Personal Learning Portal Pilot: Sharing Learning Resources.

Partners

- Canterbury Christ Church University
- Aim Higher
- University of Kent
- Oxford Brookes University
- South Kent College

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May 2007

Overview

This presentation is the result of work carried out on the (Kent) Personal Learning Portal Pilot (PLPP) by Canterbury Christ Church University, Aim Higher, University of Kent, Oxford Brookes University and South Kent College.
It was completed in March 2006. and then extended for a further year.

The work was intended to support students through their transition from FE to HE, and it included sharing resources between institutions through a single interface.

Supporting transition: A student perspective

At Level 1, students reported that they were concerned about:
- a lack of staff support
- their ability to learn independently
- problems with the academic level of their studies (more than indicating problems with workload)

Cooke, A (2004) *Heading them off at the pass: predicting retention problems,* University of Ulster

Can these concerns be addressed through centrally provided resources?

Supporting Students: an HE Perspective

• Incoming students are extremely ill-informed about what they are about to experience. This does not relate to the curriculum so much as to how they are expected to work and interact, particularly with staff.

• We should all aspire to produce students who think and learn independently, we can no longer assume that they will arrive already able to do so.

Cooke, A (2004) *Heading them off at the pass: predicting retention problems,* University of Ulster
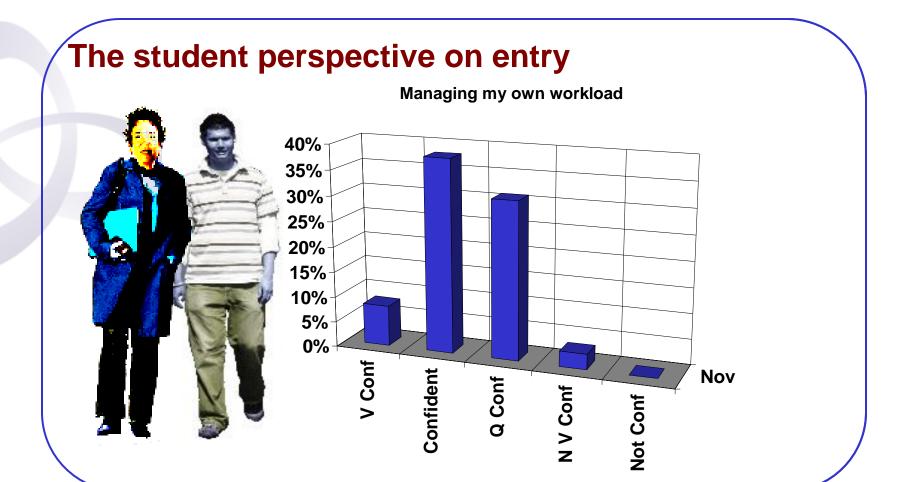
• The PLP Project targeted students in FE and tried to support their development through their courses and during the transition to HE with shared central resources.

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The student perspective on entry

Managing my own workload

- 38% of incoming students said that they were confident about their ability to manage their workload.
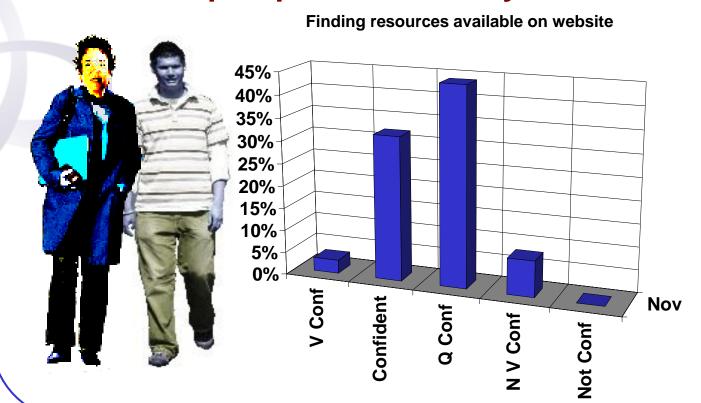 *(Final Evaluation Report, Kent PLPP Project March 2006)*

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The student perspective on entry

Finding resources available on website

- 32% of incoming students said that they were confident about their ability to find resources available on the website.
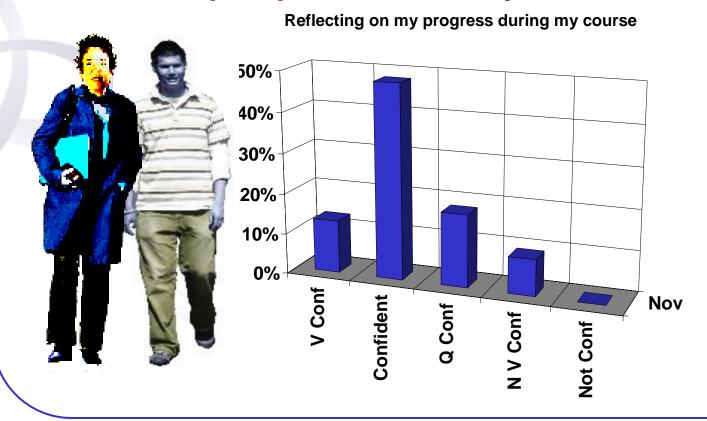 *(Final Evaluation Report, Kent PLPP Project March 2006)*

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The student perspective on entry

Reflecting on my progress during my course

- 48% of incoming students said that they were confident about their ability to reflect on their progress during their course.
  (Final Evaluation Report, Kent PLPP Project March 2006)
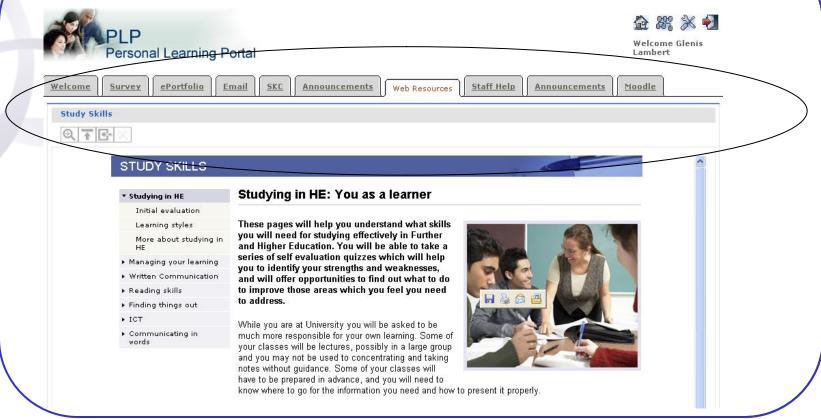
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What we provided for students - a portal

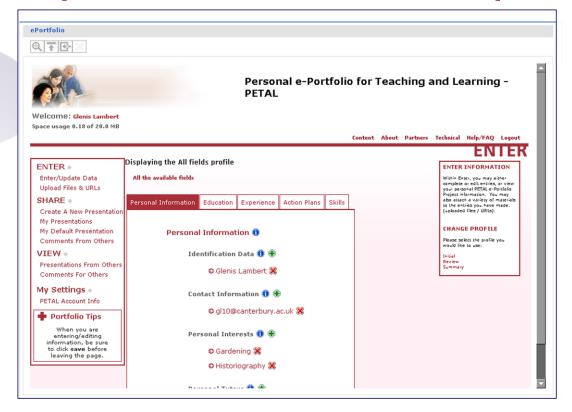- The portal gave access to shared and local resources and tools such as the institution VLE and local email

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We also provided students with an e-portfolio tool

- "Students would like to see regular use of the site by tutors, specific use for lessons ……… and using the portal as a way of providing informal feedback."

  (Final Evaluation Report, Kent PLPP Project March 2006)

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The student experience

e-Portfolio

Reflection on skills development

Skills sup

Professional Skills

email

Course materials

Online Commer

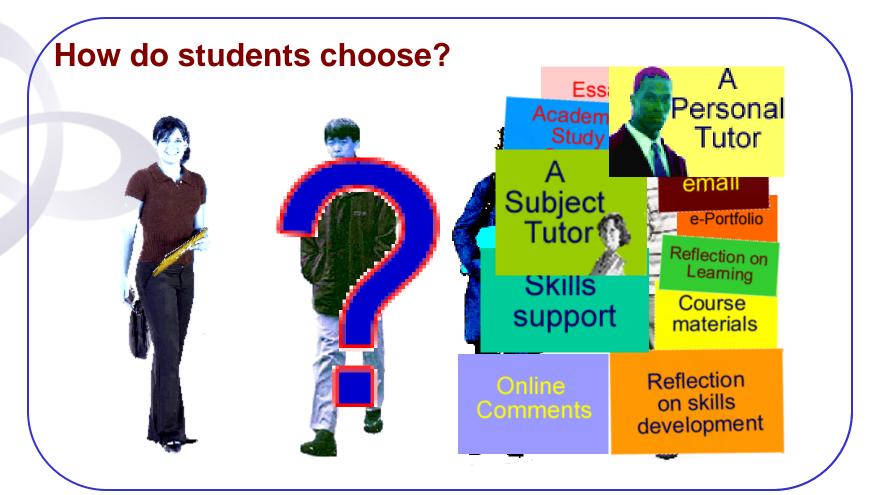A Subject Tutor

Reflection on Learning

A Personal Tutor

ays

- Students are provided with many resources and means of communicating and organising themselves. Some take these on board, many are overwhelmed.

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How do students choose?

- Students reported that where central resources are provided to students without contextualisation or tutor support, students can get confused and their confidence can suffer.
  (Final Evaluation Report, Kent PLPP Project March 2006)

Combining resources for students and tutors

Students told us that they:

- were wary of resources which were not embedded in their programmes.

- The many contradictory resources make it difficult for students to choose which ones are most appropriate

- Students come with a variety of needs which can't be met by a "one size fits all" approach.

(Final Evaluation Report, Kent PLPP Project March 2006)

- The challenge of providing resources locally is great, but the growing use of VLEs makes shared resources to support students much easier to deliver than through shared technology.

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How tutors feel about centrally provided, online resources

Concerns about work load

Concerns about local technology

Will the students know more about technology than me?

- Tutors expressed concerns about their own confidence, access to technologies and the time available to them.
  (Final Evaluation Report, Kent PLPP Project March 2006)

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Combining resources for students and tutors

Staff told us that they:

- sometimes feel "de-skilled" when helping students with study skills and personal development planning.

- wanted access to a body of generic central resources which supported key areas such as academic writing, avoiding plagiarism, citing references.

- want central resources which are appropriate to their needs and can be delivered in context.

(Final Evaluation Report, Kent PLPP Project March 2006)

- The challenge of providing resources locally is great, but the growing use of VLEs makes shared resources to support students much easier to deliver than through shared technology.

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Lessons learned

- Pedagogic opportunities need to be owned by tutors
- Tutors need to promote opportunities through embedding resources in their pedagogy
- Students need to have ownership of portal and e-portfolio content and output
- Initial point of contact for (user) support should reside with the tutor
- Shared resources and e-portfolios are challenging pedagogically and demand time to embed

- We applied these lessons to the next phase of the project where we made a resource which tried to address issues of ownership.

Graduate Skills Web Site

- Student study support materials have been made into reusable learning objects.

- A search interface allows both staff and students to access relevant resources, which are clearly described.

- Staff can download the resource and unpack it in their VLE

- Students can download the resource and work on it offline

- Printable versions are provided.

A demonstration is available with this presentation.

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The outcome for staff…

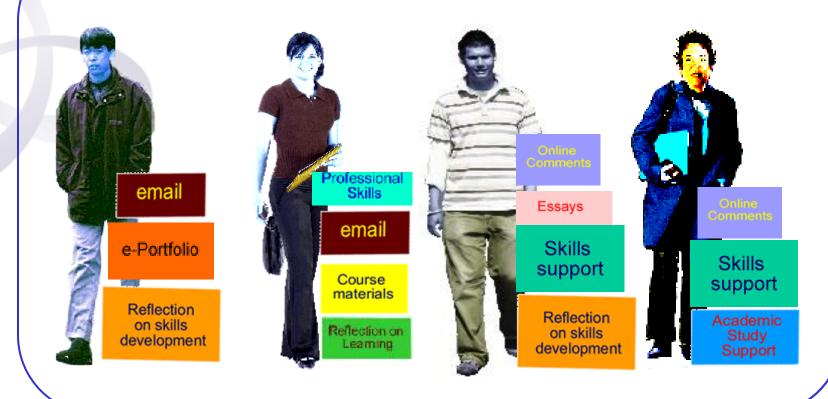- Staff gain the ability to build the resources needed by their students

The outcome for students…

- Contextualised support for e-portfolio building and study skills enables students to progress with greater confidence into the next phase of their education.

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Visit the Graduate Skills Website:

http://www.canterbury.ac.uk/graduate-skills