

Supporting excellence in initial teacher education in further education and skills



Case study for projects

ABOUT YOUR PROJECT

1. Project title

The accelerator project - enhancing quality and opportunities within teacher training in the Lifelong Learning sector.

2. Project summary (max 50 words)

This may be the same as in the original submission, but please amend in light of changes you may have made during the duration of the project.

The project developed new models of ITE provision featuring **a shortened time frame for delivery**; e mentoring support; and efficient observations. There are three new DTLLS programmes: one generic, one literacy and one numeracy. The latter two courses are being delivered by blended learning.

3. Your ITE provision (approx 200-300 words)

Describe the ITE provision you are offering from September 2012, including as a result of the project: number of students (predicted or estimated if not confirmed), accreditation, delivery methods and target audience

The three planned models are all being currently delivered. The generic programme is being delivered by a partner college. Eighteen trainees were enrolled and sixteen remain on programme. The college is delivering the programme over a 15 month period making use of the holidays for study time and completion of assignments. For the first time they are also delivering taught sessions over a full day per week. The target audience were generic teachers at the college including some who were interested in teaching at the new Studio School which is sponsored by the college. The Studio School makes provision for 14-19 year olds so the scheme of work was enhanced by emphasising where attention could be particularly given to issues relating to 14-16 year olds. At the end of the course trainees will be awarded the Diploma in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector (DTLLS) awarded by the University of Warwick.

The DTLLS (English – literacy) and the DTLLS (Mathematics – numeracy) are being delivered in a mixed cohort with the additional diplomas for both subjects. Numbers for these courses has dropped by more than 50% this year but by delivering joint cohorts we have been able to run both subject specialist courses with nine trainees in each group. The courses are aimed at both existing and new teachers of literacy and numeracy and we have been pleased that we have recruited five literacy tutors new to teaching or new to teaching literacy. The courses are run through a blended learning model where the trainees attend a full taught day once a month and complete distance or e learning tasks between the taught days. Blogs are used to engage in a dialogue with trainees between the taught days as well as contact by e mail and phone.

There are also a further 340 first and second years on DTLLS courses in eight other partner colleges. As part of this project we also predict that there will be 14 vocational teachers enrolled on subject specialist courses starting in January in a new partner college.

4. Resources used *(you may decide upon the level of detail to be provided here)*

Outline the resources used to run this provision (outlined in 3 above) including: teaching time, resources used, tutoring/mentoring etc.

Where possible please provide a cost for these resources.

The generic programme run by the college uses the same amount of resources to deliver as a standard course but because the course is completed over 15 months the release time and costs for the employer are reduced.

The subject specialist courses have always been delivered using a blended learning model but the project aimed to review the e learning activities to reduce the tutor time needed to monitor tasks. The project was also used to include screen casts and/or podcasts or videos on the course website.

For nine students each course requires a tutor for 1.5 days a week to deliver the induction session and monthly taught days; to monitor work completed between the taught days; to carry out observations and tutorials; to mark assignments; and to liaise with subject specialist mentors. Administrative support is needed to set trainees up on the system; to sort out any access problems; and to update the site on an on going basis. Clearly a good platform is needed to host the programme; in our case we use the University's bespoke website programme, Sitebuilder, which is supported by IT services.

The website holds all the course information (dates, course content, handbooks, tutor information, assessment schedule, timelines for tasks completed between taught days and the e learning tasks.) The trainees also use e portfolios and weblogs on the website for all assessed work. In addition there is a mentor page which has information for subject specialist mentors. Links from the course website exist to e books held in the university's library as well as scanned chapters chosen by the course leaders. There is also a generic web-based Resource Bank which holds a study skills package.

An additional piece of work was done to amend and develop the e learning resources on our current Contextualised, Blended and Extended DTLLS (CBED) programme which is contextualised for workbased training teachers and trainers and on the blended learning second year of the DTLLS delivered by one of our colleges. This has facilitated the cross pollination of ideas between the two course teams and these new resources are currently being piloted by one of our partners.

5. Achievement against aims and objectives of project, and lessons learnt (approx 400 words)

The main purpose of these projects was to set up new sustainable models of delivery of ITE (DTLLS and equivalents) which will:

- support providers to develop new and sustainable models of delivery to the highest quality standards;
- create efficient models of delivery, while maintaining fitness for purpose, with a focus on creating excellence in teaching and learning;
- develop ITE provision which is attractive, and affordable, to new trainees and employers and stimulate new partnerships and increased co-operation between subject associations, employers and providers.

Please comment on how well you believe your project has addressed these overall aims and objectives by answering the questions below. Any supporting evidence will be welcome here.

- **What lessons have I learnt in terms of efficiency, quality improvement, costing and affordability?**

In trying to reduce tutor input we were concerned that we maintained the proven quality of the provision. However, what we found was that finding creative ways to reduce tutor time between taught sessions resulted in activities which modelled a wider range of pedagogical approaches. For example, using peer assessment and self marking encouraged trainees to think about how they would use these strategies with their trainees. These were also more effective ways to learn than completing a task and waiting for tutor comments. The screen casts provided an excellent tool for delivering difficult content which could then be reviewed before and after the delivery sessions and reduced the time spent in tutorials going over difficult content. We also hope to be able to use more screen casts in the future to support trainees who miss a taught day instead of using intensive 1:1 tutorials to provide catch up sessions. In essence what we have found is that being efficient can also improve quality.

- **How can I implement the outcomes from this project in other similar provision?**

I am particularly interested in using screen-casts to provide resources which can be used across the partnership. For example, I plan to make a series of 5 minute screen casts which look at ways of supporting the development of literacy and numeracy in the vocational classroom.

- **In what ways has technology been used to support the delivery? What advice would you give in terms of where it should be used and in what ways? (Answer only if applicable.)**

We have used technology to support all aspects of the delivery; induction, teaching, reflection, e portfolios, support for mentors and support for course tutors. The key factor is to consider how the technology impacts on the learning experience of the trainees; it should enhance their experience. There should always be access to a trained person who is on hand as often as possible to provide support to the trainees to resolve access issues or other difficulties. When trainees are using blended learning they could be on line at any time of the day or the night so the system has to be robust.

- **What should be avoided? What doesn't work?**

We have found that on-line forums do not work well as trainees feel they are exposing themselves. They also find that later entries tend to repeat what has been said before. Instead we are using wikis which are more interactive.

Another unrelated difficulty was trying to find a partner college to work with in the time span of the project. We have found it more successful responding to requests to work in partnership with ourselves rather than approaching other organisations to ask them to work with us.

6. Advice to others

This case study will be made available to other providers via the Excellence Gateway. Please outline any advice you would wish to give to others who may be inspired to develop a similar model by answering the questions below. Where possible please highlight any resources (publicly available) that may be of use to others.

- **What difference has this project made to our knowledge of running affordable and excellent ITE programmes as an organisation?**

We knew that although we were running blended learning programmes we were not making the most of the technology or our tutors' time. This project has enabled us to review our provision and improve the pedagogical approaches we have used on line. This has meant that we can reduce the tutor time needed or use it more effectively in other ways. We have also found other ways to use the website to support the programme e.g. on-line observation training will be in place shortly and on line training for mentors.

- **What, if any, further developments are you considering as an organisation following on from this project?**

We plan to develop more screen casts to add to our Resource Bank particularly focusing on the supporting literacy and numeracy in the vocational classroom.

- **Will this project result in sustainable improvement? If so, how?**

Yes the project will result in sustainable improvements because we can continue developing on line resources in this way albeit at a slower pace. The work we have completed will continue to be used by our trainees throughout the next 12 months and some will be extended to all University of Warwick ITE trainees. If the qualifications change in the near future we will still be able to use the improved website as a basis for our courses.

- **How can the lessons learnt in this project be applied to other provision?**

We plan to evaluate the use of these new resources and if they prove to be effective then we can apply them to any new qualifications that are developed and we can share what we have done at partnership review and development meetings and at WMCETT's professional dialogue meetings.

- **What lessons are there about the strategic use of technology for ITE?**

The use of technology needs to be promoted and developed beyond those who are passionate and enthusiastic about its use, particularly in ITE provision. It needs to be an expectation that all teacher trainers will enthusiastically promote and develop the use of IT in their own delivery and that they should have the appropriate resources to develop their approaches in the classroom e.g. if we want teacher trainers to explore the use of i-pads in the classroom then they need permanent access to an i-pad.

7. Contact information

Please provide contact information of the author of this case study and state whether you are willing to answer queries from others.

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I am happy to answer queries from others

8. Resources available for others

Please provide details of the resources that can be made available to other providers as a result of this project. Examples may include teaching and learning resources, handbooks, spreadsheets to calculate costs, flyers and recruitment materials, procedure documents etc. These should be referenced in this report and submitted at the same time.

As many of the resources have only just been completed they need to be piloted and evaluated before they can be made available to others. When we report again later in the year it will be possible to make more of the teaching and learning resources available.

The flyer promoting the subject specialist DTLLS qualifications can be made available though it may be out of date within three months. (Please see below).

For generic teacher trainers and staff development officers

IAG for literacy, language, numeracy (LLN) and functional skills (FS) teachers)
Value of the **integrated** DTLLS routes for LLN and Functional Skills teachers

Increasing numbers of literacy and numeracy teachers are gaining a generic teaching qualification followed by a subject specialist qualification. This involves them in an extra year of study and additional costs compared to other vocational teachers when they could become fully qualified in two years. Now that teacher training courses in H.E. are subject to full fees, these additional, unnecessary costs will be considerable. It is, therefore, important that LLN subject specialist teachers are given full impartial information about their options so that they can choose the right route to becoming fully qualified. (It will also ensure that you protect yourself and your organisation from any litigious action in the event of trainees finding out retrospectively that they have incurred considerable unnecessary costs.) Below are some key points that LLN and FS teachers should be aware of.

- Under current regulations all literacy, language and numeracy teachers are required to hold a subject specialist qualification.
- Functional Skills teachers are not required to hold such a qualification but dedicated FS teachers would benefit from undertaking them.
- Taking a generic qualification and an additional diploma is just **one** route to becoming fully qualified
- **Another** route is to take a partly or fully integrated subject specialist DTLLS qualification which would result in full qualification within a maximum of two years of part time study.
- **A third route** is to take a concurrent route where the additional diploma is studied alongside the generic DTLLS qualification which would also result in full qualification in two years.
- You don't have to have a level 3 qualification to start a subject specialist course – some providers ask for this but some give support in reaching this standard and some ask trainees to undertake and pass an initial assessment.
- Not all subject specialist courses are offered at level 5 – some are offered at post graduate level.
- Most subject specialist DTLLS courses are part time but it is possible to study full time.

Here in the West Midlands we are lucky to have all these options available to LLN subject specialists. (See *overleaf*.)

Providers of subject specialist integrated DTLLS qualifications in the West Midlands

Organisation	Courses and contact
Wolverhampton University	Integrated DTLLS – full and part time: Pre-service PGCE at level 7 (masters) – English (Literacy or ESOL) and Maths (numeracy) Part time in-service Cert Ed at level 5 English (Literacy or ESOL) and Maths (numeracy) cathie.lacey@wlv.ac.uk
Staffordshire University	Concurrent route Lynn Machin – l.b.machin@staffs.ac.uk or Tina Richardson – t.a.richardson@staffs.ac.uk
University of Warwick	Partly integrated DTLLS – blended model e.goodall@warwick.ac.uk
Birmingham City University	Integrated DTLLS full and part time www.bcu.ac.uk

(Most of these providers also offer stand-alone subject specialist qualifications)