

## LSIS Leadership in Technology (LIT) grant based intervention Impact study template

Provider name & contact details	Canterbury College, New Dover Road, Canterbury, Kent, CT1 3AJ 01227 811111 <a href="http://www.canterburycollege.ac.uk">www.canterburycollege.ac.uk</a>
LIT Project title	Implementation of Electronic Personal Learning Plans
<b>The project</b>	
What problem or issue you were trying to resolve or improve with this project	<p>As an organisation, we had used a traditional paper based tutorial system throughout the college for many years. This system had limited scope and did not support the needs of the students and was in need of development. Feedback from staff and students indicated that a large majority desired an electronic version.</p> <p>Coupled with the reduction of hours for the provision of tutorials, moving to an electronic system would promote the idea of the feedback being accessible 24/7 thus making the tutorial continuous and not an isolated event that might occur on a fortnightly basis.</p> <p>Information pertaining to the students was also spread around a number of different management systems, this project would bring this information together making it easier for staff to act on to support the students learning while studying.</p> <p>Finally the system would bring those staff together who have limited contact with the students thus ensuring all students are monitored fully giving accurate data before a student becomes at risk of not achieving.</p>
Why did you go for a technology-based solution	<p>As stated previously, the difficulty was to ensure that all parties communicate effectively when delivering a tutorial.</p> <p>Using the electronic based system ensured that all parties were able to access the information system for the electronic tutorial within and outside the organisation</p> <p>The technology based improvements were also geared towards adapting the system for the learner, not the learner for the system. Students use technology in their everyday lives to communicate so using it academically simply makes sense.</p>

<p>What did the project cost: LSIS funding + your organisation's contribution</p>	<p>£6000 + an additional 168 staff members trained in using the e-PLP. Original bid was for 10 members of staff costing £150 each to release them from their usual duties. Our in-kind contribution on this basis is £25,200.</p>
<p>Describe what you did and what happened</p>	<p>As we had done some initial work on the PLP prior to this bid we were able to integrate the system easily with the VLE for the October 11 deadline that we had set ourselves.</p> <p>Integration of data was on-going, we set ourselves the initial targets of having contact details, prior attainment, value added scores and specific learning needs to be on the PLP. This was achieved before the end of 2011.</p> <p>Following on from this update to the PLP we added the attendance data for each student. This was after the college adopted a college wide electronic register, this system made it possible to add this essential option. This had an immediate impact on the pilot groups as they were able to discuss with the students their attendance on the program.</p> <p>Training has been continuous throughout the period of the pilot as more sections adopted the system to be used with their students. We are currently in the process of identifying 'champions' to continue the facilitation of training for those still new to using the ePLP.</p>
<p><b>The benefits and impact</b></p>	
<p>What benefits/ impact has the project had on:::</p>	<p>a. the work/ effectiveness of your organisation</p> <p>The project team have been an important group for the discussions and cross section collaboration. This team had been responsible for driving the change and developing the enthusiasm for the project.</p> <p>The ePLP has also been noted in evaluations as an accessible way for staff to build confidence using technology in lessons and to enhance students learning experience.</p> <p>The areas that piloted the bid have seen increased engagement in the tutorial process, through clear and effective target setting and monitoring of the students journey whilst at college.</p> <p>Student voice surveys indicate need for improved feedback so students know how to improve rather than just knowing they 'must do better'.</p>

	<p>OFSTED 2012 report mentioned good organisation of VLE but lack of effective use and the comments from inspectors that the ePLP was a good start but needed further development.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>	<p>b. the cost/ efficiency of activities</p> <p>There has been a considerable saving in budget allocations under 'stationary and printing'. For example, the Music section (which has pure ePLP usage) were allocated £2784 in academic year 11/12 for printing and stationary but have only spent £1549 in comparison to last year where the full budget allocation was spent. If this is used as an average and replicated across all academic sections, this would save £23,465.</p> <p>This significant amount of surplus will give the college the capital funds needed to update learning technology resources and provide greater access to high quality courses to all learners.</p> <p>Feedback from the project focus group identified a number of future areas for development that would aid the time effectiveness of tutor and the student. One particular point that reoccurred was the effective tracking of progress so the learner could see clearly where they are and where they need to be. Most importantly, the combination of tracking and quick feedback enables students with the tools of <b>how</b> to achieve.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>	<p>c. any other aspect of your work</p> <p>Feedback from the ePLP focus group and collaborative working with Mid Kent College has indicated direction of project progression from the user level. The success of this project has strengthened working relationships between Canterbury and MidKent and has enables us to successfully bid for collaborative projects.</p> <p>This project also complimented our strategy to improve e-maturity levels across the organisation including criteria for a skills card and the level 4 'Using the VLE'. There is evidence to show that staff who have little or no interest in using technology have embraced the ePLP and are pushing for further developments as they can see the instant benefits this makes to their practice</p>

<p>What contribution to the success / smooth running of the project was made by:</p>	<p>LSIS funding                    a little / some/ a lot / <b><u>essential</u></b></p> <p>Your mentor                    a little / some/ a lot / <b><u>essential</u></b></p> <p>LSIS Associate                a little / some/ a lot / <b><u>essential</u></b></p>
<p>Do you have any comments on the funding, mentor or LSIS Associate.</p>	<p>Our LSIS associate was an inspirational person to have on the team. Throughout the period of the project Linda motivated us to complete all our goals and explore other opportunities for development. Linda's background gave us the opportunity to consider the affect on people, management and organisational change while participating in the project.</p> <p>Rosie Douglas' advice and guidance as mentor was invaluable. Her experience allowed us to avoid the potential pitfalls throughout the project and that allowed us to excel with the project tasks at an unexpectedly quick rate. The best practice shared between Canterbury and Mid Kent College from this project has resulted in a strong collaborative relationship which will build on the ePLP at both Colleges.</p>
<p>What lessons did you learn / what tips would you give to other providers</p>	<p>The visual nature of the PLP was something that we hadn't considered. When the tutorial became populated with information the window became difficult to navigate and both the student and tutor had to scroll through large amounts of information.</p> <p>So to overcome this problem we looked at developing JAVA script, which had hide/show DIV tags. These then gave the user the opportunity to show only the bits of information, which they needed at that precise time and presented in a more aesthetically pleasing way.</p> <p>However, some people did still ask for the previous setup even when we made these changes that had been requested. This just shows you cannot please all of the people all of the time! Instead, we have made compromises to find the best balance of all feedback.</p> <p>One other area that we had not considered was use by students who had specific learning needs. This did not become apparent to use until we attended the LSIS Technology for Success Conference in March. At the workshop we had two different colleges that were specialists for students who were wither deaf or blind.</p> <p>At this point we had a sudden realisation that this was an area that we had neglected.</p> <p>Our first step in rectifying this problem was with the upgrade of</p>

	<p>Moodle to version 2.3 and the integration of the accessibility block <a href="http://moodle.org/plugins/view.php?plugin=block_accessibility">http://moodle.org/plugins/view.php?plugin=block_accessibility</a> This then enabled users to change the colour and combined with the ATBar allowed users to have the text read to them that is contained within the PLP.</p> <p>To review the two points presented to miss the second was significant and some thing we felt embarrassed about.</p> <p>If we were to give any tips, it would be to ensure that all parties are fully represented when developing a new system. You can become very isolated and unaware of the problems if you work on your own. You have to remember what practical and real affect does it have on teaching, learning and assessment. Having people who are able to comment on these areas fully will drive improvement and ensure that your system is fully integrated into the organisation.</p>
<b>Telling others</b>	
<p>What have you done to share /disseminate this project with others in the sector</p>	<p>Workshop provided on 8 March 2012 at the “Technology for Success” Conference and JISC RSC South East meeting in December 2011.</p> <p>All resources available on GIT hub</p> <p>KAFEC dissemination at E-learning group</p> <p>Mahara page to be lunched with a review of the project in August.</p>
<p>Provide a quote on your experience of the LSIS LIT project.</p>	<p>“LIT Project funding for e-plp’s has given students access in a logical and obvious way, the improved links and benefits created by an online tutorial system means both the college and learners are better equipped to meet challenges and targets more effectively. We look forward to developing this learner centered system even further”</p>
<p>Are you happy for us to use this and your contact details for marketing and publications?</p>	<p>Yes</p>

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