

# LSIS Leadership in Technology (LIT) grant based intervention

## Case study template

Provider name & contact details	Furness College Jo Anson (jo.anson@furness.ac.uk)
LIT Project title	Epens in Work Based Learning
Project summary :  - Include the particular area for improvement that has been tackled through the effective deployment of technology	The specific use of the digital pens in the area of WBL was focused on the aspects of the control management, compliance and tracking of student progress to link into our current and developing systems. Currently paper records are completed at the workplace, transported back to college, typed up, verified, any errors or omissions chased up with added visits to learners. The tracking software requires the inputting of data on the learners progress which is not compatible with the WBL records and forms. The use of paper records for WBL and apprenticeship learners causes errors in completion, delays in checking and internal verification; and managing the learners progress with timely information of the learner's progress to employers and management. The use of digital pens in this specific area is seen as a major step in allowing assessors and tutors to carry out their tasks in the work-place with significant reductions in administrative overheads. There is still a need to have paper records with signatures for audit and funding purposes, therefore the digital pen solution was crucial at this time to allow paper records to be kept but digital data to be used in collating and tracking students' progress. Further administrative savings would be made in the management o
What were the aims of the project?	The main aims of the project were: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improvement of accurate and timely work-based learners progress</li> <li>• Significant reduction in administrative overheads</li> <li>• Reduction in travel costs and lower carbon footprint</li> <li>• Minimal change to existing work practice</li> <li>• Timely information on learner progress available to management and employers</li> <li>• Development linked into current student tracking software</li> </ul>
What did you do and how did you do this?	A project working group of key stakeholders was formed to oversee the project. These involved staff from across the college from IT support, lead assessors, work-based learning administrative staff, health and safety administrators and quality improvement staff. Joint application development workshops took place to plan, discuss and prioritise the initial requirements with these key stakeholders in the development and deployment of the technology. An action plan was drawn up and updated

	<p>after these workshops. An Agile approach/methodology was used to ensure stakeholders were empowered and decisions they were making were to the full benefit of the project and college.</p> <p>We chose a digital pen technology with the requirements to integrate with the paper processes that operate in the training and college area, where substantial volumes of paperwork have to be completed accurately and in specific timescales.</p> <p>The working group also covered issues such as defining new behaviours and rules for management control and reporting, defining new rules for assessors for using the documentation and reporting to line managers, and facilitating the re-organisation of the supervisory and lead assessors roles to ensure appropriate levels of responsibility, authority and ownership. Another key element was assisting with the implementation of change, through coaching and mentoring of managers, supervisors and lead assessors.</p>
What role did your mentor play on your LIT project?	The mentor was valuable in identifying and helping to review the use of the technology and how this best could be utilised in the college. Pointers to the changes required in processes and operations were also discussed to enable the best use of the technology.
What have been the key benefits from the input of your mentor?	Access to up-to-date data and usage across the relevant sector of this type of work-based learning. Contacts at other training organisations through the mentor enabled issues and problems to be openly discussed.
What was the benefit of the support that you received from your LSIS Associate?	The support in the whole process was very supportive and very valuable on keeping the project on task and guidelines for action planning and reporting were also very helpful. A very valuable critical friend.
What has been the impact and benefit of the LIT capital	The capital grant enabled this project to be fully tested and implemented. Without it the project may have been seriously undermined and not taken as seriously as such a small scale project would only have been possible.

grant to your project?	
What did the project cost, including LSIS funding?	In total there was £11,000 funding from LSIS with a further £2,500 funded by the college for extra software and hardware upgrades required to existing systems and hardware.
What has been the impact of your LIT project on your organisational improvement strategy?	The project has enabled an area to review its working practices to reduce administrative and assessor overheads which has led to better services to learners and employers.
What were the benefits of your LIT project?	The project has also been a catalyst in the work-based learning area for reviewing work practices especially with the management control and compliance of tracking work based learners and also to enhance the use of technology in the assessing process. This has led to the review and discussions on the use of e-portfolios, using simple video-conferencing to communicate with learners and further work on using digital evidence gathering within this area.
What were the savings to your organisation?	Initial estimates are that administrative overheads will be reduced by 10 to 20% but more time is needed to fully evaluate these cost savings.
How did you calculate them?	We have used data that administrators and assessors have calculated on each of the key tasks identified in the processes being digitised.
What were the lessons learned?	<p>Upgrades to phones for assessors and the learner information system were required that had not been fully taken into account on the original application.</p> <p>Re-designing forms is an iterative process and requires all stakeholders to have a say. This can cause some tensions between stakeholders as sometimes they do not see the whole picture or understand why aspects have changed. The joint workshops enabled this process to be managed in an effective manner where all points of view were treated on their merit and steered to an overall consensus</p> <p>Changing working practices can be tricky, especially in the current economical climate where change can be viewed with apprehension and</p>

<p>What tips do you have for other providers?</p> <p>How will you disseminate effective practice to others in the sector?</p>	<p>caution. Stakeholders were allowed in the joint workshops to develop the procedures required and review working practices in the light of trying to alleviate duplicated effort and time in terms of the processing of forms and the management control. Assessors and administrations have been thoroughly informed and feedback valued as the project as progressed through to implementation.</p> <p>Using stakeholder workshops to get full buy-in from all involved helps with the implementation of a project.</p> <p>Be aware of hidden extras so make some contingency plans.</p> <p>Via conferences with other colleges, via LSIS organisation, JiSC conference. Case studies publicised in various publications.</p>
<p>Provide a quote on your experience of the LSIS LIT project.</p> <p>Are you happy for us to use this and your contact details for marketing and publications?</p>	<p>The LSIS LIT project enabled the college to try out new technology in a very competitive market place where overheads are constantly being scrutinised and control management of processes are continuously being reviewed to provide effective services to learners. A great success and has shown that technology can help move processes and services forward.</p> <p>Yes</p>
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