

Project Activities

The MLTC appointed a member of staff, Marjorie Allan, to carry out the project, under the supervision of Jane Woodin.

The Partners of the project (MLTC staff, Gripple and the RLN) met together at the outset of the project to review the Project Aims and to draw up an Action Plan.

An initial academic placement of a member of the MLTC staff in Gripple enabled us to establish the structure of the project. A second placement in the company allowed us to experience first-hand the business environment and the structure of this company, and to identify the way in which languages were used within the company.

This, therefore, gave us the opportunity to identify the likely applied language skills required of students of the MLTC Masters courses. The time spent in the company also allowed us to evaluate the current company work placement principles and procedures set in place.

A day spent with the RLN gave us the opportunity to look at the way in which languages are used in companies across the region and to draw up a list of potential companies with significant language needs, who might be interested in participating in the project.

A commercial placement of a member of Gripple staff, Philippe Marzin (responsible for company placements) enabled the MLTC staff to become more familiar with the needs of business and allowed Philippe to become familiar with the University courses. Philippe spent time with each of the Heads of the MA courses to discuss how the skills learnt by the students could be of use to Gripple and wider businesses in future placements. The MA courses were also reviewed with a view to them becoming more applicable to the needs of business.

We then returned to spend more time at Gripple to look specifically at the work placement procedures and to discuss with Philippe best practice in work placements. Following this visit, a document on best practice in work placements was drawn up.

A second meeting with the RLN enabled us to discuss how these principles would work in a broader context. Different company policies were looked at and generic principles were drawn up. We also looked at work placement induction within companies, mentoring, placement contracts between companies and the University and at proposed placement workshops to prepare students for placements.

4-5 companies were approached and agreed to participate in reviewing the document and providing advice and feedback on the findings. An Executive Summary on the principles and practices of work placements was drawn up and sent to these companies with an accompanying Questionnaire.

A report was written to summarise the results and conclusions of this consultation, and after discussion with the Partners, a number of project recommendations were made.

Summary of Project Activity:

- Joint meeting to establish aims of project – Action Plan drawn up.
- Academic placement in Gripple – assessed language needs of Company, evaluated procedures in place
- Academic placement in RLN - discussed language needs in region.
- Gripple placement in University – looked in detail at each of Masters courses, met Heads of Masters courses and discussed how placement students could be used in Gripple, suggestions to changes in MA courses made.
- Academic placement in Gripple to evaluate best practice in work placement.
- Document on best practice drawn up.
- Academic placement in the RLN and best practice principles discussed with reference to other companies.
- Following the above meetings, Executive Summary of best practice drawn up.
- Executive Summary sent to 5 companies as a trial for feedback with Company Questionnaire.
- Placement contract drawn up and approved by University.
- Report written on findings of questionnaires.
- Support materials for placements drawn up i.e. Placement form, Student Evaluation, Student Profile
- Recommendations on best practice made