

Open learning and Teachers' TV: Approaches to Professional Development.

People Involved

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Key Words

open learning, school-based learning, practitioner knowledge, Teachers' TV, teacher enquiry.

Description

This project is a qualitative investigation into the use of Teachers' TV as part of an online module 'Teacher-as-Researcher'. This module is located within the Institute of Education's Graduate Diploma in Professional Studies (GDPS). The integration of Teachers' TV within the VLE (currently BlackBoard) needs to provide students with access to:

- selected programmes and linked readings in a format which facilitates discussion;
- particular sections from a range of Teachers' TV programmes;
- 'expert' views on the programmes;
- collaborative tools facilitating discussion of content.

The study will evaluate the use of programmes showing classroom practice and the pedagogic purposes of such a resource in terms of teachers' perceptions of their learning experiences and its impact on work-based professional learning. It will focus on two dimensions:

- teacher attitudes to/perceptions of online learning for professional development; and
- teacher attitudes to/perceptions of Teachers' TV for professional development.

Within the e-learning environment, the inclusion of digital TV programmes will enable visual narratives, allow users to explore ideas sequentially at their own pace and enable interactivity of sound/image and text as a pedagogic device. In promoting excellence in teaching focussed on distance education, the study will explore the question as to how effectively such an environment, and Teachers' TV specifically, supports the development of teachers' professional knowledge and teachers' enquiry.

The module is due to begin in September 2006 and ▶



this study will be an evaluation of the experiences of the first cohort, due to complete the course in April 2007.

Methods

The study adopts a qualitative research approach to evaluate experiences and perceptions of professional development:

- critical evaluation of VLE design and structure (pedagogic tools);
- start of module e-mail questionnaire data – 'pilot' cohort of 25. (September 2006);
- 5 semi-structured face-to-face interviews (November – December 2006);
- e-mail questionnaire for non-completers (at point of exit);
- on-line end of module discussion/evaluation (March 2007);
- end of module e-mail questionnaire for completers from 'pilot cohort' (April 2007);
- 5 semi-structured face-to-face interviews at end of module (April 2007).

Outcomes

- The evaluation report will be discussed with the relevant London Centre for Leadership in Learning / Education Digital Management Ltd (EDML), and GDPS teams.
- Technical issues to be logged and reported to Learning Technology Unit / EDML.
- Evaluations fed back into the module development.
- Findings to be posted as discussion input to the on-line Teachers' TV Associates forums and Leading London's Learning CPD co-ordinators' on-line forums.
- Article for 'Reflecting Education'.

In the longer term this evaluation will be fed back to provide a structure for open learning courses for teachers with a national and international audience. ■

