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**Reflective Outcomes in
Asynchronous Computer Mediated
Communication:
A Case Study using a Comparative
Method**

VOLUME TWO OF TWO

Thesis submitted for the degree of PhD,

by

Aikaterini Pavlidou

**School of Education, University of Durham,
May 2011**

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: Invitation Letter to Join the On-line Forum Pilot Study

School of Education
Leazes Road, Durham, DH1 1TA, UK
Tel: 0191 334 8310 Fax: 0191 334 8311

June 2004

Dear Colleague,

Pilot Project

Thank you for agreeing to participate in Phase A (Pilot) of the research project I am about to commence as part of my studies for a Ph.D. degree at the University of Durham. I have been conducting my research under the guidance of Dr R. Coe and Prof M. S. Byram and my thesis is tentatively entitled *Asynchronous Computer Mediated Communication and Continuing Professional Development*. The context of the study is the LSDA North East and it will carry out an investigation of the collaborative dialogue deriving from both an on-line forum and a face to face setting amongst post-16 education and training policy makers and practitioners. The attached notes describe the project in a little more detail.

The reason I am very keen to work on this project is because myself and other colleagues as well came to identify a need for more opportunities to interact with peers whilst at the same time *removing boundaries* having to do with **where** and **when** to collaborate as well as with **who** can participate. As such, I have designed an on-line forum (www.e-developmentnetwork.com), which I am asking you to visit and complete the on-line registration in order to be able to log-in. At this point, I would like you to carefully examine the layout, content, and usability of the forum and comment on any improvement that might need to be made. Please feel free to use the forum for communicating with other registered members, and to forward this request to other colleagues that you feel they might be interested in this project.

After I have conducted the study, I plan to post a paper presenting my findings to all of the participants in the project. I would be happy to share with you any new experiences I gain concerning methodology issues of conducting research for the purpose of investigating on-line communities. I can be reached on 0191-2303833 / 07966283040 or alternatively please email me at aikaterini.pavlidou@durham.ac.uk. Please feel free to contact me with any questions, comments, or concerns that you might have.

Thank you for helping with what I hope you will agree is a very timely and important initiative which needs 'grass roots' information from all practitioners involved in post-16 education and training sector. I look forward to interacting with all of you.

Yours sincerely,

Kate Pavlidou.

NOTES & GLOSSARY SHEET









What is this research project about? This project seeks to examine whether, and, if yes, how continuing professional development (CPD) can be promoted amongst practitioners via on-line discussion (asynchronous computer mediated communication). The context of the research study is the Learning and Skills Development Agency (LSDA) in the North East region. The participants in the study will be practitioners in the field of post-16 education and training. This case study will carry out an investigation of the collaborative dialogue deriving from both an on-line forum and a face to face setting within the population of the registered members of the LSDA North East.

Why is the researcher interested in it? The reason I am very keen to work on this project is because myself and other colleagues as well came to identify a need for more opportunities to interact with peers whilst at the same time *removing boundaries* having to do with **where** and **when** to collaborate as well as with **who** can participate. I am very much interested in investigating further *instruments* that will increase accessibility and connectivity amongst practitioners and that they will provide additional opportunities for professionals to explore issues of concern and/or professional interest, express points of views and *share knowledge* with others which will be immediately available to all of us.

Why you? This pilot study covers **all** LSDA registered practitioners related to post-16 education and training sector. You have been identified as ‘in scope’ by the researcher. This study aims to cover **all** who teach, tutor, assess, instruct, demonstrate, or provide additional learning support to learners or make in general a contribution to the learning of post-16 education learners at any time of their normal working week. It covers all forms of provision –full time, part-time, day or modular release, and workplace based provision and assessment. It also covers all teachers/trainers irrespective of their employment status –full-time, fractional or part-time, sessional or contract or through an agency and volunteers/tutors. It includes managers, co-ordinators, administrators and others who encompass teaching/training of learners as an occasional, supplementary, or subsidiary part of their main duties.

Are you engaged in post-16 education / training sector? If you have received this email or it has been sent to you by a colleague then you are ‘in scope’ of this pilot study.

How do I register/log-in? Please visit the on-line forum at www.e-developmentnetwork.com or press CTRL + click to follow the link. Click on ‘**Register**’ on the top right of the web page and follow the instructions.

 [FAQ](#)
 [Search](#)
 [Memberlist](#)
 [Usergroups](#)
 [Register](#)
 [Profile](#)
 [Log in to check your private messages](#)
 [Log in](#)

For more information/questions regarding using the forum and technical related matters please click on ‘**FAQ**’ on the top left of the web page you are viewing. Please remember when providing the registration information that you are only asked to provide a username and an email address and **NOT** your real name, if you do not wish so.

Is this pilot study confidential? Yes. Any information you provide will be treated in strict confidence as my intention is to build on your constructive feedback for the aims of the research project and not to identify individuals.

What will happen at the end of the research project? After I have conducted the study I plan to post a paper presenting my findings to all of the participants in the project. I would be happy to share with you any new experiences I gain concerning methodology issues of conducting research for the purpose of investigating on-line communities. If you have any further questions please contact me on 0191 2303833 / 07966283040 or at aikaterini.pavlidou@durham.ac.uk.

What does some of the terminology used mean?

CMC (Computer Mediated Communication) → Facilitates person to person or person to group contact by means of computer network, i.e. communication via on-line tools such as email, web pages, on-line interaction or conferencing.

Asynchronous Computer Mediated Communication (ACMC) → On-line discussion occurring independent of time or location.

Chat → Same time (synchronous) web based text interaction. Typically fast moving, chat can be used for large “auditorium” events where there are presenters and audience, smaller group work meetings or social interactions, or small, one-on-one sessions. Some chat applications are now integrating voice as well as text chat.

Communities of Practice (CoPs) → “Communities of Practice are groups that emerge around a discipline or problem. They have no agenda; they are defined by the subject that engages them, not by project, rank, department, or even corporate affiliation. They are where learning and innovation occurs...”.

Edit a post → To go back and change a posting in an on-line conferencing space.

Electronic Forums → Also known as a conference, bulletin board or discussion board. An on-line discussion group where participants exchange text messages electronically, usually over the internet.

Email → Short for **electronic mail**, the transmission of messages over electronic communication networks.

Email List → (or listservs) A group email function that sends or ‘broadcasts’ a single email to a group of people.

Emoticon → Also known as *smilies*, they are keyboard characters used in combination to produce whimsical symbols representing a range of emotions. Examples are: happy ☺ and sad ☹. Emoticons are used in electronic communication to show humour and express emotions that are difficult to communicate in a text-based environment.

F2F → Short hand for ‘face-to-face’ to mean offline interaction.

Facilitator/Moderator → A person who helps a group to achieve their goals. Origin from ‘facilitate’ or to ‘make easy’.

Instant Message → A synchronous personal message sent between two users. Examples of instant messaging tools include ICQ, AOL Instant Messenger, Yahoo and MSN Messenger.

Listserve → See also *Email List*. An older technology, listserves are essentially mailing lists that enable you to send multiple copies of email by sending a single message to a central address. Some listserves are very useful; some not so.

Log-in → The process of going to a web site which requires the user to input a user name and password to get access to that space. This allows posts to be attributed to unique users and to track user progress through the discussion space.



Lurking → Someone who reads in an on-line interaction space but rarely or never posts.

Message → Text added by a user to an on-line discussion space. Also known as ‘post’.

Synchronous Interaction → (Real Time) On-line discussion occurring independent of location, but at the same time. This form of electronic communication is also called ‘chatting’ and can include audio and/or video.

Thread → A series of posts on a single topic.

APPENDIX II: Email Alert to the Research Study

Date: Tue, 21 Sep 2004 11:18:50 +0100
From: [Margaret Bennett <mbennett@lsda.org.uk>](mailto:mbennett@lsda.org.uk)
To: ["LLRN Yahoo \(E-mail\)" <LLRNNorth@yahoo.com>](mailto:LLRNNorth@yahoo.com)
Subject: [LLRNNorth] FW: CPD Research project
Part(s):  2 [CPD lsda.doc](#) application/msword 46.16 KB 

Dear Members

Please see attached from Kate.

If anyone is interested please contact Kate direct.

Regards
 Margaret

-----Original Message-----

From: aikaterini.pavlidou@durham.ac.uk
 [mailto:aikaterini.pavlidou@durham.ac.uk]
 Sent: 17 September 2004 03:24
 To: Margaret Bennett
 Cc: kate.pavlidou@netceptions.net
 Subject: CPD Research project

Dear Margaret,

Some time ago, Simon had agreed that I could email the LSDA 'yahoo groups' to ask for volunteers to participate in a research project I am conducting as part of my doctorate studies at the University of Durham.

If this is still the case, could you please forward the attached document to all LSDA members in the North East? Please let me know if this is ok and if you need more information on this.

Many thanks,
 Kate Pavlidou.

 LSDA: Improving practice, informing policy.

LSDA's mission is to improve the quality of post-16 education and training in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. We do this through research to inform policy and practice, through helping to shape and communicate education policy, and through improvement and support programmes for organisations that deliver post-16 education and training. For further information about our products and services visit our website www.LSDA.org.uk.

For general enquiries call 020 7297 9144

This e-mail and any attachments transmitted with it are confidential and intended solely for the use of the individual or entity to which they are addressed. If you have received this e-mail in error please advise the sender immediately and destroy the message and any attachments.
 #####



School of Education
Leazes Road, Durham, DH1 1TA, UK
Tel: 0191 334 8310 Fax: 0191 334 8311

September 2004

Dear Colleague,

I am writing to invite you to take part in a research project that I am conducting under the guidance of Dr R. Coe and Prof M. Byram as part of my studies for a Ph.D. degree at the University of Durham. This project aims to investigate the value of participating in an on-line forum in comparison to a face to face setting and in the context of continuing professional development for post-16 education sector policy makers and practitioners.

I have been a member of this newsgroup myself for some time now and I have attended a number of LSDA collaborative events. The reason I am very keen to work on this project is because I feel there is a need for more opportunities to interact with peers whilst at the same time *removing boundaries* having to do with **where** and **when** to collaborate as well as with **who** can participate.

I am very much interested in investigating additional 'instruments' that will increase accessibility and connectivity amongst practitioners and that they will provide more opportunities for professionals to explore issues of concern and/or professional interest, express points of views and *share knowledge* with others which will be immediately available to all of us.

As a token of appreciation for your participation you will enter a prize draw where 10 people will win **£25** each. After I have conducted the study I plan to post a paper presenting my findings to all of the participants in the project. I would be happy to share with you any new experiences I gain concerning methodology issues of conducting research for the purpose of investigating on-line communities.

If you are interested in taking part in this project or if you would like to discuss details of the study further please contact me at aikaterini.pavlidou@durham.ac.uk or on 07966283040 by **Thursday the 30th of September**. Please feel free to forward this request to other colleagues that you feel they might be interested in this project.

I appreciate your assistance and feedback with this matter. Thank you very much for your time and interest.

Yours sincerely,

Kate Pavlidou.

APPENDIX III: Email Enquiry about the Research Study

N.B. Please note that the enquirer's full name and email address have been removed to address confidentiality matters.

Date: Thu, 23 Sep 2004 09:34:29 +0100
From: [EH]
To: ["aikaterini.pavlidou@durham.ac.uk"](mailto:aikaterini.pavlidou@durham.ac.uk) <aikaterini.pavlidou@durham.ac.uk>
Subject: CPD Research Project

Kate,

I'm interested in helping you in your research project. Before I commit myself to getting fully involved could you send me details of how you plan to carry out the research, what the timescales are and what is involved for me if I say yes?

[EH]

The original of this email was scanned for viruses by the Government Secure Intranet (GSi) virus scanning service supplied exclusively by Energis in partnership with MessageLabs.

On leaving the GSi this email was certified virus-free.

APPENDIX IV: Initial Contact with the Sample of the Study

Date: Sun, 17 Oct 2004 23:11:12 +0100
From: ded3ap@smtphost-rs.dur.ac.uk
To:
Subject: Re: research project
Part(s):  2 [The Project Information Sheet](#) application/msword 45.16 KB 
 3 [Notes & Glossary Sheet.doc](#) application/msword 47.90 KB 
 4 [Consent Form.doc](#) application/msword 44.48 KB 
 5 [Initial Questionnaire.doc](#) application/msword 85.53 KB 

Dear Colleague,

Thank you for agreeing to participate in the research project I am conducting as part of my studies at the University of Durham. Please find attached

1. the 'Project Information Sheet'
2. the 'Notes & Glossary Sheet'
3. the 'Consent Form', and
4. the 'Initial Questionnaire'

which I will kindly ask you to read carefully and complete as appropriate, and return to me at your earliest convenience.

If you have any further queries, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Kindest regards,

Kate Pavlidou.

07966283040

0191-2301439

aikaterini.pavlidou@durham.ac.uk

APPENDIX V: The Project Information Sheet

School of Education
Leazes Road, Durham, DH1 1TA, UK
Tel: 0191 334 8310 Fax: 0191 334 8311

October 2004

Dear Colleague,

Project Information Sheet

Thank you for agreeing to participate in the research project I am conducting as part of my studies at the University of Durham. This project will carry out an investigation of an on-line and a face to face discussion to identify the value of participating in an on-line forum. The following describes the methodology of the project in a little more detail.

The context of the study is the Learning and Skills Development Agency (LSDA) in the North East region. The colleagues who agree to participate in this project will be initially asked to fill in a short questionnaire. This will enable me to gather appropriate data in order to identify those significant characteristics that appear within the participants of the study (e.g. demographic information). After identifying those, I will divide the participants into two comparable groups. The first group will participate in an on-line forum discussion for a period of approximately 6 weeks and the second one in a face to face discussion. After all identifying information is removed from electronic messages and transcripts, I will categorise and analyse the dialogue produced by comparing the face to face dialogue with the on-line discourse.

In order for me to identify the value of participating in an on-line discussion, I will then ask the colleagues who participated in the on-line forum to fill in a short questionnaire to comment on their experience of collaborating on-line and make any suggestions for future improvement.

As a token of appreciation for your participation in this study you will enter a prize draw where 10 people will win **£25** each. After I have conducted the study I plan to post a paper presenting my findings to all of the participants in the project. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have further questions. I can be reached on 0191-2301439 /07966283040 or alternatively at aikaterini.pavlidou@durham.ac.uk.

Thank you for helping with what I hope you will agree is a very timely and important initiative which needs 'grass roots' information from all practitioners involved in post-16 education and training sector.

I look forward to interacting with all of you.

Yours sincerely,

Kate Pavlidou.

N.B. This *Information Sheet* is 'Approved by Durham University's Ethics Advisory Committee'.

APPENDIX VI: The Notes & Glossary Sheet

NOTES & GLOSSARY SHEET

What is this research project about? This project seeks to examine whether, and, if yes, how continuing professional development (CPD) may be promoted by means of participating in an on-line collaborative discussion (asynchronous computer mediated communication). The context of the research study is the Learning and Skills Development Agency (LSDA) in the North East district, a strategic national resource for the development of policy and practice in post-16 education and training. The participants in the study will be practitioners and/or policy makers in the field of post-16 education and training.

Why is the researcher interested in this? The reason I am very keen to work on this project is because myself and other colleagues as well came to identify a need for more opportunities to interact with peers whilst at the same time *removing boundaries* having to do with **where** and **when** to collaborate as well as with **who** can participate. I am very much interested in investigating further 'instruments' that will increase accessibility and connectivity and that they will provide more opportunities for professionals to explore issues of concern and/or professional interest, express points of views and *share knowledge* with others which will be immediately available to all of us.

Why you? This study covers **all** registered LSDA practitioners related to post-16 education and training sector. You have been identified as 'in scope' by the researcher. This study aims to cover **all** who teach, tutor, assess, instruct, demonstrate, or provide additional learning support to learners or make any other direct contribution to the learning of post-16 learners at any time of their normal working week. It covers all forms of provision: full time, part-time, day or modular release, and workplace based provision and assessment. It also covers all teachers/trainers irrespective of their employment status: full-time, fractional or part-time, sessional or contract or through an agency and volunteers/tutors. It includes managers, co-ordinators, administrators and others who encompass teaching/training of learners as an occasional, supplementary, or subsidiary part of their main duties.

Are you engaged in post-16 education / training sector? If you have received this email or it has been sent to you by a colleague then you are 'in scope' of this study.

Is this study confidential? Yes. Any information you provide will be treated in strict confidence as my intention is to build on your constructive feedback for the aims of the research project and not to identify individuals.

What will happen at the end of the research project? After I have conducted the study I plan to post a paper presenting my findings to all of the participants in the project. I would be happy to share with you any new experiences I gain concerning methodology issues of conducting research for the purpose of investigating on-line communities. If you have any further questions please contact me on 0191 2301439 / 07966283040 or at aikaterini.pavlidou@durham.ac.uk.

What does some of the terminology used in the computer communication mode mean?

CMC (Computer Mediated Communication) → Facilitates person to person or person to group contact by means of computer network, i.e. communication via on-line tools such as email, web pages, on-line interaction or conferencing.

Asynchronous Computer Mediated Communication (ACMC) → On-line discussion occurring independent of time or location.

Chat → Same time (synchronous) web based text interaction. Typically fast moving, chat can be used for large “auditorium” events where there are presenters and audience, smaller group work meetings or social interactions, or small, one-on-one sessions. Some chat applications are now integrating voice as well as text chat.

Communities of Practice (CoPs) → ‘Communities of Practice are groups that emerge around a discipline or problem. They have no agenda; they are defined by the subject that engages them, not by project, rank, department, or even corporate affiliation. They are where learning and innovation occurs...’.

Edit a post → To go back and change a posting in an on-line conferencing space.

Electronic Forums → Also known as a conference, bulletin board or discussion board. An on-line discussion group where participants exchange text messages electronically, usually over the internet.

Email → Short for **electronic mail**, the transmission of messages over electronic communication networks.

Email List → (or listservs) A group email function that sends or ‘broadcasts’ a single email to a group of people.

Emoticon → Also known as *smilies*, they are keyboard characters used in combination to produce whimsical symbols representing a range of emotions. Examples are: happy ☺ and sad ☹. Emoticons are used in electronic communication to show humour and express emotions that are difficult to communicate in a text-based environment.

F2F → Short hand for ‘face-to-face’ to mean offline interaction.

Facilitator/Moderator → A person who helps a group to achieve their goals. Origin form ‘facilitate’ or to ‘make easy’.

Instant Message → A synchronous personal message sent between two users. Examples of instant messaging tools include ICQ, AOL Instant Messenger, Yahoo and MSN Messenger.

Listservs → See also Email Lists. An older technology, listservs are essentially mailing lists that enable you to send multiple copies of email by sending a single message to a central address. Some listservs are very useful; some not so.

Log-in → The process of going to a web site which requires the user to input a user name and password to get access to that space. This allows posts to be attributed to unique users and to track user progress through the discussion space.

Lurking → Someone who reads in an on-line interaction space but rarely or never posts.

Message → Text added by a user to an on-line discussion space. Also known as ‘post’.

Synchronous Interaction → (Real Time) On-line discussions occurring independent of location, but at the same time. This form of electronic communication is also called ‘chatting’ and can include audio and/or video.

Thread → A series of posts on a single topic.

APPENDIX VII: The Consent Form

Asynchronous Computer Mediated Communication and CPD

*Please cross out
as necessary*

Have you read the Subject Information Sheet? YES / NO

Have you had an opportunity to ask questions and discuss the study? YES / NO

Have you received satisfactory answers to all of your questions? YES / NO

Have you received enough information about the study? YES / NO

Who have you spoken to? Dr/Mr/Mrs/Ms/Prof.

Do you understand that you are free to withdraw from the study: YES / NO

- * at any time and
- * without having to give a reason for withdrawing and
- * without affecting your position in the University?

Signed **Date**
(NAME IN BLOCK LETTERS)

Signature of witness **Date**
(NAME IN BLOCK LETTERS)

I have been given information about the research project and the way in which my contribution will be used. It has been explained to me how the recordings will be kept confidential unless I give permission for my name to be used. My contribution will be kept safely and securely with access only to those with permission from the researcher.

Please cross out as necessary

YES/NO I give my permission for the contribution I am about to make for the above project to be used for research purposes only (including research publications and reports) **with** strict preservation of anonymity.

I hereby assign the copyright in my contribution to: **AIKATERINI PAVLIDOU**

APPENDIX VIII: The Initial Questionnaire



School of Education
Leazes Road, Durham, DH1 1TA, UK
Tel: 0191 334 8310 Fax: 0191 334 8311

October 2004

Dear Colleague,

Initial Questionnaire

To meet the demands of the initial stage of the present research project, I would like to obtain some information about yourself to help me identify essential characteristics of the participants in this study (e.g. demographic information). This information will be treated confidentially and will never be used to identify you personally.

For this purpose, I have enclosed a short questionnaire and I would be most grateful if you could complete and return it to me by email or post at your earliest convenience. I anticipate that the questionnaire should take no more than 10 minutes of your time.

Completed questionnaires should be returned either via email to aikaterini.pavlidou@durham.ac.uk or by post to

Kate Pavlidou
1st Floor
11 Nelson Street
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE1 5AN

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require additional information on any of the above.

Yours sincerely,

Kate Pavlidou.

Initial Questionnaire

Please answer the following questions by crossing the answer that comes closest to your view.
Remember that your responses are strictly confidential.

1. What is your gender?Female Male **2. Within which age category do you fall?**18-25 41-45 26-30 46-50 31-35 51-55 36-40 56+ **3. Which category best describes your institution/organisation (please cross one)?**FE College Local authority Community and voluntary Private

Other (please specify) _____

4. Which one of the following best describes your position (please cross one)?Basic Skills Tutor ESOL Tutor Lecturer Coordinator Manager

Other (please specify) _____

5. Which subject area do you specialize in (please cross one)?Literacy Numeracy ESOL ICT Key Skills

Other (please specify) _____

6. What is the highest level of education you have attained (please cross one)?Level 2 Level 3 Degree Masters

Other (please specify) _____

7. Do you use a computer for your personal work?Yes No If you have answered **No** to this question, please proceed to question 9**8. What type of operating system do you use?**MS Windows 98 MS Windows XP I don't know

Other (please specify) _____

9. How would you rate your computer skills?Expert Good Fair Novice None **10. Do you have regular access to a computer connected to the internet?**Yes No **11. For which one of the following do you use the internet most often (please cross one)?**Work related purposes Research The news Socializing

Other (please specify) _____

12. Have you ever participated in an on-line forum?Yes No

If you have answered **No** to this question, please proceed to question 15

APPENDIX IX: Invitation Letter to Join the On-line Forum Group



School of Education
Leazes Road, Durham, DH1 1TA, UK
Tel: 0191 334 8310 Fax: 0191 334 8311

November 2004

Dear Colleague,

Invitation to Join the On-line Forum Discussion: www.e-developmentnetwork.com

Thank you for your prompt response to my recently emailed 'Initial Questionnaire' document. I can now confirm that you have been allocated to participate in **Phase B: On-line Forum Discussion** of the research project I am conducting as part of my postgraduate studies at the University of Durham.

As such, I have built an on-line forum www.e-developmentnetwork.com which I will kindly ask you to visit and fill in the registration form as required in order to be able to log-in. The registration will take no more than a couple of minutes and you should be able to log-in straight away. More information on '**How do I register**' may be found in the attached '**Notes & Glossary**' handout alongside some useful Health and Safety related information on working with 'Visual Displays Units' (e.g. computers).

As soon as you log-in, please spend a few minutes exploring the on-line forum and the threads/discussion topics. Please allow your thoughts to unfold as you respond to the pre-existing posts but do feel free to **create new threads and/or posts** in order to initiate discussion about other issues of concern, since the purpose of this forum is to bring practitioners together as it would normally happen in a face to face conference but on this occasion in an e-setting.

This forum has been designed solely for the purposes of the specific research project and I am asking for your on-line participation for a period of approximately 8 weeks commencing on Friday 12:11:2004. There are no rules as to when or how often you need to visit the on-line forum. This is entirely up to you. However, I will kindly ask for your active participation instead of that of 'lurking', i.e. just observing and/or reading other participants' posts. May I also take this opportunity and emphasize that your involvement in terms of posting messages on the on-line forum will be of great significance to the present study and that, by sharing your thoughts and experiences with the rest of us, you will make a significant contribution to the value of the specific collaborative on-line setting.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any further queries on 0191-2303833 / 07966283040 or alternatively please email me at aikaterini.pavlidou@durham.ac.uk.

I look forward to e-interacting with all of you.

Yours sincerely,

Kate Pavlidou.

NOTES & GLOSSARY SHEET

General Questions

How do I register/log-in? Please visit the on-line forum at

www.e-developmentnetwork.com or press CTRL + click to follow the link. Click on **'Register'** on the top right of the web page and then follow the instructions.

[FAQ](#) [Search](#) [Memberlist](#) [Usergroups](#) [Register](#)
[Profile](#) [Log in to check your private messages](#) [Log in](#)

Please remember that there is no need to use your real name when you are asked to fill in the **Registration Form** but you may choose a 'nickname' instead, i.e. you are only asked to provide a username and a valid email address and **NOT** your real name, if you do not wish so. The registration information is needed for security purposes only.

For more information/questions regarding using the forum and related technical matters please click on **FAQ** on the top left of the web page you are viewing.

Is this study confidential? Yes. Any contribution you make in the on-line discussion will be treated in strict confidence as my intention is to build on your constructive feedback for the aims of the research project.

What will happen at the end of the research project? After I have conducted the study I plan to post a paper presenting my findings to all of the participants in the project. I would be happy to share with you any new experiences I gain concerning methodology issues of conducting research for the purpose of investigating on-line communities.

If you have any further questions please contact me on 0191 2303833 / 07966283040 or at aikaterini.pavlidou@durham.ac.uk.

What does some of the terminology used mean?

CMC (Computer Mediated Communication) → Facilitates person to person or person to group contact by means of computer network, i.e. communication done via on-line tools such as email, web pages, on-line interaction or conferencing.

Asynchronous Computer Mediated Communication (ACMC) → On-line discussion occurring independent of time or location.

Chat → Same time (synchronous) web based text interaction. Typically fast moving, chat can be used for large "auditorium" events where there are presenters and audience, smaller group work meetings or social interactions, or small, one-on-one sessions. Some chat applications are now integrating voice as well as text chat.

Communities of Practice (CoPs) → 'Communities of Practice are groups that emerge around a discipline or problem. They have no agenda; they are defined by the subject that engages them, not by project, rank, department, or even corporate affiliation. They are where learning and innovation occurs...'

Edit a post → To go back and change a posting in an on-line conferencing space.

Electronic Forums → Also known as a conference, bulletin board or discussion board. An on-line discussion group where participants exchange text messages electronically, usually over the Internet.

Email → Short for **electronic mail**, the transmission of messages over electronic communication networks.

Email List → (or listservs) A group email function that sends or 'broadcasts' a single email to a group of people.

Emoticon → Also known as *smilies*, they are keyboard characters used in combination to produce whimsical symbols representing a range of emotions. Examples are: happy ☺ and sad ☹. Emoticons are used in electronic communication to show humour and express emotions that are difficult to communicate in a text-based environment.

F2F → Short hand for 'face-to-face' to mean offline interaction.

Facilitator/Moderator → A person who helps a group to achieve their goals. Origin from 'facilitate' or to 'make easy'.

Instant Message → A synchronous personal message sent between two users. Examples of instant messaging tools include ICQ, AOL Instant Messenger, Yahoo and MSN Messenger.

Listserve → See also Email Lists. An older technology, listserves are essentially mailing lists that enable you to send multiple copies of email by sending a single message to a central address. Some listserves are very useful; some not so.

Log-in → The process of going to a web site which requires the user to input a user name and password to get access to that space. This allows posts to be attributed to unique users and to track user progress through the discussion space.

Lurking → Someone who reads in an on-line interaction space but rarely or never posts.

Message → Text added by a user to an on-line discussion space. Also known as 'post'.

Synchronous Interaction → (Real Time) On-line discussion occurring independent of location, but at the same time. This form of electronic communication is also called 'chatting' and can include audio and/or video.

Thread → A series of posts on a single topic.

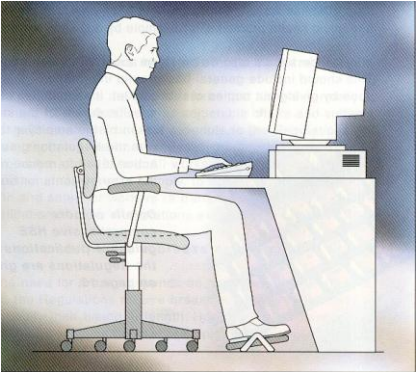
**DURHAM UNIVERSITY
OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY OFFICE**

D.S.E. Assessment Form

Name of User.....Date

Occupation.....

Risk Factor	Yes (to questions in Guidance note)	No	Action Required	Action Implemented
1. Screen / Display				
2. Keyboard				
3. Desk / Workstation				
4. Chair				
5. Posture				
6. Layout				
7. Lighting				
8. Heating / Ventilation				
9. Work Routine				
10. Accessories				
11. General comments				



(N.B. Please refer to the guidance notes below to complete the assessment form).

User _____

Signature _____

**DURHAM UNIVERSITY
OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY OFFICE**

D.S.E. Assessment Form - Guidance for Completion













The completion of an appropriate work station assessment can identify potential problems and the subsequent implementation of the agreed action plan can hopefully prevent some of the health problems associated with the use of DSE.

It is essential that all DSE users help reduce the risks to themselves by checking their workstations each time they use them, following sensible work routines and reporting any problems or difficulties that they may have.

The following information is designed to aid in the completion of the workstation assessment document, identifying possible problem areas.

1. **Screen / Display** – Is the monitor fully adjustable? Is the height appropriate? Are the images clear?
2. **Keyboard** – Is it adjustable? Is it detachable? Are there separate numerical keys?
3. **Desk / Workstation** – Is the height of the desk high enough to allow freedom of movement underneath? Is it in good condition? Is it large enough? Does the surface have a matt finish?
4. **Chair** – Is it multi – adjustable? Does it have a five star base? Is it deep enough? Is the back high enough? Is the weight capacity enough (usually max. 19stones)? Is it in good condition?
5. **Posture / Layout** – Is there sufficient space between the monitor and the forehead? Is the monitor directly in front of the user? Is the monitor high enough so the eyes are cast down to view? Are the arms bent at 90° at the elbow? Is the work area arranged to avoid over stretching?
6. **Lighting** – Is there sufficient light to work with? Is the screen free from glare? Is it at 90° to any window? Are blinds needed / supplied?
7. **Heating / Ventilation** – Is the environment comfortable? Is there access to natural ventilation?
8. **Work Routine** – Are regular breaks taken? Is work arranged to allow changes in activity?
9. **Accessories** – Is a footrest required? Is document holder required?
10. **General comments** – Is the equipment regularly checked? Is the work area free from trailing cables?

APPENDIX X: On-line Forum Index

Communities of Practice Forum	Topics	Posts	Last Post
General			
 Announcements Read me first before posting anywhere!	2	2	27 Jun 2004 02:09 am admin →
E-Discussion			
 Intensive Provision Discussion Flexible delivery to meet employer/employee needs, developing self outreach, vocational programmes, work placement and...	1	1	10 Oct 2004 11:52 pm admin →
 Planning, Delivery and Quality Discussion around planning and funding, quality and training, the workplace, research and development and other related issues.	6	6	9 Oct 2004 11:52 pm admin →
 Working with Job Centre Plus, LSC and other agencies Any news,updates or concerns?	2	2	10 Oct 2004 11:52 pm admin →
 Teaching, Training and Learning Strategies,learners,assessment,accreditation and other.	5	5	10 Oct 2004 11:52 pm admin →
 Teacher and Teacher Trainer Education Qualifications, training for mentors and volunteers, teacher materials and training articles.	3	3	8 Oct 2004 11:52 pm admin →
 Reflections/Various Topics and concerns that might not fit in any other forum.	1	1	10 Oct 2004 11:52 pm admin →
News and Highlights			
 International/National/Local Information about events, what's on, daily updates and highlights.	1	1	10 Oct 2004 11:52 pm admin →
 Publications/Surveys Let us in on any breaking news...	1	1	10 Oct 2004 11:52 pm admin →
The B-log			
 Fun Area The B-log, an informal area for socializing on line.	1	1	27 Jun 2004 02:09 am admin →
Help			
 Questions Need help or advice? Pose a question and see if anyone can help!	1	1	27 Jun 2004 12:15 pm admin →
 Technical Support Here you can ask questions if you have difficulties using this forum.	0	0	27 Jun 2004 07:38 am admin →

APPENDIX XI: On-line Forum Transcript Sample

N.B. To aid comprehension when looking into the participants' posts below, the messages have been transcribed with the order and under the relevant discussion context they were posted. **Names of the participants are not given fully and in the original; instead, pseudonyms and their initials are being used.**

Topic: What motivates adults to learn?

There has been lots of discussion around 'Successful participation' and 'Widening adult participation' (LSC, 2003) So....what motivates adults to learn? Please share your thoughts with all of us. -K

MESSAGE 1

Last year I had a very diverse timetable and found myself teaching young adults, (16-19) and older return to learning mature adults, (45-50) The common factors found on entry were that they were hoping to gain qualifications for nursery nursing and all expressed a fear of reading out from a book to young children in the nursery. Teaching basic skills this is problem faced by many. Generally I felt that some of the younger students had behaviour problems and somehow lacked fundamental communication skills and this impaired to some degree their attitude to taking responsibility for their learning. It is difficult not to compare the two ages of learners but in this instance the older ones appeared to have the necessary social skills but because of prior negative learning experiences lacked confidence and self belief even though I believed they could succeed. The key here was that strategies have to be devised to enable students to take a responsible attitude to their learning which is diverse and ensures it is an enjoyable experience, (quite a challenge!). What are other members experiences of working with various age groups and how to improve motivation? -S

MESSAGE 2

Yes, culture comes into play here..

If a young adult learner does not have the necessary life, social and communication skills thus lacking self belief and self esteem then they could well struggle to communicate the complexity of their thoughts as a result of lacking the confidence to do so in a professional and/or academic environment. . This can lead to negative learning experiences and the potential for the student to drop out.

Even dealing with the paper work and academic speak that many are confronted with on their return to education can be extremely daunting experience.

Of course, much of the above also applies to older adult learners too but these, in some instances, may well possess the confidence learnt through experience to cope.

Also, older learners may be more motivated to be in the classroom environment more than younger learners. This might be because the older learner wishes to treat the learning experience as much as a social as well as professional or educational experience. -D

MESSAGE 3

I have recently graduated with a PGCE with enables me to teach in further education. How do I go about finding out about vacancies in the F.E. sectors, particular basic skills? This would go beyond the usual newspaper ads and vacancies on web-sites. Desb37

Topic: Blended Learning

"Blended learning provides the best opportunities for learning transition from classroom to elearning. Blended learning involves classroom (or face-to-face) and online learning. This method is very effective for adding efficiency to classroom instruction and permitting increased discussion or information review outside of classrooms. For example, a new product release may be communicated to sales staff through a three-hour workshop, followed by online resources and discussions for continued learning (without significantly impacting the work activities of the sales force). The rallying cry of educational techno-prophets of the late 90's ("soon we won't need instructors, we'll learn everything online on our own time") has given way to the reality that learning is a social process, requiring instructor direction and facilitation. Blended learning utilizes the best of classrooms with the best of online learning". Would you agree with the above statement? -K

MESSAGE 4

I am currently working with blended learning materials with a group of professions working on a Leadership and Management qualification. The information is useful, especially for distance learning purposes. This course is delivered through Wolverhampton University and the blended learning materials are available both on-line and through CD roms. There has been a problem with the CD Roms and this can cause a loss of confidence with those who are using them. Nevertheless, they seem to be popular and a very good way of sending out qualities of information. regards -C.

MESSAGE 5

Hi Caroline, Hi Shirl!
Yes, I do it a lot too - I have two student teachers at the moment who fall into this category I think, plus another via distance. BG

MESSAGE 6

Hi Bob, good to hear from you on this site.
So if we are all mentoring at some stage in our working lives, I wonder how this vital source of teacher support can be better recognised and developed?
The demands for additional training and qualifications within FE and ACL work are putting tremendous pressure on already well qualified staff. whilst these developments are vital to up-skill the teaching workforce I can see senior part-time staff leaving in their droves over the next 5yrs or so. The Service will be poorer for this mass departure. I wonder if developing the mentoring system to overcome the issues might help regards to all -C.

Topic: Mentoring in FE**MESSAGE 7**

I wonder how many teachers have had access to a named mentor in the workplace and how valuable the experience was?
What do others think are the pros and cons involved, (a) for the mentor and (b) for the mentee?
Regards SD

MESSAGE 8

I have been in the situation of being a mentor on a number of occasions.
Whilst this is **interesting it is also demanding**, requiring tact and diplomacy! Comments and advice need to be clearly set out and evidenced, especially if comments are less than favourable!
It is also **rewarding** to be part of someone else's development and both side learn from the experience. -C

MESSAGE 9

I too have mentored staff and students and I find the key words are too give fair advice, document targets, action plans and provide realistic targets. Where I find that mentoring programmes are apt to fall short is the time allocated, (if any!) and support for the mentor. Clear guidelines on respective roles and responsibilities are often lacking, often referred to as giving the parties concerned a "blank canvas." I wish that there was clear funding for this...if done properly it is so valuable o CPD. -S.

Topic: Reflections-Variou**MESSAGE 10**

Hi folks
and thanks Kate for allowing me to participate-even that late! 😊
I can tell there is some interesting topics for discussion around here.
However.. from what I've read people seem to express opinions at different intervals and there is a lack of some kind of continuumand responses? I suppose professionals in UK are not really used to chatting over the net...or is it just us in the education sector??? It would be interesting to hear how the other colleagues feel about it. -M.

Topic: Who Killed Literary Reading?

"There is a point here. On more than one occasion I've stood at the news stand in an airport or a bus terminal looking at the selection of books; nothing better than a good read while travelling. And yet I am faced with nothing but pap - Danielle Steele occupies half the shelf, the magazine section is dominated by fashion and entertainment fluff, and the news consists of the seven second sound-bite called USA Today. Science? Nope, filled with astrology and fad diet books. To heck with it; I'll play Civ III on the computer (which has the odd distinction of being more historically accurate than the historical novels on the shelves (much less the Disneyfied version of things").

By Carlin Romano, Chronicle of Higher Education, July 23, 2004

<http://chronicle.com/free/v50/i46/46b01301.htm>

-K

MESSAGE 11

Has anyone had experience of learners with low basic skills being completely embarrassed and bein challenged when requested to read out loud. Some students of mine were expected to read in their role whilst on placement as trainee classroom assistants in front of staff and pupils at school. Surely the way round this would be to ensure that discreet and accurate assessment of the level of basic skills at the college providing the necessary NVQ's studys and individual needs being sensitively addressed for students.

Reading skills are very relevant and can be achievable, once again learners need relevant support and guidance.

My comment to this forum is: Does embarrassment stop the enjoyment of reading and how, as teachers can we best assist our students...any ideas or personal experiences to share? -S.

MESSAGE 12

I think embarrassment can stop enjoyment of reading fi you are expected tp read out loud in class with a room full of strangers stairing at you.

I think one to one reading exercises that interest, as well as relevant material for the student to take home and read at leisure is the common sense approach. This might also help to improve other areas such as vocabulary, spelling and even speaking. -D.

Topic:

Dear all

First of all best wishes for 2005 😊!

It's been sometime now that most of you have kindly agreed to register and interact in this online forum and I thank you very much for this.

I understand that you were probably most busy with workload, inspections, plus Christmas holidays etc but I would still like you opinion on what you feel is working well for you and what you feel isn't working through participating actively or just observing the discussions in this forum.

Ultimately, what do you think is the potential of using online forums for practitioners for continuous professional development -if any- and what are your suggestions or concerns for how it should be used/applied?

Would you agree with :

"Learning is social (Driscoll, 2000, p.239). Most problems within our business environments today are complex and dynamic. Yesterday's solutions don't always work today. Problem solving requires different perspectives to create an accurate understanding of potential solutions and environment of implementation. Online communities allow people to stay current in their field through dialogue with other members of the same organization, or the larger global field. Communities strongly contribute to the flow of tacit knowledge."

Your feedback on this would be of most value not only to myself but to all of us and especially those who have commenced similar regional initiatives.

With good wishes -K

MESSAGE 13

Happy New Year, kate and I hope it's a good one.
My comments in reply to this email are as follows:

I have been an agency lecturer for years and joining the forum has reinforce a personal belief that access can diminish feelings of isolation experienced by those in my position whilst opening up ways of exploring ideas and also building up self confidence.

I am extremely interested in any mentoring aspect of this form of shared practice on line.

What hasn't worked so well is the fact that problems with my computer and server have limited access considerably, so perhaps a suggestion that other members in difficulty need to access alternative means, i.e. library?

I agree with Driscoll but my one reservation is that members should be aware of sharing best practice by adhering to current relevant guidelines, i.e.. FENTO standards. This would give a certain amount of responsibility around any shared advice or experiences and guard against unwittingly sharing bad practice.

I believe by sharing experiences and consequences:

"Molehills are least likely to become mountains!"

I have found this an informative and enjoyable experience and wish everyone involved "Good luck for the future". -S.

MESSAGE 14

I am of the opinion that on-line fora (forums?) have a usefulness in cases where there is a distinct objective or need which is served by the communal on-line experience.

Generally tutor/teachers don't have the time for routine use of such systems;

APTT has made some experiments of this type and found that after a brief spurt of enthusiasm the forum has become redundant.

Email, overall, seems popular. Bulletin boards less so.

Chat systems seem prone to software compatability problems and are generally only of occasional benefit.

Email lists can be productive though, especially when they distribute news to those with a common purpose.

The problem is with the concept of 'communities' A community flourishes because it has common needs/goals, and works on a turnover of members (via the process 'legitimate peripheral participation' as outlined by Lave/Wenger). Without *both* goals and progression of members, the community does not flourish and dies.

A good example of this system (at its best) is the WEA 'Branch' organisational process. APTT has modelled itself on this system, which was a deliberate process in order to encourage the idea of community with the Association.

Hope this helps. BG

Topic: Communities

Learning is social (Driscoll, 2000, p.239).

Most problems within our business environments today are complex and dynamic. Yesterday's solutions don't always work today. Problem solving requires different perspectives to create an accurate understanding of potential solutions and environment of implementation.

Online communities allow people to stay current in their field through dialogue with other members of the same organization, or the larger global field. Communities strongly contribute to the flow of tacit knowledge.

Please share your comments with all of us.

-K

MESSAGE 15

Most people who know me will also know that I am a great supporter and advocate of community-based learning in all its forms.
My experience is within the true face-to-face community learning - taking the learning to the people rather than the people to the learning.

Experience shows that it works and works well in rural areas and this is an area I hope to study in depth in the next few years. The transfer of face-to-face community learning success to on-line communities of learning is an interesting one and one that reaches a different clientele. My experience here has been in my own studies with the Open University.
On courses where there has been on-line conferences and support the feeling of being part of a group has helped and encouraged studying – distance learning is very isolating!
Regards –C.

MESSAGE 16

Part of my dissertation was concerned with two students at a rural outreach centre and the safe culture that appeared to exist between them.
I found this to be a none threatening environment and wondered what would happen when they had to advance to the necessary college environment to access the level 2 vocational qualification. Having participated in this forum I am now wondering what an on line course would bring to these students. I may even contact them to get their feelings on this.

I also wonder if they would participate with confidence using any online facilities....definitely food for thought!
I reflect that education sometimes appears to be a lot of statements of "I wonder" and sometimes the best ideas come when teachers do this!
–SD.

MESSAGE 17

The use of ICT and distance learning is an interesting one with, for me, some disturbing outcomes.

ICT would seem initially to be the answer for distance learning but I am involved with some leadership and management distance learning and am the NE tutor.

We have a VLE but I'm having great difficulties in getting people to sign up and participate. It is also interesting that there are only two of us participating in these discussions.

So, why is this overall reluctance to take part? Are people afraid of the technology? don't have the time? Too aware of the 'bad press' that discussion on-line has received.

Regards –C.

MESSAGE 18

have been involved in delivering basic skills via a community centre and I feel that learners are reluctant to use computers at first and my personal experience is that they have to first feel comfortable with the teacher and then the confidence and self belief will evolve and it is so good to witness this.

I have a friend who has to take 12 laptops to a workplace each week and is developing muscles she didn't know existed!

I believe that community based learning can be a more social occasion at times than at some colleges partly because of the flexibility and evidence of peer support.
What do others think? –SD.

Topic: Has anyone got any experience at teaching abroad? (in News and Highlights: International, National, Local)

MESSAGE 19

Has anyone got any experience at teaching abroad?
Teaching anything but preferably English Language. -D.

Topic: Fun Area

MESSAGE 20

Is there anybody out there ?
It's a bit lonely in here 😞
Will someone talk with me 😊

-D

Topic: Teacher Assistanceships for the British Council (in Questions)

MESSAGE 21

Hello, has anybody got any information regarding Teacher Assistance work for English Language Institutes in Europe, (or anywhere) ?
I am in the process of applying for an assistanceship and i hope to go to Portugal 😊 but there is so much information on the British Council web site 😞 I sometimes get confused 😞 and even angry 😡
Any information/advice would be appreciated 😊
-D

MESSAGE 22

might as well reply to myself 😊 I managed to sort out the information and work out what i needed to know 😊 - what was relevant and what was not 😞 I've completed my application form and posted it 😊 It was a day late but through contact with various people who's Email addresses i'd managed to find on the plethora of pages i had to scroll though 😞 - i've been informed that they'll accept my application a little past the deadline date 😊 -D

MESSAGE 23

Hi Dean
and good luck with your application. I've just read your question and I've got some info you might find helpful. Please see below,

From Via Lingua website:

Via Lingua is one of the world's leading and most well-respected providers of International TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) Certificate Courses. We run this program, externally moderated by the University of Birmingham and leading to the internationally recognised TEFL teaching certificate, at 15 different locations worldwide, including Florence, Crete, Rome, Prague, Berlin, Granada, Sydney, Istanbul, Milan, Porto, Corinth, Budapest and St. Petersburg. We can offer firm concrete job offers and guarantees UK and Irish University graduates who successfully complete the initial TEFL training course with us.

These include:

* Take the TEFL course with us in Greece this summer (choice of either Crete or Corinth as training locations) and we'll guarantee you a choice of full-time teaching positions across Greece and the islands commencing early September.

* Take the TEFL course in Spain, Germany, the Czech Republic, Turkey or Portugal with us this summer and we'll offer you a range of job choices across these wonderful European countries.

* Take the TEFL course in Sydney, Australia, and we can offer you a range of work placements across Australia and New Zealand.

For more information on Via Lingua visit

<http://www.milkround.com/lrd.asp?l=309661&m=11253&u=176205&a=8114> or email info@vialingua.org

I hope this helps. –M

MESSAGE 24

Thankyou for that. I will visit the site URL that you posted. I need to know the obvious stuff like accomadtion etc

Although i do already have a CELTA cert i am interested in gaining more quals in this area.

Sorry it took so long to reply.

–D.

APPENDIX XII: Invitation Letter to Join the Face to Face Forum



School of Education

Leazes Road, Durham, DH1 1TA, UK

Tel: 0191 334 8310 Fax: 0191 334 8311

December 2004

Dear Colleague,

Invitation to Join the Face to Face Discussion Forum

Thank you for your prompt response to my recently emailed 'Initial Questionnaire' document. I can now confirm that you have been allocated to participate in ***Phase B: Face to Face Discussion/Group B*** of the research project I am conducting as part of my postgraduate studies at the University of Durham.

As such, I will kindly ask you to attend an approximately 1 hour face to face discussion forum on **Friday the 10th December at 3.30 p.m.** The venue is

Metropolitan House
2nd floor
19-21 Collingwood Street
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE1 1JE

May I also ask you to **confirm** as soon as possible that you are able to attend.

Please find attached a map and directions to the venue. If you have any further queries please contact me on 0191-2301439/ 07966283040 or alternatively email me at aikaterini.pavlidou@durham.ac.uk.

I look forward to meeting you soon.

Yours sincerely,

Kate Pavlidou.

APPENDIX XIII: Ice Breaker Exercise

Ice Breaker Exercise

Ice Breaker Exercise: Please Work In Pairs

a. Who is your colleague?

What is their name?

What is their job role and what does it involve?

What's the biggest amount of people that they have ever had to cook for?

Have they ever been on, or would they ever consider going on a blind date?

What 2 things would they indulge in if they won 5 million pounds?

- 1.
- 2.

b. Who is your colleague?

What is their name?

What is their job role and what does it involve?

When at school, what dinner did they hate?

How many sprouts could they eat one after the other?

Who would they most like to be stuck on a desert island with?

APPENDIX XIV: Face to Face Forum Discussion Topics



School of Education
Leazes Road, Durham, DH1 1TA, UK
Tel: 0191 334 8310 Fax: 0191 334 8311

Proposed topics for face to face discussion

Friday 10th of December 2004

Kate Pavlidou

- **Basic skills provision through workplace-linked tuition**

A number of national/local initiatives have been developed to improve the basic skills level of adults through workplace-linked tuition. For many the debate has been around ways to identify when, how and under what conditions such programmes are effective in improving adults' basic skills, as well as their effects on life-course variables.

What are your thoughts and/or experience on this?

Please share your thoughts with all of us.

- **E-learning - The 21st Century Path to Success**

A glowing look at the rise of e-learning in Britain, a revolution "which has helped 1.2 million people since 2000 to improve their workplace skills, boost their employability, or simply try something new." By Unsigned,

OnRec.Com, June 28, 2004

- **What motivates adults to learn?**

There has been lots of discussion around 'Successful participation' and 'Widening adult participation' (LSC, 2003)

So....what motivates adults to learn?

- **Informal Learning**

Informal learning is perhaps the most dynamic and versatile aspect of learning.

Unfortunately, it is also the least recognized. Informal learning is a by-product of “information foraging” - “the human behaviour when searching for information was similar to that of the hunter-gatherers and animals in search for food” (Dürsteler, undated). Our need for information (and how we intend to use it) drives our search. Search engines (like Google) coupled with information storage tools (like Furl) and personal knowledge management tools like wikis and blogs present a powerful toolset in the knowledge workers portfolio. Jay

Cross (2003): states that:

“At work we learn more in the break room than in the classroom. We discover how to do our jobs through informal learning -- observing others, asking the person in the next cubicle, calling the help desk, trial-and-error, and simply working with people in the know. Formal learning - classes and workshops and online events - is the source of only 10% to 20% of what we learn at work.” What is your opinion on this?

- **Blended learning**

Blended learning provides the best opportunities for learning transition from classroom to e-learning. Blended learning involves classroom (or face-to-face) and online learning. This method is very effective for adding efficiency to classroom instruction and permitting increased discussion or information review outside of classrooms. For example, a new product release may be communicated to sales staff through a three-hour workshop, followed by online resources and discussions for continued learning (without significantly impacting the work activities of the sales force). The rallying cry of educational techno-prophets of the late 90's (“soon we won't need instructors, we'll learn everything online on our own time”) has given way to the reality that learning is a social process, requiring instructor direction and facilitation. Blended learning utilizes the best of classrooms with the best of online learning.

- **Recent publications in the post-16 education sector have stated:**

ICT has the potential to overcome many of the barriers which people who are socially and economically disadvantaged face in accessing education and training' (NIACE, 2004).

- **Overcoming social exclusion through online learning**

Learning is social (Driscoll, 2000, p.239). Most problems within our business environments today are complex and dynamic. Yesterday's solutions don't always work today. Problem solving requires different perspectives to create an accurate understanding of potential solutions and environment of implementation. Online communities allow people to stay current in their field through dialogue with other members of the same organization, or the larger global field. Communities strongly contribute to the flow of tacit knowledge.

THANK YOU
for your valuable time

APPENDIX XV: Face to Face Forum Transcript Sample

I:	{...}
K:	I personally haven't experienced any sort of provision of Basic Skills training...in any of the places that I have worked...I should imagine that...if work based...for those with Basic Skills needs...if work based provision were available...er I should imagine that there maybe a barrier to them attending such sessions as they may feel...such a stigmatised...they may worry about what their colleagues may think of them...if they got, you know, basic skills needs they may feel as if...er...well...er...they may feel that their colleagues er...might look down on them or...you know...er...view them in sort of an inferior way...er...
G:	Yeah...I think you're right...
T:	From personal experience...er...cause I have worked with people...who had say numeracy problems or literacy problems in ... er...cause I have worked in quite a few jobs over the years and people tend to develop sort of coping strategies...coping mechanisms to try and cope with these things...to try and hide them...I would think an advantage of workplace tuition would be that its sort of ...in the workplace...that people they are going to work anyway, they don't have to travel to a separate location and...and...if it were in...within works time as well, I think this would be a significant advantage to some people not having to study on top of doing the days ... you know...sort of eight hours at work or whatever... you know if they are working full time or whatever...so I could see er...advantages and disadvantages to that and it would depend I think on the persons ... how they viewed it...er...
P:	What do you think about 'basic skills'? The wording I mean.
C:	I do think that when its phrased as basic skills it is ...I think its seen as a derogatory term, that <i>you</i> 've got the basic skills, the basic fundamental skills...you know...like the baseline...things that people do feel that they should have come away from school ...you know...and I think there are reasons why er...-
S:	But we've got all of these adults, these large percentage of adults with basic skills needs...even after they have gone through the whole schooling system, not just people coming from abroad or you know... language barriers and things like that but...er...people who have sort of been born and educated in the UK er...and they are still coming through the schooling system...you know...basic skills needs...I don't know...I...it is..I do think there is a big stigma about it...the term basic skills....people <i>do</i> see it...in a derogatory way er...-
K:	And I should imagine that if you had literacy and numeracy problems er..if you had basic skills needs...that your <i>self-esteem</i> would be...in sort of addressing these things er...you would feel...you know...your self esteem would be low...you would lack confidence. I mean we all see the excuses of people who say they haven't got their reading glasses {yeah} because they can't read something and you know...and I have come across those...so {oh yeah} I do feel that there is a problem with that...so...I think there is pros and cons around it...it would depend how you dressed it up and I think people would want to er... in a work based situation I think they would want to keep these issues confidential ...

G:	Well you know, as far as e-learning is concerned, I did try it, and the best doctrines I learnt by that...er for me personally I mean it was so boring...was a bit of a nightmare because I am not a person who is...I am more of a lively person [laughs] time –cup like, stuck by this [laughter].
A:	Courses...I have taken a health and safety course...but I think it links to the motivation side of it as well. I didn't get that much out of it, I didn't really enjoy it, because the motivation wasn't there. I was forced to do it, I didn't commit to it ...er it was learning for health and safety. It was ok, it was fine for me, I thought it was quite normal.
S:	What I was thinking and from what we have just read, you go to a library and pick a book and take your time over the book, but if you do something like that you are learning to respect the minutes... {obviously} because you are not able of taking it to another dimension-
G:	No one to discuss with-
S:	That's why you start to accept to respect the power of time...you could go on a banding as well...you could put something on a web site, and download it and go off into something else, you know, that's normal... the next thing its three o clock in the morning and I don't know how much time is left [laughs]
A:	I am on to a direction website, did some work for a course I was doing er... and I find a paper I want to read and I read it and then I found it difficult to go back to the main page.. but you know what wasn't very helpful? You felt like feeling motivated but then thinking what I am doing from here?-
P:	Getting lost [laughs]
A:	Getting lost, yes, because you want to go to where you were working and to go the next step and it wasn't even clear-{yeah} the route how to go back and-
S:	You think that it would be a good idea that the tutor have sort like put down guidelines?
A:	It should have been properly explained and said like, this is what you do and this is what you do, not to just read basically and... and this is something because we weren't proper students, because we were actually working with er...peers ... and weren't like I teach you this and that, and make me read things I don't want to-
G:	There was also another thing which I found very difficult and I did it myself, and this is how I know that you can do it, er..its you know... when you have your online test, and you have the choices-
A:	That's what people are doing on Learn Direct-

G:	Especially on one I did like.. er...25 to 35 questions...that's far too many- {yeah} that is a lot of reading really, whereas on...say 5 to 10 questions, there were easy for you to be able to concentrate on...er.. are easier, where as I said, when you have 36 questions on your module, was like oh God...and I sat and wrote down, you know, 1 to 36 and the ones I got right are marked but the ones I got wrong-
A:	And you have the same questions on the exams for all the units and when you get one right and you found what it was, and then you write it down, you go on the exams and you get 100%.
G:	I know for a fact that if I didn't take my test on paper...er..on the modules that I got 100% ...I would have got nowhere near 100% ...but its just having it online, you are not able to go through it on your own time because...one question at a time comes up on the screen and it's difficult, than having it all the questions on paper, where you can go through, zap oh yeah that, that, that, that, complete the ones that you know, and then go back to the ones that you don't know [laughs] but this way you can't do that and I think that is a bit of disadvantage...er...I don't know if it's because I am an ignorant or...[laughs] I just don't like e-learning at all...
A:	{No, not at all, it's just an example}
G:	I just don't like it...I even...about assignments...I try to print them...off screen, and...some stuff I handed to my tutor...er..because I've been able to print it off and read it properly and make notes and corrections..got that to him. Some of it was just really good, because it's really off screen... it might not be there but it's coming off...in my head, so [laughs] you know what I mean {yeah}
C:	Yeah [laughs]
I:	[They are all looking into the next discussion topic]
S:	So..how do you prefer learning? In the classroom or-
C:	In the classroom, definitely in the classroom.
S:	How about using the internet as a search engine...working on assignments?
G:	At the moment I've been trying to do some market research in a company er...and its obvious that I am looking for business in northeast..er in Newcastle and when I do that...really, it comes up with this...the university of Newcastle, business studies..but that's not what I am looking for and er..-
S:	Depends on what you are typing as well.
C:	Absolutely.
S:	You know, if you get a book...er you know, some books that are recommended to...say like, you could go to have a look on the net and...you could read and read [laughs] ending open plant [laughter]

C:	What I find..what is me about using books, because of er... being so popular, when I refer to a book...and to reference a book I think...this is you know, search the internet...and if I'm referring to a book that's been published in 1999...er... should I have even referred of it? Should I look some sort of more new ones...on the internet? er...-
A:	I think that books have more respected titles...
C:	I think they do, yes. I think when I finish the assignment I like to quote books at the bibliography obviously because it looks like...its more good... kind of smooth and...-
P:	It's easier as well [laughter] that's why I like using them [laughs]
C:	I always refer to books. I don't know what it is...
P:	The book is simple, it doesn't get it wrong. You can get a PowerPoint and you could loose it all ...the computer has gone up and [laughs] you had it
S:	This is what I was going to mention before...-
C:	It's crazy...
S:	But I still think the positives, all outweigh the negatives...er..definitely.
T:	I think that takes us to our next topic about er...I think its page 8, yeah? ICT has the potential to overcome many of the barriers which people who are socially and economically disadvantaged face in accessing education and training...um-
S:	Er...my experience of e-learning is that...if people don't have the relevant skills to access e-learning er..then there is a barrier straight away...so if people aren't IT literate, they don't have the computer skills...then...you know...it's a no go... it's a non start...they first got to obtain the skills in order to access the e-learning...
K:	I agree..you would need to be able to read and...you know, to access the information...so if you've got literacy problems it wouldn't work but...I do find that...particularly amongst...in the centre that I work in...er...as I said we've got a high percentage of older learners and...you know they...er...a lot of the people that come into the centre...there is a high percentage of them ... they actually find they are terrified of the session you know...a lot coming to the centre it's the first time they've actually touched a computer and you know...-
P:	and they are pretty nervous about switching the thing on and about touching the keyboard [laughs]
K:	yes, and they're worried that if they press the button you know...will they break something, will it blow up, will things disappear...you know...it's about sort of building their confidence you know...we usually say to them you can't break it and if you do, we can usually fix it and if we can't fix it we can get somebody else who.. you know..can fix it, so don't worry about it, you know...er...

T:	building their conference with the computer use is ... absolutely, and we have found that once we get people to a certain level of confidence then they are quite keen to access the internet ...they want to learn how to use the internet and access this...the world wide web and all this information...and to use email as well...er and we've got quite a lot of older learners who have got families...er in places like Canada, America, New Zealand, you know...they lived in ,abroad, Australia and what have you and...they're quite keen to sort of getting into the internet and to be able to use email in order to...you know...interact with their families...
C:	I think it must be very <i>very</i> difficult particularly for asylum seekers who come from other countries, people who come from Iraq and you know...from certain places in Africa er..people from Russia when.. you know...countries all over the world, must be very <i>very</i> difficult to be...to have to flee your home in fear of your life and come to a strange country where you know, you are in a totally difficult culture, you know nobody...and to worry about ... if you left family behind it must be, it must be <i>really</i> terrible for them....
K:	absolutely...
C:	So...if you were alone...like you literally are alone ...er you would worry about your family and...I don't think...er it's a very daunting prospect for those people...I think particularly in Iraq, which is in our minds at the moment and I think it must be really terrible for people who had to flee that country and...with a lousy weather for a start you know [laughs] but I mean you know... the weather is the least of their problems, isn't it? cause [laughter] So...you know, I think that you first need the basic tools to be IT literate...er..to be IT literate in order to access e-learning...and that's my opinion on that...
A:	[reading aloud] The post-16 education sector.....it has the potential...but...you have to have access to it...and it says <i>people who are socially and economically disadvantaged</i> ...if they are economically disadvantaged they might not be able to afford a computer in the home so.. they would have to go to a library or some of the places where they could have access ...but again..I think it comes down to having the tools...the IT know how ...and the computers to access the things...- {yeah...} {absolutely}
A:	and I don't think that ICT has been the answer that the government hoped it would be...I don't think that it's...the take up has been as great as the government envisaged in sort of '98-'99 you know...sort of '97 when Helena Kennedy and the widening participation...in learning works article...er..-
P:	sorry, which article?
A:	Oh, a paper called...learning works about..sort of widening adults participation...you have not seen that one? er..
P:	no...

A:	I mean they've banging on about it... a good few years now but I think sort of... particularly since the late 90s it was given..this high profile and you know...it was the drive to have all adults IT literate by a certain time.. you know, within so many years and all the rest of it.. but I don't think its...its...had the impact that the government hoped it would...not yet anyway...you know...-
T:	like in the States, you know...in Canada..-
A:	yeah, we do seem to be sort of...behind the other countries like America who use it day in and day out...er...you know...so...
T:	See, that's the thing I always say..and obviously explaining how you know how ICTs have this power...and my argument is how that someone who can't read or write, how they could use a computer, gain qualifications...ok, that's going to help me find a job <i>but</i> for me, realistically...first I think they should have...they should have literacy and then get a job...
S:	I suppose, you can prioritise things in that way er...but saying that...let's say hot and cool water, now, they may need to have experience and expertise to fill water in the system. If there is an ICT system to place all of these things or whatever you can, get the information from them ... so I think its still a good thing, but I can understand what you are saying, you know, so, well I mean... it is not something that I have personally liked, but I know that I have to learn it, because it's for my benefit, its for everybody's benefit, although like I said two or three times tonight, there are disadvantages as well, there have been problems...but I think that the positives are more...definitely...
T:	In my workplace, we work with lots of volunteers and they are trying a booking system of their own to use a computer...I can see some of them...they cannot use a computer properly..er... I'm just giving an example...and never ask for help..just sit there and struggle..struggle...because I know I would feel so embarrassed and incompetent er..if I needed help I would <i>never</i> ask for assistance because that makes me feel so..-
G:	But that's for <i>us</i> , the tutors and the trainers to learn the body language...
T:	even then...one of our students...I helped her over and over...she got to a point where she got so frustrated, and I realised then that...this happened because she doesn't understand the language, teaching is another language is just like...
S:	I think a lot of it have to do with er..age as well, the age of the individual...because obviously..should say that the older you are, the more confident you usually become. When I was 16 years old, I walked into a room with one person..I mean I would blush... but the way to think it is...er what I'm just saying is confidence comes with age as well sometimes you know, and obviously the outside of your comfort zone...and that takes time to get used to different environments, different individuals...so..I think a lot of this is connected and has to be taken on further I believe...
I:	{...}

K:	I think there are a range of factors...I think a strong motivation...a lot of the adults that I've taught have been financially disadvantaged...and to improve their employment prospects er...if they learn new skills, if they master these skills then it will hopefully open up doors to more lucrative employment for them er...sometimes not necessarily more lucrative...sometimes more enjoyable job...er..
A:	I've taught people who have worked in jobs that they are not particularly happy doing and they are looking for a career change so they've come along to learn IT skills in the hope that it will open other doors and ... for some of them it has er...I know one of our students who was working in the local supermarket and she's now got a job in working on databases with a local school and..you know she is thrilled of that. She wasn't particularly happy before...she didn't feel that she was being particularly stretched...filling shelves and sitting on the check-out all day...you know, she said whilst you know...other people were quite happy doing it and it wasn't for her...-
S:	and other adults ...I think...a lot of the older learners that I've seen they wanted to find out about the new technology...some of them its been sort of curiosity about computers...and other as I say have wanted ...this on-line access and email activity in order to contact and communicate with..relatives in countries abroad...so I think it's a range of factors...but I think they are the main ones...the economic side of things ...er..trying to get a better job or a more enjoyable job and the other is being sort of communication er... and I do know some people who they learn...er...they're motivated to learn simply because er...they feel that they're doing something positive and...they like to learn for learning's sake.
C:	I remember... for me it was definitely a choice to get a better job and...I won over a first degree... it was more ambition ...actually it was more than that...what do you do and why do you do it. In other words, I wanted to do that for a few years but it took me a little while to get myself to a position where I could actually go, so..-
G:	I am still young so..sorry about that [laughs]
C:	I'm just continuing, just studying and afterwards the job...I <i>do</i> have a first class degree...
S:	I think it's a good thing but you also...the only way to get them...I mean knowledge as well is through life skills you know. Obviously I don't have any disrespect to anyone that has got qualifications..I mean I got a few myself, but you'll still need that knowledge as well that life skill, you know... because you can't come out of the university one day and expect to be, say a bank manager...and I know I'm taking things to the extremely-
G:	But no you're not. In society you've got 20-21 year olds...22 year olds that walk out the university, after doing a degree for a year, and they maintain that attitude er..I'm going to be a manager, I'm going to be an executive before I'm 22. And they take it for granted that that's going to happen.
S:	I think that the job market nowadays is lot more intense for qualifications and they are a good thing, you have to have qualifications ...but you have to have experience as well...- {yeah}

S:	so..the question what motivates adults to learn...er...I mean there is something else we have to look at as well..qualifications we all have agreed, I'm all for experience, but we also should look at different lifestyles as well...and different jobs that people do, because all jobs are important as well. So you can have people having doctorates, and you can have your masters degree, and all of that but you still ...your age is just as important as the people that have got doctorate degrees and- {whatever [laughs]} so that I think that is very important.
A:	But I think the system starts to change anyway because...when you do exams now.. nowadays its totally unrealistic, isn't it? Because you could be studying something for three years and the next thing you know PUH! There is an exam over an hour or whatever it is some people... that bit of pressure...er..some people fall apart, and its totally unrealistic and its unfair. So hopefully things are going to change for the better, I think that's.. if you're studying in the schools now, but it is going to be post-16 as well. And I'm sure that will start to motivate people.
G:	But you'll have the opportunity, the chance to actually work and achieve and er ... a er a certain grade, so you automatically pass the exam, so you don't have to sit the exam...and <i>that</i> was actually was perfect for me, because I am one of those people you put an exam paper in front of me and I know the answers but my brain just goes <i>PUH</i> , shut down [laughter].
G:	and it's so annoying and my very first exam in England was pc repairs and maintenance. At 32 I got 26. Passed <i>but</i> ... and my tutor was really annoyed because he knew I knew every single one of those answers that the next two months every time he passed me in the corridor he threw a question at me, literally one of the questions that I got wrong in the exam, and I gave him the right answer, and he was like I wish I could clobber you one [laughter] you know, why did you go getting it wrong? But it is because of what you say, it's that pressure. But that is something not only adults have; it's like kids that have it as well- {yeah} 7 years old... pre school kids... exams and stuff, it is so silly-
C:	Yeah...
S:	I think you should have a bit of a life er to begin with anyway..that you have a bit freedom,.. <i>express</i> themselves, and I'm not on about breaking into cars [laughter] nowt like that. They should, should really I don't think really, you should be learning, I mean you should always be learning, I think that sort of that I suggest is certain, but there should be a little bit of freedom as well...you know before you get that pressure, before you get to the real world, yeah... you know...
T:	Basically, everybody is different...people are who they areyou know...they're all different and they just do different things er...

G:	But of course. If you are mathematician you are not a linguist, and if you are a linguist you are <i>not</i> a mathematician, and yet I had four of my tutors say to me that it's a load of nonsense. Maths is language, yes, but you are not a linguist, because a linguist doesn't see numbers, they see letters, and it is <i>completely</i> different, and yes, in England we have stereotyping we put everyone into the same bag, instead of ... like back into the 60s where you had your carpentry in school, and you had er skills and stuff like that, and yet at the same time you had your 3 Rs -reading and writing and arithmetic- and I seriously think that England should really get back to that ...I think it's too late really-
T:	I think they need to change those... er I think on most courses they're changing to like communication skills, literacy and numeracy {I think they've messed it up} yeah...
A:	What do you mean by <i>yeah</i> ?-
S:	I don't think it could be too late, because...er I know what you're saying but, the thing is if something is going to be changed for the better it is never too late...really...
G:	what it is really er ... I know for a fact that if I .. if my family hadn't moved <i>to</i> France I would have been a high school drop-out. There is no way I would stuck with an English education. I have got my brother and sister who left school illiterate, because they got part of their education in France, then returned to England, oh sod this for a lark [laughs].
C:	So from what you say er the English education system at that time worked against people? Hmm...
G:	Yes, you know... I see the education system before, when I was in primary school, where nobody even, er... we had to retake the ... eleven plus and we had to pass it to see whether we could, we gonna go, what school we were go on to.
S:	Because there was a stigma as well... that was something that er didn't affect me, because, I mean you know I was quite a shy person er and I used my humour to get out of situations... I was I was a person that mucked around at school too much, but when it came to the eleven plus I mean I failed that [laughter] I don't know how badly I failed it, so from an early age the class is a failure and that's a good reason why I thought they scraped it.
C:	I remember I think the worst thing for me about high school... from my experience ... I left high school being completely unmotivated, which is why I didn't go to university, I just floated into the 6 th form. I got just two A levels because I knew I didn't want to go to the university and didn't try being creative... I got very poor er poor grades. It was just something I had to do... I just didn't like the system [laughter] and I didn't want to go to university.
A:	As I said you got to go to university and you have been studying for how much? Around 10-11 years...mature to make your own decisions-
C:	I've been trying to catch up-

S:	To be honest the most time I've been in the forces, I served with the navy and the marines, I did a marines course, but er... I played sport most of the time. I had a really cushy time me like. (laughs) So I did some coaching qualifications but academically I didn't do anything. No. I left school. Two days after I left school I was in the forces. See me coming, '75, and er I didn't do any qualifications, sorry academic qualifications till I left the forces er I had that many injuries through time in the time in the forces er doing a bit in sports with other things as well. er I thought it would be a good idea, very good idea to go into...to get certain teaching qualifications and, er and obviously coaching as well, but, that wasn't...that's another force to me, I even knew which avenue I was gonna go down, and er sports....but er I knew I needed qualifications so .. was it forced for me to do that...why... was it motivation? or was it because I wanted them qualifications just to have a bit more experience or ... was something I mentioned earlier about finances... you know, ... because of the old spondoolies...-
A:	{it has nothing to do with training}-
S:	I think it's for both really, you know...
A:	if we do, do we really have any willpower to-
S:	because I know in my situation, right? I've got a few qualifications, ... but I know that with the degree I am doing at the moment, if I get that degree, that's gonna help me <i>immensely</i> for what I want to do. So there is willpower there to get that degree but the motivation is the reason I am doing it, to make the old spondoolies at the end of the day... you know...
S:	<p>It is just what comes back to experience as well I suppose, you know...er..I mean this is another reason why I am now doing a degree. I went for a job recently..don't ask me why I went cause I have no idea [laughter] was through the APTT, its chemistry fellow [laughter] I went for it, Newcastle university, dolly dimple here..right...I done well at the interview, nice presentation and what have you...er..there was a lady called {...} though..just happens to have a doctorate in chemistry..and I knew that she was going to the interview but it was recommended for me to go for it, but...I took something from that, I learned something from the interview..<i>not</i> to go for an interview again [laughter].</p> <p>Apart from that I did pick up a few things about presentations..how to present yourself differently as well, so..I still think that...that was a motivator for me, even though I wasn't really expecting to get the job, I wasn't expecting that at all..er but that still motivates me... er maybe if had a degree in that subject, and because of my..er not age but my experience, I might had a better chance to get it.</p> <p>I don't know..obviously hypothetical, but... I have went for jobs in the past I haven't got it because of...I haven't got this piece of paper. I don't know... necessarily think that's right or wrong...I don't know which way to put that, because er..obviously going to the university to get these pieces of paper...and its not all er academic anymore, its just a lot of it is practical work which I think is a good thing...but where do you draw the line to say well..you know..he is got the experience but that other person that was younger he's got a piece of paper..you know, I don't know...</p>

G:	You know I'm thinking back to my grandparents and my great grandparents...they didn't have the education that my father and I had but there was <i>something</i> you know-
S:	maybe because there were more practical
G:	No it's not that...its just that...people read more and was no television...so everybody played games for instance, and that gives you social skills...and I don't know, I start talking about the same things and I can't find the words I want to use... maybe because computers and the internet has become-
C:	so popular
G:	yeah, but that teaches us to be antisocial-
C:	Yes, it does...
G:	Who has written a letter..literally written on the last two years on this team?
P:	I had, because the computer was knackered [laughter]
C:	I received a letter recently...er..a hand written letter from a personal friend..and it was wonderful. {S: It feels a lot more personal, doesn't it?} Not even a card...letter on paper written in an ink pen. It was wonderful...
S:	I'd like to say something about widening...adults' participation...from the Victorian times yet...I think a lot have to do with who you are, your social standard as well...nowadays they're trying to improve that, I think they have done so, no matter how badly some people [coughs] perceive it to be, it has improved...and it's in all strarters of society and...er are getting into universities now as well and Cambridge and Oxford..which used to be depending on your background...er until quite recently I suppose. I knew a young lady who went to Harvard...studied in Cambridge, Oxford I am not sure which now...er...which she worked there ...she did some sports coaching there a few years ago.
G:	[reads aloud] Informal learning-
A:	I am using that word on Monday night [laughter] That's me [laughs]
P:	Kids are not actually communicating with each other anymore, apart from emails...they spend the rest of their time text messaging- {Text Messaging} {Yeah text messaging}.
P:	A new language isn't it?...a new language and that's it..they are texting each other, emailing each other and the rest of the time they are on the games, playing games all night...so they are getting no exercise or anything..-

A:	I can't find any fault with text messaging.
G:	No, no, no, just a minute, this is just something I've been thinking on recently...er..think of the English language and the way that is written, right? And think of the American language and the way that is written and look at the way kids are writing text messages. My god, in fifty years time that's gonna be English.
A:	and what is the motivation for doing this?..because they get no information by messaging...
P:	I have got a friend that actually texts like that, with abbreviations, m8 mate, also numbers and that-
A:	your formulas are massive and the cost of it-
P:	it costs exactly the same price it doesn't matter what you put in the text message if its <i>this</i> long or <i>this</i> long...
S:	I don't think is wrong because language is always above...its always a bargain...the way that I mean...er you could go back to middle ages...different part of the country spoke differently...you couldn't get somebody from Newcastle just going down as far as York...wouldn't be able to understand each other [laughter] you know. And obviously because of globalisation...things are changing again, making the world even smaller but...I don't think that's a bad thing. Text messages is even...er you know...its just a new language and like you say that the language er...not just English language but all languages...are evolving all the time, so...I think its a good thing.
G:	I actually...wondering if it happens to know from the story the piece ...er...the..try to get to the sky and as a punishment god separating all languages... {yeah} I sorta like wonder... <i>where..</i> where and how I know did that one originated?-
S:	But I think that that's a religious thing as well because I think-
G:	Wait, wait, because I am a religious person-
S:	<i>I</i> am a religious person.
G:	but I try and see within that story, as we call it...where is the meaning of the sent or crossed understanding-
A:	what came first, where did the story come from er..did he actually come to earth to keep the story accurate or that sort of thing?
C:	so the story is an explanation to why there are so many languages?

A:	what I mean is, say that there is a fucking 100 languages in the world, and there must be a reason for this and that's why they write a story and I think that could be the reason.
S:	I think is an interpretation, I mean just for example the bible, all right, you can get 20 people read a passage in the bible and they have all got different interpretations, you know...in a passage in the bible-
G:	but don't forget that even two people from within the same church don't believe the same thing because faith is unique to each person...because they're all individuals-
A:	but what if people do not have those choices?
G:	well I don't know..because actually I know someone like that, my dad is like that and yet he knows half the bible off by heart, he knows the ten commandments off by heart. Ask me what the 10 commandments are and I'll go rhhhh [laughter] Kate, you know? [Laughs] I know thou shall kill, thou shall not commit adultery, that shall not steal... about three of them I remember[laughter]
K:	I personally agree with this informal learning and a lot of informal learning...er..I think isn't recognised because...er its not certificated and categorised ...it does tend to be overlooked er...formal learning classes, workshop and online events is the sort of only 10 to 20% of what we learn at work er....I would say that...its tacit knowledge, skills that you bring into the workplace form the other life experiences and...a lot of learning...in the workplace isn't formal... learning from other colleagues....so I would agree...I don't know whether I would agree this sort of 10-20% figure but...I do think that it's a large percentage...of informal learning...I do think that informal learning is undervalued ...but perhaps that's because it's not measurable er...difficult to measure....er..-
A:	Well, I have to say that...I contradict my self here, I used to work, when I had worked at IT, its been informal learning...it's been like er...the blackboard and all that official stuff...being didactic, telling people what they should do...and all that stuff. It's always been informal in the sense that...er because of the students...and the location...I was more like a mentor-
S:	so it was classed as informal learning-
A:	but we've been in an informal environment...not like a proper training scheme...that's what we mean by <i>informal</i>
S:	so ok, one who manages a football team..is that informal learning?
A:	that's it...I don't know...where do you draw the line?

G:	Here in the text it says that basically informal learning is asking when you're trying to do something...observing others, talking during breaks and stuff like that, and I know for a fact with... er especially with things like at..IT, shortcut keys, you know..its in the keyboard, actions..its often that...I've noticed er...but it's the one thing that you...that everybody picks up on everybody else because its not actually formally taught.
A:	They have to discover it, don't they? It's in the curriculum, isn't it? But-
C:	well, quite the better really
S:	Well it's the best
G:	I know because you see somebody doing something and you say hi, what does that do? And they tell you and you pick it up from there so...-
C:	That's how you learn through your life...isn't it?
A:	you don't have a choice here, do you?
C:	if you can somehow emulate what was on actually...what human beings are like...how they learn and things...er..this is how you can increase the learners' experience...-
S:	Looking at informal learning though...it is more relaxed, right? Because the individuals are in an environment where they are more relaxed...less pressure to take on loads of information.
T:	I think it's a psychological thing.
S:	I wonder whether...because when you are in a formal environment...its regimented...this lesson starts at that time and finishes at that time, this is the information we are gonna give you today, in <i>this</i> period of time...so there is pressure on the lecturer to get that information over and...its pressure on the individuals within the formal setting to take on new learning...er..so I don't think this helps.
C:	It's not good for their confidence as well.
S:	Personally that's the route I'll take, the route of informal learning when I finish my degree. This is something I wanna seriously look at in because...I don't agree with the recommended way that post-16 education is taught a lot of the time...er..not all of the time, but a lot of the time...er- {yeah...}

S:	and particularly because of the age of the students as well. I don't think they should be treated like children...and am not on about 16-17 years, am on about mature students as well, they've got to start at this time, finish at this time, they got to get that, take that information in, you're not taking on board...er I personally don't... I keep learning from my tutor, [JM]...I mean he's been a <i>massive</i> help to me, and he explains things to me...he can explain something to me in two minutes, than..someone that taken weeks to try and get through, partly because...because of the setting, because of the environment that were in.
A:	I think when you're thinking formal informal, are thinking as like, this is a formal setting and this is informal setting? or is this an informal approach or this is formal approach? I mean that is a mix out of two really. You don't get like things exclusively in either setting..you would work on assignments for college...compared to...30% or something...and I say you might be in informal setting where you are in home and you might think, well...that gotta be informal education..somebody, a friend, showing you to use like setting a burglar alarm...this isn't formal learning er...this you have something when you are writing notes...you're constantly learning are you?, so that class.. that's formal learning, cause it is in formal environment-
S:	Cause its got a bit further down here, formal learning, classes and workshops and online events is the source of only 10% to 20% of what we learn at work, so its, it could be when in the work environment as well, but its pressure..pressure all the time and I think er...if you could take the pressure away, in any way you can, then I think that would be clustered...more, of an informal setting.
G:	Yeah, but there is also a thing where in classrooms and workshops, where there's the...you know, a schedule to stick to and what times... but something like us.. where.. its in our control as to what point to go away tonight...after one hour and a half, two hours or however long [laughs] {um..probably} I should remember more that... we had er... in the last time we were actually in a class after 5 hours, half the class was asleep [laughter].
I:	{...} [End of the tape. Last few seconds of the conversation were not recorded].

APPENDIX XVI: Guidelines for Verbatim Transcription

Goal for Transcription	Content Analysis. Theory grounded on the data.
Format	Spacing: single spaced. Font: Times New Roman (10). Number lines in transcript from the beginning: No.
Give speaker's name as follows	Identify speaker each time. Use initials followed by a colon. Identify the researcher by using "I" (for interviewer).
Spelling	Use conventional spelling. Use contractions: can't, don't and so on as heard. Use yeah, yup, and so on exactly as heard.
Language and dialect	Transcribe all words verbatim; spell unusual words (those not in dictionary) as they sound. Use conventional spellings of all common words.
Punctuation of text	Use basic punctuation (e.g. periods, commas). Do not use colons or semicolons.
False starts, broken sentences, repetitions	Include all false starts, broken sentences, repetitions.
Filler words	Example: "you know", "like", "obviously", or any phrase or word used frequently as follows: Include all fillers.
Non verbal sounds	Indicate the following nonverbal sounds – um, er, oh, ooh, mmm- as follows: Include all nonverbal sounds as above. Indicate other sounds such as laughter, coughs, sighs, and so on as follows: Use square brackets for the word, as follows [laughs], [coughs], [sighs], and so on. Laughter: [laughs] if it is one person, [laughter] if it is more than one person.
Pauses	Denote short pauses during talking by a series of dots (...), the length of which depends on the amount of time elapsed (e.g., two dots for less than half a second, three dots for one second, four dots for one and a half seconds). Use "(pause)" for two- to three-second breaks and "(long pause)" to indicate pauses of four or more seconds.
Overlapping speech	When two or more people speak at the same time: Transcribe, if you can hear the overlapping words, and indicate speakers if possible. Start overlapping fragments on separate lines at point of overlap and use curly braces { } at the beginning and end of overlapping portion. Include names, unless you cannot distinguish speakers. Example: Jane: Oh {the way it was then} John: {we never knew how it} was then

Unclear or hard to hear words or sections	<p>If you are uncertain of words/phrases, indicate as follows: Place the word(s) in square brackets preceded by a question mark; [?]justice reigns].</p> <p>If you cannot decipher at all after a few tries, spend no more time, and: Indicate by using square brackets that there are missing words, if possible giving approximate number of words/syllables. Do not write “garbled”, “rubbish”, or similar description. Example: [3 syllables unclear] [1+ words unclear] [cannot hear 2 words].</p> <p>Indicate when someone’s speech is broken off midsentence by including a hyphene (-) at the point where the interruption occurs e.g. What do you do-.</p>
Researcher’s speech	<p>Omit researcher’s introductory instructions/concluding comments as follows: Indicate entire omission by ellipses {...}. Indicate comments in square brackets [comment].</p>
Other sounds	<p>Note interruptions (phones, people entering the room, other sounds that override speech) by brief description [phone rings] in square brackets.</p>
Expressive aspects	<p>Note expressive aspects as follows: Include emphasis if words are emphasized strongly: use italic typeface.</p> <p>Include loud speech: indicate by capital letters. Include soft speech: indicate by inserting [speaks softly].</p>

Source: This guideline has been adapted by:

Poland, B. D. (2002) ‘Transcription Quality’ in Gubrium, J. F. and Holstein, J. A. (Ed.s) *Handbook of interview research: context and method*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications.

Powers, W. R. (2005) *Transcription techniques for the spoken word*. Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press.

APPENDIX XVII: On-line Forum Evaluation Questionnaire

SCHEME FOR EVALUATING THE ON-LINE FORUM EXPERIENCE	
<p>PART A: This section is intended to obtain your views about the complexity of using the on-line forum. Please indicate the extent to which you agree with each statement using the following scale. 1: strongly agree 2: agree 3: neutral 4: disagree 5: strongly disagree</p>	
	<i>1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5</i>
1. I thought it was relatively easy to access the on-line forum.	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
2. I did not have to learn any additional technical skills to access the on-line forum.	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
3. The project background information provided in the Notes & Glossary Sheet was useful.	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
4. There were times when I could not 'get on-line' and access the on-line forum.	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
5. I had no trouble navigating in the on-line forum.	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
6. I found the procedure for posting comments relatively easy.	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
7. I found reading people's posts on the computer screen difficult.	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
8. The technical procedures I had to follow in order to register, log-in and post messages in the on-line forum were confusing.	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
9. The technical support feature in the on-line forum was helpful.	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>PART B: This section is intended to obtain your views about the content and structure of the on-line forum. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement using the following scale. 1: strongly agree 2: agree 3: neutral 4: disagree 5: strongly disagree</p>	
	<i>1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5</i>
10. I liked the way the on-line forum was structured.	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
11. I found when I selected certain links I got lost.	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
12. I found the suggested topics for discussion interesting.	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

13. The information presented was well organized.	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
14. The information presented was not comprehensive enough.	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
15. The presence of an on-line moderator would have been useful to help the conversation move forward .	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Part C: This section is intended to obtain your views about the value of participating in the on-line forum. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement using the following scale.</p> <p>1: strongly agree 2: agree 3: neutral 4: disagree 5: strongly disagree</p>	
	<i>1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5</i>
16. The opportunity to try this on-line forum was beneficial.	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
17. I preferred the on-line forum to a face to face forum because I missed less time from work.	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
18. To participate in the forum, I learned skills that will be useful in other parts of my work.	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
19. Getting to know and talking with other participants was easier with the on-line forum than what would have been in a face to face forum.	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
20. It was more difficult to socialize with other participants on-line than in a face to face forum.	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
21. The information exchanged during the on-line forum was of better value than what would have occurred in a face to face forum.	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
22. Participating in this on-line forum was a waste of my time.	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
23. I thought participating in the on-line forum was a useful activity as part of my continuing professional development.	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
24. I have found the on-line forum helpful in getting to know my fellow colleagues.	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
25. I would guess that the participants in the on-line forum found my posts useful and/or interesting.	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
26. I found other participants' posts useful and/or interesting.	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

27. I felt I was part of a community when I participated in the forum.	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
28. Using emerging learning technologies, such as this on-line forum, is important to me personally.	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
29. I personally do not like learning from technologies such as this on-line forum.	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
30. My overall feeling is that on-line forums are of little value.	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
PART D: This section is intended to obtain your views and recommendations for improvements that could be made, in order to advise the development and structure of future on-line forums. In specific, what in your opinion are the factors that would encourage or hinder your active participation in an on-line forum?	
THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING THIS QUESTIONNAIRE	

APPENDIX XVIII: Telephone Interview Guide

Kvale's list of qualification criteria of an interviewer (adapted from Bryman, 2004)

<i>Knowledgeable:</i>	is thoroughly familiar with the focus of the interview, can conduct an informed conversation about the topic.
<i>Structuring:</i>	gives purpose for interview; rounds it off; asks whether interviewee has questions.
<i>Clear:</i>	asks simple, short questions; no jargon.
<i>Gentle:</i>	Lets people finish; gives them time to think; tolerate pauses.
<i>Sensitive:</i>	listens attentively to what is said and how it is said; is empathetic in dealing with the interviewee.
<i>Open:</i>	responds to what is important to interviewee and is flexible.
<i>Steering:</i>	knows what he or she wants to find out.
<i>Critical:</i>	is prepared to challenge what is said, for example, dealing with inconsistencies in interviewees' replies.
<i>Remembering:</i>	relates what is said to what has previously been said.
<i>Interpreting:</i>	clarifies and extends meanings of interviewee's statements, but without imposing meaning on them.

Kvale's nine different kinds of question (retrieved from Bryman, 2004)

<i>Introducing questions:</i>	'Please tell me about when your interest in X first began?', 'Have you ever...?'
<i>Follow-up questions:</i>	Getting the interviewee to elaborate his/her answer, such as 'What do you mean by that...?'; even 'Yeeees?' Kvale suggests that repeating significant words in an answer can stimulate further explanation.
<i>Probing questions:</i>	Following up what has been said through direct questioning, such as 'Could you say some more about that?'; 'You said earlier that you prefer not to X. Could you say what kinds of things have put you off X?'
<i>Specifying questions:</i>	'What did you do then?'; 'How did X react to what you said?'; 'What effect did X have on you?'
<i>Direct questions:</i>	'Do you find it easy to keep smiling when serving customers?'; 'Are you happy with the way you and your husband decide how money should be spend?' Such questions are perhaps best left until towards the end of the interview, in order not to influence the direction of the interview too much.
<i>Indirect questions:</i>	'What do most people round here think of the ways that management treats its staff?', perhaps followed up by 'Is that the way you feel too?', in order to get at the individual's own view.
<i>Structuring questions:</i>	'I would like to move on to a different topic'
<i>Silence questions:</i>	Allow pauses to signal that you want to give the interviewee the opportunity to reflect and amplify an answer.
<i>Interpreting questions:</i>	'Do you mean that your leadership role has had to change from one of encouraging others to a more directive one?'; 'Is it fair to say that what you are suggesting is that you don't mind being friendly towards customers most of the time, but when they are unpleasant or demanding you find it more difficult?'

Possible questions to guide the telephone interviews

<p>Researcher's opening remarks [thanking the interviewee for his/her time, explaining the purpose and the structure of the interview and offering reassurance related to data protection and confidentiality matters].</p>
<p>Accessibility and forum complexity related questions</p>
<p>1) From where did you access the forum? [work, home, travelling?].</p>
<p>2) Did you have any problems accessing the forum?</p>
<p>3) Did you find it easy to log-in in the forum? [If difficult: What effect did this have on you?].</p>
<p>4) How easy or challenging was it to navigate in the on-line forum?</p>
<p>5) What were the technical challenges when using the on-line forum? [What effect did this have on you?].</p>
<p>Content and structure related questions</p>
<p>6) What was your opinion about the content/structure of the on-line forum? [Please comment on the length of the forum: too short? Too long?].</p>
<p>7) Would you feel the presence of a moderator would have made a difference and why?</p>
<p>Perceived value of the on-line forum</p>
<p>8) Please tell me about your participation on the forum. [Did you participate actively in the on-line forum? How often? Why? Why not?].</p>
<p>9) What was your overall feeling about the value of the on-line forum and why?</p>
<p>10) Did the forum provide adequate opportunities for you to contribute your ideas? Why? Why not?</p>
<p>11) Do you think the experience of participating in the on-line forum has influenced reflection on practice/training matters? [Could you please elaborate on this?].</p>
<p>12) Would you prefer a face to face forum instead and why?</p>
<p>13) Please tell me about the factors that would encourage or hinder your active participation in an on-line forum.</p>
<p>14) What things could be changed to improve future on-line forums?</p>
<p>15) Would you like to ask me any questions?</p>
<p> </p>

APPENDIX XIX: Coded On-line Forum Transcript Sample based on the Scheme of Indicators for Determining Evidence for Reflection

MESSAGE 1 ONF[RI-R]

Last year I had a very diverse timetable and found myself teaching young adults, (16-19) and older return to learning mature adults, (45-50) The common factors found on entry were that they were hoping to gain qualifications for nursery nursing and all expressed a fear of reading out from a book to young children in the nursery.

Teaching basic skills this is problem faced by many.

Generally I felt that some of the younger students had behaviour problems and somehow lacked fundamental communication skills and this impaired to some degree their attitude to taking responsibility for their learning. It is difficult not to compare the two ages of learners but in this instance the older ones appeared to have the necessary social skills but because of prior negative learning experiences lacked confidence and self belief even though I believed they could succeed.

The key here was that strategies have to be devised to enable students to take a responsible attitude to their learning which is diverse and ensures it is an enjoyable experience, (quite a challenge!).

What are other members experiences of working with various age groups and how to improve motivation?

MESSAGE 2 ONF [RI-R]

Yes, culture comes into play here..

If a young adult learner does not have the necessary life, social and communication skills thus lacking self belief and self esteem then they could well struggle to communicate the complexity of their thoughts as a result of lacking the confidence to do so in a professional and/or academic environment. .

This can lead to negative learning experiences and the potential for the student to drop out. Even dealing with the paper work and academic speak that many are confronted with on their return to education can be extremely daunting experience. Of course, much of the above also applies to older adult learners too but these, in some instances, may well possess the confidence learnt through experience to cope. Also, older learners may be more motivated to be in the classroom environment more than younger learners. This might be because the older learner wishes to treat the learning experience as much as a social as well as professional or educational experience.

MESSAGE 3 ONF [UN-R]

I have recently graduated with a PGCE with enables me to teach in further education. How do I go about finding out about vacancies in the F.E. sectors, particular basic skills? This would go beyond the usual newspaper ads and vacancies on web-sites.

MESSAGE 4 ONF [RT]

I am currently working with blended learning materials with a group of professions working on a Leadership and Management qualification. The information is useful, especially for distance learning purposes. This course is delivered through Wolverhampton University and the blended learning materials are available both on-line and through CD roms.

There has been a problem with the CD Roms and this can cause a loss of confidence with those who are using them. Nevertheless, they seem to be popular and a very good way of sending out qualities of information.

MESSAGE 5 ONF [UN-R]

Yes, I do it a lot too - I have two student teachers at the moment who fall into this category I think, plus another via distance.

MESSAGE 6 ONF [RT]

So if we are all mentoring at some stage in our working lives, I wonder how this vital source of teacher support can be better recognised and developed?

The demands for additional training and qualifications within FE and ACL work are putting tremendous pressure on already well qualified staff. whilst these developments are vital to up-skill the teaching workforce I can see senior part-time staff leaving in their droves over the next 5yrs or so. The Service will be poorer for this mass departure. I wonder if developing the mentoring system to overcome the issues might help.

MESSAGE 7 ONF [RT]

I wonder how many teachers have had access to a named mentor in the workplace and how valuable the experience was? What do others think are the pros and cons involved, (a) for the mentor and (b) for the mentee?

MESSAGE 8 ONF [RI-R]

I have been in the situation of being a mentor on a number of occasions.

Whilst this is interesting it is also demanding, requiring tact and diplomacy! Comments and advice need to be clearly set out and evidenced, especially if comments are less than favourable!

It is also rewarding to be part of someone else's development and both sides learn from the experience.

MESSAGE 9 ONF [RI-R]

I too have mentored staff and students and I find the key words are to give fair advice, document targets, action plans and provide realistic targets. Where I find that mentoring programmes are apt to fall short is the time allocated, (if any!) and support for the mentor. Clear guidelines on respective roles and responsibilities are often lacking, often referred to as giving the parties concerned a "blank canvas." I wish that there was clear funding for this...if done properly it is so valuable to CPD.

MESSAGE 10 ONF [RT]

I can tell there are some interesting topics for discussion around here. However.. from what I've read people seem to express opinions at different intervals and there is a lack of some kind of continuumand responses? I suppose professionals in UK are not really used to chatting over the net...or is it just us in the education sector??? It would be interesting to hear how the other colleagues feel about it.

MESSAGE 11 ONF [RI-R]

Has anyone had experience of learners with low basic skills being completely embarrassed and being challenged when requested to read out loud. Some students of mine were expected to read in their role whilst on placement as trainee classroom assistants in front of staff and pupils at school.

Surely the way round this would be to ensure that discreet and accurate assessment of the level of basic skills at the college providing the necessary NVQ's studies and individual needs being sensitively addressed for students. Reading skills are very relevant and can be achievable, once again learners need relevant support and guidance.

My comment to this forum is: Does embarrassment stop the enjoyment of reading and how, as teachers can we best assist our students...any ideas or personal experiences to share?

MESSAGE 12 ONF [RI-R]

I think embarrassment can stop enjoyment of reading if you are expected to read out loud in class with a room full of strangers staring at you.

I think one-to-one reading exercises that interest, as well as relevant material for the student to take home and read at leisure is the common sense approach. This might also help to improve other areas such as vocabulary, spelling and even speaking.

MESSAGE 13 ONF [RI-R]

I have been an agency lecturer for years and joining the forum has reinforced a personal belief that access can diminish feelings of isolation experienced by those in my position whilst opening up ways of exploring ideas and also building up self confidence.

I am extremely interested in any mentoring aspect of this form of shared practice on line.

What hasn't worked so well is the fact that problems with my computer and server have limited access considerably, so perhaps a suggestion that other members in difficulty need to access alternative means, i.e. library?

I agree with Driscoll but my one reservation is that members should be aware of sharing best practice by adhering to current relevant guidelines, i.e.. FENTO standards. This would give a certain amount of responsibility around any shared advice or experiences and guard against unwittingly sharing bad practice. I believe by sharing experiences and consequences: "Molehills are least likely to become mountains!" I have found this an informative and enjoyable experience and wish everyone involved "Good luck for the future".

MESSAGE 14 ONF [RI-R]

I am of the opinion that on-line fora (forums?) have a usefulness in cases where there is a distinct objective or need which is served by the communal on-line experience.

Generally tutor/teachers don't have the time for routine use of such systems;

APTT has made some experiments of this type and found that after a brief spurt of enthusiasm the forum has become redundant. Email, overall, seems popular. Bulletin boards less so.

Chat systems seem prone to software compatibility problems and are generally only of occasional benefit. Email lists can be productive though, especially when they distribute news to those with a common purpose.

The problem is with the concept of 'communities' A community flourishes because it has common needs/goals, and works on a turnover of members (via the process 'legitimate peripheral participation' as outlined by Lave/Wenger). Without *both* goals and progression of members, the community does not flourish and dies. A good example of this system (at its best) is the WEA 'Branch' organisational process. APTT has modelled itself on this system, which was a deliberate process in order to encourage the idea of community with the Association. Hope this helps. B

MESSAGE 15 ONF [RI-R]

Most people who know me will also know that I am a great supporter and advocate of community-based learning in all its forms. My experience is within the true face-to-face community learning - taking the learning to the people rather than the people to the learning.

Experience shows that it works and works well in rural areas and this is an area I hope to study in depth in the next few years. The transfer of face-to-face community learning success to on-line communities of learning is an interesting one and one that reaches a different clientele.

My experience here has been in my own studies with the Open University. On courses where there has been on-line conferences and support the feeling of being part of a group has helped and encouraged studying - distance learning is very isolating! The potential is tremendous but it will not replace the f2f work in my opinion. What do others think?

MESSAGE 16 ONF [RT]

Part of my dissertation was concerned with two students at a rural outreach centre and the safe culture that appeared to exist between them. I found this to be a non-threatening environment and wondered what would happen when they had to advance to the necessary college environment to access the level 2 vocational qualification.

Having participated in this forum I am now wondering what an on line course would bring to these students. I may even contact them to get their feelings on this. I also wonder if they would participate with confidence using any online facilities....definitely food for thought! I reflect that education sometimes appears to be a lot of statements of "I wonder" and sometimes the best ideas come when teachers do this!

MESSAGE 17 ONF [RT]

The use of ICT and distance learning is an interesting one with, for me, some disturbing outcomes. ICT would seem initially to be the answer for distance learning but I am involved with some leadership and management distance learning and am the NE tutor. We have a VLE but I'm having great difficulties in getting people to sign up and participate. It is also interesting that there are only two of us participating in these discussions. So, why is this overall reluctance to take part? Are people afraid of the technology? don't have the time? Too aware of the 'bad press' that discussion on-line has received.

MESSAGE 18 ONF [RI-R]

have been involved in delivering basic skills via a community centre and I feel that learners are reluctant to use computers at first and my personal experience is that they have to first feel comfortable with the teacher and then the confidence and self belief will evolve and it is so good to witness this. I have a friend who has to take 12 laptops to a workplace each week and is developing muscles she didn't know existed! I believe that community based learning can be a more social occasion at times than at some colleges partly because of the flexibility and evidence of peer support. What do others think?

MESSAGE 19 ONF [UN-R]

Has anyone got any experience at teaching abroad?
Teaching anything but preferably English Language.

MESSAGE 20 ONF [UN-R]

Is there anybody out there ?
It's a bit lonely in here 😞
Will someone talk with me 😊

MESSAGE 21 ONF [UN-R]

Hello, has anybody got any information regarding Teacher Assistance work for English Language Institutes in Europe, (or anywhere) ?
I am in the process of applying for an assistanceship and i hope to go to Portugal 😊 but there is so much information on the British Council web site 😞 I sometimes get confused 😊 and even angry 😡 Any information/advice would be appreciated 😊

MESSAGE 22 ONF [UN-R]

might as well reply to myself 😊 I managed to sort out the information and work out what i needed to know 😊 - what was relevant and what was not 😊 I've completed my application form and posted it 😊 It was a day late but through contact with various people who's Email addresses i'd managed to find on the plethora of pages i had to scroll though 😊 - i've been informed that they'll accept my application a little past the deadline date 😊

MESSAGE 23 ONF [UN-R]

I've just read your question and I've got some info you might find helpful. Please see below, From Via Lingua website:

Via Lingua is one of the world's leading and most well-respected providers of International TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) Certificate Courses. We run this program, externally moderated by the University of Birmingham and leading to the internationally recognised TEFL teaching certificate, at 15 different locations worldwide, including Florence, Crete, Rome, Prague, Berlin, Granada, Sydney, Istanbul, Milan, Porto, Corinth, Budapest and St. Petersburg. We can offer firm concrete job offers and guarantees UK and Irish University graduates who successfully complete the initial TEFL training course with us.

These include:

* Take the TEFL course with us in Greece this summer (choice of either Crete or Corinth as training locations) and we'll guarantee you a choice of full-time teaching positions across Greece and the islands commencing early September.

* Take the TEFL course in Spain, Germany, the Czech Republic, Turkey or Portugal with us this summer and we'll offer you a range of job choices across these wonderful European countries.

* Take the TEFL course in Sydney, Australia, and we can offer you a range of work placements across Australia and New Zealand.

For more information on Via Lingua visit

<http://www.milkround.com/lrd.asp?l=309661&m=11253&u=176205&a=8114> or email info@vialingua.org

I hope this helps.

MESSAGE 24 ONF [UN-R]

Thankyou for that. I will visit the site URL that you posted. I need to know the obvious stuff like accomadtion etc

Although i do already have a CELTA cert i am interested in gaining more quals in this area. Sorry it took so long to reply.

APPENDIX XX: Coded Face to Face Forum Transcript Sample based on the Scheme of Indicators for Determining Evidence for Reflection

<p>K: FTF[RI-R]</p>	<p>I personally haven't experienced any sort of provision of Basic Skills training...in any of the places that I have worked...I should imagine that...if work based...for those with Basic Skills needs...if work based provision were available...er I should imagine that there maybe a barrier to them attending such sessions as they may feel...such a stigmatised...they may worry about what their colleagues may think of them...if they got, you know, basic skills needs they may feel as if...er...well...er...they may feel that their colleagues er...might look down on them or...you know...er...view them in sort of an inferior way...er...</p>
<p>G: FTF[UN-R]</p>	<p>Yeah...I think you're right...</p>
<p>T: FTF[RI-R]</p>	<p>From personal experience...er...cause I have worked with people...who had say numeracy problems or literacy problems in ... er...cause I have worked in quite a few jobs over the years and people tend to develop sort of coping strategies...coping mechanisms to try and cope with these things...to try and hide them...I would think an advantage of workplace tuition would be that its sort of ...in the workplace...that people they are going to work anyway, they don't have to travel to a separate location and...and...if it were in...within works time as well, I think this would be a significant advantage to some people not having to study on top of doing the days ... you know...sort of eight hours at work or whatever... you know if they are working full time or whatever...so I could see er...advantages and disadvantages to that and it would depend I think on the persons ... how they viewed it...er...</p>
<p>P: FTF[RT]</p>	<p>What do you think about 'basic skills'? The wording I mean.</p>
<p>C: FTF[RI-R]</p>	<p>I do think that when its phrased as basic skills it is ...I think its seen as a derogatory term, that <i>you</i> 've got the basic skills, the basic fundamental skills...you know...like the baseline...things that people do feel that they should have come away from school ...you know...and I think there are reasons why er...-</p>
<p>S: FTF[RI-AR]</p>	<p>But we've got all of these adults, these large percentage of adults with basic skills needs...even after they have gone through the whole schooling system, not just people coming from abroad or you know... language barriers and things like that but...er...people who have sort of been born and educated in the UK er...and they are still coming through the schooling system...you know...basic skills needs...I don't know...I...it is..I do think there is a big stigma about it...the term basic skills....people <i>do</i> see it...in a derogatory way er...-</p>
<p>K: FTF[RI-R]</p>	<p>And I should imagine that if you had literacy and numeracy problems er..if you had basic skills needs...that your <i>self-esteem</i> would be...in sort of addressing these things er...you would feel...you know...your self esteem would be low...you would lack confidence. I mean we all see the excuses of people who say they haven't got their reading glasses {yeah} because they can't read something and you know...and I have come across those...so {oh yeah} I do feel that there is a problem with that...so...I think there is pros and cons around it...it would depend how you dressed it up and I think people would want to er... in a work based situation I think they would want to keep these issues confidential ...</p>

G: FTF[RI-R]	Well you know, as far as e-learning is concerned, I did try it, and the best doctrines I learnt by that...er for me personally I mean it was so boring...was a bit of a nightmare because I am not a person who is...I am more of a lively person [laughs] time –cup like, stuck by this [laughter].
A: FTF[RI-R]	Courses...I have taken a health and safety course...but I think it links to the motivation side of it as well. I didn't get that much out of it, I didn't really enjoy it, because the motivation wasn't there. I was forced to do it, I didn't commit to it ...er it was learning for health and safety. It was ok, it was fine for me, I thought it was quite normal.
S1: FTF[RI-R]	What I was thinking and from what we have just read, you go to a library and pick a book and take your time over the book, but if you do something like that you are learning to respect the minutes... {obviously} because you are not able of taking it to another dimension-
G: FTF[UN-R]	No one to discuss with-
S2: FTF[RI-R]	That's why you start to accept to respect the power of time...you could go on a banding as well...you could put something on a web site, and download it and go off into something else, you know, that's normal... the next thing its three o clock in the morning and I don't know how much time is left [laughs]
A1: FTF[RI-R]	I am on to a direction website, did some work for a course I was doing er... and I find a paper I want to read and I read it and then I found it difficult to go back to the main page.. but you know what wasn't very helpful? You felt like feeling motivated but then thinking what I am doing from here?-
P: FTF[UN-R]	Getting lost [laughs]
A2: FTF[RI-R]	Getting lost, yes, because you want to go to where you were working and to go the next step and it wasn't even clear-{yeah} the route how to go back and-
S: FTF[UN-R]	You think that it would be a good idea that the tutor have sort like put down guidelines?
A3: FTF[RI-R]	It should have been properly explained and said like, this is what you do and this is what you do, not to just read basically and... and this is something because we weren't proper students, because we were actually working with er...peers ... and weren't like I teach you this and that, and make me read things I don't want to-
G1: [RI-R]	There was also another thing which I found very difficult and I did it myself, and this is how I know that you can do it, er..its you know... when you have your online test, and you have the choices-
A: FTF[UN-R]	That's what people are doing on Learn Direct-
G2: FTF[RI-R]	Especially on one I did like.. er...25 to 35 questions...that's far too many-{yeah} that is a lot of reading really, whereas on...say 5 to 10 questions, there were easy for you to be able to concentrate on...er.. are easier, where as I said, when you have 36 questions on your module, was like oh God...and I sat and wrote down, you know, 1 to 36 and the ones I got right are marked but the ones I got wrong-
A: FTF[UN-R]	And you have the same questions on the exams for all the units and when you get one right and you found what it was, and then you write it down, you go on the exams and you get 100%.

G3: FTF[RI-R]	I know for a fact that if I didn't take my test on paper...er..on the modules that I got 100% ...I would have got nowhere near 100% ...but its just having it online, you are not able to go through it on your own time because...one question at a time comes up on the screen and it's difficult, than having it all the questions on paper, where you can go through, zap oh yeah that, that, that, that, complete the ones that you know, and then go back to the ones that you don't know [laughs] but this way you can't do that and I think that is a bit of disadvantage...er...I don't know if it's because I am an ignorant or...[laughs] [I just don't like e-learning at all...]
A: FTF[UN-R]	{No, not at all, it's just an example}
G4: FTF[RI-R]	I just don't like it...I even...about assignments...I try to print them...off screen, and...some stuff I handed to my tutor...er..because I've been able to print it off and read it properly and make notes and corrections..got that to him. Some of it was just really good, because it's really off screen... it might not be there but it's coming off...in my head, so [laughs] you know what I mean {yeah}
C: FTF[UN-R]	Yeah [laughs]
S: FTF[UN-R]	{reading aloud}So..how do you prefer learning? In the classroom or-
C: FTF[RI-AR]	In the classroom, definitely in the classroom.
S: FTF[RT]	How about using the internet as a search engine...working on assignments?
G: FTF[RT]	At the moment I've been trying to do some market research in a company er...and its obvious that I am looking for business in northeast..er in Newcastle and when I do that...really, it comes up with this...the university of Newcastle, business studies..but that's not what I am looking for and er..-
S: FTF[UN-R]	Depends on what you are typing as well.
C: FTF[UN-R]	Absolutely.
S: FTF[RT]	You know, if you get a book...er you know, some books that are recommended to...say like, you could go to have a look on the net and...you could read and read [laughs] ending open plant [laughter]
C: FTF[RT]	What I find..what is me about using books, because of er... being so popular, when I refer to a book...and to reference a book I think...this is you know, search the internet...and if I'm referring to a book that's been published in 1999...er... should I have even referred of it? Should I look some sort of more new ones...on the internet? er...-
A: FTF[RI-AR]	I think that books have more respected titles...
C: FTF[RI-AR]	I think they do, yes. I think when I finish the assignment I like to quote books at the bibliography obviously because it looks like...its more good... kind of smooth and...-
P: FTF[RI-AR]	It's easier as well [laughter] that's why I like using them [laughs]
K: FTF[RT]	I always refer to books. I don't know what it is...

P: FTF[RI-AR]	The book is simple, it doesn't get it wrong. You can get a PowerPoint and you could lose it all ...the computer has gone up and [laughs] you had it
S: FTF[UN-R]	This is what I was going to mention before...-
C: FTF[UN-R]	It's crazy...
S: FTF[RI-AR]	But I still think the positives, all outweigh the negatives...er..definitely.
T: FTF[UN-R]	I think that takes us to our next topic about er...I think its page 8, yeah? ICT has the potential to overcome many of the barriers which people who are socially and economically disadvantaged face in accessing education and training...um-
S: FTF[RI-R]	Er...my experience of e-learning is that...if people don't have the relevant skills to access e-learning er..then there is a barrier straight away...so if people aren't IT literate, they don't have the computer skills...then...you know...it's a no go... it's a non start...they first got to obtain the skills in order to access the e-learning...
K1: FTF[RI-R]	I agree..you would need to be able to read and...you know, to access the information...so if you've got literacy problems it wouldn't work but...I do find that...particularly amongst...in the centre that I work in...er...as I said we've got a high percentage of older learners and...you know they...er...a lot of the people that come into the centre...there is a high percentage of them ... they actually find they are terrified of the session you know...a lot coming to the centre it's the first time they've actually touched a computer and you know...-
P: FTF[UN-R]	and they are pretty nervous about switching the thing on and about touching the keyboard [laughs]
K2: FTF[RI-R]	yes, and they're worried that if they press the button you know...will they break something, will it blow up, will things disappear...you know...it's about sort of building their confidence you know...we usually say to them you can't break it and if you do, we can usually fix it and if we can't fix it we can get somebody else who.. you know..can fix it, so don't worry about it, you know...er...
T: FTF[RI-R]	building their confidence with the computer use is ... absolutely, and we have found that once we get people to a certain level of confidence then they are quite keen to access the internet ...they want to learn how to use the internet and access this...the world wide web and all this information...and to use email as well...er and we've got quite a lot of older learners who have got families...er in places like Canada, America, New Zealand, you know...they lived in, abroad, Australia and what have you and...they're quite keen to sort of getting into the internet and to be able to use email in order to...you know...interact with their families...
C1: FTF[RT]	I think it must be very <i>very</i> difficult particularly for asylum seekers who come from other countries, people who come from Iraq and you know...from certain places in Africa er..people from Russia when.. you know...countries all over the world, must be very <i>very</i> difficult to be...to have to flee your home in fear of your life and come to a strange country where you know, you are in a totally difficult culture, you know nobody...and to worry about ... if you left family behind it must be, it must be <i>really</i> terrible for them....
K: FTF[UN-R]	absolutely...

C2: FTF[RT]	So...if you were alone...like you literally are alone ...er you would worry about your family and...I don't think...er it's a very daunting prospect for those people...I think particularly in Iraq, which is in our minds at the moment and I think it must be really terrible for people who had to flee that country and...with a lousy weather for a start you know [laughs] but I mean you know... the weather is the least of their problems, isn't it? cause [laughter]
A: FTF[RI-R]	[reading aloud] The post-16 education sector.....it has the potential...but...you have to have access to it...and it says <i>people who are socially and economically disadvantaged</i> ...if they are economically disadvantaged they might not be able to afford a computer in the home so.. they would have to go to a library or some of the places where they could have access ...but again..I think it comes down to having the tools...the IT know how ...and the computers to access the things...- {yeah...} {absolutely}
A1: FTF[RI-AR]	and I don't think that ICT has been the answer that the government hoped it would be...I don't think that it's...the take up has been as great as the government envisaged in sort of '98-'99 you know...sort of '97 when Helena Kennedy and the widening participation...in learning works article...er..-
P: FTF[UN-R]	sorry, which article?
A: FTF[UN-R]	Oh, a paper called...learning works about..sort of widening adults participation...you have not seen that one? er..
P: FTF[UN-R]	no...
A2: FTF[RI-AR]	I mean they've banging on about it... a good few years now but I think sort of...particularly since the late 90s it was given..this high profile and you know...it was the drive to have all adults IT literate by a certain time.. you know, within so many years and all the rest of it.. but I don't think its...its...had the impact that the government hoped it would...not yet anyway...you know...-
T: FTF[UN-R]	like in the States, you know...in Canada..-
A: FTF[UN-R]	yeah, we do seem to be sort of...behind the other countries like America who use it day in and day out...er...you know...so...
T: FTF[RI-R]	See, that's the thing I always say..and obviously explaining how you know how ICTs have this power...and my argument is how that someone who can't read or write, how they could use a computer, gain qualifications...ok, that's going to help me find a job <i>but</i> for me, realistically...first I think they should have...they should have literacy and then get a job...
S: FTF[RI-AR]	I suppose, you can prioritise things in that way er...but saying that...let's say hot and cool water, now, they may need to have experience and expertise to fill water in the system. If there is an ICT system to place all of these things or whatever you can, get the information from them ... so I think its still a good thing, but I can understand what you are saying, you know, so, well I mean... it is not something that I have personally liked, but I know that I have to learn it, because it's for my benefit, its for everybody's benefit, although like I said two or three times tonight, there are disadvantages as well, there have been problems...but I think that the positives are more...definitely...

<p>T:</p> <p>FTF[CR]</p>	<p>In my workplace, we work with lots of volunteers and they are trying a booking system of their own to use a computer...I can see some of them...they cannot use a computer properly..er... I'm just giving an example...and never ask for help..just sit there and struggle..struggle ...because I know I would feel so embarrassed and incompetent er..if I needed help I would <i>never</i> ask for assistance because that makes me feel so..-</p>
<p>G:</p> <p>FTF[RI-AR]</p>	<p>But that's for <i>us</i>, the tutors and the trainers to learn the body language...</p>
<p>T:</p> <p>FTF[RI-R]</p>	<p>even then...one of our students...I helped her over and over...she got to a point where she got so frustrated, and I realised then that...this happened because she doesn't understand the language, [teaching is another language is just like...]</p>
<p>S:</p> <p>FTF[CR]</p>	<p>I think a lot of it have to do with er..age as well, the age of the individual...because obviously..should say that the older you are, the more confident you usually become. When I was 16 years old, I walked into a room with one person..I mean I would blush... but the way to think it is...er what I'm just saying is confidence comes with age as well sometimes you know, and obviously the outside of your comfort zone...and that takes time to get used to different environments, different individuals...so..I think a lot of this is connected and has to be taken on further I believe...</p>
<p>K:</p> <p>FTF[RI-R]</p>	<p>I think there are a range of factors...I think a strong motivation...a lot of the adults that I've taught have been financially disadvantaged...and to improve their employment prospects er...if they learn new skills, if they master these skills then it will hopefully open up doors to more lucrative employment for them er...sometimes not necessarily more lucrative...sometimes more enjoyable job...er..</p>
<p>A:</p> <p>FTF[RI-R]</p>	<p>I've taught people who have worked in jobs that they are not particularly happy doing and they are looking for a career change so they've come along to learn IT skills in the hope that it will open other doors and ... for some of them it has er...I know one of our students who was working in the local supermarket and she's now got a job in working on databases with a local school and..you know she is thrilled of that. She wasn't particularly happy before...she didn't feel that she was being particularly stretched...filling shelves and sitting on the check-out all day...you know, she said whilst you know...other people were quite happy doing it and it wasn't for her...-</p>
<p>S:</p> <p>FTF[RI-R]</p>	<p>and other adults ...I think...a lot of the older learners that I've seen they wanted to find out about the new technology...some of them its been sort of curiosity about computers...and other as I say have wanted ...this on-line access and email activity in order to contact and communicate with..relatives in countries abroad...so I think it's a range of factors...but I think they are the main ones...the economic side of things ...er..trying to get a better job or a more enjoyable job and the other is being sort of communication er... and I do know some people who they learn...er...they're motivated to learn simply because er...they feel that they're doing something positive and...they like to learn for learning's sake.</p>
<p>C1:</p> <p>FTF[CR]</p>	<p>I remember... for me it was definitely a choice to get a better job and...I won over a first degree... it was more ambition ...actually it was more than that...what do you do and why do you do it. In other words, I wanted to do that for a few years but it took me a little while to get myself to a position where I could actually go, so..-</p>

G: FTF[UN-R]	I am still young so..sorry about that [laughs]
C2: FTF[CR]	I'm just continuing, just studying and afterwards the job...I <i>do</i> have a first class degree...
S1: FTF[RI-AR]	I think it's a good thing but you also...the only way to get them...I mean knowledge as well is through life skills you know. Obviously I don't have any disrespect to anyone that has got qualifications..I mean I got a few myself, but you'll still need that knowledge as well that life skill, you know... because you can't come out of the university one day and expect to be, say a bank manager...and I know I'm taking things to the extremely-
G: FTF[RI-AR]	But no you're not. In society you've got 20-21 year olds...22 year olds that walk out the university, after doing a degree for a year, and they maintain that attitude er..I'm going to be a manager, I'm going to be an executive before I'm 22. And they take it for granted that that's going to happen.
S2: FTF[RI-AR]	I think that the job market nowadays is lot more intense for qualifications and they are a good thing, you have to have qualifications ...but you have to have experience as well...- {yeah}
S: FTF[RI-AR]	so..the question what motivates adults to learn...er...I mean there is something else we have to look at as well..qualifications we all have agreed, I'm all for experience, but we also should look at different lifestyles as well...and different jobs that people do, because all jobs are important as well. So you can have people having doctorates, and you can have your masters degree, and all of that but you still ...your age is just as important as the people that have got doctorate degrees and- {whatever [laughs]} so that I think that is very important.
A: FTF[RI-R]	But I think the system starts to change anyway because...when you do exams now.. nowadays its totally unrealistic, isn't it? Because you could be studying something for three years and the next thing you know PUH! There is an exam over an hour or whatever it is some people... that bit of pressure...er..some people fall apart, and its totally unrealistic and its unfair. So hopefully things are going to change for the better, I think that's.. if you're studying in the schools now, but it is going to be post-16 as well. And I'm sure that will start to motivate people.
G1: FTF[CR]	But you'll have the opportunity, the chance to actually work and achieve and er ... a er a certain grade, so you automatically pass the exam, so you don't have to sit the exam...and <i>that</i> was actually was perfect for me, because I am one of those people you put an exam paper in front of me and I know the answers but my brain just goes <i>PUH</i> , shut down [laughter].
G2: FTF[CR]	and it's so annoying and my very first exam in England was pc repairs and maintenance. At 32 I got 26. Passed <i>but</i> ... and my tutor was really annoyed because he knew I knew every single one of those answers that the next two months every time he passed me in the corridor he threw a question at me, literally one of the questions that I got wrong in the exam, and I gave him the right answer, and he was like I wish I could clobber you one [laughter] you know, why did you go getting it wrong? But it is because of what you say, it's that pressure. But that is something not only adults have; it's like kids that have it as well- {yeah} 7 years old... pre school kids...exams and stuff, it is so silly-
C: FTF[UN-R]	Yeah...

<p>S:</p> <p>FTF[RI-AR]</p>	<p>I think you should have a bit of a life er to begin with anyway..that you have a bit freedom,..<i>express</i> themselves, and I'm not on about breaking into cars [laughter] nowt like that. They should, should really I don't think really, you should be learning, I mean you should always be learning, I think that sort of that I suggest is certain, but there should be a little bit of freedom as well...you know before you get that pressure, before you get to the real world, yeah... you know...</p>
<p>T:</p> <p>FTF[RI-AR]</p>	<p>Basically, everybody is different...people are who they areyou know...they're all different and they just do different things er...</p>
<p>G:</p> <p>FTF[RI-AR]</p>	<p>But of course. If you are mathematician you are not a linguist, and if you are a linguist you are <i>not</i> a mathematician, and yet I had four of my tutors say to me that it's a load of nonsense. Maths is language, yes, but you are not a linguist, because a linguist doesn't see numbers, they see letters, and it is <i>completely</i> different, and yes, in England we have stereotyping we put everyone into the same bag, instead of ... like back into the 60s where you had your carpentry in school, and you had er skills and stuff like that, and yet at the same time you had your 3 Rs -reading and writing and arithmetic- and I seriously think that England should really get back to that ...I think it's too late really-</p>
<p>T:</p> <p>FTF[RI-AR]</p>	<p>I think they need to change those... er I think on most courses they're changing to like communication skills, literacy and numeracy {I think they've messed it up} yeah...</p>
<p>A:</p> <p>FTF[UN-R]</p>	<p>What do you mean by <i>yeah</i>?-</p>
<p>S:</p> <p>FTF[RI-AR]</p>	<p>I don't think it could be too late, because...er I know what you're saying but, the thing is if something is going to be changed for the better it is never too late...really...</p>
<p>G:</p> <p>FTF[RI-AR]</p>	<p>what it is really er ... I know for a fact that if I .. if my family hadn't moved <i>to</i> France I would have been a high school drop-out. There is no way I would stuck with an English education. I have got my brother and sister who left school illiterate, because they got part of their education in France, then returned to England, oh sod this for a lark [laughs].</p>
<p>C:</p> <p>FTF[UN-R]</p>	<p>So from what you say er the English education system at that time worked against people? Hmm...</p>
<p>G:</p> <p>FTF[RI-AR]</p>	<p>Yes, you know... I see the education system before, when I was in primary school, where nobody even, er... we had to retake the ... eleven plus and we had to pass it to see whether we could, we gonna go, what school we were go on to.</p>
<p>S:</p> <p>FTF[RI-AR]</p>	<p>Because there was a stigma as well... that was something that er didn't affect me, because, I mean you know I was quite a shy person er and I used my humour to get out of situations... I was I was a person that mucked around at school too much, but when it came to the eleven plus I mean I failed that [laughter] I don't know how badly I failed it, so from an early age the class is a failure and that's a good reason why I thought they scraped it.</p>
<p>C:</p> <p>FTF[RT]</p>	<p>I remember I think the worst thing for me about high school... from my experience ... I left high school being completely unmotivated, which is why I didn't go to university, I just floated into the 6th form. I got just two A levels because I knew I didn't want to go to the university and didn't try being creative... I got very poor er poor grades. It was just something I had to do... I just didn't like the system [laughter] and I didn't want to go to university.</p>

A: FTF[RT]	As I said you got to go to university and you have been studying for how much? Around 10-11 years...mature to make your own decisions-
C: FTF[UN-R]	I've been trying to catch up-
S1: FTF[CR]	<p>To be honest the most time I've been in the forces, I served with the navy and the marines, I did a marines course, but er... I played sport most of the time. I had a really cushy time me like. (laughs) So I did some coaching qualifications but academically I didn't do anything. No. I left school.</p> <p>Two days after I left school I was in the forces. See me coming, '75, and er I didn't do any qualifications, sorry academic qualifications till I left the forces er I had that many injuries through time in the time in the forces er doing a bit in sports with other things as well. er I thought it would be a good idea, very good idea to go into...to get certain teaching qualifications and, er and obviously coaching as well, but, that wasn't...that's another force to me, I even knew which avenue I was gonna go down, and er sports....but er I knew I needed qualifications so ..</p> <p>was it forced for me to do that...why... was it motivation? or was it because I wanted them qualifications just to have a bit more experience or ... was something I mentioned earlier about finances... you know, ... because of the old spondoolies...-</p>
A: FTF[RI-AR]	{ it has nothing to do with training }-
S2: FTF[CR]	I think it's for both really, you know...
A: [UN-R]	if we do, do we really have any willpower to-
S3: FTF[CR]	because I know in my situation, right? I've got a few qualifications, ... but I know that with the degree I am doing at the moment, if I get that degree, that's gonna help me <i>immensely</i> for what I want to do. So there is willpower there to get that degree but the motivation is the reason I am doing it, to make the old spondoolies at the end of the day... you know...

<p>S:</p> <p>FTF[CR]</p>	<p>It is just what comes back to experience as well I suppose, you know...er..I mean this is another reason why I am now doing a degree. I went for a job recently..don't ask me why I went cause I have no idea [laughter] was through the APTT, its chemistry fellow [laughter] I went for it, Newcastle university, dolly dimple here..right...I done well at the interview, nice presentation and what have you...er..there was a lady called {...} though..just happens to have a doctorate in chemistry..and I knew that she was going to the interview but it was recommended for me to go for it, but...I took something from that, I learned something from the interview..<i>not</i> to go for an interview again [laughter]. Apart from that I did pick up a few things about presentations..how to present yourself differently as well, so..I still think that...that was a motivator for me, even though I wasn't really expecting to get the job, I wasn't expecting that at all..er but that still motivates me... er maybe if had a degree in that subject, and because of my..er not age but my experience, I might had a better chance to get it.I don't know..obviously hypothetical, but... I have went for jobs in the past I haven't got it because of...I haven't got this piece of paper. I don't know... necessarily think that's right or wrong...I don't know which way to put that, because er..obviously going to the university to get these pieces of paper...and its not all er academic anymore, its just a lot of it is practical work which I think is a good thing...but where do you draw the line to say well..you know..he is got the experience but that other person that was younger he's got a piece of paper..you know, I don't know...</p>
<p>G1:</p> <p>FTF[CR]</p>	<p>You know I'm thinking back to my grandparents and my great grandparents...they didn't have the education that my father and I had but there was <i>something</i> you know-</p>
<p>S:</p> <p>FTF[UN-R]</p>	<p>maybe because there were more practical</p>
<p>G2:</p> <p>FTF[CR]</p>	<p>No it's not that...its just that...people read more and was no television...so everybody played games for instance, and that gives you social skills...and I don't know, I start talking about the same things and I can't find the words I want to use... maybe because computers and the internet has become-</p>
<p>C:</p> <p>FTF[UN-R]</p>	<p>so popular</p>
<p>G1:</p> <p>FTF[RI-AR]</p>	<p>yeah, but that teaches us to be antisocial-</p>
<p>C:</p> <p>FTF[UN-R]</p>	<p>Yes, it does...</p>
<p>G2:</p> <p>FTF[RI-AR]</p>	<p>Who has written a letter..literally written on the last two years on this team?</p>
<p>P:</p> <p>FTF[UN-R]</p>	<p>I had, because the computer was knackered [laughter]</p>
<p>C:</p> <p>FTF[RI-AR]</p>	<p>I received a letter recently...er..a hand written letter from a personal friend..and it was wonderful. {S: It feels a lot more personal, doesn't it?} Not even a card...letter on paper written in an ink pen. It was wonderful...</p>

S: FTF[RI-AR]	I'd like to say something about widening...adults' participation...from the Victorian times yet...I think a lot have to do with who you are, your social standard as well...nowadays they're trying to improve that, I think they have done so, no matter how badly some people [coughs] perceive it to be, it has improved...and it's in all starters of society and...er are getting into universities now as well and Cambridge and Oxford..which used to be depending on your background...er until quite recently I suppose. I knew a young lady who went to Harvard...studied in Cambridge, Oxford I am not sure which now...er...which she worked there ...she did some sports coaching there a few years ago.
G: FTF[UN-R]	[reads aloud] Informal learning-
A: FTF[UN-R]	I am using that word on Monday night [laughter] That's me [laughs]
P: FTF[RT]	Kids are not actually communicating with each other anymore, apart from emails...they spend the rest of their time text messaging- {Text Messaging} {Yeah text messaging}.
P: FTF[RT]	A new language isn't it?...a new language and that's it..they are texting each other, emailing each other and the rest of the time they are on the games, playing games all night...so they are getting no exercise or anything..-
A: FTF[UN-R]	I can't find any fault with text messaging.
G: FTF[RI-AR]	No, no, no, just a minute, this is just something I've been thinking on recently...er..think of the English language and the way that is written, right? And think of the American language and the way that is written and look at the way kids are writing text messages. My god, in fifty years time that's gonna be English.
A: FTF[RT]	and what is the motivation for doing this?..because they get no information by messaging...
P: FTF[UN-R]	I have got a friend that actually texts like that, with abbreviations, m8 mate, also numbers and that-
A: FTF[UN-R]	your formulas are massive and the cost of it-
P: FTF[UN-R]	it costs exactly the same price it doesn't matter what you put in the text message if its <i>this</i> long or <i>this</i> long...
S: FTF[RI-AR]	I don't think is wrong because language is always above...its always a bargain...the way that I mean...er you could go back to middle ages...different part of the country spoke differently...you couldn't get somebody from Newcastle just going down as far as York...wouldn't be able to understand each other [laughter] you know. And obviously because of globalisation...things are changing again, making the world even smaller but...I don't think that's a bad thing. Text messages is even...er you know...its just a new language and like you say that the language er...not just English language but all languages...are evolving all the time, so...I think its a good thing.
G: FTF[RT]	I actually...wondering if it happens to know from the story the piece ...er...the..try to get to the sky and as a punishment god separating all languages... {yeah} I sorta like wonder... <i>where</i> .. where and how I know did that one originated?-

S: FTF[UN-R]	But I think that that's a religious thing as well because I think-
G: FTF[UN-R]	Wait, wait, because I am a religious person-
S: FTF[UN-R]	I am a religious person.
G: FTF[RT]	but I try and see within that story, as we call it...where is the meaning of the sent or crossed understanding-
A: FTF[UN-R]	what came first, where did the story come from er..did he actually come to earth to keep the story accurate or that sort of thing?
C: FTF[UN-R]	so the story is an explanation to why there are so many languages?
A: FTF[RI-AR]	what I mean is, say that there is a fucking 100 languages in the world, and there must be a reason for this and that's why they write a story and I think that could be the reason.
S: FTF[RI-R]	I think is an interpretation, I mean just for example the bible, all right, you can get 20 people read a passage in the bible and they have all got different interpretations, you know...in a passage in the bible-
G: FTF[RI-R]	but don't forget that even two people from within the same church don't believe the same thing because faith is unique to each person...because they're all individuals-
A: FTF[RT]	but what if people do not have those choices?
G: FTF[RT]	well I don't know..because actually I know someone like that, my dad is like that and yet he knows half the bible off by heart, he knows the ten commandments off by heart. Ask me what the 10 commandments are and I'll go rhhhh [laughter] Kate, you know? [Laughs] I know thou shall kill, thou shall not commit adultery, that shall not steal... about three of them I remember[laughter]
K: FTF[RI-R]	I personally agree with this informal learning and a lot of informal learning...er..I think isn't recognised because...er its not certificated and categorised ...it does tend to be overlooked er...formal learning classes, workshop and online events is the sort of only 10 to 20% of what we learn at work er....I would say that...its tacit knowledge, skills that you bring into the workplace form the other life experiences and...a lot of learning...in the workplace isn't formal... learning from other colleagues....so I would agree...I don't know whether I would agree this sort of 10-20% figure but...I do think that it's a large percentage...of informal learning...I do think that informal learning is undervalued ...but perhaps that's because it's not measurable er...difficult to measure....er..-
A1: FTF[RI-R]	Well, I have to say that...I contradict my self here, I used to work, when I had worked at IT, its been informal learning...it's been like er...the blackboard and all that official stuff...being didactic, telling people what they should do...and all that stuff. It's always been informal in the sense that...er because of the students...and the location...I was more like a mentor-
S: FTF[UN-R]	so it was classed as informal learning-
A2: FTF[RI-R]	but we've been in an informal environment...not like a proper training scheme...that's what we mean by <i>informal</i>

S: FTF[RT]	so ok, one who manages a football team..is that informal learning?
A: FTF[RT]	that's it...I don't know...where do you draw the line?
G1: FTF[RI-AR]	Here in the text it says that basically informal learning is asking when you're trying to do something...observing others, talking during breaks and stuff like that, and I know for a fact with... er especially with things like at..IT, shortcut keys, you know..its in the keyboard, actions..its often that...I've noticed er...but it's the one thing that you...that everybody picks up on everybody else because its not actually formally taught.
A: FTF[UN-R]	They have to discover it, don't they? It's in the curriculum, isn't it? But-
C: FTF[RI-AR]	well, quite the better really
S: FTF[RI-AR]	Well it's the best
G2: FTF[RI-AR]	I know because you see somebody doing something and you say hi, what does that do? And they tell you and you pick it up from there so...-
C: FTF[RI-AR]	That's how you learn through your life... isn't it?
A: FTF[RI-AR]	you don't have a choice here, do you?
C: FTF[RI-R]	if you can somehow emulate what was on actually...what human beings are like...how they learn and things...er..this is how you can increase the learners' experience...-
S: FTF[RI-R]	Looking at informal learning though...it is more relaxed, right? Because the individuals are in an environment where they are more relaxed...less pressure to take on loads of information.
T: FTF[RI-AR]	I think it's a psychological thing.
S: FTF[RI-R]	I wonder whether...because when you are in a formal environment...its regimented...this lesson starts at that time and finishes at that time, this is the information we are gonna give you today, in <i>this</i> period of time...so there is pressure on the lecturer to get that information over and...its pressure on the individuals within the formal setting to take on new learning...er..so I don't think this helps.
C: FTF[RI-AR]	It's not good for their confidence as well.
S1: FTF[RI-AR]	Personally that's the route I'll take, the route of informal learning when I finish my degree. This is something I wanna seriously look at in because...I don't agree with the recommended way that post-16 education is taught a lot of the time...er..not all of the time, but a lot of the time...er-{yeah...}
S2: FTF[RI-AR]	and particularly because of the age of the students as well. I don't think they should be treated like children...and am not on about 16-17 years, am on about mature students as well, they've got to start at this time, finish at this time, they got to get that, take that information in, you're not taking on board...er I personally don't... I keep learning from my tutor, [JM]...I mean he's been a <i>massive</i> help to me, and he explains things to me...he can explain something to me in two minutes, than..someone that taken weeks to try and get through, partly because...because of the setting, because of the environment that were in.

<p>A:</p> <p>FTF[RI-R]</p>	<p>I think when you're thinking formal informal, are thinking as like, this is a formal setting and this is informal setting? or is this an informal approach or this is formal approach? I mean that is a mix out of two really. You don't get like things exclusively in either setting..you would work on assignments for college...compared to...30% or something...and I say you might be in informal setting where you are in home and you might think, well...that gotta be informal education..somebody, a friend, showing you to use like setting a burglar alarm...this isn't formal learning er...this you have something when you are writing notes...you're constantly learning are you?, so that class.. that's formal learning, cause it is in formal environment-</p>
<p>S:</p> <p>FTF[RI-R]</p>	<p>Cause its got a bit further down here, formal learning, classes and workshops and online events is the source of only 10% to 20% of what we learn at work, so its, it could be when in the work environment as well, but its pressure..pressure all the time and I think er...if you could take the pressure away, in any way you can, then I think that would be clustered...more, of an informal setting.</p>
<p>G:</p> <p>FTF[RI-R]</p>	<p>Yeah, but there is also a thing where in classrooms and workshops, where there's the...you know, a schedule to stick to and what times... but something like us.. where.. its in our control as to what point to go away tonight...after one hour and a half, two hours or however long [laughs] {um..probably} [I should remember more that... we had er... in the last time we were actually in a class after 5 hours, half the class was asleep] [laughter].</p>

APPENDIX XXI: Sample Transcript of Telephone Interviews**Interview with JL**

I: {...}

J: My reflections are that I really enjoyed participating in this project, a real trip down memory lane.

I think that I've found it harder than I thought it would be to motivate myself to sign on and keep up to date with the discussion board, which I find funny as I am on the Internet every day. I've found it much harder than I anticipated. Especially making the time. I work full-time, at different sites so haven't had much time at work to check in.

I found the discussion topics encouraging, as the titles showed up on the front page and were intriguing enough to get me into the site.

I found it really hard to write something to the group, I mean start a post myself, and I'm guessing that others are finding that hard too. I am informed that I am a reflective learner, and to a certain extent this tends to hinder my learning as I question not just the theoretical approaches to learning, but at times my own ability to respond at an appropriate level. I was thinking that I am not sure which topic to choose or what sort of comment to make and I think one's answer, I think it was one of the first comments not sure though, seemed so well answered. So I read it again a couple of times. It could very well provide a good model, example for others, who are not sure how to go about it, like me, before they post a reply. Would this help at least some of them, the reluctant ones perhaps, to go ahead and post a reply?

I think I would like to find out more about other people, those I don't already know on the group, as I know lots of people within the LSDA centre, where they work, what they do, what they look like. I find it interesting that I feel I need to have a voice for each person in my head, and be able to picture them speaking when I read their posts. Perhaps I am a particularly aural person?

I have a friend who is dyslexic and she has problems with her short memory and because of this I think she hates forums, I mean, I'm not dyslexic but I have found it much more challenging and time consuming than I thought, for example, to remember what the topic is about, read all the posts, reply where necessary and then start to post myself. I find the way generally the discussion boards are laid out very slow and annoying too. Slow and pedestrian. I have to keep checking what people have actually said, or what we are being asked to do. There's no 'tone of voice' to help you track the responses. I find this as bad as not putting a face to a name. I would like to be able to see all the posts in full when I am replying. I am not even sure if there is a button to do that, is there?

I think that e-learning taps into the inside of individuals and breaks down the 'first impression based on what you look like' syndrome, but it is faceless. I think it would be good to have photos or something, just to aid the mental picturing, and help with keeping tabs with 'who said what'.

I: {...}

Interview with MM

I: {...}

M: I have been trying to catch up and feel quite disheartened. At the start the time needed to do this didn't seem too much but the days slipped away very quickly, especially with all the preparations and shopping for Christmas. It is notable how difficult it can be to find time for activities. I planned that I would work through the pages and catch up but when you go to the discussion topics and see all the comments, most of which you agree with then it seems difficult to add your own original comments, although it does mean you can respond positively to others I suppose.

I do feel what I have seen and experienced has been valuable, putting me in the situation of a part-time student new to e-learning, which is the experience of those I work with. I mean I have felt very exposed and defensive at times while trying to understand and work the technology, and feeling stupid when I couldn't get access to the text either.

I still feel very much a beginner in the online world but can see lots of possibilities. I suppose this made me reflect on the differences in approach, and how easy I think it will be for unconfident learners to jump ship if there is empathy and support for them. I really like the opportunity to think, reflect in discussions. I love discussions about things, and being made to think, although if you think for too long it has moved on, but that is where the moderator's encouragement might be helpful.

Comments or emails from a moderator at the start might have been encouraging, especially for those of us who are used to a face to face teaching and learning, but I suppose this isn't always the solution.

Some years ago I was on a 2 week course and falling a bit behind and encouraged by the moderator I scheduled enough time over a weekend to do the work to catch up and then get ahead, only for the purpose of the exercise to be changed. This affected me considerably as I felt I had wasted about 2 hours. I was completely demotivated. So moderators can affect participants both ways, positively and negatively.

I also found the differing uses of font style, some adventurous, size, some large and colour some bright in the various contributions quite interesting. Obviously this has a lot to do with personal preference, not to say presence, but some of the postings did perhaps pose a challenge even without any visual impairment, other than the usual ageing effects.

I: {...}

APPENDIX XXII: Coding of Responses for the Initial Questionnaire

Question	Variable	Coding of Responses
1. What is your gender?	SEX	1 = Female 2 = Male
2. Within which age category do you fall?	AGE	1 = 18-25 2 = 26-30 3 = 31-35 4 = 36-40 5 = 41-45 6 = 46-50 7 = 51-55 8 = 56+
3. Which category best describes your institution/organisation (please cross one)?	SECTR	1= FE College 2= Local Authority 3= Community and Voluntary 4 = Private 5 = Other
4. Which one of the following best describes your position (please cross one)?	POSN	1 = Basic Skills Tutor 2 = ESOL Tutor 3 = Lecturer 4 = Coordinator 5 = Manager 6 = Other
5. Which subject area do you specialize in (please cross one)?	SUBJ	1 = Literacy 2 = Numeracy 3 = ESOL 4 = ICT 5 = Key Skills 6 = Other
6. What is the highest level of education you have attained (please cross one)?	QUALIF	1= Level 2 2 = Level 3 3 = Degree 4 = Masters 5 = Other
7. Do you use a computer for your personal work? N.B. If you have answered 'No' to this question, please proceed to question 9	PC_USGE	1 = Yes 2 = No
8. What type of operating system do you use?	PC_SYSTM	1 = MS Windows 98 2 = MS Windows XP 3 = I don't know 4 = Other
9. How would you rate your computer skills?	IT_SKLS	1 = Expert 2 = Good 3 = Fair 4 = Novice 5 = None

10. Do you have regular access to a computer connected to the internet?	WEB_ACCS	1 = Yes 2 = No
11. For which one of the following do you use the internet most often (please cross one)?	WEB_VISTS	1 = Work related purposes 2 = Research 3 = The news 4 = Socializing 5 = Other
12. Have you ever participated in an on-line forum? N.B. If you have answered 'No' to this question, please proceed to question 15	ONLNF	1 = Yes 2 = No
13. If yes, for what purpose (please cross one)?	ONLNF_PURP	1 = Work related purposes 2 = Course studies 3 = Professional development 4 = Socializing 5 = Other
14. What was the average time you spent on the on-line forum per day?	ONLNF_TME	1 = 0-30 minutes 2 = 31-60 minutes 3 = 2-3 hours 4 = Less than 2 hours 5 = Other
15. Please refer to the most recent training initiative/course you have attended and answer the following questions in no more than a 100 words. a) Why did you attend this training initiative/course? b) Did it meet your training/learning needs? c) If yes, did this affect your current practice and in what way(s)? If not, why?	REFL REFL1	1 = Critical Reflection 2 = Dialogic Reflection 3 = Descriptive Reflection 4 = Descriptive Writing & CR = Critical Reflection DIAR = Dialogic Reflection DR = Descriptive Reflection DW = Descriptive Writing & 1 = Deep Reflection 2 = Surface Reflection
N.B. Missing values	98 99	98 = refused to answer 99 = not applicable (question not relevant)

APPENDIX XXIII: Sample of Open Ended Responses Transcript

G: FENTO standards 4 as this is what I require to work in Basic Skills. The course is going to be very useful. All training and learning needs will be met. More skills, more information.

M: Attending T318 C&G Teaching Certificate a) to gain qualification for work advance b) finding it helpful c) it is, I feel, improving my training abilities.

C: I'm currently studying towards PGCE (FE) and Level 4 Literacy qualification, to gain Qualified Teacher Status. Will complete both in December 2004.

S: a) needed to undertake the Cert Ed as I believe this would enable me to a greater insight into machineries of student learning, and enable me to improve the status quo. b) I found it very enlightening although c) I would have found it more useful if it had been more practically based, due to the work I do. d) It enabled me to focus more on new standards that have been introduced into educational policy.

T: I finished my Certificate in Education at Newcastle College 2 years ago. I have just started a FENTO 4 standard Literacy and Numeracy course at Newcastle College. This course will last until June/July 2006. This is part of my continued professional development. It is most useful in my current job, training.

K: a) Management requested that all staff attend the training event. b) Yes-the training event was the first opportunity to view a new interactive software package, which is used to identify individual learners' abilities regarding literacy and numeracy skills and to identify those who may require additional support. It was also a useful opportunity to test the software and to discuss with colleagues. c) Yes. d) Tutors now utilize the software package at all induction sessions. The results determine the course level (either entry level or level one) for each individual learner and help to identify any person who may require additional learning support.

M: I attended a training session on 'how to deal with difficult behaviour' to enable me to deal with some of the clients I have to work with. I found it very useful. It did meet my training needs. Yes, it did affect my current practice by enabling me to understand the effects of chaotic abusive lifestyles of our clients and the effects this can have on their learning abilities.

A: I chose to attend it to enhance my career prospects and teaching knowledge. Yes, very much so. Well yes, but it also highlighted other interests and needs which I am busy now dealing with (I am studying a teaching BA). Gave me greater insight (access to authoritative theories) into how and why students learn, which has influenced my teaching approaches and methods.

P: [No response].

TH: I needed no relevant experience as I was given full training to do the job. The training wasn't that useful as some of it was irrelevant to the job I was about to do. The training did meet the learning needs but it was intense so it was a lot to take in. This affected my practice slightly as I had to recall all the training I had done.

APPENDIX XXIV: Initial Questionnaire: Frequencies of responses
1. On-line Forum- Initial Questionnaire - Frequency of responses

SEX	Frequency	%	Valid %
Valid Female	5	50.0	50.0
Male	5	50.0	50.0

AGE	Frequency	%	Valid %
Valid 31-35	1	10.0	10.0
36-40	2	20.0	20.0
41-45	2	20.0	20.0
46-50	1	10.0	10.0
51-55	3	30.0	30.0
56+	1	10.0	10.0

SECTR	Frequency	%	Valid %
Valid FE College	4	40.0	40.0
Community and Voluntary	3	30.0	30.0
Private	2	20.0	20.0
Other	1	10.0	10.0

POSN	Frequency	%	Valid %
Valid Basic Skills Tutor	1	10.0	10.0
ESOL Tutor	2	20.0	20.0
Lecturer	3	30.0	30.0
Coordinator	1	10.0	10.0
Manager	1	10.0	10.0
Other	2	20.0	20.0

SUBJ	Frequency	%	Valid %
Valid Literacy	2	20.0	20.0
Numeracy	1	10.0	10.0
ESOL	2	20.0	20.0
ICT	3	30.0	30.0
Other	2	20.0	20.0

QUALIF	Frequency	%	Valid %
Valid Degree	7	70.0	70.0
Masters	3	30.0	30.0
PC_USGE	Frequency	%	Valid %
Valid Yes	10	100.0	100.0

PC_SYSTM	Frequency	%	Valid %
Valid MS Windows 98	3	30.0	30.0
MS Windows XP	6	60.0	60.0
I don't Know	1	10.0	10.0

IT_SKLS	Frequency	%	Valid %
Valid Expert	2	20.0	20.0
Good	6	60.0	60.0
Fair	1	10.0	10.0
Missing	1	10.0	10.0

WEB_ACCS	Frequency	%	Valid %
Valid Yes	10	100.0	100.0

WEB_VISTS	Frequency	%	Valid %
Valid Work related purposes	5	50.0	50.0
Research	2	20.0	20.0
The news	3	30.0	30.0

ONLNF	Frequency	%	Valid %
Valid Yes	9	90.0	90.0
No	1	10.0	10.0

ONLNF_PURP	Frequency	%	Valid %
Valid Work related	2	20.0	22.2
Course studies	3	30.0	33.3
Professional Development	3	30.0	33.3
Other	1	10.0	11.1
Total	9	90.0	100.0
N/A	1	10.0	

ONLNF_TME		Frequency	%	Valid %
Valid	0-30 min	6	60.0	66.7
	31-60 min	2	20.0	22.2
	Less than 2 hours	1	10.0	11.1
	Total	9	90.0	100.0
N/A		1	10.0	

REFL		Frequency	%	Valid %
Valid	Critical Reflection	3	30.0	30.0
	Descriptive Reflection	5	50.0	50.0
	Descriptive Writing	2	20.0	20.0

REFL1		Frequency	Valid %	Valid %
Valid	Deep Reflection	3	30.0	30.0
	Surface Reflection	7	70.0	70.0

2. Face to Face Forum - Initial Questionnaire: Frequency of Responses

SEX		Frequency	%	Valid %
Valid	Female	6	60.0	60.0
	Male	4	40.0	40.0

AGE		Frequency	%	Valid %
Valid	18-25	1	10.0	10.0
	36-40	3	30.0	30.0
	41-45	4	40.0	40.0
	51-55	2	20.0	20.0

SECTR		Frequency	%	Valid %
Valid	FE College	3	30.0	30.0
	Local authority	1	10.0	10.0
	Community and Voluntary	4	40.0	40.0
	Private	1	10.0	10.0
	Other	1	10.0	10.0

POSN		Frequency	%	Valid %
Valid	Basic Skills Tutor	2	20.0	20.0
	ESOL Tutor	1	10.0	10.0
	Lecturer	2	20.0	20.0
	Manager	2	20.0	20.0
	Other	3	30.0	30.0
SUBJ		Frequency	%	Valid %
Valid	Literacy	1	10.0	10.0
	Numeracy	1	10.0	10.0
	ESOL	1	10.0	10.0
	ICT	5	50.0	50.0
	Other	2	20.0	20.0

QUALIF		Frequency	%	Valid %
Valid	Level 3	2	20.0	20.0
	Degree	6	60.0	60.0
	Other	2	20.0	20.0

PC_USGE		Frequency	%	Valid %
Valid	Yes	10	100.0	100.0

PC_SYSTM		Frequency	%	Valid %
Valid	MS Windows 98	2	20.0	20.0
	MS Windows XP	7	70.0	70.0
	Other	1	10.0	10.0

IT_SKLS		Frequency	%	Valid %
Valid	Expert	2	20.0	20.0
	Good	5	50.0	50.0
	Fair	3	30.0	30.0

WEB_ACCS		Frequency	%	Valid %
Valid	Yes	10	100.0	100.0

WEB_VISTS		Frequency	%	Valid %
Valid	Work related purposes	6	60.0	60.0
	Research	1	10.0	10.0
	The news	1	10.0	10.0
	Socializing	1	10.0	10.0
	Other	1	10.0	10.0

ONLNF	Frequency	%	Valid %
Valid Yes	3	30.0	30.0
No	7	70.0	70.0

ONLNF_PURP	Frequency	%	Valid %
Valid Course studies	2	20.0	66.7
Other	1	10.0	33.3
Missing Not applicable	7	70.0	

ONLNF_TME	Frequency	%	Valid %
Valid 0-30 min	1	10.0	33.3
31-60 min	1	10.0	33.3
Less than 2 hours	1	10.0	33.3
Missing Not applicable	7	70.0	

REFL	Frequency	%	Valid %
Valid Critical Reflection	3	30.0	33.3
Descriptive Reflection	2	20.0	22.2
Descriptive Writing	4	40.0	44.4
Missing Refused to answer	1	10.0	

REFL1	Frequency	%	Valid %
Valid Deep Reflection	3	30.0	33.3
Surface Reflection	6	60.0	66.7
Missing Refused to answer	1	10.0	

APPENDIX XXV: On-line Forum Evaluation Questionnaire Responses

Questionnaire Closed Items	Mean
1. I thought it was relatively easy to access the on-line forum.	1.5
2. I did not have to learn any additional technical skills to access the on-line forum.	2.5
3. The project background information provided in the Notes & Glossary Sheet was useful.	1.8
4. There were times when I could not 'get on-line' and access the on-line forum.	3
5. I had no trouble navigating in the on-line forum.	2.1
6. I found the procedure for posting comments relatively easy.	1.6
7. I found reading people's posts on the computer screen difficult.	3.3
8. The technical procedures I had to follow in order to register, log-in and post messages in the on-line forum were confusing.	3.8
9. The technical support feature in the on-line forum was helpful.	2.3
10. I liked the way the on-line forum was structured.	2
11. I found when I selected certain links I got lost.	3.5
12. I found the suggested topics for discussion interesting.	1.6
13. The information presented was well organized.	2.1
14. The information presented was not comprehensive enough.	3.6
15. The presence of an on-line moderator would have been useful to help the conversation move forward.	2.6
16. The opportunity to try this on-line forum was beneficial.	2
17. I preferred the on-line forum to a face to face forum because I missed less time from work.	2.8
18. To participate in the forum, I learned skills that will be useful in other parts of my work.	2
19. Getting to know and talking with other participants was easier with the on-line forum than what would have been in a face to face forum.	3.1
20. It was more difficult to socialize with other participants on-line than in a face to face forum.	2.6
21. The information exchanged during the on-line forum was of better value than what would have occurred in a face to face forum.	2.8
22. Participating in this on-line forum was a waste of my time.	4
23. I thought participating in the on-line forum was a useful activity as part of my continuing professional development.	1.6
24. I have found the on-line forum helpful in getting to know my fellow colleagues.	2.8
25. I would guess that the participants in the on-line forum found my posts useful and/or interesting.	2.5
26. I found other participants' posts useful and/or interesting.	1.6
27. I felt I was part of a community when I participated in the forum.	2.8
28. Using emerging learning technologies, such as this on-line forum, is important to me personally.	2.3
29. I personally do not like learning from technologies such as this on-line forum.	3.5
30. My overall feeling is that on-line forums are of little value.	4
N.B. 1= strongly agree 2= agree 3= neutral 4= disagree 5= strongly disagree	

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