

AUSTRALIAN *FLEXIBLE LEARNING* FRAMEWORK

Managed by the Flexible Learning Advisory Group on behalf of all States and Territories in conjunction with ANTA

2002 RTO Case Study Project 'Flexible learning in practice'

Queensland Police Service



Creation of an online student support system

29 November 2002

RTO Case Study Foreword

The following case study is one of 18 case studies that document the use and application of Australian Flexible Learning (AFL) Framework products and services by Registered Training Organisations (RTOs). The case studies are an initiative of the AFL Framework for the National Vocational Education and Training System 2000 – 2004 as a means of offering 'real-life' examples of how RTOs are implementing elearning strategies with the assistance of AFL Framework products and services. Each participating RTO has documented their experiences over a six month period (June 2002 to November 2002) and have been selected from each State and Territory representing the TAFE, Private Provider, Enterprise and VET in Schools sectors.

Each case study will provide you with an insight into how RTOs are implementing flexible learning and is critical reading if:

- You are interested in finding out about the possibilities of flexible learning
- You are currently implementing flexible learning within your organisation
- You are looking to extend your flexible learning delivery capabilities

Each case study covers areas such as;

- How to implement AFL Framework products and services
- Change management practices
- Customisation of flexible learning products and services
- Professional development
- Access and equity considerations
- Flexible learning strategic planning
- Blended learning techniques
- Marketing and much more.

Each case study highlights the various ways in which AFL Framework products and services can be applied to the learning environment to enhance client delivery and service.

For further information pertaining to AFL Framework products and services or to access other case studies visit discover.flexiblelearning.net.au or phone 07 3234 1852.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This case study details the experience of the Queensland Police Service in implementing three Australian Flexible Learning (AFL) Framework Products and Services:

- LearnScope
- Toolbox (Certificate IV Assessment and Workplace Training)
- Flexible Delivery Business Planning Framework

The major focus of the LearnScope Project was the development of a student support website. A dedicated team successfully researched and prepared a proposal that was endorsed by senior management. Planning has now begun for the implementation of a student support website located on the QPS intranet.

The second aspect of the case study details the experience of the Queensland Police Service in implementing a Toolbox to support the delivery of the Certificate IV in Assessment and Workplace Training. The case study revealed a range of issues associated with the use of the Toolbox within the QPS context. There were a range of challenges including organisational pressures (staff commitments, competing priorities) and specific technological challenges, that were ultimately overcome and led to the successful use of this Toolbox.

The third aspect of the case study briefly describes the use of the Flexible Delivery Business Planning Framework within the QPS Education and Training Support Program (ETSP). QPS did not use this product in its entirety, electing to use a Balanced Score Card approach to business planning instead. However, value was found in some elements of the Flexible Delivery Business Planning Framework. The key areas identified and the range of key questions that are a specific part of each part of the framework assisted the QPS. The QPS is well on track to achieve its target of a flexible delivery strategic plan by mid 2003.

The experience of the QPS through using AFL Framework products during 2002 is that our base and experience in flexible delivery has been enhanced and clear process for future development identified.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Organisation overview

The Queensland Police Service (QPS) provides a wide range of education and training initiatives to its 11,000 employees (Police Officers and Staff Members) statewide. During the past 12 months our learning management system recorded around 170,000 enrolments in courses. Currently there are around 900 courses registered on our learning management system consisting of:

- Post-graduate level management programs
- Undergraduate level programs
- 43 VET qualifications
- Specialist training courses
- Self-paced distance education products
- Extensive Online web-based delivery as well as other forms of computer based training (32 courses to date)

Educational institutions in public, private and community sectors have recognised the need to make learning and development more flexible. Given the geographically dispersed nature of the QPS, the need to provide more flexible learning options is particularly relevant and as such is referred to in a number of strategies and objectives in the QPS Education and Training Business Plan.

QPS is committed to quality training and education. Our techniques are ever changing and we continue to strive for improvements and to meet growing demands. We take pride in keeping up to date with the latest educational methodologies and techniques in order to provide the highest standards of training to our participants. The extensive range of products and services that the Australian Flexible Learning (AFL) Framework has on offer has motivated the QPS to expand our existing base of flexible delivery strategies.

The AFL Framework has a strong emphasis on linking educational providers with the community and with each other. This is consistent with the key strategic directions of partnerships in policing and community based policing. It is also reflective of the ongoing relationships that the QPS has developed with TAFE Institutions, private providers, universities, schools and other adult education providers.

Background of QPS involvement in flexible learning

The QPS is committed to using flexible delivery methods in order to best meet training needs. The needs of our learners and the information that must be conveyed to them is as diverse as the geographical nature of the state. As such, a range of flexible learning strategies have been employed and the QPS has gained extensive experience over the past six years in applying flexible learning initiatives. As well as face to face delivery and the use of audio visual and print materials, strategies adopted include:

- Online tutorials
- Multimedia presentations
- CD-based learning materials
- CD-based materials linked to the web and QPS Intranet

Recently QPS has been involved commercially with the development of online learning materials in association with the Queensland Government and TAFE Queensland.

The combination and selection of these strategies is determined through direct negotiation with the clients, police and staff members in the operational field. We continually refine how we use the range of strategies available to us and our involvement in the case study has enhanced this process of reflection, development and continuous improvement.

As part of our development we now have the capacity to integrate assessment online as an integral part of our learning management system.

Organisation priorities and vision for flexible learning within the RTO for 2002

To Become A Leading RTO in the Public Safety Industry

As the QPS is already extensively networked, online and off, we are in a position to provide unprecedented standards in training at the forefront of public safety vocational education.

The police service is a community service organisation, therefore the beneficiaries of our training are vast. The AFL Framework products and services we utilise receive extensive exposure and recognition both internally and externally.

The Development of a QPS Flexible Delivery Business Plan

Because of our broad involvement with flexible learning initiatives and our ever increasing usage of a range of flexible delivery methodologies, it has been recognised that a specific business plan for flexible learning and delivery was essential. The development of such a plan has paralleled the life of this case study and is expected to be completed by mid 2003. Our flexible learning business plan is being informed by extensive research and will allow our direction to be set by national and international benchmarks in public safety education and training and in applying best practice methods in the field of flexible learning.

To Increase Efficiency and Effectiveness of QPS Training

There is an ever-increasing training demand across the QPS that has fostered a search for training solutions. The flexible learning approaches we currently have on offer to service members have increased exponentially over the last twelve months. The concept of flexible learning is now widespread across this organisation and is still gaining momentum. Flexible learning allows the choice of appropriate strategies to accommodate the growing need for high quality training in so many areas of our expertise.

Some of the organisational constraints that can be addressed through a careful choice of flexible strategies include:

- Participant removal from active duty to attend training
- Cost of replacement workers and payment of facilitators
- Enrolment clashes with rosters and schedules
- Inequity regarding access and availability of training and resources between metropolitan and remote/isolated locations of the state
- Travel and accommodation expenses for members to attend training
- Inefficient training - time delays between the training and implementation opportunities (training when it is actually needed)

- Ineffective training – difficulties in tailoring training to suit individual needs and relevant to location (training where it is actually needed)
- Time consuming to modify some learning and print materials in keeping training up-to-date
- Maintaining consistency between content delivered across the state
- Coordinating and ensuring quality educational experiences across the state

Online Student Support and the Centralisation of all QPS Education and Training Support Services

A project that was listed as high priority for 2002 was to enhance student support through the production of a student support website. This would be undertaken by researching and amalgamating the current student support resources within the QPS to a central point of contact.

Prior to using AFL Framework products and services, student support throughout the QPS was fragmented with various education and training providers having either created or in the process of creating their own websites on the QPS Intranet. There appeared to be no integration of online support. This project was targeted to address this integration issue.

Provide solutions to a number of professional development needs.

In keeping up with the training demands and the advancements in technology, it is important that our staff member's professional skills are also maintained to reflect these progressions. Considering time and budget constraints, we plan to offer professional development opportunities for all QPS staff.

Queensland Smart State Objectives and Outcomes

The achievement of the Queensland Government Smart State objectives and outcomes also provide a focus for our flexible learning goals and priorities, in particular:

- Queensland needs to maintain a decentralised population
- Services should be delivered to where people live
- All citizens will benefit from an information-driven future
- Queensland's future economic prosperity is linked to transitioning from a resource-based to a knowledge-based economy with an increasing emphasis on service industries
- Skills and knowledge provide the impetus for economic growth
- Innovation and technological know-how will be the keys to economic success

2.0 GETTING STARTED – SELECTING THE RIGHT AFL FRAMEWORK PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

LearnScope

LearnScope is designed to assist organisations develop personal and professional practices for it's staff. It is a professional development initiative that assists users to gain skills and knowledge to expand their flexible learning capabilities. More information about LearnScope is available from URL: <http://flexiblelearning.net.au/LearnScope>

QPS has been a satisfied customer of the LearnScope initiative prior to participation in this Case Study. In November 2001, the QPS completed a LearnScope assisted flexible learning project which concluded with these principle outcomes:

- a group of staff who are more informed about flexible learning and it's implications for QPS
- a set of resources that can be used to guide staff in reviewing existing courses and developing new ones
- a plan for a flexible learning web site to be developed in 2002.

As a result of the above achievements of the 2001 LearnScope project, QPS staff were then able to:

- develop a rationale and highlight the need for QPS to develop a Flexible Learning Business Plan in 2002
- outline the need for a proven Flexible Learning Business Plan Framework to be used as a guide
- encourage the use of LearnScope in 2002 to achieve flexible learning priorities in terms of Student Online Support.

Because of the significant QPS past experience with LearnScope it was a natural progression to support two major projects in 2002 that were subsequently incorporated into this Case Study:

- Development of a Flexible Delivery Business Plan.
Allowing QPS to strategically work towards numerous flexible learning goals by using the Flexible Delivery Business Planning Framework as a working model for change implementation.
- Development of a Student Support Website.
Using LearnScope again to help achieve this was a logical progression to follow-up the findings of LearnScope in the original instance.

Toolbox

“A Toolbox is a collection of resources, suggested learning strategies and supporting material to support online delivery of qualifications from recognised training packages.”
(URL: <http://flexiblelearning.net.au/toolboxes>)

A Toolbox was the chosen AFL Framework product used to specifically increase the scope, efficiency and effectiveness of specific training programs and to address professional development needs of QPS members. As Toolboxes were promoted as being cost-effective, easily installed, delivered through existing learning management systems, flexible in their usage and customisation, and also cover a range of qualification and contexts, QPS had in mind a number of different options for their implementation.

Our immediate vision and focus for the case study was to implement the Certificate IV – Assessment and Workplace Training Toolbox.

Certificate IV Assessment and Workplace Training Toolbox

As of January 2003, the QPS will be offering the Diploma of Public Safety (Policing) from the National Public Safety Training Package for Police, State and Territory Emergency Service and Emergency Management Sectors. A major component of this training occurs on-the-job.

In addition to offering the Diploma in Public Safety (Policing) in 2003, we have dramatically increased our scope of course registration over the last 12 months, particularly for qualifications in specialist areas.

This qualification has been available to QPS members for some time through Regional facilitation, usually by face-to-face delivery. However, in order to offer specialist qualifications and the Diploma, we need to have appropriately qualified trainers and assessors.

QPS required a process to prepare a suitable number of qualified workplace assessors within a short timeframe to provide the workplace training and assessment to meet AQTF standards. The Certificate IV Assessment and Workplace Training Toolbox was chosen to address this need.

This Toolbox consisted of a double CD pack to be installed on a network server. It uses computer based training resources linked to the competencies in the Training Package for Workplace Training and Assessment (BSZ98).

It incorporates both an instructor and a learner component along with the following tools:

- Installation tool
- Student Outcomes Analysis tool
- Instructional Design tool
- Student interaction tool
- Professional Development tool

The Toolbox is developed to operate on IBM/PC.

Flexible Delivery Business Planning Framework

The Flexible Delivery Business Planning Framework assists organisations in planning for any change-management associated with the implementation of flexible learning. It acts as an excellent self-assessment checklist, model and guide for organisations developing a business plan.

An outline of the sections and focus areas of the Framework is available from:

<http://flexiblelearning.net.au/discover/productservices>)

The Flexible Delivery Business Planning Framework is available to download by visiting:
<http://flexiblelearning.net.au/busmodels>

The Flexible Delivery Business Planning Framework was chosen because the Queensland Police Service is embarking on another round of development in its ability to use a range of flexible delivery learning strategies. While our capacity and approaches have been continually refined through a continuous improvement process, it was timely to begin a more formal process of review. The Flexible Delivery Business Planning Framework was seen as a tool for guiding this review and subsequent planning process. The expected outcome was to have a strategic plan to guide our approach to flexible delivery over the next three years. The development of this strategic plan for flexible delivery is ongoing with an expected completion date of mid 2003.

3.0 PUTTING FLEXIBLE LEARNING INTO PRACTICE WITH AFL FRAMEWORK PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

LearnScope

The LearnScope project entitled Online Student Support was undertaken to research how best to design and develop a central online student support intranet website and to encourage a consistent and standardised approach to student support utilising online technology. Ultimately student support throughout the QPS would be enhanced.

An additional focus of the project was on the learning process with regards to student support issues, not only for the QPS as an organisation, but for QPS staff themselves. Staff developed skills and understanding in the application of online learning technologies, built foundation skills in online student support and contributed to innovative solutions.

The long-term aims of this project include the eventual design and development of the website, based on the research conducted in this LearnScope project.

The LearnScope project commenced in May 2002. The project was jointly funded with a total budget of \$45,700. Funds were allocated in the following proportions:

- AFL Framework - \$17,700.00
- QPS - \$28,000.00

The ten members of the project team consisted of three police officers and seven staff members drawn from across the Human Resource Development Branch.

The project commenced with an internal consultant, experienced in group dynamics and team building, assisting the project team in the identification of project goals and outcomes.

The principal goal was the development of a centralised student support intranet site that would act as a 'one stop shop' for all QPS learners.

Five major phases were identified to achieve this principal goal:

- Surveying 600 members of the QPS to determine views on effective student support
- Research that involved collecting examples of best practice in online student support from a range of international and Australian education providers
- The creation of a foundational student support website to provide an opportunity for ongoing reaction and a firm base for future development
- The development of a marketing strategy
- The writing of a final report to provide clear recommendations to the QPS and to provide insights about our experience for other education providers.

Each of the five phases was completed successfully. The underlying basis of participation in LearnScope, the growth of professional knowledge through addressing work based projects, was an outstanding success. The QPS is richer for its participation in this LearnScope project.

Toolbox

Toolboxes are available for purchase through Australian Training Products (ATP) at a range of costs (maximum \$395). The website: <http://flexiblelearning.net.au/toolbox>, which is well worth a visit, provides purchasing instructions and other useful information such as:

- A profile of the Toolboxes
- A direct link to ATP
- Toolboxes which are currently in development
- Direct access to a Toolbox Helpdesk

▪ **Certificate IV Assessment and Workplace Training**

The introduction of the Diploma in Public Safety (Policing) in 2003 is a significant project for the QPS. Part of the training takes place on-the-job as Police recruits spend their first year in the operational field. To ensure that the Diploma can be awarded, qualified workplace trainers and assessors are needed to train and assess to the standards required. It would also help to provide quality assurance when QPS, as an RTO, begins to offer this nationally recognised qualification to the recruits and first year constables.

The QPS decided to pilot the Toolbox with a small group with the intent of it being available after the pilot to the large number of Field Training Officers (FTO's) and District Education and Training Officers (DETO's) who are dispersed across Queensland.

Installation

When the Toolbox arrived (two weeks after the placement of the order) a training officer was tasked to review the material.

While there were some issues with installing the Toolbox to the desktop, the flexible nature of the product did enable the QPS to perform modifications. This in turn, allowed for more effective and efficient use of the Toolbox.

In overcoming these initial problems, the QPS allocated a significant amount of time for the modification process and called upon specialist skills from Education and Training Support Program personnel. These strategies proved worthwhile, as once the problems were overcome, the end result was that the Toolbox has been effectively installed into our Learning Management System.

Evaluation and customisation of the content

The experience of using this Toolbox led to a number of challenges and an equal number of solutions. It is intended that the completion of a new version of the Certificate IV Assessment and Workplace Training Toolbox will address the challenges of this Series I version Toolbox used by the QPS.

In summary, Education and Training Support Program staff used the excellent content contained in the Toolbox and successfully developed the online capacity to deliver BSZ Units 401, 402 and 403. The QPS already had a computer based training program for BSZ Unit 404 (Train Small Groups).

Current Position

The Education and Training Support Program has successfully implemented a pilot or trial of the use of the three online units and is currently reviewing the evaluation data.

Our journey, while time consuming and dependent upon skilled programmers and education developers, has meant that we now have the capacity to meet the pressures associated with the introduction of the Diploma of Public Safety (Policing). We now can prepare geographically dispersed staff with the required qualification to conduct workplace assessment and improve overall knowledge, understanding and skills in workplace training.

Flexible Delivery Business Planning Framework

The Flexible Delivery Business Planning Framework is a useful tool. Particularly useful were the various key areas of project management, collaboration, strategic integration, communication, performance management, market understanding and change management. These key areas provide a useful structure and conceptual map for planning. Also of great assistance were the questions that were integrated within the various parts of the framework.

The Human Resource Development Branch (HRDB) and the Education and Training Support Program (ETSP) have used a 'Balanced Score Card' approach to business planning.

This approach provides clear guidance and direction from four major perspectives:

1. *Stakeholder / Financial Perspective*
How do we look, as a branch, to our key stakeholders, such as the Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner, Assistant Commissioner's, Regional Education and Training Officer's etc.? Are we providing the right financial results?
2. *Customer Perspective*
How do our customers see us? Are we meeting our customer's needs and expectations?
3. *Internal Business Process Perspective*
What processes are critical to achieve our strategies? Where do we need process improvement to better deliver core business to our customers and stakeholders?
4. *People, Learning and Growth Perspective*
What initiatives do we have to undertake to develop our people, technologies and work practices for the future?

While there are aspects of the Flexible Delivery Business Planning Framework which are similar to the Balanced Score Card approach, the Framework is based on a different model. We were however, able to use the Flexible Delivery Business Planning Framework to inform aspects of our regular business planning process. Of particular value were the market assessment component and the links between market perspective and provider perspective. The Inquiry Boxes (focus questions) provide an excellent thinking framework for business planning and were particularly valuable in the preliminary planning that has occurred in expanding our commercial activities.

4.0 HOW TO GET THE MOST OUT OF AFL FRAMEWORK PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

LearnScope

At the beginning of the project a specific instrument to gauge the skills, knowledge and understanding of project team members in relation to online student support did not exist. A learning evaluation form was adopted by team members whereby each member was responsible for recording their individual learning.

Completion of the learning evaluation form was encouraged but was not compulsory and left to the individual's discretion. Most team members chose to complete an evaluation instrument on a weekly and/or monthly basis and submitted the form to the project manager. The evaluation form collected information from team members in relation to:

- Individual tasks;
- New things that I found out about; and
- Jargon updates;

This is a process recommended by the QPS to other RTOs. It allows the RTO to see exactly how LearnScope can be a beneficial personal and professional development AFL Framework Service.

The project team adopted an experiential and work-based learning strategy whereby learning took place as each team member participated in achieving the project outcomes. Major learning outcomes for the team through LearnScope were:

Planning

- A broader understanding of project management issues;
- Understanding the need for effective time management skills in completing project tasks;

People Issues

- Recognising the importance of team cohesiveness and a shared and common understanding of project goals and outcomes;
- Appreciating the need to involve and include all stakeholders in project outcomes;
- The need for effective communication amongst team members;

Networking

- Realising the importance of looking outside the organisation to help solve problems within the organisation;
- Meeting new people from outside our organisation and gaining insight into their respective skills, knowledge and experience;

Research

- Gaining a better understanding of student support by visiting various websites and speaking with experts from other education and training providers in relation to online student support and other educational issues.
- Gaining a greater knowledge and understanding of what QPS personnel see as the most important aspects of online student support.

- Gaining an understanding of some of the jargon used within the computer technology industry.
- Enhancing research skills.

Applied Skills

- Developing the skills necessary to contribute to the design and development of an online student support website, based on best practice initiatives.
- Focusing on students wants, needs and expectations, within a support framework.

To achieve success, experience similar outcomes and get the most out of LearnScope, QPS recommends:

- Utilisation of an internal consultant to focus team members and share common project goals and outcomes;
- The provision of adequate time away from normal duties and the setting of realistic timeframes for team members;
- Streamline management processes to enable efficient decision making and budget approval processes;
- Foster effective teamwork and relationships among all project members;
- Manage leave commitments and approvals consistent with the achievement of milestones and outcomes.

The combined funds from AFL Framework and the QPS were more than adequate to achieve our project goals/outcomes. Funds supplied through the AFL Framework greatly assisted the learning process from an individual and team perspective.

Toolbox

The Certificate IV Assessment and Workplace Training Toolbox project did not progress against the intended milestones and timelines. RTOs considering using this Series 1 Toolbox should allow sufficient time for the initial set up and evaluation of the Toolbox.

While a new version of this particular Toolbox is due for release in 2003, the QPS decided not to wait and therefore applied the time and devoted the staff necessary to customise this product. It required specialist staff with the expertise to perform tasks such as:

- Re-establishing links to files
- Creating auto-run CD for the video/audio files
- Creating associated commands for connection to CD and other Toolbox features
- Creating assessment tasks and a workplace assignment

The QPS learning management system, Advance, was then set up to accommodate the new online training using the modified Toolbox. RTOs considering using this Series 1 Toolbox should ensure the staff involved have the necessary expertise to perform such functions, or that they have access to specialist advice.

The allocation of staff, time and resources for the customisation of the Toolbox was a beneficial decision for the QPS. It was also the less expensive option, the alternative being that QPS would have had to build a product from scratch.

The price of the Toolbox was only \$385 + \$10 freight. The majority of expense has stemmed from the time and subsequent wages involved in the installation and evaluation of the Toolbox. Some additional costs with the duplication of sufficient quantities of the auto-run

audio-visual CDs also occurred. However, cost of using the Toolbox and maintenance is minimal thereafter. The final result, is a cost-effective product from the QPS's perspective.

Basically, to get the most out of this Toolbox, other RTOs would benefit by:

- Having professionals readily available to assist in extracting the content and changing the delivery method to be linked through their learning management system.
- Already having a learning management system in place to assist with delivering the training through the web
- Having content experts in the BSZ98 training package to analyse the product to ensure that it meets requirements and develop assessment materials

The following points outline the benefits to the QPS that have resulted from the implementation of this Toolbox. RTOs considering using Toolboxes for this qualification can expect to receive similar benefits.

- Toolboxes offer the opportunity to save time by not starting from scratch. Even in this case where significant modification was necessary, there was much saving in time and cost.
- Content is good and has saved much research, writing and editing and transfer to web pages.
- The use of the Toolbox will improve accessibility to training to a geographically dispersed service.
- The delivery method is cost effective.
- The delivery of the education and training is more manageable through the use of the Toolbox.
- The Toolbox provides the QPS with another tool in a suite of flexible delivery options.
- The Toolbox provides on demand, self paced learning.
- Training content can now be up-dated easily leading to significant savings in time and cost.
- An increase in the consistency of training content will occur, with participants across the state receiving the same information and a quality educational experience.
- The utilisation of text, graphics, animations, video and audio multimedia enables effective and relevant training to be presented.
- Access to training is not as dependent on others in the organisation or other external organisations. Efficiency will increase in training.
- More manageable co-ordination of programs and processes for enrolments and issuing certificates has been created

The QPS is aware that this Toolbox is an early Toolbox and that a new version is to be released in 2003 in line with the revised National Training Package. However after making the necessary changes to the former series Toolbox we are satisfied with the final product. The QPS is confident that it will meet our training goals as intended. The effort and time required for the installation and modification process has been worthwhile with a solid product imminent.

Flexible Delivery Business Planning Framework

Because the Queensland Police Service has had six years experience in the development of non-print based materials and extensive usage of web-based delivery there was not a great need at this time to develop a new Business Case or in a sense to establish external Market Needs.

As an Enterprise Provider, within the QPS, there is a constant demand for extensive education and training. This ranges from ongoing recruit training (600 per year), to specialist training of groups such as investigators and prosecutors, to responses to new legislation or major events, to meet needs from external bodies such as coroner's courts or to meet the ongoing training needs of the 11,000 members of the QPS.

Our challenge as a provider is not to establish need nor to market flexible delivery but to ensure that an appropriate mix of delivery methodologies is used to meet the educational requirements, the specific nature of the content, organisational requirements and resourcing implications.

RTOs should consider the overall nature of the educational challenges facing them and this will help them to decide how best to utilise the Flexible Delivery Business Planning Framework and how to get the most out of it.

For example, our challenge is in guiding the client to use an appropriate flexible delivery strategy *not* to encourage them to use flexible delivery. The Education and Training Support Program staff have established procedures that move our clients from starting negotiations with a preconceived delivery strategy in mind to discussing the nature of the learning activity and then suggesting an appropriate choice of delivery methodologies. Flexible delivery means the choice of appropriate strategies to meet a particular need. Some of the key questions listed in the Learning and Improvement section were useful in informing this process.

A specific example from our experience was the development of an online training package to assist all police with amendments to the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act with the introduction of the so-called 'Hoon Legislation'. Initially the suggestion was for a wide-ranging number of flexible delivery methods ranging from face-to-face, online and print. Through discussion the end product was an online unit linked to legislation and simply outlined the major changes to the Act. The choice was influenced by the fact that the information was simple and did not require interpretation or development of new skills, needed to be distributed quickly across the state, involved training 6000 police, and had a limited training budget. The choice of delivery method has met educational and organisational needs and was appropriate for the nature of the content.

This framework can be used in a variety of ways to enhance planning. It is suitable to use as both an overall planning process and as a source to inform other planning methods. For example, as indicated, the key areas identified within the Framework (Strategic Integration, Market Understanding, Communication, Change Management, Performance Management, Financial Analysis, Collaboration and Project Management) have all informed QPS planning in the flexible delivery area.

Some specific examples include:

a) Project Management

The Education and Training Support Program within QPS manages around 120 projects at any one time. Effective project management processes are essential. The Flexible Delivery Business Planning Framework product provided a useful starting point and checklist to inform the detailed project management development that is a feature of our operation.

b) Collaboration

The Queensland Police Service has developed a range of education and training using flexible delivery in collaboration with other agencies. For example we recently completed training to support the introduction of the Mental Health Act 2000 that involved joint planning and delivery with the Department of Health. The collaborative process resulted in a mixture of web-based, CD-Rom, video, print, poster/pamphlet and face-to-face training.

Another joint project on Community Conferencing was successfully implemented in collaboration with the Department of Family Services. This collaboration resulted in a CD-Rom based multi-media approach that was linked to our intranet web. The delivery methodology also involved the seamless integration of our learning management system that allowed online enrolment, assessment and product evaluation.

In both these cases our approach of determining the appropriate delivery methodology based on the needs of the learner, the nature of the content and specific organisational factors (with both the QPS and our partners) was determined in collaboration with the other department. This kind of collaborative planning is an ongoing feature of our operations. The Flexible Delivery Business Planning Framework again provided useful questions and areas as a ready reference. The Education and Training Support Program has developed two supplementary documents to inform this collaboration; a guide to determining roles and responsibilities within a partnership and a guide to assist in the choice of educationally sound delivery methodologies.

c) Performance Management

The Flexible Delivery Business Planning Framework section on performance management is also useful. During the period of the case study Education and Training Support Program has introduced an integrated evaluation process that utilises our learning management system. This means that any web-based training can incorporate instant evaluation, compilation of data and reporting. The critical aspect has not been the development of appropriate programming within our learning management system database but the development of appropriate evaluation questions. The Flexible Delivery Business Planning Framework performance management section offers some useful guidance in this area.

The QPS experience with the Flexible Delivery Business Planning Framework suggests that other RTOs may find similar opportunities and outcomes. The Flexible Delivery Business Planning Framework provides a useful guide to business planning. In particular, the QPS found the focus questions, business case summary and the provider capability checklist to be quite valuable.

5.0 CONCLUSION AND FUTURE FOCUS

LearnScope

This project achieved its objectives which were to increase the skills, knowledge and experience of project team members. It also, discovered through research, the most important aspects of online student support. In addition, the project team identified best practice in relation to student support and created a foundational website that can be further developed based on best practice and the needs of QPS staff.

Marketing strategies used during this project included publication of articles in QPS magazines and presentations to key stakeholders, which increased the organisation's awareness of LearnScope as a valuable learning and professional development program.

Future Focus

Even though the 2002 LearnScope project objectives were achieved, there still remains a substantial amount of work in developing the website to its full potential. QPS now has a proof of concept that needs to be developed into a working model.

To develop a working model, it was recommended that a new project team consisting of the Education and Training Support Program student support officer and staff conversant in website design be formed to work in conjunction with QPS Web Service staff to further develop this website.

Toolbox

The Certificate IV Assessment and Workplace Training Toolbox was purchased, installed locally, evaluated and modified to suit Queensland Police Service systems and needs. It is currently continuing to undergo a trial process with five participants. The project is on task to open training to a target audience of Field Training Officers and District Education Training Officers in preparation for the Diploma of Public Safety (Policing) being introduced to QPS in 2003.

The challenges identified with the Toolbox have lead to extensive changes and involved the expertise of numerous Education and Training Support Program staff from the QPS.

However, the Toolbox is now at the stage where it allows QPS the ability to provide an alternate pathway for training. It will allow Regions to determine what type of training they wish to conduct that will best fit in with their budget, area and organisations needs.

The Toolbox has offered another effective strategy for the QPS in meeting the needs of a geographically dispersed staff in a cost effective manner. This is particularly welcome with the impending introduction of the Diploma of Policing and the progressive extension of qualifications within the Public Safety Training Package to encompass other specialist training needs.

Future Focus

The Toolbox will be further modified as a result of insights gained through the pilot trial.

QPS are satisfied that we are going to meet training demands adequately and more effectively and that a quality training product has been produced. The efforts in implementing this Toolbox have been worthwhile.

Given time, the remaining competency units of the BSZ98 Toolbox will be modified to operate on the QPS network file server and the complete Certificate IV will be offered online.

Flexible Delivery Business Planning Framework

The Flexible Delivery Business Planning Framework is based on a particular business-planning model. It may not fit with the approach in all organisations. Education and Training Support Program staff chose to use the framework as a checklist and guide to inform the ongoing and established business planning processes. The Flexible Delivery Business Planning Framework can be used flexibly as both an overall planning process or as a useful reference to enrich other business planning processes.

The development of the Flexible Delivery Business or Strategic Plan is ongoing with an expected completion by mid 2003.

6.0 GLOSSARY OF TERMS

AFL Framework	Australian Flexible Learning Framework
ANTA	Australian National Training Authority
ATP	Australian Training Products
ETSP	Education and Training Support Program
HRDB	Human Resource Development Branch
QPS	Queensland Police Service
RTO	Registered Training Organisation

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