

# **OUTSTANDING TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT TECHNICAL SKILLS NATIONAL PROGRAMME**

**Case study by:** West Thames College  
**Created by:** Graeme Baker, Executive Director Performance Development and Student Experience

Managed by



In partnership with

**emfec**

# CONTENTS

---

## CONTENTS

---

Overview	3
The project reach – the partners, employers, tutor practitioners, and learners	4
<a href="#">Table 1 – Project partners and range of learner participants</a>	<a href="#">5</a>
Project aims	6
Project methods	6
Outputs and outcomes	8
Impact	11
<a href="#">Table 2 - Adult learners completion and achievement (7 September to 30 October 2017)</a>	<a href="#">11</a>
<a href="#">Table 3 - Adult learners completion and achievement (3 November to 21 December 2017)</a>	<a href="#">11</a>
<a href="#">Table 4 - Adult learners completion and achievement (2 January to 26 January 2018)</a>	<a href="#">13</a>
What has changed?	15
Next steps	15
The lessons learnt and our takeaway message	16

### Project Lead



### Project Partners



# Blended logistics learning

## Overview

The Blended Logistics Learning project built on the work of West Thames College to establish a Logistics Skills Alliance (LSA) bringing together employers and training providers to strengthen logistics and transport training in west London serving Heathrow Airport and its' wider supply chain.

This project brought together providers from different regions and working with different learners to explore the use of blended learning as tool to drive improvement in teaching, learning and assessment and to strengthen the understanding of learners of the sector.

Across all the providers, tutor practitioners have up to date subject knowledge and are very experienced delivering logistics and transport training. An important outcome for this project – moving towards outstanding teaching, learning and assessment – was the journey from training models of delivery to other means through the use of blended learning.

In addition to the exploration of blended learning, the project partners worked with employer groups to develop a series of blended learning materials for use with young people and adults. These quickly, through the feedback from employers, became focussed on the behaviours need in the logistics and transport sector and are targeted at learners at level 2. The materials have been developed for use with young people preparing for or undertaking the range of apprenticeship standards - both approved and in development – that will be delivered through the proposed transport and logistics technical route.

Delivery of logistics and transport qualifications, whilst increasing, is not yet widespread across FE colleges and although it may form part of the delivery of business or travel related qualifications in schools, it remains an employment sector on the margins of both pre and post-16 compulsory education. However, it is vital to the UK economy. It is seen to be a critical enabler in improving the competitiveness of the nation and local economies (DfT, 2011). It is projected that there is a requirement of 900,000 additional jobs within the sector in the UK by 2020.

Both the Department for Transport and Department of Work & Pensions at national events as well as Heathrow focussed conferences hosted by the Logistics Skills Alliance refer to 3 key workforce challenges for the sector. These are:

- Engaging young people in the logistics and transport sector
- Recruiting, retaining and training staff in 'shop floor' roles – 'warehouse to wheels' progression
- Increasing the proportion of women entering the sector.

All of the project partners – Somax (part of Weston College) in the South West, Transervice (an employer and training provider) in the West Midlands, West Suffolk College in East Anglia, and West Thames and South Essex Colleges both near transport hubs on the outskirts of London – recognise these challenges and saw the potential of the project to strengthen the training of the workforce (particularly at lower levels) and highlight the wide range of roles and opportunities within the sector.

## The project reach – the partners, employers, tutor practitioners, and

**learners** Our project involved five FE colleges:

- West Thames College
- Somax (part of Weston College)
- South Essex College
- West Suffolk College
- Heart of Worcestershire College.

And one employer/provider:

- Transervice.

We engaged employers through the networks and relationships of Heathrow and the Logistics Skills Alliance. Key employers and employer organisations that have contributed to the blended learning materials development include:

- Institute of Couriers
- Transervice
- Merlin Supply Chain Solutions (Knights of Old)
- Heathrow
- Job Centre Plus.

Other employers including DHL, Geodis, dnata and DB Schenker gave feedback in response to short presentations at Logistics Skills Alliance conferences in September 2017 and January this year. At these conferences we showcased the focus, development and progress of the project with employers, gathered views and feedback through networking opportunities and run short workshops with providers and partner tutor practitioners.

Eight tutor practitioners have worked throughout the project to develop and extend the use of blended learning in their practice. They have taken part in pre/mid/and (nearing the) end point evaluations having experimented with different tools and software applications and contributed to the development of the blended learning materials also. The tutor practitioners are:

- West Thames College (Ian, Michael and Rob)
- Somax (Alan and Dave)
- South Essex College (Stephen and James)
- Transervice (Colin).

Two tutor practitioners – Tori and Caroline from West Suffolk College – contributed at the start of the project through sharing the Skills for Success materials used to develop and extend key behaviours – such as resilience and integrity – required in the world of work. Tori and Caroline deliver Level 2 and Level 3 Supply Chain and Warehousing qualifications to 16 to 18 year olds. They provided ongoing review of the blended learning materials.

At West Thames College, Somax and South Essex Colleges all tutor practitioners used the techniques developed with their target groups into other sessions and settings.

**Table 1 – Project partners and range of learner participants**

<b>Project Partner</b>	<b>Profile</b>	<b>Course groups engaged</b>	<b>Learners</b>	<b>Tutors</b>	<b>Managers</b>
West Thames College	GFE	Level 1 Certificate in Warehousing & Storage and Level 2 Award in Forklift Truck Operations	98	3	2
Somax (now part of Weston College)	GFE	Level 2 LGV or PCV Driver qualifications	8	2	1
South Essex College	GFE	Level 1 and Level 2 LGV, Warehousing & Storage, and Forklift qualifications	19	2	1
Transervice	Training Provider	Level 2 Large Goods Vehicle Apprenticeship standard	3	1	1

## Project aims

The aims of the project were to:

- Develop tutor practitioners' experience of delivering, supporting and assessing blended learning in different logistics and transport sector settings
- Design and create a set of blended learning materials to strengthen the 'work readiness' of learners including apprentices
- Offer learners an up-to-date and innovative learning experience that will enable them to review and reflect on their learning
- Establish a 'good practice' learning resources hub
- Extend relationships with employers and education and skills providers across a sector growing and widening in terms of jobs and career opportunities.

## Project methods

### Working with tutor practitioners, partners and their learners

The OTLA Phase 2 projects 'kick-off' meeting took place in early September. At that point all partners had confirmed that an immediate start presented challenges as new students, courses and provision were getting underway at all of the colleges involved.

Somax, Transervice, Heathrow and West Thames College resolved to meet at the Logistics Skills Alliance Conference on 27 September alongside meetings with South Essex and West Suffolk colleges to confirm and establish:

- A partner lead (the key point of contact) at each organisation
- The learner groups to participate (exploring volumes, levels, and key characteristics by age, gender, ethnicity and learning difficulty or disability)
- The tutor practitioners to be involved
- The agenda of the first tutor practitioner meeting at each partner to explore areas of focus for the blended learning materials
- Preferred forms of communication and protocols for project liaison, information and data sharing, payments, and for guidance from the Project Lead
- The requirements of the project funders and supporters – ETF, AoC and EMFEC
- Timescales, targets and tools to evaluate impact
- Dissemination and next steps for each partner (still being finalised!).

This approach led to the development of a monthly tutor practitioners' guide provided by the Project Lead setting out the activities and targets each month. Progress achieving targets or completing activities was monitored through fortnightly 'progress review' email and telephone exchanges with the Project and Partner Leads with items for monthly team meetings/discussions agreed. All partners involved in delivery favoured written (hard copy) feedback for learners with feedback from tutor practitioners to be captured through all project meetings and vox pop activities.

West Suffolk College supported the development of the blended learning materials through the sharing of their 'Skills for Success' materials used with learners aged 16 -18. These were used by West Thames College to plan and storyboard content, and to consult with partners and employers

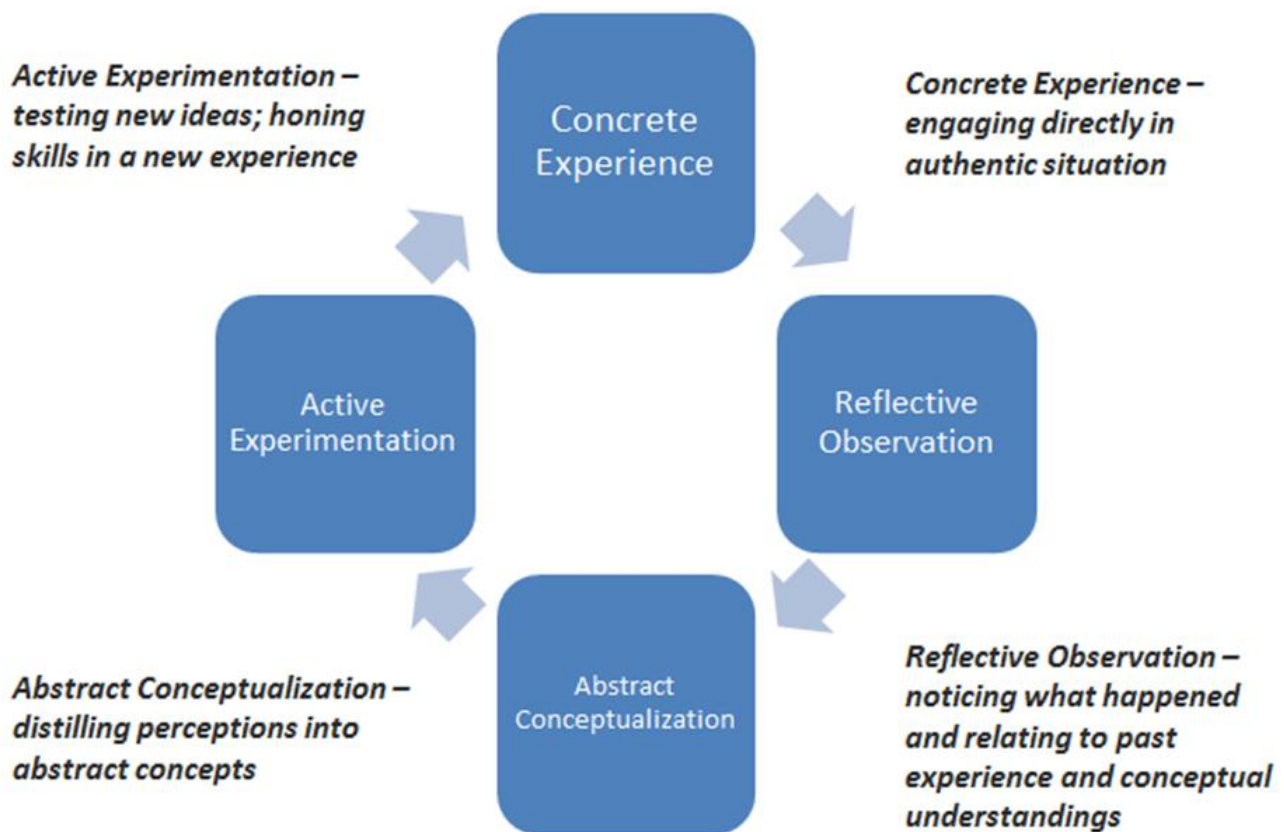
prior to development by the Blended Learning Consortium team (Matt and Tracey) at Heart of Worcestershire College.

The structured approach established at the outset was valuable and mitigated some of the challenges presented by:

- OFSTED inspection of the Project Lead
- Changes in staffing for partners
- Fluctuations in the engagement and commitment of all partners – including the project lead – we kept each other honest!

West Thames College took the lead on the delivery activities both in terms of the volumes of learners and the different blended learning tools and techniques used by all project partners. For tutor practitioners an accessible and practical approach to Kolb's cycle of experiential learning (shown below) was used:

### Kolb's Cycle of Experiential Learning



## Working with employers

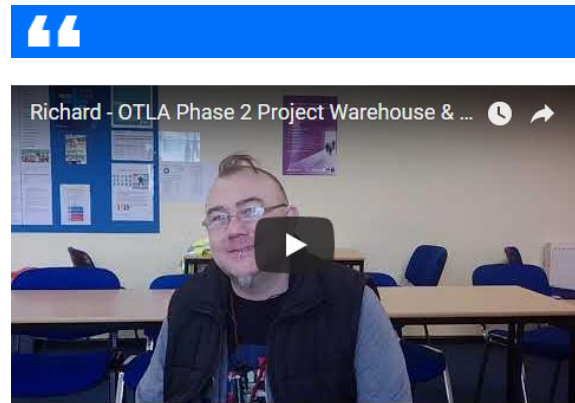
Working through existing employer networks and organisations linked to the project lead, West Thames College, had led to securing the involvement of Somax, Transervice, the Institute of Couriers, Job Centre Plus and Heathrow from the project outset and this approach was maintained throughout.

The partnership approach and network of employers and providers established by the Logistics Skills Alliance was an enabler – it presented a forum for project partners to come together and formally review progress and next steps as well as opportunities for employers – most often informally – to feedback views and potential improvements regarding the blended learning materials.

## **Outputs and outcomes**

### For the learners:

- 98 adult learners on Level 1 Certificate in Warehousing & Storage and Level 2 Award in Forklift Truck Operations participated in sessions involving the virtual learning environment (Moodle), digital cameras and Kahoot, Padlet, YouTube, Quizizz - to capture and flip learning at West Thames College.



- 8 adult learners at remote or distant employer locations undertaking Level 2 LGV or PCV Driver qualifications participated in learning using digital cameras to record, feedback and review progress with tutor practitioners at Somax.
- 2 groups totalling 19 learners aged 18 upwards on Level 1 and Level 2 LGV, Warehousing & Storage, and Forklift qualifications participated in learning making greater use of laptops, digital cameras, Smartboards, YouTube and Kahoot to feedback and/or review progress at South Essex College.
- 3 adult apprentices recently underway on the Level 2 Large Goods Vehicle Apprenticeship standard used digital cameras and smartphones to record, feedback and review progress with their tutor practitioner at Transervice.



### For the tutor practitioners

All 8 tutor practitioners completed the FutureLearn Blended Learning Essentials: Getting Started course (shown below). This course was an essential for all tutor practitioners because it aims to equip learners:

- Identify ways in which new technology can contribute to the difficult challenges facing the VET, FE and Skills sector.
- Evaluate the many free or affordable tools now available to enhance teaching and learning.
- Apply your knowledge of blended learning to develop training materials using appropriate technologies.
- Evaluate a variety of effective blended learning approaches and apply the most suitable to your delivery in order to improve the learners' experience and attainment.

2 tutor practitioners completed the Developing Digital Skills course. This course was recommended to all tutor practitioners because it aims to:

- Enable teachers and trainers to develop their learners to acquire the digital skills needed in the workplace - to manage personal online identity.
- Enable teachers and trainers to develop their learners to acquire the digital skills needed in the workplace - to manage digital information.
- Enable teachers and trainers to develop their learners to acquire the digital skills needed in the workplace - to create digital content.
- Enable teachers and trainers to develop their learners to acquire the digital skills needed in the workplace - to use tools and techniques for working collaboratively
- Collaborate on models for teaching of digital skills in practice.
- Support teachers and trainers in the VET sector in developing their digital skills.

## For the FE and skills sector

4 blended learning modules – predominantly for use with learners at level 2 – are in final development stages and provide learners with interactive and engaging tools to find out more about logistics and transport and, specifically, explore the behaviours and skills needed to be successful in the sector. All materials will be shared on a learning resources hub developed and ‘live’ by the end of the spring term – this regrettably, is the one project aim that is outstanding.

3 examples of the blended learning materials are shown below:



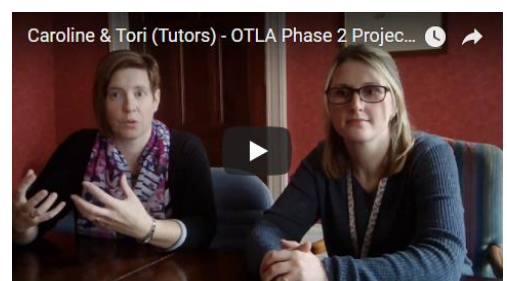
*These materials will really take learners into the industry – it is important to map behaviours to skills and knowledge for an industry that thrives on customer demand and is playing catch-up with expectations*

**Carl Lomas**  
**Chair**  
**Institute of Couriers**



*Nice to see something being done differently – in a sector reliant on technology we need to ensure we recruit and train apprentices in an accessible manner using the latest learning tools*

**Andy Frost**  
**Director**  
**Merlin Supply Chain Solutions**



**Caroline & Tori**  
**Tutors**  
**West Suffolk College**

## Impact

### For the learners and tutor practitioners

The 98 adult learners on the L1 Certificate in Warehousing & Storage and L2 Award in Forklift Truck Operations at West Thames College are of sufficient volume to assess – in statistical terms – the impact of introducing blended tools and techniques on qualification completion and achievement.

These programmes are supported by the Job Centre Plus and, once screened by both the Job Centre and the delivery team (the tutor practitioners), attendance and completion are high however, the proportion of adult learners - as table below shows – achieving the qualification could be improved.

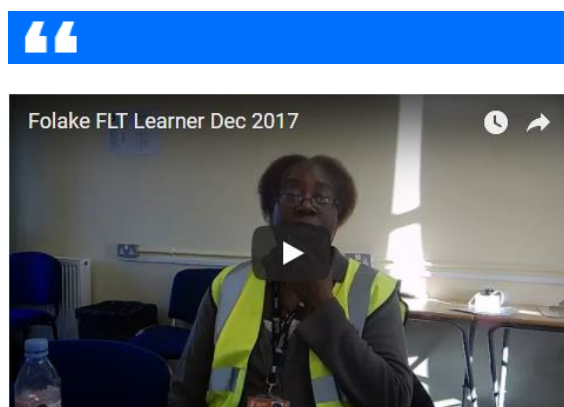
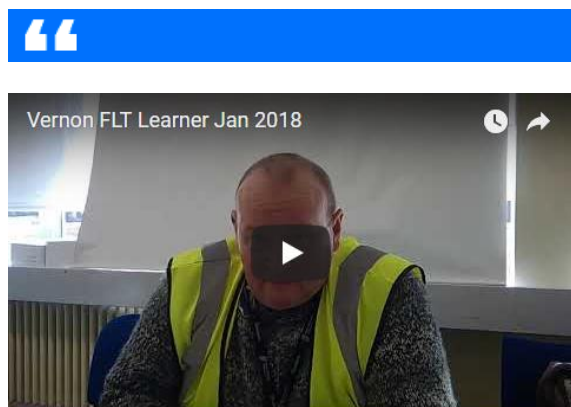
**Table 2 - Adult learners completion and achievement (7 September to 30 October 2017)**

Qualification	Starts	Completers	Achievers
L1 Certificate in Warehousing and Storage (QCF)	37	35 (95%)	32 (86%)
L2 Award in Forklift Truck (Counter-balance) Operations (QCF)	47	44 (94%)	41 (87%)

Following the completion of the FutureLearn Blended Learning Essentials courses, the setup of the courses on Moodle and the introduction of digital cameras, the tutor practitioners encouraged and enabled learners to capture their learning, complete activities and tasks in their own time – at home or using the Learning Resources Centre (LRC). The impact of these approaches was evaluated over a six week period and is shown below.

**Table 3 - Adult learners completion and achievement (3 November to 21 December 2017)**

Qualification	Starts	Completers	Achievers
L1 Certificate in Warehousing and Storage (QCF)	31	30 (97%)	29 (94%)
L2 Award in Forklift Truck (Counter-balance) Operations (QCF)	33	31 (94%)	29 (88%)

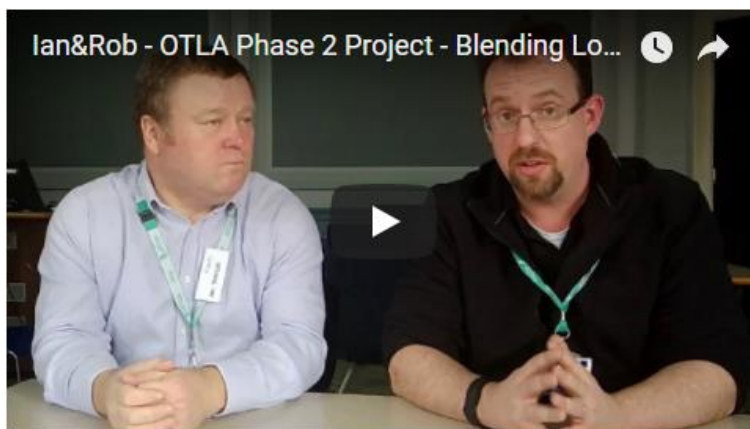


The positive response from learners in terms of engagement and behaviours (arriving early at college to work in the LRC and/or staying late to prepare for the next day) and the increase in the proportion of learners completing and achieving both qualifications led the team to reassess their approach to delivery.



*I've been really surprised at how many of our learners are happy to come to college early, stay late or do work at home. We get time back in the warehouse or on the forklift and as a result our learners can go into jobs with more practical training under their belts.*

**Ian**  
**Tutor practitioner**  
**West Thames College**



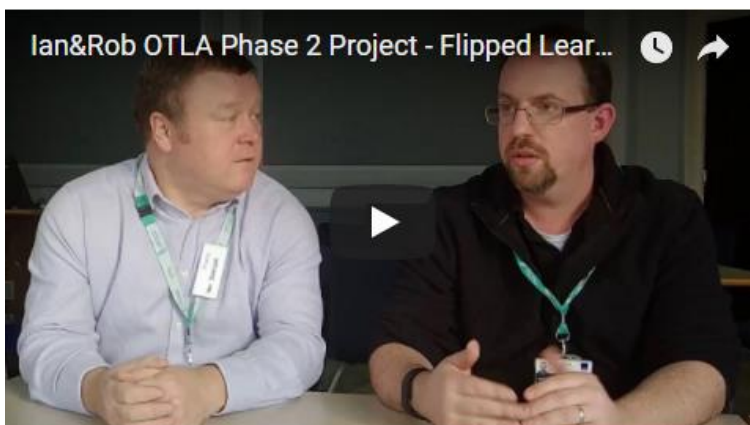
The delivery phase from the beginning of November through to late December had, using Kolb's cycle of experiential learning, moved the team in terms of their use of blended learning tools and techniques from active experimentation to concrete experience.

Two members of the tutor practitioners, Ian and Rob, completed the second of the FutureLearn modules that included an exploration of the use of flipped learning in practical learning settings and were now keen to formalise this approach as integral to the programme. They both began to make greater use of tools such as Kahoot, Padlet, YouTube and Quizizz to continue to strengthen their experience and their learners' experience of interactions with different technologies.



*It changes our focus because learners are able to learn at their own pace using the resources offsite, it means we start by looking at there we can add value right from the word go.*

**Rob**  
**Tutor practitioner**  
**West Thames College**



From January 2018, this became reality and following a visit from the project Peer and Excellence Advisers – reinforcing and validating the approach to flipped learning – the team began to explore further information on the use of flipped learning. A guide developed by the University of Western Sydney (Fundamentals of Blended Learning, 2013) – that formed part of the literature review of the project in the early stages – was considered clear, useful and accessible and reinforced the FutureLearn modules.

The positive impact for the learners' completion and achievement was sustained (shown below) over the course of January.

**Table 4 - Adult learners completion and achievement (2 January to 26 January 2018)**

Qualification	Starts	Completers	Achievers
L1 Certificate in Warehousing and Storage (QCF)	19	19 (100%)	18 (95%)
L2 Award in Forklift Truck (Counter-balance) Operations (QCF)	15	14 (93%)	14 (93%)

When taking the performance of starts on both qualifications together across the period from 3 November 2017 to 26 January 2018 – both phases of the introduction of blended into the Job Centre Plus programmes at West Thames – and comparing the completion and achievement rates before these phases **there is an increase of 2% in terms of completion (96% - 94 learners v 94% - 79 learners) and, more significantly, an increase of 5% in terms of achievement (92% - 90 learners v 87% - 73 learners).**

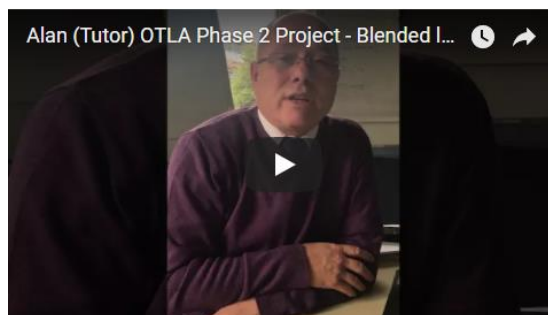
Evidence of increased progression for these adult learners into logistics and warehousing roles remains anecdotal. Initial tracking by the College indicates improvement and liaison with a key local employer (Kuehne and Nagel) indicates that those securing employment are well-prepared – after for some considerable gaps from work – for the job market also. The progress made and its positive impact in this setting and with these learners will continue beyond the project timeframe alongside the monthly review of performance on the programme and the strengthening of the evidence of impact in terms of progression into work.

The demonstrable shift in teaching, learning and assessment practice by the team at West Thames has not been assessed through a series of lesson observations and, therefore, evaluation of the practice as 'outstanding' is difficult. However, the step change in the results for level 1 and level 2 adult learners with gaps in their learning and employment histories is a significant finding and will be the focus of dissemination activities at West Thames and for the project. Furthermore, the impact of blended learning and, specifically, the flipped learning approach that developed is also important. It strengthens the argument to apply or at least experiment with flipped learning as an approach in different settings with a range of learners.



*Ensuring the learning for jobseekers is effective and accessible is crucial – the experience they're getting is having a positive impact on progression into work*

**Jaswant Lall**  
**Operations Manager**  
**Job Centre Plus**



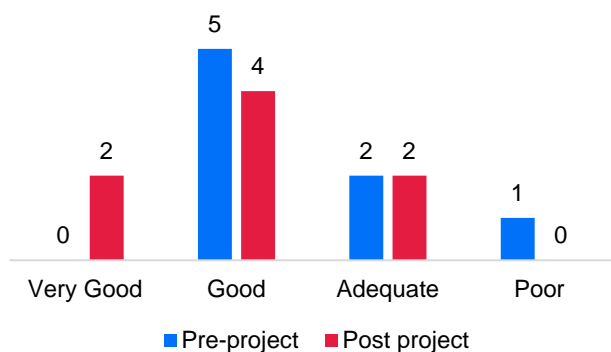
**Alan**  
**Tutor**  
**SOMAX (Weston College)**

In the other project settings – at Somax, South Essex and Transervice – the volumes of learners engaged prohibits detailed statistical impact analysis. However, learners working with Alan at Somax and working with Colin at Transervice have all reported that the use of technology has had positive effect in terms of both accessibility and engagement.

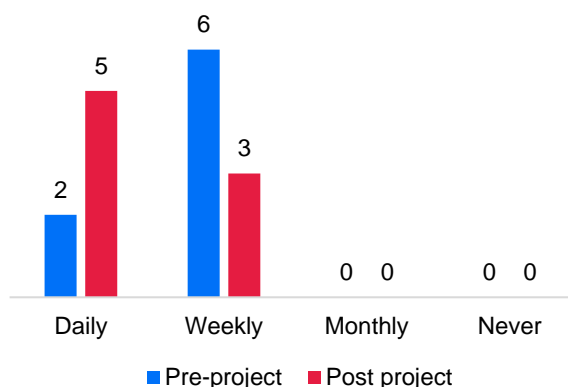
At the outset and at the tutor practitioner meeting on 30 January (or via email for those unable to attend) at West Thames, 5 key questions were asked of the 8 tutor practitioners. These were:

1. How do you rate your digital skills overall? (on a 4 point scale of Very Good to Poor)
2. How do you rate your digital skills in the delivery of Teaching, Learning and Assessment? (on a 4 point scale of Very Good to Poor)
3. How often do you use technology in Teaching, Learning and Assessment? (Daily/Weekly/Monthly/Rarely)
4. What technology do you use in Teaching, Learning and Assessment?
5. What technology works best with your learners?

Tutors' self evaluation of use of digital skills in teaching, learning and assessment



Frequency - use of technology in teaching, learning and assessment



All tutor practitioners reported at the outset that they used laptops, projectors, smartboards and digital cameras with their learners. For the majority, this was often on a daily basis and most commonly these tools were used to gather and record evidence (digital cameras) and to display and annotate PowerPoint presentations (laptops, projectors and smartboards).

By the end of the project all tutor practitioners were using evidence gathered with a digital camera to greater effect for self and/or peer assessment by learners and, at West Thames, to upload work onto Moodle for learners to self-assess when not in college. The project led each of the tutors to try out different software applications also. Kahoot and Padlet were the favourites and all the tutors agreed that they will continue to use these tools.

At the meeting on 30 January at West Thames, the six tutor practitioners present all agreed that the most significant impact of the project for them had not been the development of their own digital skills but the different ways in which they now used their skills and the different tools in their settings. One tutor put this across very succinctly at the close of the meeting.



*It's not difficult using technology. Thinking about the impact and how you can change to improve learning is.*

**Stephen  
Tutor  
South Essex College**

## What has changed?

The most significant finding from the project in terms of taking the tutor practitioners and their learners towards outstanding teaching, learning and assessment was (and remains) the flipped learning approach. This approach is well-established in the schools, FE and HE sectors and is most often used effectively by teachers and learners confident and experienced in their learning environment. Applying flipped learning techniques with adult learners on lower level short courses to enable them to re-enter the jobs market was an unusual and surprisingly successful step.

It would be an exaggeration to claim that the approach to flipped learning had been planned from the outset of the project. Equally, it did not come about by accident. It was due to a significant shift in the delivery team from training to enabling learning through the use of technology and the suitability of this for jobseekers. The team spotted it worked for one particular aspect of delivery – the pre-shift safety checks on a forklift truck – and are now exploring other activities to take this further.

The shift for the learners is married by the changes amongst the delivery team and other tutor practitioners at partner organisations. There is clear enthusiasm to experiment with technology and try different techniques, tools and with different groups. This will lead to greater use of blended learning at all of the institutions involved as well as discussion with organisations such as Job Centre Plus and employers regarding the ways in which this practice can be shared.

The development of the blended learning materials with employer and tutor practitioner input is another significant output from the project. These materials have not yet led to a change but are intended as a catalyst for change and are targeted at addressing the perceptions and understanding of young people of the logistics and transport. The preparation of these materials with apprenticeships as the focus is intended to enable advisers and/or teachers working with learners at level 2 to prepare for the logistics and transport sector as one of the 15 technical routes available from 2020.

There are clear links for the project with the Post-16 Plan. These are evident through the focus on digital skills and improving the digital skills of adults, the development of transferable workplace skills through the focus in the blended learning materials on behaviours, and the support for adults to get a job and stay in work. The focus on logistics and the transport sector is important also. This is a comparatively new area of curriculum or provision for FE colleges reflecting the growth in this sector and the commitment of the Government to deliver 30,000 apprentices across the transport sector by the end of this Parliament and the setup of the Strategic Transport Apprenticeship Taskforce.

## Next steps

We did not get the learning resources hub setup within the project timescale but we will ensure this is achieved as soon as possible.

The key learning point for the lead organisation – West Thames College – from this project is focussed on the success of using blended learning technology with adult groups and the potential of flipped learning to be used at lower levels. Planning is already underway in this academic year to strengthen the digital pedagogy in our college and the approach of our logistics delivery team will be shared across other areas of our curriculum.

At our most recent meeting of the tutor practitioners (January) we agreed that the teams would plan visits to each of the different sites and that we would convene biannual meetings – as a minimum – for the tutor practitioner to continue to compare, contrast and share their ongoing use of blended learning techniques.

We will be strengthening our evidence – working with Job Centre Plus – to track the progress of the adult learners on the warehousing and storage and forklift truck operations courses into the world of work. We will also be working with employers such as Kuehne and Nagel to strengthen the evidence of the benefits of blended learning in terms of better preparing people for work.

The input of employers into the blended learning materials has been a valuable lesson learnt as well as presenting a next step. We struggled repeatedly to engage individual employers or found negotiating our way through to the ‘right person’ challenging. The networks of employers working with Heathrow, established by the Logistics Skills Alliance (principally through the two conferences in September and January) and linked to the Institute of Couriers offered more successful routes in and enabled significant informal input. The next steps is to formalise this and explore the ways in which employers can also use the materials through their recruitment and selection activities (the suggestion of one of the employers), promotional and careers activities with schools, and learning and development work.

## **The lessons learnt and our takeaway message**

As detailed above, we secured better responses from employers in this project when they were engaged in topics as groups. Their personal views as employees and employers within the sector were clear, helpful and made a significant contribution to the blended learning materials developed. These views were most readily expressed in informal sessions when there was no concern about adding individual endorsement or approval to a product or activity. This was helpful for the project at the stage it has reached and, we hope, now provides an opportunity to take the next step.

Our takeaway message and one of the key lessons learnt is *‘let your tutors/practitioners run with it’*. We took a broad approach to developing blended learning in the teaching and delivery of learning about logistics and transport and had not prescribed a specific route or focus with any of the partners. This project enabled us to put in place a framework for learning and enquiry through the FutureLearn courses and provided all tutor practitioners with a guide each month detailing activities and tools to try out and feedback. This worked really well – it meant tutor practitioners could experiment. With this approach, the team at West Thames alighted on approach to flipped learning that both engaged and had a positive impact on achievement – an outcome for the learners and the delivery team that will continue long beyond the end of the project timescale.