

3.4

Computing and e-learning

Lead Organisations	Background	Targets / Milestones
<p>The Open University in the South East, University of Sussex</p> <p>Key Partners</p> <p>University of Brighton, University of Chichester, The Open University in the South East, University of Sussex, City College Brighton and Hove, Central Sussex College, Chichester College, Hastings College, Northbrook College Sussex, Plumpton College, Sussex Council of Training Providers (SCTP) members as appropriate, Sussex Downs College</p>	<p>We recognise that there is still much to learn about the use of computer mediated technologies in facilitating learning. A new initiative led by HEFCE aims to embed e-learning in all higher education institutions by 2015 with the intention of strengthening flexible systems of lifelong learning which meet learners' needs (HEFCE, March 2005). A number of projects have been established to achieve this goal. They include a 'Pathfinder Programme' to identify institutional and organisational issues for disseminating and embedding of e-learning within institutions, e-learning resource websites and a number of research and evaluation initiatives to develop the theory and practice of providing seamless provision for lifelong learning.</p> <p>Creating continuity for lifelong learning through developing and sharing good practice across different learning environments is a major objective for the Sussex Learning Network. The development of e-learning practice and staff development opportunities, through collaborative work with the SLN partnership institutions and other key stakeholders across Sussex, will significantly contribute towards this objective. This project is aimed at identifying the range and diversity of e-learning practice in Sussex, in order to provide opportunities to develop and disseminate good practice within specified curriculum strands. A key focus of the project will be sharing and developing e-learning practice for working with vocational learners and supporting their transition from further to higher education.</p>	<p>1 A comprehensive map of the range and diversity of e-learning in Sussex by July 2008</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">1.1 Map of HE provision in e-learning December 20061.2 Map of FE provision in e-learning July 20071.3 Maintenance and updating of mapping data July 2008 <p>2 Development and evaluation of a series of action research projects to contribute to the development of e-learning in Sussex</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">2.1 Establishing action research projects January 20072.2 Action research projects concluded and evaluated June 2008 <p>3 Staff development opportunities for staff in e-learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">3.1 Staff development conference by July 2007

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Activities 2006–08

The project has five key phases, which overlap to maximise the potential that we will meet our objectives. During the first phase of the project, from July to December 2006, we will engage in planning and consultation, establishing the level of interest in the project through networking with SLN partner institutions and other key stakeholders such as employer organisations, voluntary education providers, and trades unions. We will map the range and diversity of e-learning across Sussex, with the focus on HE institutions and curriculum leads, and begin work with institutions delivering FE. This will be achieved through interviews with learning development staff at each of the SLN partner institutions. We will focus on locating the project within the wider range of e-learning initiatives in further and higher education. This will entail a literature review, informal contact with JISC and CETLs, and the encouragement of wider participation (especially by learners) in the development of the project. This will also serve to introduce case studies and opportunities to share experiences of engaging with e-learning.

In phase two, from November 2006 to July 2007, we will work on establishing web site resources, including a database, to disseminate the findings of the first phase of the project. We will develop the mapping of e-learning in institutions delivering FE and through the range of partners, and host a conference (to include practitioner, learner and expert perspectives) to raise awareness and stimulate further interest in the project.

The third phase of the project will run from January to September 2007, during which we will continue the mapping of e-learning, including updating of records. We will begin action research projects by establishing collaborative partnerships across SLN partner institutions and other key stakeholders, and will pilot and evaluate e-learning resources.

Phase four of the project, from September 2007 to June 2008, will consist of completion of the mapping of e-learning and the action research projects, including an evaluation of their contribution to the development of e-learning across Sussex. We will also set up staff development workshops. These will disseminate strategies for establishing collaborative partnerships, with the aim of developing e-learning practice.

During the final phase, from June to July 2008, we will produce an evaluation of the project and submit papers to peer-reviewed journals.

As part of the capacity building in this area we will look to continue support for the Post Graduate Certificate in e-learning design. In addition, we will collaborate with FE partners seeking to bid for JISC funding to support higher level vocational learning.

