

Action Research and Development Projects in teacher education

Project title: Designing and piloting a bridging programme between the Additional Diploma Awards

Funder: LSIS

Grant: £5000

Organisation: University of Greenwich

Project Lead: Gordon O. Ade-Ojo

Provider Final Report

1. Background

Description of the organisation and its point of departure for the project (approximately 250 words)

The university has been a major provider of ITT in general and the Subject Specialist Awards in the SFL area in particular for many years. Over the last five years, many practitioners have gained their specialist awards through the university. In addition, the university provides CPD training to colleges on demand. Central to the provision of training by the university is the goal of continuing to improve the programme and developing the flexibility to meet the needs of our trainees as well as those of the organizations that employ them. One of the ways in which we engage with this is through the process of evaluation during and after training. This project is informed by the findings from our engagement with the latter. Many of our former trainees in the SFL areas have through our post-training evaluation, expressed the desire to improve their knowledge in alternative SFL subject areas. For example, specialist literacy teachers indicated that they would like to develop their skills in teaching ESOL learners. Subsequent investigations confirmed the importance of equipping these teachers with the skills to engage in promoting learning in alternative SFL subject areas for two reasons. First, the changing features of SFL learners now indicate that many learners have features of both ESOL and Literacy traditional learners. Second, there was evidence that the current economic climate is forcing senior management in colleges to try and ensure that their teachers are multi-skilled thus reducing outlays on recruiting micro-specialists. Based on the above, the university decided to design an intensive bridging course which is focused specifically on practical issues around the teaching of each of the two subjects. The course is designed to address these issues through a comparative approach which is enhanced by the fact that the sessions are combined for both ESOL and literacy teachers.

2. What we did and how we did it (500 words)

(1) We designed a programme which focused on the aspects of the existing additional diploma programmes that are not common to both ESOL and Literacy. In particular, we explored aspects of teaching and learning such as lesson planning, resource development, assessment and feedback which would normally reflect differences between the two subject areas. Based on

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this, we populated the course content with topics that will enable trainees from both specialist areas to engage with these aspects of their jobs within a comparative framework. Central to the delivery is the notion of sharing experiences and good practice across the subject areas.

- (2) The next stage was essentially administrative. This involved getting the programme validated by the university. This is crucial because our investigations indicated that trainees would like to be accredited for undertaking this programme. This became an issue and has effectively delayed the implementation of the programme because the university schedule did not fit the funding pattern. This meant that there was a long delay between funding approval, programme development and university approval. As a result, we have had to delay the delivery of the programme as the final approval was only secured in March. The programme is now approved as a twenty credit course which will be certificated by the university as a specialist SfL teaching award and will be seen as giving the recipients the specialist qualification in teaching in the subject area that is comparable to the Additional Diploma award. Further information on how it was delivered will be provided after the delivery of the programme.

3. What we produced/created (the outcomes of the project.) (250 words) with examples of outcomes attached to the report including photos. Outcomes/final products could be e.g. a scheme of work, a course outline, a description of a process such as marketing; a professional development module

So far, we have produced a course specification/content for the programme. (attached). After the delivery, a reflection on the value of a combined approach will be produced. This will draw on the evaluation of both trainees and tutors on the programme. A section of this report will be dedicated to lessons learnt with a particular focus on recruiting onto the programme and planning to accommodate structural differences between universities and other organizations. The content of the programme is further informed by the principle of action research and development. Having delivered the Additional Diploma programmes since their inception, and having piloted the combined ESOL and Literacy format of delivery, we have drawn from aspects of our experience in terms of using the comparative approach and in terms of some of the activities and resources from both subject areas which we expect to be of mutual benefit to all trainees.

4. What the impact was on learners, employers, teachers, the organisation (250 words) with text for quoting from interviews with some of the above. Please include any quantitative data or in other format as appropriate

Although the full impact is expected to be identified after the delivery, we are clear in terms of the areas we will be exploring in terms of the impact that the programme has had. Specifically, We will be exploring the impact of this programme on our trainees through a focus group interview. We will be seeking to get their perceptions on how the programme has improved their skills and their confidence in dealing with trainees in the new specialist area. Furthermore, we will be exploring the impact of the programme from employers' viewpoint through the use of an evaluation questionnaire to gauge their perception on how the course has impacted on the quality of delivery of trainees. We will further explore the extent to which they feel that the course has helped to equip their employers towards contributing to the organisation's ability to meet the needs of their learners.

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5. What we learnt that is of use to others (do's and don'ts) (250 words)

A part of 3 above will focus on this. The remaining part will be identified after the delivery of the programme.

6. Next steps (how the organisation intends to carry the work forward) (200 words)

- (1) Already in discussion with colleges in the university's LLS network who are keen to deliver the programme in their areas.
- (2) Market the programme to colleges
- (3) Engage IFL to see if the programme can be considered as a CPD module for meeting the requirements for QTLS

7. List of attachments (including outcomes, appendices, photographs etc.)

Course specification and content document.