



LOVED BY STUDENTS,
RECOMMENDED BY TEACHERS

Becoming the GCSEPod Lead when our school subscribed

A View From Andrew Rome, assistant head at Maidenhill School, Gloucestershire

Maidenhill School is a coeducational foundation secondary school located in Stonehouse, Gloucestershire. A smaller than average secondary school with a rural catchment area, it subscribed to GCSEPod in February 2015. Within the space of a year, GCSEPod has found its place within school and has become an essential resource for students in Year 11.

Andrew Rome, assistant head teacher is the GCSEPod lead at the school and was tasked with rolling it out to staff and students. We speak to him to find out more about his experience as a GCSEPod lead.

I had some reservations about taking on the role as I feared it would take me away from other school priorities. I also thought it would be a challenge to get the 'buy in' we hoped for; but I really needn't have worried.

In fact, it has in fact been a really positive thing to be part of.

We introduced GCSEPod to provide students with an extra resource to help them to revise. Rather than dictating that they use something we approached it more as a gift that we had invested in because we believe in our students and want them to achieve their full potential.

Being the bearer of gifts is a generally a good thing and is certainly a nice thing to be associated with.

Our approach seems to have paid off and a large proportion of our year 11 students are already actively using the resource and have downloaded thousands of pods.

It has been pretty easy to promote it to our students as GCSEPod provides engaging videos which we used in assembly and provides a host of other material to help spread the word. There is a dedicated support team who helped us to launch it but provide ongoing help and share best practice from across all their subscribing schools.

It has been even easier to get the buy in of students this academic year as we have quite strong evidence to say that GCSEPod works. We have found a direct correlation between students downloading 50-100 podcasts and levels of progress. On average, the more podcasts they download, the better progress they make.

As a result our Year 10s have been desperate to use it too so we have rolled it out to them this year and appointed some of our highest year 11 users as GCSEPod experts to offer them help and guidance.

Staff have bought in to it too; the reporting tool provides easily downloadable evidence to demonstrate that it makes a difference and because it is easy to drill down across specific user groups such as our pupil premium students or some of our under achieving boys, staff can actively help target such groups and individuals to revise more efficiently.



Of course it is not for everyone and some students prefer to use other resources, but we are definitely seeing more and more of them get on board with it. Whilst we have by no means enforced it upon our students we have introduced all our students to it through our Learning for Life Lessons to ensure that they know exactly how to use it and how to get the best out of it by creating and sharing playlists. But to be honest because it looks and feels very much like some of the software that they use in their day to day life outside of school, using it does seem to be pretty much second nature to them.

All in all, I'm really enjoying my role as GCSEPod lead and have even managed to deceive some colleagues in to thinking that I am some kind of ICT guru.

