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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
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