



**HARLOW
COLLEGE**

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**LEARNING FUTURES PROGRAMME
FINAL REPORT**

**APPLYING THE SUCCESSFUL KUBE MODEL TO
16-19 STUDY PROGRAMMES**

HARLOW COLLEGE

KINGSTON COLLEGE



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Project title

Applying The Successful Kube Model To 16 – 19 Study Programmes

Name of lead organisation

Harlow College

Project summary

How do we transform our colleges to allow tutors and learners access the tools they need to implement blended learning and ensure that 10% of our courses are delivered online? Acting on research from this project, Harlow College believes it has found the answers, starting with the deployment of iPads to all of its teaching staff and learners.

Drawing on the Kube Model developed by Kingston College, we took existing good practice to see how learning technologies could be used to create a culture of innovative, relevant and diverse online content. Tutors were given the tools in the form of iPads, new learning environments and freedom to use technology to enhance learning opportunities, to motivate and monitor students and to help to reshape the curriculum to meet the challenge of blended learning through the use of the flipped classroom. The project helped to empower and build the confidence of tutors delivering vocational programmes in Business, Media and Journalism at Harlow and Hairdressing at Kingston. Their confidence grew as they saw the learners gaining greater independence and autonomy in their learning, helping them to develop strengths that would improve their employability in careers directly relevant to their interests and qualifications.

Who should read this report and why

This report will be of interest to:

- College leaders and governors who are considering the strategic implications of implementing blended learning including the impact on teaching staff and learners;
- Curriculum staff and managers seeking practical advice and creative ideas from fellow practitioners on how to implement blended learning, including the assessment of tools that can support a range of models;
- Staff and curriculum development managers to help them plan training and development programmes in the use of apps and online tools that would support improving performance;
- Quality managers keen to find valid alternatives to paper-based portfolios of evidence of learner's work;
- Other training providers seeking practical advice and ideas in the use of online and interactive classroom tools.

CPD resources developed

- Kube Model updated;
- Blendspace;
- Blended Learning - Xerte learning object;
- Flipped classroom – Xerte learning object;
- Blendspace – Xerte learning object;
- Jing – Xerte learning object;
- Tools used – star rated;
- Three case studies;
- Digital literacy survey - Questionnaire;
- Digital literacy survey results – Harlow;
- Digital literacy survey results – Kingston;
- E-Learning – Harlow College Part 1 – video;
- E-Learning Vocational Business – video;
- E-Learning for Governors – video;
- E-Learning Checklist for Governors;
- Nishall Garala Career Development Portfolio – weblink.

For further information about these resources please see the final section of the report – Resources

Project lead contact details

Harlow College is a successful provider of post 16 education with a good reputation in the sector for its value added and academic record. Courses are offered in: A Levels; vocational areas; apprenticeships; higher education; access; preparation for work and business training.

<http://www.harlow-college.ac.uk/>

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What the project set out to do and why

The College's culture needed to change to meet the strategic challenge of developing online blended learning and using digital technology. It needed to further improve current good practice of personalisation of delivery and support for the learner, including setting daily targets. It needed also to prepare learners for employability through apprenticeships, through simulating the workplace, by offering live briefs and other relevant pathways.

We set out to challenge people's reluctance to change habits in their approach to teaching and learning which is often paper-based and teacher led. Through action research we aimed to drive towards transforming our delivery model, moving to a more innovative and creative one where a far more personalised approach would result, where learning would move from being passive to active, allowing for greater autonomy, and provide opportunities for differentiated support using digital technology.

The process

The Kube project developed by Kingston College with JISC aimed *"to develop and evaluate models of good practice in using technology to transform teaching, learning and assessment in higher-level business education."* (George 2009) Seven models were devised representing the blend of traditional face-to-face teaching and online learning

methodologies using a range of technology tools, including the Xerte online authoring tool, podcasts and Moodle. These models provided a basis for the Harlow College Learning Futures project. A key feature of the models that were developed for the project is the range of reliable pedagogic online tools now available compared to even a few years ago, such as Socrative, Blendspace, Padlet and so. These tools are complemented by the rapid growth in mobile devices, notably iPads. The combination of both of these factors has added to the possibilities for blended learning which our updated Kube models have been able to illustrate for fellow practitioners and training providers.

George, P., 2009. Kube project plan. London: JISC/Kingston College.

We introduced several changes in our model of delivery to help facilitate a blended learning approach. Chief of these were the provision of iPads for staff and learners involved in the project and changing the learning environment, particularly for vocational media and journalism where an open plan area was created for delivery and learning designed to foster collaborative project-based work that would more closely mirror the work environments learners would hope to enter on completion of the course. Learners' engagement with live briefs were fostered through the personalised recording of achievement using Padlet in particular. We also began the introduction of e-learning mentors drawn from our learners as we felt that for many of them a readiness to use digital technology was a given compared to our delivery staff who were more reluctant and unsure of themselves using the iPads.

The teams chosen for the project at Harlow and Kingston were either already beginning to lead the way with new approaches to personalising learning, such as through the use of Padlet and Jing respectively and were being led by innovative managers who were able to draw on willing support from some team members to help foster new skills amongst other less confident colleagues. This led to a holistic working environment which encouraged risk taking and exploration of new technologies and tools, the outcome of which were three variants of the Kube model.

The results

Challenges overcome

Overall the project has helped to solve the challenge. It helped to provide evidence to college leaders of the value of using tools that can open up learning, allowing greater autonomy and enhancing personalisation. This informed the decision to provide iPads college-wide for staff and students at the beginning of the 2015 – 16 academic year and the recommendation that staff focus on using tools that were tried and tested through the project and which would often require little time to learn to use but which could have a

positive impact in transforming the delivery model, making it more interactive and personalised.

Media Student (Harlow) <http://www.tubechop.com/watch/6894996>

Hairdressing Student (Kingston) <http://screencast.com/t/SX0TwRCMow>

“I think it has been really good how we always have access outside of the class and the video tutorials were good” - Amy Butterfield

“Using technology to do work, it will help to go into the working world”- Nishall Garala (Nishall is a finalist for 2015 AOC Student of the Year Awards. He supported the project as an e-learning mentor with the Business staff)

Impact identified

All staff who worked on the project felt far more confident about learning delivery using a blended learning model with 100% rating this with top marks on a graded scale (1 lowest to 5 highest) in an end of project survey. Similarly all of the project staff rated the second top grade (4) that they felt that a blended learning approach has improved the quality of the learning experience. These are some of their comments:

- “I now feel more confident in supporting other to use technology and since project have undertaken a new role.”
- “I am confident to try new methods out and taking risks.”
- “Creating resources for staff CPD enabled me to reflect on my own delivery in the classroom. The feedback from Kingston College staff was mainly positive. Lack of time is always an excuse for staff to become reluctant about learning new methods of delivery. However, our learners’ experience in the classroom must take priority over everything else.”
- “Learners grades have increased.”
 - In Media there was a 30% increase of learners achieving distinction grades for the unit 29 Music Video compared to last year. This unit was the focus of the project for the Media team.
- “The learners were able to develop independent learning skills that better prepared them for the work place.”
- Feedback on the employability of Media students who were part of the project was very good, in particular their commitment to working on Live Briefs, such as the work three students did to support a charity fund raising event, praised by one of the organisers as follows:

“The work the boys did was nothing short of amazing. They were very professional all of them. The work that I have had to date is outstanding and I cannot wait to see the rest of their work... Again I have nothing but praise for the boys. They were hard working, professional and damn right amazing.”

- “Our student feedback was very positive. Learners were able to access the resources available via Moodle. This has created a positive impact on the courses that have their guided learning hours reduced because of funding. The use of technology to motivate hard to reach learners and also work-based learners has been very successful.”

Key learning points

Key factors to our success:

- Commitment from College leadership in placing e-learning at forefront of college strategy along with proven track record in innovative approaches to personalising learning;
- Commitment of staff working on the project and their willingness to develop the Kube model, which helped to give them a sense of freedom to try out new approaches;
- Willingness to share good practice and provide support to colleagues both within the same subject areas and college-wide, e.g. through curriculum and staff development workshops;
- Willingness to learn which was illustrated by the response of project staff who attended the Learning Futures CPD event in Reading which led to the purchase of Swivl devices for use with the project and Xerte training provided by the specialist trainer Ron Mitchell which stimulated interest in Xerte by both project and non project staff;
- Provision of the technologies to do the job, e.g. iPads for staff and students;
- Desire by staff to be more innovative in their delivery.

Avoid doing the following:

- Making assumptions about digital literacy – trying too many apps and online tools can be confusing and become overwhelming to learners, a point made by our Business studies students who felt that they were victims of app overload. We should not take for granted that all learners are willing users of technology through a given assumption by educators that all young people have grown up with it and expect to use it. Some learners were resistant to working purely online.

- Rushing the planning – the project lead time meant that the project teams were thrown straight in with the expectation that they could change existing practice in a very short space of time. This worked well in the Media area where the newly designed learning space facilitated collaborative, project-based learning whereas the switch from paper-based teacher led delivery in Business Studies was a more dramatic change for some of the learners, who found the adjustment to working autonomously to be quite hard.

What would an organisation need to do to repeat our success?

- Develop an e-learning strategy if one does not already exist;
- Ensure that the organisation's leaders are fully committed to change and are able to back their staff with the resources required to implement blended learning;
- Empower teaching staff to improve their teaching through support for CPD with an emphasis on improving digital and blended learning skills;
- Use good quality freely available tools, such as Socrative, Blendspace and Xerte, utilising additional training support from specialists as well as fellow practitioners.

How will you sustain your achievements? What do you plan to do next and why?

- Harlow College has recognised the work carried out by the project team and recently appointed one of them to manage the new innovation zone (iZone) and lead a team of digital apprentices, the e-learning development co-ordinator, e-learning mentors and innovators. Their role is to assist staff and learners in the creation of resources and effective use of digital technologies.
- Kingston College has appointed its project team leader as E-Learning and Moodle Co-ordinator to work with staff in developing their e-skills;
- All teaching staff and learners at Harlow College have been given an iPad at the beginning of the current academic year. The teaching staff are directed to seven key tools or apps, from which they need to choose four to become confident in using during the academic year – Blendspace, Padlet, Showbie, Xerte, Nearpod, Socrative, Moodle VLE. Most of these tools were tried and tested for the project apart from the Moodle VLE, known locally as Qube.

Resources

- Kube Model updated – PowerPoint showing the original Kube Model for blended learning produced by Kingston College for a JISC project with the three models

developed through this project added. The Kube Model can be used by other organisations looking at implementing blended learning;

- Blendspace – The Blendspace is located at <https://www.blendspace.com/lessons/Vyf21hvfMpsiJw/applying-the-successful-kube-model-to-16-19-study-programmes-a-pedagogic-curriculum-toolkit-for-teachers> . This collects the range of resources developed by the project to form the toolkit where other organisations can explore the work we carried out as part of of this action research project. Focus group interviews can als be accessed through the Blendspace;
- Blended Learning - Xerte learning object – Designed for staff CPD by Harlow College, the learning object can be re-purposed;
- Flipped classroom – Xerte learning object - Designed for staff CPD by Kingston College, the learning object can be re-purposed;
- Blendspace – Xerte learning object - Designed for staff CPD by Kingston College, the learning object can be re-purposed;
- Jing – Xerte learning object - Designed for staff CPD by Kingston College, the learning object can be re-purposed;
- Tools used: star rated – Practioners on the project describe how they used different online tools and rate them based on this experience. Others can use this as a “buyers guide” if they wish;
- Three case studies – The case studies produced by the three teams on the project show how they went about developing the Kube model for their areas;
- Digital literacy survey questionnaire – Re-purposed digital literacy questionnaire taken from a JISC Exeter University project, Cascade. Can be re-purposed by other organisations. For the project it was re-purposed to run as a Google Form;
- Digital literacy survey results Harlow – Learners in the Harlow led project were surveyed;
- Digital literacy survey results Kingston – Kingston’s Hairdressing apprentices also carried out the survey;
- E-Learning – Harlow College Part 1 – Video of Media and Journalism staff and learners carried out at the beginning of the project;
- E-Learning Vocational Business – Video of Business Studies Staff and learners carried out at the beginning of the project;
- E Learning for Governors – Video produced for Harlow College governors which can be used by other corporations for insight into the work of the project. The video was towards the end of the project. It can be used in conjunction with the resource E Learning Checklist for Governors;
- E Learning Checklist for Governors – These key questions for governors grew out of the project and Harlow College’s E Learning Strategy which was partly informed by the work of the project;
- Nishall Garala Career Development Portfolio – Weblink to a Weebly blogsite produced by one of the Business Studies learners for the career development unit of the course which was part of the project.