Project Activity to date March 2010

Project Name: ‘Using reflective dialogue to assess professional learning’

Project Lead: Ruth Pilkington

Project Plan Summer 2010 -2011

This final stage will focus on analysis and findings. At this stage the blog will play an important part, but on the basis of prior experience of the value of writing events as a means of focussing attention and effort on activity with clear objectives, the project team will use a 3-day writing event to consider results, write up findings and plan papers and articles. This has been found to work effectively as a process and mechanism for working collaboratively to draft preliminary materials and articles. The 3-day event will therefore provide the space to draw together and interpret results, draft conclusions, and draft project report, preliminary research papers, etc.

Progress Plans from Interim Report:

1. Advertise a project workshop through ESCalate for June 4th 2010

   This was held and report has been uploaded to the website

2. Project Lead to explore wiki for collaborative work on documents and space for sharing

   Two attempts made at using virtual sites for managing project activity: through the use of a Ning area which really did not allow the level of interactivity that the project lead desired; using the UCLan virtual area ELGG. This was more successful as a site but as with all projects activity was limited because colleagues on the project were all busy, and communications defaulted to e-mail.

3. Project Lead to circulate documents from meeting for annotation to Team

   Done

4. Team members circulate further contacts and additional literature

   The project lead has drawn together an extensive bibliography of texts on professional learning, assessment and dialogue. It has been circulated as an annotated bibliography to team members and uploaded as a simple bibliographic list onto the ESCalate website.

5. Project lead draft and circulate data security and disposal agreement

   The project completed ethics documentation for research through the two main partners (Chester and UCLan). This was shared with all partners as the ethical commitment and procedure for managing security and research.

Update on actual activity:

Meetings have been held on 1st July, 14th October and December. Dr Peter Kahn from Liverpool was appointed as critical friend and has been invited onto the team. He also attended the workshop in June 2010, and has provided insight and feedback on that event,
draft articles. He has also brought a colleague into the project team from Liverpool who is also using dialogue for assessment.

The project research assistant has transcribed 10 dialogues and prepared initial coding for analysis following meetings and discussion with the project lead over the summer. Selected interviews have also been transcribed. Preliminary analysis has taken place and more detailed analysis is currently underway.

Meeting in July 2010. This meeting focussed on discussion of two early transcripts, and project members undertook detailed analysis to identify themes issues to support the research assistant in early coding. There was also further work on the interviews. Key elements that emerged with respect to the transcripts related to the structure of the dialogue process, the interventions of the assessor, the language, evidence of reflection and extent to which values emerged. The Glyndwr project member was taking retirement and the institution withdrew from the project.

Meeting in October 2010. The meeting included the research assistant and this meant we could examine early coding, and work on data analysis. Nearly all dialogues had been submitted; we were still finishing transcriptions at this stage. It was decided that participants would do outlines of their dialogues for the website for dissemination and also would complete interviews either as written documents or as recorded interviews. The team worked in the afternoon on a book proposal to disseminate outcomes from the project.

The Meeting in Dec was cancelled and the Writing Event has been postponed to early Spring to allow analysis to be completed.

Wider Project Involvement:

- Conference Paper at Assessment: Research and Innovation for Inclusive Practice Conference Programme, 8th July 2010
- Poster Presentation given at ISSOTL 19th-21st Oct 2010
- Application made to HEA to fund Assessment Seminar on Dialogue in assessment (unsuccessful)

In addition to early contacts with colleagues at Hull (dialogue to support peer review reflection), Portsmouth (Narrative dialogue), Leeds (Formal scholarly dialogue), and Middlesex (reflective dialogue for WBL) about dialogue and its value to reflection and work-based learning, further contacts have been established with colleagues at Liverpool (professional dialogue), BCU (professional modules assessed dialogue adopted following project model), Newcastle, colleagues from SEDA, and through the workshop in June 2010.

Ruth Pilkington UCLan, Jan 2011