



An Excellence Gateway case study

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Highbury College: Don't Judge Me Until You Know Me

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Outline the aim

The aim of the project is to raise awareness of the Equality Duty amongst students and the benefits of diversity through the design and production of a series of thought provoking short videos. The videos will explore the experiences of young people and adults with respect to age, disability, race, religion & belief, sex and sexual orientation. The purpose of the resources is to stimulate discussion and debate amongst our students and staff to better counter stereotypes, tackle discrimination and promote equality and diversity. A particular focus will be on the unconscious behaviour and language that can result in individuals and groups feeling or being excluded.

The challenge

The main issue the project is trying to resolve is one of stereotyping and the instant judgements people make about each other – hence the title of ‘Don’t judge me ‘til you know me’”

Partnership organisations

ExpressFM – Opportunity to air audio versions of the interviews to the local community

Portsmouth City Council – support in finding subjects for the short videos and the opportunity to show them on ‘The Big Screen’ in Portsmouth Guildhall Square

Plus3 Productions – independent production company providing production expertise.

The outputs

5 short videos – age, race and disability completed.

Sexual orientation and religious belief in production. However, these themes cut across a number of the videos. Support materials are in the process of being produced for these

Workshop event for community groups –

- Discussion sessions about stereotyping.
- Hands on camera and interviewing training.
- 30 + community organisations invited.
- 6 individuals attended.
- Interest expressed by more but unable to attend on date.

The intention is to create a database of organisations the College can work with on Equality and Diversity/Multimedia projects in future.

Two day workshop for students – attended by 11 Level One Computing students with a range of learning differences. Discussion on Equality and Diversity issues, shared personal experiences and a review of available videos resulted in them planning their own videos with training in basic camera operations and editing using final cut pro.

They produced a series of short films (with professional support). Note this 2 day workshop also covered their multimedia unit. It will be adapted for future use by students throughout the college on a range of courses where Equality and Diversity and Multimedia work are appropriate.

Through the workshop students were able to express their negative experiences, reflect on how they want people to view them and then create short video pieces which are designed to make the audience think – this approach is transferrable to all areas and levels of students, staff and the community.

The project will be showcased at the next available staff development day and provide the basis for workshops on E & D

The impacts and outcomes

The project is creating resource materials for induction, tutorial and workshop based sessions which will allow students and the wider community to consider and reflect on their attitudes and how they are formed through the title of 'Don't Judge Me Until You know Me'. It is also intended to provide the inspiration for the development of further materials produced by the students and community themselves.

People who are already well informed and motivated by the issues of Equality and Diversity actively seek out the materials themselves – this material is designed to be easily available and of interest to those groups who do not fall

into this category and thereby attempt to remove some of the barriers to their learning.

Through the use of the materials the hope is that all students will become more aware of their own and others values and attitudes.

The materials will be ready for the end of June, although there is already interest being generated in them. Once the mechanisms are in place for full dissemination through the staff training day, the radio station and the Big Screen it will be more appropriate to answer this.

A compilation DVD of all the videos will also be available to the wider community for use in youth groups, for example.

This element is still ongoing. To date this has included:

Performing Arts students - 15

Level 1 computing students – 11

Independent living and Work Skills students – 20

All groups contained elements of the equality groups.

The fuller impact will be known when the materials are rolled out to the College and the wider community.

Working relationship with LSIS

The project has enabled us to have professional people working alongside students in developing materials and enhancing their learning.

Good value for money

This element is still to be judged. It is envisaged that there will be savings in terms of ready-made materials being available for tutorial and wider pastoral work.

The production of each video, if we were to fully utilise an outside company, would've at least trebled the cost of the project. The project has enabled us to engage professionals, use College resources and provide worthwhile learning opportunities for students.

At this stage it is difficult to comment on the savings to the wider community. However, at the workshop day representatives from Portsmouth Police Community Support Officers (PCSO) believe that it will be a valuable resource for them. In addition they have identified colleagues who fit into most of the different groups (and more) and would like to work with the College in developing a video which illustrates the diversity within the local police.

Senior managers involvement

Senior managers have been supportive in the project.

Stakeholder involvement

To date this has included:

Portsmouth Football Club
Portsmouth Girls School
Muslim Youth Group
PCSO
Age UK
Lord Mayors Project
Portsmouth City Council
Highbury College Student Union

Learner involvement

Learners have been involved through:

Planning
Developing ideas
Participants in videos
Production team
Production of music

And has involved approximately 45 students

Raising awareness

To date this has been through

- Community workshop
- Mail shot
- Internet
- College intranet

Full dissemination will occur once the project is completed in June.

Continuity of project, after LSIS funding

Equality and Diversity is a key agenda in the College and the project has helped to reinforce this. The College has a good reputation for its approach to inclusiveness. The project materials will be regularly used. The project has also opened up opportunities for further community based work which will form part of student based projects related to their curriculum (eg. the work with the PCSO's mentioned above).

Did you experience any difficulties in implementing the project and how did you overcome these?

The key issue was the poor attendance at the workshop and last minute dropout which delayed the project. It was hoped that a number of community groups would become more involved than actually happened. This resulted in staff at the College having to source additional participants.

As the project started part way through the academic year, a number of media students had already sourced projects and not as many as hoped were able to fully participate in the whole production process.

The lessons learned

In order to synchronise better with the curriculum where projects involve students directly in the making of materials it would be better that there is:

- A longer timeframe
- The potential for projects to start at the beginning of the academic year so that elements can be built into the curriculum. For example, in the case of this project a number of media students were already significantly in to their own projects and were not able to get as involved in the production processes as we had hoped.

The project has huge potential and will create a resource bank and is should be repeated.

It has been hard to get community groups engaged – a longer timeframe would maybe have enabled a longer lead in time to develop the relationships more effectively.

Sustainability – lasting legacy

The materials themselves will prove a long lasting legacy, along with the changes in attitude that we hope will be imparted on those who encounter them.

Through the workshops we will be making available the strategies we have used for addressing the issues identified by students, staff and community groups with respect to tackling barriers and promoting a more inclusive College and wider community.

Demonstrating impact – evidence of short and long term impact

As the project is yet to be disseminated to staff and the community it is not yet possible to provide this evidence

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