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

Provider name & contact details	Woodspeen Training, 13-15 Lion Chambers, John William Street, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire, HD1 1ES
LIT Project title	Be prepared, ITs coming! Using Virtual Classrooms as a staff training tool, whilst also highlighting its potential to course delivery staff.
Project summary : - Include the particular area for improvement that has been tackled through the effective deployment of technology	Virtual classrooms (VC) are being utilised to deliver in-house staff training and tutor meetings to our various departments/centres around Yorkshire, raising the staff's knowledge plus ensuring best practice is shared. It is hoped that raising the awareness and confidence of course delivery staff to VC will highlight the vast opportunities for learners, delivery staff and the organisation.
What were the aims of the project?	Virtual classrooms were to be utilised to deliver staff training and prompt the sharing of best practice ("Review arrangements to monitor and improve the quality of teaching and learning. Extend staff knowledge of the use of ILT in lessons and improve lesson planning to meet the individual needs of all learners." (OfSTED Report main findings)). Regular VC best practice meetings were used to prompt session plans and resources to be shared and discussed amongst staff from different departments/centres. There was a strong emphasis on use and integration of ILT into the delivery of lessons. This tutor led approach should ensure buy-in and the support mechanisms for sustainable development of teaching practices. Other organisations in the sector could use this practice to develop their own best practice groups across multiple training centres and remote locations to share teaching expertise and receive training. Remote learners will be able to receive better training and support from tutors and assessors.
What did you do and how did you do this?	Before commencing on the project, we drew up an Action Plan to guide us through, ensuring that we had targets, along with interim targets to keep the project on track. We did a lot of initial research, to ensure that the products that we purchased were a good fit for the project. We needed a stable VC/Web Conferencing tool, which was user friendly and flexible enough to meet our requirements. We chose Web-ex as it met all of our needs and its functionality was very similar to commonly used packages such as web browsers, Facebook and Skype. We felt that it was important to ensure that the users, even those lacking confidence in ILT, didn't raise barriers because of the conduit we used to transfer our training information. Once the hardware and software was in place, we entered a testing stage, ensuring that staff were able to access the VC sessions and that no audio issues affected their experience. We delivered headsets to all delivery staff to ensure that they could attend the forthcoming Tutor Best Practice Meetings. During the project, the Organisation has been going through a time of

	major restructuring. This has had a negative effect on the progress of the project. The internal staff training programme has been on-hold whilst new paperwork, policies and procedures have been produced. A round of redundancies have occurred along with the relocation of whole departments, having a negative affect on staff morale and again disrupting the intended flow of the project. Many staff roles have altered; some staff are still unclear on some areas of their new roles, as so much change is occurring, in so many areas of the Organisation, all at the same time. It is going to take quite some time for the dust to settle and for effective, efficient work to occur throughout the new structure. We have, with the help of Dave (our mentor) managed to get some staff training out using the Tutor Best Practice Meetings as our soap box utilising Web-ex as our delivery method. Alongside this we have also been gathering staff training resources, content for our proposed Staff Training online repository. We have started to produce a framework to house all of this information. Dave has again proved invaluable in this area as he has produced a DVD of useful, professional screencasts for our staff to access at a time to suit them and learn about one of the many topics to improve the way that we utilise ILT within our courses.
What role did your mentor play on your LIT project?	Dave Foord, our mentor (A6 Training) assisted throughout the project, he's been a tremendous help. Initially during the research stages of the project Dave, like us, signed up to a number of free trials to discover the pros and cons for each VC package. He's been there to assist with the sessions that we've run to introduce the delivery method to staff. He has provided an excellent knowledge base, showing us many free to use ILT web based packages. He has also assisted greatly both producing training resources and accessing previously produced resources that we can access to assist us in improving our delivery staff's skills and confidence in the use of ILT.
What have been the key benefits from the input of your mentor?	Dave has brought so much to the project, the key benefits from his input are the information that he has been able to impart, to assist us on our journey. Without his level of experience we would have hit many more barriers and taken much longer to find an effective solution. Dave has also provided us with a wealth of knowledge and expert tips and resources for our delivery staff to access, improving their skills and confidence in the use of ILT. Beyond all of this Dave has also delivered training sessions through Web-ex to our staff, highlighting good practice for presenters who are delivering over VC/Web Conferencing tools, along with excellent information for those attending the training.
What was the benefit of the support that you received from your LSIS Associate?	Vic, our LSIS Critical Friend, has been brilliant. He did loads of work up front on our project as we had nobody suitable in mind for our project mentor. Vic initially put us in contact with one mentor who we found to be very friendly and a wealth of knowledge but not the perfect fit for our project needs. With this in mind Vic went back, with our requirements, and found Dave Foord to ensure that we had the most effective mentor available to help us along our journey. Vic has a wealth of experience and is passionate in trying to use that experience and knowledge for the good of the many. He has signposted many resources to help us ensure that the project delivers. He has asked probing questions and given excellent advice at all stages of the project to

	ensure that we push the product and its benefits forward into the vision of those who make the decisions within the Organisation. He has always been available to offer assistance as required and has always ensured that he has responded in a timely manner.
What has been the impact and benefit of the LIT capital grant to your project?	Without the LIT capital grant this project would still just be a pipe dream. With finances as tight as they are, we would never have been offered the opportunity to get this project up and running by our board. The project, if successfully implemented, will not only improve the skills and knowledge of our staff but also save the company a lot of money and time. The project has already proved an effective way to increase participation within staff training and allow staff from the various locations to meet up and share best practice.
What did the project cost, including LSIS funding?	The project has been scaled in such a way to work within the LSIS funding, beyond the cost of staff time. The cost of project staff time has not been calculated in the costing of the project. The project staff have fitted the work required for the project into there daily duties. It has been a time consuming activity but, much of this has been in initial training and hardware delivery/setup around the various centres. Going forward the need for this will reduce staff will already be setup and have the hardware to access the system. We have managed to complete the project to this point within the LSIS funding and have around £200 left to spend on further headsets or hardware as required.
What has been the impact of your LIT project on your organisational improvement strategy?	We have shown, through the LiT project that there is the potential to save time and money in delivery of staff training by utilising Web Conferencing Software. We have shown that delivery through this method allows greater participation as more staff can access the training when they don't need to travel.
What were the benefits of your LIT project?	We have been able to increase delivery staff's knowledge of ILT and show various techniques that staff can use to increase learner interaction in ILT during sessions. We have been able to produce a user friendly resource library where delivery staff can access many tools and resources to improve their sessions. We have also been able to create a similar resource for training videos, allowing staff to access training when they have some free time and learn what they want at their own pace.
What were the savings to your organisation?	Woodspeen has gone through major restructuring over the last 5-6 months as the organisation has attempted to integrate the 5 legacy businesses into Woodspeen. The scale of this work has caused everything other than essential day to day activities to slow or be put on hold during this time. The in-house training schedule has still to been rolled out this year as everything from buildings, paperwork, delivery formats, assessment formats, portfolio systems and staff structure has been changed. This has had a knock on effect on the scope for success within the LiT project. The project has proved that there is a huge cost saving potential to the organisation through the use of web conferencing software as a conduit for delivering some internal staff training and for some staff meetings. A number of tutor meetings have been held, using the Web-Ex system within the project, we have used these opportunities to deliver some ILT

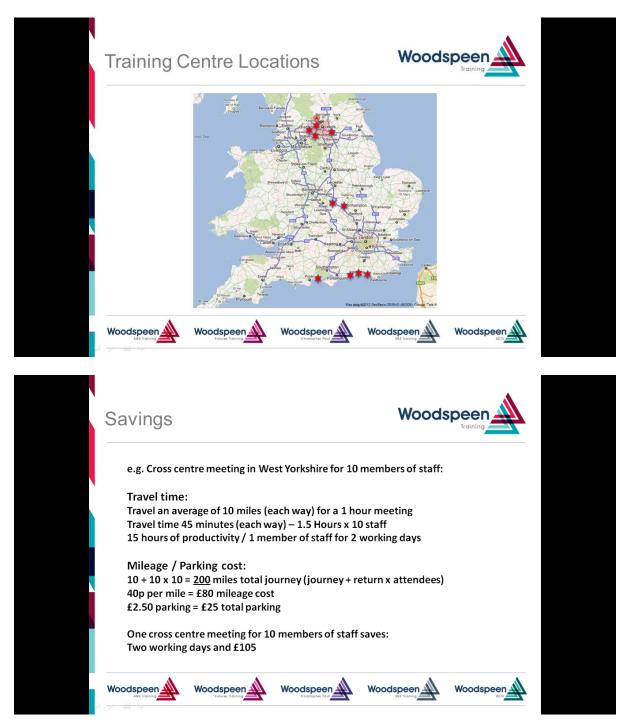|	
	training to delivery staff. As part of our commitment to the LiT project, we delivered a workshop within LSIS' Technology For Success Conference. Within this workshop we showed how the software offered the potential to deliver a very interactive training session/meeting whilst also saving money and also, importantly, staff time.
How did you calculate them?	The example we used within the workshop that we ran at the LSIS Conference was: Cross centre meeting in West Yorkshire for 10 members of staff: Travel time: Travel an average of 10 miles (each way) for a 1 hour meeting Travel time 45 minutes (each way) – 1.5 Hours x 10 staff 15 hours of productivity / 1 member of staff for 2 working days Mileage / Parking cost: 10 + 10 x 10 = 200 miles total journey (journey + return x attendees) 40p per mile = £80 mileage cost £2.50 parking = £25 total parking One cross centre meeting for 10 members of staff saves: Two working days and £105 Our tutor meetings are aimed at 30 tutors in West Yorkshire If 10 tutors attend each monthly meeting we would be saving: 24 working days (over the year) £1260 in mileage and parking (over the year) The cost for one Webex host account for one year is £345.60 Appendix 1 contains the screen shots from the workshop/presentation, this also includes a shot highlighting where we have centres within England. This is included to further highlight the extent of potential savings that web conferencing software could provide Woodspeen. The example is for a meeting for staff within West Yorkshire, savings would be even greater for meetings involving training centre staff from the North and South. Appendix 2 shows a screen shot from Web-Ex.
What were the lessons learned?	Make sure that the software that you chose is compatible with all other software that you plan to use in delivery. Webex for example doesn't recognise open source software such as Open Office. You can still share your screen with this software open but lose functions such as collaboration through annotation. Don't try to run Web Conferencing software over a terminal server, all our Office packages were purchased to sit on our server, however there is no sound over our server (due to the bandwidth requirements to transmit sound). When working off our server, staff lost the ability to access the office software. With this in mind training using Web Conferencing

	software has become less straight forward that it would otherwise have been.
What tips do you have for other providers?	You need to ensure that senior management buy in to the project, and remain actively involved in the project, for you to gain the kind of success that you believe is possible.
How will you disseminate effective practice to others in the sector?	We have already delivered a workshop on the use/benefits/pit falls of Virtual Classroom/Web Conferencing Tools within the lifelong learning sector, at the LSIS Technology for Success Conference in Birmingham earlier this year. We will also leave our project blog up for others to access (we will attempt to maintain the blog keeping it up to date as we gain further experience with this delivery system). We are also to assist others in the sector where ever possible on request.
Provide a quote on your experience of the LSIS LIT project.	The project has been a wonderful learning experience, the support provided by both Vic, our Critical Friend from LSIS, and Dave Foord, our project mentor, has been exceptional. I urge every organisation to try to work closely with LSIS and this project is an excellent way to do so.
Are you happy for us to use this and your contact details for marketing and publications?	Of course.
Contact details for further information	Simon Kelly Quality Improvement Co ordinator Woodspeen Training Ltd Business Enterprise Centre, Barkerend Road Bradford BD1 5BE 01274 721391 Simon.kelly@woodspeentraining.co.uk

Please email all case studies to eleadership@lsis.org.uk by 31st July 2012

Appendix A

Training Centre Locations

Woodspeen Training

Woodspeen A&R Training · Woodspeen Futures Training · Woodspeen Christopher Paul · Woodspeen S&S Training · Woodspeen BDTS

Savings

Woodspeen Training

e.g. Cross centre meeting in West Yorkshire for 10 members of staff:

Travel time:
Travel an average of 10 miles (each way) for a 1 hour meeting
Travel time 45 minutes (each way) – 1.5 Hours x 10 staff
15 hours of productivity / 1 member of staff for 2 working days

Mileage / Parking cost:
10 + 10 x 10 = 200 miles total journey (journey + return x attendees)
40p per mile = £80 mileage cost
£2.50 parking = £25 total parking

One cross centre meeting for 10 members of staff saves:
Two working days and £105

Woodspeen A&R Training · Woodspeen Futures Training · Woodspeen Christopher Paul · Woodspeen S&S Training · Woodspeen BDTS

Savings

One cross centre meeting for 10 members of staff saves:
Two working days and £105

Our tutor meetings are aimed at 30 tutors in West Yorkshire
If 10 tutors attend each monthly meeting we would be saving:

- 24 working days (over the year)
- £1260 in mileage and parking (over the year)

The cost for one Webex host account for one year is £345.60

Costs

- Virtual Classroom Software
- Training
- Infrastructure
  - Laptops
  - Web cams
  - Headsets
- Other hardware
  - Scanner
  - Camcorder
  - Software

Appendix B