaching, learning and assessment that you would like to highlight here?

We would be very grateful if you would be prepared to share any of your course materials with us, as a way of adding more depth to the information you have given in this section. Anything you share will be treated in confidence and, naturally, remains your intellectual property.

Please e-mail details of URLs or attach documentation (in Word, RTF or PDF formats, please) to n.d.thew@sussex. ac.uk. That e-mail address will be given again at the end of this questionnaire.

7. Developing Shakespeare teaching in the future.

7.1 Do you have any current plans to change how you teach Shakespeare?

☐ No

☐ Yes

If yes, please tell us about the plan

7.2 Are there any other resources/events/other activities you would like to see developed by the English Subject Centre, or by other organisations or publishers?

☐ No

☐ Yes

Please specify

Thank you very much for your time!

Appendix B: Shakespeare plays taught during the academic year 2005-06

5.8 Which texts are your students studying this year across the courses offered by your department? (Please tick all that apply)

	Whole text: Level 1	Extract: Level 1	Whole text: Levels 2+	Extract: Levels 2+	Respondent total
All's Well that Ends Well	1	0	4	1	6
Antony and Cleopatra	2	0	7	2	10
As You Like It	5	0	7	1	13
Comedy of Errors	2	0	4	0	5
Coriolanus	2	0	7	1	9
Cymbeline	1	0	6	0	7
Hamlet	8	0	15	4	23
Henry IV, Part 1	5	0	7	2	14
Henry IV, Part 2	1	0	5	2	8
Henry V	3	0	12	1	16
Henry VI, Part 1	0	0	4	0	4
Henry VI, Part 2	0	0	3	0	3
Henry VI, Part 3	0	0	3	0	3
Henry VIII	0	0	3	0	3
Julius Caesar	2	0	8	0	9
King John	0	0	2	0	2
King Lear	4	0	12	2	16
Love's Labours Lost	1	0	5	0	6
Macbeth	4	0	9	3	14
Measure for Measure	3	0	11	3	16
Merchant of Venice	5	0	8	0	12
Merry Wives of Windsor	0	0	3	1	4
Midsummer Night's Dream	4	0	11	4	18
Much Ado About Nothing	4	0	5	0	8
Othello	4	1	12	2	16
Pericles, Prince of Tyre	0	0	3	1	4
Richard II	4	1	8	1	12
Richard III	2	0	10	2	12
Romeo and Juliet	1	0	7	1	9
Taming of the Shrew	4	0	8	1	11
The Tempest	5	0	17	1	22
Timon of Athens	0	0	3	0	3
Titus Andronicus	2	0	8	0	9
Troilus and Cressida	1	0	4	1	6
Twelfth Night	7	1	13	2	19
Two Gentlemen of Verona	0	0	4	0	4
Winter's Tale	5	0	11	0	15
Poetry: the Sonnets	5	5	9	2	20
Poetry: other poems	3	0	4	0	7

The texts ranked in order of popularity:

(In the first instance, texts are ranked by the total number of times they are mentioned. In the case of equal rankings, they are then ordered firstly by examining how often they are studied in full, and then by adding in the number of times extracts are studied. In the event of any remaining ties, texts are listed in alphabetical order.)

Ranked by total responses

	Whole text: Level 1	Extract: Level 1	Whole text: Levels 2+	Extract: Levels 2+	Respondent total
Hamlet	8	0	15	4	23
The Tempest	5	0	17	1	22
Poetry: the Sonnets	5	5	9	2	20
Twelfth Night	7	1	13	2	19
Midsummer Night's Dream	4	0	11	4	18
Othello	4	1	12	2	16
King Lear	4	0	12	2	16
Henry V	3	0	12	1	16
Measure for Measure	3	0	11	3	16
Winter's Tale	5	0	11	0	15
Macbeth	4	0	9	3	14
Henry IV, Part 1	5	0	7	2	14
As You Like It	5	0	7	1	13
Merchant of Venice	5	0	8	0	12
Richard II	4	1	8	1	12
Richard III	2	0	10	2	12
Taming of the Shrew	4	0	8	1	11
Antony and Cleopatra	2	0	7	2	10
Julius Caesar	2	0	8	0	9
Titus Andronicus	2	0	8	0	9
Coriolanus	2	0	7	1	9
Romeo and Juliet	1	0	7	1	9
Much Ado About Nothing	4	0	5	0	8
Henry IV, Part 2	1	0	5	2	8
Cymbeline	1	0	6	0	7
Poetry: other poems	3	0	4	0	7
Love's Labours Lost	1	0	5	0	6
All's Well that Ends Well	1	0	4	1	6
Troilus and Cressida	1	0	4	1	6
Comedy of Errors	2	0	4	0	5
Henry VI, Part 1	0	0	4	0	4
Two Gentlemen of Verona	0	0	4	0	4
Merry Wives of Windsor	0	0	3	1	4
Pericles, Prince of Tyre	0	0	3	1	4
Henry VI, Part 2	0	0	3	0	3
Henry VI, Part 3	0	0	3	0	3
Henry VIII	0	0	3	0	3
Timon of Athens	0	0	3	0	3
King John	0	0	2	0	2

Appendix C: A highly selective, annotated guide to further resources

Respondents to the survey were very generous in sharing details of the resources they found most useful for teaching. What follows is a very selective list, detailing the most commonly cited resources. Many of these are themselves useful starting points for further exploration.

One item deserves mention at the outset. An invaluable and comprehensive guide to Shakespeare resources, written by Dr. Christie Carson in 2006, is available to be downloaded as an 11 page PDF from the Royal Shakespeare Company's website at: **http://www.rsc.org.uk/downloads/learning/rsc_internet_guide.pdf**

All links given below were correct and live at the time of publication.

BBC Shakespeare resources

http://www.bbc.co.uk/drama/shakespeare/

Some entertaining interactive resources, with good materials on the recent modern adaptations of Shakespeare broadcast on the BBC. You need a relatively high-end computer to access these materials.

There is a useful account of the series of BBC Shakespeare films produced between 1978 and 1985 at **http://www.screenonline.org.uk/tv/id/459382/index.html**

This page also provides links to further resources on each individual production, generally including a synopsis, cast and credits, and images, audio and video clips.

Designing Shakespeare Database

http://ahds.ac.uk/performingarts/collections/designing-shakespeare.htm

This audio-visual database contains four distinct elements.
- A text database of production details and excerpts from theatre reviews which refer to design.

- An image database of production photographs selected from the archives of the theatre photographers Donald Cooper and Tom Holte and from the archive of costume designer and lecturer in design, Janet Arnold.

- A collection of video interviews conducted by Dr. Christie Carson with a number of important designers.

- A collection of VRML models of the key theatres spaces in Stratford and London where Shakespeare has been performed, developed by theatre designer Chris Dyer.

Early English Books Online

http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home

Full digital facsimiles from the Early English Books microfilm collection – with broad coverage of texts from Caxton to the Civil War – an excellent collection of Shakespeare and Renaissance texts. Requires an institutional subscription.

The English Subject Centre

http://www.english.heacademy.ac.uk/

The English Subject Centre provides a wealth of teaching and learning related materials.
Of particular interest to teachers of Shakespeare will be the resources on:
- Images of Violence in *Lear*, *Othello* and *Titus Andronicus*

- Performance Approaches to *King Lear*.

Both of these can be found at: **http://www.english.heacademy.ac.uk/designshake/completed/index.htm**

The Folger Shakespeare Library

http://www.folger.edu/

Students are likely to find the Discover Shakespeare section particularly useful. There is also an interesting (smallish) section entitled *Teach and Learn* – though this is aimed more at school level teachers.

The Globe Theatre

http://www.shakespeares-globe.org/

The site focuses on the Globe itself and on the project to recreate the theatre. It also contains archive material relating to previous productions.

There are useful resources specifically for students about the Globe Theatre project at: **http://www.shakespeares-globe.org/navigation/framesetNS.htm**

Intute: arts and humanities

http://www.intute.ac.uk/artsandhumanities/

This site has taken over from the old Humbul site. The new Intute site describes itself as: *a free online service providing you with access to the best Web resources for education and research, selected and evaluated by a network of subject specialists.* There are over 18,000 Web resources listed here that are freely available by keyword searching and browsing.

A keyword search on "Shakespeare" turns up 154 hits – including e-texts; annotated texts; performance images; historical materials etc. Very useful as a "one-stop shop" – and can be accessed by students too, of course.

JSTOR

http://www.jstor.org/

Archive of scholarly journals. Requires an institutional subscription.

The Oxford English Dictionary online

http://www.oed.com/

Requires an institutional subscription.

The Royal Shakespeare Company

http://www.rsc.org.uk/home/default.aspx

Clicking on the *Learning link* on the home page takes you to a section of the website that has further links to excellent resources, including online play guides, which explore the process of putting plays into production and contain actor and director interviews, and picture archives with images of productions, sets and costumes.

Also the home of Dr. Christie Carson's comprehensive guide to Shakespeare resources (see introduction above).

The Shakespeare Birthplace Trust

http://www.shakespeare.org.uk/

Useful information about Shakespeare's life and about the Trust's Library and archive materials.

About the author

Neill Thew lectured in English Literature and Language for 11 years at the Universities of Oxford, London and Birmingham. He has spent the last 6 years as Head of Teaching and Learning Development at the University of Sussex and now runs his own educational consultancy company, working across the U.K., in Sweden, the USA and the Far East. He works alongside institutions, Subject Centres and CETLs to undertake research and evaluation projects, and to support curriculum development and renewal. He has particular interests in the fields of assessment; faculty development; and evaluation.

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View of Shakespeare's Globe Theatre, London.

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