

## LSIS Leadership in Technology (LIT) grant based intervention

### Case study: HMP Castington LIT Project

Provider name & contact details	HMP Castington Morpeth Northumberland NE65 9XG
LIT Project title	HMP CASTINGTON: IMPROVING THE RECORDING AND USE OF VISUAL IMAGES IN AN OFFENDER EDUCATION SETTING
Project summary :  - Include the particular area for improvement that has been tackled through the effective deployment of technology	At HMP Castington we wanted to explore the use of video technology in teaching settings, as a creative tool and opportunity for prisoners to develop skills and self-evaluate. We utilised an opportunity to purchase mentor-led training and equipment to attempt to make changes to the attitudes of all within the prison to digital media.
What were the aims of the project?	<p>With opportunities within prisons to harness technological advances being scarce due to financial and security constraints the opportunity to develop this project was a very exciting development.</p> <p>By introducing digital video technology staff and prisoners were presented with opportunities to hone skills and creativity, and develop positive attitudes towards digital media. With strong mentorship and by instilling a policy of colleague coaching (via repeatedly sharing best practices) we believed a meaningful legacy could be achieved.</p> <p>Having chosen a mentor from the commercial film industry, with knowledge of the most up to date digital equipment, who is expertly qualified and experienced to deliver a program suitable to our needs, we knew the project had every chance of being a success.</p>
What did you do	To ensure the project succeeded we put into place a number

and how did you do this?	of programmes to enable the commencement of digital technology use within the prison beyond what was being achieved before, and to instil a culture of peer mentoring, or colleague coaching as we called it. Because of the structured environment of the prison we focused mainly on classroom based activities that could be incorporated into the prison's core day. We made training programmes available to both staff and prisoners on the merits of harnessing digital media, the power of peer mentoring, technical skills and creative practices with digital media. To test and showcase these new skills, four prisoners then volunteered to be the subject of four documentary short films. The experience of this was clearly very moving at times for prisoners, and presented them with many opportunities to reflect on their pasts and their future, whilst also giving them a taste for the developments in digital media.
What role did your mentor play on your LIT project?	Our mentor was instrumental in the success of this project. Chris Taylor was professional and knowledgeable which we fully expected. His charisma and ability to put people at ease and therefore get the best out of people from all walks of life was a key factor in the success of the project.
What have been the key benefits from the input of your mentor?	Chris's technical knowledge and natural teaching ability set in chain the whole concept of colleague coaching. He was able to share his knowledge and experience of sometimes difficult and challenging technical information easily with all involved with the project.
What was the benefit of the support that you received from your LSIS Associate?	Through every step of the project, including a number of challenging periods of change here at the prison and throughout the prison system in general over the last few months, Tim Kelly has been a key supportive and knowledgeable voice. His support has always been timely, well thought through, constructive and always positive.
What has been the impact and benefit of the LIT capital grant to your project?	The purchase of state of art video and computer equipment as a result of the capital grant has been hugely beneficial and will undoubtedly leave a legacy of increased technological advancement of prisoners and staff long after the completion of this project. We now have the equipment capable of producing high quality video and photographic output with no or low additional costs.

What did the project cost, including LSIS funding?	The project budget was fixed at £6000, of which 100% was LSIS funded. However, through work hours of many staff throughout the prison including education, security and psychology the project came to fruition.
What has been the impact of your LIT project on your organisational improvement strategy?	The prison, because of the very sensitive nature of security, was wary at first of any digital image capture on site. However, through the success of the project and its clear positive outcomes, it is hoped that further projects can now enable staff and prisoners to harness the positive aspects of technology within the setting.
What were the benefits of your LIT project?	The benefits of our project mostly related to individuals. The whole principle of our 'colleague coaching' was to empower them, to instil a belief that digital media need not be challenging or exclusive.
What were the savings to your organisation?	Savings will now be made in relation to any future digital media project developed within the prison. We have the equipment and expertise to manage our own projects and have made some good relationships with a view to procuring cheaper equipment and personnel (should it be required) at cheaper rates in the future as a result of this project.
How did you calculate them?	As these are only savings to be made in the future they have not been calculated.
What were the lessons learned?	We simplified the process of training in regards to digital media, to enable as many people as possible to partake, regardless of education or skills. We hoped – and largely achieved - to dispel the myth that digital technology was confusing and inaccessible. However, we know realise that the project could have been widened out to more staff and prisoners. We were concerned that having only one camera would hold us back but the application of our mentor and the enthusiasm of our participants has persuaded us that the project could have contained even more participants.
What tips do you have for other providers?	Be bold, take calculated risks, challenge people but don't compartmentalise them before a project has begun: they will surprise you.
How will you disseminate effective practice to others in the sector?	We are hoping to share best practices through the Writer's in Prisons Network and through further projects we create.

<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 programme has provided a massive positive change within our environment towards the capabilities of and access to digital media. Thank you to all involved in making this happen.</p> <p>Yes.</p>
Contact details for further information	<p>Tom Chaplin</p> <p>Tom.chaplin@hmps.gsi.gov.uk</p>

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