Developing a Web Based Toolkit to Support Academics with the Accreditation of Students’ Prior Experiential Learning

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Intuitively, the Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL) would seem to be a simple process but being based on such an individual series of events makes it a complex process to model. This is exacerbated by institutional APEL processes which tend to be complex and not user friendly. The paper will discuss this challenge of investigating and developing a technological solution that would support and encourage the uptake of APEL in UK higher education.

Working in partnership with a University of Plymouth faculty and with staff from a number of partner institutions, the JISC funded Pineapple Project developed a web-based tool to support staff through the management of an APEL claim. Initially planned as a bespoke tool for the University it became apparent, through a desk study, staff survey, piloting and numerous formal and informal meetings, that ‘one size’ would not ‘fit all’ if this was to be of used to the wider education community. This led to the creation of the Pineapple core builder which can be used to design and deliver an online APEL process for any institution. An analysis of best practice in the sector was used to create a range of guidance materials that underpin the tool. With both the core builder and the support materials available for download and adaptation this paper also reports on the issues surrounding deployment at other institutions.