E-Learning
Zambia Project

Case Study of Innovative
Practices for Teaching
and Assessment in NI FE

E-Learning Zambia Project

South West College

Background

As part of the College's widening participation agenda, and embracing international partnerships, South West College is committed to growing its online presence and capability. The college has made its curriculum available online for national and international students. For example, we have delivered a fully online course, a Level 3 Subsidiary Diploma in Information Technology, to students in Zambia.

The Project

Direct Aid For Africa (D.A.F.A.), a local charity, initiated a programme to target students, educate them and send them to university. Although successful, it was proving too expensive to educate students in this way and many graduates did not return to Zambia, but took jobs elsewhere.

The challenge for South West College was to deliver vocational programmes that would help build up the local infrastructure in poverty stricken areas, for example in Health and Social Care or Information Technology.

A working group was established and the partners signed a memorandum of agreement in November 2011. Staff from the college went to Lusaka in May 2012 on a scoping exercise to determine IT requirements and establish links with a school to deliver the programme. They chose Fatima High School, Ndola. Representatives from the school visited South West College to discuss matters of curriculum. It was determined that the main stumbling block to students progressing from the school to university was the lack of access to level 3 education. So we chose a level 3 course to pilot the link and to provide this intermediate qualification.

Since then, the college has set up a computer hub in Ndola. Both staff and students have been trained on college systems and inducted into the college processes. The pilot programme began in September 2013, teaching 9 students from Ndola a Level 3 subsidiary Diploma in Information Technology.

'To provide lifelong learning opportunities for the people of the South West region and beyond through quality education and training in support of economic, social and community development'

South West College

Zambia E-Learning students taking a lesson in IT

Fatima High School, in Ndola

'E-Learning bridges the gap between the teacher and the pupil through technology, I just really enjoy it … it's really beautiful. It's the best thing that has ever happened.'

Student, Francis Mutale 2013

E-Learning Zamnia Project

They have since qualified and graduated in September 2015. Six students have completed their full diploma with five of the six students gaining a distinction. The intention is to offer them a level 4/5 programme on completion of their level 3 qualification. A second cohort of students started the Subsidiary Diploma in September 2014.

- The college now has charity status and endeavours to help those who are most vulnerable in society.

- The project promotes best practice in online teaching and learning. We keep staff informed through Staff development days and our annual curriculum conference. As a result, more members of staff are keen to be involved in online delivery and developing their curriculum content with the virtual services team to support it.

- Staff have developed a new skills set. This includes developing curriculum material for online learning; delivering online learning using online tools available such as live classrooms, blogs, wikis, live chat and overcoming the cultural challenges of teaching online.

- We now have an online teaching model that we can use to deliver other international courses in the future.

- The project enables us to share the curriculum with international partners. We hope that we can deliver this pilot scheme into other schools in the region in the near future.

- The college is extending the reach of its curriculum and establishing links with new partners in the process. The project is also capitalising on an opportunity for knowledge transfer on the international stage.

Graduation Ceremony

This is another good example of a project that is technology focused, but it is the systems and support mechanisms integrating the technology that are the basis of its success. There is no single technology that is critical to the success of this project, but the development of a co-ordinated approach that is sensitive to the environment in Zambia and encompasses consideration of social issues as well as infrastructure, that is critical to the overall success of the project and shows the sustained commitment of the college to its global work.

RSCni Awards Innovation in Teaching & Learning Runner-up 13/14 – Judges Comments

Several innovative examples of the effective delivery of blended learning programmes were observed during the inspection, including the fully online, excellent level 3 Information Technology programme delivered to a group of learners in Zambia. As a result, the college is well-placed to provide programmes of study with a significant blended learning component.

ETI Inspection Report 2014 – Grade 1

Accreditation