Sharing Innovative Approaches to Implementing 16 – 19 Study Programmes

Yeovil College
“It is essential for Yeovil College that our distinctive entitlement activity is recognised in the new Study Programmes and recorded to celebrate what our students achieve, for themselves and their community”

Andy Perlejewski, Director 14-19 Vocational Curriculum

About the College

Yeovil College is a medium-sized general further education college serving South Somerset and North and West Dorset. The main campus is in Yeovil, along with specialist centres for construction skills, motor vehicle studies and the University Centre. There are also smaller centres in Shaftesbury and Bridport which provide vocational programmes mainly in engineering, construction and hair and beauty.

There are currently approximately 1,600 16-19 learners on full time programmes, about 1,400 adults on part time courses and over 1,400 on employer responsive programmes, which includes 550 apprentices.

The college offers courses in 14 of the 15 sector subject areas, with preparation for life and work, science and mathematics, health, public services and care and arts, media and publishing recruiting the largest numbers of learners. Most learners, both part time and full time, take intermediate or foundation programmes. However, a significant proportion of 16 to 18 year olds and adult learners are on advanced programmes such as GCE AS and A levels and BTEC national diplomas. The college works with two 14-19 Partnerships delivering a range of level 1 programmes to about 200 local school pupils and has developed Higher Education programmes in collaboration with four universities.

The region served by the college has low unemployment but low wages for those in employment. The proportion of young people not in education, employment or training has increased recently and the college is working in collaboration with schools and colleges in the South West of England to encourage these young people to gain qualifications. The proportion of pupils gaining five GCSE A* to C grade passes in the area is below the national average.

Study Programmes

One issue for the college in planning for Study Programmes in 2013/14 has been that the total guided learning hours expected for each student amounts to more, in some cases, than those allocated to current similar programmes of study.
The core planned learning hours for qualification activity varies by level of Study Programme and also between academic qualifications, such as GCE AS and A Level, and vocational. Additional time is planned in as necessary for Maths and English and entitlement learning.

The college is planning around 600 hours for student timetables but not all of the hours will have direct face to face contact. This approach to supporting learning through staff time has been used particularly with non-qualification activity, as shown below.

**Additional or non-qualification Learning**

One principle for the college in its planning for Study Programmes was to ensure that the rounded development of young people was retained. For example, the college has extensive and successful volunteering and sports activities.¹ Space has been allocated to these and similar activities within Study Programme timetables, with the personal tutor being provided with additional time to ensure that the activity is undertaken in a structured and beneficial way, with its outcomes recorded. A Student Logbook is used for recording purposes co-signed by the placement provider, sports supervisor or personal tutor, as appropriate, alongside the student.

Given the importance of recording and recognising each student’s individual additional activity, the college decided to develop its electronic tracking system for Study Programme scheduling. The software used is “eTracker”², a package also utilised by Bath College and Somerset College, nearby. The three colleges joined together to plan the adaptations needed for eTracker if it were to capture all Study Programme activity coherently and efficiently, including the recording of entitlement learning. An eTracker representative worked with them in this exercise.

Initially in planning it was thought that the management information requirement for entitlement within Study Programmes covered four areas. These were:

- Directed Study, which is time allocated to study in learning centres and the like, with guidance or supervision
- Work Experience, also supervised and recorded
- Employability Skills, which is in taught or supervised sessions visits by guest speakers or mentoring from local companies, and
- Sports Enrichment, again supervised and logged.

¹ [http://www.yeovil.ac.uk/college-life.html](http://www.yeovil.ac.uk/college-life.html)
² [http://vlesupport.co.uk/etracker](http://vlesupport.co.uk/etracker)
All the partner colleges find these categories useful but Yeovil has added a fifth, Volunteering, to ensure its established strengths in this area, serving students and the local community, are maintained.

As eTracker monitors the individual progress of students against their personal targets and presents all the relevant information in a single page, Yeovil and its partners have worked together to ensure that the criteria for information being recorded for each type of activity are right for this presentation. The eTracker staff are creating a page for each of the five entitlement activities so that student and tutor can record and sign-off the activities and achievements in each category. In adopting this approach, Yeovil College believes that Study Programmes will enable all the personal development activities undertaken by young people to be credited to them as clearly as their qualification based learning will be.
particularly with non-qualification activity, as shown below.