



# Engaging students in Personal Development Planning (PDP)

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## Keywords

Personal response systems, large classes, student engagement.

## Activity

This case study outlines delivery of a Personal Development Planning (PDP) module.

## Group

A large cohort of first year sport students.

## Aim

This module aims to:

- Develop students' awareness of employability and understanding of the personal, social, academic, reflective and professional skills required at HE Level 1
- Devise an accurate evidence base of developing employability skills

## Example

The module is designed to be self-managed by students and runs during the whole of the first year of study at UWIC. It is delivered through a series of lead lecture briefings to support student independent engagement with a series of E-lessons, related tasks, self-assessment, and formative and summative assessment using materials available through the UWIC virtual learning environment. Students upload evidence from this engagement into their individual School of Sport PDP and Employability Log which is subsequently shared with their Personal Tutors. By the end of this module students should be able to:

- Evaluate their role within a team;
- Identify their own learning styles and preferences and apply self-management and independent learning strategies to address their study at HE Level 1;
- Devise and monitor an action plan for their personal development based on their awareness of the key aspects of employability;
- Develop appropriate and accurate evidence to support their progress;
- Demonstrate independent learning by addressing appropriate academic support and information systems;
- Develop an appropriate academic / scientific writing style.

Assessment is staged throughout the academic year, with students required to complete on-line tasks and tests. In addition students must complete their PDP and Employability Log and make this accessible to their Personal Tutor to pass the module.

Any system of PDP could only be successful if students take ownership of the process. Tutors recognition that students needed to develop employability skills alongside academic knowledge and understanding was also a vital component in encouraging students' full engagement with this process.

To support the programme a suite of e-lessons were developed which, on completion, generate the solutions to tasks which were uploaded by students into an electronic PDP Log. The PDP Log was created as part of the Expo package in BlackBoard and is essentially a template in a wiki format which is both interactive and acts as a depository of sustainable evidence of a student's developing skills. The PDP Log contains sections for both Yr1 and Yr2 students to upload tasks, compile development evidence and reflect upon Sport sector employability skills. The PDP Log is available to students for the entirety of their course and can be exported by the student for use on completion of their course. To enable the system to be effectively monitored each student is allocated a Personal Tutor (PT) who is invited by the student

to share access to the PDP Log. To ensure engagement and ultimately accountability, students need confirmation from PTs that all tasks have been completed to entitle them to access the final assessment point for the modules.

## **Results/Feedback**

- The series of e-lessons which students access and complete at a time of their choosing are popular with students. In response to student demand a greater variety of topics have been included.
- It is noticeable that by the second year students have engaged with the process and undertaken some in depth reflection.
- As students decide on the topic and pace of their learning they are involved in making informed choices and it is anticipated that they will continue this approach in making decisions about their study paths, subject options and dissertation topics and ultimately in their future employment.
- The methodologies have addressed learners' demonstrated preference for a 'Facebook' style of access. This has resulted in responsible maintenance of individual e-portfolios of uploaded work, reflective logs and employability logs – all frequently accessed by personal tutors – encourages learners' quality investment in their own work.

## **Further Information**

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