

E-PDPs in the Extended Curriculum

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What is a PDP?

- Personal development planning:
Knowing what and how to learn the next thing is as NB as what has already been learnt (Jackson, 2004)

What is a PDP?

- Students identify S/W against set competencies
- Students plan and implement improvements
- Self-awareness and understanding others
- PDP as mediating artifact
- Social learning
- Enculturation
- Productive learning
- E-tools: interaction and feedback
- Curriculum design

PDP research questions

- To what extent are students developing self-awareness of their own learning and learning needs in HE?
- To what extent are they, through reflection, realising professional identity?

Andile Thole

Chemical Engineering

E-PDP Towards Professional ID

- Certain Chemical Engineering Competencies were chosen for the students to reflect on :
 - (GROUP) Problem solving .
 - Application of Scientific knowledge and Engineering knowledge.
- These are Specific Outcome 1 &2 (ECSA:14)

Set up

- Pre PDP reflective dialogue
- WEBCT chat room in computer classes topic: 'Group problem solving'. 30 students + lecturer.

What we found

- Students move between interpersonal, intercultural (race), professional and academic issues (less of the latter)
- The online reflections were honest, students said things online that they could not say face to face
- Student could learn from their peers online.

Direction 1: Social learning and developing identity

- C: I think that I am a problem solver, and I think I can identify problems. But in total honesty I do not like to work in groups as I don't like relying on people, though I try my best to make it work
- T: You aren't supposed to be here! You chose the wrong course. If you are doing chemeng you MUST be able to work in groups. So, change your attitude, brother, or your course!
- D: Good reply, T now I think I can see you thinking like an engineer.
- C: but doing chemeng is not just about working in a group.
- E: sometimes you get help from others
- C: oK, I agree
- Tutor: Yes, you do need to work in groups in the profession, to better solve problems. In fact there are few careers where you work alone a chemical engineer is a problem solver

The group DID focus on professional identity and the need for academic learning in a group BUT things did not go smoothly here

Direction 2: Interpersonal and Intercultural issues

A: C, I think its time you work with your attitude because being an engineer is about working together. and if you think you are that better think again my brother. i have a q do you have a problem with working in groups or having group members that are black or not the same race as you.

C: All I said was I don't like groups!

D: I understand your position, C. We are all friends but sometimes we try to break the other down.

A: Sometimes it (not working in groups) hurts the other person, we get offended easily

E: I think C is just an independent guy who likes working on his own

A: Ok I take back what I said (about race) but I still don't approve (of him not working in a group).

G: I understand you c but you must make it work, don't just pretend

F: C must do what he wants but in a gud way

A: Ok C, sorry I take it back sorry if I said anything to hurt you but plz next time

But things again go awry

Direction 3: Flirting!

C: I think R is in love with you

D: lol really I think it is love at first site

K: U r right, R wants C.

L: R, have you heard the rumours ...

New person: I got a food/bad mark on that assignment, I did not submit on the due date (shift to new topic) -

Amanda Morris

Graphic Design

Implementation

- We decided to implement the e-PDP into a subject called Professional Graphic Design Practice. It was structured as an open assignment on the Black board Learning Management System (LMS).
- The assignment asked the learners to:
"Record what you have learnt every day, how you feel you are progressing and also where you feel you still need to work on."

Implementation

- Because it was an open assignment, a constant exchange could take place between the learners and me.
- They could submit their writing on a weekly basis via the LMS; I could read it, give them feedback and return it to them for further writing.

Implementation

- This process continued over a period of weeks and learners were asked to update their PDPs on a weekly basis.
- At the end of the assignment, learners were asked to complete a self-evaluating questionnaire to rate themselves using a list of competencies for graphic design learners.
- Interviews were done with 3 students based on their interest and understanding of the e-PDP.

Video

Conclusions

- Students do reflect
- They learn and begin to take on professional identity
- Some issues are more easily discussed online
- Electronic format helps shy students to engage in reflective process.

Conclusions

- Students learn from one another
- Time-management is critical
- Students report that the e-PDP is empowering through knowledge gained

Where to...

- We think PDPs thus far show great promise in First Year transition
- How do we integrate it fully?

Questions

Thank You!