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HUDDERSFIELD ISC

Personal Learning and Thinking Skills

(PLTS)

STUDENT HANDBOOK

2016

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**WHY?**

Why Personal Learning and Thinking Skills? Why this module?

We want our students to become successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens. The development of PLTS is an essential part of meeting these aims. PLTS have considerable impact on your ability to enter work and adult life as a confident and capable individual who can make a positive contribution to society.

The aim of PLTS is to emphasise the importance of acquiring and improving transferable skills that enable you to cope with change and to learn effectively, such skills that will help students to be effective in many different work and life situations. Furthermore, the PLTS framework represents 6 skills that employers and those in further education want to see developed. Employers worldwide are demanding more than just a degree – they want employees with additional winning skills.

This module is worth 15 credits on your Foundation Programme, which will help you to progress to your degree of choice.

**WHAT?**

**What are the 6 skills?**

* independent enquiry
* creative thinking
* reflective learning
* team working
* self-managing
* effective participation

**The Skills**

**Independent enquirers**

*Focus:*

Young people process and evaluate information in their investigations, planning what to do and how to go about it. They take informed and well-reasoned decisions, recognising that others have different beliefs and attitudes.

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| • identify questions to answer and problems to resolve  • plan and carry out research, appreciating the consequences of decisions  • explore issues, events or problems from different perspectives  • analyse and evaluate information, judging its relevance and value |
| • support conclusions, using reasoned arguments and evidence |

**Creative thinkers**

*Focus:*

Young people think creatively by generating and exploring ideas, making original connections. They try different ways to tackle a problem, working with others to find imaginative solutions and outcomes that are of value.

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| • generate ideas and explore possibilities  • ask questions to extend their thinking  • connect their own and others’ ideas and experiences in inventive ways  • question their own and others’ assumptions |
| • adapt ideas as circumstances change |

**Effective participators**

*Focus:*

Young people actively engage with issues that affect them and those around them. They play a full part in the life of their school, college, workplace or wider community by taking responsible action to bring improvements for others as well as themselves.

• discuss issues of concern, seeking resolution where needed

• present a persuasive case for action

• propose practical ways forward, breaking these down into manageable steps

• identify improvements that would benefit others as well as themselves

• try to influence others, negotiating and balancing diverse views to reach workable solutions

• act as an advocate for views and beliefs that may differ from their own

**Self-managers**

*Focus:*

Young people organise themselves, showing personal responsibility, initiative, creativity and enterprise with a commitment to learning and self- improvement. They actively embrace change, responding positively to new priorities, coping with challenges and looking for opportunities.

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| • seek out challenges or new responsibilities and show flexibility when priorities change  • work towards goals, showing initiative, commitment and perseverance  • organise time and resources, prioritising actions  • anticipate, take and manage risks |
| • respond positively to change, seeking advice and support when needed |

**Team workers**

*Focus:*

Young people work confidently with others, adapting to different contexts and taking responsibility for their own part. They listen to and take account of different views. They form collaborative relationships, resolving issues to reach agreed outcomes.

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| • collaborate with others to work towards common goals  • reach agreements, managing discussions to achieve results  • adapt behaviour to suit different roles and situations |
| • take responsibility, showing confidence in themselves and their contribution  • provide constructive support and feedback to others |

**Reflective learners**

*Focus:*

Young people evaluate their strengths and limitations, setting themselves realistic goals with criteria for success. They monitor their own performance and progress, inviting feedback from others and making changes to further their learning.

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| • set goals with success criteria for their development and work  • review progress, acting on the outcomes  • invite feedback and deal positively with praise, setbacks and criticism  • evaluate experiences and learning to inform future progress  • communicate their learning in relevant ways for different audiences  • assess themselves and others, identifying opportunities and achievements |

The groups of skills are interconnected and you are likely to encounter skills from several groups in any one learning experience.

For example:

‘Independent enquirers’ set goals for their research with clear success criteria, organise their time and resources effectively to achieve these (acting as ‘self-managers’) and then assess the extent to which they have achieved these (acting as ‘reflective learners’).

In this module, via the development of a specific ‘Project’ learners are required to apply skills from all six groups and to reflect on their own development in these skills areas as the module unfolds.

**Outcomes**

The module is a credit bearing section of the Foundation Programme, and therefore has clear knowledge and ability outcomes, based on the 6 skills.

**Knowledge and Understanding Outcomes**

On completion of this module students will:

K1 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of relevant subject

Content

K2 Understand the importance of independent enquiry, creative thinking, reflective learning, team working, self-management and participation

**Ability Outcomes**

On completion of this module students will be able to:

A1 Perceive own strengths and weaknesses and be able to use reflection to make improvements

A2 Schedule activities to meet deadlines

A3 Collect, select and prepare information independently and apply at an appropriate level

A4 Record, analyse sand evaluate information

A5 Demonstrate awareness of and show that they are receptive to new ideas

A6 Work collaboratively with others to develop ideas and solve problems

A7 Find creative solutions to problems pertinent to specific degree/industry through independent activity

The overarching aim is to build on the underpinning knowledge acquired in previous study, which is why the project chosen relates to your field of study/area of professional interest.

While working on the development of a group project, you are expected to demonstrate on a progressive basis that you have met the learning outcomes, or that you have a strengthening awareness of these and of how you need to work towards meeting them.

**Evidence/assessment**

**In many modules, we know that students often wait until the week of the assessment deadline to put together a piece of work, regardless of strong advice about staging the production process throughout the term. In this module, that approach is not possible or acceptable, as students need to see this as a journey, and give evidence of the stages of that journey as they progress.**

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| **Formative assessment**  Formative assessment will be by means of weekly observation of performance, with appropriate feedback from your tutor and from others in your group at certain points. This will include 3 formal feedback events. Your tutor notes how students work as a team and as individuals  **Meetings and minutes**  From the time when the students are set the project tasks, they also produce meeting minutes that demonstrate project progression and student involvement. Weekly tasks, such as MEETING MINUTES, are not optional but are mandatory and **must** be completed by all groups at the end of each project meeting session. These are to be shared with the tutor.  Meeting minutes have a clear purpose. Done correctly, they are an indication of skills in planning, time management, process adherence etc., to be considered in final grading. They are also a factor in the traceability of the group’s project development, work plan and journey as a team.  **Summative Assessment** |
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| |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | Task | LO’s to be met | Type of assessment | Weighting | Deadlines | Word count or equiv. if appropriate | | 1 | K1, A2- 7 | Group project with individual responsibilities | 60% (based on content and individual contribution) | Project submission  W9 | 1500 words/ 60 hours | | 2 | A2,5,6 | 20 minute Group SPSE Presentation\* | 20% | Week 8 | 20 hours | | 3 | K2,A1, A7 | Reflective Journal\*\* | 20% | Week 9 | 20 hours/  1000 words |   \*Group presentation to demonstrate collaboration and assess PLTS development.  \*\*A collection of reflective statements and commentary which demonstrates understanding of personal development from the outset, and evidence of their critical thinking, personal contribution and self-evaluation. These should be taken in on a regular basis through the unit and returned with feedback for developmental guidance. **This will be a visual diary and will include reflections on feedback from your peer group as well as showing your own personal growth.** |
| The assessments will be marked anonymously where appropriate. In order to pass the module, you must achieve a **minimum of 40% overall** in the summative assessments.  **The Project**  Guidelines are given for the project but there is negotiation within those guidelines for groups to look at issues they wish to follow. This also allows for individuality between groups.  The projects are relevant for your subject. |
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**Project Breakdown**

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| **Section** | **Detail** |
| **Final submission Week 9:** | |
| **Introductory justification of project choice** | Individual input on relevance and personal future application of project (100 words approx per group member) this is presented as an opening section to the project. |
| 1. **Introduction** | Why did you believe this product or service would have a market? |
| 1. **Research review** | With individual input and evaluation to show that everyone has done some initial research into why this would appeal and/or produce a needs analysis according to published work. |
| 1. **Suggestions, evaluation and selection** | Summary and Evaluation of the brainstorm and rejection/selection of specific ideas to pursue. Include your market research here and the PEST analysis |
| 1. **Description of solution** | The project: what is it? How does it work? Description of your product/service which you have worked to produce. |
| 1. **Analysis of process and decisions** | What is your marketing plan and marketing strategy including the 4Ps |
| 1. **Final evaluation of the submitted project** | Strengths and weaknesses of the project itself. |
| 1. **Projections/further development possibilities** | Could your idea be further developed/extended/more widely applied? |
| **Appendices** | Examples of questionnaires, surveys and results of primary enquiry |
| **References** | List of refs used in research for project/ diagrams and illustrations |

**\*\*\*The 1500 word count covers sections 1-7 only, although all the introductory justification, appendices and references must be included in the final submission.**

**The project is a group product, but as can be seen from the table above, there are sections into which each student must put their individual content, and part of the process is for the group to decide who will be responsible for the production of the other sections.**

**In the interests of fairness, each student is awarded a grade which is a combination of content-based and contribution-based assessment. Therefore, each student will have the same score for the first column, as it is dependent on the quality of the project itself, while the score in the second column will vary per individual group member.**

**On the following page is the marking scheme to be used for this written project.**

**PLTS Written Project Mark Scheme**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Descriptor: Project content | Grade  Weighted 50% of total for task | Descriptor: Individual contribution | Grade  Weighted 50% of total for task |
| The project lacks depth or relevance and/or does not really come up with a solution to the set problem | 0-39%  ...............% | The individual student has made very little or no contribution, through absence, lack of engagement or teamwork | 0-39%  ...............% |
| The project is relevant, sufficiently structured, sufficient depth and the group arrive at a basic solution | 40-49%  ...............% | The individual student has made a proportionate contribution | 40-49%  ...............% |
| The project is relevant, reasonably coherent contains sound research and analysis and the group arrives at a realistic solution | 50-59%  ...............% | The individual student has made a reasonable, consistent contribution as a team worker | 50-59%  ...............% |
| The project is relevant, well-developed and thorough, and the group arrives at a realistic and justified solution from a range of possible options | 60-69%  ...............% | The individual has made a consistently strong contribution | 60-69%  ...............% |
| The project is relevant and impressively thorough in research and analysis and the group arrive at a good, justified solution having clearly reviews and evaluated other possibilities | 70%+  ...............% | The individual has made a significant leading or outstanding contribution | 70%+  ...............% |

Total Mark: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ %

Content score + Contribution score ÷ 2 = total

(The 2 elements are proposed with 50% weighting to give equal

importance to the project ‘content’ delivered and the individual contribution)

Evidence referred to in order to assess level of project content:

* inclusion of all sections, as per project breakdown
* level of coherence in organising, linking and structuring those sections
* evidence of clear creative and lateral thinking
* evidence of outcomes K1, A2, A3, A4, A5, A6, A7
* evidence of justified evaluation and analysis of solution
* evidence of application of subject knowledge

Evidence referred to in order to assess level of individual contribution:

* Group meeting minutes evidence specific division of work and achievement of tasks by student
* Attendance in classes
* Tutor assessment templates referring to participation in group work in class
* Peer feedback assessment forms
* Individual elements of content

Tutor:...............................................................................................

Date:...............................................................................................

Presentation Mark Scheme

PLTS Presentation Mark Sheet (IFY)

Group: .............................. Tutor........................ Moderator...........

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Marking Criteria** | **Checklist of things to look to award marks** | **Comments** | **Mark** |
| **Content and Organisation**  (50%, 10 marks) | * Is the presentation well structured? * Is the project problem correctly identified? * Is the problem articulated/expounded in a logical way? * Do sts identify steps in arriving at their solution to the problem? * Do sts identify and explain problems/hurdles found in the process of arriving at a solution? Do sts explain how they worked to solve these? * Are clear signposts used to lead audience from point to point? * Do sts comment on which of 6 skills were used in the process of finding solutions? * Do sts come up with a relevant solution to the problem? * Do sts provide a reflective summary of what went well and what they would do differently next time (focus on teamwork and team dynamics particularly and application of 6 skills as a team?) |  | **/10** |
| **Delivery**  (30%, 6 marks) | * Clarity: Is the speed of delivery of the presentation appropriate? Do the presenters enunciate clearly and speak at an appropriate volume? Is the level of English generally supportive of the clear delivery of points? * Engagement: do the presenters make an effort to engage the audience directly at the beginning, and throughout? * Body language: Do the presenters seem relaxed and confident in front of the audience and are gestures and body language open and natural? * Evidence of teamwork: Do the presenters interact effectively with one another in the interests of a smooth consistent and seamless event? * Use of notes: Are students using any notes effectively as a prompt, and not over-reading? * Ownership: Is it clear that this is their own product and sts are engaged and excited by their content (not just read as if from somewhere else). Is this equal in all members? |  | **/10** |
| **Others (Visual Aids, Responses to Questions etc.)**  (20%, 4 marks) | * Visuals: Are slides easy to read/understand, with clear engaging visuals and not too much wording? * Content: Are slides relevant and helpful in content? * Q+A: Are responses to follow-up questions concise and relevant? * Q+A: Do responses to questions show wider understanding and knowledge rather than simply repeating delivered content? |  |  |

Guidance for marking:

Award 1 full mark if competent, award a ½ mark for attempt or awareness evident for each of the above 20 points. Total marks available 20.

**Reflective Videos**

Planning, self-reflection and reviewing personal progress are important processes in this module, and this is supported by a reflective journal.

As you progress, you will be able to demonstrate an increasing number of PLTS.

As it is about *progression* here, it is required that you make video recordings as an *ongoing process* and after specific sessions/group meetings

You may include:

* Belbin results and how these were used
* preferred learning style and how this was used
* Blake Mouton managerial style
* Feedback from your peer group and tutor and how this information has been used

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| Level of Reflection |  |
| 1-3.5 | Reflections are included but student demonstrates little awareness of their strengths and weaknesses in the 6 skills. Level of insight is mostly descriptive |
| 4-5.5 | Fair level of insight and development, student showing budding awareness of both their strengths and weaknesses in the skills. Level of insight is descriptive with some basic reflection. Student demonstrates effort to take on feedback |
| 6-7.5 | High level of insight and development, student has become aware of their strengths and weaknesses in the skills and has clearly addressed these to a great extent, taking on feedback from peers and tutor.  Writing is descriptive but also includes reflection on events and demonstrates awareness/learning |
| 8-10 | Very high level of insight and development, student has become aware of their strengths and weaknesses and has addressed these to a very great extent , taking on feedback from tutor and peers whilst demonstrating plans/actions for implementing change/modifying own practices in response to learning. Genuine improvement |

**It’s not a module, it’s a journey!**

Each session is a station on the journey to development of these skills: at each station you will be given guidance on how to stay on track to the next stop. You will have the chance to add that information to your working ability before moving on.

You will then be expected to show application of that particular skill or set of skills through your main project, and your tutor and peers will be able to comment on your confidence in and adoption of those skills.

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| MEETING MINUTES  Date and Time | | Personal Learning and Thinking Skills | |
| Attendees [insert names below] | | | |
|  | | | |
| ABSENTEES [insert name of absentees here] | | | |
| Documents [list supporting documents here] | | | |
| Agenda Item | Topic of discussion | | Action / Decision / Proposal/Who/Date |
| 1. |  | |  |
| 2. |  | |  |
| 3. |  | |  |
| 4 |  | |  |
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|  |  | |  |
| Additional information | | | |
| Next Meeting: [date and time or to be confirmed] | | | |