2015-16 CoLRiC AWARD FOR THE EFFECTIVE INTEGRATION OF LIBRARIES/LEARNING RESOURCE CENTRES IN CURRICULUM DELIVERY

WESTON COLLEGE
LibraryPlus Team

LibraryPlus – an integrated, innovative and holistic approach to learning resource centres

The Planning: Purpose and Process

- The core aims and objectives of LibraryPlus were represented as four primary functions and were established to target student experience, curriculum integration and development of online learning. Each team within LibraryPlus prioritises the key functions in all activities, initiatives and innovations, to:

    o   provide a fully integrated and outstanding library service to all students and staff
    o   develop the use of technology and resources in teaching and learning
    o   create and promote digital resources and e-learning materials that can be accessed and used by curriculum areas
    o   develop the study skills, employability and personal social development of students by working collaboratively with curriculum teams.

    The primary functions were designed to deliver a wide range of services, support and resources centralised to LibraryPlus. Integration with curriculum was largely achieved by delivering the CollegePlus Personal Social Development (PSD) programme as part of curriculum delivery, working with curriculum teams to develop their use of technology and by centralising Moodle development and the technology resources to the library.

Planning into Practice

- The college leadership recognised the need to redesign services and facilities at all campuses. To truly integrate the library services within the student journey, the redesign and implementation was led through cross-college collaboration between senior managers, heads of faculty and curriculum staff.

- New roles and staff structures were implemented, replacing library assistant roles with specialists in learning support, technologies, HE and resourcing.

- All services and programmes provided by LibraryPlus are relaunched and promoted at the start of the academic year at the annual 'Academic Conference' through session delivery and/or promotional stands. Being a part of the planning group for the Academic Conference, the LibraryPlus service links and integrates with the curriculum from the start of the academic year at this high profile cross-college event.

- LibraryPlus is an accessible and inclusive learning environment. From the concept, to the design and through to the implementation, equality, diversity and accessibility were key considerations. As courses developed, the online learning experience, the LibraryPlus facilities provided students with access to technology that they may not have outside the college.

- Teaching staff were being upskilled to create their own online lessons and resources.

- The 'CollegePlus' PSD and Employability programme also promotes equality and diversity, though discussion and activities around social, moral and cultural issues. Materials and resources created by the students on this programme are used within LibraryPlus displays and college themed weeks, raising awareness and understanding.

- Opportunities to build apprenticeships into the LibraryPlus model were assessed, with a focus on digital learning development and customer services.

Continuing Development

- The link with the college quality assurance team ensures the service and facilities are responsive to the needs of the curriculum. The faculty self-assessment process managed through the quality team feeds directly into the LibraryPlus team, enabling the service to adapt and respond to curriculum strategy.

- Quality processes such as the Self-Assessment Review (SAR) and quality improvement plans offer insight into curriculum for LibraryPlus to identify opportunities to support, integrate or link with curriculum teams.

- Throughout the academic year, the fortnightly Curriculum Quality Management Group meetings provide further opportunities to connect with curriculum or respond to new requirements that arise.

- The audit of Moodle courses is part of the quality assurance processes at the college and feeds into the curriculum review boards.

- There have been new developments in embedding technology in learning through the Microsoft Office 365 platform, promoting collaboration and communication, and a greater emphasis placed on utilising Microsoft Office 365.

- The LibraryPlus model is being developed to work with different groups of students, from secondary level students to dedicated HE facilities with 24 hour access.

Outcomes/benefits to date

- The integrated approach of LibraryPlus has resulted in the promotion of exemplary teaching by:

  o improving and embedding the use of learning technologies with teaching and learning by raising staff skills and confidence through LibraryPlus Learning Technologist Information and Learning Technologies (ILT) training programmes
  o developing online learning within the virtual learning environment through a reward based Moodle standards framework
  o creating online and distance learning resources to support curriculum in achieving the Further Education Learning Technology Action Group (FELTAG) recommendations for online learning
  o improved utilisation of electronic resources, ensuring staff are confident in accessing subscribed academic resources and using these with students
  o delivering core PSD and employability content through the 'CollegePlus' programme, enabling teaching staff to focus on core curriculum content delivery and student support
  o working with curriculum teams to identify 'at risk' students who are behind in their studies. These students are then provided one-to-one support with the LibraryPlus team.

- Student feedback reveals a 13% increase in those rating the service as an important contributor to their learning as at 2014/15.

- Statistical data indicates that stock loans and the use of technology have increased since the implementation of the LibraryPlus facilities in 2011. This data is used to identify where additional technology and resource investment is required.

- Ofsted has positively commented on LibraryPlus within inspection documentation and during other visits to the college.

- Users have access to all manner of up-to-date resources, including subscribed online resources, as well as to online learning support with Moodle and other e-resources.

- The award money is being used to further enhance the collaborative use of technology within LibraryPlus through the addition of SMART Kapp 42 interactive dry wipe displays. Tablet stands are also being purchased on main service desks to demonstrate how e-books can be accessed if physical resources are either not available or on loan.

Relevance and Replication

- There is a close match between the initiative that the college presented and the CoLRiC criteria. This is an initiative that is constantly evolving and developing. Its contribution to the learning experience is evident and valued widely.

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