

Microsoft® Partners in Learning Customer Reference

Access



A First for UK Trainee Teachers: Anytime, Anywhere Access to Best-Practice Resources

A major project is set to drive knowledge transfer throughout the teaching profession in England. The UK's Training and Development Agency for Schools is launching a groundbreaking national e-library service to provide over 45,000 trainee teachers and their tutors with immediate, convenient access to professional data and resources.

"We believe the e-library will become a major route for transforming teaching practice and communicating continuing professional development," says Marilyn Leask, Head of the Effective Practices and Research Dissemination Team at the Training and Development Agency for Schools.

The agency is an executive, non-departmental public body of the UK's Department for Education and Skills. Its job is to raise children's standards of achievement by improving the training and development of the entire school workforce. Better training of student teachers is an essential part of the agency's responsibilities.

The agency was aware that trainee teachers and their mentors needed better access to knowledge about teaching theory and practice in their subject areas – especially when they were in their classrooms. The e-library service was devised and successfully piloted in response to this need.

The service gives users access to a 'knowledge database' via a portal on the Training and Development Agency's Web site. Here they can find best-practice guidance, teaching resources and evidence-based materials, including videos of effective classroom teaching practice.

If a search for information fails, the user can submit a question to a dedicated e-librarian, who researches the answer and responds to the user. The e-librarian also updates the database, creating a growing and sustainable research and knowledge-transfer resource.

"As an evidence knowledge-base for education practitioners, the e-library will provide a really effective way for us to target research and knowledge across the teaching profession," says Leask, adding: "The ultimate beneficiary is, of course, the child in the classroom."

The e-library was funded by the Microsoft Partners in Learning initiative. It was created and deployed through a three-way partnership between Partners in Learning; the Training and Development Agency for Schools; and Research Machines plc, a provider of information technology software, infrastructure and

A successful pilot proved the popularity of the service, delivering 500 downloads and responses to detailed, analytical requests every day.

services to UK education. The knowledge database is hosted on the agency's Web site and uses Microsoft® SQL Server 2005, Microsoft® .NET framework and Microsoft® Internet Information Server (IIS).

The e-library pilot project, covering 10% of England's teacher training establishments, was very popular with the trainers and student teachers who used it, delivering 500 downloads each day and responses to detailed, analytical requests. The Training and Development Agency for Schools believes demand will triple when the service is launched to all teacher training establishments in England in April 2006.



Fast Facts

Customer:

Training and Development Agency for Schools

Country: UK

Web Site: www.tda.gov.uk

The UK's Training and Development Agency for Schools is launching an e-library service that will raise the status of teacher-training research and drive the professional development of over 45,000 teacher trainers and student teachers in England. Users have easy online access to quality teaching resources and to the knowledge they need to inform their teaching practice.

Partners in Learning, in conjunction with Research Machines plc, built the e-library knowledge database, provided the infrastructure and expertise to implement and deliver the service nationwide, and funded a professional e-librarian to create a growing, sustainable service.

For more information about other Microsoft Partners in Learning customer successes, please visit:

www.microsoft.com/emea/PartnersinLearning

"This innovative service delivers instant anytime, anywhere access to professional resources for student teachers and their mentors. It will drive knowledge transfer and, ultimately, this will benefit the children in our schools."

Marilyn Leask, Head of Effective Practices and Research Dissemination Team, Training and Development Agency for Schools