Developing Student Autonomy: Producing A Public History Resource

What are the aims of this project?

This project aims to develop, implement and support an innovative piece of assessment in which students autonomously produce a public history resource (e.g. website).

The specific objectives include:

- To generate networks between staff, and partnerships between staff and students, which enhance student autonomy.
- To identify, monitor and evaluate the emerging skills (subject-specific and generic) of the students.
- To liaise with the LTI to develop appropriate levels of IT/media skills for tutor and students.

What is the background / rationale?

In keeping with SHU's Digital Fluency agenda this project seeks to develop skills incorporating digital communication technologies. Using media resources an autonomous student learning approach will be encouraged which will enhance subject knowledge as well as individual self-esteem and employability. There are clear connections with the 'Inspirational Learning' methodology created within the LTI, which is being developed in other subject areas and in other faculties. The pedagogy behind this project was also inspired by a similar project at UCLAN in which history students successfully created their own community history resource.

What are the benefits to student learning?

Benefits will include:

- Students and project team work in partnership to enhance learner autonomy and create a learning environment for greater student inclusion.
- Students engage actively and imaginatively with module in order to achieve 'deep' learning.
- Through taking responsibility for developing/ presenting a creative project, students increase self-confidence and engage explicitly with issues of employability and PDP.
- Students develop transferable skills in IT and digital media.
- The assessment caters for diverse students by allowing them to choose written, visual, audio and tactile modes of presentation.

- Tutor develops IT and media skills to be employed on this module in future years as well as on other modules which support students in autonomous learning projects.
- Increased network knowledge and collaboration between History staff and LTI staff, working towards a common goal of student autonomy.
- Completed public history resources would be displayed in learning hubs and online to promote achievements in student autonomy across the university.
- Resources produced could be used in future history modules and to inform similar projects across the university.

How will this project be evaluated?

Students on the module will submit an individual reflection on the process of compiling the resource which will provide an opportunity for the project team to evaluate student experiences of the assessment. Students will also be involved in more general module evaluation through the use of forms and a focus group.

In addition to this the module tutor will keep a log which will be used to reflect on and evaluate the extent to which the aims, objectives and outcomes have been achieved.

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