

LAMS for Inquiry-based Learning Case Studies

Exploring Intellectual Property



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1. The students and the curriculum

The learning design was created for a group of 51 postgraduate students on the Legal Practice Course

2. The teaching and learning aims

A LAMS-based learning design was created to provide an out-of-classroom follow-up, and extension of, face-to-face workshop activity. Previously students had not engaged with the recommended follow-on learning activities for this particular topic outside the classroom.

Aims included:

- delivering learning outcomes that, because of time constraints, could not be delivered in the face-to-face classroom.
- facilitating consolidation of what students had already learned in relation to the subject matter
- exposing them to intellectual property search practices
- enabling students to see intellectual property in the commercial context of real-life case studies, and to undertake some searches of intellectual property registrations in order to experience and become familiar with the search process.

The challenge was to design a task that would enable students to respond to open-ended questions, experience a search and reflect on what they had done.

3. The inquiry/ inquiries

The activity focuses on concepts and practices in Intellectual Property within the English system. The task was identified, broadly, as a form of inquiry-based learning in that students were being invited to inquire into the search process itself. The emphasis was on students working individually on search and analysis tasks rather than in collaboration with each other, although with the benefit of sharing observations, reflections and search outcomes.

4. What happened (the process)

The LAMS tools used in this process were:

(1) **Noticeboard**: tutors provided a brief introduction on Intellectual Property (IP) for their students. They reproduced a diagram on the benefits of IP from an Intellectual Property website. Students were directed to follow the sequence of activities which would demonstrate the importance of IP in practice. Students were asked to make their own notes in their private notebook and save it for reflective purposes. Instructions about how to use LAMS were provided via the Noticeboard.

(2) **Resources + Forum**: tutors uploaded a BBC Dragon's Den videoclip. Students were required to watch this clip, demonstrating the importance of IP to potential business investors. Students had to reflect on the views of these potential investors and identify three key areas of concern on the message board in the forum.

- (3) **Share Resources:** students were shown a patent case study and provided with a report form which they had to download onto their personal drives. They were required to consider the case study complete the report by carrying out research including searching intellectual property registrations.
- (4) **Submit Files:** students submitted their completed case study report.
- (5) **Share Resources:** Students were shown another design rights case study and provided with a further report form, which they had to download onto their personal drives. Again, they were required to complete the report by carrying out research including searching intellectual property registrations.
- (6) **Submit Files:** Students submitted their completed case study report
- (7) **Survey:** a survey collated feedback from students about using LAMS for this activity.
- (8) **Share Resources:** tutors thanked the students for participating and provided a BBC video clip intended to provide comic relief for the students after completing the LAMS sequence.
- (9) **Noticeboard:** A closing message from the tutors and announcement that survey results would be published in a VLE.

5. Reflections

Tutors considered that their pedagogical objectives were achieved. They were able to broadly replicate a face-to-face workshop teaching format via a LAMS asynchronous learning design. The linearity of LAMS sequencing functionality enabled the tutors to scaffold and guide their students' learning process.

"Getting students to do it in that sequence helped with the flow in terms of the concept we wanted them to consider. If you'd had that either in hard copy or maybe a different platform we would have lost that structure I think".

Tutors commented that some previous IP learning designs had been experienced by students as fragmented and therefore did not enable them to as easily make learning connections between activities, resources and concepts.

Students commented positively on the development of their research understanding and skills, the stimulating variety of activities and use of multimedia resources, the encouragement to actually engage with the task, the novelty and interactivity of the activities and impact on learning and engagement.

25 agreed that they found the activity stimulating and useful;

28 agreed that they found the activity effective in helping them to learn about their subject;

32 agreed that the activity had involved them in a new way of learning;

29 agreed that the activity had helped them carry out some useful research/exploration;

6. Any other comments

Tutors intend to use the learning design again, with the following changes:

- Enhanced preliminary instructions, to make the purposes of the activity more explicit and provide an indication of how long the sequence will take (i.e. manage students' expectations better).
- Check and revise if necessary the wording of 'inquiry questions' posed to students, to make sure they are clear and unambiguous.

Tutors also note that it is important to provide adequate support for students when they expose them to a new e-learning tool. Some guidelines on using LAMS were given during a preliminary face-to-face workshop sessions and students were encouraged to contact tutors via email if they had queries or problems.