BRIDGE to success

Newsletter February 2012

Bridge to Success (B2S) offers open, free content to help students cross the barrier to gaining the skills to learn, providing "bridging" content in mathematics and learning to learn. Thanks to a Next Generation Learning Challenges grant, the project began in April 2011 and has now successfully published all its content online as free Open Educational Resources (OER): http://labspace.open.ac.uk/

Bridge to Success in the News!

Journalist Jon Marcus writes in the Washington Post about B2S's content which helps prepare students for higher education by boosting confidence and skills in key areas such as math. In his article entitled *UK online university offers help for US colleges* he says that the OU is partially credited with increasing the proportion of young people in the UK with some level of higher education. Read the full story here: http://tinyurl.com/877cz2m
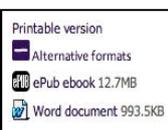
Pilots-a-Plenty for 2012

The first two pilots using the Learning to Learn (L2L) material completed in November 2011 and at the time of publication a further ten are either in progress or are committed to use L2L or Succeed with Math (SWiM). Fifty additional institutions in the US have indicated a serious interest to commit to the pilot process. Our Project Managers and researchers are being kept on their toes by the encouraging uptake!

If you are interested in piloting either or both of these courses at your institution, please contact David Lascu at the email address below for more information.

Alternative Formats

Because B2S content has been rendered for the web using the Open University's XML schema, users can simply create an alternative version of the content that they can "take away" with them! Every unit of both L2L and SWiM can be rendered as an ebook, or Word document, that is created and downloaded onto the user's device, or a printable version: all the content is beautifully rendered for print without the need for website navigation and tools. Any videos created by the OU are also included in the resulting file (embedded YouTube videos are not) to ensure it is as dynamic a learning experience as the online version. The process takes seconds, and provides a portable ebook or Word document that can be read offline.
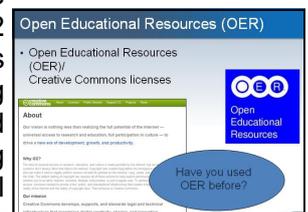

Research and Reflection

With SWiM content about to go live and new pilots about to commence the project is now entering a research intensive phase. Team members will be evaluating the experiences of participating students and instructors through interviews and surveys, and looking at the types of institutions which have chosen to make use of B2S courses. Assessment of the adaptation process is another key area the team is evaluating and, in addition to learning design analysis of both courses, the materials are also undergoing accessibility and usability testing. A research visit to Maryland at the end of March 2012 is currently being planned by the team.

At the beginning of this month B2S content had been visited by over 700 unique users, of which 236 had registered to use L2L materials.

Webinar Series

Continuing the success of the 2011 webinar series, 2012 has begun with an ambitious program. Two exciting webinars were presented during January: "Adopting B2S Open Educational Resources (OER) for your Educational Program" with the US Project Manager David Lascu and "Have it your way: Remixing and Wrapping OER to suit your learners' needs" with members of the Research team. Learn more about OER, view these and other past webinars and register your interest in future events, via the "Educators" and "OERs" tabs on the B2S website.

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