

Report

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Report to:	Clyde Valley Learning and Development Joint Committee
Date of Meeting:	3 October 2011
Report by:	Chair of Clyde Valley Learning and Development Project Implementation Steering Group

Subject:	Clyde Valley Learning and Development Project - Progress in E-Learning
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1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

- ◆ update the Joint Committee on progress in relation to the implementation of e-learning and the outcomes achieved to date

2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. The Joint Committee is asked to approve the following:-

- (1) that the progress which has been achieved so far in relation e-learning be noted.
- (2) that the type of training best suited to e-learning be noted.
- (3) that the most commonly utilised subjects addressed by e-learning reflect individual and collective learning and development priorities of the Clyde Valley Councils

3. Background

- 3.1 E-learning is recognised as a method of delivering training, learning and development in an efficient, effective and economic way for all organisations where learning is an identified priority. The use of e-learning provides a method to allow high numbers of employees to gain access to learning content relatively easily, in a flexible way and more efficiently than any other more traditional approach to learning.
- 3.2 Despite the advantages e-learning provides, in many situations a more complete outcome is achieved when combining e-learning with other learning methods such as traditional classroom based training, coaching and on the job experience. This approach is commonly referred to as blended learning.
- 3.3 All 8 Clyde Valley Councils and a further 10 Associate Member Councils have purchased a common e-learning management system.
- 3.4 The additional advantages associated with this approach include the ability to develop and share e-learning content across the spectrum of subjects for some or all Clyde Valley Councils. In addition the common platform provides an opportunity for analysis of usage and trends across the membership.

4. Usage to Date

- 4.1 Data provided from the Brightwave learning management system reveals that the current number of students in scope and on the combined learning platform is some 179,391 students.
- 4.2 Of this number, some 34,103 have accessed e-learning either from their own workplace desktop, a council learning centre, library or school or from a personal computer at home or other remote location. A total of 205,583 hours of learning has been accessed by these students, which is an average of just over 6 hours of learning per student.
- 4.3 This represents approximately 19% of employees. It is clear from these figures that although large numbers of students have the potential to access content, not all Councils have completed the roll out of e-learning to every service.
- 4.4 This is a reflection of different strategic approaches to the roll out of e-learning, whereby some Councils have launched the service to all users simultaneously, while others have chosen a phased roll out to selected groups of employees in each phase. Nonetheless the number of students actively involved in e-learning indicates the potential to reach all services and users in the coming months.
- 4.5 The total number of e-learning courses active on the combined Brightwave platform is 3,706. These courses have been accessed a total of 469,799 times. These statistics illustrate the flexibility that e-learning provides, whereby students can start some learning and not necessarily complete the whole course in one sitting if there is not enough time available. Similarly courses can be accessed repeatedly to re-enforce learning, provide refresher training or support blended learning.
- 4.6 Some 290 courses have been produced using the Brightwave BILD content authoring tool, and these courses have been accessed some 203,595 times.
- 4.7 This content comprises the courses developed from scratch by Clyde Valley Members and Associates in response to identified priorities from each council. As a result it can be seen that approximately 8% of available courses covers 43% of the usage, demonstrating that targeted development of content more closely meets the priorities of each organisation.
- 4.8 In addition this approach illustrates the ongoing strategy to be more self sufficient in the development of content and consequently to reduce the expenditure in off the shelf or licensed e-learning content in the longer term.
- 4.9 The remaining 3,421 courses available on the platform have therefore been accessed 267,204 times (57% of launches). These courses comprise off the shelf content (typically management training, communications, soft skills and information technology), bespoke commissioned learning (e.g. one off development to satisfy a particular need) and free access content (e.g. BBC, Open University, Institute of Research and Innovation in Social Services (RISS)).
- 4.10 It is clear that although this approach provides high volume access to relatively cheap e-learning, it is less specific in meeting the identified needs of end users.

5. Trends in Usage

5.1 Analysis of subject matter which is most commonly addressed using e-learning shows the following trends:

- ◆ policy courses (e.g. health and safety, maximising attendance, PDR/PDP)
- ◆ soft skills (e.g. customer care, objective setting, communications)
- ◆ processes (e.g. accessing self service HR systems, procurement)
- ◆ induction training (either as a blended approach or as an alternative to traditional classroom based induction)

6. Evaluation and Continuous Improvement

6.1 Analysis of access and usage data provides valuable evidence to assist in the evaluation of impact from e-learning. Evaluation is carried out at various levels within each authority ranging from feedback from individual learning on completion of courses, to the impact on performance.

6.2 The evaluation data is used to ensure continuous improvement of best practice, as well as maximising the impact and contribution from the e-learning being delivered. To support this process the Steering Group recently agreed that the E-Learning Sub Group should be remitted to run quarterly workshops in specific subjects and skills, to allow each member Council to benefit more effectively from the knowledge and experience of the wider group.

7. Employee Implications

7.1 The general move towards the use of e-learning has implications for both learning and development staff and for Council employees as a whole. For the learning and development staff, there is a requirement to improve and develop skills in design and development of e-learning content. This is being supported to a large degree through sharing of good practice in the Clyde Valley E-learning Sub Group.

7.2 For all other employees, the move towards e-learning requires a change in organisation culture. This involves changing expectations that all training will be delivered in a classroom, and that training can be accessed more flexibly in terms of time and location. From an organisation point of view, this will reduce employee time spent on learning without diminishing the learning experience.

8 Financial Implications

8.1 Developments will result in financial benefits categorised as both savings (in cash and/or time) and in cost avoidance (based on a business case for new developments).

9 Other Implications

9.1 The limited risks of this collaborative approach to learning and development are covered in the Minute of Agreement between participating authorities.

10. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements

10.1 No immediate action required to carry out an Equality Impact Assessment is required.

10.2 The Implementation Steering Group continues to meet on a regular and frequent basis and consultation on progress and implementation issues are regularly discussed.

Gill Bhatti
Chair
Clyde Valley Learning and Development Project Implementation Steering Group

16 September 2011

Previous References

Minutes of 14 June 2010 (Paragraph 8)
Minutes of 14 March 2011 (Paragraph 5)]

List of Background Papers

None

Contact for Further Information

If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please contact:-

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