Website context: ePioneers home → ePioneers programme

ePioneers launch meeting: extract from the notes

Extract from the notes of the meeting held on 26th July 2006

1. Introduction

EA gave information on the e-Pioneer Project – it is about good practice in the SofE being taken forward across the wider University.

The main aim is to pair/cluster groups of people together and to use technology to influence teaching, learning and administration and improve the experience of students. The plan is to move forward on these inclusive initiatives and use these projects to transfer ideas. It is a condition of the funding to disseminate guidance in an electronic or other format to the rest of the University.

Proposals will be looked at and will be funded either through the e-Pioneers project or through the VLL if they have a visual element.

MN explained that a research output was expected with research being done as the individual projects take place. EA will take a lead on researching the whole project. EA interested in looking at how we take part in this as a full e-learning School. The research agenda has not been finalised yet.

MN confirmed that every ePioneer will be allocated a Mentor to assist you to get to where you want to be.

2. e-Pioneers Ideas

The following ideas were presented at the meeting:

SH/GP
SH said that an e-learning pilot had been undertaken in the Certificate in Art History (1 student on a trial basis) Setting up the materials had been a large workload and would like to have support in doing this and funding to employ a specialist to devise suitable materials.

GP would like to extend the materials available with copies of hand-outs/links and extend the distance learning experience whilst at the same time keeping expectations realistic.

GP also interested in finding out more about WebCT in order to enhance weekly meetings held. Explore the possibility of using WebCT from home and provide small-scale enhancement for students through the creation of on-line communities.

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SC (Local History)
Attending meeting to find out what is going on and what the role of e-learning is – is somewhat sceptical and likes f2f delivery of materials.
What is the gain of delivering materials in this way?
SC needs convincing that this can work and would be interested in undertaking a project to prove it could work.
EA/MN felt that with such a broad spectrum of students core f2f teaching could be enhanced with supplemental resource available in an on-line format.

JO
Attending to find out about e-learning in her role as Student Support Officer for Postgraduates.
Interested in website information – what can be offered for support of an academic nature - bulletin board/chatroom/discussion room?
Give postgraduates opportunity to exchange ideas about language, share ideas that would be beneficial for their reading and writing in what could be their 2nd/3rd language and provide the opportunity to discuss language and conventions of writing and improve their writing and reading skills.
EA felt an on-line community could be brought together.
RP felt this could be linked with Ian McGrath and CELE to create a central on-line resource where students could find this information.

PT/DA
Would like to develop ITT across all courses. Re-usable Learning Objects and be involved in a project to develop theoretical and practical understanding of RLOs.
DA/PT/MN to look at modules that could be used across a range of courses.
Already started on the 1-year course (Masters accreditation) but would like to establish inter-changeable distance learning units.

EA felt e-China could help with this and said projects will be showcased from the ground level on the PESL website.

JP
Project on improving handling of assessment managements and electronic submission of assignments: possible bar code system for tracking assignments which would improve the student experience.
EA said this could be linked with other suggestions from ES/SR of 3 week turnaround for marking of assignments.

RW
Interested in exploring the use of 'podcasts', University of Melbourne, Australia offers lectures as podcasts. RW would like to set up a project linking Institute of Education, Kigali, Rwanda with SofE to teach sensitive issues.
Related low tec application of radio broadcasts for teacher education (RP to join RW on this).
GP felt this method could offer more for tutorial discussion time as notes could be read ahead of time and time spent in f2f contact would be for more discursive work.

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RP said that some universities have teamed up with Apple to offer this and different models are used - podcasts offer the opportunity to present Key Issues/question in a more fun way.

RW also interested in video podcasts.

PT said that some sort of Flexible Model could extend thinking.

RP

Teaching on the MA in English Language – International course and the students are desperate to get more teaching practice. The course is too top down and not practical enough. RP wants to change the course so it gives opportunity to do micro-teaching – have a learning circle sessions following by videoed micro-teaching sessions which are put on line (short clip edited to 1 key minute) to offer students quick turnaround and feedback. Theory could be followed up by practice and clips viewed again at a later stage in the course.

Hold a video clip archive of certain topics.

RP is keen for a TLO (Teaching Learning Observatory) link and desperate for videos of classrooms in action. RW confirmed that old TLO lesson data is being digitalised.

PT felt video editing is a logistical problem. RW reported that Barcelona students video edited their own projects by being provided with the technical skills by mentors (MN and Lynda Carter). EA said mentors could again be used to help teach students to do the work.

RW said that video based projects were now built into assessment in School of Geography, contact Michelle Clark (helped by IS video unit) and students presented their work as video based projects.

RW confirmed that a Video-editing Suite is planned for SofE (part of VLL) and should be available on a booking system for use by all.

RP also keen to link with ICE (Interactive Classroom Explorer) project and will be contacting Colin Harrison.

RP/JO may be able to join together using the mobile TLO in British classrooms.

3. Next Steps

3.1 Pro-Formas
MN asked all to submit pro-formas electronically by 28 July. A grid will be compiled of the proposals and these will be circulated to the e-Learning Strategy Group.

3.2 Mentors
MN emphasised that mentors would be found and that this was not something to worry about.

3.3 Research Process
EA confirmed that the research process would evaluate your bit of the project – this should not take up too much time to give a good output.

EA gave an example of her "blogging" trial which took 10 weeks from start to finish and involved 2 PGCE tutors with a full-time PGCE group. Students were able to

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support each other on line through a web-based diary. Set up time a couple of days.
Wrote report at the end of the 10 weeks period to assess effectiveness of the "blog".

3.4 Buying time out
EA confirmed that buying out time is possible and can be flexible.
EA thanked everyone for attending and for the wealth of ideas submitted.
EA confirmed e-Learning Strategy group will be in touch with all interested in
participating in an e-Pioneers project after the summer vacation.

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