

Personal Development Planning

10 do's and 10 try not to's for course planning teams:

Do:

- ✚ avoid the misconception that PDP refers to a 'portfolio' – it is the **process** that is important, not where or on what it is recorded
- ✚ develop a shared definition, vision and strategy within the course planning team in relation to how PDP will be facilitated
- ✚ articulate the strategy within the course documentation making the process explicit within the course structure
- ✚ where possible, accredit it – this signifies to the learners that PDP is a valued approach to learning
- ✚ ensure that the activities foster and promote active learning and are relevant and meaningful for the learners rather than appearing tedious
- ✚ make full use of an 'assessment for learning' approach
- ✚ the process should be cohesive and incrementally challenging for the learners, therefore, include PDP activities which are increasingly complex and relevant in the 'real world'
- ✚ include activities and strategies which encourage a timely 'feed-forward' approach to assessment in each module
- ✚ consider the use of self and peer assessment strategies within individual modules
- ✚ introduce the process to learners at the earliest opportunity providing a clear explanation in relation to expectations and articulate the process of continuing support

Try not to:

- ✚ get hung up on portfolios! – this is probably the single most confusing issue around PDP
- ✚ assume that learners will engage in PDP without direction and support
- ✚ assume that learners automatically know what is expected of them
- ✚ expect learners to see the relevance of PDP to their HE studies and appreciate its value without guidance
- ✚ rely upon the ‘add-on’ activities which have historically been utilised to address PDP – e.g. the annual non-assessed progress file. This strategy has proved to be non-engaging for learners and makes PDP appear artificially distinct from the learning process
- ✚ address PDP in one module, or at one academic level, only – this serves to divorce it from the overall learning on a course
- ✚ use jargon that will disengage the learners
- ✚ regard PDP as everybody else’s responsibility and no-one’s in particular
- ✚ be over-reliant on traditional assessment methods, e.g. exams and essays which may not readily lend themselves to PDP
- ✚ attempt to sell PDP to learners as ‘one more hoop to jump through’