



ACL Initiative Project Report

Name of project lead	Irina Matthews
Name of organisation	Shropshire County Council County Training, Adult Community Education

Brief description of what you proposed to do

To explore the possibilities of using mini laptops and digital cameras in the delivery of ACL courses to increase the opportunities for learning.

Summary of your project *(How did your organisation integrate the mini laptops and camera into e-learning in your Adult Education Service?)*

Case study 1:

A mini laptop was used by a Family Learning tutor teaching literacy/numeracy to parents (so that they can assist their children with the school home work). Teaching sessions take place in schools around the county.

Case Study 2:

A mini laptop was used one of the IT tutors delivering Computers for Beginners course. It was partly in response to learners' feedback from the previously run courses: learners wanted to have a mini session on the use of laptops.

Case study 3:

Digital camera was used by a Family Learning Tutor who delivered the following courses:

Fitclub
Speakeasy
The Community Garden

Evaluation of project

Case Study 1

Tutor found the laptop to be very useful as a mobile workstation: tutor was able to do "tweaks" to the session contents, update Schemes of Work and Lesson Plans in preparation and immediately following the delivered sessions.

It was a great “talking point” and helped to bring the group together.

Both the tutor and learners found the learning resources very enticing and useful, however, some of them required higher level IT skills that learners had and in terms of literacy/numeracy resources some of the resources were too challenging for some learners.

Small use – great for a tutor to carry around but learners found the screen and keyboard too small.

Documents created in Open Office when uploaded into MS Word required additional editing if contained anything more complex than simple text formatting.

Case Study 2

Including the mini laptop into Computers for Beginners course allowed learners who are very new to IT to see the difference between a desktop PC and a laptop, “have a go” at using the touch pad and a mouse; see the standard Windows desktop (customised desktops at the centres); practice uploading and downloading files (not always possible in the network environment). It provided a subject for further discussion and increased the motivation to learn more.

Case Study 3

Speakeasy

On the Speakeasy course we had a lady who is dyslexic. Although her literacy skills were poor she is very articulate and the camera enabled the tutor to produce evidence showing her taking an active role in the discussions.

Group tasks set to the group resulted in the production of one piece of work, which the tutors were able to photograph so that all learners had a copy for their file.

The Community garden

The camera was used to keep a journal regarding the progress and transformation that the garden has undergone in the last few months. These photos will also be used as evidence when learners come to complete OCN units relating to the garden project.

These photographs were also used as promotional shots to encourage other potential learners to take part in the project. Tutors created a display and submitted press releases to the local paper.

Fitclub



The camera was used to record evidence of the learners progress, and samples of their work, for example pictures of meals they have created in the Healthy Cooking/Healthy Eating Session and garments during Eco Chic as well as items of jewellery during jewellery making sessions.

It was particularly useful for some of the learners with profound learning difficulties.

Project outputs

Apart from providing evidence of learners' progression the main benefit of the project is the opportunity to

- Introduce people to modern technology in an informal and friendly way
- Provide further encouragement and motivation to learn more
- Introduce more active and varied ways to learn
- Increase inclusivity and access to technology for everyone

Any plans for the future?

It will be great if we could get some more mini laptops for Family learning sessions as well as IT sessions; we also could offer the mini laptops to be used by the language tutors – that would help to increase the differentiation and widen the range of learning resources used.

Future issues

As we move towards more accredited courses this will be an invaluable tool for recording evidence for our less able learners.

Digital camera could be also be used for creating resources e.g. discussion