

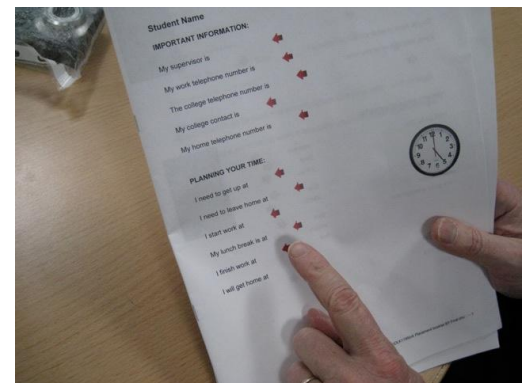


JISC RSC Scotland South & West Case Study @ Cardonald College

Using Technology to Reflect on Work Experience Placements by Sharing Experiences with Other Students

Ian Jenkins is a Senior Lecturer and delivers the Learning for Work Course at Cardonald College in Glasgow. This is a two year full-time course for people who have recently left school. The course aims to prepare young people with learning disabilities for life after school, and assists them in the transition from school to mainstream college courses or open employment. It does this by building skills that will be used in life and work and that will enable them to approach the workplace and any further learning with confidence. The course aims to improve personal awareness, work preparation skills, IT core skills, job search skills and independent travel.

The first year of the course the students attend college 5 days a week. In second year, students spend one day a week at work experience placements and one of the activities they are asked to participate in following these work placements is to create a formal presentation (and/or 1 page advert) to deliver to first year students about their placements with employers and to share their experiences of their time with employers.



Ian demonstrates traditional worksheets which have been transformed into electronic formats.

This creates an opportunity for self reflection, and gives students a chance to review their experiences as prospective employees. It also creates a scenario where they have to take responsibility for themselves in relation to self advocacy and a responsibility for sharing their experiences to their 1st year colleagues who will be undertaking similar placements in the following year.

What technologies do you encourage them to use as part of this and why?

We assist students in learning how to use a number of ubiquitous/mainstream technologies and as part of their placement. Students are taught how to use Microsoft Office, PowerPoint and Microsoft Publisher to create presentations and newsletters for first year students to share information about their placement. This is enriched with a range of multi-media resources (images of the environment, the tools they use, appropriate attire, the people they work with) which students are also asked to collect as part of their placement. Students are also asked to browse the internet to research information about their placements both prior to and during their placements.

Why use technology as part of this experience – why do you think that the use of technology as part of this process is important?

Using technologies as part of their course, students gain experience in a supported environment. They learn how to use the resources to create professional and sophisticated outcomes and often these technologies are resources which they may well be expected to use in the world of work. Ultimately the resources they create are vibrant and sophisticated with professional outcomes. It is amazing how the students skills and confidence increases when they create published resources using these technologies.



Ian describes his Learning for Work Course.

What would you say where the expected outcomes of this experience for the students and also are there any unexpected outcomes?

As well as thinking more analytically about their placement, the students develop skills in presenting and sharing information in a professional manner. This is an essential core skill which will be helpful for future employment, and undertaking this process can often prove to the students that they can undertake this pastoral role where students develop a sense of responsibility for others. It is an excellent way of proving to students that they can actually stand up and transfer their knowledge and experience to fellow students. It also provides first year students with the opportunity to see how successful their second year counterparts have actually been.