

Personal and Professional Development Planning using e-Portfolio



Commenced: 2005

What is it?

This project aims to promote learner autonomy through supporting learner engagement through Personal and Professional Development Planning (PPDP). The Professional Development Program in the Division of Education and Humanities at Sheffield Hallam University offers a range of courses for continuing professional development to those working in education and training. A key aspect of this provision is work-based learning. One particular course within this Program, the Msc E-learning, Multimedia and Consultancy (ELMAC), takes an international approach to developing communities of practice through an active partnership with Arnhem-Nijmegen University of Professional Education in the Netherlands. This course is based on a project and team-based approach towards learning involving authentic, real-world, work-based problems. Communication occurs via multimedia, including videoconferencing, framed within a virtual learning environment, ePDP/ ePortfolio and a blend of on-line learning, local face-to-face studies and independent study.

What is involved?

We are currently examining professional practice and the profile of the consultant and "problem solver" at the interface of pedagogical, technological and cultural dimensions of development. This project builds on our work-based learning developments and the action learning framework emerging in ELMAC. One of the areas of investigation is the effects of collaborative and supportive networks of learning on the location and development of professional identity and voice in an e-learning context. A work-based learning special interest group has been established that aims to encourage partnership between work-based approaches and to create and disseminate a set of case studies illustrating a variety of approaches to work-based learning frameworks and personal and professional trajectories. One important aspect of this is to examine the place of competency frameworks as adopted by our colleagues in the Netherlands.

Why is the project important to the CETL and the University?

It is a HEFCE requirement that development of Progress Files will form part of students' experience from 2005 in order that the outcomes, or results, of learning in higher education are made more explicit, the achievements of learning identified, and the concept that learning is a lifetime activity. An individual's personal records of learning and achievements, progress reviews and plans are used to clarify personal goals and can provide a resource from which material is selected to produce personal statements (e.g. CVs etc) for employers, admissions tutors and others. It can also structure and support processes to develop the capacity of individuals to reflect upon their own learning and achievement, and to plan for their own personal educational and career development. The term Personal and Professional Development Planning (PPDP) is used to denote this process.

What do you hope the project will achieve?

The project will promote PPDP in the International Masters in E-learning, Multimedia and Consultancy (ELMAC) and encourage and support the development and use of e-portfolios. Further opportunities for work-based learning will be developed arising from the Project Studies module and work-based enquiry (dissertation) and the ELMAC community of practice will be enhanced locally and internationally.

What impact do you hope the project will have?

The initial impact will be on the international Msc in ELMAC which involves around 15 colleagues and over 70 students and active alumni at the present time. The project will also contribute to the National Coalition for Electronic Portfolio Research with focus on the effect of e-portfolios on student engagement.

Wider impact will be achieved through dissemination as colleagues adapt any of the principles, approaches and methods, which they find of relevance, to their own local contexts.



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Future Developments

The project will form part of the Faculty Continuing Professional Development Portal project that aims to build on the PPDP approaches for over 800 Professional Development Programme students.

Links

Course web site:

Msc in e-Learning, Multimedia and Consultancy

<http://www.shu.ac.uk/msce-learning/>

ELMAC Student-led Conference:

<http://extra.shu.ac.uk/msce/con06/>

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