

# Developing Augmented Reality in Youth Offender Learning

## Project Summary

Augmented Reality offers a whole range of benefits and a greater learner experience. With a computer you need to log on and then navigate to the resources, whether this be a link, a resource search or something on your Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) or portal. This is acceptable but can be a long process and some of the immediacy can be lost in the process. Some learners can become distracted or do something completely different, risking losing attention and concentration. Using augmented reality, you can link precisely and directly to resources eliminating these potential problems.

A mixture of online and blended learning approaches in conjunction with face-to-face teaching/instruction can provide a greater balance and variety of resources and interactions. This linked with the quality of teaching, mentorship and the overall offender learner experience can only be beneficial to all learners and provide pathway for innovation linked to technology.

Augmented Reality can provide learners in youth offender learning with a more interactive way of learning, facilitate research, activities, instruction and information. These AR resources can give information on a range of instructional and skills-based topics that will be engaging and interesting. A 'trial' project of Augmented Reality will be needed in youth custodial establishments, with security and access a key factor and of major importance. The project will need to ensure that the resources are 'locked' from the outside world and access is monitored and within the security confines required for custodial institutions.

The use of mobile devices to access the resources on a designated App gives an increased access to a whole new way of learning at any given time. This will enable these resources to be shared easily with the wider community. It is envisaged that 'standalone' versions of the resources and links to the videos and learning materials will be available within the learning portal or environments at each establishment, creating an individual resource bank, safely and within constraints of security processes.

The project aims

- Evaluate the effectiveness of using Augmented Reality resources for giving access to information, resource and instruction about a range of topics to custodial establishments.
- Investigate security and access requirements needed to ensure that the resources are 'locked' from the outside world and access is monitored and within the security confines required for custodial institutions.
- Extend and enhanced the learner information experience using an engaging tool that enables students to use their own smart devices to access the content

- Develop high quality resources using Augmented Reality as a tool to link to engaging information for learners that can be accessed in a range of situations (AR posters, leaflets, literature disseminated to institutions, etc.)
- Reach a wider audience as a result of production of the AR resources
- Share good practice
- Undertake a review/evaluation of the project with outcomes report
- Raise attainment in youth offender learning trans-nationally

Additionally, the project outputs will enable learners:

- Opportunity to gain skills & knowledge they wouldn't otherwise easily have access to
- Higher engagement /attendance in lessons in prisons
- Build on prior knowledge
- Better results - improved employability
- Learning outside of lessons
- Use free time constructively rather than negatively
- Raise Aspirations

The project has four key partners, working alongside Shrewsbury Colleges Group to introduce, develop and roll-out the use of augmented reality to youth offenders in different institutions in the specific European countries.

Each objective will be the focus of a specific work package, that will undertake the key tasks needed to identify, develop and have the resources available to be used by the learners, depending on their need, skills gaps or interest.

The AR resources produced during the project will be AR posters, worksheets and learning cards. These can be shared, evaluated and utilised by others, providing a wider level of dissemination. The outputs will be shared via local and national means (where applicable). This will not only share best practice but will be a good test of the outputs in real teaching, learning and support situations.

The use of digital tools and resources is an opportunity for prison staff to work offender learners to help them rehabilitate. This in the long-term is good for society as it allows offenders to keep update with the digital age. With security measures in place, this gives confidence in "moving towards digitalisation behind bars". (Dr Victoria Knight - Dec 17). It is without doubt that a "prison sentence disrupts digital literacy", leading towards "increased isolation, loneliness, boredom, frustration and anger." (Dr Victoria Knight - Dec 2017). AR can have a huge impact with the way forward in learning and rehabilitation.