

Title: **Still Struggling With PDP?**

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Abstract:

Session Learning Outcomes

By the end of this session, delegates will be able to:

- Articulate how PDP operates in their own programme / area / Department / Institution
- Appreciate the perception which students have of PDP
- Devise a process to increase engagement of staff with PDP
- Run a focussed, hands-on problem solving activity

Session Outline

The PDP agenda is one which different institutions have approached in different ways. A good source of material is provided in SEDA (staff and educational development association) paper 115, *Personal Development Planning* (Gosling, 2003). In addition, entering the PDP discussion list (at PDP-UK-NETWORK@JISCMAIL.AC.UK) shows the range of issues being discussed, including whether and how PDP should be assessed, how to encourage reflection, how best to keep portfolios. Although a variety of systems can be put in place, the crux is getting **both** students **and** staff to engage, and how to embed materials and approaches into the curriculum.

In the Faculty of Science and Technology at UCLAN we have avoided a prescriptive approach to PDP, recognising that it is the **process** rather than the **content** which is important. Certain 'elements' have been identified as being what PDP 'is' - it is then for Departments to determine how they fit these into their own strategies and procedures. These elements are: self awareness; reflection; action planning; working as part of a group; career planning.

Despite significant consultation and training, there is still widespread ignorance of what PDP 'is', and there is a lack of engagement from both students and staff, although when given the opportunity to 'display' how an area delivers PDP, staff are quite adept at presenting reasonable models. However, rarely are the views of the students part of this process.

This session will therefore simulate a developmental process, firstly generating models of PDP as perceived by staff; secondly exploring the views of students of PDP; and finally, using this information to generate an improved approach to implementing a PDP framework.

Session Activities and Approximate Timings

- a) Participants divided into groups of 5 or 6, within which they share experiences of PDP, and draw 'model' of process with which they are involved (15 mins).
- b) Groups then simulate a student 'focus group' designed to elicit views of students of PDP. One member of group takes role of facilitator, and others assume role and attitude of students (15 mins)

- c) Interim plenary in which views of students in the Faculty of Science and Technology at UCLAN are shared – led by P Lumsden (10 mins)
- d) Return to groups, and for **one** of the models from a), improved model for implementing PDP is drawn, referring to information gained in b) and c). Groups self-managed (20 mins)
- e) Feedback from groups to whole (15 mins)
- f) Reflection on exercise – all (15 mins)

References

Goslin, D. (2003) Personal Development planning. Staff and Educational Development Association (SEDA) paper 115: SEDA