



Strengthening Global Perspectives in Adult Learning

Building on the policy document *The Global Learning Challenge* (2002), in 2003 the DEA invited further education colleges to apply for a small grant of £1,500 to develop one-year pilot projects to incorporate global perspectives into their course planning, curriculum/staff development and/or their policy procedures.

This publication contains brief reports on each project:

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Cornwall College and Cornwall Association of Development Education (CADE)

Cornwall College offers a variety of teacher training courses, which focus on the needs of further education and adult learners. The pilot project was located in its School of Education and Training where it was expected to have a high impact within the college and throughout the community.

A three-stage strategy was adopted:

- Conduct two one-day seminars with the DEA's project funding to develop the expertise of teachers in the post-16 sector to disseminate global educational values throughout the college and the community.
- Gather and disseminate the learning outcomes within the college and the wider community to enable greater participation in the agenda of development education.
- Capitalise on the current reforms of teacher education in the post-compulsory sector to embed global perspectives in teacher education and training curriculum which in turn will provide the basis for continuing professional development throughout the college.

The seminar took the form of an action learning workshop targeted at trainee teachers undergoing their Post-Graduate Certificate in Education – Post-compulsory Education PGCE (PCE). Thirty key staff (including trainee teachers, Advisory Teachers and a Teacher of the Deaf) were invited to take part in the first seminar to investigate methods of introducing global perspectives into the existing curriculum through the use of four questions:

- What is development education?
- What do global perspectives mean for me as a teacher?
- How can I incorporate development education into my teaching?
- How might we develop global perspectives across the curriculum?

Discussion, debate and small group work provided the basis for the participants to explore their understanding of development education and suggest practical ways in which they could facilitate the global dimension into the curriculum.

Through the initial stage, the project has:

- Enabled the college community to deepen their understanding of the contribution that development education can make towards the realisation of the educational objectives of the college.
- Provided an opportunity for the college to develop relationships with new partners such as the DEA and CADE.

The responsible college managers are very conscious that they are in the initial stages of the development of an ambitious project, but are encouraged by the positive beginning that has been made.

Future plans

- Establish links between the teacher training and education programme with 'natural supporters' of the agenda within the college such as Access Course Organisers and others.
- Disseminate the learning outcomes of stage one through verbal and written reports to College Managers, an article in 'Teach Magazine' and postings on the college website.
- Extend internal support in the college to incorporate global perspectives in the curriculum.
- Prepare and deliver INSET for post-compulsory teachers in the region to explore and promote global learning and development education within the college and throughout the community.

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Croydon College and Worldaware

With the support of Worldaware, Croydon College developed their project around the A level Economics, Business Studies and Sociology programme.

The project provided opportunities for the students and lecturers to explore and raise their awareness of global and international development issues as well as increase their critical understanding of the challenges of globalisation for themselves and other people around the world. It culminated in a one-day conference entitled 'Constructive Dialogue on Globalisation Issues'.

Over 100 lecturers and students attended workshops exploring concepts such as global citizenship, interdependence, social justice and human rights with particular reference to different subject areas. These were facilitated by NGOs such as CAFOD, Reading International Solidarity Centre (RISC) and Friends of the Earth, and companies such as Nestlé and Marks & Spencer.

The project enabled a blend of formal and informal learning across the college that has led to the following outcomes and future plans:

- A marked increase of the global dimension in the Enrichment Curriculum for 16-19 year olds.
- Heightened awareness and understanding amongst students and staff of the global dimension of their subject area.
- A core college staff group has emerged to organise similar events in future years.

Future plans

- The college plans to run a conference for all A level students as part of a college-wide Global Awareness Week in 2005.
- They are also considering developing a global awareness component to the college staff CPD programme.

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Pendleton College and Christian Aid

The Pendleton project grew out of the students' interest to follow up a volunteer's presentation about her visit to Levana Primary School in South Africa. The DEA funding and support enabled the project leader to explore and develop this interest into a sustainable global learning strategy across the college.

In developing the strategy, the project leader worked collaboratively with colleagues supported by the Salford Levana Support Fund, Christian Aid and People and Planet. The project progressed with three specific aims:

- Develop and maintain relationships with communities in Africa, specifically through three schools, one in RSA, one in Botswana and the other in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe.
- Explore some of the issues faced in schools in English and African education systems and the communities they serve.
- Engage staff and students at Pendleton College more fully in global awareness and action.

To do this, the project leader made full use of themed weeks such as Africa Week, One World Week and Fairtrade Fortnight. Staff included the themes in their curriculum planning and provided a mainstream learning context for what might have otherwise been considered as extra curricular activities. Students and tutors worked together to facilitate and attend talks and workshops, planned and managed fair trade stalls, discussed and researched issues such as HIV/AIDS and its impact on local and global communities and ways in which they could become actively involved in creating solutions.

The project impacted most on the curriculum planning within the college resulting in:

- The production of a Moving Stories publication of college students' experience and views about refugees that has generated interest from the LEA.
- The initiative began as a 'special project' but has been picked up by other subject tutors across the curriculum engaging over 1,000 students.

Future plans

- Senior managers are keen to build on the success of the project and make the fair trade stalls a regular feature of the college.
- There is an expressed interest within Health Education to develop the work around AIDS and HIV, linked to the increase in AIDS in the UK and especially in the North West.
- Develop a staff training package on global perspectives with those staff that have begun to work with this agenda.

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Preston College and Lancashire Global Education Centre

In partnership with a literacy tutor at Preston College, Lancashire Global Education Centre (LGEC) developed a series of lesson plans and resource material to integrate the global dimension in pre-GCSE English.

Materials from LGEC and support from the senior management gave the project a head start. The college management have reportedly described the process of bringing global perspectives into basic education as "buy one, get one free"!

Over 50 students participated in the project. Whilst they developed their reading, writing and oral skills, the students were also being equipped to read, write and talk about the world in which they live. The students are reported to have concluded that "learning English by discussing global issues made it much more interesting".

Amongst other learning outcomes, the content and process enabled the students to:

- improve their media literacy and ability to critically analyse information
- gain a greater understanding of the interconnectedness of their lives and the lives of people in other parts of the world
- increase their confidence and motivation to make informed and ethical choices in their everyday life in the interest of sustainable development.

As a result of this project, Preston College and LGEC were joint winners of the DEA's Global Learning Award in November 2004.

Future plans

- The materials and lesson plans have been collated with a list of useful websites for internal use.
- Lancashire Global Education Centre are hoping to secure funding to develop and trial the resources for a wider audience.

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Wigan & Leigh College and Wigan Council

Wigan & Leigh College seized the opportunity to make its franchised links with further education institutions in India and China a springboard for teaching and learning about the interconnectedness of local and global communities. The project, entitled 'Dispelling the myths: a cross-college global learning event', built on the existing cross college events for international students by extending the involvement to all college students.

The project gave students from across the college the space and time within the teaching and learning programme to explore the values base and cultures represented within the college communities. It also provided opportunities for international students and UK-based students to develop links in a structured learning context and learn with and from each other using global issues as a focus.

Two strands were developed:

- An email discussion for 'home' and 'overseas' students at the college studying basic skills/essential skills and ESOL to learn about the livelihoods of other people whilst developing their literacy and IT skills.
- An email discussion for British students and students in China and India to participate in collaborative learning about global issues and consider responsible options and sustainable solutions.

Future plans

- Embedding email links into the structure of learning support including basic skills/ESOL.
- Embedding global perspectives into the CPD programme for college staff.
- Opening up the international events further to attract even more UK-based students.
- Embedding global perspectives into future cross-college events.

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Conclusion

Each of the five projects offers a glimpse of global perspectives in practice.

Steve Harris of Cornwall College says: “as teachers we do need to be aware that our learners may find employment with international companies and live and work abroad. In the UK itself the population is increasingly from diverse ethnic origins and cultures, and all areas of life reflect this – obvious examples are the variety of national cuisine now offered by restaurants in British towns, and the retail trade where merchandise is increasingly sourced from abroad. We can explore global perspectives and influences through our own learning and teaching and so help our learners to have a broader outlook on life and grasp the opportunities which the ‘one world’ has to offer.”

A key issue for Gillian Sinnot from Wigan and Leigh College was ensuring that there was sufficient time to develop the links and move the initiative forward in order to make significant impact on the learners and the culture of the college as a whole. Most of the practitioners undertook the projects as a result of their personal commitment and interest rather than as a specific college strategy.

These projects are therefore indicative of what can be achieved given appropriate support in terms of resources and recognition. The DEA grant was clearly a very small sum, however it enabled a few short term interventions with long term gains. Cornwall College, for example, states that although they estimated 70 immediate beneficiaries of the project in terms of attendees on their seminar, in the near future 450 college students will have had some specific experience of education with explicit global learning outcomes.

The five projects offer exemplary models of how local development education organisations and FE colleges can combine their expertise, share approaches and work in collaboration to enhance the quality of learning within the college. The partnerships gave the development education organisations the opportunity to work in new ways with their local community and to develop their skills in working with FE colleges.

The projects also demonstrate how practitioners can be supported to become more specifically engaged with global issues in relation to agendas such as neighbourhood renewal/regeneration, widening participation, active communities and citizenship, sustainable development and skills enhancement. A student teacher at Cornwall College was reportedly “pleasantly surprised that we had the opportunity to study this area of work”. If the education programmes we implement are to contribute to the learner’s ability to participate fully in his/her world, then trainee teachers need to be well resourced to facilitate a teaching and learning environment in which the adult learners can develop the knowledge, skills and value base to deal with challenges of life in the local and global context.

The projects exemplify some ways in which to incorporate global perspectives in the curriculum rather than as an additional or separate entity. The Preston College project shows that making courses more topical and engaging helps to increase motivation and interest for both tutors and learners.

All of the project leaders are in agreement that sustaining the project outcomes and fulfilling their future plans will be difficult without the support of their senior college managers. Embedding the global perspective and engaging senior managers in the process have been important indicators of success for the DEA because without these the initiative would have had a limited impact. The project at Pendleton, for example was instigated by a tutor who felt that it was based too much around her input. An important concern is how to help the practitioners and other ‘lone champions’ convince their colleagues and college managers, as emphasised in one project report, “that the introduction of global perspectives will serve to enrich student experience, motivate both teachers and learners, help retention rates and serve to increase external recognition of college achievement”.

The DEA is committed to securing greater recognition of global perspectives in further education and seeks over the next three years to build on the outcomes of these projects and other work being carried out by members and others to support colleagues in further education to embed global perspectives in their policy and practice.