



LINGUACUISINE IMPACT CASE STUDY – WEA

The WEA is the UK's largest voluntary sector provider of adult education in England and Scotland. Founded in 1903, the Workers' Educational Association (WEA) is a charity dedicated to bringing high-quality, professional education into the heart of communities. With the support of nearly 3,000 volunteers, 2,000 tutors and over 10,000 members, we deliver friendly, accessible and enjoyable courses for adults from all walks of life.

Assessed 'Good' by Ofsted in 2018, we have classes in almost every area of England and Scotland. You do not need any previous knowledge or qualifications to join most of our courses, only a willingness to share with others your curiosity, ideas and experience. We also have a special mission to raise aspirations and develop educational opportunities for the most disadvantaged. This includes providing basic maths, English and IT skills for employment; courses to improve health and wellbeing; creative programmes to broaden horizons and community engagement activities that encourage active citizenship.

Our members also help support our mission and campaign for adult education.

We are the Senior Area Education Manager, Mike Rugg, and Area Education Managers Susan Hylands and Susan Heptinstall, for the WEA North East region. We were pleased to be part of this project as it married with our Mission, Aims and Values to enable students to take part in an experience that because of their previous learning experiences had come to believe that they wouldn't be studying at a university and be taught by experts in the fields of Language and Technology.

We identified and worked with 2 tutors to engage students to take part in the project. We supported both tutors and students to remove barriers and provided additional bridging courses, to enable them to achieve their own personal and project aims.

The role of the SAEM initially was to work with Newcastle University, Professor Paul Seedhouse, to produce the Quality Plan and dissemination plans. The Area Education Managers also have researched, planned and organised a high profile dissemination event to be held in Newcastle in early September 18.

Students on this project, have increased their confidence through learning new skills such as storyboarding, using an iPad and apps, creating and designing recipes and developing language learning materials, which has enabled them to progress in their learning and opened up opportunities for them. They were motivated to take up further learning and they have worked together collaboratively with people from different countries and cultures, which has developed their team working, language and social skills, along with an increased knowledge of recipes and food from around the world. One student, Paul, was so motivated he walked 6 miles to attend the bridging course and another student, Ampara, gave up a lot of her own time to ensure her recipes contributed to the success of the project.

An unexpected outcome from the collaborative working was that students identified each other's strengths and weaknesses and took on a teaching role with their peers.



WEA staff working on the project have gained skills and knowledge in organising a large scale, high profile event, which included working with organisations from the public and private sector. We've developed marketing materials to showcase the project and raise the profile of the WEA. We've worked to very tight deadlines, keeping within budget, to ensure success.

The tutors, Kate and Rupa, who usually work in community venues across the region, have worked collaboratively, across curriculums, and within an HE setting, to support each other and the students. Kate, who delivers ICT for the WEA, has developed her practice and includes these new digital skills in her teaching which benefits the organisation and our students. Rupa, who delivers cooking courses for the WEA, has also developed her practice in using digital technology that she can bring into the classroom, again benefitting the WEA and her students. Rupa was also featured in a publication 'In Tuition', SET's quarterly professional journal supporting members' access to CPD resources and the latest sector and research news.

Through the Newcastle dissemination event, WEA staff nationally, have been invited to participate either in person or via a live feed, and a film will be produced to be shared on YouTube to raise awareness of the project and the app, which can be used as a resource by tutors and students across the Association. This will support the development of the WEA strategic aim of Digital Inclusion.

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