

## REPORT ON THE VISIT TO MIDDLESEX UNIVESITY

Under activities on the SIGMUS project, we have visited EU partner the Middlesex University from 27.1-1.2.2013.

We took part in the meeting on subject "Exploring Educational Technologies in Higher Education", held in form of series of presentations presented by staff involved in learning technologies and user support. Danish visitors from Medical faculty also attended this showcase. Important features of academy and non-academy collaboration were pointed out. Especially, the influences of university size, in-progress spreading over the world, flexibility to follow labor market demands and financial challenges were yielded as crucial for shaping the coordination on the relation management-academic staff - non-academic staff - students. It is illustrated what kind of technologies were settled for student support, and the willingness to adapt them to further trends and needs was asserted. Since there is a very important e-learning component at Middlesex University, it is vital to minimize possible obstacles between students and modern learning technology, which is especially valuable in case of lifelong learners who are often "digital immigrants". Therefore, it is crucial for these students to be well prepared, provided with help and continually encouraged to use technology. Several parties are shown to play key role here, such as learning technologists and student representatives.

Professor Mike Dawney has introduced as to the event called Refresh, a fair organized in order to support newcomers and all other students who need advices on their study, financial management and involvement in student organizations.

Additionally, we had an opportunity to speak to Alex Chapman, Educational Technology and Strategy Manager, who explained how his team was organized in order to support academic staff and students most efficiently for communication in context of e-learning facilitation, as well as in context of mutual cooperation and organizing. Although the core team responsible for education technologies support is in the house, the most of student support is conducted online by teams in India. In that way it is manageable to scale the support for such great number of students.

Very important component of student support is the student portal that integrates information about virtually all relevant student issues, such as university portfolio and guides, study support data, extracurricular activities, social life and career counseling. It also integrates with the e-learning platform.

It is agreed that activities pointed towards students' trainers trainings and those facilitating e-learning to "digital immigrants" are supposed to be taken and that the experience of teaching staff from University of Kragujevac in E-learning would be the very valuable for constructing the appropriate training programs.

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