



National
Teaching
Fellowship
Scheme

NTFS Project Progress Report

The purpose and acceptance criteria for NTFS projects submitting a progress report are described as part of the '*NTFS Project Reporting Procedure*' paper.

Please complete the sections below. If you have any queries regarding the completion of the forms please contact the NTFS project strand Project Officer at ntfsprojects@heacademy.ac.uk or 01904 717500.

Progress Report Project Information

Project lead	Norwich University College of the Arts
Project title	InCurriculum
Lead contact name	Neil Powell
Reporting period	1 August 2008 to 31 December 2008

1. Project Update Summary

Please provide a short update on the project's achievements and current activities, to be disseminated on the Academy's website, maximum 200 words. **(Only this section will be made publicly available)**

The InCurriculum project has continued to evolve during the latter half 2008 and significant steps forward have been made in relation to data gathering and the piloting and development of models for the project.

Project staff continue to deliver, amend and evaluate the sample modules across Year 2, using the work of the *AchieveAbility* project, GLAD, NALN and Art and Design pedagogy to enhance learning, teaching and assessment practices originated for students with SpLD for the wider benefit of all HE students. Evaluation methodology has been reviewed and revised inline with good action research practice. Assistive technology has been incorporated within this methodology to ensure a multi-sensory approach.

InCurriculum staff development sessions have been established based on year 1 staff feedback. Two have taken place this academic year, with another in May leading up to the interim conference on the 25th June, hosted by the University of Westminster as host of the *AchieveAbility* National Network.

The website is fully functional with details of the project and project partners, and developing information on inclusive approaches to teaching and learning, and on the social model of disability. www.incurriculum.org.uk

InCurriculum collaboration staff have disseminated information on the project at the GLAD conference (Nottingham Trent University), HEA Significant Interest Group, *AchieveAbility* House of Commons event for Challenging Behaviours in December 2008. InCurriculum is also a standing agenda item at the termly *AchieveAbility* Steering Group meetings.

Although there have been changes in staffing, the project remains on track and is fulfilling its aims and objectives.

2. Activities and progress

2a. With reference to your project plan summarise your achievements during the last reporting period and whether the anticipated objectives, activities or deliverables have been completed.

If there has been any variance from your planned activities please say what the variance is and what its causes were? If applicable, what is being done to get back on track? Will the project plan need to be revised? *(Please list as headings or bullet points)*

The Project Management Group (PMG) has continued to refine and develop the project, with advice and guidance from the Steering Group (SG). The evaluation strategy has been refined in line with the action research methodology, and a consistent approach has been assured across the three institutions by the PMG via Staff Development Sessions and literature review. Questionnaires, think tanks and focus groups have elicited both quantitative and qualitative data from the unit samples. Audio recordings were made from the various *fora* and transcriptions of these will be available on the website from March 2009 as a resource.

The website is currently in the process of a technical upgrade that will enable visual 'mind maps' to be produced of relevant research findings. The website is also about to undergo field tests in relation to its accessibility for a range of audiences.

No revision of the project plan has been required, but a significant development during the autumn of 2008 was the drafting and approval (by SG and PMG) of the project Action Plan 2008-09 (Annexe A) in order to more effectively monitor the research and allocate specific roles and responsibilities to the staff involved.

From July 2008, the Project had in place a full team of institutional coordinators at the member of institutions. Good practice was disseminated through a series of Continuing Professional Development events and by the use of case studies from a range of different academic fields. Subject covered range from Textile Design to Management and Law.

In August 2008 an Institutional Coordinator was appointed to NUCA and this ensured that each institution had a coordinator in place. Additionally further academic unit leaders from both DMU and NUCA joined the project research and this strengthened the team in terms of its breadth and expertise.

A record of meetings and their minutes is appended to this report (Annexe D).

Reports have been received from institutional coordinators and module leaders, and as a result some modules have been amended in terms of their content, structure and assessment requirements. Student evaluation is being gathered and collated and revised unit profiles and levels of achievement will be monitored.

2b. Use the template below to report expenditure. Explain the reasons for any significant overspend or underspend. **(Only required for the annual progress report, submitted in July)**

3. Reflection

3a. Please articulate, in a short paragraph, the pedagogic issue, 'problem', or research question, at the heart of your NTFS project, bearing in mind that this central component may have evolved, developed and been refined. This should not simply be a reiteration of the project title.

At the time of writing, the project is progressing well in accordance with its milestones and objectives and is gaining momentum. There is considerable confidence within the team that the research methodologies and emerging findings are robust with outcomes that will be

transferable across the wider HE sector. The findings to date are beginning to shape several key themes for the research and for the InCurriculum Interim Conference to be held at University of Westminster in June 2009.

Key themes arising from research, evaluation and analysis have been summarised in the recent staff development session held on the 28th January, they are as follows and will inform the shape of the interim conference;

1/ Ensuring Robust Evaluation Methodologies for Action Research.

This is a cornerstone of the research and one which underpins the more dialogical aspects of the project.

2/ Inclusive Dialogues in HE Teaching, Learning and Assessment

This aspect examines practical and transferable methods for engaging learners and teachers in HE. Based on unit field trials and case studies from the project.

3/ Cumulative Learning as a Catalyst for Formative and Summative assessment

This element looks at *assemblage* and *bricolage* as a means for students to accrue a body of material during learning that can fulfil overall assessment tasks. E-learning, weblogs and more conventional formats are being trialled to provide an expanded range of research and assessment opportunities for students.

4/ Social and Visual Strategies for Writing

This element examines models of peer assisted learning and text as a visual language

3a. Are you experiencing any problems which are impeding progress? If applicable, what are these? Are there any unresolved problems from the last report?

No significant problems encountered and no unresolved problems from the previous report.

Synopsis of staffing changes: In September 2008, Simon Willmoth, the Project Leader left the project to take up a senior role at UAL, London, and was replaced by Neil Powell, Director of Studies at Norwich University College of the Arts. Powell was involved in the original consultation of the project bid in conjunction with Simon Willmoth and so was familiar with the aims and objectives of *InCurriculum*. Powell is also on the Management Group of the National Arts Learning Network and a member of the Group for Learning and Teaching in Art & Design (GLAD).

Sadly, in December 2008, David Pollak, the Principal Investigator and Project Director was forced to withdraw from the project due to health reasons and a replacement was sought via the partner institutions and HEA. In January 2009, Paula Hixenbaugh, a National Teaching Fellow based at the University of Westminster joined the project and will be bringing appropriate expertise to bear from January 2009.

Katherine Hewlett (originator of project bid) and Kate Byford have continued to ensure the project has stayed on track.

The original institutional Coordinator for NUCA, Mr Peter Martin, was also forced to withdraw from the project in August 2008 for health reasons, but a replacement was rapidly appointed in the form of Felicity Booth, Senior Lecturer in Textiles Critical Studies.

3b. How has the implementation of activities informed your approach? How do you see the project developing? Has progress changed the project or your expectations in any way? What lessons have been learned?

The project is beginning to have a noticeable impact on the development of teaching, learning and assessment in the sample modules, which have all been modified as a result of year 1 findings. It should be noted however that there needs to be an increased introduction of modules/units which are not Art and Design based in line with the original outcomes.

Despite the breadth of subjects involved, many of the curriculum delivery, learning style and assessment issues are emerging as consistent. Module leaders have also been able to share good practice via the Staff Development sessions which have proved invaluable, both as a source of mutual support and as a way of securing a rigorous comparative analysis of TLA and evaluation methods employed.

The Action Research approach has enabled some significant refinements to take place in the gathering of data, including audio and video footage, the development of weblogs as well as written submissions. The project has also adhered to some self imposed parameters such as working within existing educational budgets, anticipating that inclusive practice can be enhanced without major resource implications for HEI's.

4. Future Activities

What activities, objectives or deliverables you expect to achieve during the next reporting period? *(Please list as headings or bullet points)*

- Expand functionality of the website including 'mind-maps', web blog links and resources for teachers.
- Further staff development activities for academic coordinators and module leaders in advance of the Interim Conference; facilitated by Project Development Director. This will include some less experienced project staff being funded to attend conferences in order to enhance their own conference presentations.
- Continue to deliver and evaluate 9 modules informed by the outcomes of Year 1/2 of the project.
- Finalise revised Collaborative Agreement between NUCA and DMU and UoW.
- Hold interim Conference at University of Westminster; Thursday 25th June 2009.
- Project team to develop series of academic papers for delivery at conferences and for inclusion in publications.
- Revision and refinement of the questionnaire and closer correlation between focus group themes. Use of more than one learning styles diagnostic.

5. Any other comments

I understand that the text provided in section 1a will be made publicly available on the Academy's website and other publications.

Name	Neil Powell
Date	29 January 2009