

Action Research Projects

Final Report: - Report due by 10th June 2009 to Catherine Hill

Colleagues involved in Project	School
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Gwen Law Eileen Norris	Learning Resources Unit
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Name of Project:

A collaborative approach to Information Skills Support from Level 3 to Level 6

Main Aims and Expected Outcomes of Project:

- Investigate information skills needs from Level 3 through to Level 6
- Give students the tools to become independent and information literate lifelong learners
- Increase the School's potential for increased achievement, retention and progression between FE and HE
- Be sustainable and informed by learner feedback
- Plot the skills needed at various stages of each course
- Translate this into a programme of workshops
- Specify timing, content, provider and length of session
- Produce suitable resources

Implementation process:

- Please outline how you have implemented your project against the methodologies suggest in your application.
- Please also indicate any adjustments you have had to make, what has worked well and what barriers have been overcome.
- Is progress in line with expectation?

Action Research Groups identified

- Level 3 BTEC National Diploma First Year, DCE, OCR
- Year 1 Foundation Degree Professional Practice Early Years (control group receiving full input)
- Year 2 Foundation Degree Professional Practice Early Years
- Year 3 Foundation Degree (P/T) Professional Practice Early Years
- BA top-up Early Years Studies

Sources of information for evaluation

- Track previous support in terms of sessions, theme and when delivered
- Comparison of assignment marks for control group

- Analysis of control group bibliographies for range and quality of resources used
- Analysis of BA dissertation bibliographies for range and quality of resources used
- Analysis of Athens resources usage and interlibrary loan data
- Comment and data from HELMs
- Student evaluations from academic writing sessions
- 182 learners from all groups completed detailed questionnaire on various elements of information literacy
- Exit questionnaire to BA top up group plotting session requirements and timing of delivery against six semester programme grid

Control groups

Two control groups of Foundation Degree Professional Practice Early Years learners were engaged in detailed planned delivery of information literacy skills including:

- referencing
- critical analysis
- reading for purpose
- accessing sources through Athens and LRC

(delivered in conjunction with tutor time and LRC this was planned on a weekly basis and covered more than 10 hours of delivery in tutorial and lesson time)

Level 3

- Alternative referencing aids produced for Level 3 students
- Revised 'hands on' LRC sessions designed for Level 3 students

Level 5

- Provide 5 additional workshops on specific Information Literacy skills for Level 5 students progressing to Level 6 (June 2009)

Final Outcomes:

- Indicate progress against expected outcomes.
- Have the anticipated outcomes been achieved?
- Have there been unanticipated outcomes?

Systematic integration of support at Level 4

- Framework designed to input necessary support at the right time
- Information Literacy Skills Scan produced for induction to indicate skills gaps
- HELMs and LRC staff informed of needs for additional tailored support

- Tutorial sessions with specialist staff from School and LRC embedded
- Adoption of single Harvard Referencing format by School
- Referencing Handbook for HE students

Integrated customised support applied to one assignment resulting in:

- Learners attaining 50-59% increasing by 22%
- Learners attaining 60-69% increasing by 6%
- No learners attained 30-39%

compared with the previous year

Increased student confidence with specific Information Literacy skills

Final outcomes

- Sustainable, embedded framework
- Collaborative approach by School, LRC and HELMs
- Rich source of data allowing annual review of tools and results
- Continuity of approach

What next?

- How do you see the project developing over the remainder of the year?
- Are there changes to methodology or outcomes you wish to make?
- How will the outcomes of this project benefit other areas and/or the College?

2009/2010

- Expand programme to other HE courses within School
- Share programme timetable with LRC and HELMs
- Amend referencing handbook to include additional examples
- Use PPEY course as case study for development of Primo (federated search software) by Learning Resources
- Investigate open source referencing software (Zotero)
- Ongoing comparison of results against collected data
- Consider offering additional workshop sessions on specific information literacy skills to Level 3 students wishing to progress to Level 4 (June 2010)
- Interest expressed in project by other Schools – share good practice