Are virtual insight visits an effective way of engaging learners?

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Introduction

Field trips and insight visits can have wide-ranging benefits to students including:

➤ Reinforcing and expanding upon taught learning
➤ Improving ability to relate theory to practice
➤ Encouraging collaborative learning
➤ Enhancing motivation

(Chang 2007. Higgins et al 2012. Jakubowski et al 2003. Kali et al 2015. Sachatello-Sawyer et al 2002)

Benefits may lead to enhanced student experience, outcomes and employability as well as widening museum participation
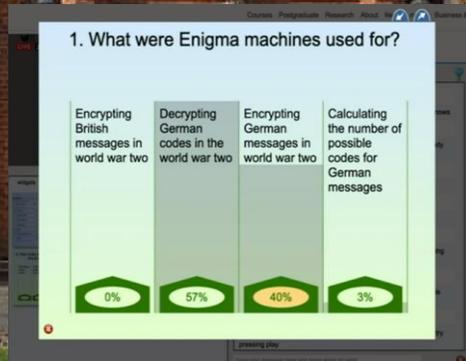
Questions

➤ Can a live virtual insight visit to Bletchley Park Museum provide mature distance learners with effective interaction with a real-world environment?
➤ Can interactive virtual insight visits provide mature distance learners with similar benefits to traditional insight visits?

Interactive visit to Bletchley Park

1. What were Enigma machines used for?

Encrypting British messages in world war two	Decrypting German codes in the world war two	Encrypting German messages in world war two	Calculating the number of possible codes for German messages
0%	57%	40%	3%

Results

➤ 101 students participated
➤ Age: mean (SD) 38±14
➤ 42% of student participants were identified as being in the lowest 50% of the Index of Multiple Deprivation
➤ 54% of respondents would find it difficult to attend Bletchley Park Museum in person
➤ 100% of respondents said they would attend relevant virtual visits/webcasts in future

Conclusion and recommendations

➤ Results indicate that live interactive visits may be an effective way of engaging distance learners
➤ Further investigation is required

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A recording of the webcast can be watched here -https://player.open.ac.uk/share/5da0d3d6eb

A short film detailing our research can be watched here - https://youtu.be/e8pAajojGVY

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