Learner Persistence Program Self-Assessment of Program Design and Management Strategies

This compilation of promising practices in learner persistence draws from the New England Learner Persistence Project, research by the National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy (Comings, Parrella & Soricone, 1999) and the NCSALL Learner Persistence Study Circle Guide (2005), Equipped for the Future, the *Stick With It* projec*t* of the National Research and Development Centre in the United Kingdom, and others.   The evidence for the promising practices comes from research and professional wisdom. Practices in some categories necessarily overlap, such as goal-setting upon entrance and during participation.

We hope that doing the self-assessment is a fruitful experience for you. For more information, please contact the New England Learner Persistence Project Director, Andy Nash at anash@worlded.org

Program self-assessment scale: 1 – Top priority need to address 2 - We should work on this at some point 3 – We're already working on this but could do it better 4 – We do this adequately 5 – We do this well		
Promising Practices in Learner Persistence	**Self-Assmt**	**Comments, Questions to Explore, Evidence for the Score**
Program Design and Management		
a. Offer learning options (e.g. classroom instruction, distance learning, computer-assisted instruction, drop-in instruction or activities, conversation or book clubs, peer learning groups, tutoring, and enrichment classes) to address diverse student needs.		
b. Create a comfortable, safe and welcoming learning environment that communicates caring and respect to students and staff, that encourages students to take risks in their learning, and that consciously counters racism and prejudice.		
c. Develop an organized curriculum (i.e. a master plan for selecting content and organizing learning experiences) that results from a clear process for making curriculum decisions, that addresses the needs and goals of adult students, and that is consistent with adult learning principles.		
d. Institute managed enrollment, where feasible, to reduce turbulence and promote class stability and continuity; implement admission policies that enable easy and timely re-entry to classroom instruction.		
e. Develop student "cohorts" – groups of students who participate together in program activities (e.g. study groups, goal-related workshops, classes) as a learning community.		

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Promising Practices in Learner Persistence	**Self-Assmt**	**Comments, Questions to Explore, Evidence for the Score**
f. Provide training and support for teaches to implement persistence strategies, including meeting regularly to share strategies and concerns, discuss student work, and participate in overall program improvement planning.		
g. Solicit and use student feedback to make improvements in instruction, counseling, and program structures and processes.		
h. Use program data to analyze patterns of persistence and to inform program improvement.		
i. Work with external partners to align policies and procedures in ways that will help learners persist along cross-program learning pathways.		
j. Integrate basic skills instruction with work readiness, job training, or college courses.		
k. Institute an attendance policy that is clear and fair, and that explains the impact of individual attendance on learning and on the program.		