HABIT: cutting edge technology for apprentices

Summary

HABIT offers their apprentices highly mobile technologies to fit their learning needs. From ASUS Eee PCs to digital pens, the technologies available to their learners are both innovative and user friendly. Learners’ progress is faster and the delivery of the training is based in the salons rather than at a separate training site.

About…

HABIT (Hair And Beauty Industry Training), based in Sunderland, is a private training organisation offering apprenticeships in hairdressing to over 150 learners all over the UK. They work closely with REGIS Salons to link the NVQ training with their salon training and
have recently been invited to join the Exemplar Technology Network.

**The challenge**

To ensure their training is learner friendly, as well as improving the employability of their trainees and a need to reduce the amount of paperwork, HABIT introduced e-portfolios for a number of their apprentices.

**The activity**

Partially funded with Learning Innovation Grants (LIG 2 and 3), ASUS Eee pc’s were purchased along with 3G USB modems. The mini laptops were placed into the salons and learners can access their work and assignments at any time. HABIT’s assessors are also available to provide support to their learners 24/7.

Each apprentice has her or his own personal e-portfolio and can submit their work online: from written work (essential knowledge) to videos, digital recordings, pictures and witness statements. HABIT is currently experimenting with digital pens for trainees who might not be comfortable using a laptop or are dyslexic. HABIT also hopes to link up to Facebook in the future to support their learners.

**The outcomes**

The e-portfolios have been proved a great success:

- The learners’ progress is much quicker compared to when they were using the old paper based system, in some cases even up to a year faster.

- The assessors can cut down on visits because the learners have done their work and don’t need chasing up.

- The paperwork has gone down dramatically.

HABIT has been able to close one of their training premises since most training is done online or in the salon.

**The impact**

Learning is now flexible to fit the trainees’ needs. The new technology and online learning approach also attracts learners who were not keen on further training when the paper based system was still in use.

**Useful links**

- HABIT - Apprenticeships Good for our Business.
- Jisc RSC Northern

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