

Report – Case Study from the perspective of post-16 students

How would the experience of a young person here at Ysgol Dyffryn Nantlle change as a result of introducing the post-16 formal collaboration arrangement

Of course, it's impossible to foresee the exact effect of introducing the post-16 formal collaboration arrangement on individuals that will study here in the school in future. But, the experiences of those students who currently study courses where collaboration between institutions already exists, create a picture of experiences that are comparable with those traditional experiences gained by students that stay on site to study every course.

Studying on a collaborative course can mean one of two situations:

- Travel to another site external to the Ysgol Dyffryn Nantlle site to join students from another site or even from many other sites.
- Stay on the Ysgol Dyffryn Nantlle site to study a course with students from another site or sites joining the class.

There is no doubt that these two situations are able to offer students very different experiences.

Below, are observations by students of the school who are at present studying collaborative courses in Year 12 since September 2012.

Student 1 – She studies 3 AS subjects, including Psychology on the Ysgol Syr HASH Owen site (travelling there twice a week) and Religious Studies at Ysgol Brynrefail (travelling there twice a week).

Positive experiences:

- Meeting and making new friends
- Increasing independence
- Expanding horizons
- A confidence boost
- A feeling of freedom
- Friendly competition amongst students
- Prove my ability to work in an unaccustomed environment

Negative experiences:

- Taxi not always on time
- Lack of link with the teacher

- A feeling of having to rush from lessons or a break to catch the taxi
- Teacher training days on different dates in different schools, which can lead to missing lessons.

Student 2 – He studies 2 AS subjects on the school site and Engineering BTEC Level 3 on the Coleg Menai site in Bangor (travelling there once a week).

Positive experiences:

- Able to meet new people
- A better experience from going into a new environment
- A different experience of having lectures as in universities
- Lecturers teaching us instead of teachers
- Receiving different experiences from those I get in school

Negative experiences:

- I'm the only student from Ysgol Dyffryn Nantlle on the course and so I was in the middle of strangers at first, which was rather an intimidating experience

Student 3 – She studies 3 AS subjects, including Religious Studies at Ysgol Brynrefail (travelling there twice a week). She's a new pupil this year, having come from outside the catchment area.

Positive experiences:

- I feel that I have received a very warm welcome from all (pupils and teachers) at Ysgol Dyffryn Nantlle
- I've received a variety of experiences in my short time at the school, such as the school Eisteddfod, a journey to Cardiff and helping with arranging the October Fair.
- Also received a great welcome at Ysgol Brynrefail. On our first day, the teacher was waiting for us and we were shown around the school. This made me feel comfortable and at home and I enjoy my lessons there very much.
- Both schools are very different from my ex-school but by now I have settled very well.

Student 4 – She studies 3 AS subjects here at Ysgol Dyffryn Nantlle, including Geography which is a collaborative course, with 3 pupils from Ysgol Brynrefail joining the class which is held twice a week.

Positive experiences:

- I've benefitted personally from making new friends, and this giving me a confidence boost
- The teacher gave us a task to prepare and give a presentation of 8 minutes to the rest of the class. As there were new members in the class, this was a challenging task as I wasn't entirely comfortable speaking in front of strangers. In spite of this, in giving the presentation, confidence is fostered, and for me personally, my confidence as regards being able to speak in front of strangers has had an enormous boost. I feel that this is a skill that is essentially important to foster, as it is so crucial to my future.

Student 5 – He studies 3 AS subjects, including Electronics on the Cynnal site in Llangefni (travelling there once a week).

Positive experiences:

- I'm of the opinion that it is a good thing that schools and colleges work together because schools are able to offer different subjects from those that would otherwise be on offer by them
- I get the opportunity to use equipment that is not available at school.
- There's an opportunity for me to meet new people.

Negative experiences:

- The journey to Llangefni takes 45 minutes one way and so I travel for 1½ hours there and back every Monday.