

Case Study

Accessing intellectual property: Transferable Academic Skills Kits - TASK

Key Facts

- Original IFP course content was specially designed for international students without British A level qualifications or the equivalent. It was one of the first courses of its type to be established in the UK.
- The Technology Transfer Office manages the University's IP and offers companies access through licence agreements or creating spin-out companies to develop new products and bring them to market.
- IFP content was licensed to Garnet Education, a specialist English Language Teaching (ELT) publisher producing high-quality English for Academic Purposes (EAP) materials, general English materials and tailor-made courses for specific clients.
- Garnet Education rebranded the original IFP content and now sells it as TASK (Transferable Academic Skills Kits), a modular and flexible learning resource.
- Each TASK module has been designed to develop the key transferable skills that underpin students' success in further and higher education.
- TASK titles include: Key Foundation Skills, Academic Culture, Seminars & Tutorials, Essay Writing and Examination Techniques.
- Garnet Education sold over 7,800 units of TASK in 2008.

Background

The International Foundation Programme (IFP) at the University of Reading is an intensive one-year access course specially designed for international students without British A level qualifications or the equivalent, and was one of the first courses of its type to be established in the UK.

A team of academic staff compiled content for the IFP. The material was well received and had immediate impact. Content was licensed to 20 – 30 academic institutions for use internally and as the material was modular in nature they only licensed the content they required.

Commercial Opportunity

The Technology Transfer Office realised the opportunity to provide the benefits of the International Foundation Programme to a wider user base by making tailored content available to individual students through a publishing company. The Intellectual Property (IP) rights were licensed to Garnet Education to enable this to happen.

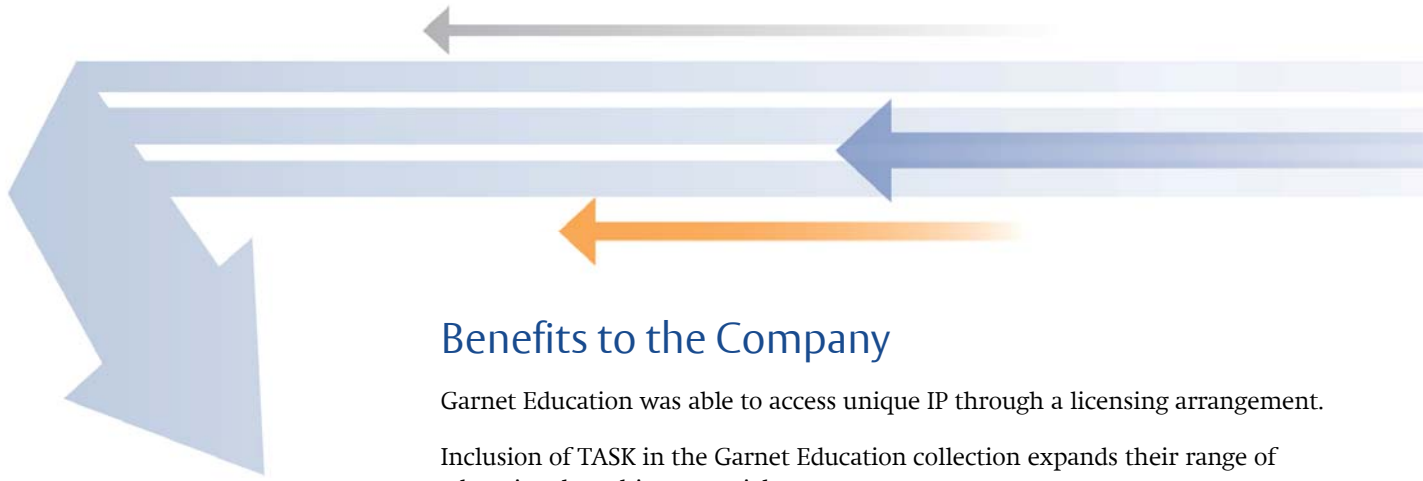
Current Status

Garnet Education is a specialist English Language Teaching (ELT) publisher producing high-quality English for Academic Purposes (EAP) materials, general English materials and tailor-made courses for specific clients.

In 2004 the University of Reading signed a licensing agreement with Garnet Education for the exclusive rights of the IFP material. Garnet Education is now solely responsible for all publishing and promotion of the material.

Garnet Education rebranded the original IFP content and now sells it as TASK (Transferable Academic Skills Kits). The kits can either be followed as a complete course, or as individual modules selected according to students' specific needs. TASK titles include: Key Foundation Skills, Academic Culture, Seminars & Tutorials, Essay Writing and Examination Techniques.

The University continues to develop the IFP content for its own teaching purposes.



Benefits to the Company

Garnet Education was able to access unique IP through a licensing arrangement.

Inclusion of TASK in the Garnet Education collection expands their range of educational teaching materials.

Garnet Education is able to enjoy the prestige affiliated with the production of materials compiled by academics from a leading UK university.



'Accessing IP from IFP has enabled Garnet Education to expand in a new and interesting direction - study skills for non-native speakers. The scope of the publication is still expanding and October 2009 will see the American version used for the first time in the USA.'

Rod Webb

Education & Research Manager, Garnet Publications

Benefits to the University

The licensing arrangement demonstrates the potential for commercialisation in any area where the University excels.

Publication of the IFP content has raised the profile of the programme and led to University of Reading materials being made available to a wider audience.

Royalties from the sale of TASK generate income for the University to re-invest in further development of the International Foundation Programme.

University of Reading

The University of Reading is a world-class research-intensive university covering a broad spectrum of disciplines across the Life and Physical Sciences, Arts and Humanities, Social Sciences and Henley Business School. Areas of particular strength include: Climate Systems Science, Preventative and Therapeutic Health Sciences, Sustainable Construction and Environments and Computational Science and Informatics.

The Technology Transfer Office manages the University's portfolio of intellectual property as a vital component of Open Innovation, offering companies access to IP through licence agreements or creating spin-out companies to develop new products and bring them to market.