



# Case Study: Self-Directed Learning at Bentley Park College

July 11, 2022

Zenva Schools is a proud partner of the *ICT Gateway to Industry Schools Program*. Funded by the ACS and the Queensland Government's Department of Employment, Small Business and Training, this program is designed to increase the accessibility of technology education in schools, and support the next generation of coders.

Through this program, we provided [Bentley Park College](#) – a state-run school in Queensland – with access to Zenva Schools.

They found that the platform had a wide range of positive impacts. It provided better professional development opportunities for the staff, and increased the students' independence and ability learn on their own. Zenva Schools also helped them to more successfully deal with external disruptions to the school year, and increased engagement

by providing students with topics that were interesting and relevant to them. Students also learned skills that were relevant beyond just classroom settings, which could be applied to their own projects and situations in the outside world.

This case study will examine the challenges Bentley Park College faced, how they used our platform, and how they achieved the above positive outcomes.

## The Class

Lorena Goodall, the Digital and Design Technology Teacher and HOD of IT at Bentley Park College, used Zenva Schools for professional development for both herself and her staff.

She also used it with her Year 8 class of around 20 students. The class met for two sessions a week. Each session featured 1-2 blocks that lasted around an hour each.

Lorena selected a range of courses to use with her staff and students on the topics of Blender, Photoshop, HTML, JavaScript, and Excel.



*Lorena Goodall, Digital and Design Technology Teacher & HOD of IT*

## The Challenges

For Lorena, a key challenge that she faced was that for herself and her team, professional development was incredibly time-consuming: "I'm constantly having to take on new subjects to upskill my staff."

She also needed up-to-date, clear content that could support learners who were working at differing speeds. This was especially important given the many disruptions caused by Covid, where students were frequently missing the class due to sickness or isolation requirements.

## The Goals

Lorena's primary goal was for students to be able to learn more independently without relying so heavily on the teacher: "So I can stand at the front of the room and show them, but if they can have the video and they can also self-direct their learning... It's kind of flipped learning, so they can teach themselves, and then I can help those who need it in between.

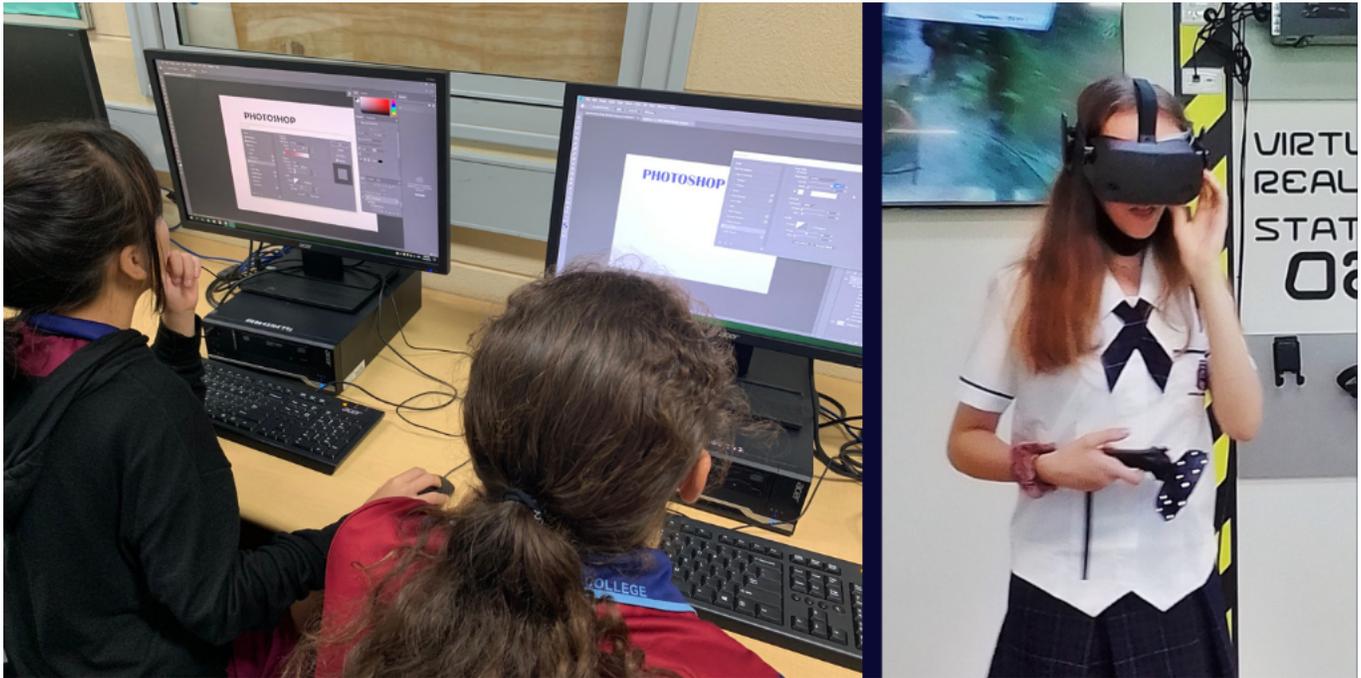


## Using Zenva Schools

When implementing Zenva Schools in her classroom, Lorena took a self-directed approach to learning, where students learned at their own pace. They completed the course with their headphones on, but also had the option to use the text-based lesson summaries: "So they don't have to have headphones, if they want to read, they can".

Lorena mentioned, "I also had to use it as a bridging opportunity for some students." She explained that there were instances when students would join the school mid-year and needed to catch up to the rest of the class, and others fell behind due to Covid-related

disruption, resulting in students needing extra help that couldn't be covered during school classes. Lorena was able to set them up with a course that they could actively complete on their own.

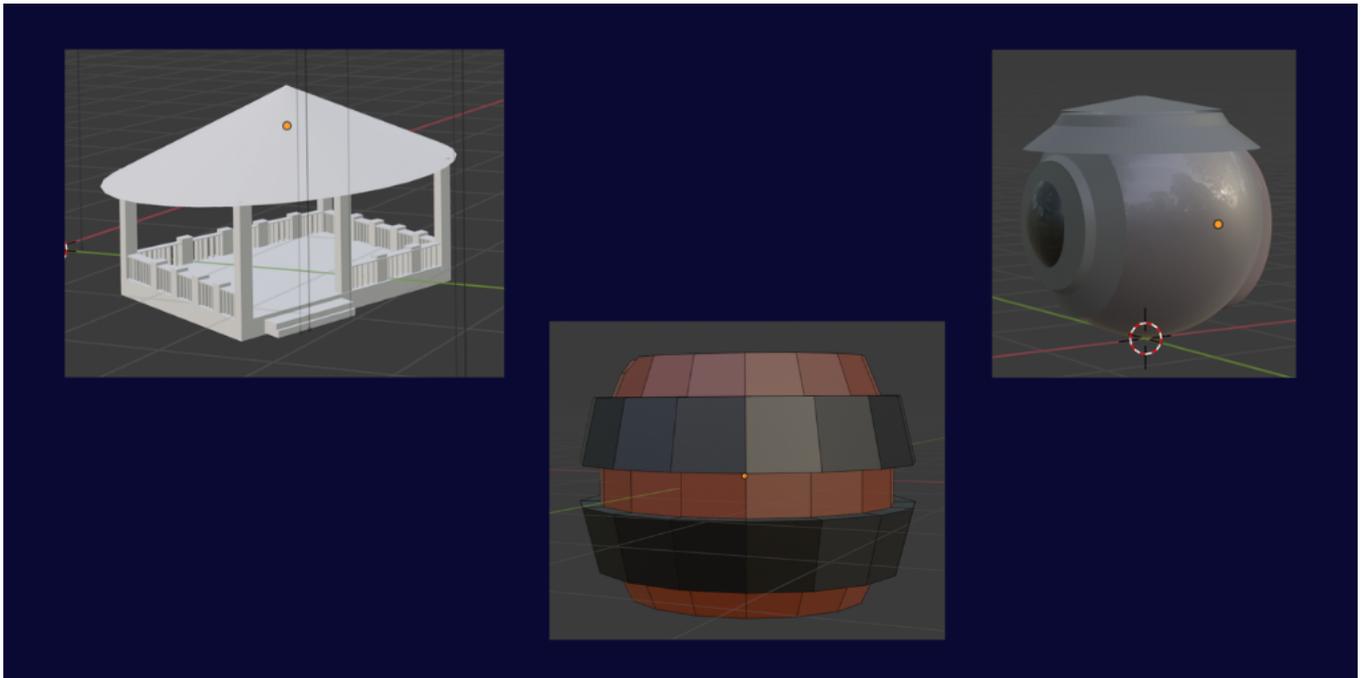


Lorena then monitored how students were progressing with their coursework – she would “check to see where they’re up to with all their programs”, and each time they tried something, they had to give her a screenshot.

When the students finished a course, she got them to document it, and submit it through Microsoft Teams. This allowed her to “see that they’ve actually completed their task and not just a screenshot from the video.

## The Results

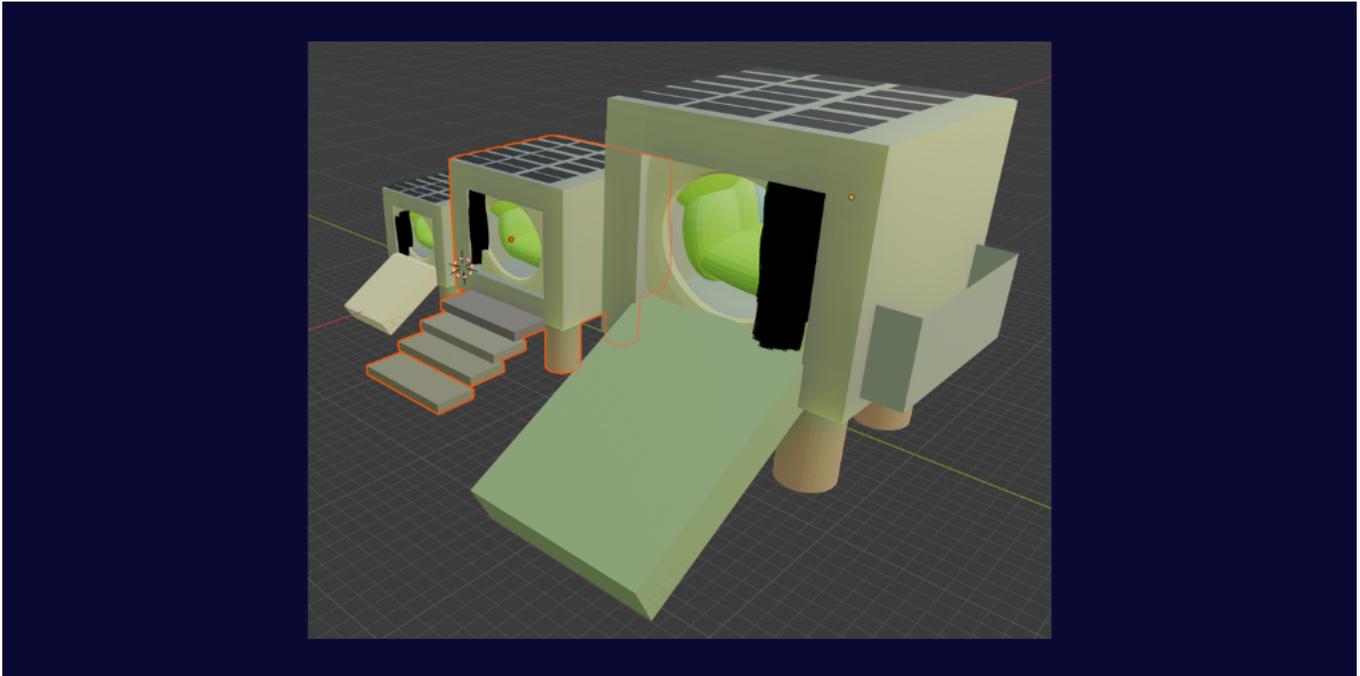
Lorena found that for her and her staff, Zenva Schools made it easier for teachers to learn and understand the topics before the students. “I think that it’s great for teachers to be able to learn first... you’ve got all the slides for some of your lessons so they can come back and access the information later on. I like the fact that you’ve got some progression, so from introduction to medium to high.”



*Projects created by Bentley Park College students*

Additionally, the quality and reliability of the content was better for upskilling herself and her team: “Your workshops are much easier than going to YouTube, finding random videos, and hoping that will work.” Lorena found the courses more “modern. They’re shorter, they’re quicker. They’re more direct.”

One of the most significant positive outcomes experienced at Bentley Park College was achieving a higher degree of self-directed learning. As Lorena had hoped for, by using Zenva Schools students gained more independence with their learning, and relied less on direct guidance from Lorena. She was able to tell students to “go find this video, go look at that, and they knew how to go back in there. It’s self-directed learning, so that was great.”



*Projects created by Bentley Park College students*

Zenva Schools was also highly effective at preventing students from falling behind. Students could easily access the course at home, or when she wasn't available to take the class, and could also revisit previously covered content if they needed to: "It's just that backup for kids who are away or if they miss something, they can go back and check it. I just love it. I think it's really awesome and I want more."

Lorena also enjoyed the various features of the Zenva Schools platform: "You can track [student progress] as well, and you've also got those little quizzes at the end of each round, I just found that really helpful."

## Analysis and Conclusion

Overall, Lorena loved our system and will continue to use it, and looks forward to using the game design courses with her Year 9 class in the upcoming term. She said, "I think it's really 21st century. It's really up to date and I love the fact that you've got so many things that the kids are into... There are so many opportunities there for students to be doing something that is in their world. So it's relevant for them".

Another major benefit for Lorena was that the platform used real programs and languages, instead of just a self-contained, proprietary platform, and taught skills that could be used in the outside world: "You can do your own project on the side, that's going

to build their skills. It means that kids can use that program later... they can see how it works outside.”

Lorena also intends to introduce Zenva Schools to the primary school students, and to expand how it is used for professional development among the staff: “I want to help them with Excel and stuff for year six... [The Excel courses are] really high end. It’s really full-on, but I found it helps the teachers to get confidence as well. So that I find is awesome”.

As a final message to other teachers about our platform, she said, “I would highly recommend it. I think if you want something that is current, up-to-date, and engaging for students, this is the way to go.”

***Interested in trying Zenva Schools? [Get in touch with us here.](#)***

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