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‘Under investigation: using video-based interviews to enhance student police officers’ learning about equality, diversity and rights’

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Overview

- Context – teaching equality and diversity on the Foundation Degree in Police Studies
- Challenges and opportunities
- Project rationale
- Involving community members
- Identity, speaking for oneself and ethical issues
- Evaluation
- Future development and sustainability
Context

• Foundation Degree in Police Studies developed in partnership with West Yorkshire Police (began 2005)
• ‘Equality, Diversity and Rights’ – foundation level module
• Classroom-based, ‘issues-focused’ and linked to strands of diversity
• Mix of discussion and tutor-led input
• 7 cohorts per year
Context (ii)

Some dominant themes from module feedback:
“…less negativity…more positive examples…”
“…more interaction and discussion”
“…see content from different points of view and perspectives”
“…more self-paced learning”
“Particularly enjoyed listening to guest speakers who shared their experiences”
Picturing Diversity: Project rationale

- Recognising the importance of community members speaking for themselves - moving away from “speaking on behalf of” community members
- Response to student feedback
- Bringing to life complexities of “the idea of community” and “hard issues” (Clements, 2008)
- Picturing Diversity should be an ongoing, work in progress much like developing individual awareness of diversity
Opportunities

• Important chance to influence Police Officers’ learning
• Collaboration and community engagement in learning resource (Spencer, 2007)
• Recognising complexity
• “Taking Orders” – push the boundaries
• Vary learning approaches
Picturing Diversity

- Web-based learning package (also available in paper format) and contextual video-interviews with community members
Learning issues arising…

• Some of the issues that arose which can be used to prompt student discussion and debate:
  – What is the nature of ‘community’ (Piotr, Nina, BD5)?
  – Tension between recognising difference and generalising or stereotyping whole communities
  – Effective communication…breaking down barriers
  – Use of language
  – Debates about the value of ‘political correctness’
  – The impact that individual police officers can make
  – The value of pro-actively finding out about communities
Identity, speaking for oneself and ethical issues

• Issues around collaboration and inclusion
• Recognising the contribution of community members’ work – payment
• Conceptual frameworks (academic, legislative, institutional…etc) and their relationships to “lived experience”
• Acknowledging our power to potentially manipulate contributions through the editing process
Evaluation (i) - Format

• Version of workbook used:
  – Paper-based Study Pack: 100%
  – Web-based Study Pack: 0%
  – Combination: 25%

• Preferred version:
  – Paper-based Study Pack: 80%
  – Web-based Study Pack: 15%
  – No preference: 5%
Evaluation (ii)

- **Evaluation of learning units:**
  - 60% rated them as being useful learning resource
  - 90% indicated that they were easy to read
  - 55% stated that unit activities were useful in developing their learning and understanding of equality and diversity issues.

- **Relevance to role:**
  - 65% indicated that learning from resource was relevant to their role as police officer
  - 70% agreed that learning from resource would impact on their work with communities.
Evaluation (iii)

• Areas for further development:
  – Faith, religion and belief unit
  – Video interviews need further editing
  – Tie-clip microphones should be used in any future interviews as background noise is distracting, and more noticeable on classroom-based speakers
  – Students felt some interviews questions encouraged repetition...indicated they would like more input into deciding questions asked.
  – Time allocation for working through units and activities: majority felt they were given too much time
  – Review mix of classroom based and independent learning activities – give more flexibility?
  – Incorporation of activity responses into formative or summative assessment?
Future development and sustainability

• Opportunity for feedback from contributors to input into the development of the resource.
• Potential for on-going, evolving interview bank? Student participation in collecting video interviews? Digital storytelling?
• Potential use/re-use and development by other university courses?
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References

