

## PRD project – case study: Phase 2

### Developing Higher Education in Further Education



Project title - Collaborative Approaches to Study-Skills Development for HE Students

Worth reading if you are interested in:

- The development of teaching and learning (especially using ILT) of HE in FE

Contact information

Main contact: Robin Webber - Jones

Name of Peer Review and Development (PRD) group: The Notts, Lincs, Derby Leicester Group

Participating organisation(s):

- New College Stamford
- Leicester College
- Derby College
- Central Nottingham College

What was the original PRD project designed to achieve?

**In Phase 1 of the project we set out to ...**

Answer a simple question. We wanted to know 'what makes out outstanding HE in FE lesson'. This emerged from a range of discussions we had with teachers who were exploring the differences between teaching HE learners and FE learners. We were all engaged in discussions about what made good teaching and learning in each of these areas and where there were differences and cross overs.

**and we achieved....**

A very informative conference, attended by over 40 teachers, to look at this. We had a key note from professor Frank Coffield as well as representation from HEFCE, QAA, JISC, the HE Academy, and the chance for the Colleges to share their work. The final aspect of the conference was the most valuable and generated the most discussion. Moreover, the use of ILT became an interesting theme we wanted to explore further and that took us to Phase 2.

How did the Phase 2 activities embed or extend the work undertaken in phase 1 of the project?

**In Phase 2 we wanted to....**

Allow teaching teams across the organisations to work closer together to undertake a key aspect of research associated with teaching and learning. We also wanted to provide yet further opportunity to share this with more colleagues.

Given the feedback from our first conference our emphasis was increasingly on moving learners to higher levels of thinking and using technology as an enabler to support this.

**...and we achieved**

There were two 1 day events for about 15 teachers across the 4 organisations to develop new approaches to teaching and learning. These were led by colleagues from the Centre of Excellence for Teacher Training at the University of Sunderland (SUNCETT). Each College then went back to base to try their ideas out and reflect and refine their activities. It was action research in action! A final day was held to collate findings and develop presentations and research posters to share with others.

The teachers came from various curriculum areas including music, graphics, photography, engineering, life sciences, criminology. These have become the corner stone of the conference this year.

The final part of the project was another conference. The second conference was very much focused on teachers sharing their research with other teachers. Pro D. Laurillard from the IoE offered a keynote exploring how ILT can influence pedagogy. Each College then presented the research that they had undertaken, outlining the strengths and weaknesses of each one.

What has been the main impact of the project and how will this affect the key stakeholders such as learners, the PRD group and participating organisations?

Definition – impact = “A change of behaviour as a result of engagement with the PRD activity”.

The **main impact for the participating organisations** has been

On the learners. The groups have explored notions of using new technologies (such as social media), new ideas (such as the flipped classroom), new assessment techniques (especially for part time learners) to be able to develop activities they can test out and measure. These have come from a theoretical base which teachers have been able to evaluate. It has meant that each organisation have demonstrated practical and coherent approaches to a range of teachers working in the HE in FE setting.

There has also been a greater sense in the teachers that they are not solving problems in isolation. This has increased their ability to be reflective practitioners and find opportunities to move learners into higher levels of thinking which are needed if an increased volume of learners are to access HE in FE.

The **main impact for the PRD group** has been

A sense that working collaboratively we can make a big impact in the quality of teaching and learning. Teaching staff have been able to work together to challenge their own assumptions and see that they are not alone in solving similar problems.

The group has been able to support each other in KIS implementation, in sharing its thoughts on HE in FE with the AOC and in exploring other funding opportunities (such as through the Catalyst Fund).

We have agreed to work as closely as we can in the future to find ways of funding this model as it is having a significant impact on raising the quality of activity in the classroom.

Has there been an **impact for other stakeholders**?

A range of external groups (HEFCE, QAA, AOC) have sent the work of the group and we have demonstrated the power that collaboration has if we come to it with an openness, a trust and are willing to share problems in a timely and meaningful way. These ingredients have been key to the project's success.

What will be done differently and what are the key learning points?

The key learning point is that this work requires time to embed. It also takes energy from the leads at each organisation to make space and time to meet and reflect on progress being made. However, the impact of this just for information sharing, discussing the very significant legislative changes to HE, and in improving classroom practice cannot be underestimated and we have all found the approach very powerful.

What resources should be shared with the FE and Skills sector?

(Please list and submit with the case study)

The model of practitioner based research needs to be taken forward by the sector and must not be lost in changes to the structure of FE which are currently taking place.

All of our research projects have presentations and research posters which are available on request.