

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

Provider name & contact details	<p>Bedfordshire Adult Skills & Community Learning</p> <p>Sarah Mortimer – Skills Development Manager, tel. 07701001304 or Fiona Jukes, VLE Manager, Fiona.jukes@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk</p>
LIT Project title	Enhancing the effectiveness of tutor induction via a VLE
The project	
What problem or issue you were trying to resolve or improve with this project	<p>To create an interactive online sustainable resource that gives tutors key generic information prior to undertaking work, thus supporting the standardisation of core information given to tutors at induction. Induction is a vital stage in the recruitment and training of new tutors and the use of an online resource would enable them to be virtually greeted by the Head of Service and be introduced to other staff members. Standard core information such as Skills for Life Awareness, Health and Safety, Safeguarding and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion would then be delivered in an interactive format to engage the tutor; this would consist of quizzes, forums and examples of good practice designed to evidence they have understood the information.</p>
Why did you go for a technology-based solution	<p>The introduction of e-learning at the induction stage gives tutors a clear indication of the organisation's commitment to use technology to enhance teaching and learning; it also encourages them to develop learning communities for both themselves and their learners. In addition, by using technology such as Moodle, it will ensure that the accessibility meets a variety of tutor needs by including remote access so that they can undertake their induction at a time and place to suit their needs. Moodle also offers a facility to adjust the appearance of text and background colour, adding subtitles and audio clips; this in turn will demonstrate methods for improving the e-learning support available to their learners.</p> <p>In support of this choice is that fact that by using Moodle, the generic information and resources that are created will be shared with our Community & Voluntary Sector partner organisations; the majority of whom do not have their Moodle and who are undertaking the delivery of Teaching and Learning for us, the first time.</p>

<p>What did the project cost: LSIS funding + your organisation's contribution</p>	<p>LSIS funding was £6K with £3k awarded to the mentor who helped support us on this project with technical /design input and advice. The project had the resource time of the VLE manager, as well as a senior member of the management team and an administrator; tutors and curriculum specialists were utilised to help support the project. In addition, the project became linked to a full Moodle upgrade when it became apparent that in order to achieve our desired outcomes. Our original version of Moodle needed updating and this was already planned in for the year when it was identified that it was unable to meet our needs; however this project identified the fact that in reality we had to invest in a full upgrade, major overhaul and new hosting service; both pieces of additional work meant that the organisation had to commit both additional financial resources as well as staff resources. In all, our upgrade/hosting facility cost an additional £1.5K for one year with a commitment to sustaining this in the forthcoming years; additional staff resources involved one dedicated staff member taking 2 weeks out of her normal work schedule to get this operational, at a cost of approx £1650.</p>
<p>Describe what you did and what happened</p>	<p>Early on in the project; e-learning champions, key project staff and CVS partner representatives met to share a vision of what was being developed and they created an action plan; responsibilities were allocated and dates set accordingly.</p> <p>We/LSIS had some early issues with identifying the correct mentor for this project, however once this was sorted we met with them and they helped us evaluate our existing Moodle and inputted into the action plan.</p> <p>Key staff identified a tutor resource group who we asked to evaluate our existing induction programme; equally this was also undertaken by our LSIS Associate and our mentor – all feedback was imputed into this project upon receipt.</p> <p>We then collated digital images of key staff, reviewed induction areas, redesigned the moodle layout, checked policy documentation and current legislation issues and ended up with a core 'offer' of resources</p> <p>We then had the issue with the existing Moodle version being too old for the type of resources we needed and a review was undertaken on the upgrade of this, alongside the hosting facility we had in place. As a Local Authority service, we had some issues with where this hosting should take place; BASCL requested that it moved externally, as we felt that the current IT</p>

solutions within the Council could not meet the needs of our Moodle - this brought about many internal / external discussions; however, after much negotiation we eventually were able to move this to an external hosting site and upgrade to the latest version Moodle.

Whilst this discussion/negotiation was going ahead, we set up a second Moodle site so we could start development work on it, create a basic layout and set it up in line with the project needs; this was done so as to reduce down the impact on our staff and learner at the point of transfer, as we had live courses running on our system and could not afford to lose this facility.

Once the decision was made transfer, we then had only 2 weeks to migrate our old Moodle over to the new site before we lost all our old data/access to courses

During this time, our tutors were asked to evaluate the effectiveness of the induction resources; the outcomes of which were documented in order to demonstrate feedback from pilot group.

Once this migration had taken place, the final developments of the resources were undertaken and these were then reviewed by staff and peers; feedback was used to help modify them as we went along.

This is a live project still, as we have more work to do in order to make the induction resource fully operational and at the standard we wish for; however we are 90% there now even with the delay being brought about by the transfer and upgrade of our old system.

At the beginning, we knew our old version of Moodle was not as effective as it could be and we were prepared for a small upgrade, however in the end we had to make this more substantial; this coupled with move to the new hosting site meant we had substantial work to be carried out that we had not planned for and so it delayed our project by a month. What we feel is important though, is that we did not stop the project nor did we down size it, more the opposite, we escalated it and increased its size and outcomes.

At the point where we took the Moodle to the conference for show casing, we were still in its draft stage; however this enabled us to gain further input and feedback on the progress at that point and

	so we felt that this was a valuable stage on our journey.
The benefits and impact	
What benefits/ impact has the project had on:::	<p>a. the work/ effectiveness of your organisation</p> <p>The Organisation’s Service Plan and the ILT strategy all express our mission, which is to create a dynamic and innovative learning environment which extends the range and quality of learning experiences available to learners, and enables them to take greater control of their own learning and maximise their own learning pathway. This project fitted this aim perfectly by ensuring that everyone understood their role and their areas of responsibility within the e-learning agenda; it also supported learners by the delivery of improved teaching and learning.</p> <p>By using technology in the tutor induction, it communicates an important message to all staff at the beginning of their career with us; it demonstrates our commitment to e-learning and how we use it to enhance teaching and learning. For our CVS partners it is valuable asset to their organisation and helped to support their development in this area, as well as enhance their learner’s experiences.</p> <p>The development of an online staff induction, via a much more technologically advanced version of Moodle, will help improve existing good work in the area of e-learning, as identified by Ofsted in 2011.</p> <p>The introduction of the online staff induction has supported our successful approval for Matrix accreditation.</p> <p>b. the cost/ efficiency of activities</p> <p>As an organisation we already delivered induction sessions for tutors prior to this project, with the aims of these sessions being to ensure that the tutor had undertaken mandatory training in core subject areas, had understood their key roles and responsibilities, had become familiar with the organisation’s ethos and culture and had looked at areas of good practice aimed at supporting their teaching and learning. The organisation had already developed an online learner induction and was now working to raise the effectiveness of the Moodle across the Service as a fully integrated Service VLE. The original arrangements meant that each tutor’s/organisation’s induction experience was different; Consistency of delivery was not guaranteed by this method and some CVS organisations were</p>

	<p>new to us in this area of work.</p> <p>As a result of this project we have been able to standardise this area of work and this has led to a reduction in paid tutor hours required for training; In addition, BASCL can now offer induction across a wider geographical area, which means that as our tutors can be located anywhere and are often working only part time hours for the organisation, the online induction resource has ensured an improved accessibility for this important part of their work with us and has helped to reduce the timescale taken to complete the core areas. Both of these outcomes have meant a reduction in time and cost to staff and the organisation.</p>						
	<p>c. any other aspect of your work</p> <p>For the CVS partners, the benefits of the online induction are that they now have access to good quality resources to support their Teaching & Learning; in addition they have been able to standardise their induction and also gain valuable experience in the effective use of a VLE, both of which they would otherwise not have had.</p>						
<p>What contribution to the success / smooth running of the project was made by:</p>	<table border="0"> <tr> <td data-bbox="490 1220 779 1255">LSIS funding</td> <td data-bbox="779 1220 1446 1255">a little / some / a lot / essential</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="490 1255 779 1291">Your mentor</td> <td data-bbox="779 1255 1446 1291">a little / some / a lot / essential</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="490 1291 779 1327">LSIS Associate</td> <td data-bbox="779 1291 1446 1327">a little / some / a lot / essential</td> </tr> </table>	LSIS funding	a little / some / a lot / essential	Your mentor	a little / some / a lot / essential	LSIS Associate	a little / some / a lot / essential
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<p>Do you have any comments on the funding, mentor or LSIS Associate.</p>	<p>The funding / project acted as a catalyst for us in, not only developing the tutor induction programme, but also getting us to look at how this could be improved to become a more universal staff induction programme. In addition, it resulted in the complete overhaul of our Moodle / VLE resource and has helped focus on the development of this area moving forward.</p> <p>Our mentor was extremely helpful both technically and from a supportive viewpoint, this enabled us to achieve our end goals much more quickly than perhaps it would otherwise.</p> <p>The mentor has also felt this project was extremely useful for themselves as an organisation, they have stated that “A benefit to ACL Essex in being involved with this project was that BASCL chose Moodle version 2.0 whereas Essex is still using 1.9. This allowed Essex to have a chance to understand the differences between the two systems as Essex are planning to upgrade to version 2 later this year”</p> <p>Our LSIS Associate helped us enormously with ideas, practical</p>						

	support and feedback on the progress we were making; again it helped us to maintain our timeframe even in light of the additional work we had to undertake.
What lessons did you learn / what tips would you give to other providers	<p>We have learnt a number of lessons, one being the different variations in the types of VLE there are in this sector and how effective some are, or are not, in enhance teaching and learning. Equally, we learnt how valuable the feedback from peers and colleagues can be in helping the organisation move technology forward; as a result, we have seen our VLE grow and develop beyond where we thought it would be at this stage.</p> <p>In relation to tips for other providers, we would say that anything is possible if you have an idea and a vision for where you want to be in a certain time frame; it is about committing time and resource to help you get there, but also its about having a flexible and adaptable approach, so that when (or if) things crop up that could stall the project, you as a provider, can adapt and respond accordingly to help you still meet your overall aims and objectives. Technology is something to be embraced not feared and that outcomes for learners will be greatly increased with its use.</p>
Telling others	
What have you done to share /disseminate this project with others in the sector	The developing induction programme was showcased at the 'Technology for Success' Conference at Birmingham in March 2012, it was also reviewed at the 'e-learning - maximising impact' event in London, also held in March 2012. In addition, we have undertaken showcasing the moodle developments within the sector with our peers/partners and are supporting another provider in this work.
Provide a quote on your experience of the LSIS LIT project.	The LSIS LIT project was an extremely effective catalyst and support mechanism for the Organisation's development of their VLE, with a view to further improving the quality of Teaching and Learning and outcomes for learners.
Are you happy for us to use this and your contact details	Yes

for marketing and publications?	
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