

**Case Study: Assessment and learning: involving the learner.**

*LSC funded project.*

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**The context:**

The intention of the CETT for Inclusive Learning (CETTIL) is to provide a source of expertise for those who teach and support learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. It is based in the School of Health, Community and Education Studies at the Coach Lane Campus of Northumbria University.

**The challenge:**

In late December 2008, the CETTIL Director was asked if we could help the north east regional Learning and Skills Council (LSC) with two key priorities.

Priority 1 Increase understanding of, and expertise in, initial, baseline and diagnostic assessment of learners' needs, and the setting of challenging targets, and monitoring and recording of learners' progress and achievement.

Priority 2 Address the training priorities of teachers, trainers, tutors and support workers relating to learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD) within the further education system.

A series of discussions were held with CETTIL partners, LSC LDD Advisors and other key organisations. The decision was made to address the two priorities through a series of continuing professional development (CPD) workshops entitled 'Assessment and learning: involving the learner'.

**What we did:**

There were four key phases to the project

- Established an advisory panel - this group supported the development, delivery and quality assurance of the project. The panel was drawn from a wide range of contexts and members had a breadth of LDD and staff development experiences.
- Developed and quality assured the CPD activity – CETTIL has developed a mechanism to quality assure non-accredited continuing professional development. The CPD activity was quality assured in early September 2009 prior to delivery.
- Delivered the CPD activity – delivery took place in three locations / cohorts across the north east namely Newcastle, Durham and Stockton between October and December 2009. Providers were encouraged to send a tutor and a learner support to enable a collaborative approach. They could attend one or more of the locations to enable a flexible approach dependent on their teaching timetable.
- Evaluated and produced a final report – interim reports were produced for the LSC with a final report at the end of the project in February 2010.

**The outcomes:**

As a result of the project we have

- Developed a model of training that incorporates

- Three workshops per cohort, two of which focus on priority one and ensuring the Learner Voice is heard. The third workshop had as its focus the dissemination of individual interventions / innovations
- Workplace learning - between workshops one and two participants collaborate with their colleagues to identify, develop, implement and evaluate an intervention / innovation in relation to priority one
- Each participant had their own Individual Learning Plan to mimic the stages of the learner journey from entry to exit.
- Built into the workshops the CETTIL two stages model of reflection to enable participants to reflect on the immediacy of the training and at a later stage the impact of the transfer of learning.
- Peer reviewed the CPD activity so that participants can be confident in the quality of the workshops.
- Involved 34 organisations, (drawn from adult and community education, work based learning, general further education, specialist colleges, offender learning), in the three cohorts
- Worked with 73 practitioners (wide range of work roles) in one or more of the workshops
- Ensured a collaborative approach so that tutors and learner support began to work as a team prior to workshop one to identify a challenge related to priority one that would become the focus of their intervention / innovation and resulting case study
- Created a series of case studies identifying the intervention / innovation challenge they were faced with and the resulting outcomes and impact
- Shared practice across a wide range of organisational contexts
- Identified additional training needs in relation to Learner Voice
- Received additional LSC to deliver a fourth cohort between February 2010 and April 2010 with a project dissemination in May / June 2010
- Distributed Certificates of Attendance to participants.
- Used the CETTIL website ([www.cettil.org.uk](http://www.cettil.org.uk)) as a virtual learning environment to hold project teaching / learning materials

#### **The impact:**

Evaluations identified the following aspects as having key impact on participants

- Sharing ideas, discussing good practice and working experiences with peers
- Raised awareness of how to engage learners with different needs, to ensure they had a 'voice' and more involvement in the learner journey from recruitment to progression
- All participants identified an area of practice that could be enhanced and did something about it, then shared it with other participants
- Participants developed their own individual learning plans which were peer reviewed and constructed an exit action plan to ensure the further development of the intervention / innovation

#### **Supporting documentation:**

- Please contact CETTIL Director to discuss workshop related documentation

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