

**Derbyshire
County Council**

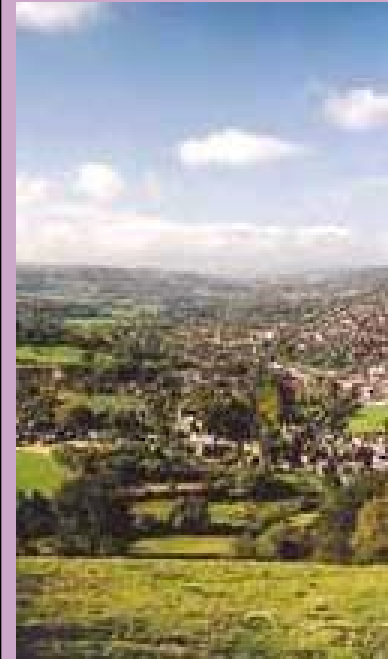
**Children and Younger
Adults Department**



Explore, Experiment, Improve your Practice: Action Research in Adult Community Learning

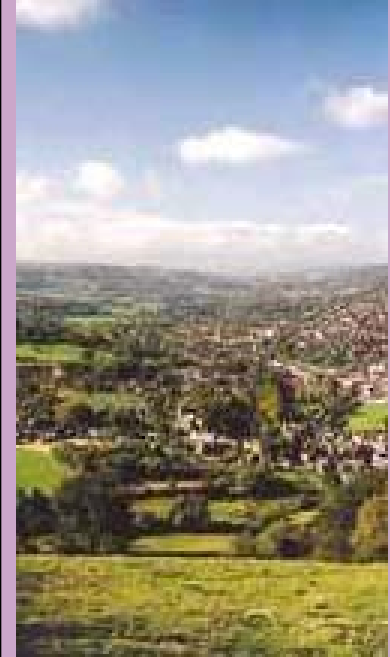
If you always do what you've always done – you'll
always get what you always got

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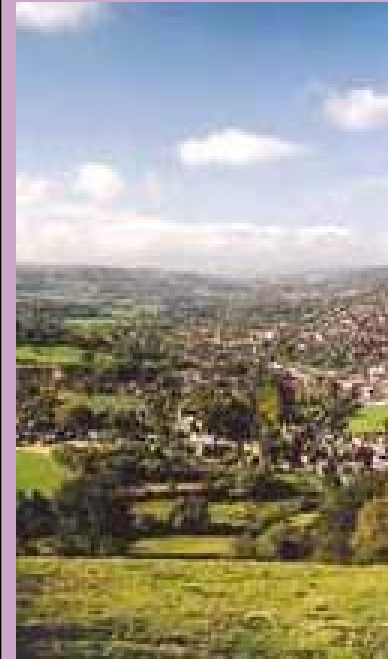
Research Methods

- We chose Gummerson's – pre-understandings methodology to define our research
- Our main research process was an action research project using supported experiments and joint practice development
- Research ethics: all the people involved were aware that a supported experiment was taking place and knew that their involvement and feedback would be requested. The final paper will protect participants anonymity and confidentiality



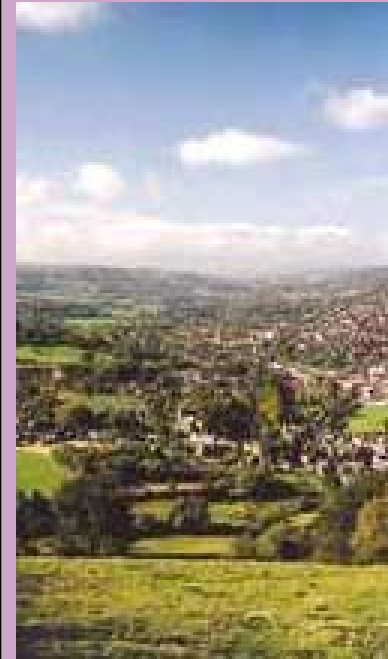
Research Methods

- **Explore the literature around communities of practice, joint practice development, supported experiments, and influences on learners learning.**
- **Set up a community of practice (CoP) from DACES tutors, managers; and professional peers**
- **Share the supported experiment concept with the CoP**
- **Gain support and commitment from tutors to join the CoP**
- **Engage the CoP in running supported experiments – with appropriate support**
- **Collect tutor and learner feedback on the supported experiments**
- **Disseminate the outcomes of the supported experiments throughout DACES and the wider research community**



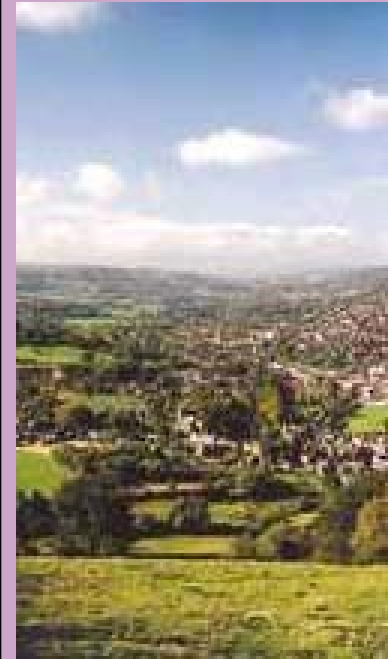
Key Literature

- Coffield, F (2008). *Just suppose teaching and learning became the first priority* – LSN
- Coffield, F (2010). *Yes, but what has Semmelweis to do with my professional development as a tutor* – LSN
- Fielding M et al (2005) *Factors influencing the transfer of good practice*. DfES/DEMOS
- Hattie JA (1999) *Influences on Student Learning* Inaugural Professorial Address, University of Auckland, New Zealand
- Lave and Wenger (1991) *Situated learning. Legitimate Peripheral Participation*. Cambridge University Press, New York
- Marzano www.mcrel.org/topics/products/110/
- Petty G (2006) *Evidence Based Teaching* Nelson Thornes



Data Collection and Analysis

- Data analysis was conducted via a narrative analysis of the documentation provided by the supported experimenters
- 5 tutors, 2 programme managers (from 4 different curriculum areas) and 1 senior manager took part in the supported experiments
- 6 experimenters chose to look at improving their teaching practice through using new technologies
- The use of Webinars and online meetings were trialled in 2 of the experiments as a way of developing an alternative cost effective delivery method for learning



Findings and Recommendations and Next Steps

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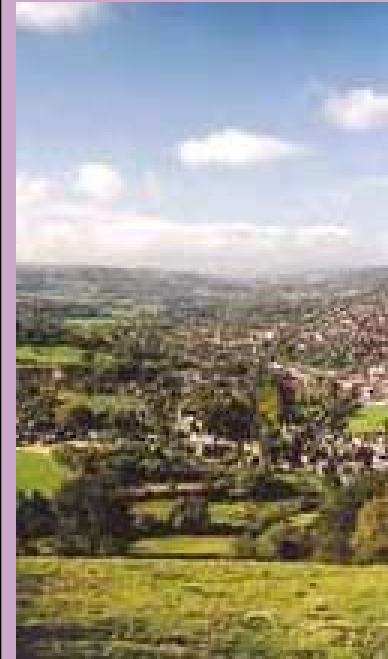


- **Findings:**
 - Taking part in Supported experiments does improve practice
 - Joint Practice Development and CoP helped experimenters to stay engaged with the research
 - Putting T+L first – especially at SMT level - is worth it
 - Online Webinars have proved to be effective, efficient and cost saving
- **Implications for T+L**
 - Use more tutor centred supported experiments and Joint Practice Development for CPD rather than staff inset, conferences and cascade events
 - Generate more ACL research evidence as research in this **area is sparse**
- **Dissemination**
 - LSIS National Research Conference March 2011
 - DACES Celebration event
 - Via DACES Practitioner support networks and PRD groups

Impact of the Research

What difference has your research made to practice?

- New ILT skills have been developed by most experimenters and some learners
- Experimenters and learners have gained confidence to try new ideas in a supportive environment
- Increased learner involvement in teaching and learning methodology
- Effective use of new technology to deliver alternative learning sessions cost effectively.



Next Steps

- We have successfully secured £20,000 of funding to continue to develop the use of supported experiments and the use of technology to improve the quality of teaching and learning
- We will continue to pursue Joint Practice Development and supported experiments as the main CPD process/activity for the Service – as opposed to the cascade model
- We will continue to put T+L on SMT agendas to ensure that T+L remains high profile and high priority
- We will promote the use of Webinars and online meetings and its cost effectiveness across the Service and disseminate to other Council departments
- And finally - we hope to publish this work more widely as there is a dearth of research in and on the Adult Community Learning sector.

