

CATS Project Community of Practice Development Form

NESCOT: Credit Transfer and Progression in Accounting and Finance April 2013

1.0 Achievements to date

- Delivered dissemination event at AoC National Conference
- Multiple certifications confirmed – additional employer (HP) have expressed interest
- Validation on track – internal and external validation panel dates set (but see note below)
- Confirmed highly flexible pathways including FT, FT WBL, PT, PT WBL
- Employer endorsement of qualification confirmed
- AAT have confirmed their commitment to offer APEL of FD assessments against AAT level 4
- Appointed an external evaluator for the project (Jill Ward, former LLN Director in Staffs and Shropshire)
- The project will be the basis of a poster presentation at the AoC HE Conference in March 2013
- A specialist employer that recruits specialists in this area has contributed to the development of the validation document
- Through the good offices of AoC, exploring the opportunities with AAT to develop a national framework for the transferability of the programme nationally with the Open University. Contact has been made with OU and a meeting is to be scheduled.
- The evaluation of the project by an independent consultant is about to commence.
- The Institute of Leadership and Management will recognise one of the units for ILM credits

Problems/Challenges of developing CATS

- A major problem with the validation of the course has arisen because NESCOT's long-standing HE partner, the University of Surrey, has pulled out of external FE partnerships to concentrate on international work. An appeal has been made to the VC at Surrey and a response is awaited. This matter was reported to Nick Davy as soon as it was known and assistance has been offered. The internal validation is proceeding as originally planned. Discussions have taken place with Kingston University about becoming the College's HE partner but this will be too soon for a validation this summer. We have confirmed that BCU or Kingston will be able to validate the programme but unfortunately not in time for an Autumn 2013 start.

2.0 Working across the FE/HE interface

- Ensuring that the course meets industry needs and meet requirements for HE award
- Challenges in finding meaningful work placements
- See validation issues above

3.0 Working with other agencies

- Professional body (AAT) continue to be highly supportive and have attended all Project Steering Group meetings and employer events (special thanks to Clare Cooper at AAT)
- eResourcing, who are a specialist recruitment agency for SAP, have worked very closely with the project and are going to provide input on documenting and endorsing demand for skills etc.

4.0 'Eureka' moments/Key learning outcomes for the project

- Assumptions about validation arrangements may not always be reliable. This was a very low risk at the beginning of the project but it has become a barrier as discussed.
- AAT are keen to learn the lessons of credit transferability from this project specifically in terms of the recognition of work-based learning.

Emerging themes ?

- Flexibility of delivery design is something that HE providers always claim but the reality can be somewhat different. We believe that this programme will genuinely offer learners and employers flexibility whilst maintaining quality.