

## LEARNING DEVELOPMENT PROJECT OVERVIEW FORM

Project title	Using problem-based learning to develop online resources for use in the professional development of specialist teachers of the visually impaired	Project ID No	CLAD – HIST016
Strategy area/theme	Education		
Start date	October 2003	Completion date	September 2004
Project type	Learner enhancement project		
Level	Undergraduate/postgraduate	Programme of study	Visual impairment
Aims	To explore how to most effectively embed the set of pilot on-line problem-based learning resources developed within phase one of the project, into a restructured programme of study for specialist teachers of children with visual impairment studying at a distance.		
Objectives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Through a review of literature and current national initiatives, to determine what materials have been developed to date and their relevance to the project</li> <li>2. Through interviews with relevant professionals to identify key factors that can be linked with effective practice in the use of PBL within a range of professional development programmes and examine how these factors can be applied in developing on-line resources for use in the professional development of students at a distance</li> <li>3. To plan, develop and trial a pilot set of on-line resources, drawing upon the principles of PBL, with one group of students (PBL Activity Group) registered in the 2003-2005 cohort of the Visual Impairment programme of study</li> <li>4. To evaluate and refine the materials for inclusion in module 2 of a restructured programme of study in visual impairment (to run from September 2004)</li> <li>5. To disseminate the findings of project through relevant journals, conferences and research seminars and consider their relevance to other DE Programmes</li> <li>6. To apply to the Learning Development Unit for funding of the second phase of the project, in order to monitor and evaluate the use of the on-line resources with a cohort of new students within a restructured programme in visual impairment</li> </ol>		
Overview	<p>The focus of this study was the design, development and evaluation of online problem-based learning resources for use with postgraduate teachers studying through distance education at the University of Birmingham. Following their participation in online problem-based learning within two modules of a restructured programme, feedback from the students was collected and analysed. The findings suggest that 'traditional' campus based learning and teaching approaches such as problem-based learning (PBL) can be adapted for use in professional training courses offered through distance learning. They also provide evidence that an appropriate induction programme, together with clear guidance on time management, as well as adequate tutor and technical support are important to enable students to overcome potential barriers to online learning and participation. The broader implications of the findings for embedding e-learning within PBL for similar profiles of students are explored in a Final Project Report with recommendations made for future practice.</p>		
Further Information	<p>For further information on this project please contact CLAD at University of Birmingham</p> <p><a href="mailto:cladprojects@contacts.bham.ac.uk">cladprojects@contacts.bham.ac.uk</a> quoting CLAD projects HIST016</p>		