

BOBERGSGYMNASIET PRESENTATION LEARNING SCHOOL 9

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INTRODUCTION TO LS

The Learning School is a student research group project which has been established for nine years and represents an international partnership of schools known as the Global Classroom. The students on Learning School are current or recently graduated school students, given the opportunity to act as evaluators of learning aiming to promote school self-evaluation.

Over the course of the year, the LS will go to a diverse range of countries with different social, cultural and economic situations, taking into account different aspects of learning within schools. This translates to a rich social, cultural, personal and academic learning experience for group members in particular, but also for students in participant schools, host families, wider communities and experts.

INTRODUCTION TO LS9

This year's research project for Learning School 9 is investigating 'A Curriculum for living and learning in the 21st Century'. From this we have chosen to focus on developing a Global Campus which would be an educational project that would offer students the opportunity to study abroad providing them with a broader range of curriculum options, experiencing new ways of learning and teaching methods. This will try to investigate the ways in which international relations could help young people face the challenges of the future, incorporating such themes as language development, inter-cultural exchange/learning, technology development.

METHODOLOGY

We have divided our research into two parts: Audit and Exchange.

In the exchange part we used email questionnaires and asked current or former participants of international projects, as Global classroom, extended exchange and Learning school about their experience. Our purpose was to find answers for questions. Why students participate in international projects? What they feel as the most beneficial part? If their expectations were finally met? The responses will help us to develop Global Campus in a way which will be inspired by student opinions.

In the audit part we have interviewed several students from each programme. In both sections we made use of video recording to keep evidence, which can be used towards the Global Campus database as another source of information.

In the first section, we worked with questions which were focused mainly on school programmes. Students were describing their views of their programmes, methods of learning and teaching and the responsibility given to students. These answers would help us provide the Global Campus database with deeper personal information.

In the second section we applied a card activity, which involved two sets of cards, one which described challenges, which were brainstormed in the beginning of the project by researchers and transferable skills, which were inspired by Curriculum for Excellence. The aim of this activity was to create a vision of 21st century and how are students prepared for challenges they may face in the future.

AUDIT

The audit was to focus on the transferable skills from the Scottish Curriculum for Excellence. This is to provide prospective students with more in-depth information about the programmes and the schools. When analysing the answers from the transferable skills activity we discovered some general trends.

This graphs shows that the students feels that their programmes mostly teaches skills from the Effective Contributors section. A way of explaining this will be through the schools profiles which are enterprising, communication and internationalisation. The transferable skills from the section are all connected to the school profiles, as communicating in different ways and in different settings.

We also discovered that Bobergsgymnasiet appears to offer programmes that teach students to be able to work in partnerships and teams and being open to new ideas and thinking. These transferable skills are important in carrying out the aims of the school profiles, which might explain why they were so often chosen.

When we compared theoretical and practical programmes we found that the theoretical programmes seem to educate students to become successful learners. Since the theoretical programmes aims to encourage students to go onto further studies these are the skills most beneficial to the student. The practical programmes on the other hand seem to teach skills from the confident individual section. A reason for this might be that the students attend work experience where they are not solely responsible for themselves but also for others. The close relationship between teachers and students might also have an impact on the student since they will get better self esteem and help them grow as an individual.

EXCHANGE

Through emails we questioned past exchange students and Global Classroom participants to get a student perspective on the experience. We received a positive number of replies and there were many encouraging comments to give us a clear indication of the benefits and possible consequences of participating in such exchanges.

The main reasons that students wanted to study abroad were to learn or improve on their language skills, to meet new people and to combine travelling with their studies. When asked of the skills they gained from the experience they said that they learned to communicate with others despite language barriers and also gained new language skills. They also said the experience had made them become more open minded to new ideas and meeting new people.

The students did however mention they had faced difficulties abroad. Obviously language and communication was at times difficult. Also the students mentioned it was often hardest to speak with their host families. This issue will have to be considered before launching the Global Campus.

All students greatly recommended studying abroad for the main reasons of the many new friends and people to meet, how the experience can broaden your horizons, make you think differently and how quickly it can be to learn a new language.

“You will make so many friends and have such a great time. Also, you learn the language very effectively and it is a great experience to have.”

We hope that the Global Campus would simply continue to encourage these basic principles by giving students an international education and to introduce students to different cultures and new ideas.

GLOBAL CAMPUS MAIN IDEA

GLOBAL CAMPUS AIMS

To offer an opportunity to experience different ways of learning and teaching methods

To increase cooperation between schools globally, allowing for a broader range of curriculum options

To encourage a better understanding of cultures amongst young people across the world

GLOBAL CAMPUS EVIDENCE

Global Campus would be an educational system that is a vision of the future which takes advantage of a number of educational resources already available and proven to be successful, these include:

Distance Learning – a method designed that aims to deliver to students who are not physically ‘on-site’ allowing them to communicate at times of their own.

Virtual classrooms/conferencing - Methods of E-learning are becoming more popular and online education is increasing, especially as technologies in Internet and multimedia technologies are advancing. It has been reported that students appear to be at least satisfied with their online courses as they are with their traditional ones.

Extended exchange programmes where a senior student goes abroad to study.

Global Campus would take the step forward from the Distance Learning, combining the online learning whilst still using conventional teaching methods to combat the integrity issues that arise from online learning, offering an on-site presence and having those available to act as tutors/mentors trained to use computers and Internet.

A project similar to how the Global Campus is envisioned which is already well established and a proven success is the ERASMUS project. ERASMUS is only for those in Higher Education however its aim is to encourage and support academic mobility of Higher Education students and teachers within the European Union, the European Economic Area and candidate countries. So far 1.4 million students have taken part and it is seen to encourage a sense of community among students from different countries. It has been speculated that former ERASMUS students will prove to be a powerful force in creating a pan-European identity.

A Global Campus would be reinforcing this, starting the inter-cultural exchange at an earlier age and developing this sense of community amongst students, creating individuals with a different socialisation from those of today.

GLOBAL CAMPUS IMPLEMENTATION

Student will create their own timetable using the Global Campus database of programmes; there will be two types of courses school and online.

School courses are programmes or subjects, which student attends at place of current stay. Student is physically present and fully engaged in the lessons.

Online courses will be available through the Internet. We are developing a website, which will offer space and possibilities of using video conferencing, e-learning and other technologies to help young people to study their subjects online. This website will offer constant access to the information about subjects, forums, might be videos of lessons, books. This will allow students to study various subjects from the other schools during the stay in particular country.

There will be tutor and guide teacher nominated on each of the schools to help students either with school courses or online courses. There will be also a Global Campus coordinator, who will be responsible for communication and connection between schools within the project.

GLOBAL CAMPUS SERVICES

The schools within Global Campus would provide the students:

School Services:

- Mentors/Guidance teacher – the mentor would be a teacher who helps students with any difficulties. The mentor and the student would meet regularly every week, using that time to highlight any difficulties the student may be having or any issues they wish to raise.
- Language support
- Accommodation support

Online services:

- Online seminars
- Global Campus Coordinators
- Discussion forums
- Virtual classrooms

These services would be developed from the already existing website www.schoolofambition.org. The online services would increase participation, communication and interaction between students.

GLOBAL CAMPUS WEBSITE STRUCTURE

Global Campus would use a web format as a tool for participating schools to offer their curriculum options. This structure could also be used towards providing a database for schools at the end of our project with regard to the Extended Exchange Programme. On the face of the website would be:

- 1) A Introduction about the Global Campus
- 2) (Information about) Participating Schools

Which would include →

- Schools Information
- Location details
- Programmes Information (which includes the aims of every programme, the subjects which are available in the programmes and Student Opinions.

- 3) Individual login: (for students who decide to participate further)

They would be given access to

- Discussion forums
- Coursework details
- Timetables, Schedules
- Exam information
- Personal e-mail
- (And Access to course tutors)

GLOBAL CAMPUS BENEFITS

As previously mentioned the Global Campus will give students the possibility to develop personally, go travelling, get an inter-culture exchange, learn a new language or improve an already studied language. Furthermore the student will benefit from the skills learned by using different types of media, for example video-conference and e-learning.

The wider range of curriculum options will allow the students to find out what methods of teaching/learning that suits them the most. The students taking part in the Global Campus will get a better understanding of other cultures and gain another perspective by learning globally. This makes the students gain respect for others and seeing other ways of dealing with problems. This will help them face the challenges of the future.

GLOBAL CAMPUS TRANSITION

We want our research to come out with an idea which could be implemented and extended in the future; therefore we are going to adapt our Global Campus idea for the already existing project: the Extended Exchange Programme.

We intend to develop The Extended Exchange Programme to provide it with a better structure through a new database that we are creating, which will be explained later.

More structure would raise the awareness of the Extended Programme which could contribute towards increasing the numbers of students at Bobergsgymnasiet, publicising the school's international links and encouraging the participation.

Providing a database to be used for the Extended Exchange Programme would allow for easier access to more information about the Exchange Programme. It would be hoped that this would also increase student participation and their confidence to take part in the project.

CONCLUSION

To sum up, we were given the topic: “A curriculum for living & learning in the 21st Century”, and we developed the idea of a “Global Campus” combining the both into the question to investigate: “How could a Global Campus contribute to a curriculum for living and learning in 21st century?”

A Global Campus aims to be both website based and to take place in schools, offering students to experience a different way of learning, increasing cooperation between schools and encouraging a better understanding of different cultures.

We have used evidence from other existing projects such as from those who took part in the student exchange programmes and have used information gathered from similar educational learning methods like Distance Learning and the Erasmus project which has already moved 1 million students across Europe, all to help strengthen the Global Campus idea.

There would be many benefits for the students, like language development, having a broader range of curriculum options, personal development, and learning globally.

Findings from Bobergsgymnasiet have showed the school to be developing students to be effective contributors and offer a variety in types of programmes especially with regard to offering both practical and theoretical programmes, not seen in other schools. The availability of a Global Campus would enable any student across the world to take part in the Swedish curriculum which may be more suited to their type of learning. Our research aims to gather information from each school, finding their identity and their strengths all to create a database for the future students wishing to join the Global Campus.

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