Presentation at UVAC York November 2008

The Inter-Disciplinary Inquiry-Based Learning Project (IDIBL)

Stephen Powell, Dr Margaret Nelson and Richard Millwood, University of Bolton

stephen.powell@bolton.ac.uk, 0120 490 3669
richard.millwood@bolton.ac.uk
margaret.nelson@bolton.ac.uk

This workshop will briefly outline the scope and design of a modular framework for HE levels 4-7 to support professional learning in the workplace. The framework covers learning, teaching and assessment and includes module descriptions that are applicable to a wide range of thematic areas of study. The approach developed enables course teams to follow an agile validation process for new programmes that are identified as being economically viable.

The Inter-Disciplinary Inquiry-Based Learning Project (IDIBL) project was initiated in August 2007 and sets out to reach students for whom traditional university courses do not fit. Within the project, innovative methods for online support, assessment and access to expertise have been adopted. It is intended that the learner is at the centre of such a design and their continuity and progression throughout lifelong learning is paramount. On the other hand, the learner is expected to focus on improvement in the workplace and thus the employers' needs are met by a frequent renegotiation by the learner to fit their organisation's or contextual needs. Changing work conditions can be catered for and effective practice sought without freezing the curriculum. The design avoids specific subject material in favour of process skills which may be applied to improve the learner's individual work practice.

When such personalisation of learning is achieved, there are new challenges for learners, employers and HEI's – this workshop will discuss what these are and how they have been successfully overcome and invite participants to question the presenters and debate the issues that arise.

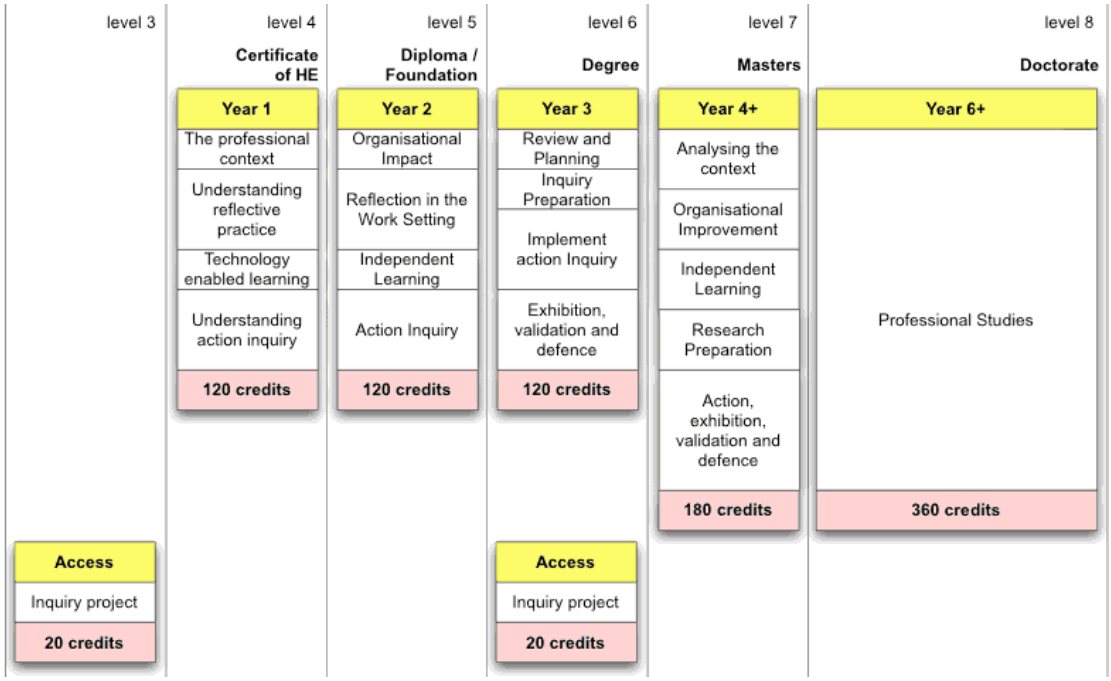
UNIVERSITY VOCATIONAL
AWARDS COUNCIL

inter-disciplinary inquiry-based learning

idibl

Stephen Powell, Richard Millwood, Mark Johnson & Margaret Nelson
University of Bolton

This workshop will briefly outline the scope and design of a modular framework for levels 3-8 to support professional learning in the workplace.



OUTLINE OF THIS WORKSHOP

When such personalisation of learning is achieved, there are new costs – this workshop will discuss what these are and how they have been successfully overcome ...

...and invite participants to question the presenters and debate the issues that arise.

30 Thursday, August 3rd, 2006 www.doncastertoday.co.uk DONCASTER FREE PRESS

Using life's challenges to learn

WOMEN

EVE Thirkle was just three months into a degree course when her son was diagnosed as autistic.

But Eve didn't panic and abandon the course.

Instead she used her studies to find out more about ten-year-old Jonathan's condition and how she could help him.

"The degree, a BA (Hons) in Learning, Technology and Research, is based around your work," said Eve, 47.

"When I started the course, I was working as a teaching assistant at Kingfisher Primary School.

"But when Jonathan was diagnosed, I gave up my job to look after him and was able to base my coursework around him."

Jonathan, a pupil at Canon Popham Primary School, has high-functioning autism. He is excellent at maths but struggles with some everyday situations.

"When I'm cross with him, he just doesn't pick up on it at all," explained Eve. "I have to tell him I'm cross and how cross I am on a scale of one to ten because he is very mathematical."

The degree course allowed her to carry out a year-long study looking at how she and husband, David, 45, an accountant at DMBC, could improve their parenting skills and change the home environment to best help Jonathan.

"It gave me a focus at a time when it was very easy to get depressed," said Eve, who recently became chairman of Doncaster Autistic Society. "It was something for me to do that made me step outside the day-to-day situation and made me feel I was doing something about it."

The qualification, offered by Anglia Ruskin University, is available for study online which was ideal for Eve in her changed circumstances.

Although the former radiographer does admit it was a steep learning curve getting to grips with the IT skills.

She said: "I started out with only slightly more than basic computer knowledge but, by the end of the course, I could produce video, web pages and sound clips."

Another bonus of the course was the virtual friends she made along the way.

"I have made some good friends online and I am looking forward to meeting them at the graduation ceremony."

Eve Thirkle, 47, of Langfield Drive, Edenthorpe, celebrates after achieving a first class degree in Learning Technology and Research. She used her work with her autistic son Jonathan, ten, as a basis for her research (S7833LR)

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2003 2004 2005 2006 2007 2008

January 2003
• Ultraversity project starts

May 2003
• Ultraversity validated

July 2003
• Ultraversity recruits 300 students

July 2006
• Ultraversity graduates 148 students

2005
• Ultraversity revalidated for 15-30 credit restructure

February 2006
• Bournemouth MA Creative Media Practice validated

August 2007
• IDIBL project starts

May 2008
• Validated new framework & Masters in Learning with Technology

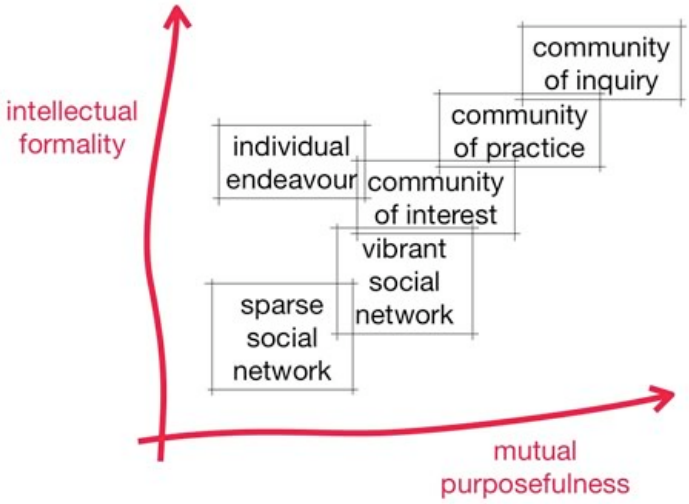
September 2008
• Recruited 9 students for Masters LwT
• Masters module is CPD for new staff in UAE

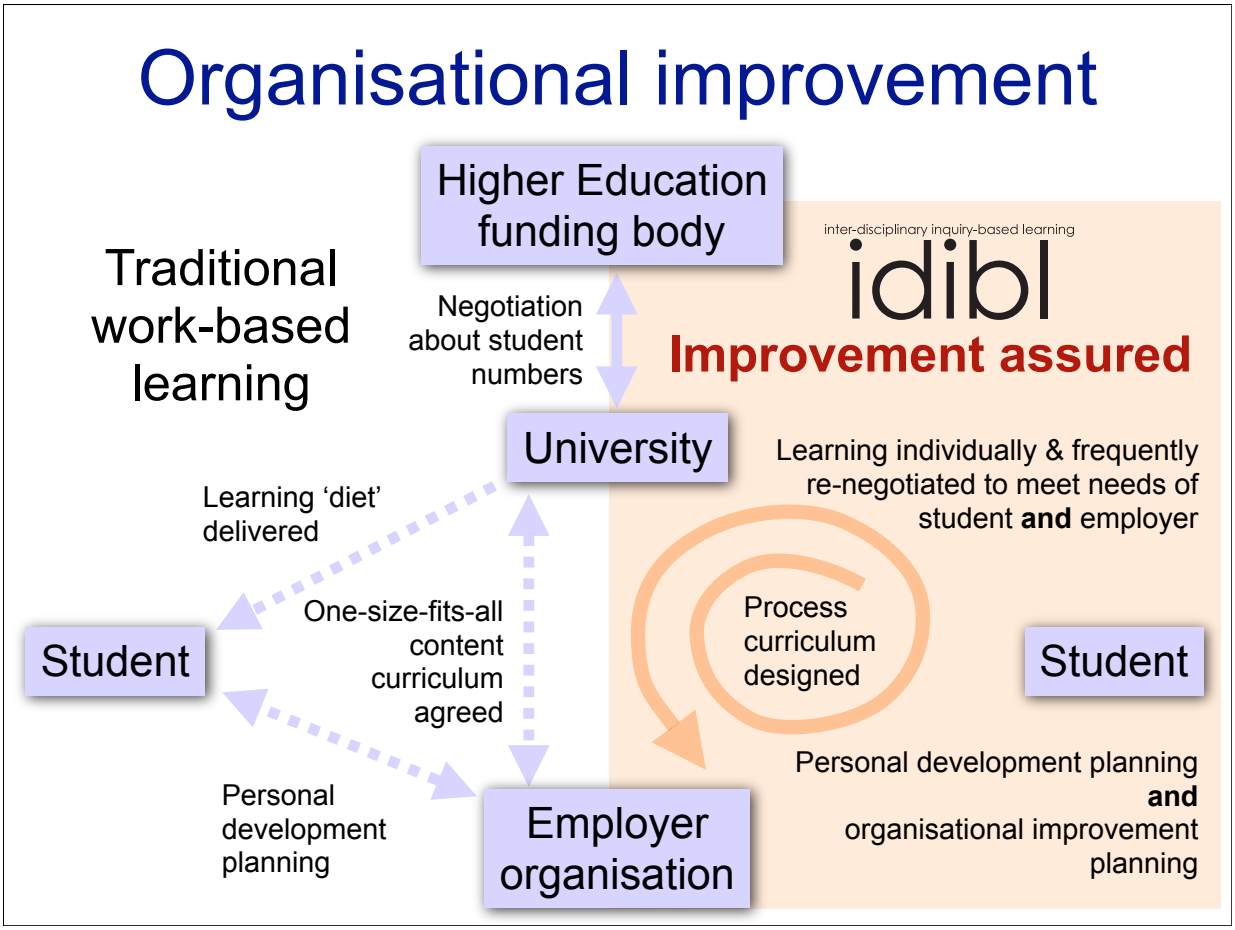
November 2008
• Validated Regeneration & Sustainable Communities
• UVAC!

Future developments
• Top-up from Foundation degree to Bachelors in Nursery Education

Within the project, innovative methods for

- online support
- assessment and
- access to expertise have been adopted.





Objective	Learning outcomes at Level 7 - the postgraduate with Masters Degree will be able to:
1. Action for improvement to create curious, evaluative and effective 'improvers' in society	Independently identify opportunities to take actions for improvement at an organisational level, systematically implement innovative solutions and critically evaluate the outcomes.
2. Scholarly research to assure the quality of improvement is based on best evidence, analysis and insight	Undertake a significant piece of research that fully and critically explores key issues demonstrating rigor in the research process.
3. Communication for effective dissemination of improved practice	Synthesize sources and communicate orally, in writing, and in appropriate media, in academic and professional contexts making well informed, coherent and persuasive arguments.
4. Application of subject and professional knowledge for depth of understanding of practice	Critically analyse and evaluate complex issues and lead reasoned argument around topics of debate or controversy drawing on knowledge at the forefront of their field including a historical perspective.
5. Learning and working with others to sustain lifelong learning and community of practice	Take a leadership role to articulate philosophies of lifelong learning, the applications of technology, and the way organisations work.
7. Organisation and policy to act on wider contexts of organisation and society	Use organisational theories to inform analysis and evaluation of their work context at a strategic level, critiquing local and national policies and develop recommendations for change.
8. Ethics to maintain integrity and respect for individuals and society	Analyse and manage the implications of ethical dilemmas including social implications of activities and work pro-actively with others to formulate solutions.
9. Technology to enhance creativity, confidence and competence with technology as a modern practitioner	Evaluate technology for its contribution to communication, co-ordination and an organisation's enterprise activities.

	Benefits for:		
Flexibility in:	**Student**	**University**	**Employer**
Time	Full time work, family, best time for learning	Timetable, staffing	No release needed
Place	As above and best place to study	No rooms, no car parking	As above
Assessment	Finding voice, creativity, technology	Retention, graduate competencies	Communicative employees
Negotiated curriculum	Motivation, perseverance, meaningfulness.	Retention, focus on process quality, relevance to society.	Relevance
Action Inquiry	Basis in 'delight' - zest and interest	Practitioner data eg collection of case studies	Effective improvement

Costs (metaphorically):

- productivity agreement - 550 hours?
- assessment - let's stop marking?
- staff development
- articulating the argument for action inquiry et al
- university enterprise systems - technical, pedagogical and administrative

CO-EDUCATE Jisc Curriculum Development Project to address systemic change issues as above

DISCUSS?...