

PRD project – case study: Phase 2

Developing Higher Education in Further Education



Project title - Higher Education Support in Sussex Colleges (Phase 2)

Worth reading if you are interested in:

- **HE delivered in an FE environment**

Contact information

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Name of Peer Review and Development (PRD) group: Higher Education Support in Sussex colleges (HESCC)

Participating organisation(s):

- Chichester College
- City College Brighton and Hove
- Central Sussex College
- Northbrook College
- Sussex Coast College Hastings
- Plumpton College

What was the original PRD project designed to achieve?

HESCC – Higher Education Support in Sussex Colleges is an on-going project which has the overall aim of enabling peer group development and interaction to support colleges providing HE in an FE environment. Building on former activity of establishing and becoming an effective PRD group, the central feature of this initiative was the need for all HE in FE providers to be aware of and act on the enhanced role for HE in FE as detailed in the BIS report 'Understanding HE in FE'.

Particular themes of interest cited in the report which the PRD group examined were:

- The lower level of under-graduate student satisfaction expressed by HE students in FE (page 11 of the report)
- The acknowledgement that teaching and learning is acknowledged to be distinctive in college settings.

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

(please indicate **why** you used the approach that you did)

Theme one was to further investigate course, teaching and learning satisfaction ratings and the commonality between colleges across the consortia.

and we achieved....

Development activity	How identified	Changes be achieved	Sustaining the changes
Theme one: To investigate course, teaching and learning satisfaction ratings across all colleges.	Through the BIS report 'Understanding HE in FE' and also through the comparison of SAR's within the HE In FE peer group	An improvement in the satisfaction ratings of at least 10% where they are currently below 80%	Through the embedding of good and best practice within teaching methods. By providing targeted CPD which is specifically for HE

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

In Phase 2 we wanted to....

Theme two was specifically targeted at improving and diversifying teaching and learning methodologies used with HE students in FE to maintain the 'distinctive nature it is renowned for' (BIS report page 11). This was addressed through the continued use of peer perusal, review and development as a catalyst to drive pan-Sussex quality development programme 'HE in FE.'

...and we achieved or are working towards achieving...

Theme two: To improve and diversify teaching and learning at HE level through a process of comparative peer group development including discussions, demonstrations, shadowing and inter-college linking	Identified as an ongoing requirement to ensure that FE is not seen as a sub-standard deliverer of HE by students or employers and to ensure the best possible learning experience is provided	An improvement in the results of learners coupled with an increase in in-course retention and achievement rates such that they equal or exceed the sector benchmark	Embedding the good and best practice identified into daily classroom teaching through peer word/team/development.
Theme two: To use pre-developed expertise and experience as a catalyst for sharing and changing the teaching methodology and delivery practices used in HE in FE.	Practitioner exchange of good and best practice has long been at the heart of FE and is now moving rapidly into HE as a result of this programme	Collaboration, exchange and peer group interaction between Sussex colleges providing HE. Incorporation of ideas and methodologies into daily delivery	Peer group exchange and interaction will be embedded into strategies for achieving 'outstanding' under the Action for Outstanding Colleges programme.
Theme two: To overcome the barriers which exist to the development and introduction of new	Identified through individual staff appraisal and also observation of	The embedding into daily use of a range of teaching techniques which draw upon	Use of new technology etc to be incorporated into teaching and learning plans. Similarly

teaching techniques designed to appeal to HE learners.	classroom performance	modern technology such as social networks, VLE, interactive packages and manufacturers networks.	social media.
Theme two: To share and exchange learning resources used for HE in FE delivery	Identified through peer group meetings and exchanges of practice	A sharing of learning resources between forum members and the build up of a bank which can be drawn upon across the various colleges at zero cost. All learning resources to be tested and proven.+	Incorporate into the FE Sussex VLE which can be drawn upon by all staff once authorised. (Some aspects still under development).
Theme two: To incorporate HE CPD into the pan-Sussex CPD cycle of all colleges delivering HE as a dedicated stream.	Identified by HE leads, quality leads and all principals with HE in their college	HE as an established CPD activity on pan-Sussex CPD days.	On-going once adopted as a theme.
Theme two: To investigate the potential for delivery of HE using new media and on-line technology	Identified through learner feedback	Suggestions of courses which could be delivered in an outreach manner rather than using conventional college methods	To be incorporated into teaching and learning once staff confident in usage.

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”.

Project Activity	Impact
Investigation into satisfaction rates, and reasons	Activity has enabled colleges to benchmark performance of HE courses with others in local area as part of quality improvement activity. Direct impact in driving up quality of teaching and learning
HE in FE peer group meetings	Diversification and broadening of teaching methodologies implemented as a result of peer group learning.
pan-Sussex Staff Development HE in FE theme	Sustained stream of on-going staff development
Sharing of learning resources/teaching methodologies	Not impacted as yet
Set up Virtual Forum meetings	Staff development on-going
Peer visiting and shadowing and exchange	Changes to teaching methods and course management methodology
Investigation into potential for HE using on-line delivery	Long term aspiration
Dissemination sessions	Adoption of HE in FE as a theme in CPD

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

We have found the set-up we have used to enable this peer group to function is satisfactory although we feel we have not made enough use of new technology to replace conventional face to face meetings. However, experience with other PRD groups has taught us (FE Sussex) that the group dynamic must first be established on a face to face basis prior to extract maximum impact from tele-meetings.

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

(Please list and submit with the case study)

- Methods of evaluating performance of HE courses – statistically
- Peer group linkage for quality improvement
- Teaching methodology for HE delivery
- HE in FE specific CPD requirements