



Guroo encourages enable VLE usage

Functional Skills

Diplomas, introduced in September 2008, combine theoretical study with practical experience and are a key part of the Government's 14-19 reforms. There are 17 main subjects or 'lines', ranging from Hair and Beauty to Engineering and each student must also complete Functional Skills in English, Mathematics and ICT.

In a report published by Ofsted in August 2009, entitled *Implementation of 14-19 reforms, including the introduction of Diplomas*, it was stated that 'almost half the consortia visited had not established an effective, co-ordinated approach to teaching the functional skills and so the quality of teaching and learning varied considerably.' One way of helping to address this is to consider the use of good, interactive resources to support learning.

Guroo Resources

When the Northamptonshire 14 -19 County Strategy Group were looking for resources to support teachers in teaching functional skills, there were few suitable products available. However, they were encouraged by the resources available from Guroo, which had been developed as a number of challenges across English, Mathematics and ICT for both level 1 and level 2.

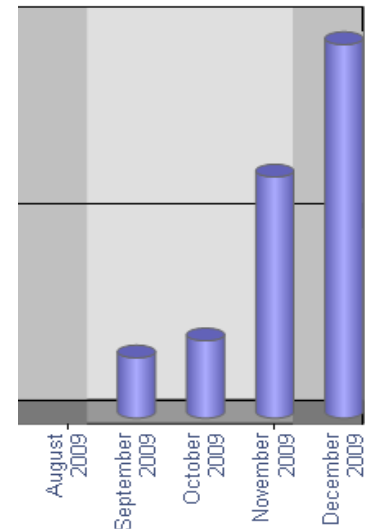
Each challenge consisted of a number of interactive activities along with self assessment tasks, videos, audio files and lesson plans. A disadvantage was that the resources were web-based and this meant yet another set of logins and passwords for both students and teachers.

Delivery Through enable

Guroo agreed to repackage their resources to allow them to be uploaded onto enable, the Northamptonshire county wide learning platform.

LP+ assisted in the design of a navigation page and also a template page to give a common look to each challenge. Icons were designed by a member of the Harnessing Technologies team at Northamptonshire County Council to give an intuitive approach to use of the site and this, along with the ease with which multimedia resources can be loaded onto the enable platform, has resulted in resources that are appealing and engaging for students.

Usage of Functional Skills site within enable



Since the initial resources have become available, usage of the site has increased, and the challenges are now being used in a number of secondary schools.

Comments from Students

"I like the site because it focuses on most of the aspects which we will be examined on and the user interface is great"

"The resources included some good information which was quite useful. A lot of detail"

"Simple and easy to work with and find the subject"

"The resources contained a lot of useful information and had easy access to all the resources. It was easy to navigate"

"It is an interesting way to help you learn"

"It is interesting and taught me stuff. It's fun and simple to use"

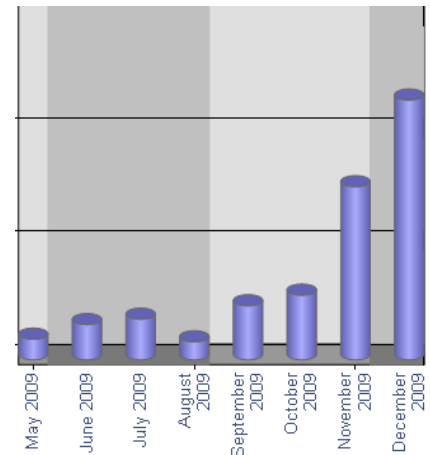


Next Steps

The first set of challenges was released at the start of the academic year. After trials, changes were made to the pre-assessment part of the challenge to improve the feedback given to the student and an update was received in October. Additional challenges are being developed including resources aimed at Entry Level students which will be available soon.

The increased usage of the Functional Skills has also had a knock on effect on the use of both the top level enable site (<https://enable.lpplus.net>) and the 14-19 site, as this is often the route that users take to get to the Functional Skills site.

Usage of the 14-19 Site within enable



14-19 home Diplomas Functional Skills YAP

Gardener's World



In this challenge, your friend has a landscaping business and has asked you to help him with some gardening jobs.

You will need to:

- work out the area of a garden so that it can lay some grass
- mix a solution of insecticide to spray on infected plants
- calculate how much money you will earn.

Choose one of the activities below



A sample level 2 Maths challenge page

Watch the video below to find out more about this task.



Click on the Play button below to hear more about this activity



Functional Skills

- carry out calculations with numbers of any size in practical contexts
- understand, use and calculate ratio and proportion, including problems involving scale
- find area, perimeter and volume of common shapes.

Teacher Resources

[Click here for Lesson Plan](#)

Contacts

Find out how guroo functional skills resources can help encourage use of your VLE:

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