

Family, Adult and Community Learning

Provider Self Assessment – University of Sunderland 2010-2011

KQ1 How well do learners achieve?

Are retention levels on your courses good? How do you know?

Retention levels on both courses are generally good, with some courses achieving 100% retention. Some courses have had lower retention, this year there has been increased contact with the centres in the early stages and while recruiting learners, to emphasise the course commitments, although with some centres it is clear that more needs to be done to ensure learners are retained, suggestions/strategies can be discussed on a one to one basis with the individual centres. In some cases retention has been lower than the 90% target, the reason for this is currently unknown but discussions between the tutors and centre staff will take place prior to any future projects being delivered at that site to ensure retention targets are met. Retention and attendance are measured through course register.

How is success/achievement measured for your learners?

Success on both courses is measured through full completion of course and achievement of goals and targets set on Individual Learning Plan. All learners completing a course are able to achieve the all of their learning goals, this is evident thorough the ILP'S and feedback.

Do your learners achieve well on courses? How do you know?

The participants completing the course tend to achieve all of their goals, as documented on ILP's. The small percentage who do not achieve all of their goals it is noted have had poor attendance, but are still able to achieve some of their goals.

Are levels attendance and punctuality at classes satisfactory? How do you know?

With most courses, attendance and punctuality are very good, with the majority of absences explained/authorised. However in 3 of the projects attendance has not been satisfactory, learners are encouraged to inform school staff or project tutors of any absences, but this does not always happen. This is more apparent when working in primary schools possibly due to parents not necessarily having daily contact with the parents in the same way nursery staff do. It is also noted that attendance is slightly lower during the summer term, possibly due to an increase of other activities taking place in schools/nurseries during this term e.g. trips and visits.

Is there evidence of your learners maintaining fitness levels and independence?

A great number of adult learners were particularly pleased with their improved fitness, in particular elements such as flexibility and stamina being the most developed (as recognised on ILP's). In some cases the learners have gone onto attending fitness/dance classes e.g. Zumba. Fitness levels and independence are monitored throughout the course by the course tutor.

Do you have evidence that learners develop socially and personally through your courses?

It is possible to observe social and personal development for most learners throughout the course, during the participation in the various tasks, practical participation in the session and communication with tutor and others in the group. Some learners do recognise and document their development on their ILP's however some do not, the implementation of the DVD (which includes photographic and video evidence of learning undertaken during the project) has improved the recognition of learning for both adult and child, as it is used at various points throughout the course.

How do you celebrate the achievements of your learners?

Achievement is recognised by the tutor and praise and feedback are given throughout the course, however at the end of the 10 week programme learners are invited to demonstrate their new found skills/knowledge in the form of a short dance performance for an invited audience at the University, attendance at these events is very good and often extended family members attend and end up taking part, as the event now culminates in a short workshop 5/10 minutes where audience and performers are invited to get up and learn a short routine (often a partner dance, adult and child) to then perform to culminate the celebration event. Learners are also given a copy of their groups DVD. These 2 elements combined have proved to be very successful for the learners and an enjoyable experience. Implemented during May 2011 learners were offered an extra celebratory event, this time taking place at the Customs House in South Shields all learners who attended this will also receive a £20 gift voucher for the Bridges, it is hoped this opportunity will also be available for learners in 2011-2012.

KQ2 How effective are teaching, training and learning?

Do your teachers demonstrate an appropriate level of expertise/knowledge?

The 2 tutors who deliver sessions for both small steps and little movers have specialist dance knowledge (particularly creative dance), vast amount of experience delivering sessions to both adults and young children and have Degree level education and qualified teacher status. This year it has also been possible to undertake team teaching of some projects which has proved beneficial for tutor development and sharing of best practice.

Are aims and objectives for lessons shared with learners?

All learners are given a brief overview of the course during the enrolment process and weekly aims and objectives are shared with the learners at the beginning of the session in a very informal way, allowing parents/carers to understand what the session will entail, what their role will be and how they can help/support their child during the session, this includes a breakdown of all of the tasks to be undertaken during the session and has allowed learners to offer their ideas for the session also, which where possible are also included. Learners are also informed of the skills the tutors envisage will be developed during the session e.g. hand eye co-ordination, this has proved helpful in their recognition of the learning taking place and has helped with completion of ILP's.

Are schemes of work and lesson plans in evidence? What is their quality?

Scheme of work and lesson plans are available for all courses, The schemes of work, are beneficial to the first part of the course however participants have been encouraged to choose their own themes or songs during the second part of the course to encourage ownership of the project and to link to their own interests. Therefore the scheme of work does need to have a great deal of flexibility to allow for this to be developed over the course. To allow for this a general scheme of work is created which is then adapted and developed as the changes occur.

Do you record cancellation of classes or use of substitute staff?

Course cancellation and change forms are sent to FACL where appropriate, there have been instances where staff have covered a session if lead tutor is unavailable, but this is recorded and no other external staff are brought in all sessions are taught by the 2 tutors (Sarah Riach and Emma Waites), course files and any learning materials are always passed onto the tutor teaching the session to minimise any disruption to the learner.

Are lessons suitably paced for all learners? Is there evidence of differentiation?

Lesson are suitably paced for the learners particularly the children, where a variety of tasks are required to not spend too long on one aspect, to ensure where possible that motivation and concentration is lost. Differentiation is used within sessions, all tasks cover a variety of learning styles i.e. auditory, visual and kinaesthetic and all fitness levels are catered to with movement at times adapted to suit individual learner needs. Also learners have been encouraged to initiate their own ideas and themes to the session. Differentiation is documented on all lesson plans and can be evidenced in the learner DVD.

Is there evidence of class interaction/peer support?

A lot of the tasks used within the sessions encourage group interaction and activates are designed to ensure this happens and can clearly be observed by the tutor, this can also be evidenced in the learner DVD for both adult and child learners. This is a key aspect throughout the project as a common goal for the learners is to interact/meet other parents at the nursery/school.

Are teachers appropriately qualified and do they participate in continual professional development?

All tutors are suitably qualified (refer to do your teachers demonstrate an appropriate level of expertise/knowledge) and are encouraged to attend meetings within the University or those offered by the City Council to enhance their Continual Professional Development. Currently both tutors plan to attend safeguarding training (this training was also undertaken in 2010).

KQ3 How well do the programmes and activities meet the needs and interests of learners?

Do you deliver a sufficiently broad range of provision? How do you know?

All courses are dance related however we can incorporate different aspects/styles of dance

I.e. creative dance, pop steps, salsa, cheerleading, interaction with props dancing individually and with a group/partner, dance from other cultures. The inclusion of the learners choice of songs/styles/themes allows for even greater breadth. Projects also reference popular culture with a great number of projects this year making reference to the current tv series Glee.

How appropriate is your range of courses for the geographical area? How do you know?

Courses Delivered - school (SS = small steps , LM = little movers)	Area
Oxclose nursery – SS x 2, LM Wessington - LM	Washington – 4 projects
Richard Avenue – SS Grangetown - LM	Sunderland South – 2 projects
Hylton Red House nursery – SS Grange Park Primary – LM Redby Primary – LM Southwick – SS & LM	Sunderland North – 5 - projects

Do you have any evidence that gaps in your provision have been addressed through partnership arrangements?

Numerous projects were also offered to schools and nurseries in the Coalfields areas, however schools did not participate in the project this year, however there is interest for 2011-2012.

When do your courses take place and is this in line with learners' wishes?

Courses are offered in all 3 school terms, the term, day and time the course runs is decided by the venue i.e. primary or nursery school, this is generally in line with what would best suit the learners and venue. All days (Mon to Fri) and times are offered; courses could even run over lunch times or after school.

Are learners' views/needs solicited and analysed?

All learners are invited to contribute their ideas/views/needs for the project and all courses are flexible to cover learner's needs. This can take the form of learners choosing themes for each week or what to do for final presentation or could be they include a game they enjoy. All learners contribute to the warm up each week.

Do you provide progression opportunities? Are there examples where learners repeat courses due to lack of opportunity?

After learners have completed the Small Steps project they can choose to go onto the Little Movers project, however this is dependant on their school choosing to be part of the programme. There is currently no progression route after Little Movers; however we would like to maybe offer a general dance class offered to all ages within the primary school – this aspect would need to be discussed in much greater depth with

City of Sunderland Council/Primary Schools/Participants and tutors. There is evidence this year of learners completing the Small Steps project then progressing onto the Little Movers.

Can you provide evidence of effective widening participation strategies for recruitment?

Recruitment is currently undertaken by School/nursery staff, however to encourage more people onto the project and ensure where possible we enrol the minimum requirement of 7 adults learners it may be possible to target the following groups for the projects

Small Steps – Nursery and Reception Children

Little Movers – Infant children (reception, yr 1 and 2) and junior children (yr 3,4,5 and 6). Recruitment has been more difficult than in previous years, this is possibly due to more of the projects being delivered in primary schools which typically do not recruit as well as the nursery schools, which continue to recruit very good numbers. The main focus for 2011-2012 will be to deliver the project primarily in the nursery schools to maximise the number of new learners.

KQ4 How well are learners guided and supported?

What standard of pre-course information and literature do you provide for learners?

All schools/nurseries participating in the project are sent an information booklet to give out to the parents. Nursery/school staff can adapt this or make their own version if they do not think it is suitable for their learners.

Are learners then given sufficient advice and guidance prior to enrolment to ensure they are on the correct programme?

All learners are offered a taster session this allows them to try out one session without having to sign up for the full course any concerns or questions they may have can be discussed and dealt with during the taster session. It also gives the tutor the opportunity to gauge what level the learner is both socially and physically.

Are learners suitably inducted onto their chosen course – in a way that assesses the suitability of the course for them?

See above

Are there costs to the learners?

There are no costs for the learner on either course, however they may be asked to bring something in from home i.e. a prop, costume, picture etc to be used in the session. All learners are offered the opportunity to take part in the celebration events held at the University of Sunderland, and are expected to make their own transport arrangements. Those who attended the Customs House event transport costs were covered in some instances (e.g. some schools organised mini buses with costs covered by University).

How do these costs compare with those of other providers?

Unknown

KQ5 How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?

How effectively do you manage your curriculum?

The curriculum/courses are managed effectively in that each course is individual as they are designed for that particular group. All courses follow the same structure but actual content can be decided by the participants which has worked very effectively, allowing them to feel part of the course and giving them ownership of the work.

Is your management proactive or merely a continuation of what has historically been provided?

As stated above each course is individual as manager of the overall project, it is vital to adapt and develop the course to keep the learners interest and improve quality. Tutors are also encouraged to keep up with current trends and interests the children may have i.e. this term some of the courses worked on a Glee theme.

Do you communicate with teachers? If so - how? Are there staff meetings?

Communication between the project manager and tutor has been very good regular meetings take place at the beginning, mid and end of each course, staff also share good ideas/lesson plans/resources. The majority of the projects which took place during term 3 (summer term) were delivered by both members of staff, this team teaching allowed for sharing of good practice and offered staff development.

An end of year meeting is also planned to take place over the summer (Aug 11) to discuss plans for Sept and positive and negative aspects of the courses this year and how we can improve.

Are appropriate service level agreements in place? Are these effective in meeting the needs of learners?

Service level agreements will need to be looked at in preparation for Sept, as a number of schools during Spring and Summer term confirmed they would like to take part and later dropped out very late, causing a great deal of extra work and time table changes for both project manager and tutor. This led to some projects starting late during term 3 which was problematic with regards to fitting in 20 hours, this would typically be delivered via 10 sessions at 2 hours, to accommodate late starting course learners took part in 2 session per week in some instances.

Do you use data for curriculum planning and target setting?

The data given by the council with regards to service targets and priorities is used when setting provider targets and when planning the provision (mainly in relation to which areas/schools to target).

Do you compare and evaluate your provision against what is on offer from other areas within the local authority and private providers? If so – how?

Not at present, but aware of financial differences between provision and private dance/theatre classes. This aspect is often discussed by the learners as they often have tried private/external classes or looked into this area, and this proves very favourable to both projects.

Are your facilities suitably located? Are they accessible to all and well signed?

All courses are currently delivered at the child's primary school/nursery meaning the project is actually taken to the learners rather than the other way round. This makes the learners feel confident as they are in an environment they feel quite comfortable

in and with others who they may already know/recognise. Although they are invited to take part in the University Celebration event which is offered to all projects running that term, it is stressed that this aspect is not compulsory to not put learners off, but attendance at these events throughout the year has been very good.

Are the rooms used fit for purpose? Of an appropriate size?

All rooms used in the primary schools were fit for purpose and an appropriate size, as tended to be dance studios or sports halls. Rooms used within nurseries tended to be community rooms with some quite small but still suitable for a small number (7 adult learners plus children), although these rooms are not specialist dance spaces, they tend to be quite self contained e.g. kitchen area, toilet facilities part of the space, this works very well for the structure of the lessons and allows for smooth running of the session. All rooms are health and safety checked and any issues resolved with centre staff prior to course commencing.

With sufficient heating and lighting and allowing for uninterrupted activities?

Both heating and lighting have been sufficient in all venues and neither have caused interruption to any session. During the summer term (term 3) the hot weather has proved difficult in some sessions although tutors have overcome this by offering refreshments throughout the session and allowing a slightly longer break during the session, with children and adults using outside areas during the break also (only in nursery schools), this has proved very popular and has allowed for the children to remain engaged for longer.

Have you completed risk assessments on the venues and activities?

A risk assessment for each course and venue is undertaken prior to the taster session, then any specific problems relating to learners will be added after week 1, health and safety checklists are also completed by tutor/contact at venue. All learners must also complete a pre-exercise checklist for both themselves and the child; any problems will then be discussed on a one to one basis with the tutor. Health and safety is discussed throughout each session.

Do you provide all equipment for the learners?

Tutors provide all resources/equipment for learners however at times they may be asked to bring something from home relating to a particular session (this is always something they may already have, they are not required to purchase anything, although some learners do, it is stressed this is not a requirement).

Are teachers/learners expected to provide anything themselves?

Tutors are allowed to purchase things they may need for the course and money can then be refunded or if they ask we can purchase it on their behalf. Tutors often use materials they have from other projects/employments but this is not expected of them, but is an added bonus. See above re learners.

Have you ensured that all electrical equipment been safety tested?

We require all centres where the course is run to ensure all of the equipment is PAT tested or we can provide our own (i.e. cd players) from the University where all safety checks (pat testing) is undertaken.

Do you carry out staff appraisals for your tutors?

Staff appraisals and observations of staff teaching are carried out, course files are checked particularly scheme of work and lesson plans are checked, both tutors can use previous lesson plans for specific themes/tasks they may be planning to do with their group. All council paperwork is also checked prior to being sent on. Opportunities are provided for staff development from both the University and the council (all staff development opportunities are offered to all tutors). Two of the tutors currently teaching on the small steps/little movers projects are currently undertaking teacher training courses.

Do you provide opportunities for staff development?

Opportunities are provided for staff development from both the University and the council (all staff development opportunities are offered to both tutors).

Can you provide any evidence of staff development having taken place?

Both tutors are planning to undertake safer learning training.

Equal opportunities

Do you know the participation rates among different groups?

Details will be discussed in business case review, exact percentages unknown at present

Are lessons welcoming and valuing of diversity?

All courses/sessions are welcoming to all learners from various backgrounds/experiences and value the diversity of the learners. This is referenced in the sessions which allow for learners to chose/have input on the content.

Are your tutors suitably qualified and able to deal with the needs of all learners?

Both tutors have sufficient experience of teaching a variety of groups including hard to reach groups such as drug and alcohol rehabilitation service users, teenage mums, learner's from other cultures and learners with disabilities. If any tutor needed anything specific to help a particular learner we would be able to ensure that this happened so as to not prejudice or put barriers to learning.

Is your publicity in a form suitable for all?

Publicity is currently provided by the centre the course will be delivered in i.e. staff at the school will send letters home to parents or speak to them when they are bringing/collecting their children. As they are already familiar with the target group they will be aware how to best target/publicise the course to the parents/carers. Examples of publicity are sent to centre staff to use as a template. It is planned that the creation of the 'Small Steps' and the 'Little Movers' DVD will provide another form of publicity.

Does everyone know how to make a complaint?

All learners are given a handbook in their first session and informed of how to make a complaint. We generally suggest they first go to the tutor/staff from the school or contact the family learning department directly if they can't speak to tutor or staff at

school. All learners are also informed that the course is flexible and can cover other aspects themes they may wish to do, so are invited to give tutor feedback.

Are you aware of different levels of performance across different groups?

It has been noted particularly this year that some groups have been less motivated than others with 3 projects in particular having poor attendance, this could be connected to a geographical area but further analysis needed as 2 of these projects were delivered at the same venue, reasons for this have been discussed with staff at the centre at it has been suggested it is typical behaviour of the learners, ways to overcome this in future projects will be discussed further.

Have your tutors been trained on equality and diversity issues?

Training has taken place previously, but no training has been undertaken during 10/11.

How do you monitor and promote equal opportunities and health & safety?

As the course requires practical participation from the learners health and safety is a very important aspect of the course, all learners must fully participate in warm up and cool down and will begin to gain a basic health and safety knowledge on how to correctly prepare their body for exercise. All learners must also complete pre-exercise checklist and if any problems they can be discussed on a one to one basis with the tutor. Equal opportunities are promoted within the course particularly for those who may have limited mobility, are not able to undertake all of the physical aspects, alternatives will be given by the tutor to suit the individual learner need I .e. may not have to go onto floor to do stretches may do them standing up. Tutors will also try where possible to let learners know if anything may aggravate their condition prior to class starting.

Quality improvement

What quality assurance systems do you have in place?

All projects follow the same format and both tutors follow this with regards to both the practical and written aspects of the project to ensure parity across all of the provision.

Do you carry out teaching observations?

Teaching observations are carried out generally these observations will include feedback and ways to improve for the tutor, if problems another observation will take place at a later date and training/support will be offered.

Does an occupationally competent person carry these out?

Observations are carried out by Project Manager Sarah Riach, who has subject specific dance knowledge, and also wrote the project.

Do you have records of these?

The delivery plans submitted to the council contain details of which projects have been observed/supported by Sarah Riach.

Do these results in action plans for the tutors?

Both tutors discuss action plans for the provision throughout the year, therefore action plans are regularly checked and updated.

Do you have any evidence of such actions being carried through?

Electronic action plans are sent throughout the year, refer to above.

Do you have a formal process for obtaining learner feedback?

Learner feedback is generally obtained via the ILP's and feedback forms, however where possible verbal feedback is all documented and in some instances can be added to the learner DVD.

As an organisation do you complete your own self-assessment process?

All projects which are delivered through Dance&us.com/University of Sunderland are all self assessed to meet funders needs and are also self assessed to meet the needs of the University and for research purposes.

Do you have any formal system for sharing good practice?

Tutors are encouraged to share good practice in the regular team meetings, but the University/Dance&us.com are also invited to share their good practice with other Universities/Dance Institutions nationally in the form of research presentations/lecturers/seminars.