

## TITLE

**Skills for Success**

## NAME of INSTITUTION

University of Liverpool

## NAME and CONTACT DETAILS

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## SUMMARY

Induction programme for adults returning to full time higher education. Aiming to support students in their transition into degree level studies through a **problem based learning (PBL)** programme. Including:

- Demystifying the institution
- Explaining and signposting support structures
- Supporting the development of cultural competencies
- Empowering and giving students confidence
- Establishing network of 'peers' for ongoing support

## TARGET GROUP

Adults returning to higher education. Non traditional students all over the age of 21. Returning to education through a variety of progression routes including Access qualifications gained as adults. 125 students on course. 50:50 men:women. Language level not relevant.

## LANGUAGE

Which language do you use as a medium of instruction for your target group?

English

## ACTIVITIES

All students attend a full three day timetable with two linked social events. An evening social for students at the end of the three days and an event for families and supporters a week later.

The students are welcomed formally by a senior member of the University of Liverpool academic staff on the first day. PBL sessions are led by Student Advocates with access to computers and various key members of the Administrative Services provide a panel for questions. The student advocates are all current mature students who have undergone PBL training and are paid for their involvement.

The social elements are key aspects of the programme.

## METHODOLOGY

Three day programme with an entirely PBL teaching format.

Three main aspects:

- Welcome and introduction to PBL teaching methodology. Students divided into 4 clusters of 4 groups sized 7/8 people.
- Each group is given one of four PBL scenarios which over the three days, introduces different aspects of students needs and issues. These scenarios enable students, just starting on a degree programme, to identify their level of knowledge in key areas of student support and then gives them the knowledge as to where they can get further support and information.
- Groups feedback on their scenario and learning. The groups then present within clusters of four enabling students to see 'solutions' identified by each group for the other three scenarios. This process enables new students to understand and engage with the culture of the University of Liverpool by meeting and working with existing mature students whilst at the same time developing a network of peer support through the programme delivery

### EXAMPLES

of the material you have developed.

1. Programme Skills for Success
2. PBL Scenarios
3. Evaluation Questionnaires

### OUTCOMES

The Skills for Success programme enabled mature students to be better prepared for their time as full-time undergraduates at the University of Liverpool. The PBL learning methodology equipped them with an understanding of their own level of knowledge and gaps in their knowledge. It also identified what support was available and where they could go for support. The use of mature student advocates as group facilitators also introduced them to role models with a personal understanding of the issues that they face in returning to education as adult learners.

### CONSTRAINTS

Recruiting and training sufficient mature student advocates was more time consuming than anticipated.

### Relation to the aims of CHAGAL

Skills for Success embraced by diversity through providing additional support to enable non traditional students to more likely to succeed within mainstream undergraduate provision.

The curriculum defined key areas of competencies and student need through the use of PBL where the students established their own level of knowledge.

The students identified a variety of solutions to the problem identified within the scenarios, linked to the key competencies.

The PBL scenario based methodology gave students the confidence to negotiate their own goals in future dealings with the University, and enabled them to meet role models who had already done so.

PBL teaching methodology is supported by VITAL , the virtual interactive teaching platform of University of Liverpool.

Facilitation of working groups enabled students to interact with curriculum on a basis of their own needs.