

## Regional Collaboration Fund (RCF) grant based intervention Impact study template

RCF Project title	<b>FIRST Functional Interactive Resources Supported through Technology</b>
Name of lead contact	Peter Caney – Myerscough College
Consortium members	Preston College, Blackpool & The Fylde College, Via Partnership, Lancashire Adult Learning, Lancashire WBL Executive Forum & JISC RSC Northwest
Other contributing organisations (if any)	North Lancs Training Group, Burnley College, Nelson & Colne College, Training 2000
<b>The project</b>	
What problem or issue you were trying to resolve or improve with this project	The project was to tackle a live issue facing each organisation and the FE sector as a whole to support the implementation of functional skills delivery and to raise English and Maths attainment amongst apprentices. A specific objective was to develop a way of facilitating access to and the improvement of functional skills learning within the workplace.
What was your solution	To collaboratively develop a range of interactive learning resources to support the delivery of functional skills in the workplace. Using the project to promote the creation of interactive learning resources and conversion of traditional classroom based resources in support of distance learning.
Describe what you did and what happened	<p>The project plan was developed with 5 key project stages identified; Research, Resource Content, Resource Development, Resource Piloting, Evaluation and Improvement, and Project Evaluation, Impact and Dissemination.</p> <p>A steering group was formed and tasked with researching existing learner materials and delivery methods for Maths, English and ICT and mapping those resources against the Functional Skills standards.</p> <p>The steering group were invited to view and upload resources into 'Box net'. This package was used throughout the project to keep members informed of developments.</p> <p>A sub group was formed for each area (Maths, English &amp; ICT) with a</p>

lead contact who would co-ordinate progress against tasks and stages and report back to the steering group.

It became apparent through research and consideration of resource content that there were relatively few resources available amongst the partners for 'converting' into interactive formats as most providers were using commercial resources albeit in non-interactive formats.

It was also apparent that whilst lots of different functional skills resource sites and activities were available, with many open source, there was little evidence of a centralised resource that provided an interactive learning environment for all aspects of functional skills delivery.

Partners were in full agreement that creating a resource package, consisting of required topic content for each functional skill specialism and level should be a key project outcome.

A moderation panel was formed to aid the selection of resources for further product development and conversion into interactive formats.

In support of creating standardised interactive resources and working with the advice and guidance of JISC, Articulate Storyline was chosen as a licensed Authoring Tool to create the project resources. Despite the license cost, Storyline was chosen ahead of other open source packages because of its functionality and relative ease of creating resources for non e learning specialists.

Partners nominated staff to attend a Train the Trainer day to develop the skills to create and convert existing functional skills resources into online and interactive teaching and learning packages in support of workplace delivery.

Once developed, the interactive resources were piloted with both learners and tutors by all organisations involved in the project. Following collation of the evaluation forms, the resources were adapted and improved based on learner, tutor and JISC evaluation and feedback.

The technological task focussed on producing 6 functional skills interactive templates, two each for Maths, English and ICT to support the teaching, learning and assessment of a topic element for each functional skill specialism.

The technological task has focussed on a producing interactive teaching, learning and assessment resources for Maths, English and ICT at levels 1 and 2. A total of 12 resources have been developed as part of the project in addition to an employer resource focussed on promoting the benefits of functional skills in the workplace. The resources are housed within an interactive resource package that has been developed with topic content for each functional skills specialism

	<p>and level. This package will be populated with additional resources as partners continue to develop content beyond the end of the project.</p>
<p><b>The collaboration</b></p>	
<p>How well did the collaboration work and what were the key factors that led to this</p>	<p>The project stimulated increased collaboration between partners with new relationships being formed at varying levels within each organisation from management level to tutors.</p> <p>Partners found it useful to see how other providers were delivering Functional Skills, by sharing delivery methods and resources.</p> <p>The project has given partners the opportunity to work together rather than just attend meetings together, this has forged relationships that will support continued collaboration after the completion of the project.</p> <p>The purpose of the project was desirable to all partners which aided continued collaboration.</p> <p>Partners of the steering group will continue to meet as part of the Lancashire WBL Executive Forum Quality improvement sub group and plan to continue the development of the resources with other members of this group.</p>
<p><b>The benefits and impact of the project</b></p>	
<p>What benefits/ impact has the project had on:::</p>	<p>a. the work/ effectiveness of the organisations in your consortium</p> <p>Evaluation has shown that there has been a marked increase in Internal collaboration across curriculum areas with activity spreading across organisations. It has broken down barriers between departments and inspired teaching staff to embrace technology and create more interactive resources.</p> <p>Teaching staff have been inspired by what they can produce without the reliance on an e learning and development specialist.</p> <p>One provider reported that as a result of the project they have now embraced technology within their organisation by introducing e-portfolio.</p> <p>There has definitely been a wider use of Storyline within organisations including examples of resources being developed to support the promotion of equality and diversity, inclusive learning and best practice teaching, learning and assessment resources.</p>

	<p>b. the cost/ efficiency of activities</p> <p>The development of resources, staff skills and expertise as part of the project will begin to have a tangible benefit on the efficiency and effectiveness of provider delivery models, with anticipated benefits of;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced staff time and travel costs for tutors</li> <li>• Improvement of VLE platforms and quality of distance learning materials</li> <li>• Encouraging staff to produce more resources will avoid buying in 'off the shelf' packages</li> </ul> <hr/> <p>c. any other aspect(s) of your work</p> <p>The activity produced will make learning much more independent</p>
<p>What contribution to the success / smooth running of the project was made by:</p>	<p>LSIS funding                      a little / some/ <b>a lot</b> / essential</p> <p>LSIS Associate                      a little / <b>some</b>/ a lot / essential</p> <p>LSIS Associate provided very good support and liaison with the project lead, advising and supporting project activity. However a challenging approach adopted initially with the Steering Group was not well received by all members.</p> <p>Other contributors (please identify)</p> <p>JISC RSC Northwest a little / <b>some</b>/ a lot / essential</p>
<p>What did the project cost: LSIS funding + your consortium's contribution</p>	<p>LSIS Funding; £29,975</p> <p>Consortium Contribution (based on supply of project time sheets and rates described within project application)</p> <p>Training Provider Partners (Additional hours/ costs) = £7,181</p> <p>JISC – 150 hours @ £179/day = £3,836</p>
<p>What lessons did you learn / what tips would you give to other providers</p>	<p>The project has provided an opportunity to learn more about the opportunities and challenges of collaborative working. Lessons learned when collaborating over a technological task, include;</p> <p>Not to be too ambitious with what the project will finally produce and be prepared to adapt in line with group expectations, skills, time and expertise. Allow creativity and input but remain focussed on project objectives.</p>

	<p>Increase project activity/ meetings/ tasks at the start of the project to aid 'buy in', clear understanding and reduce project 'drift'.</p> <p>Some project members felt that expectations of ICT ability may have been too high and clearer input from specialists regarding design and standardisation may have been useful earlier in the project.</p> <p>Challenge partner desire to be involved against reality early in the project as collaboration relies on equal or agreed input from all members.</p> <p>Assign staff specifically to the project and allocate time rather than it becoming an additional activity on a busy workload. This worked well with one partner employing an hourly paid specialist to support resource development.</p> <p>Assign tasks based on skills and ability ahead of enthusiasm and willingness.</p> <p>Be clear on the intended outcome – commercial quality of resources or engagement of non-specialist staff? The desire to achieve both at times created challenges as part of this project.</p> <p>Consider using a project 'protocol' or terms of agreement specific to the project rather than relying on previous working relationships. Promoting discussion on working arrangements, project management and organisational responsibilities.</p> <p>To ensure that partners are fully aware of the organisational commitment they need to put into a project such as this.</p>
<b>Telling others</b>	
<p>What have you done to share /disseminate this project with others in the sector</p>	<p>Attended Lancashire WBL Executive Forum and sub group meetings.</p> <p>Presented at the LSIS Technology for Success Conference 5<sup>th</sup> February 13 in Birmingham</p> <p>Planning on presenting at the North West Provider Network Regional Quality group meeting on the 7<sup>th</sup> May 2013 to demonstrate project resources and disseminate findings.</p>
<p>Provide a quote on your experience of the LSIS RCF project.</p>	<p>This project has provided a valued learning experience about collaborative working with partner organisations on development of technological tasks. It has been a challenging yet rewarding experience that has stimulated innovative resource development and created legacy opportunities to deliver sustained improvements for learners.</p>

<p>Are you happy for us to use this and your contact details for marketing and publications?</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Quote</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Contact information</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Yes</b> <b>Yes</b></p>
<p>Contact details for further information</p>	<p>Peter Caney  Assistant Principal Skills &amp; Development  Myerscough College  Email; <a href="mailto:pcaney@myerscough.ac.uk">pcaney@myerscough.ac.uk</a>  Tel; 01995 642222</p>

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