

1. REGIONAL RESPONSE FUND FINAL PROJECT REPORT (RRF073)

1.1. The purpose of the Regional Response Fund is to provide activities that allow providers to deal collectively with the operational, funding and planning implications of the changes to funding mechanisms and allocations

2. Project Title

2.1. Intelligent use of data to provide business optimisation (Routeways to successful Dashboard Implementation in FE)

3. Lead organisation

3.1. Loughborough College, Loughborough

4. List the partners involved in the project

4.1. Gateway College, Leicester

4.2. South Leicestershire College, Leicester

4.3. Loughborough College, Loughborough

4.4. JISC Regional Support Centre, East Midlands

5. Review of the project *(max 100 words)*

5.1. Working with FE Colleges primarily within the East Midlands region to:-

5.2. Investigate and confirm a set of Key Performance measures that can be used by Colleges to maximise their business performance

5.3. Investigate, compare, contrast and recommend appropriate choices of technologies that can be used to inform College Managers of the measures in real time (generally known as Dashboards)

5.4. Develop a "Tool" or methodology which will help Colleges to choose the appropriate pathway to a successful implementation of Dashboard technology

5.5. Measure and report on the Impact of such systems on Colleges.

5.6. Work with three Colleges to help them successfully implement a Dashboard KPI system

6. What were the planned and actual outcomes and associated impacts?

| Planned Outcomes | Actual Outcomes | Impact* |
|---|------------------------------------|---|
| Monthly progress reports | Reports and project board meetings | <p>Shared ideas and experiences Examples include... <i>Use of technical documentation produced as part of the project toolbox.</i></p> <p><i>Adoption of the data architecture model.</i></p> |
| Tool for use by Colleges | Project toolbox | <p>Will enable a quick start for colleges and providers. Cannot assess impact until Spring 2012.</p> |
| Final report and presentation to sponsors | Project report | <p>Provides a thorough overview of getting started, options available and a comprehensive toolbox of development items. Cannot assess impact until Spring 2012.</p> |

| Planned Outcomes | Actual Outcomes | Impact* |
|---|---------------------------|--|
| <p>Case studies presented on the Excellence Gateway</p> | <p>Three case studies</p> | <p>Impact on each of the three colleges is described in their case study.</p> <p><i>'The dashboard is a great tool for monitoring key data required for management in an FE college. I particularly like the visual nature of it, and the ability to drill down into the detailed data.'</i></p> <p>(Attributed to Janet Ruffoni, Curriculum Manager responsible for STEM)</p> <p><i>"The Dashboard is providing a timely view of our position. Significantly the Curriculum Management is viewing it at the beginning of each weekly operational meeting and it is informing actions, improvements and celebrations of success."</i></p> <p>(Attributed to Jan Leivers, Assistant Principal Curriculum & Standards)</p> <p><i>'People spot data issues and do something about it'</i></p> <p><i>'So many people are using it on a daily basis. It's starting to make a difference - but it has taken a long time to embed the culture'</i></p> <p>Gavin Peake, Director of IT</p> |

| Planned Outcomes | Actual Outcomes | Impact* |
|------------------|--|--|
| | Heightened awareness of the significance of data integrity and quality | <p>More accurate data and therefore more robust information.</p> <p>Examples include - correction of spelling differences to aggregate data under one category; removal of the high number of 'unknown' categories; chasing staff who have not completed registers on time; tracking down incomplete final outcome grades.</p> |
| | Review of data management processes | Colleges have taken another look at how they manage their systems, in particular looking at roles and responsibilities of individuals and teams. |
| | Review of server management processes | <p>Audit of technical skills to identify gaps and potential training opportunities.</p> <p>Review of existing business processes relating to server management.</p> |
| | Review of Business Processes | Analysis of college systems and their potential improved integration through a common reporting layer. |
| | More responsive in managing identified issues | Users are more engaged in the underlying processes and can see the full panorama of the colleges systems that are monitored and reported using Business Performance Monitoring and Business Intelligence reporting. |

7. How was the initial issue for development identified?

- 7.1. Learning providers are facing demanding and difficult times with decreased funding provision and an increasingly competitive market.
- 7.2. Improving business effectiveness and efficiency has to be core for the survival of many learning providers. Better data management and information processing are both achievable in the majority of providers especially with the availability of cost effective data dashboard systems.
- 7.3. The project aims to help address the issues of what and how business can track their critical success factors and quickly identify areas for remedial action.
- 7.4. JISC RSC-EM initially identified that there were inefficiencies in the way in which colleges and training providers were managing their business processes. There was little integration of the processes and systems, resulting in multiple data silos. An opportunity arose to access the funding provided by the Regional Improvement Service and this was seized in order to bring about business advances for the sector.

8. What was the intended benefit to the sector?

- 8.1. The anticipated benefits to include improved business modelling, business planning and decision making.
- 8.2. Decisions at senior management team will be better informed, resulting in a more efficient organisation and improved information systems for the learner will help improved awareness for the both the learner themselves and key stakeholders such as employers and parents.
- 8.3. The improved use of data to develop well informed decisions has never been more critical and urgent. Understanding the business, what is going to plan and what needs appropriate attention is critical to effective business management. There is a need to justify and quantify just how the improved information through the use of active data dashboards will help realise these benefits. In order to do this one needs to know costs of purchase and cost of implementation, what the alternatives are and what are the implications and consequences of such a development route.

9. What were the key activities?

- 9.1. Identified all potential systems with data
- 9.2. Identified existing owners of systems and scale of existing reporting
- 9.3. Created a set of useful documents to capture the requirements of the design and display
- 9.4. Assessed existing resources
- 9.5. Recommended a data architecture to deliver the dashboards and any other reporting
- 9.6. Investigated a range of solutions to suit all needs
- 9.7. Spent time with the three colleges

10. How were the findings and developments disseminated within the region and more widely?

- 10.1. New College Stamford – meeting on 17/10/2011
- 10.2. MIS Managers regional meeting at EMFEC – 4/11/2011
- 10.3. Production of a project report and associated toolbox.
- 10.4. Regional event in November/December 2011.
 - 10.4.1. In the evaluations, 67% of the respondents stated that the most useful part of the event was the presentation on data dashboards.
- 10.5. Further online events planned for 2012
 - 10.5.1. February 14th 2012 project dissemination and workshop.
 - 10.5.2. March 22nd 2012 project dissemination and workshop

11. What further issues has the project identified and how might these be addressed?

- 11.1. Management of systems and data – review of roles, responsibilities and business processes
- 11.2. Management of SQL servers – training and development for IT support staff
- 11.3. Improved skills and understanding of Business Intelligence and the part data can play is needed by middle and senior managers – awareness and training sessions required.
- 11.4. Greater understanding of the data integration potential when procuring systems which will help remove data duplication – better understanding of systems integration by procuring managers.