

## **Webinar script**

### **Pre-Employment Provision**

#### **Using Blended Learning in Pre-Employment Provision**

**Time: 20-30mins**

**Style: information giving with activities and questions and answers**

#### **Introduction**

Welcome to this webinar on Using Blended Learning in Pre-Employment Provision. The webinar will provide you with an opportunity to consider the use of blended learning to support your provision.

In the webinar, we will cover two main points:

- the background to blended learning
- how to make best use of blended learning

There will be set points for you to consider your current practice and to begin planning how you can work best with learners.

#### **What is blended learning?**

Blended learning is increasingly being accepted as a key way of delivering learning opportunities in a range of settings. It can be defined in many ways but is generally defined as:

A blend of classroom teaching combined with online, independent learning.

Blended learning is often used with learners who are developing their skills at Level 1 or 2 because:

- learners need to be fairly confident to learn without teacher-led activities;
- learners need to have good ICT skills to access online materials;
- learners need to be able to identify when they need help and to ask the teacher (in person or online); and
- learners need to be sufficiently self-motivated to undertake tasks outside the 'classroom.'

Blended learning can also work well for learners who:

- have difficulty attending formal classes;
- have a learning style which benefits from on-screen or online activities;
- need reinforcement activities to embed learning;
- have had negative experiences of teacher-led sessions;
- have difficulties interacting with other students; and
- have a disability which can be supported by online delivery.

Let's have a look at some definitions through these YouTube clips:

[Blended learning—the best of both worlds](#)

(1minute 8 seconds)

[Clive Shepherd's interview on blended learning](#) (selected extract)

(43minutes 39 seconds)

### **Planning considerations**

You may be using these approaches already but it is worth spending time considering the following:

- how much of the course needs to be delivered face-to-face;
- do learners prefer online or face-to-face learning;
- what quality checks will you build in to the delivery of online materials;
- can blended learning reduce the delivery costs; and
- can blended learning improve outcomes?

Voting buttons – how many of you have been a learner on a blended learning programme? **YES/NO**

Voting buttons – how many of you can think of an existing course that might be better as a blended learning programme? **YES/NO/MAYBE**

## **How do I plan a blended learning programme?**

Before designing a blended learning programme, you need to take four things into account:

- the starting point of the learners;
- the interests and needs of the learners;
- the technical requirements; and
- the skills of the delivery team.

### **Planning considerations**

To decide on the materials and pedagogy for the course, you will need to:

- undertake a thorough initial and diagnostic assessment process with the learner to gauge their starting level, strengths and weaknesses;
- this includes their English and ICT skills so that you are able to write materials at an appropriate level – both the content of the written

English and the complexity of the ICT activities;

- discuss with the learner any previous learning experiences that may positively or negatively affect the way they work through blended learning materials;
- consider how to meet general employability and specific vocational requirements with the aspirations and skills of the learner;
- ensure that you and the learners have the necessary ICT equipment and connectivity to be able to run the material you design; and
- ensure that you have a delivery team with a range of skills – technical ICT skills, learner support experience, appropriate written and spoken English.

In many cases, blended learning will be the most appropriate option but may not be the way that you have delivered courses in the past. Be prepared to experiment and to learn from the learners!

### **How can blended learning help with pre-employment skills?**

Learners coming into pre-employment programmes may have barriers to overcome based on:

- previous poor learning experiences;
- personal circumstances;
- learning difficulties and disabilities; and
- a misconception about the benefits of engaging in the programme.

Blended learning may help re-address some of these by:

- debunking some of the negative images of learning as being teacher-led and boring;
- working in a way which is more flexible for learners with chaotic or challenging personal circumstances;
- providing materials and activities in more accessible formats; and
- providing a range of 'real' materials and activities that can be easily tailored to the specific needs and interests of individuals.

Can you see how using blended learning may help to overcome some of this resistance? You may want to design materials such as:

- example payslips that explain the words and calculations used – these could be online or hard copy, selected from jobs that are of interest to individual learners;
- real Health and Safety notices linked to workshop layouts, images of Personal Protective Equipment and a risk assessment sheet. These

could be completed as a team exercise followed by industry specific research;

- a hyperlink to the Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) website to show materials about staying safe online – use this to stimulate discussion or for an activity to design a safety poster for the workplace.
- a quiz using voting buttons to show the different earning potential based on qualification levels and types;
- case studies of learners who have achieved their vocational aspirations following the course. These could be used to generate classroom discussion and to lead to further online research into chosen careers; and
- primary source examples such as work requests, stock-taking documents, complaint forms etc. These could be used in the classroom as well as being photographed/scanned and uploaded, for learners to use in tailored activities based on their particular vocational interests and skills level.

Can you think of any other examples of materials or approaches which might be useful?

## **Getting positive outcomes**

As with any programme, you will want to maximize the success rate for your learners. But, like any programme, learners may experience difficulties.

When e-learning and blended learning programmes suffer from poor completion rates, it is often due to:

- learner isolation
- lack of personal feedback
- technical problems
- lack of social interaction

*Learner support reviewed (2007) Ufi / learndirect and Kineo*

Taken from the [Move On E-tutor Guide](#). You will need to log in to access this material.

To ensure that you maximise the impact of blended learning in pre-employment provision:

- provide face-to-face support for learners before they embark on online activities – it is much easier if they know who the person is on the other side of the screen and have met other learners who they can network with online;
- establish regular online contact backed up by telephone tutorials as necessary;
- remember to match the maths, English and ICT levels of the online materials with the learner;
- use an online resource bank to tailor activities to the specific learning needs and vocational interests of learners – you can set up systems where learners choose activities based on their skills level and the career they are pursuing but you need to make sure that learners understand their progress and targets to do this effectively;
- use group sessions to reinforce online learning outcomes;
- encourage learners to network through an online learner forum;
- test out the technology before launching it and have a protocol for learners to follow if there are difficulties;
- integrate networking and learner feedback into the online activities;
- encourage learners to post their own ideas on forums or to use blogs as part of their learning activities; and
- make it fun!

## **Sources of information**

There are lots of sources of information about blended learning (often a Google search will focus in on e-learning so you might want to start there).

Try some of these and if you have an E-Guide in your organisation they may also be able to help you.

[www.jisc.ac.uk](http://www.jisc.ac.uk)

[www.elearningnetwork.org](http://www.elearningnetwork.org)

<http://archive.excellencegateway.org.uk/page.aspx?o=131207>

## **Q&A**

If you have a question, raise your hand to speak or type a question if you would rather not speak aloud.