

Assessment and Learning in Practice Settings (ALPS)

ALPS Embedding Pilots

Final Report

Please return the completed report to the ALPS Mobile Technologies Project Manager (Tamsin Treasure-Jones – t.treasure-jones@leeds.ac.uk) by 26th April (unless another date has been agreed).

1. Project title

Social Work – integration with National Occupational Standards

2. Project leader

Title	Mr		
First name	Alan	Last name	Murphy
Email	a.s.murphy@leeds.ac.uk		

3. Total Funding Agreed: £724

4. Project Plan and Progress

i) Have there been any changes to the project plan since your interim report? If so then please indicate what changes have been made and why.

None since the interim report

ii) Have you completed all the activities that you set out in the original project plan?

No - not downloaded in ALPS assessment suite yet. See below for reasoning

iii) Did the project hit any problems and if so how did you overcome them?

No real problems – just insufficient time to complete

5. Project Report

In your original proposal you identified (shown below) the results and outcomes you expected to be able to include in the final report.

Your answer to question 15 in the submission:

Some comments and feedback of the integrated ALPS assessment tools from practice assessors and students as follows;

1st year mid April 2010

2nd / 3rd year beginning of April 2010

MA would not be available until September 2010

Please can you report on your project below, describing the final outcomes of your project and commenting on how these compare to those you had anticipated.

Students report that the ALPS assessments integrated with their National Occupational Standards (NOS) contribute far better to their learning experience than the “observation records” which were previously used. They clearly indicate how the feedback can evidence against the NOS and therefore

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the students can identify evidence for their portfolio. The 1st years, particularly valued the cross referencing as it made it very clear to them the quality of reflection required and how their activity/ies provided evidence for their portfolio.

The final year students complimented the assessments on their ability to provide student-led assessment activity. They commented as to how they enabled a greater quality of learning experience on placements through the structure of the questioning from a variety of people. Some students completed their assessments immediately and then took to their practice Educator for discussion and action planning. They also valued this structured approach. Because of the short time scale required for the feedback most students had only completed one assessment, but were very motivated to do more.

These outcomes were what we had hoped for.

6. Barrier and Embedding Approach

In your original proposal you outlined (question 7) the barrier to embedding that your project was addressing.

Your answer to question 7 in the submission:

The barriers to overcome are indicated in the first section of this submission, and are mainly the creation of extra paperwork, with no perceived benefits ie the ALPS assessment tools are seen to be “outside” existing requirements.

The outcome of this work will embed the ALPS assessment tools completely within the practice based assessment required by the undergraduate Social Work students, they will enhance existing assessments without recourse to additional burden of paperwork and/or time. The additional bonus of a PC based ALPS/NOS assessment suite will provide students with a choice of medium to record their assessments.

There may be some resistance from some practice assessors and students used to current systems.

A medium term developmental educational approach to their use with both students and practice assessors may lead to better take up over time. Also starting with new cohorts of students and practice assessors may lead to greater future use of these tools.

Please explain below to what extent your approach has overcome this barrier and how you evaluated this.

1. Extra paperwork; students were using them instead of their observation documentation and therefore these tools were not an additional piece of paperwork. However, these assessments required greater detail and some practice Educators and (in one case) a Community Nurse, were reluctant to complete, as they preferred the “old” documentation. All the students, however, said they preferred using the ALPS assessments as they provided better feedback (and therefore learning) for them. They recognized the value to them, and would therefore encourage greater use by their Practice Educators and work place assessors.
2. The students particularly, are clear that they preferred to use them for their own documentation. With time, the Practice educators and others will hopefully recognize this too. The assessments have not been downloaded onto the PC yet, as it was felt too early to do this, as amendments to the cross referencing might be required. There have already been some suggestions from the students. However they were distributed as a zip file on email so effectively became PC available for use by both students and practice educators
3. Resistance has been less than thought. Practice Educators have completed the assessments; only 1 or 2 did not. All the students who attended the focus group are keen and motivated to continue using them.
4. With some amendments to the paper work, which students have suggested, they will become embedded within the Social Work requirements.

7. Relevance and transferability of the approach chosen

In your original proposal you explained (question 8) how other ALPS Partners could benefit from your project.

Your answer to question 8 in the original submission:

The development and integration of the ALPS assessment tools within the NOS will be transferable to other Social Work programmes and also potentially the model can be adopted for all other competence based assessments, within Health and Social care or even non-health programmes.

The concept of offering students the option of paper based or PC based assessments provides choice for our undergraduate programmes. This choice may provide greater motivation for students to complete.

Please outline below how Partners are now able to use your results. How can the lessons you've learned help to inform other Partners' embedding decisions?

1. This was offered to the Huddersfield Social Work students, but was not taken up this time. It is hoped that they will in future.
2. An abstract for a paper presentation has been accepted for the 12th UK Joint Social Work Education Conference with the 4th UK Social Work Research Conference in July and therefore this model will be disseminated to Social Work colleagues nationally.
3. Offering the students the choice of PC based and paper based will be our next step.

8. Dissemination

Have you written an article for the ALPS Newsletter about your project's work? Have you disseminated the results of your work in any other way or do you have plans to do so?

We have only just completed the last focus group with students to research the findings of the work so far. However an article will be submitted for the ALPS Bulletin. It has already been mentioned that this research has been accepted for the 12th UK Joint Social Work Education Conference with the 4th UK Social Work Research Conference.

9. Expenditure

Please indicate below the final project expenditure which you are claiming (note that it cannot exceed that agreed at the beginning of the project).

	Original Budget	Actual Expenditure
Time release* 5 days grade 8 to work on the integration of the ALPS assessments tools with NOS	£724.00	
Administrative/secretarial support* <i>Already supported by ALPS - Leeds Site</i>	£	
Other assistance (please specify)* <i>* please indicate how this has been costed (number of hours, rate of pay).</i>	£	
Training and professional development	£	
Travel and subsistence	£	
Equipment (e.g. mobile devices) <i>*any equipment must be individually detailed and costed.</i>		
Consumables* <i>*any consumables must be individually detailed and costed.</i>	£	
Other costs (specify)	£	
TOTAL	£724.00	

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