

Early Years Pedagogue Masters

Overview

Summary



The Early Years Pedagogue (EYP) Masters is an On-line Course that provides a learning platform for Early Years professionals across Scotland. On-Campus provision includes two initial induction days and a mid course review. This course used 'My Place' to house a range of pedagogical experiences that linked specifically to desired learning and outcomes for our students. Tools such as Synchronous and Asynchronous Chats provide opportunities for tutor-led sessions that explore and discuss key themes from learning and student-led discussions and create a space for students to research and build theories as part of a learning community. Module pages include introduction sections and weekly session content and materials such as: on-line lectures; individual and group forum tasks ;on-line module reading;sub group & tutor group chat facilities;group and individual blogs, assessment forums & podcasts.

Context

School of Education

Faculty of Humanities and Social Science

Contact Details

Jenny Carey

<http://www.strath.ac.uk/staff/careyjennym/>

Themes

Themes

Rationale

The course was developed to offer a route for Primary teachers to specialise in early education. The On-line delivery was considered the best way to provide a forum for creating a community of practice across a wide range of Local Authorities. In addition, it was a way of providing flexibility and increasing opportunities for professionals who could not make it onto campus to continue their PGT studies.

Successes

Staff developed experience and knowledge of the on-line environment as a vehicle for learning, and created opportunities for a variety of approaches to Teaching & Learning within this. It became much more than just a 'resource bank'; it was about considering the learning outcomes & experiences and linking this with the session/ module content and then considering the best vehicle to deliver this on-line. Another successful feature of this venture was the ability to review our role as educators on-line. Weekly on-line chats are recorded so you can evaluate your role in each chat alongside the role of other participants. This shifted views about ways staff should lead, facilitate and review learning through on-line chats.

Student feedback has indicated that the course has enabled a high degree of collaboration and scaffolding of learning which has helped to 'build capacity in recent theory & practice and in turn had a positive impact on developments in school and staff training'. Due to the fact that participants in this course have full time positions within education, they appreciated the flexibility connected with the familiar layout and access to on-line materials. Lectures, reading & chats could be accessed and reviewed on multiple occasions, which helped to clarify and reinforce key learning.

Student collaboration and feedback via Group Blogs was viewed as an important tool to enhance practical changes in early years environments whilst strengthening theory-to-practice links.

Organisation and group size was considered when creating spaces for chats to maximise learning.

Lessons Learnt

It cannot be assumed that on-line learning limits collaboration and opportunities to extend/ clarify learning within a particular field.

Staff knowledge of the facilities that 'My Place' offer and how these link to the learning we are promoting can be strengthened if we 'flip' our view of the purpose of the on-line environment.

Challenges

Challenges related to the 'out of hours' issues that occurred at the beginning of the course/ some new modules. An out of hours service I.T. may support staff and students alike.

Many positive challenges related to Course Leader/staff upskilling knowledge of using and creating spaces on 'My Place'.

Scalability

During 2014-15 we had 70 students across the Masters Certificate & Diploma.

Suggestions for Transferability

This structure will be piloted across aspects of the PGDE Primary & Secondary Course 2015-16 to introduce a blended approach to learning and teaching. The purpose being to extend the use of My Place as an On-line Learning Environment and that is more than a resource bank.

Related documents

Garrison, D. R., Anderson, T., & Archer, W. (2001). Critical Thinking, Cognitive Presence, and Computer Conferencing in Distance Education. *American Journal of Distance Education*, 15, 7-23. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/08923640109527071>

Garrison, D. R., & Vaughan, N. D. (2008). *Blended Learning in Higher Education: Framework, Principles, and Guidelines*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

S Garrison, D. R. (2007). *Online Community of Inquiry Review: Social, Cognitive and Teaching Presence Issues*. Calgary: University of Calgary.

Koehler, M.J and Mishra, P. (2009). [What is technological pedagogical content knowledge?](#) *Contemporary Issues in Technology and Teacher Education*, 9 (1), 60-70.

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