

Expert learner and the learner journey

Guidance

Introduction

We have the opportunity to foster the characteristics of the expert learner throughout the learner journey. Thinking about each stage of the learner journey can also help you and your colleagues review your practice and plan how you will introduce experiences that promote expert learner characteristics. If you are leading the session, you will benefit from having reviewed the whole resource first.

Target Audience

Participants might include teachers*, curriculum teams, managers, information, advice and guidance professionals, partner providers, work placement providers.

*We use 'teaching and learning' and 'teacher' as generic terms to include:

- teaching, training and learning
- teachers, tutors, trainers, lecturers and instructors in the further education (FE) system.

Purpose of the activity

- To raise awareness of and promote discussion about developing the expert learner.
- To consider expert learner characteristics.
- To review stages of the learner journey and consider how expert learner characteristics can be developed.

Activity

There are two parts to this activity:

- identifying the qualities that characterise the expert learner
- identifying the stages in the learner journey where you can help learners develop those characteristics.

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Resources

- DVD: **Developing the expert learner** from the resource pack or from the website <http://excellence.qia.org.uk>
- Download and print out the **Characteristic cards** and the **Stages in the learner journey** cards. Both are designed as card sets and we suggest that you make one set for each small discussion group. Include blank cards in each set.
- Download and print out copies of the **Learner Journey Handout: Stages of the learner journey**. It is useful to have one copy per participant. You could also enlarge the handout to create an A3 handout to use as a discussion stimulus in small groups.
- Sticky notes and marker pens.

You can create a stimulating continuing professional development (CPD) environment by using the poster in the pack and you can create additional posters or visual stimuli by downloading the designs in the web-based resource.

Activity part 1

This part of the activity uses the DVD, the poster and the downloadable documents; **Background summary, Characteristic cards**.

Show the DVD as a warm-up activity. Before you play the video, ask participants to be prepared at the end of it to share the three most interesting or stimulating ideas they have heard. You could also ask participants for their initial idea about what the expert learner means to them and for their response to the posters and other materials you might have provided. If questions or doubts are raised, note these on sticky notes and return to them at the end of the session.

Explain that you plan to discuss the characteristics that help describe the expert learner in the first part of the session and then to explore how some of the ideas you have just seen on the DVD might be introduced into your learners' learner journey.

Briefly introduce the context or background for the session, the personalisation agenda and the concept of the expert learner. You might like to download and print out **Background summary** which sets out the policy context and rationale.

Provide each group with a set of **Characteristics cards**, including the cards **More impact** and **Less impact**. Ask participants to discuss which characteristic statements they would place under each of these two categories. If you are

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working with more than one group you can ask for feedback. Participants should explain and justify their choices.

Activity part 2

Introduce the **Learner journey handout**. Explain that we have the opportunity to develop the expert learner at every stage of the learner journey. Crucially, we should consider the opportunities we have to more fully involve learners as partners at each stage.

Ask participants to select one stage of the **Stages in the learner journey** cards they would like to explore. If you have more than one group you can allocate different stages.

So, for example, if a group is considering initial assessment they might note that they could provide experiences that help learners to:

- understand the value of different forms of assessment
- understand how they learn best and how to apply this to a range of tasks
- provide constructive peer assessment or feedback
- become pro-active in planning their learning
- become goal-orientated.

The group should then consider their current practice and plan what changes they could make to fully exploit this stage in the learner journey to foster the characteristics they have selected.

Next steps

The purpose of this activity is to raise awareness and stimulate interest. It should be followed as soon as possible with a commitment to doing something. Some possible 'next steps' are to:

- signpost teachers to the web-based resource **Developing the expert learner** on <http://excellence.qia.org.uk>
- engage teachers in the **Activity: Learners as research partners**, which can be downloaded from the **Learner journey** webpage in **Developing the expert learner** on <http://excellence.qia.org.uk>

Taking part in this activity can form part of your 30 hour (or pro rata) annual CPD requirement. For more ideas on how you can plan CPD go to **Supporting your CPD**.