

Induction Strategies: A Practical Approach; Engaging the Work Based Distance Learner

The University of Lincoln's Work Based Distance Learning (WBDL) Programmes reach out to a diverse student population across the world. The challenges in supporting such diversity include limited use of technology and virtual learning environments, a lack of understanding of higher education and expectations of study, a perceived perception of isolated study exacerbated perhaps by the student profile and different time zones across the globe, along with issues faced by students internationally with intermittent internet connections. WBDL at the University of Lincoln has developed a structured framework of support and resources within the virtual learning environment, Blackboard. The next step was to consider how to prepare and support students to study successfully with digital technologies (Jisc, 2013) and to engage students at an early stage easing their transition into higher education and setting them on a pathway to becoming independent autonomous learners. A pre-induction and induction strategy was developed offering a range of options to address the challenges identified. Motteram and Forrester (2007) suggest that a web-based learning environment provides the opportunity for students to select induction activities in a pick-and-mix fashion, which can be tailored according to personal needs. Following Harper and Kenning's (2015) timely study of induction for distance learners, this presentation provides an opportunity to share the development of the WBDL induction strategy and current practice of the WBDL programmes, identifying challenges and opportunities for future developments.

Tracy White

Principal Lecturer Innovative and Flexible Provision
University of Lincoln