

The Employability Challenge

Case Studies

February 2009

Introduction

This document is intended to accompany *The Employability Challenge*, which is based on the contributions of just over 200 organisations active in developing the employability skills of individuals. Twenty of these organisations participated in case studies, which are featured on the following pages and drawn on heavily in *The Employability Challenge*.

It is scarcely necessary to state that this is not, and does not pretend to be, a representative sample of the whole of UK practice in developing employability skills; there are certainly many examples of good practice which we were not able to review. The organisations listed below were featured in case studies because they all have distinctive qualities and/or a strong reputation in the field.

1. Belfast Metropolitan College
2. Birmingham City University
3. Career Academies UK
4. Creative Partnerships – Black Country
5. The Deloitte Employability Initiative
6. Fosse Way School
7. Harper Adams University College, ASPIRE
8. Local Employment Access Projects – STRIVE
9. Newham College
10. Prince's Trust, Get Into Programme – London
11. Renfrewshire Council, Sports Leader Awards Programme
12. Skill Force
13. Skills Training UK Ltd
14. Sponsors for Educational Opportunity London, Career Programme
15. Stanley High School Specialist Sports College
16. Training With Purpose
17. University of Dundee
18. University of Leicester
19. Young Enterprise, Company Programme
20. Ysgol Basaleg (Bassaleg School)

Case Studies

1 Belfast Metropolitan College

Developing employability through a Further Education College

Themes

Leadership and Resources, Programme Design and Delivery

Background

Located in six centres around the city of Belfast, County Antrim, Belfast Metropolitan College is the result of the merger between Belfast Institute and Casterleagh College, creating Northern Ireland's largest college with more than 50,000 enrolments. Over 1,000 full time and 800 part-time staff are employed by the College, which has an annual budget in the region of £45 million.

Belfast Metropolitan College offers both Further Education and Higher Education courses, including: NVQs, key skills, GCEs at AS and A-levels, Access to Higher Education courses, Foundation Degrees, Modern Apprenticeships, Foundation courses, BTEC National Certificates and Diplomas, Higher National Certificates and Diplomas, and Degrees.

Belfast has approximately half a million people within its urban area and has seen the number of tourists increase five-fold since 1994. There are growing employment opportunities in health and environmental technologies, information and communication technologies, and business services – especially the hospitality and tourism sectors.

Programme Overview

The College places a strong emphasis on supporting students to develop the necessary skills it feels are required for employment. As such, the college has an Essential and Key Skills Policy, which ensures all students, where appropriate to their learning programme or personal development, have an opportunity to achieve accreditation in the relevant Essential Skills¹ and/or Key Skills².

The following statement from the college prospectus illustrates the importance the college places on these skills: “Essential Skills are the most important, universal and transferable skills that are required by everyone in order to succeed in education, work and everyday life.”

The college determines the level of support required for each learner through a process of Initial Assessment and discussion prior to, or in the first few weeks, of entry to a learning

¹ Essential Skills are defined by the college as Literacy, Numeracy and Information Technology from Entry level 1 through to level 2.

² Key Skills are Communication, Application of Number, Information Technology, Working With Others, Improve Own Learning and Performance, and Problem Solving.

programme. The outcome of the assessment is an Individual Learning Plan, which outlines the planned achievement of both the main programme of study and the Essential or Key Skills.

Employer Engagement

The College feels it has a good reputation in the business community, but recognises that with the reliance on small businesses in the local area there is a potential problem for its students, when seeking full time employment, of under-employment. The college is keen to support the local economy by producing students with the necessary technical and personal skills (such as creativity, entrepreneurial flair, teamwork and innovation). To address this issue, the college promotes a close relationship with employers through work placements and designing learning activities, to help better integrate the students' skills into the workplace. As a result, students gain a more meaningful context and purpose to their learning and are better prepared for work.

An Employability co-ordinator works with academic departments to find more interesting ways of developing employability, suited to the needs of the students and the subject areas they are studying. An example of how the college is adapting to different approaches to developing employability skills, is through the planned £16 million E3 (Employability, Entrepreneurship and Enterprise) campus that will focus on project-based learning. Here, local businesses will be able to tap into the skills of college students to tackle real business issues. Students will gain valuable experience of working life and applying their skills in a meaningful way, and local businesses will receive support to help maintain and develop their competitiveness. This link with employers is seen to help students develop more relevant learning to meet current and local labour market needs, provide a higher-value experience for students and help them become better prepared for the world of work.

The college also has a Placement and Employability Unit – which actively seeks work placements, ranging typically from one month for a student on a Higher National Diploma course, to six months for a student working towards a Foundation Degree.

Staff Development

Belfast Metropolitan College is one of nine Deloitte Employability Centres (see case study 5 for further details on Deloitte), which has been recognised by Deloitte as providing high quality teaching and learning on their employability skills programmes. As such, the college is licensed to deliver a residential course to other practitioners. The college sees this as something which simultaneously helps to develop the skills of their own teaching staff, as well as students, by expanding the skills of its lecturers to deliver teaching and learning in different ways. As a result, the college places more emphasis on delivering employability teaching and learning to students through experiential learning – learning by doing. The Employer Engagement Manager, Paul White, commented: "Lots of lecturers are already delivering employability teaching and learning, this programme helps bring some new activities, different approaches and more fun into the experience. It challenges students to move beyond their comfort zone and lecturers are able to bring 'fresh' delivery methods into the learning process."

Impact

The College plans to measure the impact of its approach to employability learning across a number of different indicators. These include:

Students & College

- Recruitment – are the activities helping to attract students in the numbers required?
- Retention – are the activities helping to retain students on courses by focusing on employment, developing personal skills and motivating students?
- Achievement – are the activities supporting students to successfully complete qualifications?
- Progression – do the activities encourage students to enrol for further studies e.g. lifelong learning programmes, professional qualifications etc?
- Employment – are students achieving appropriate employment following studies and do salary levels exceed the local average?
- Discipline – do lecturers benefit from the enhanced behaviours of students e.g. timekeeping, ownership of personal learning, contribution to class, completion of assignments, etc?
- Lecturers – are they more fulfilled by the variety in teaching methods of employability learning?

Employers and the economy

- Multi-skilling – do the students (when employees) provide a flexible resource option e.g. are they capable of work/activities in a number of areas? Are they ready to make a contribution having had an opportunity ‘to practice’ at the College?
- Profit and efficiency – do the students contribute effectively to the performance of the organisation?
- Investment – is Northern Ireland a more attractive prospect to investors as a result of the skills and effectiveness of our workforce?

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2 Birmingham City University

Developing employability through a Higher Education Institution

Themes

Employer Involvement, Leadership and Resources, Programme Design and Delivery

Background

Located across six faculties over seven campuses, the University delivers over 300 courses to a student population of approximately 23,000. The former Polytechnic, which had been forged by combining a number of smaller institutions, was given university status in 1992. The City of Birmingham has a population of just over 1 million people, with 67.8 per cent of the population White, 20.4 per cent Asian or Asian British and 6.6 per cent Black or Black British³. The local economy is dominated by the service sector, including banking, finance, insurance and a rapid growth in tourism. Over 70 per cent of Birmingham City University's students are from the West Midlands.

Programme Overview

The development of employability skills is a key service provided by the University. It is seen as part of a wider move towards a closer relationship with employers. "Courses have a strong focus on relevance for the job market and there's an excellent careers service."⁴

The University describes employability as a "hot topic" because:

- it is an important part of the new mission and vision
- it is a major part of both the Learning and Teaching and Student Experience Strategies
- Birmingham City University has won a major employability project with the National Teaching Fellowship Scheme
- employability is part of the "philosophy" of the Redesign of the Learning Experience (RoLEX) Learning & Teaching project

The University continues to move strategically towards embedding employability, and Ruth Lawton, who is Learning & Teaching Fellow for Employability, quotes Peter Hawkins in a position statement on the relevance of employability for students: "To be employed is to be at risk, to be employable is to be secure".⁵

Definition of employability skills

The Enhancing Student Employment Co-ordination Team (ESECT) who produced the Learning & Employability series of publications for the Higher Education Academy defines

3 Regional Population Estimates by Ethnic Group (2005). Office of National Statistics

4 *Guardian University Guide*, May 2008

5 The Art of Building Windmills: Career Tactics for the 21st Century, Dr. Peter Hawkins and the Graduates Into Employment Unit (GIEU), 1999.

employability as: "A set of achievements, understandings and personal attributes that make individuals more likely to gain employment and be successful in their chosen occupations." (Brenda Little & ESECT colleagues May 2006)

The University views being employable as a synthesis of four factors:

- skills and knowledge relating to a job
- a job search strategy (being able to identify suitable opportunities)
- presentation (producing effective written applications and performing well in interviews)
- external factors (e.g. the labour market and personal circumstances)

Developing employability

Since September 2005, it has been a requirement of the higher education Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) that all students have access to Personal Development Planning. The University has created a University-wide Central PDP, delivered through the University's virtual learning environment (Moodle software). The Central PDP is designed and maintained by the Educational Staff Development Unit (ESDU) in the Centre for Enhancement of Learning & Teaching (CELT), and contains a wide range of interactive learning materials, comprised of five 'courses' and based on Kolb's theory of experiential learning:

- self awareness
- action planning
- reflection
- career and employability
- self employment

In addition to the resources and support provided by CELT for Personal Development Planning, the Careers Service also supports students in developing specific skills and qualities identified as enhancing their employability. Support is offered through both careers advisors and development materials available to students online. An example of how students are supported is this series of reflective questions:

- *Do you have a career plan?*

Support material: "I don't know what I want to do."

- Exploration of the type of person you are
- Making the match between you and work
- Putting things into practice
- Sources of help and support

- *What skills, knowledge, qualities and experience will you need?*

Support material: "Make yourself employable."

- What skills and qualities do employers say they want
- Opportunities to develop employability skills: degree programme, work experience, volunteer work, extracurricular activity, and networking

- Self assessment checklist of 22 employability skills and examples of where used
- Guidance on how to express your employability skills
- *Do you know who offers the opportunities you want?*
Support material: Networking – proactive job search
 - Making a start
 - Being proactive
 - Speculative approaches
 - Questions to ask an employer
 - Keeping track of networking activity
- *How should you communicate with the providers of these opportunities?*
 - Support material: CVs and covering letters
 - Support material: interview tips
 - Support material: psychometric tests and assessment centres

Employer engagement

In addition to strong links with local and national employers through work placements, Birmingham City University offers Service by Design. This is a business development programme which analyses an organisation's products and services from the customer's point of view to identify growth opportunities using a suite of tools unique to the University. More and more organisations are basing company procedures and processes around a customer focus to maximise market place potential.

When these opportunities have been identified and agreed with the organisation, a programme is put in place to take full advantages of them using selected, trained University academics and other University based programmes. These programmes would generally be between 10 and 20 days long and would last for 3-6 months depending on the work to be done.

The University has become a nationally recognised Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) in Stakeholder Learning Partnerships. The CETL is creating a model of learning partnerships engendering dynamic and responsive curricula that enhances student learning experiences and outcomes. These partnerships aim to better anticipate, plan for and meet the emerging educational and training needs of present and future employees of the health and social care sector. It is creating a transferable model involving the stakeholders of students, academic and support staff, service users and health and social care sector staff in order to:

- engage a wider Faculty and realise a wider Campus
- prepare students for employment and continually changing roles
- embed organisational change to enable innovation

The University is undergoing a complete redesign of all its curricula as it moves – in line with most other Higher Education institutions – to a 15-credit module structure. This process, known internally as Redesign of the Learning Experience (RoLEx), has put employer engagement as a priority for all courses. Many of Birmingham City University's courses are vocational and content is recognised and/or specified by Professional or Statutory Regulatory Bodies, but the RoLEx project is expecting local employers as well as professional bodies to be consulted to ensure that a permanent relationship and valuable two-way dialogue is established. Seventy per cent of the graduates from the University will be employed in the West Midlands, so maintaining and enhancing good connections with the local labour market and economy is crucial.

The University is also working in collaboration with Career Innovation to develop a tool to help profile placement students with employers. This will be piloted early in 2009. A more complete listing of services to employers can be found at:
http://www.bcu.ac.uk/business/services_to_business.html

Programme design

Experience and research shows that students are particularly influenced by and motivated to engage with assessed aspects of the curriculum. Ruth Lawton and her colleague within CELT, Jo Powell who is the Tutor for PDP and Employability, design and deliver workshops for academic staff to enable them to enhance the PDP and employability provision in their curriculum. Resources used might be examples of good practice from across the University identified from previous workshops, or designed in-house. For example, the 'Embedding Employability and PDP' materials created collaboratively by CELT and the Careers Service which can be downloaded from: http://www.bcu.ac.uk/studentservices/careers/staffinfo_employabilityembed.html. Ruth, Jo and their colleagues have also supported the RoLEx project with curriculum design by working as consultants with course teams and individual staff to integrate PDP, employability and employer engagement into the academic curriculum.

To provide further opportunities for students to develop their employability skills through their studies, and to complement the PDP provided by CELT and support provided by the Career Service, the University is undertaking a project jointly funded by the Higher Education Academy (HEA) to create 'future-proof' graduates. This is a two-year initiative, aimed at producing training and education resources in consultation with employers – to help graduates apply their skills and knowledge in the workplace. Project manager Dr. Celia Popovic, who is Head of Educational Staff Development at the University's Centre for the Enhancement of Learning and Teaching (CELT), said:

"Traditionally, university has focused on giving students skills and subject knowledge, but not on how to apply them in the workplace. If we can show students how to apply their skills and knowledge and how to adapt to changing circumstances in the workplace, they will be more employable as graduates. They will also be able to transfer those abilities on and in that sense they become truly future-proof."

The project is developing teaching resources, such as case studies and scenarios, using a mixture of board games, videos, IT and the Virtual Learning Environment (Moodle).

The scenarios are being developed in consultation with employers and will demonstrate common workplace situations requiring an employee to adapt, think on their feet and apply skills, knowledge and experience to the problem.

These resources will form a staff development tool for lecturers across the whole FE and HE sector who can then pass them on to students. They will be equally useful for students in any discipline.

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3 Career Academies UK

Developing employability through Further Education

Themes

Employer Involvement, Programme Design and Delivery

Background

Career Academies UK is a registered charity, with roots in the United States, which has been working since 2002 to raise the aspirations of middle-achieving 16 to 19 year olds studying in 6th form. From September 2008, over 100 schools and colleges and approximately 2000 students throughout England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales will be working with the charity to deliver the Career Academy programme aims. There is currently a Career Academy in one third of the most deprived ward areas, and many of the schools and colleges are located in former manufacturing areas where old industries and jobs have disappeared and are being replaced by the new ‘knowledge economy’. New employers are demanding well-educated students with a high level of employability skills, the right ambition and an understanding of new and different working life demands. The Career Academy Programme runs over two years of the sixth-form study and aims to transform young people’s life chances by raising their aspirations for the future and better preparing them to advance to higher education and employment.

Career Academies UK is funded by a combination of charitable donations from schools and colleges (24%), corporate support (59%) and grants from the public sector (13%). It draws on the support of over 600 private and public sector employers who: provide funding, Partners in Business, internships, Guru Lecturers, host workplace visits, serve on the National or Local Advisory Board and help attract the involvement of other employers.

Programme Overview

Participating schools and colleges engage in a Year of Planning before launching their Career Academy programme at the beginning of the academic year, which has the following three streams of activity:

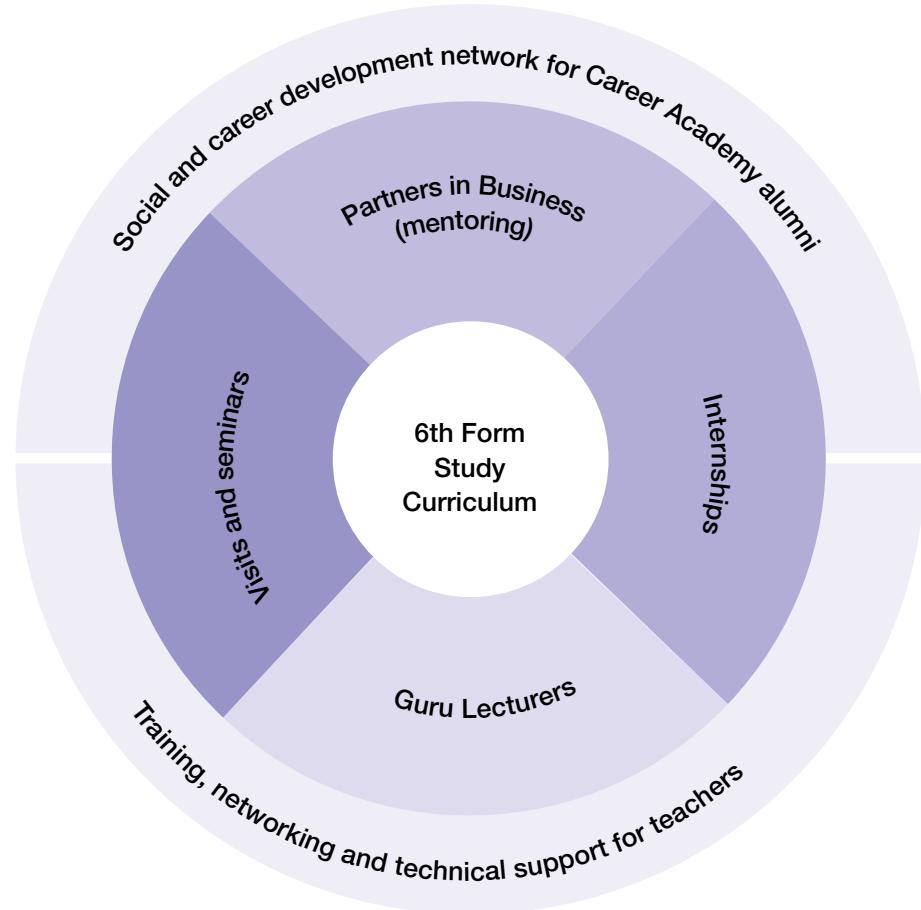
1. teaching and learning, which includes designing the curriculum, planning delivery and professional development for the staff involved in the Career Academy
2. partnership and planning, which includes recruiting business partners and securing their involvement in a range of activities and setting up a Local Advisory Board
3. leadership and management, which involves developing a robust and sustainable support structure in the school/college for the programme

Schools and colleges that successfully complete the Year of Planning become affiliated with Career Academies UK and are ready to implement and enrol their first students.

Schools pay £2500 in the year of planning and £100 per student per year once their Career Academy is up and running for support, employer engagement and branding from Career

Academies UK, which includes a regional field team and access to a network of supporters.

Career Academy programmes are based on the following model, which has a core that can be consistently applied in a variety of locations and themes, and allows for local innovation in delivery.



Classroom learning and formal qualifications

At the centre of the present model is a compulsory business studies and theme-related core, which can be delivered through a range of business studies-related qualifications. All of the approved qualifications are part of the National Qualifications Framework. All of the business qualifications should carry appropriate UCAS points.

Alongside the compulsory business studies core is a theme related qualification in finance, IT, marketing and communications and, as of September of 2008, engineering and business & media. All themes are required to incorporate employability units drawn from the BTEC Award in Personal Business Finance qualification, *Preparing for Employment* and *Learning from Employment*.

Partners in Business

Students are encouraged to have a Partner in Business or mentor who is a volunteer from the local business community. This is the only non-compulsory part of the programme.

Mentors and students have hour-and-a-half one-to-one meetings twice a term for 18 months, during which they discuss life skills, coursework and issues that will prepare the student for their internship, university or employment. Partners in Business help students develop the soft skills they need for adult life and open a window onto the world of work.

Students and Partners in Business are well prepared for making the relationship a success through briefings and detailed guidance in the student logbook and partner handbook.

The student logbook contains: suggested objectives and goals for each meeting, a space for recording notes and a place to reflect on progress towards agreed goals between meetings. The partner handbook contains: an overview of the Career Academy programme, a detailed description of the mentor's role, tips and tools for making the relationship a success, a description of what they can expect from a 16-19 year old, and suggested objectives for each meeting.

This relationship provides a rich opportunity for the both the Partner in Business and the student. Below are two quotations from students about their experiences:

“As part of the Career Academy, I was lucky enough to be assigned a mentor at Zurich. At first, I thought Steve would just be able to help me out with the finance part of my coursework. He's got a vast knowledge of financial-based work so, more often than not, was able to help me with any queries. But the mentoring sessions became much more relaxed than I expected. I gained a genuine friend as well. We both love football and golf, so talked about those as well as work-related issues and anything else that had happened in our lives since our last meeting. So it was always enjoyable. I'd advise any student to have a mentor; it's a great opportunity. It helped when I went on my summer internship too, at Capita Life and Pension Services in Swindon.” *Cameron Holloway, Career Academy graduate from Cirencester College.*

“I had a mentor as part of the Career Academy too, John from Citi. The first time I went to Citi was to meet him. I was really scared, but he made me feel OK. I did my summer internship at Citi as well, in the IT department. Preparing for that was one of the things John helped me with. I used to think that people in Canary Wharf were really different and that I was invisible to them. I now realise they're just like me.” *Sultana Jeasmin, Career Academy graduate from Tower Hamlets College.*

Internships

In the summer between the first and second year of the programme, students undertake a six week paid internship during which they do work that is of benefit to them and their employer. At Cirencester College, for example, Career Academy students do internships with employers such as a FTSE 100 wealth management company, a large financial services provider, a building society, and an accountancy firm. Some students stay in a department that matches their career choice and others rotate around the organisation to learn how the departments link together operationally. Their work has included data entry, building a company website, updating handbooks and contributions to wider organisation projects. The internship allows students to practice the skills they have developed during the first year of the programme and motivates their continued participation in the second year.

Here is what one employer and one member of a Career Academy said about their experiences:

“Our managers are getting to appreciate the value and potential of Career Academy students and we’re finding a greater groundswell of interest internally when internship time comes around. The interns have proved more than just a spare pair of hands. We’ve focused the placements on key initiatives within the company wherever possible and the interns have certainly proved their worth to our business. I’ve been pleasantly surprised by the quality of their work and solutions they’ve come up with. It’s a chance for them to apply their classroom learning while acquiring new practical skills. At the same time, it’s an opportunity to grow our own employees’ coaching and leadership skills, in a low cost, no risk environment. We’ve hosted interns for three summers now.” *Ian Woolley, Hadley Group’s HR Manager*

“My internship will always stick in my mind. It was a great experience and gave me a lot of help into understanding the real world of work. My internship got me my job. The interviewer was impressed with all that I had done and with the fact I had relevant work experience.” *Career Academy graduate, Orpington College*

Guru Lecturers

A Guru Lecturer is someone who volunteers to talk to a group of Career Academy students in the classroom. By sharing their business expertise and experiences, they complement other teaching resources, enhance teachers’ knowledge and help to ground the curriculum in the real and current world of work. At Cirencester College, for example, a representative from a local recruitment agency came in to work with Career Academy students to develop their job search skills. On a different occasion, a director from a major financial services provider came to the College to talk with students about the importance of customer service.

Here is what a member of a Career Academy Team said about their experience:

“The Cheshire Building Society delivered two Guru Lectures in the classroom and a workshop at their training centre. All the students got distinctions in that coursework; our first taste of the link between the Career Academy model and academic achievement.”

David Coppock, Career Academy Coordinator from Tytherington High School and Specialist Science College.

Visits and Seminars

Employers host Career Academy groups in the workplace for tours, presentations, trading games, practice interviews, CV development sessions and more. This includes an annual national student conference ‘A Capital Experience’, organised by Career Academies UK. This event held in London is for first-year students, and combines interactive sessions, motivational speakers and visits to two major companies.

One Career Academy student had this to say about her experience: “It isn’t just classroom based. We visited the Lehman Brothers offices and Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer. At Freshfields we had to do a buying and selling task and try to make a profit. We were given

snippets of information about the political and economic situation and had to make decisions very quickly, as a group, on whether to buy or sell. It was exciting – that's one of those experiences that will stick with me." *Sultana Jeasmin, Career Academy graduate from Tower Hamlets College.*

Social and career development network for Career Academy alumni

An alumni network to help students keep in touch as their careers progress was recently launched, which is maintained by an innovative social networking site.

Training, networking and technical support for teachers

Career Academy teachers and staff have a range of opportunities to exchange ideas with other Career Academy schools and colleges. For example, national and regional training days and conferences are held for Career Academy teachers and visits to each school/college are carried out to support the planning and implementation of the Programmes. Some Career Academies also provide development opportunities locally. For example, at Cirencester College, teachers are actively encouraged to do an "externship", which is a short-term placement in a local business to refresh their knowledge of a particular industry and a non-academic workplace more generally.

Here is what one Career Academy teaching team member said:

"It's important for me too, being able to network with other Career Academy teachers. As a teacher, you meet people at training days, but this is ongoing. We've met up this year at various student events in London. Then there was the Annual Conference in June with all the Career Academy teachers from across the UK. It's a community; there are people I can call on. If I'm stuck on setting an assignment, other teachers will share what they've done. And the Career Academy Coordinator in Orpington College recommended a great speaker from PricewaterhouseCooper. I wouldn't have known about her otherwise." *Smitta Sodha, Career Academy Coordinator at Lambeth College.*

Impact

Early evidence of the Career Academy programme has demonstrated impact. Based on GCSE grades prior to starting the programme, 40 per cent of participants were likely to go on to higher education. Over 90 per cent of participants actually progress to university, or into employment with further training opportunities. 96 per cent of Career Academy students felt that participating in the programme raised their aspirations for the future.

Research carried out in May 2008 by Bain and Co showed that personal satisfaction and the opportunity to give back to the community were the top 2 most important benefits for supporters getting involved with a Career Academy. The research also showed that the most important benefit to an organisation when getting involved with a Career Academy is meeting the CSR agenda.

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4 Creative Partnerships – Black Country

Developing employability through a Government initiative

Theme

Programme Design and Delivery

Background

Established in 2002, Creative Partnerships is the Government's flagship creativity programme for schools and young people. It is managed by the Arts Council England and funded by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport with additional support from the Department for Education and Skills. Operating across 36 deprived communities in England, the programme works with schools to develop:

- the creativity of young people, raising their aspirations and achievements
- the skills of teachers and their ability to work with creative practitioners
- schools' approaches to culture, creativity and partnership working
- the skills, capacity and sustainability of the creative industries

The programme is delivered at the regional level by independent delivery organisations, or delivery organisations that are hosted within other organisations. Schools now apply and participate in Creative Partnerships at one of three levels:

1. Schools of Creativity – schools that participate at this level are national exemplars of the programme. They have participated in Creative Partnerships for two or more years and are entitled to £15,000 from Creative Partnerships each year for three years. They are required to match this funding with £5,000 per year for the three years. They are also entitled to 20 days per year of support from a creative agent. There are 30 Schools of Creativity across England
2. Change Schools – schools that participate at this level face significant challenges and are using Creative Partnerships as a vehicle for whole school change. It is an in-depth process of experimentation and change lasting up to three years. Schools at this level are given £15,000 per year for up to three years from Creative Partnerships, which they must match with £5,000 per year for each year that they are with the programme. They are also entitled to 15 days' support per year for three years from a creative agent. The progress schools make towards their aims is measured rigorously throughout their years of involvement
3. Enquiry Schools – schools that participate at this level are just beginning their relationship with Creative Partnerships. These schools receive £3,000 for one school year, which they have to match with £1,000. They are entitled to 6 days of support from a creative agent. Enquiry schools run smaller programmes that are focused on answering particular questions

In all cases, Creative Partnerships programmes are deeply rooted in the School Improvement Plan, involve in-depth planning and often start with a guiding question that the school wants to explore. They involve:

- a teacher who usually initiates the relationship with Creative Partnerships, gathers the students for the programme and serves as a point of contact in the school for the programme
- a creative agent, who is a creative arts professional, that guides the work, serves as a critical friend, broker and a consultant
- resource staff with the right skills
- a creative practitioner, who is also a creative arts professional, who delivers the programme to the students and staff at the school. Creative practitioners bring a new approach, language and practice to working with young people. This different approach is often helpful in engaging students who may otherwise be disengaged. The approach often challenges teachers and students and requires them to stretch themselves

National evaluations have found that Creative Partnerships projects:

- increase student performance in areas such as English, Maths and Science
- improve pupils' confidence, motivation and attendance
- develop communication, ICT and teamwork skills
- improve students' ability to show enterprise and handle change

These skills are at the core of employability. Many Creative Partnerships projects also expose students to aspects of the world of work and in doing so further enhance their employability.

The following overview will focus on the approach to delivery and specific examples from Creative Partnerships Black Country.

Programme Overview – Creative Partnerships Black Country

Creative Partnerships Black Country is hosted by Black Country Children's Services Improvement Partnership, which sits within the Education Partnerships Division of the University of Wolverhampton. As of September 2008, the programme will cover six local authority areas (Wolverhampton, Walsall, Sandwell, Dudley, Telford and Shropshire) and, from November 2008, will work with 84 core schools. The following steps are taken to set up a Creative Partnership in Black Country:

Marketing & Outreach (January – February)

Schools come to Creative Partnerships as a result of outreach done by the Creative Partnerships team, which includes awareness letters sent out to local schools and after-school presentations in participating local authorities. Schools also learn about the programme through word of mouth.

Application Submissions (through end of May)

Interested schools submit an application to a competitive bidding process and have access to planning surgeries run by the creative agents to receive guidance on their application.

Panels & Interviews (mid-June)

For Enquiry Schools, a panel made up of the Creative Partnerships Black Country team, representatives from the local authorities involved and a local creative sector consultant review the applications, score them against criteria defined by the national Creative Partnerships team and inform all participants of the results. The application for Change Schools goes a step further in that a shortlist of schools are required to do a presentation for the panel on why they are ready to become a Change School. The application for the Schools of Creativity goes a step further in that the Black Country review panel recommends four applicants to the national Creative Partnerships team, and shortlisted participants are visited for a day-long school review.

Invitations (June & July)

Once schools are selected to participate, the programme team and creative agents spend a half day matching the schools with a creative agent based on the agent's skill set, the school's guiding question and location.

Induction (September)

Schools are invited to an induction session in September during which they are:

- given an overview of what it means to be a Creative Partnerships school
- informed of what they can expect from the Creative Partnerships team and what the team will expect of them
- given the timescale for evaluation and monitoring information needed by the Creative Partnerships team
- introduced to their creative agent with whom they plan their next couple of steps
- creative practitioners are then recruited and selected for each school by the Creative Partnerships co-ordinator and creative agent with input from pupils

From here, the specifics of what students will do as part of their experience are handled by the school, creative agent and practitioner. Below are descriptions of two programmes run in Black Country.

Deansfield High School, Wolverhampton

In 2004/2005, while working with their creative agent, a group of students expressed interest in knowing more about a ten acre brown-field site close to the school called the Mayfields, which was under development. The site had contained poor quality flats, which had become run down and were contributing to social problems. The council moved all residents and demolished the whole development, allowing the borough architect and planners to regenerate the site. Several pupils and members of their extended families were

directly involved, so they were interested in the development plan, which included over a hundred new homes, along with a medical centre and sheltered accommodation. The creative agent encouraged the students to find out more, which led to extensive cross-curricular work.

Picking up on the students' interests and working with the creative agent, teaching staff began to consider how they could use urban regeneration and the changing built environment as a stimulus for teaching. They met with officers from the City Council and persuaded the lead officer for Neighbourhood Renewal to visit the school. After a question and answer session with year 11 students, he decided to use the school as a sounding board for ideas. As a result, a meeting was arranged between the school and the chosen developers of the Mayfields site and ideas for collaboration began to evolve. The students, and several teachers, became involved in the collaboration in different ways:

- Year 8 pupils were given the chance to name the development and, after extensive research and consultation, came up with 'Deans Park'
- Year 8 pupils also undertook extensive community consultation about the development, for example, they created a large scale model of the planned site, which was used to stimulate discussion with local residents and tease out local priorities. Pupils collated their findings, including concerns about safety, transport and the environment, into a power point presentation, which was shared with the planning committee and leader of the council
- The developer sub-contacted with a design company to dress a show home for the new site. A senior partner from the design company worked alongside an art teacher at Deansfield to facilitate the students' contribution to the design of the show home. They co-developed and co-delivered a nine-week programme for a GCSE design textiles class, during which the pupils created original fabrics and canvases. Their fabric designs were used for cushions and curtains in the show home
- During visits to the development site, pupils met with sales and marketing staff and asked them about the skills and qualifications needed for their role. From these conversations came the idea of having trainee sales advisors
- With support from the developer and the local Education Business Partnership, the school launched a competition for year 10 students to be recruited and trained to lead visits to the show home for potential buyers. A job specification was drawn up with the HR team for a post offering training, a uniform and a negotiable pay rate. The head of marketing and head of sales for the developer led the recruitment process. Over fifty pupils applied, fifteen were interviewed and four were selected to attend a six-week training course in the sales office and show home led by a team from the developer and overseen by a humanities teacher and the creative agent. The students shadowed staff and watched actual sales transactions, learned about product knowledge, were taught techniques in meeting and greeting, and given information about mortgages, finance, sales and marketing

- The pupils or apprentice sales advisors helped to host three open events for visitors. For the visit, the company provided official name badges, corporate scarves and ties, and took each student shopping for a suit that met the company's dress code
- Three of the four pupils subsequently gained part-time employment in the retail and service sectors and all acknowledged how much the experience had helped them secure their jobs

Impact

Working with Creative Partnerships Black Country since 2002, on the projects mentioned above as well as others, has helped Deansfield raise student achievement and aspirations. For example:

- Over a five-year period, pupils achieving 5 A-C grades at GCSE increased from 19 per cent to 63 per cent
- The school has also seen a dramatic rise in pupils applying to University. In 2002 one pupil from Deansfield successfully applied for a higher education course, in 2007/08, 26 pupils will enrol on access and degree courses

The work has also provided students with experience, skills and knowledge that are invaluable for the world of work.

George Salter Collegiate Academy, West Bromwich

One Creative Partnerships project that the school recently completed with Year 9, 10 and 11 students began with the question: "How can we use digital media to improve our students' ability to construct, comprehend and contest meaning to nurture their confidence and self-esteem?" To pursue this question, 22 students aged 13-16 worked with a creative agent who is a producer and a lead practitioner who is a filmmaker for a year to embed film and media into the school and 'out of hours' provision. Together they developed an after-school film club, which produced a 30-minute urban drama.

Students initially met after school for two hours every Wednesday. The sessions began with generating ideas for the film using open discussion, brainstorms and story development games. Once basic ideas had been devised, the students worked in smaller groups to develop storylines, produce ideas for characters and script selected scenes. The small group fed their ideas back to the whole group to share their process and to identify links or themes to tie the storylines together. All the material and ideas were then given to the filmmaker who turned them into a film format script.

This part of the process was aimed at teaching students (how to):

- work effectively independently and in groups
- appreciate their own and other's ideas
- confidence to share their own thoughts
- generate and adapt ideas
- literacy skills

- communication skills
- listening skills
- negotiation skills
- the role of script writing and idea development within the film industry
- story and film script structure

Once the script was completed, rehearsals began. Pupils were encouraged to bring the unique attributes of each character to life. They worked on each scene using techniques such as vocal work, improvisation, re-writes, line learning and blocking to ensure that they were well thought out, easy to understand and well rehearsed. Rehearsals were filmed to allow pupils to get used to working in front of a camera.

Pupils also decided on locations, props and costumes and actively sought permission to film in homes and other local areas. They worked with staff and members of the community including the police to get extras to star in the film.

Filming took place over five days, primarily during weekends and half-term. Pupils acted and worked alongside a professional crew, comprised of a director (their lead practitioner), camera operator, sound operator and production assistant, giving ideas for shots and problem solving when timings didn't go according to plan.

The rehearsal and filming part of the process aimed to develop and teach the following skills and abilities, which are essential for the workplace generally and the creative industries in particular:

- acting and vocal skills
- line learning – memory development
- adapting to different roles and flexibility
- working in changing environments
- production skills
- confidence and self esteem
- time management and self discipline
- the roles of a filming crew

The final film, called *Normals*, was shown in March 2008 at a local cinema in Wolverhampton and was viewed by about 150 students from the Academy, as well as staff and other stakeholders. The film focused on the varying definition among different groups of students of what it means to be normal. The overall message was to recognise the differences and celebrate the similarities.

Impact

In the Academy's progress report, it was observed: "One particularly telling moment during the [screening] evening was when two of our Year 11 students spoke to the audience about the positive impact being involved in the process has had on their lives. It was wonderful to hear about their improved self-esteem. What was equally impressive was the

fact that they spoke confidently and fluently in front of such a large audience; twelve months ago these children would not have had the confidence to deliver such speeches.”

Students turned up on time every day, demonstrated commitment and worked with others who were not from their year or group of friends. They learned:

- the process of filmmaking
- how to communicate their ideas – verbally, in writing and on film
- how to compromise and collaborate to get to an end goal
- to build relationships with community members to get their support and participation (e.g. local police officers were recruited to star in the film)

The learning that students did is evident throughout the project as well as in the final film, which was high quality with outstanding performances from all pupils. These achievements are particularly notable as many participating students had previously struggled in school daily. The core group of young people involved in the programme have sustained the film club, with less support from the creative agent and lead practitioner. They have recruited new members and begun their next film.

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5 The Deloitte Employability Initiative

Developing employability through Further Education

Key Themes

Employer Involvement, Leadership and Resources, Programme Design and Delivery

Background

Since 2001 the Deloitte community investment team has been working with employers, training consultants, further education colleges and government to design and deliver a course that will provide young people with the skills, attitudes and behaviours they need to secure and sustain employment.

Deloitte believe that teaching employability skills to students requires specialist skills and The Deloitte Foundation has committed £2 million of funding until 2011 to train a new generation of employability trainers who will teach the Deloitte employability course in colleges across the UK. Nine Deloitte Employability Centres have been appointed to deliver the Train the Trainer course, and the Deloitte Foundation will fund up to 800 Further Education teachers to receive this training. These new Deloitte Employability Trainers will teach the Deloitte employability course to up to 40,000 students by 2011.

More than 200 Further Education teachers have already completed Deloitte Train the Trainer courses and they have in turn delivered Deloitte employability courses to more than 1,500 young people, with 4,000 more having enrolled in September 2009 in 58 Further Education colleges across the UK.

Programme Overview

Deloitte has developed a Train the Trainer course for teachers who wish to develop the skills to deliver employability skills effectively in any context. The 4-day residential training course and e-learning modules deliver personal and professional development for teachers, and cover the key requirements of the new LLUK teaching standards for employability. The course can also be used as the basis for achieving an Edexcel Level 4 BTEC Professional Award for Teachers of Employability and can count towards the required 30 hours of CPD. Further Education teachers and colleges can apply for places on a Deloitte Train the Trainer course and if successful these places are fully funded by the Deloitte Foundation. Training is delivered at one of 9 Regional Deloitte Employability Centres across the UK – Further Education Colleges or Universities appointed by Deloitte as centres of excellence for Deloitte employability skills training and delivery.

Content, Design and Materials

The Deloitte employability course has evolved since 2001 in consultation with training providers, government, training consultants and employers. Delegates on the course receive a full set of teaching and learning materials for a 100-150glh course which includes

detailed lesson plans for each session. The distinguishing feature of these employability courses is that learning is based around practical exercises, simulations, role-plays and scenarios that replicate real employment and workplace situations. Students are encouraged to regard their learning as a journey of personal development and growth, and they set their own targets and objectives for this process. They thereby develop an understanding of the theory and principles of employability through actively experiencing the practical reality of different workplace situations.

Contextualised delivery

Employability skills training is not delivered in isolation, but alongside training in the technical skills and knowledge required for employment in specific sectors. In addition, colleges are encouraged to give students the opportunity to take advantage of work-based learning with local employers. Whilst the Deloitte employability course materials are generic and the course itself is delivered as a discrete programme funded and accredited by one of two Level 2 qualifications (Edexcel BTEC Skills for Employability, Level 2 NOCN Certificate in Employability) teachers who attend the Train the Trainer course are required to deliver employability skills training to students in vocational areas in which they currently teach. In addition, teachers are encouraged to adapt, develop and redesign the Deloitte course to suit their own learners' needs and ensure relevance to the particular sector they are preparing young people for – as long as the overall approach and style of the Deloitte programme is maintained. This is assessed through observations undertaken by Deloitte Employability Centres on every delegate who has completed a Train the Trainer programme and subsequently delivers Deloitte employability courses.

Employer engagement

The Deloitte employability course includes a range of opportunities for employer input. These include work experience, workplace visits and employer speakers. The material provided includes exercises to help prepare young people for engagement with employers during the course and help them reflect on these experiences. In addition, up to 500 Deloitte staff visit colleges every year to provide specific workshop sessions on CVs, interviews and presentation skills as part of every Deloitte employability course regardless of sector.

Development

The current Deloitte initiative is being developed further to include a Deloitte Skills Package. This will bring all elements of the Deloitte employability course together with functional and key skills in a full employability package making the course more readily fundable and easy to timetable, as well as fitting in more readily to the new Diploma frameworks.

The programme is also being adapted to meet the needs of the Higher Education provider network and work is underway to develop guidelines for Deloitte employability modules within Higher Education frameworks.

Reach

In 2006/7, the Deloitte employability programme trained 311 students and 16 trainers through 21 courses. In 2007/8, the programme trained 64 trainers who delivered 106 courses to approximately 1,500 students.

In 2008/09 the programme has already trained a further 147 trainers who are delivering 226 courses to more than 4,000 students in over 60 Colleges of further and higher education. In 2008 over 400 Deloitte staff will provide Employability sessions within Further Education Colleges.

Impact

In 2006/7, 89 per cent of students remained on the programme and 82 per cent successfully achieved a qualification. Six months post completion of the Deloitte Employability programme, 93 per cent of respondents were in full-time education or training at a higher level. During 2007/08, 199 Deloitte volunteers delivered sessions to students on Deloitte employability courses on CVs, Interviews and Presentation Skills. In 2008/09, 92 per cent of delegates on the Train the Trainer programme rated the course as either good or excellent.

Deloitte have designed a formal evaluation model and data tracking tool together with Corporate Citizenship. The first results will be available in February 2009.

Students have said:

- “The employability course has really changed my life”
- “I don’t think I would be where I am today without the employability skills training I was given”

Employers have said:

- “Whenever we have a vacancy now we will look to people who come from the course because we know it works”
- “We were very impressed by the students’ positive attitude and willingness to learn. The employability skills training they received at college enable them to fit into our organisation and workplace culture”

Teachers have said:

- “The students really enjoyed the sessions. They still talk about it now! And believe me, that’s really good”

Delegates have said:

- “A thoroughly enjoyable and liberating experience, I feel invigorated and ready for the challenge of delivering employability skills”
- “Extremely useful course. Intense but I learned so much about my personal and professional conduct, drivers and areas I would like to improve on”

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6 Fosse Way School

Developing employability through a special education school

Themes

Leadership and Resources, Programme Design and Delivery

Background

Located near Bath in Somerset, Fosse Way is a special school for children between the ages of 3-19. All 150 pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Needs and come from the surrounding rural and urban areas. The school offers generic provision to around half the pupils and is a regional specialist provider for male and female students with autistic spectrum disorders (ASD). The school has 12 residential places available for pupils with ASD who need an extended educational programme within a consistent and structured environment.

Programme Overview

All pupils at Fosse Way have access to a broad and balanced curriculum, which consists of:

- The National Curriculum, differentiated to meet the needs of individual pupils
- Personal, Social, Health and Moral Education, including Citizenship, Childcare and Careers Education
- Religious Education

All pupils at Fosse Way follow Nationally Accredited Courses. Students at Key Stage 4 and Post 16 follow a combination of the following courses:

- GCSE Art, Design Technology, English, Maths, Science
- Entry Level in Maths, English, Science, Food Technology, French, Design Technology, ICT and Physical Education
- ASDAN Bronze and Silver Youth Award Scheme
- Accreditation for Life and Living
- National Skills Profile
- Certificate of Personal Effectiveness
- Towards Independence
- Entry Level BTEC – Skills for Working Life
- Entry Level BTEC – Life Skills

Developing employability skills

The school has developed schemes of work for each subject in the curriculum. They have embedded Personal Learning and Thinking Skills with employability attitudes and

behaviour, and opportunities to apply these and gain experience through enterprise activities, into each syllabus. For example, in science there are planned learning outcomes for how well students work together in addition to how well an experiment is undertaken. Across the school, staff are encouraged to actively link learning to enterprise. Focusing on processes, not just products, is promoted as the key to developing enterprise skills.

Examples of how employability is developed through the curriculum include:

Key Stages 1 and 2

- Personal Social and Emotional development includes a work related section, which places learning into the context of skills and qualities needed in the workplace
- Employability skills and attitudes are part of the Core Curriculum including how to get on with others, know yourself, and manage anger
- All pupils are encouraged to develop social skills throughout each of the programmes of study. Social skills are not seen as an optional extra, but as planned outcomes
- Enterprise activities take place across the school. Examples include a sponsored silence used as a charity fundraising event to develop understanding of money and enhance links with the local community

Key stage 3

- There is an afternoon of specific vocational education per week, including enterprise
- Awareness about health & safety in work is taught, in addition to job awareness
- Three hours of creative art – emphasis on developing 12 PLTS over 2 years

Key Stage 4

- Year 9 has been moved to key stage 4 in response to parents demand for skills development
- Block curriculum approach – pupils have to develop a skill of choice
- One afternoon per week developing life skills
- Deliver Edexcel entry level BTEC Certificate in Skills for Working Life – offering vocational learning in Business and Retail, Horticulture, Health & Beauty, Practical Skills, and Media⁶
- ASDAN Bronze and Silver Youth Award Scheme
- New secondary curriculum
- Qualification content seen as a vehicle for learning PLTS

⁶ Main qualification number: 100/1078/6

Post 16

- Many pupils are not sufficiently independent enough to go to college
- Thus, the school continues to bolster the employability of its pupils with the introduction of functional skills in a real-life context, such as through visits to town
- Less able pupils are offered a series of tasks to develop process skills as part of an American system called Treatment and Education of Autistic and related Communication-handicapped Children (TEACCH)⁷

The School is also turning two classrooms into a Café and an Art Gallery to provide work experience for students not ready to be independent in the workplace.

Impact

- The school has a Pupil Attitudinal Self Evaluation System (PASS). Over the past 4 years, the attitude of pupils towards the curriculum has risen from below average to well above average
- Subjects have been merged, such as humanities. This has created a mix of subjects, in which employability skills are given equal importance
- Pupil enjoyment of learning has risen
- The school has been part of a PLTS pilot with QCA. Through this work, staff and students have been reviewed on their experience and the feedback has been very positive
- There are very low incidents of pupil absences
- Vocational qualifications have been brought into the curriculum for the first time
- During January 2006, the school was inspected by Ofsted and judged to be outstanding in all areas. The progress made by pupils at Fosse Way is well above average, and over the last three years the school has been placed in the national top 25 per cent of secondary schools, judged on the criterion of "value added"

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⁷ www.teacch.com

7 Harper Adams University College, Aspire

Developing employability through Higher Education

Theme

Programme Design and Delivery

Background

Harper Adams University College, located in Shropshire, specialises in supporting the needs of the rural economy, land-based and food sectors. In 2005, Harper Adams was awarded funding to establish *Aspire* (Advancing Skills for Professionals in the Rural Economy), a Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning. Among the areas *Aspire* focuses on is supporting students to develop transferable academic and professional skills. At Harper Adams, professional skills are defined as:

- Intellectual Skills – the ability to think critically, analyse, evaluate and synthesise information
- Key Skills – communication, IT, numeracy, teamwork, personal development and problem solving

To ensure that all of Harper Adams' 1600 full-time students develop these professional skills as well as identify and fulfil their professional ambitions, all students complete:

- (1) an Academic and Professional Development module
- (2) a professional placement
- (3) a team problem solving exercise
- (4) an individual, major research project

Students undertake these activities in the context of their area of study. Most teaching staff at the University College are either researchers of an applied nature or have a professional background, so they have a direct link to the world of work, which supports their delivery of these aspects of the curriculum. All tutors also act as placement tutors, supporting students and employers in the professional placement. There is also a lot of team teaching and sharing of resources, which helps with the sharing of applied research and professional practice.

Programme Overview

Academic and Professional Development module

In Term 1 of this year-long 15 credit module, students learn study and communication skills, in part through preparing a 1500-word report and delivering 5-minute oral presentation to the class, on which they receive feedback. The reports are subject-specific and are often relevant to professional issues. For example, a business student could be asked to review a company's business environment, and an engineering student could be asked to review computer control systems in agriculture. The oral presentation is based on the written report. Throughout the module, students have access to support including online guidance, workshops and one-on-one sessions.

During the early part of Term 2 of the module, students are guided to begin thinking about personal and professional aspirations and to complete a Professional Development Plan. This begins their preparation for their professional placements. During the end of Terms 2 and 3, students begin developing numeracy skills linked to study and research skills.

Professional Placement

Nationally, Harper Adams University College sends the highest number of students on placement – 89 per cent. Only those with extension experience are exempt. Students do a professional placement, regardless of their course of study. Placements are, typically, of a year's duration. Preparation of students for placements begins during the Academic and Professional Development module and continues with pre-placement workshops. Some are on general topics such as CV writing and interview techniques, whilst others are more specific, for example: Health and Safety relating to agricultural environments. Students can also learn from peers who have completed their placements, as each student produces a visual poster documenting their time on placement, which is displayed and can be discussed.

While placements are quite varied, all students complete the following:

- A SWOT analysis of the business to encourage a broader view of the organisation. The analysis provides students with insight into the working environment and how it relates to the wider business world
- A major project of professional worth to the employer and student. For example, one student undertook an appraisal of options for a livestock auction business to extend its portfolio of activities to mitigate the effects of future disease outbreaks. Another student advised a tenant farmer on diversification alternatives and another worked with a quiche production unit to improve its efficiency
- An updated Professional Development Plan

Each student is assigned a tutor for the duration of their placement, to help them complete these requirements. The tutor makes two on-site visits to see students while on placement, and maintains contact with the employer and students throughout the period.

Harper Adams has a database of employers who provide placements. Some take students each year, whilst others are new contacts generated either by the student or the placement manager nominated for each course of study. Placement managers liaise with employers, not only to generate placements but also to create opportunities for employers to recruit students, to enable students to get insight into particular areas of business, and/or to understand the skills and knowledge required by the employers. The University College also holds a very large placement and career fair to support the placement process.

There is an estimated 20-40 per cent re-employment rate following placement into full-time employment. Factors that influence the rate of re-employment include:

- the limitations of the placement job
- students' desire for a more challenging and diverse role with progression opportunities
- students' consideration of work/life balance and location

Team Problem Solving Exercise

Put plainly, clients have a problem, and they work with students to solve it! The process and the types of problems students work on both depend on the course area. Business students, for example, are put into groups and are given a client brief which is developed by a supervising tutor alongside the client, and then fine-tuned by the students. Once they complete the brief, the students present a report of their findings to the client. In the past, students have been asked:

- by a Safer Communities Partnership, to find out people's perceptions of safety in the town centre in the evening
- to find out how to encourage people to eat dates all year round, rather than only between Christmas and Easter
- by a local farm shop, to find ways to broaden their customer base
- to develop an approach to supplying ethnic food producers with local produce

Extended Research Paper

Students complete an oral examination or presentation involving a question and answer session, to support their written report. Many of these reports draw on workplace issues identified by students whilst on placement. Students have reported that they prove useful in preparing for graduate employment selection.

Impact

Harper Adams maintains that their graduates have an enviable employment record due in large part to their outstanding professional skills. For example:

- Of 2006/2007 graduates, 99 per cent of students who obtained first degrees from full-time courses were employed or in further study within six months of completing their degrees
- Only 0.7 per cent of 2007 graduates became unemployed, the rest continued into work or more schooling
- Student feedback indicates that the programmes met the stated outcomes, all of which include reference to employability skills and attributes

Harper Adams attributes the impact of their embedded approach to teaching professional skills to:

- constant reinforcement throughout the academic experience
- contextualising employability skills within the students' vocational areas of interest
- employer input to ensure the right skills are being taught
- managing the four elements of the approach in a fine-tuned way

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8 Local Employment Access Projects – STRIVE

Developing employability through the help of a voluntary organisation

Themes

Leadership and Resources, Programme Design and Delivery

Background

Local Employment Access Projects, or LEAP, is a black led charity based in Kensal Green, North West London, which aims to transform people's lives by giving them the skills and motivation they need to get work, remain employed, and flourish. LEAP became a registered charity in 1996 with four main objectives:

1. To empower participants and help them develop the soft skills, attitudes and behaviours employers in the entry-level job market are seeking
2. To be connected with real jobs, which motivate those who are sceptical about compulsory employment schemes
3. To assist London residents and LEAP users, who are ineligible for mainstream employment programmes because they do not qualify for state benefits, have not claimed benefits for long enough, or are recent arrivals to the UK
4. To improve job retention, so that those who are placed into jobs can use them as a springboard into continuous employment

Since its inception, LEAP's 20 staff have helped more than 4,000 people to find work. Around 80 per cent of LEAP's clients are from ethnic minority backgrounds – mostly of African or African Caribbean origin – and most are 25 years of age or older.

In 1999, LEAP launched STRIVE, its flagship employment and empowerment programme, which combines 'tough love' with skills training, employment placement services and ongoing support. STRIVE is based on a powerful technique aimed at creating a no-nonsense environment where excuses are unacceptable, and in which participants are provided with tools to begin viewing themselves as marketable adults: not as victims. The programme aims not only to equip participants with essential skills, but also challenges the underlying behaviours and perceptions that prevent clients from getting and keeping jobs. As LEAP state on their website, " We believe in the people we serve. We care too much about them to watch them conform to the basest stereotypes that could be attributed to them, without challenging them to consider themselves in an altogether more positive light."

Programme Overview

STRIVE is a three-week intensive course followed by up to two years' job search and placement assistance. The programme is based on four core principles:

- that regular employment is the key to tackling many of the problems faced by the poor
- that attitudinal training which challenges negative beliefs and behaviour and aims to improve the self-confidence and motivation, is essential
- that participation is voluntary and should be offered to people who *want* to work
- that the programme is not for everyone: it does not meet the immediate needs of people with significant basic needs, who are very disruptive, under the influence of drugs or alcohol, or whose current circumstance make full participation unlikely

Programme staff work to ensure that participants move seamlessly through the following programme features:

- outreach
- training
- employment services
- support services
- post-placement follow-up

Outreach

To recruit participants, LEAP's outreach team advertises in local papers and establishments, as well as conducts presentations and surgeries at Jobcentre Plus, prisons or community organisations. Many clients come through referrals from other agencies and via word-of-mouth. Recruitment is carried out in three-week cycles throughout the year – three weeks of recruitment followed by one down week for administration, followed by three weeks of recruitment, and so forth. The team speaks to around 300 potential clients each month and registers 120 per month. Fundamental to their approach is:

- Establishing a relationship with potential clients based on trust
- Dressing in professional attire, to command respect, when carrying out outreach work
- Having empathy for the clients
- Offering access to real jobs, not just training
- Talking 'the same language', figuratively speaking, as potential clients

Interested clients come to LEAP to register in the organisation's database. The registration process includes an informal discussion in which an initial needs assessment is done to ascertain why individuals are unemployed, what barriers to employment they face and what kind of assistance they are seeking. The process is aimed at getting a sense of the whole person with the hope of providing holistic support. With an understanding of the client's needs, LEAP staff enrol them in the appropriate training programme. Ninety five per cent of those that register with LEAP enrol in STRIVE.

Training – STRIVE

Week 1 of STRIVE focuses on shifting attitudes and behaviour. Programme staff shift attitudes and behaviour by, figuratively, holding a mirror up to participants, thereby making participants aware of what they do and how they do it. For example, staff may highlight the negative tone of voice a participant uses in response to a question. Staff also establish ground rules with consequences, to help shift attitudes and behaviour such as requiring people to be on time, and permitting three late arrivals before asking a participant to leave the programme. Participants are also asked to pay fines for breaking rules. The first week sets a framework for the rest of the programme.

Week 2 focuses on teambuilding. For instance, participants are asked to work in small teams, which have been put together by LEAP staff, based on personalities and participation styles. As part of their teambuilding, the participants will work in sub-groups with a variety of different people to hold mock interviews. Throughout the exercise, participants get practice working in a group – expressing views effectively, listening to others, coming to agreement.

Week 3 focuses on job seeking skills. An employer, who has vacancies, visits this portion of the programme and does a presentation introducing themselves, discussing the importance of dress codes, the dos and don'ts of interviewing, and professionalism on the job. During the week, participants also get support in preparing a CV, completing a mock application form and further preparation for interviewing.

LEAP is distinctive in its tough-love approach, which is well-demonstrated in at least three ways by the STRIVE programme:

- Ground rules are set at the beginning of the programme and participants are expected to honour them, which helps to create a desirable culture and demonstrates participant commitment and respect for the programme. Transgressions are treated seriously and are met with consequences. A recent incident provides a clear example: One of the ground rules is that mobile phones should be turned off during training sessions. In one recent session, during the first week of the programme, one of the instructors (as well as other participants) heard a client's phone vibrate. Nobody admitted to the transgression despite encouragement to do so, and a discussion about integrity and responsibility. LEAP's chief executive was due to hold a presentation soon after the incident, and during it he reiterated the ground rules and said he would let this one go, and let it rest on the conscience of the owner of the phone. He said that if it happened again, the course would be terminated. All participants agreed. During the third week of programme, the second instructor heard another phone vibrating. Participants on his side of the room could also hear it. Again, the owner was asked to identify his/her self, but nobody would and, as the chief executive had agreed, the course was terminated.

Participants were asked to reflect on their thoughts in writing before leaving. People milled around talking and venting because they were very upset. After a bit of discussion, participants asked the instructor to check a particular participant's phone as they thought it might have been his that was vibrating. His phone was checked, he

was confronted and did not deny the accusation. The instructor called everyone back into the room and, after the owner of the phone finally apologised, the class was resumed.

- High expectations, coupled with robust support, are set for participants and participants are respectfully challenged in and outside of class to meet those expectations. There have been a few cases where participants have been asked to repeat the three-week training course because the effort and behaviour that they demonstrated did not meet expectations.
- Participants are given frank and constructive feedback from peers and instructors on their performance. For example, during mock interviews, participants can be given feedback on their dress or lack of preparation.

One programme staff said, “It is really about accountability and making people more responsible for their actions. While the tough-love is initially ‘tough’, it is one of the strengths of the programme to which participants respond. Seventy per cent of participants who enrol in the programme complete it and receive an OCN Level 2.”

Employment Services

After completing the STRIVE programme, graduates are matched with an Employment Services Officer. Through a series of one-to-one sessions, for as long as it takes, the pair identify and address the client’s barriers to employment, which may include childcare, language needs and/or housing problems. They also identify and aim to secure a job for the participant that matches his/her skills, experience and requirements. During the process, previous employment is reviewed, aspirations for the future are considered and an agreed action plan to get their desired job is developed and implemented.

This tailored approach is central to LEAP’s effectiveness. It depends upon a strong relationship between the Employer Services Officer and the client as the multiple barriers to employment that clients are often dealing with are sensitive, such as inappropriate self-presentation and drug rehabilitation. The strong relationships which staff are able to form with clients are due, in part, to the staff’s ability to empathise with clients because many have been through what some of the clients are experiencing. Several staff are STRIVE alumni. Staff are also able to form strong relationships with clients because of staff continuity; there is very low turnover among LEAP staff.

LEAP believes that employers (as well as jobseekers) are their clients. Staff members do presentations to employers on the STRIVE programme, establishing a rapport and a source for vacancies. They also attend job fairs, employer association meetings, networking sessions and carry out cold calling. Participants also look for job opportunities. As a result of their combined efforts, 70 per cent of STRIVE graduates secure employment. Between 20 and 25 are placed every month, and after two years, 84 per cent are still employed.

Support Services

The Support Services team continues to support participants after they secure employment. The aim of the follow-up activity is to help participants through the difficult early months of transition into employment and then to support their aspirations for a career. It is one of the distinctive aspects of LEAP's provision and is essential to the effectiveness of the programme. The team also works with clients to identify additional training needs and to help them find the next level job.

Impact

The success of the STRIVE programme and of LEAP's efforts more generally can be attributed to:

- empathetic and committed staff
- effective leadership and management of the organisation
- the values, which permeate the organisations' culture – integrity, empathy, professionalism, passion, dedication, creativity and excellence
- the quality of customer care that staff provide

Visitors to LEAP are immediately welcomed and made to feel comfortable. Staff are responsive, thoughtful and clearly committed to their work. The day-to-day running of the organisation feels smooth and well-managed. There is a sense of calm in the office environment that is coupled with a feeling that something meaningful is going on.

Since its inception, LEAP has helped over 4000 clients secure employment. They are placed in/as: retail (29 per cent), administration (13 per cent), customer service/call centres (8 per cent), care workers (7 per cent), packing/stock control/warehouse (4 per cent), security (4 per cent), catering (4 per cent) and cleaning (3 per cent). The average starting salary is £13,000 and average salary for those assisted in finding the next level job is £15,000. Seventy per cent of graduates of its flagship programme, STRIVE, secure employment and 70 per cent are still employed after two years.

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9 Newham College

Developing employability through a further education college

Themes

Employer Involvement, Leadership and Resource, Programme design and delivery

Background

Located east of central London, Newham College was established in 1985 as the result of a merger between East Ham and West Ham technical colleges. Today, Newham College is one of the largest further education colleges both nationally and in the Greater London area, with over 20,000 full and part-time students and an annual budget of £40 million. Many of the students are from the local area, and over 80 per cent are aged over 19 on entry, with an average age of 31. Newham is a diverse community, where approximately 60 per cent of students are members of ethnic minority groups.

The area around Newham is currently in the middle of large scale re-development, including the development of Stratford City and the Olympics in 2012. This in itself brings further demand for the college to support students to develop the skills necessary to construct and sustain such huge developments.

Newham College delivers programmes in 12 out of 14 national programme areas, including a unitised framework integrating skills for life with vocational and academic study – Newham College Access Diploma (NewCAD). In addition, the college offers NVQs, GNVQs, AVCEs, GCEs at AS and A-levels, Access to Higher Education courses, Foundation Degrees, Modern Apprenticeships, Foundation courses BTEC National Certificates and Diplomas, Higher National Certificates and Diplomas, RSA, City & Guilds and a range of other specialist qualifications.

Programme Overview

The value placed on developing employability skills is driven both “top down” by the Principal and senior management team, and “bottom up” by the needs of the local community. Managers and staff turn the college’s vision into practice by having a customer-focused approach, which places both student and employer requirements central to its activities. This is reflected in the design, content and delivery of programmes, which regularly involves employers at each stage. It is also reflected in the strategic management of staff development and resources to support learners to develop the skills local employers request.

“We’re also building up people. We are in the throes of vast change, with 2012 providing a chance for revitalisation of the East End... we have never had a better opportunity to build a great future. We’re offering the opportunities, resources and personal support to help people raise their sights and realise their full potential.”

Martin Tolhurst, Principal and Chief Executive

Employability skills are developed for full time students through the Progression and Employability Skills Programme (PES). The course is offered from Entry 3 to Level 3 and is delivered over 36 weeks for 1 hour per week. The content of the course has been developed in part from the experience of two staff who have completed a Deloitte Employability Skills teacher training programme, and in part by the college to make it suitable for different levels of ability. A strong theme throughout the content of the PES programme is supporting students to develop their reflection and planning skills, which is taught through a series of activities and then applied by planning and reflecting on their own development. Managers reported that the inclusion of citizenship in the PES programme was particularly useful in helping overseas students in their search for employment.

Teacher comments on the PES programme have included:

- The Deloitte training was useful to help update skills (teaching & learning methods have developed since becoming qualified)
- It helps learners to get jobs
- Employers have responded positively
- Parents are supportive of the course

The PES course is supported by an online learning system (Virtual Learning Environment), which provides access to materials and support for both learners and delivery staff – including lesson plans and delivery materials. As such, all staff at the college are required to deliver the PES programme, without the requirement for additional off the job training. Learners are able to access additional support materials throughout their study and request support from a tutor when required. Online surveys provide real-time feedback from learners, which the college can use to further tailor support.

Following successful feedback from students, staff, employers and parents, the plan is to roll the PES programme out to part-time students in 2008/09.

A key factor in the effective teaching & learning of employability skills, identified by the tutors interviewed, was the need to have up-to-date skills and industry knowledge. To support this, the college rewards teachers who obtain a Grade One lesson observation with time to gain further experience in industry. The updated skills and knowledge are cascaded back to other staff through meetings and collaboration within each department.

To ensure students have the opportunity to apply their skills in a work setting, the college runs an “Earn as you learn” scheme – where the college pays students to work in real college core activities. These include reception, administration and events management. In addition, the college offers hair and beauty services, and a nail bar, to the local community. Here, customers book and pay for services delivered by students on the appropriate course. The in-house salon and treatment rooms are professionally equipped and provide students with the opportunity to gain experience applying their skills and knowledge in a work environment rather than a classroom.

Opportunities for students to apply their skills in the workplace extend beyond the college’s campus, with a hair salon in the main shopping street. Students work with clients to provide services appropriate to their level of study. The salon is not subsidised by the

college and must be competitive with other local salons to remain open. The role of the salon manager was identified as critical in supporting students to develop the necessary business awareness of balancing time for learning with the need to deliver a timely and high quality service. An interview with the salon manager highlighted her position as a role model. Her experience and progression from being the salon receptionist gave credibility to her position, which encouraged a positive working relationship with students.

The salon manager oversees the work of each student. This includes providing feedback when a good service has been provided, and on performance in areas where a student is required to develop and maintain a high standard, such as how they speak and listen to the client. Students are reviewed at least every 12 weeks, which provides an opportunity for the salon manager, course tutor and students to reflect on progress and plan for the following 12 weeks.

The salon manager saw the benefit of being involved as critical to the level of service the salon delivers, and helping students with the transition from a classroom into the workplace. The salon manager was clear that she ran a business, and although students were still learning, they would be dismissed if they did not demonstrate the skills, knowledge, and attitude needed to work in a busy salon.

The college has a high standard of learning environment because of the space, furniture, layout and modern equipment. This was true of both the vocational areas (hair salon, beauty treatments rooms, and nail bar) and the academic learning facilities. Students had access to open plan learning environments, which contained high quality audio/visual equipment, computers, projectors, internet access and furniture. This gave a feel of an open-plan office environment, in which staff were observed working with students to support individual needs – more as colleagues than instructors. An interview with a student explored why she was taking on an employability course in addition to her main programme of learning. Her response was that she felt it “enhanced my opportunity of getting the right job.” Staff reported that the instances of vandalism were very rare once the high quality learning rooms were installed: “Higher quality environment produces higher quality behaviour.”

The Centre for Innovation and Partnerships (CIPS) at the college has developed a resource specifically targeted at the needs of the local community – a Women in Business centre known as “Her Business Centre”. This facility provides women access to business support, training, counselling, business contacts, and incubator start-up offices. The service has been adapted to meet the specific needs of women starting their own businesses.

A group of women on a jewellery course were interviewed for their feedback on the support and services provided. They gave very positive feedback and felt they were learning both jewellery-making skills and the wider skills necessary to set up and run their own businesses. The college has worked hard to seek involvement with local employers, and the jewellery class is a good example where a local employer has been fully engaged – through programme design, delivery and workplace experience. The employer collaborated with college managers to help consider the skills being developed, and provide the reassurance that students will be equipped to work in the jewellery industry. Regular meetings are held between the CIPS and the employer to review progress and explore how

the college can further develop its relationship with the employer – to achieve its aim of helping people become job-ready.

The involvement of an employer has resulted in the women from the business start-up class being able to have “as it really is” input from a business owner and have their work showcased to the public. From discussion with the women on the course, there was a strong “can-do” attitude to running their own businesses, as they could both see and experience working with local employers. They also felt there were real benefits of working with an employer, such as having the opportunity to enter a competition run by the company to design and build a new company logo. This opened up new opportunities to apply and further develop their skills, such as designing and producing a finished product in gold.

The students did feel there could be two improvements made to how support is offered:

- Clarify and simplify funding
- Reduce the number of eligibility criteria to widen the opportunity

Discussion with the employer highlighted the benefits he felt his engagement with the college had created for his business:

- Offering work placements and competitions brought new ideas and energy into the jewellery industry, raising his company profile within the industry
- Providing an opportunity to show growth to both customers and other jewellers in the industry
- Stimulating interest in the media by showcasing new talent at exhibitions and shows
- Enabling him to offer a broader and unique range of products to better serve his customers: “Adding value to the brand”
- Forging sustainable relationships with the college and individual small jewellery start-up companies
- Becoming involved with developing local people has helped increase retention of staff and skills. Previously, there was higher staff turnover because of problems with travelling to work

The college collaborates with a range of other organisations to support students as they prepare for and secure employment. During a visit to the college, a meeting was held with the local authority to explore how the college and Job Centre Plus worked together to support local people. A drop-in centre was visited where local people could:

- apply for work
- put together a Curriculum Vitae
- make job applications
- prepare for an interview
- identify learning needs and receive guidance on training

Speaking to the local authority staff, the relationship with the College was valued as an effective part of supporting the local community secure and sustain employment. This was

felt to be especially important given the current large scale regeneration in the local area – the developments for the Olympics in 2012 are the fourth largest development currently underway in the local area.

As a result of the feedback from students and employers, the college plans to use its links with Sector Skills Councils, especially Skillsfast, to develop a more sector focused approach to teaching employability skills. Managers commented that two strengths of the employability skills strategy are:

- It is integral to their work towards the Training Quality Standard
- It builds on their experience of using unitised learning through NOCN, in preparation for the Qualification Credit Framework

Impact

Newham College has been recognised as a Centre of Vocational Excellence in the areas of Enterprise and Business, as well as Financial and Professional Services. The College suggests that developing employability skills has contributed to developing an effective relationship with:

- Local employers – especially in the textile and jewellery industries
- Sector Skills Councils
- The local authority
- The local business community
- Students from the local community

In addition, in 2006/07 over 272 students progressed to university.

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10 Prince's Trust, *Get into* Programme – London

Developing employability through the support of a charity

Themes

Employer Involvement, Programme Design and Delivery

Background

Started in 2004, *Get into* provides unemployed 16-25 year olds who are ready and available for work the opportunity to develop sector-specific vocational skills and transferable employability skills for sustainable employment. Participants can also receive one-to-one holistic support, during and for six months after the programme, to address the broader barriers to employment they may face such as homelessness, learning disabilities or mental illness.

Get into is delivered across the UK and targets young people who are: in and leaving care, offenders, ex-offenders and/or educational underachievers. Within these groups, the programme focuses on black and minority ethnic young people, those with disabilities, refugees and asylum seekers and lone parents, with the aim of recruiting over 50 per cent of young people from the 25 per cent most deprived areas throughout the UK.

The specific content and design of each *Get into* programme is tailored to the sector it trains participants for, the geography in which it is delivered and the specific staff and partners involved in design and delivery. However, all programmes are/involve:

- Small and short – 2-6 weeks and usually no more than 15 participants
- Driven by identified and achievable jobs in the delivery area
- Employers in development, delivery and evaluation
- Exposure for participants to a range of sector employers
- A hands-on practical approach
- Work experience, where appropriate
- Recognition for successful completion – a *Get into* certificate and a formal qualification/accreditation where relevant (e.g. a CSCS card for *Get into* Construction, a CSLA qualification for *Get into* Sport)

Programme Overview – London

Get into programmes are developed as a result of skills shortages in particular sectors that employers and/or the Trust have identified. In London, programmes are offered in digital media, construction, sport, cooking, retail and hospitality and involve employers such as Mossimann's, The Ritz, and The Gap. Approximately 18-20 programmes in total, across sectors, are offered in London per year.

Once an employer has agreed to participate in *Get into*, a delivery contract is created between the employer and The Prince's Trust that sets out roles and responsibilities. The Prince's Trust programme team and the employer then work together to design a Taster/Selection Day and the *Get into* programme. The programme team also prepares the employer for working with the young people. An open dialogue is established between the employer and the programme team throughout delivery and at the end of programme, they complete an evaluation.

In 2007/2008 one hundred and twenty young people in total went through *Get into* programmes in London. These programmes involve the stages described below.

Referral

Potential programme participants are referred to the *Get into* team coordinator by organisations such as Probation Services, Job Centre Plus and Connexions. Once a referral is made, the team coordinator contacts the organisation for a follow-up chat about the young person. Individuals often self-refer as well. The team coordinator calls each potential participant to ensure that they fit within the Programme's target audience and to discuss *Get into* to ensure that it is the right programme for them. A referral form, containing basic profile data and a description of the needs and interests of the individual, is filled out for each potential participant and held by the team coordinator. She maintains contact and alerts individuals to appropriate *Get into* programmes as they come up. In the interim, participants may attend another Prince's Trust programme.

Employability Day

The Employability Day, which is standard across *Get into* programmes in London and mandatory for interested participants, has the following objectives, to:

- introduce participants to *Get into*
- provide them with information on the particular sector
- allow them to practice key employability skills
- expose them to an employer in the sector
- prepare them for the Taster/Selection Day
- gather information about participants to inform the selection process

The Day is facilitated by the Programme Executive and is broken into two sections. During section I, the objectives for the day are explained. Participants are introduced to *Get into* and asked to complete basic paperwork. The day is framed as preparation for the Taster/Selection Day and the expectations for that day are articulated. During section II, participants complete the three short exercises described below, which prepare them for success on the Taster/Selection Day and the actual programme.

Exercise 1: Working in small groups, participants are asked to brainstorm and then feedback a list of characteristics they think employers in the sector are looking for in employees.

Exercise 2: Building on this, the facilitator introduces and generates definitions for four characteristics/skills employers need individuals to have/be: reliable, hardworking, a good communicator, a team player. Each item is put on a piece of flip chart paper and posted around the room. Participants are asked to write examples of when they have demonstrated these characteristics/skills on post-it notes and to put them up on the relevant chart paper. The facilitator reviews what participants have written and reads a few examples aloud.

Exercise 3: With guiding questions, participants are asked to conduct brief mock interviews with a partner drawing on the information that was generated during the previous exercise. Participants give each other feedback.

After these exercises, the partner employer meets and speaks with participants providing an overview of the programme and an introduction to the industry. Participants are then encouraged to ask questions about the programme and industry.

Taster/Selection Day

On this day, participants are introduced to the programme and each other and complete an exercise typical of work in the industry. For example, on the Taster/Selection Day of *Get into Digital Media*, participants produce a short film in pairs. Specifically, they:

- receive introductory training on how to use a camera
- are shown two short films to see what is possible
- are divided into pairs and asked to pick a theme out of a hat
- brainstorm and develop ideas on they can capture their theme on film
- film in pairs and share their footage with the whole group

All of the exercises and information shared thus far, on the Employability Day as well as this day, prepare participants for the last agenda item – an interview to participate in the *Get into* programme. Interviews are conducted by a Prince's Trust *Get into* team member and the partner employer and include questions such as: tell me about yourself, why are you interested in joining this course, what experience do you have of this industry, and what you can offer to this *Get into*?

Selection Decision

Get into programme staff and the partner employer discuss each individual in depth. They use the information gathered during the referral stage, the Employability Day and the Taster/Selection Day to determine who to select. Through the discussion, partner employers gain an understanding of the young people, a target population they may not normally recruit. *Get into* programme staff often provide, for example, insight into participant's attire and behaviour that may be initially misinterpreted by the partner employer. Once final decisions have been made, the *Get into* programme coordinator invites successful candidates to participate and signposts unsuccessful candidates back to their referral organisation.

Get into Programme

The specific content and design of each programme varies. Below is what the *Get into Digital Media* programme entails. To support full participation, travel, lunch and childcare are provided and paid for by The Prince's Trust.

DAY	AM (9:00-12:30)	PM (1:30-4:30)
1	Welcome, introductions, icebreaker. Introduction to the programme, industry and filmmaking	Practical workshop on operating a camera, sound recording, lighting and mock shoot
2	Editing workshop, practice editing, training on 'visual language'	Small teams are organised to create a film. Initial ideas for the films are discussed and presented
3	Pre-production day – debate project names, shoot set-up, storyboarding and scripting	Finish pre-production and present preliminary ideas
4	Finish planning. Begin filming	Filming
5&6	Filming	Filming
7	Filming	Editing & digitizing
8& 9	Editing	Editing
10	Editing & washdown	Editing-films, discuss screening and final event
		PM (2:30-6:00)
11	Final touches and prep for evening	Screening Event to present student films to an external audience. Agenda – introduction, keynote speaker, films, key note speaker, certificate presentation & photos
		Evening (6:00-9:00)

1:1 Support

After completing the programme, participants have the option of receiving six months of 1:1 tailored support from a *Get into* programme team member. The first meeting sets the direction for those that follow, usually on a weekly basis. During this meeting, the young person articulates their short and long term goals and a plan for meeting them, often through using a Life Map.

The first portion of the Life Map asks users to rate, on a scale of 1 – meaning not at all satisfied, to 7 – meaning completely satisfied, their feelings about:

- Life Overall
- Employment/Income
- Education and Training
- General Health
- Alcohol and Drugs
- Accommodation

- Relationships
- Social Life
- Handling Problems
- Other

Once they have completed their ratings, they identify three priority areas for the next six months.

Using the same scale, the Life Map then asks participants to rate how happy they are with their basic, life and vocational skills and to choose priority areas for development.

Lastly, participants consider the barriers that are preventing them from improving in their life and skill priority areas and develop a short and long term plan for addressing the barriers and improving their skills. They then make a time commitment for working with the Trust (or another agency) on this plan. This plan is the basis of the six months of 1:1 support.

Impact

After 3 years of continually developing *Get into*, programme staff, participants and partners have reaped the benefits. For example, in 2006-07, in the London region, one month after completing a *Get into* programme, on average, 58 per cent of graduates had entered employment, education or training. Three months after completion, 75 per cent had and six months after completion 88 per cent had. The programme target is 70 percent. The biggest rewards are perhaps, not quantifiable. In an interview, a *Get into* programme staff member said – the last day of the programme is often the first day of a new start.

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11 Renfrewshire Council, Sports Leader Awards Programme

Developing employability through a community initiative

Theme

Programme Design and Delivery

Background

Located west of Glasgow, Renfrewshire Council Youth Services delivers a sports coaching and leadership programme, aimed at young people from the community. The project is funded through the Fairer Scotland Fund and is monitored by Renfrewshire's Community Planning Partnership. Started in 2004, the programme was a response to needing more volunteers in the community. In 2007/08, the programme was delivered in 8 high schools and 4 community-based courses in Renfrewshire, with 183 candidates. Since the programme began, there have been 435 young people gaining the Sports Leader Level 1 or 2 Award.

Programme Overview

The Sports Leader Awards Programme is a Renfrewshire Council initiative, providing opportunities for young people aged between 14-18 years to become involved in sport leadership and coaching in their local community. The target audiences for the programme are:

- School children, as part of their physical education curriculum
- Early school leavers who, at the age of 16, will leave school with no qualifications – offering a practical alternative
- Community-based programme to target young people within deprived communities to provide an opportunity to gain a nationally recognised award and the first step towards employment as a sports coach

Recruitment onto the programme is undertaken through PE departments at high schools, through coordinators who work specifically to support pupils who are at risk of not being in education, and by Sports Development Officers who are employed by the council to work in areas of deprivation within Renfrewshire.

The programme has three distinct stages, which candidates can progress to, depending on their level of interest in sports leadership and coaching.

Stage 1: Candidates work towards a Level 1 qualification – the Sports Leader Award⁸

Stage 2: Candidates organise and deliver sports activities in their local community on both a voluntary and paid basis

Stage 3: Candidates are able to join Renfrewshire's Coach Support Programme

8 <http://www.accreditedqualifications.org.uk/qualification/10033981.seo.aspx>

Stage 1

The Level 1 Award in Sports Leadership is a practical based qualification, consisting of 7 units, which are:

- Planning, preparing and assisting a simple sporting activity
- Basic communication skills for leading a sporting activity
- Principles and practice in delivering a basic health and fitness session
- Understanding fair play in sport
- Understanding the role of the sports official
- Understanding the scope of local sport and recreation activities
- Demonstration of leadership skills in sport

The qualification involves a minimum of 30 guided learning hours and one hour of practical leadership. Candidates learn the basic elements of how to plan, organise and deliver a simple sports activity to a group. By doing so, the qualification also provides an opportunity for candidates to develop their self-confidence, self-awareness, time keeping, teamwork, decision making and communication skills.

Stage 2

All of the participants volunteer following completion of their Level 1 Award. They offer a range of support to the community by assisting a more highly-qualified coach, or by organising their own activities as part of their own development. An example of this is the Saturday Night Activity Programme in the town of Renfrew, organised by two sports coaches who developed as sports leaders, joined the Coach Support Programme and gained a number of national sports awards. The council now employs them as casual sports coaches.

Whilst offering their time volunteering, each young person is mentored by a Sports Development Officer. This helps those young people who are interested in further development to progress to stage 3 of the programme.

Stage 3

Participants of the Sport Leaders Award are given the opportunity to progress to the Coach Support Programme. This has been set up to support candidates aged 16+ who are, or want to be, sport coaches. The programme embraces continuous professional development by encouraging coaches to use and reflect on their skills. During this stage, coaches are also given the opportunity to achieve various National Governing Body awards in various sports, and progress to higher levels of sports leadership and coaching.

The Sports Leader Awards Programme is delivered by a team of community based Sports Development Officers. Each officer is a trained tutor and responsible for planning, organising, developing and delivering the project. Candidates meet once a week for a 90-minute session, during which they are trained in the planning and delivery of leadership and sports coaching. Each candidate completes a log book and this, and the sports

delivery sessions, are monitored and assessed. Sports Development Officers give constructive criticism where required, advising and demonstrating how sessions could be improved upon, and encourage self-evaluation.

Collaboration

Sports Development Officers within Renfrewshire Council Youth Services, work in partnership with Head Teachers, Physical Education Departments and Sport Leaders UK. These partnerships are central to the success of the Programme. As the project works within specifically targeted areas there is considerable support from local elected members, senior management within Renfrewshire Council and the Paisley Partnership Regeneration.

The project was approved by the Community Planning Management Group which is chaired by the Leader of the Council, and therefore has high level political support locally. Local councillors have also been invited to come along to sessions to see the sport leaders in action and therefore to appreciate the benefits that they bring to their local community.

Outcomes

After successful completion of the Level 1 in Sports Leadership, candidates receive a nationally recognised qualification. To date (November 2008), 435 young people achieved the Sports Leader Award at Level 1 or Level 2 and went on to be active in their local communities by delivering sport-based activity sessions to young people. Of the 435, 28 candidates have been employed by the local authority in community focused session based coaching posts. One of these coaches has been awarded the Community Coach of the Year award.

Impact

The range of ways in which the Sports Leader Awards Programme impacts on candidates can be summarised as:

- Receiving a nationally-recognised qualification helps the candidates to articulate their skills when applying for employment and further education in sport
- Being part of the programme has also provided opportunities to apply their new skills and to continue develop professionally as a sports coach and leader. Many candidates have transferred their new skills into schools and communities as volunteers in school/youth/sports clubs
- Helping candidates secure a first job in the sector
- In addition to developing sector specific skills in the sports industry, candidates develop a range of skills, knowledge and behaviours that are transferable into any occupation. An example is: developing cross-sector skills in leadership by teaching young people to organise, lead activities, motivate and communicate with groups
- Develop a healthy and active lifestyle
- Consider their contribution to the community, by encouraging volunteering. In partnership with Renfrewshire Council Voluntary Service, all candidates are given an

opportunity to gain a millennium volunteer award for the amount of voluntary hours that they work in their community

- Provides a positive experience and opportunity to develop and experience success.

There are also a number of ways this programme impacts on the community:

- With increasing financial challenges, there is a drive and focus on recruiting and developing suitable, reliable, knowledgeable volunteers who can provide a safe, structured environment for others to learn in to help sustain and promote activities after school and in the community
- Candidates on the programme are able to act as role models for other young people. They are closer to the values, circumstances and culture of what would otherwise be a different generation
- The programme promotes a healthy lifestyle. It is anticipated that this lifestyle pattern will continue as candidates get older and that the health and fitness throughout Renfrewshire communities will improve through time as a result
- By collaborating with community police and wardens to help identify potential candidates for community-based courses, there is an expectation for some reduction in crime and anti-social behaviour
- Engaging with young people to offer an opportunity to enhance their skills and prospects, in particular those that may have opted out of mainstream education
- The programme supports Health Promoting Schools, with the older pupils taking part acting as role models to younger members of the school. With the award being nationally-recognised, this is helping schools work towards the Curriculum for excellence, and with the recent trend and focus being directed on allowing more vocational awards to be offered alongside SQA qualifications within the curriculum timetable

In addition to the benefits for individuals and the community, the programme has a key characteristic of sustainability. It uses a model of learn – apply – cascade, where skills, knowledge and values which are useful to both working in the sports sector, and in general employment, extend into the community. This model is an effective use of resources and its growth has proven it is replicable.

“What makes this project unique is that the volunteers are youths. The age group most often associated with being a nuisance in their communities are participating in a worthwhile course that they can use not only for their own benefit but also for their neighbourhood. They are learning about the benefits of following a healthy lifestyle at a young age and are delivering this message back to their communities, setting a positive example that hopefully younger children within the community will follow.”

Jim Blythe, sport development coordinator at Renfrewshire Council.

The following examples illustrate how two young people have joined the Sports Leader Awards Programme to develop their skills and support their local community.

Mark, 19, Linwood, Renfrewshire

Mark undertook the Sports Leader Level 1 Award through his local high school, Linwood High, two years ago during curriculum time. Upon completing the award, Mark was then successful on gaining a place on an initiative known as EYES (European Year of Education through Sport), which is a 15 week programme aimed at developing young sports coaches, and as part of that course Mark successfully completed the Community Sports Leader Level 1 award, and in doing so completed over 200 hours of volunteer work in and around his local community. Such was his progress and commitment that Mark is now employed on a sessional basis with the Council as a sports coach, and works part time in the local sports centre whilst he completes his HND in Sports Coaching and Development at college.

Melanie, 16, Johnstone, Renfrewshire

Melanie took a slightly different approach to Mark's, described above. Melanie was identified last year as a potential candidate for our pilot community-based course. Money provided through the Community Regeneration Fund allowed for Sports Development Officers to set up a pilot community based course targeting specific young people residing in socially deprived communities and offering them the opportunity to participate in the award. From this Melanie successfully completed the Sports Leader Level 1 Award. This year Melanie has begun her Community Sports Leader Level 2 Award through her local high school, Johnstone High, and is now actively volunteering with a girls' football initiative in her local community in Johnstone. She is currently considering a career in PE teaching once her studies are complete.

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12 Skill Force

Developing employability skills for 14-16 year olds in school

Theme

Programme Design and Delivery

Background

Skill Force is an independent national charity operating throughout Great Britain. Skill Force delivers an alternative curriculum to students across the country and across the student population. The Skill Force programme draws together vocational qualifications, community volunteering and life skills within the context of a classroom and outdoor activities based framework.

Skill Force aims to deliver inspiring programmes that increase the number of young people entering education, employment and training upon leaving school.

Skill force began specialising in Key Stage 4 pupils considered 'difficult to reach'. Since then, Skill Force has developed expertise through the wider key skills to life skill development generally. Schools and LEAs use skill force not only to work with their more challenging students, but also to develop wide-ranging programmes, from the leadership development of their most talented senior pupils, to supporting younger students during the significant transition phase from primary to secondary school.

Skill Force was created in 2000 with 2 teams; today Skill Force has almost 40 teams, and over 200 staff.

The teams employed at Skill Force are largely ex-military personnel who work with a range of the most disaffected pupils i.e. pupils who are truant, display disruptive behaviour, low ability, low attainment, and are 'turned off' by an overly academic curriculum – those pupils who are at the less engaged end of the spectrum. Mentoring is provided by predominantly ex-armed forces personnel who 'stand no nonsense, yet instil respect and mutual support', to create an environment in which individuals can learn. Distinct from teachers, yet working in support of teachers, Skill Force enables students to receive recognised qualifications and develop life skills, with improved results for schools and untold benefits for the communities where Skill Force teams are present.

Most of the work Skill Force is involved in is with pupils from years 10 and 11. Skill Force does some work at primary school and some work with pupils who are at the transition from primary to secondary school.

Programme Overview

Skill Force teams typically consist of a Team Leader, plus two pairs of Instructors who operate with a group of 3-4 schools throughout the year. The Core Programme, an example of which is given below, is delivered to year 10 and 11 students with every student spending 1 day per week for 2 years with a Skill Force team. The weekly programme is

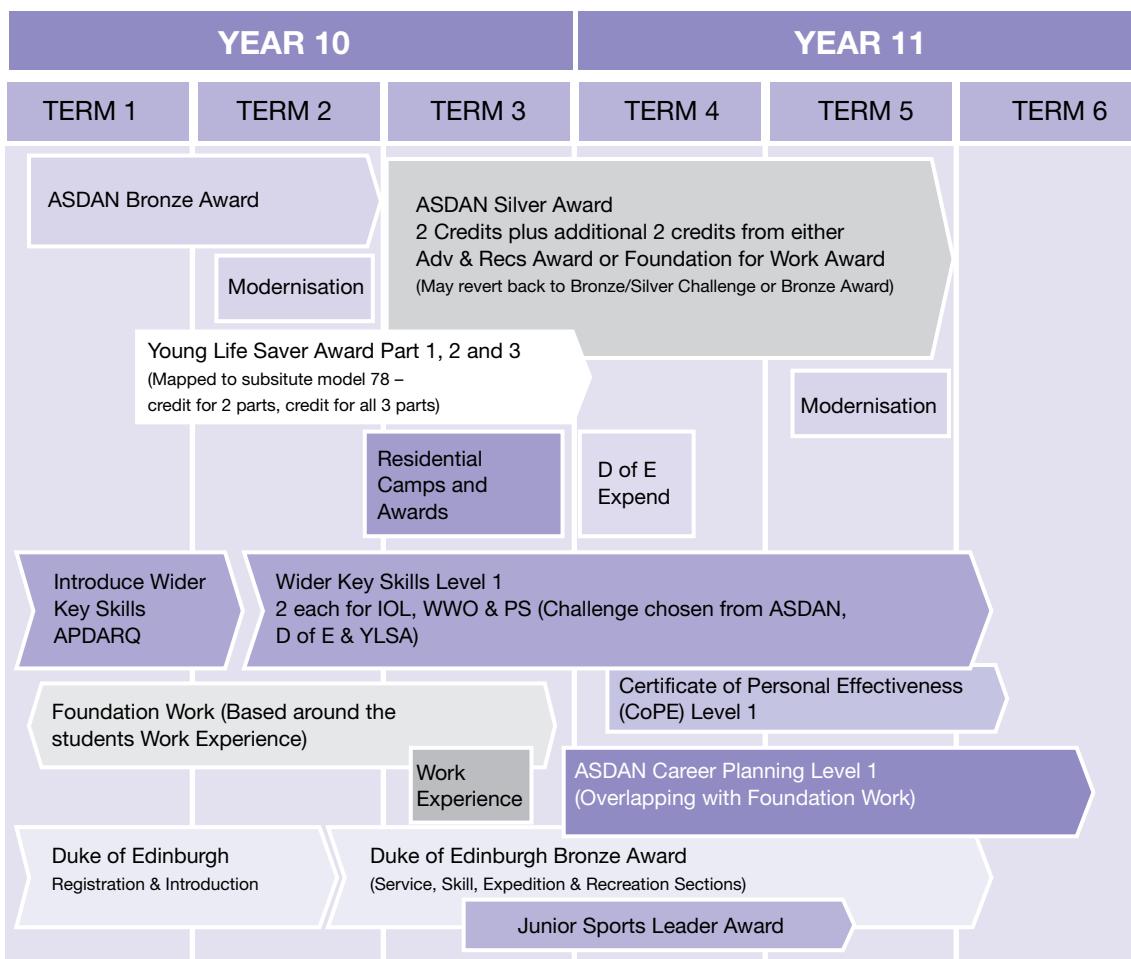
approximately 70 per cent classroom-based with 30 per cent of time spent on outdoor activities, and the first year usually ends with a challenging residential activity week during the summer. Regionally, teams will adapt the programme to meet the specific needs of their LEA and the schools with which they work.

In order to participate fully in the programme, students drop 2 GCSE options for the 2 years they will spend with Skill Force obtaining other qualifications. Students either nominate themselves for a Skill Force programme or they are directed to sign up by their teachers. Normally schools put forward the most disaffected pupils.

The teams of instructors work in pairs and are normally people with an ex-military background. Working in pairs allows trainers to give focused attention to the students and their behavioural challenges, so one instructor will observe the behaviour in the class and the other will lead the lesson.

They take a relaxed approach to the learning environment i.e. first names are used for and by both instructors and students.

Year 12's Skill Force extends its instruction to Level 2 qualifications for ASDAN FE, Wider Key Skills and CoPE



The diagram is the 'core' programme Skill Force delivers. The programme involves engaging with students and working closely with them through a framework of recognised qualifications. The programme engages students and gives them the opportunity to be successful where often they are not successful at school.

The programme, which takes place during a normal school day, engages students, challenging their perspectives and encouraging them to plan, complete and reflect upon their approach to a diverse range of activities. In this way, Skill Force believes students enthusiasm and interest is cultivated and their commitment to learning is energised and followed through with ongoing contact with the Skill Force team. Students improve their motivation toward goals associated with seeking further education, employment and training.

At the start of each programme, instructors put particular effort into trying to get students to understand the purpose of the programme by articulating the course outcomes and how they will contribute to the students' overall points score. For example, the Junior First Aid Certificate allows students to obtain 3 points for a certificate at each level. The approach to teaching and learning is very hands-on and practical, i.e. learning by doing, and learning by demonstration.

Year 10 students focus on developing wider key skills, taking part in work experience and gaining qualifications and/or credits for activities undertaken, such as the Young Life Savers award.

At the end of year 10, students take part in a 3-5 day residential camp which may involve an expedition and/or adventurous training exercises. The instructors take part in the camp and participate in all of the activities students are required to undertake. This helps to further enhance the relationship instructors have developed with the students throughout the year and provides a good lever for the relationship to continue into year 11.

The course is approximately 70 per cent classroom-based and 30 per cent activity/outdoor-based. Some of the work in the classroom is linked to the activity-based work: for example, students undertake an element of planning and organising of the end of Year 10 residential course.

Year 11 focuses on post-school outcomes, for example, students can work to obtain a Career Planning Award (or elements of it), where they practice interviews, filling out application forms, writing CVs and understanding what is expected of them within the world of work.

Classroom work includes a range of topics from first aid lessons to plan and review of activities undertaken. The content of the programme is tailored according to the needs of the student group.

Skill Force instructors use the time they spend with students each week to build rapport, and recognise the strengths and weaknesses of Skill Force students. Developing young people's self-esteem and confidence is a significant step along the path toward achievement. Skill Force evaluates achievement through the PASS (Pupils Attitudes towards School and Self) System. Student perspectives are assessed before and after participation in the programme, and demonstrate how the programme is changing students' attitudes to learning, with positive effect.

PASS – Pupils Attitudes towards School and Self

- Factor 1 Feelings about school
- Factor 2 Perceived learning capability
- Factor 3 Self Regard
- Factor 4 Preparedness for learning
- Factor 5 Attitude to teachers
- Factor 6 General work ethic
- Factor 7 Confidence in learning
- Factor 8 Attitude to attendance
- Factor 9 Response to curriculum demands

The programme is focused around giving students the opportunities to:

- engage with other students and instructors from different backgrounds
- succeed in individual activities and be successful in whatever path they wish to take i.e. employment, education or training
- build relationships with a diverse range of people
- time to develop an understanding of their own needs and skills
- develop different skills and approaches to dealing with a variety of work and personal issues
- leave school being able to give an account of themselves and to represent themselves in a way their peers may not be able to do i.e. they have the evidence to demonstrate they have 'employability skills'
- self confidence
- leadership skills

Impact

The success of the programme is largely attributed to both its length (i.e. 2 years) and the time spent on the programme (i.e. 1 day a week) as well as the positive relationships that students and instructors typically develop.

In terms of evidence of success and impact, this comes from a range of sources:

- anecdotal evidence – feedback from schools with pupils involved in the programme
- the University of Nottingham recently conducted an independent evaluation of the programme
- outcomes for students i.e. points contributing to league tables. Taking part in the programme for 1 day a week over 2 years earns the average student 100 points, 50 per cent of the threshold (of 200 points) in 20 per cent of the normal teaching time

- the number of schools and students participating in the programme. The first Skill Force pilot was run in 2000. Since then Skill Force has taught 7,000 students, and the ambition is to treble the number of students over the next 5 years

Typical qualifications achieved by Skill Force students are set out below. This example is taken from one of the Skill Force Northern teams:

Award	Per cent students passed
ASDAN Bronze	100
ASDAN Silver	83
ASDAN FE (level 1)	100
Wider Key Skills (level 1)	95
Wider Key Skills (level 2- 6th form)	100
Foundation for work	88
Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Full	80
Young life saver	100
CoPE (level 1)	82

Contact

www.skillforce.org

13 Skills Training UK Ltd

Developing employability through an adult training provider

Themes

Employer Involvement, Programme Design and Delivery

Background

Located within Greater London, Skills Training UK provides training to adults in Language, Literacy, Numeracy, Communication and sector-specific skills – in order to help them find employment or develop their careers. Operating from 10 centres, there are 260 staff and the company trains over 10,000 adults per annum. Skills Training UK are funded primarily by Jobcentre plus, and secondarily through partnerships and consortia, negotiated by the Learning and Skills Council and other government bodies.

The organisation sets out five values which articulate the skills and attitudes it strives to develop in helping people secure and develop their employment:

Service excellence	Customer focused, professional approach and image at all times
Problem solving	Continuous improvement, proactive, analyse issues
Passionate	Act with urgency, flexibility and confidence.
	Excellent punctuality and attendance
Building effective relationships	Team player, open and honest. Supportive, share ideas, embrace diversity, good listener and tolerant
Business focus	Understanding of services, clients, competitors and the market. Keen interest in the business

Across the 10 centres, the organisation delivers:

- New Deal Gateway to Work (18-24 and 25+)
- New Deal 25+ Intensive Activity Period (Work Experience, Basic Skills and ESOL)
- New Deal 18-24 FTET (IT, Administration, Retail and Customer Service)
- New Deal 18-24 FTET (ESOL and Basic Skills)
- Jobcentre Plus Programme Centres (Intensive Job search Resource Programme)
- Fair Cities Project – Brent (Employer led programme to support ethnic minorities into sustainable employment)
- Pan-London LSC Co-Financing – ESOL Into Work (Partnership with Ealing, Hammersmith and West London College). Delivering NVQ 1 Customer Service

Programme Overview

Through collaboration with Jobcentre Plus, people who are unemployed are offered the opportunity of being referred to Skills Training UK to seek help with finding a job. All new applicants to programmes are initially assessed through a diagnostic assessment and a one-to-one interview with a personal advisor, to identify their needs and explore their aspirations. Prior to placing a person on a job search programme, specific support is offered when learning needs in literacy, numeracy or language support are identified.

Depending on the circumstances of each individual, the support offered by Skills Training UK can vary from a two-week Gateway to Work programme, to 26-week training programme for long term unemployed. There are dedicated teams of staff to help find work placements, give advice on job applications and develop skills identified as appropriate to helping individuals find a job.

Gateway to Work

This is a two-week programme aimed at providing intensive job search support, through a series of employability workshops to help motivate and develop interpersonal skills. For example, staff use a “brick wall” activity to recognise and explore personal barriers to finding work and will deliver individual support to help explore personal aspirations, previous experience and how to overcome barriers. The programme builds on the initial assessment (where literacy, numeracy and language skills are addressed) and focuses on developing skills in self management (including time keeping), presentation and articulation, and positive attitudes to work – to help secure employment. Opportunities to apply these skills are written in to the programme through making real job applications and attending real interviews.

Programme timetable

Week one

- Monday: induction, CV and covering letter workshop
- Tuesday: icebreaker, CV session, CV writing
- Wednesday: ice breaker, job market session, telephone techniques, job search, action plans
- Thursday: covering and speculative letters, interview session
- Friday: job search

Week two

- Monday: job search, agency registration
- Tuesday: job search, motivational/teambuilding exercise
- Wednesday: external job search
- Thursday: action plans, job log check, job search, interview session or mock interview
- Friday: wrap up session and action plans

Success on the course is measured by people applying for and attending interviews, with the aim of securing employment within the two weeks. A “Congratulations board” and celebration certificates are displayed around the offices to record and share when people have gained employment through the organisation. On some programmes, a £50 bonus is paid to people when they secure employment. Staff feel this helps focus everyone on what they are there for, and it helps motivate both people coming to the organisation, and staff, that they can achieve their aims.

The staff who deliver the Gateway to Work support have a background of working in the local community and feel this makes them better able to appreciate the background and empathise with the challenges people from the local community face. The staff explained how they needed to adjust their tone and choice of language to adapt to the needs of different people they meet, stating: “People must feel you can relate.”

Staff felt one of the biggest barriers to getting a job was a change in the structure of a person’s daily routine, as they move into professional life. They felt the two-week course gave people the opportunity to get used to a way of life more like that of an employed person. To reflect this, attendance and punctuality are emphasised by the course tutor as important for all entrants to Skills Training UK and on this initial two-week course. People on the course are aware that poor timekeeping and attendance can have an effect on their job-seekers’ allowance, requiring a minimum of 30 hours activity per week.

Feedback from learners has been very positive, through on-programme discussion and feedback forms. Employers have responded positively, and frequently arrange to conduct interviews for jobs at Skills Training UK premises. The organisation also invites employers into the premises to show the skills being developed, helping local employers have a clearer picture of the capability of people who have attended the course.

13- and 26-week programmes

Delivered as part of the New Deal (18-24 and 25+), these programmes involve an element of developing vocational skills and business awareness by working towards an NVQ Level 2. To accompany the teaching & learning, many programmes have work placements and workplace visits.

A construction training course was observed, with the Skills course working towards a BTEC Introductory Diploma in Construction⁹. The course is comprised of a mixture of industry specific skills and personal skills to help secure employment in the industry. During the observation, the group were working on a personal effectiveness unit, focusing on considering their aspirations, how they would describe themselves professionally, and a personal action plan to help secure employment. The people on the course worked through provided written materials to act as prompts to stimulate their thinking skills and personal reflection. The tutor used group and individual discussion to challenge their thinking skills by asking for evidence, and supported each person develop a more thought through picture of themselves and action plan. The tutor gave positive encouragement to an individual who felt his age was against him – turning this into an opportunity to express

⁹ Qualification reference number: 100/3775/5

how much experience and skills the person had developed. A secondary outcome of the learning activity was to help the people on the course articulate their skills, experience and desire to work to an employer. This was achieved through group discussion and individuals writing their own responses to a series of prompts – which could be used in putting together a curriculum vitae and letter of application.

The group was made up from a mix of older workers with some industry experience, and young people wishing to enter the profession. The course tutor felt the mix of peer group was an important factor in helping the younger members develop a professional attitude to working in the construction industry – being able to learn from the personal experiences of the experienced workers. The tutor also noted that the older workers acted as role models, with a clear focus on completing any work set and trying to get the most out of the learning opportunity.

The course tutor felt one of the biggest barriers to young people not being successful in securing employment was a lack of willingness to learn. As a result, the course tutor felt it was important that he made the teaching & learning interesting, by sharing his own and others' personal experiences. The tutor felt there had to be a balance between people enjoying their learning experience, and developing the necessary skills and attitudes to succeed in work. Having workplace visits were seen as an important factor to achieving this balance – where people could gain a better understanding of working in the industry and hear directly from a site manager why the skills they were developing were critical to working in the industry. Involving a site manager was seen to have a positive effect on reinforcing the message from the course tutor, and the people on the course valued the input from a real “decision maker”.

One of the people on the construction course was interviewed to explore his thoughts on the course and how this fitted with his aspirations. The person responded that he felt the course was part of his aim to be employed in a job earning £30,000 per annum in 5 years' time. When asked, “What made the course work?” he responded: “The tutor shows respect for each person and knows what he is talking about.

People attending the course were supported by staff from Skills Training UK to make the transition to the daily routine of a working person. During the observation, problems were discussed on an individual basis and solutions agreed to minimise barriers to moving towards securing employment. Examples included financial concerns, course content and visits, and behind-the-scenes paperwork needed to secure the correct benefits. Staff took responsibility to resolve any issues that could become barriers to employment.

Skills Training UK work in collaboration with a number of organisations, including sub-contracting in specialist training areas. During a visit, the manager of a sub-contractor explained the aim to support the local community move into employment through these programmes, and then continue their development through undertaking higher skilled learning through the Train to Gain initiative, once they are employed. Considerable work had been undertaken with local construction employers to gain their involvement through course design, work placements and ultimately employment with continued learning. It was felt that the involvement of employers was necessary to provide a sustainable balance of benefits to both employers and the local community.

Work placements

A feature of the service offered by Skills Training UK is short-term work placements to provide an opportunity for people to gain work experience and enhance their Curriculum Vitae for future job applications. Work placements are sought in the following sectors: retail, childcare, warehousing, social work, administration/IT, teaching and art.

The organisation has taken the view to promote work placements in local charity shops, offering placements of up to two weeks. This has proven popular with both the local charities seeking voluntary help, and with people who have undertaken the short work placements. The organisation sees work placements as a further opportunity to develop and apply skills needed to secure employment – in both the relevant sectors and cross sector skills of timekeeping, attendance, and customer service.

Teaching and learning staff

Two staff were interviewed to explore the factors that they felt were important in teaching and learning employability skills.

Care tutor: It is important to be culturally aware of the people attending the course. For example, in her experience, Muslim women will not have a male tutor unless their husband is present, or sometimes not at all. During an observation of the group, the tutor made arrangements for the only male member of the group to attend a job interview whilst First Aid training was planned – so some of the women would attend and be able to show their face to practice resuscitation without a male present.

The tutor felt that having a mix of cultures within the group was beneficial, as she felt cultural awareness was an important factor to working in the local community.

Skills for Life tutor: It is important to treat each person as an individual, with accurate initial assessment, calling them by their name, including everyone in the group whilst recognising the need for “different things for different people”. It is important to teach as an adult, and not try to create a teacher – pupil dynamic. As a tutor, you must “be real – be yourself” so you are approachable and you show respect.

Impact

Skills Training UK measures its success by both quantitative achievement of its contracts, and by observing the experience of each customer. Examples of how the organisation views its success include:

- During May, June and July 2008, the organisation placed 660 unemployed customers into work via the ten centres across the South and West London
- The organisation aims to place 45 per cent of customers who enter a programme into work, within the 13 week course period

- Every customer has the opportunity to improve their interview skills
- The New Deal programme has mandatory attendance requirements – which can affect the customer's benefits if they do not attend
- In addition to the main programmes, the organisation also offers a range of pre-employment and added value courses – including ESOL and IT qualifications. Many customers comment that they feel they are more employable from attending these additional courses

Marc Brown, an Employer Engagement Manager at Skills Training UK Ltd reflects on why the organisation is successful:

"I think what makes our offer successful is that we try to understand exactly what each individual's barriers to employment are, and help them overcome these barriers – whether lack of motivation/confidence or a shortage of skill level. It helps that we involve employers in some of the courses because the customers really start to believe they will get employed once they've met the employer and completed the course.

It helps that we treat each unemployed customer with respect, that way you tend to gain the trust of the individual and they believe they will be better off in work."

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14 Sponsors for Educational Opportunity London, Career Programme

Developing employability through a voluntary organisation

Themes

Employer Involvement, Programme Design and Delivery

Background

Sponsors for Educational Opportunity London (SEO), is a not-for-profit organisation which was established in 2000, bringing to the UK an organisation with an exceptional track record of success in the US. The programme strives to encourage as many outstanding ethnic minority students as possible to consider a career in the most prestigious firms in the UK financial services industry. Students from the most under-represented ethnic minority groups (Black Caribbean, Black African, Pakistani and Bangladeshi) make up more than half of those who have participated in SEO since its inception. SEO places interns in: Investment Banking, Fixed Income, Currencies and Commodities, Equities, Asset and Investment Management, Risk Management, Structuring, Private Wealth Management and Technology. The organisation has also recently launched internship programmes in corporate law and technology. SEO has programmes in New York, San Francisco, Chicago and Hong Kong as well as London.

SEO differentiates itself by recruiting, preparing and supporting high performing ethnic minority students who, because of lack of awareness and exposure, may not have pursued careers in financial services, corporate law or technology. It recruits from Universities many of the firms with which it works would not have and in so doing widens their candidate pool. For example, in 2007-08, SEO visited 57 different universities and ultimately confirmed placements for students representing 31 UK universities. These universities ranged from those traditionally targeted by investment banks, like Cambridge, Oxford and Imperial, to those which no investment bank currently actively targets for client facing roles, such as Brunel, Essex and Queen Mary. While interns are recruited, prepared and supported by SEO, once they are accepted into the programme, they enter firm's mainstream internship programmes and compete for permanent positions with the whole intern pool.

Programme Overview

The following overview focuses on the financial services programme, which reflects the design of the other programmes.

SEO applicants are recruited through staff and alumni visits to a range of different universities throughout the UK. Applicants also learn about the programme by: word of mouth through the fast growing alumni network and within targeted ethnic minority communities; advertisements on campus; and student guides that focus on financial

services. As part of a thorough application process, and with adequate background information, students select the area of banking they are interested in completing an internship in. Once they apply, they go through the process detailed below:

1. A Rigorous Selection Process (January + February)

Applications are reviewed by SEO programme staff. Successful applicants are invited to attend a half day assessment centre in Canary Wharf at the office of a sponsor firm. The assessment centre is typically structured as follows:

TIME (AM)	ACTIVITY
8:30-8:50	Welcome
8:50-9:20	30 min. interview with 2 senior-level bankers from SEO sponsor firms
9:20-9:30	Break
9:30-10:00	30 min. question and answer break to gather more information from SEO programme staff such as details on the candidate allocation process, training and mentoring, exposure to partner firms through the summer
10:00-10:10	Break
10:10-10:40	30 min. preparation period for a case study
10:40-10:50	Break
10:50-11:05	15 min. presentation of case study to 2 senior-level bankers from sponsor firms
11:05-11:15	Break
11:15-11:50	35 minute numeracy test
11:50	Thank you and departure

The structure and tone of the assessment centre is similar to that which a student would experience at one of the City banks. Applicants and interviewers wear business attire. Interviews and case study presentations are formal, and intense. Students are expected to be well-prepared and professional. Applicants are sometimes asked to come back for additional rounds of interviews. The opportunity being presented is valuable and the competition is stiff. In 2008, 3,500 students applied for an investment banking placement and 191 students were placed.

2. Training (March – August)

Successful applicants begin an in-depth, individually tailored and unique training and mentoring programme soon after their acceptance to SEO. The training and support continues throughout their internship. The goal is to prepare students to be successful during their summer internship adding value on day one, and to convert it into a full-time career in the industry. Decisions about the content of the training are made with input from employers, SEO staff and alumni. The training programme is designed based on the belief that demonstrating the following employability skills, throughout the internship, is key to an intern's success during the summer:

- technical competence (e.g. financial math and accounting)

- strong presentation skills
- effective interpersonal skills (e.g. effective networking)
- enthusiasm
- energy
- ambition
- attention to detail
- business knowledge of relevant financial products

A tailored training programmes, for each individual, is prepared based on: the business area the student is due to intern in; the development feedback from the assessment centre and individual meetings with students to discuss their strengths and development areas. Training is further developed throughout the internship based on feedback provided from employing banks and mentors. The training focuses on:

Technical skills

Students participate in/access:

- More than 45 hours of interactive online finance training (Zoologic)
- More than 30 hours of excel-based training preparing students to conduct analytical and research tasks (Almaris)
- A full-day session on Microsoft Excel
- Bloomberg terminal induction
- A tool kit containing 20 modules relating to the summer internship
- Seminars, run onsite by senior managers at sponsor firms, which provide broader commercial awareness

As part of the technical training students often participate in interactive activities such as simulated trading games and sales role plays.

Networking

Students are offered a range of opportunities to network with senior managers from sponsor banks. The seminars mentioned above are a good example of this. Students get to learn more about host firms and make important contacts. Hosting executives get exposure to the entire pool of SEO interns. Often, hosting executives invite smaller groups of students back for follow-up smaller meetings, which are additional networking opportunities.

Presentation skills

Students attend a training session conducted by Working Voices, a private consultancy that focuses on interpersonal communication and presentation skills. During the session, students are taken through an interactive module delivered by a skilled trainer designed to break down the component parts of what makes a good presenter. This will include

physical appearance, body language, vocal tone, projection, articulation, enthusiasm, engagement, rapport building.

Inter-personal skills

To improve their interpersonal skills, students receive a combination of:

- one-to-one support from a mentor
- one-to-one and small group informal sessions with SEO employees and alumni
- formal training sessions

This training focuses on developing the inter-personal skills necessary to make an impact within the team the students will be doing their internship. Those completing corporate finance and sales internships will learn the importance of active listening, rapport building, confident body language, clear communication. Those working in trading will focus more on assertiveness and maintaining poise in a very pressurised work environment.

Mentoring

Every student is paired with an SEO mentor to help coach them through their internship experience. Mentors are usually senior managers, often SEO alumni, working in similar business areas at a different bank to that of the student. Mentors support interns through face-to-face meetings, email exchanges and phone calls. They have at least weekly contact and address subjects such as making a good impression at work, handling office politics, information needed to complete an internship project, questions about how the bank works and appropriate physical appearance (dress, hair, make-up).

Here is what one mentor said about his experience:

“I definitely wouldn’t be where I am today without the help of SEO and, of course, my mentor. Ultimately, mentoring provides so much fulfilment for both parties. And at the end of day, you just want to be able to give back as much as you can to the SEO family.” *Alexian Lien, SEO London Mentor, SEO USA Intern 2001*

Here is what one mentee said of her experience:

“My SEO mentor was also a great support – I was able to contact him with any problems and any advice I needed. It was helpful to have a mentor that was not related to the bank so that he could give me impartial advice, and I really could be totally honest with him.” *Navneet Sehmi, SEO Intern 2006, Investment Banking Programme*

3. The Ten-week Paid Internship (July-August)

Students are placed at banks based on a rigorous matching process implemented by SEO staff. Banks provide SEO with internship descriptions and SEO staff match students with opportunities based on the student’s interests and profile. Once matched, students become part of the bank’s regular internship programme. The majority of interns are placed

in front-office positions, in many of the most desirable client-facing locations in sponsor firms. For example:

1. within the Investment Banking Division these include client-facing roles in Corporate Finance, M&A, ECM and DCM
2. in Global Markets these include sales, trading, research and structuring roles covering all major businesses (Equities, Fixed Income, Currencies and Commodities)
3. a smaller number of positions are available with bank Investment Management businesses, either within Asset Management or, increasingly, Private Wealth Management
 - During their internships, students are expected to support their teams' business deliverables. The internships are demanding, though the specific amount and type of work each student will complete will vary from team to team. In certain areas like trading it is very hard for interns to execute as they will not have completed the necessary training and certification to trade on behalf of the firm or its clients. Corporate finance interns, on the other hand, will be expected to complete many of the tasks of a graduate analyst, including working on valuation models and completing financial analysis of clients or competitors. Students are paid between £550 and £900 a week for their contribution.
 - Intern performance is assessed based on the quality of work they complete, feedback from their line managers and any specific projects or presentations they are asked to do. SEO staff sit down with all partner firms at the mid-point of the ten week scheme to discuss the interns' formal mid-term review. With this feedback, plus that which students have given on their own performance, SEO will design an appropriate coaching regime for the last five weeks of the summer, which will be executed by SEO staff, alumni support teams and mentors.
 - Once they have completed their internship, students are considered for full-time positions alongside all other university students. Offers can come shortly after completing the summer internships or later in their last year at University. In the eight years since its inception, SEO London has placed over 800 ethnic minority students for summer internships at sponsor firms and more than 80% go on to receive full-time job offers.

Here is what two students said of their experiences:

“I applied to SEO after being recommended by a friend, not really knowing what to expect. I soon came to recognise SEO’s dedication to providing each and every intern with unparalleled training, mentoring and exposure. The support network is fantastic! From buddies to mentors to classmates to the SEO staff, you really feel part of a global network that is there to ensure you maximise your chances of success. Through this programme I have met great people, gained access to many of the brightest minds in finance, expanded my inter-personal skills and learnt what hard work is really about. The SEO experience is truly unique and has provided me with the perfect platform from which to launch my career in investment banking. ” *Abdiwali Elmi, SEO Intern 2008, Investment Banking Programme*

“SEO provided unrivalled access to all the sponsor banks. While a direct internship allows you to experience one bank only, SEO opens the door to a range of opportunities which you can utilise to learn about the broader industry.” *Bryan Mezue, SEO Intern 2006, Investment Banking Programme*

4. Alumni Participation (Ongoing)

Alumni support is central to the SEO programme. In fact, it is considered during the admission process. Among the questions asked by interviewers at the assessment centre is, if and how applicants will give back if they are accepted into the programme.

Currently there are over 5000 alumni worldwide. Alumni are surveyed regularly to determine who is interested in providing support and what kind of support they are best qualified to give. Those who are interested, do a range of activities to ensure SEO's growth and success including recruiting, mentoring, hosting/running training sessions, providing financial support and serving on the SEO Board. The SEO offices in Chicago, Hong Kong and London were established as a result of the initiative of alumni.

Throughout the Career Programme, SEO works closely with representatives from their partner firms, across all levels of the business, to ensure the programme is as well integrated as possible.

- Senior managers from every partner firm serve as SEO Advisory Board members. Typically these will be very senior Managing Directors, such as regional CEOs or global business heads. These Advisory Board members: meet regularly as a group to discuss SEO policy and out-reach; champion the programme at their firms; and present to the entire SEO class every summer.
- Line managers: conduct interviews at SEO assessment centres (221 participated in 2008); act as mentors for students not interning at their firm (210+ agreed to mentor the 191 person 2008 SEO class); manage interns during the summer; attend the pre-summer seminars at their firms; host networking evenings during the summer with a view to identifying potential graduate talent in the wider class; and take part in SEO recruitment and training events throughout the autumn recruitment season.
- Recruiters and diversity are key points of contact for SEO, and they have a dedicated relationship manager at every firm. Through these relationships, SEO comes to understand the diversity and graduate recruitment priorities of the firms their partner firms; co-ordinate firms' representation on interview days and agrees which firms will host assessment centres and pre-summer training sessions.

In addition to delivering the Career Programme, in 2007 SEO introduced a first year university student training programme, which all partner firms now take part in. SEO has observed that students from the most under-represented ethnic groups under-perform relative to other better-represented ethnic groups at second year university interviews even, when they have comparable academic records. The feedback for this under-performance is often that such students lack exposure to the industry. The aim of the first year initiative is to therefore improve the awareness and level of preparation of students earlier in the academic cycle. The training is delivered over the course of two days in London and

involves each partner firm sending trainers and line staff to provide interactive training on each business area and also provide guidance on how to best prepare for second year interviews. SEO is currently working to establish awareness building events and mentoring for secondary schools students as well.

Impact

SEO's impact is demonstrated by the following:

- In the eight years since its inception, SEO London has placed over 580 ethnic minority students for summer internships at sponsor investment banks and corporate law firms. More than 80 per cent have gone on to receive full-time job offers from firms after their internships. This is in comparison to most partner firms offering between 50-60 per cent of their intern class full-time jobs
- In 2007 over 60 per cent of the SEO class was fast-tracked for end of summer interviews with partner firms other than the firm that they completed their internship with. Over 40 per cent of the class received multiple graduate offers from partner firms
- For many partner firms, SEO is responsible for the identification of at least 70-80 per cent of their Black African and Black Caribbean summer and full-time analyst hires

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15 Stanley High School Specialist Sports College

Developing employability skills through a specialist college

Themes

Leadership and Resources, Programme Design and Delivery

Background

Stanley High School in Southport is a Specialist Sports College in which a strong ethos of teamwork, individual responsibility and personal achievement has developed over the past three years. This has undoubtedly contributed to the dramatic increase in the accomplishments and employability skills of its pupils.

The School is a ‘specialist’ sports college in that the national curriculum is taught in it but that a particular emphasis is placed on sport. The school has exceptional facilities and staff in this area. Stanley High School caters to mixed pupils from 11-16 and has an intake of pupils from a range of social and economic backgrounds. On entering the school the pupil is of average ability; but the School’s achievement rates are above average with 74 per cent achieving five or more good passes at GCSE.

Programme Overview

The development of employability skills is not approached through a ‘bolt-on’ programme, but rather forms a fundamental part of the school’s ethos and approach. For example:

- Traditional forms have been replaced by mixed age teams, with an enhanced form tutor acting as a ‘team manager’. As well as providing the basis for a range of competitive activities and projects this system enables older students to mentor younger ones and support them through transitions such as choosing options and undertaking work experience. This system of informal support begins on day one when new pupils are welcomed to the school with a presentation from their teammates entitled “How to survive at Stanley High School”. An induction from the perspective of fellow pupils is designed to help new pupils with the daunting task of settling into school and provides opportunity for those delivering it to develop important skills in the process of planning, agreeing and presenting the information.
- Attendance levels have been increased by using the sports theme and the team structure as the basis for a ‘Champions’ League’ styled competition. Through this kind of activity and challenge throughout the year the 32 teams (which form four houses) are used to promote the sense of belonging and pride that young people need. Pupils learn teamwork and individual and collective responsibility. The Head teacher, David Tansey, understands the importance of this, commenting that, in his opinion, “If they don’t get this in a positive way they look for it elsewhere, hence gang culture.”

- As well as successfully integrating employability skills into pastoral arrangements learning for both work and life has been embedded into every aspect of the curriculum. In Physical Education lessons pupils take turns in taking responsibility for warm up. In subjects ranging from Religious Education to the Science pupils are encouraged to think critically, apply logic, co-operate and solve problems in the course of everyday lessons. Mr. Tansey believes that: “Subjects are a vehicle for Life Skills, not the other way around.”
- Pupils are encouraged to achieve academically by striving for a ‘personal best’ rather than the more common target of five or more GCSEs. This personalised target focuses on individual achievement, a change of focus that has created an ethos where all pupils can feel proud of themselves. This has had a positive impact on levels of confidence and self esteem, has led to improved behavior and achievement and potentially builds toward the kind of ‘positive attitudes’ that employers so often comment is missing in new entrants.
- A small group of pupils (approximately 25) are involved in a ‘relationship support programme’. This is designed to help those pupils who have difficulty in having appropriate relationships with anyone in authority. This approach seeks to address early those beliefs and behaviors that are likely to make it difficult for a pupil to succeed in life and work.

Leadership

When David Tansey took over as Head teacher in 2005 he began making changes to both curriculum delivery and pastoral systems in the School. This involved not only practical arrangements such as the new house system, but also using the school’s status as a sports college to provide an interesting new twist. As many opportunities as possible for pupils to develop transferable skills and a positive approach were utilised.

Making these fundamental changes within the school involved a sustained process of change management. An early step was to develop a new mission statement as a ‘top down’ approach to changing the policies and culture within the school. The mission statement includes the aspiration that pupils will:

“...achieve knowledge, skills, understanding and values to thrive in and make sense of a rapidly changing world.”

Mr. Tansey supports embedding employability within the mainstream curriculum rather than treating it as a separate subject. He believes that, “The pressure of the content of the National Curriculum has been used as an excuse not to focus on the underlying skills and values that young people need. The new model for the curriculum starts with these values and enables schools to build their curriculum from there. It’s a really positive step for which Mick Waters and QCA deserve massive congratulations.” However, the successful integration of employability skills into the curriculum requires a different approach to teaching and learning. Mr. Tansey made this happen by committing the necessary resources and consistently pushing forward a programme of change.

The degree of commitment required to implement this kind of change cannot be underestimated. It is necessary to demonstrate unwavering commitment and a high degree of inspirational leadership. David Tansey chose to undertake a programme of far-reaching change in an already successful school because he believed that doing so would help each and every pupil to believe in their own abilities and achieve their potential. He believes passionately that his pupils' experiences at school should fully equip them for life and work as well as help them to achieve the highest possible level of academic attainment.

This vision was not always shared by everyone. In the early stages Mr. Tansey experienced resistance and concern from staff, parents and even pupils; the local newspaper even reported on developments. One of the lessons to be learned from Stanley High School is that although a high degree of determination is needed to make things happen, it is equally important to make sure that those who will be affected understand your vision, rationale and the benefits of any changes. It took a three-year commitment of time to successfully implement the approach and for most people involved to see the benefits.

Impact

Following the changes in 2007 the school could claim better academic achievement and there is now increased attendance, fewer exclusions and fewer pupils not progressing into education, employment or training. Benefits can also be seen in the absence of drugs, pregnancy and similar social problems. Most importantly pupils benefit from an enjoyable and positive educational experience and are well equipped for life and work.

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16 Training with Purpose

Developing employability for 16-19 year olds not in education, employment and training

Theme

Programme Design and Delivery

Background

Training With Purpose is a training and development consultancy that has focused on organisational development and delivering staff training and development since 1995, and teaching/developing employability skills since 2001. The organisation delivers a variety of consultancy advice and training courses covering a range of topics from management development, time management, interviewing clients, presentation skills, Train The Trainer, to employability skills. They work across the country, carrying out work in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Training With Purpose has been involved in delivering employability skills training for young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) in partnership with a number of organisations including The Stephen Lawrence Trust, Lewisham College, Deloitte and Central London Connexions (following an open tender exercise) and London East Connexions Partnership (following a recommendation). They currently run the 'Getting Ready for Work!' Job Readiness Programme for Central London Connexions and London East Connexions Partnership, approximately once a month or once every other month.

Connexions is targeted at 13-19 year olds living in England advice on a range of issues affecting where they want to be in life. Connexions also provides support up to the age of 25 for young people who have learning difficulties or disabilities (or both). Local education authorities are responsible for the provision of Connexions services.

Connexions offers a range of support services including advice and guidance on issues affecting education, employment or family life. For each young person not in education, employment or training, signing up to the Connexions service involves agreeing an 'activity agreement'. The activity agreement sets out the actions an individual must take over a 20-week period. The objective is to get the young person back into either education or employment at the end of the 20 weeks. Part of this 20-week programme involves attending a variety of training programmes that includes the 'Getting Ready for Work!' Job Readiness Programme run by Training with Purpose.

Programme Overview

'Getting Ready for Work!' is a 5-day Job Readiness Programme that prepares young people for workplace success by developing their employability skills through confidence building, self motivation, team working skills, work etiquette, personal awareness and self-esteem. It uses a variety of proven techniques that include individual and group work, drama, teambuilding activities, guest speakers, competitions, videos and role plays.

There are a maximum of twelve young people on any one course. The course runs over 5 days and starts at 10am, finishing at 4pm. Participants are expected to arrive between 09:30-10:00 for a 10am start. If participants miss Module 0 (Motivation and Confidence Building) they are encouraged to attend another full programme as they have missed the 'bonding' session where participants have taken time to get to know each other and shared their individual experiences. In terms of punctuality, as this is a joint programme run by both Connexions and Training with Purpose, it has been agreed that for the particular young people the programme is targeted at, it is more important for attendees to actively participate in the programme and therefore participation is considered a priority over punctuality. For other employability programmes run by Training with Purpose, punctuality is always a priority because the training is about preparing individuals for the real world of work where lateness is not acceptable.

Participants receive a certificate of attendance at the end of the programme which is signed by Connexions and the Managing Director of Training with Purpose. The benefits of taking part in the job readiness programme is that young people will develop their confidence, interview technique, social skills and understanding of work etiquette to ensure successful employment or entry into further training and/or education.

The programme is outlined below. It is designed to help participants develop a better understanding of the world of work and the actions they will need to take in order to become an attractive employment prospect for most employers.

Module 0 – Motivation and Confidence building

This module is focused on encouraging participants to develop a clear vision for where they want to be in the future, the programme encourages participants to identify and set themselves challenging goals to achieve the vision they have identified.

Module 1 – What makes a successful employee?

Employers from a range of different sectors, either identified by Connexions or Training with Purpose from the pool of clients they work with, are invited to participate. If there is no employer to take part in this session, the programme uses a video known as 'faking it' where the group looks at what it took for someone to be successful in an area of work which is different to theirs. The participants then discuss the parallels between the changes the person in the video had to make to be successful and the behaviours, attitude, dress etc. they will have to change or develop if they want to make it in the world of work today.

Module 2 – Getting the Job you want!

The aim of this session is for participants to have a good understanding of the overall recruitment process, from writing a CV to how to perform in a real interview to how best to sell oneself. Participants are given honest and constructive feedback on how they performed during the 'real' interview and given advice and guidance on other issues which are relevant to the recruitment process, such as how to dress for an interview and how body language can influence the perception others have of you.

Module 3 – Working with others

This module explores the relationship employees have with their colleagues and others in the organisation. It identifies different ways to manage conflict and difficult relationships and focuses on understanding the rights and responsibilities as an employee and an employer.

Module 4 – Work – The real deal!

The purpose of Module 4 is to encourage the participants to use the skills developed during the programme to create a business and present the business plan to a panel of Business Angels.

Training with Purpose delivers training programmes through a range of trainers/facilitators. When considering the key skills of the trainers and in turn the factors which contribute to make the programme a success, the Managing Director of Training with Purpose was very clear that effective and successful employability trainers/facilitators need to have:

- Recent experience in the world of work to ensure they are able to make learning/developing employability skills relevant to the workplace and therefore the career aspirations of participants
- An element of fun/humour. Positive learning experiences encourage the desire of participants, particularly young people, to learn and engage
- A passion for engaging young people and developing employability skills to ensure young people achieve their true potential
- Ability and confidence to give feedback which is honest, constructive, and realistic
- A spontaneous and flexible in their approach and teaching
- The ability to make clear the links between the programme and the workplace
- CIPD training (desirable as opposed to essential criterion)

In reflecting on the work of Training With Purpose, the Managing Director also emphasised that:

- There are some basic/core employability skills everyone should develop, for example, punctuality/time keeping, personal presentation, self awareness, ability to work as a team, the use of ICT etc. There are a second set of slightly more advanced employability skills, for example, using initiative, problem solving, understanding the sector/industry the young person is looking at having a career in, work etiquette and the social skills that help individuals build healthy work and life relationships. Therefore, the approach to teaching employability skills needs to be varied to ensure the teaching of employability skills is appropriate for people who are starting from different places and therefore engage with these programmes at different stages of job readiness
- There should be something before young people leave education to ensure they have basic skills in literacy and numeracy – developing employability skills should be a ‘cradle to grave’ approach
- There is a need for teaching employability skills in a discrete way in certain circumstances, for example, teaching young people who are not in education,

employment or training so that it is clear to the young person the employability skill that they are learning, and the purpose of it in the real world of work. However, there is also a need to have employability skills taught as an integral part of the overall curriculum/programme of teaching, therefore there is a need to ensure the approach to teaching employability skills is one which is both embedded but also discrete

In reflecting on their experiences, participants said:

- *“This course has made a real difference, I had no confidence in myself before coming on the course”*
- *“I realised I am better at certain things than I thought I was”*
- *“Employers need to be more diverse in their approach to recruitment, need more flexibility as such rigid entry requirements put people like me off. I have a real desire to work and have the passion and desire to do a job properly but I am not seen as equal to someone who has the qualifications but not the ‘basic skills’ and determination as me”*
- *“My age is a factor in me not getting employment, people think I am too young”*
- *“Developing employability skills needs to start in primary school”*
- *“Traditional academic classroom teaching doesn’t work for everyone, we need to have different approaches to teaching”*

Impact

Evidence of success includes:

- Young people are engaged in the programme
- The transformation seen in people attending the programme is amazing and that is often visible during the course of the programme. There are immediate soft outcomes including, for example, increased confidence, being more alert, improved presentation techniques, team working and general communication with others
- Positive feedback from personal advisors from Connexions keeping track of outcomes for participants, for example, those participants who have gone into further education, training or employment

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17 University of Dundee

Developing employability through a Higher Education Institution

Themes

Leadership and Resources, Programme Design and Delivery

Background

Located in Scotland, the University of Dundee has grown since its origins in 1881, to become home to nearly 18000 students. The University is made up of four colleges and has an annual turnover of £160 million. In addition to embedding employability skills through a comprehensive academic skills programme, the University develops employability skills through three additional approaches:

- Personal Development Planning for all students
- Discrete support through a well developed University Careers Service
- Competitions and events for students to engage with industry

Programme Overview

In 2004, the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) made a proposal that all Higher Education Institutions should have a policy for personal development plans (PDPs) for students. QAA gave guidance on the main principles, which included having:

- a structured and integrated process
- a recording system for students to keep a progress file
- guidance materials and support mechanisms
- academic transcripts should be included in the file
- a monitoring system to ensure effectiveness and inform review

In response to the proposals, the University developed two key approaches:

1. a web-based ePDP account for all undergraduate students, able to be tailored vocational and professional disciplines
2. support for career planning for non-vocational students, including a credit bearing module

ePDP

All undergraduate students have personal development plans which are accessed through the University's student e-Learning portal – *My Dundee*, based on the Blackboard Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) platform. Students are encouraged to access their PDP on a regular basis, to reflect, record and plan their personal development, whilst developing both academic and employability skills. Students undertake skills audits which describe transferable skills needed to secure and develop in employment. By following the PDP

process, students consider their competence in each skill, and build a portfolio of examples when these skills have been used. This culminates in producing an individual action plan, where the student identifies development areas, specific actions, and a target timescale.

Induction programmes on how to use the ePDP have been developed and delivered with all four colleges at the university. Printed materials and online support material is also available.

Departments are encouraged to work with their respective professional bodies to help develop the ePDP so that it prepares students for professional development in their chosen sector.

For example, in Town & Regional Planning, the skills templates used in the PDP process match closely to the requirements of the Royal Town Planning Institute for continuous professional development. In addition, the student's critical reflection of their academic experience is structured around the Royal Town Planning Institutes learning outcomes.

The University sees the ePDP as giving University of Dundee students an edge in the competitive jobs market, by helping students develop important skills of reflection and planning, helping students articulate their skills and experiences, and preparing students to adopt a professional attitude and personal responsibility to their continued development.

The outcome of PDP – an action plan and portfolio of development – helps students gain employment. The process of PDP – reflection, critical review and action planning – support students develop skills required in the workplace.

Support from the Careers Service

The University has an active Careers Service which has trained and qualified members of staff to provide direct and remote support. Students can access three main sources of support:

- Education
- Advice & guidance
- Information

Education

In addition to the department based careers education, the Careers Service offers students additional opportunities to develop skills, knowledge and values that are aimed at enhancing their employment prospects. First, are a range of seminars and workshops that focus on interview techniques, CV writing, personality testing and assessment centres.

Second, students can choose to study additional Level 2 modules in Career Planning and Internships. Each module carries 20 Level 2 credits upon successful completion.

As an example, the Career Planning Module has 6 assignments and is continually assessed in both written and practical formats. The following topics are covered in timetabled 2 hour sessions:

- factors leading to career choice
- transferable skills/PDP
- opportunity awareness

- career options
- personality profiling
- aptitude test
- working cultures
- CVs and covering letters
- enterprise
- personal effectiveness
- presentation skills
- making an application
- team roles and recruitment
- interview and telephone interview techniques
- assessment centres
- an assessed interview
- action plan, contingency planning, job hunting

As part of the offer of additional learning, students have access and exposure to the world of work through the involvement of employers, such as site visits to employer premises and talks by employers coming to the university. Although the Career Planning Module is aimed at supporting students who are still deciding on their career path, the skills developed are equally relevant to helping students manage their career once employed.

Internship Module

As an alternative to the Career Planning Module, students who wish to pursue work experience in a particular industry can apply for the Internship module. This is a practical module combining a work experience placement with learning about the world of work and career planning. Placements are offered in a wide range of career areas through the Placement Basement, or students can source their own placement to match their needs. The Internship Module is open to any level 2 student (or level 3 student requiring 20 level 2 credits) from the colleges of Arts and Social Sciences, Life Sciences and elsewhere where the degree pathway allows. There is no examination for the Internship Module. Students are continually assessed in both written and practical formats through the successful completion of 5 assignments:

- weekly log
- skills audit
- CV
- short presentation
- written placement report

The ePDP system is integrated to the Internship Planning and Career Planning modules, supporting students evidence their development, and develop skills useful to working in professional employment.

Advice and guidance

Students are able to access advice and guidance from the University on-line resources, in printed form from the Careers Service, or in person from a Careers Adviser. The range of advice and guidance offered includes:

- making a career choice
- options for further study and opportunities for funding
- interview techniques and mock interviews
- taking time out
- making applications and CVs
- selection and aptitude tests
- part-time work and work experience

A benefit of using online resources has been that they are accessible at a time and place chosen by the student. To help students develop a better understanding of preparing themselves for the world of work, a range of tools and video clips are available online, through the University's website.

One example of the tools available to students, is access to sector, country and occupational profiles. Here, students can select an industry, country or job role they are interested in and be directed to the official graduate careers website, Prospects¹⁰. Students can use this tool to find out about the job market, vacancy sources, salary and conditions, entry requirements, progression, and future trends.

In addition to a range of advice and tips when applying for work, the University has a range of online videos. These give students a useful insight over a range of topics, as they contain video of real students from the University making real applications.

Students can also book an appointment with a Careers Adviser to receive individual and tailored support. The advisers also offer timetabled drop-in sessions, for both general and subject specific support. Through their professional training, Careers Advisers structure their support to enhance a student's and graduate's own understanding of their skills, personality, motivations & values and interests in choosing and seeking employment. The clarity, focus and action planning a Careers Adviser bring to someone's understanding of their relationship to the world of work, is seen as an important factor by the University.

¹⁰<http://www.prospects.ac.uk/>

Information

Throughout their study, students can access a number of sources of information to help in their development and search for employment. Examples of information that students can access include:

- a vacancy database
- careers information
- computer careers guidance
- placement basement
- careers fairs

The Placement Basement is Dundee University Careers Service 'one-stop-shop' for students and employers, for internships and work experience placements. The Employer Liaison Team, who are based in the Placement Basement work to find as many students within the University a work experience placement, and therefore help to increase their employability after graduation. The Placement Basement is open to both students and employers, with a foyer area open for information and latest placements five days a week and our drop-in sessions timetabled throughout the week.

Not just about undergraduates

In recognition that developing the transferable skills that enhance employability does not stop at graduation, the University aims to help post-graduate research students through a programme called Generic Skills Dundee.

A range of resources have been designed to meet the standards laid out in the Joint Skills Statement, by the UK Research Councils. The statement details which skills have been identified as important in supporting post-graduate research students develop better research skills and enhance their employability:

- A. research skills and techniques
- B. research environment
- C. research management
- D. personal effectiveness
- E. communication skills
- F. networking and team-working
- G. career management

The UK Research Councils now recommend that post-graduate students undertake the equivalent of two weeks of transferable skills training per year, comprised of a series of workshops and training sessions. Generic Skills Dundee training events are offered in addition to any mandatory training already delivered through each college.

Events and Competitions

In addition to embedding employability skills through the curriculum, and the range of support through the Careers Service, the University runs regular events and competitions to encourage stronger links with employers and enhanced opportunities for students to gain experience through exposure to the world of work.

“Enterprise Gym Awards”

An event run in November 2008, students embarked on a programme of seven sessions delivered by senior local business people which takes them from total beginners to producing a business plan based on their own business idea. The final stage is a “Lions Den” scenario, judged by the Student President of The Enterprise Gym.

“Employer-Led Learning”

2in10 Ltd, a technology venture management firm based in Glasgow, has an agreement with the University’s School of Computing to incorporate its own intellectual property in Product Management and Product Marketing into the School’s existing BSc degree courses in E-Commerce Computing and Applied Computing. 2in10’s directors and specialist associates have taught the students about global technology and product marketing techniques and processes and how to design a commercially-focused product development process. A number of active Scottish technology entrepreneurs have also delivered case study projects.

The students were set a product management task. They each interviewed 2-3 product managers of high-profile technology companies/corporations face-to-face or by telephone. They then present their findings to the companies, and their tutors, in a series of 20-minute interactive presentations, and are judged by an expert panel. The top students receive cash prizes from HoundDog Technology, which has supported the student task.

“Technology for the future”

Computing students at the University of Dundee are being challenged to envisage what life will be like in 2020, in a competition sponsored by NCR Corporation. Students at the School of Computing faculty in Dundee have been asked to think about how new technologies will change the way in which we shop, bank, travel and spend our leisure time.

NCR sponsored the competition to get insights into how ‘digital natives’ – the generation which has grown up with technologies such as the Internet and mobile phones – will want to interact with providers of services and products, such as banks, retailers or airline companies, in the future.

Ten teams of students have risen to the challenge and are competing to come up with the best vision of the future. They have been asked to think about:

- What will a day in the life be like in 2020?
- How will you communicate with others?

- How will you do your shopping?
- Will there be money?
- What will it be like?
- How will you get your entertainment?
- How will life be REALLY different?

Students have had to respond to the challenge quickly, coming back with a three minute ‘elevator pitch’ on their vision after the first session. They then had just a week to develop a presentation of their vision using a modern way to communicate it, such as a ‘YouTube-style video’ or another contemporary medium. The contest was judged by a panel of experts.

In undertaking this work, students are exposed to the real work demands of achieving outcomes with restricted resources, time and to meet a customer’s needs. As a result, students are motivated to apply their skills and encouraged to be creative and innovative – vital skills seen in the computing industry. The emphasis on technology also helps students understand the changing demand for skills they need now and in the future in their chosen industry.

“Innovation Showcase”

As part of National Enterprise Week, the Universities of Dundee and Abertay, together with Scotland’s centre for crop research, joined forces to present the ‘Innovation Showcase’. High-profile representatives from industry, government and the world of research were invited to an event which aimed to support businesses see how they could benefit from making more use of the institutions’ expertise and facilities.

This event brings a focus to students on how their enterprise skills can be used in a workplace setting, and raise opportunities for progression into work by forming links with visiting employers. Bringing high-profile representatives from industry into the University, especially those who originate from the local area, helps to raise student aspirations.

Impact

The University of Dundee is proud of its success in supporting students develop the necessary skills to make an active contribution to both the world of research, and the world of employment with local, national and international companies. The University identifies its success thus:

- 80 per cent of students are in graduate-level jobs within 6 months of graduation
- Dundee University graduates have the highest starting salaries in the UK apart from top London colleges
- Dundee is Recognised as a university that delivers high quality and appropriate skills, and successfully transferring the skills to make a valuable contribution to the named industries:

- According to the Times Good University Guide 2009 league table, the University of Dundee was ranked 1st in Scotland for Architecture, Civil Engineering, Dentistry and 2nd in Scotland for Social Work
- According to the Guardian University League Table 2009, the University of Dundee was listed as: 1st in Scotland for Civil Engineering, Dentistry and Medicine, and 2nd in Scotland for American Studies, Education, English, History, Pharmacy & Pharmacology and Town Planning

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18 University of Leicester

Developing employability skills through an Higher Education Institution

Themes

Employer Involvement, Programme Design and Delivery

Background

The University of Leicester is The University of Leicester is Times Higher Education University of the Year 2008-09

The university provides an interesting example of an HE institution that approaches the development of employability skills through a number of different routes, locating responsibility for doing so within both academic departments and student services.

Colleagues from the Student Learning Centre and the Careers Service have key roles in delivering employability across the institution. Academics are involved to varying degrees depending on the policy of their department and level of personal interest.

In some degree courses, work-related learning and employability skills are formally integrated into the curriculum, but, in common with most universities, the University of Leicester does not have an employability skills programme that is compulsory and institution-wide. To provide opportunity to those students who do not experience the full range of employability skills development as an integral part of their course optional programmes are available.

Programme Overview

The inclusion of employability skills into the curriculum is an explicit expectation of all degree programmes at the University of Leicester. This is articulated in the institution's Learning and Teaching strategy. However, the method and level of this type of teaching varies according to the academic department and the individual course design. This may be because the decision about *how* employability should be addressed both within and outside of the curriculum lies with the academic staff responsible for the programme.

There are many competing pressures on academics so it is difficult to implement change management procedures across the institution.

There are Career Management/Employability *modules* within some courses and these are more commonly optional and credit bearing as opposed to fully embedded within the programme of learning.

Examples of embedding employability skills within a subject include:

- Group work projects
- Assessed presentations
- Research projects
- Problem-based learning

The Leicester Award

The university run a work-based learning course entitled the Leicester Award for Employability Skills (often shortened to “The Leicester Award”). Based on experiential learning, the programme is open to students who are already engaged in some form of work experience, paid or unpaid. Students may choose one of the following areas, for which they must be able to demonstrate an existing and ongoing involvement, and around which they must base their course activities and assignments:

- Volunteering/community work
- Post Graduate Research/academic project
- Paid employment/Self employment
- Business or social enterprise idea
- Students’ Union activity/involvement

As part of the six-month programme, students attend three interactive workshops designed to encourage self-reflection and personal development as well as challenge students to work as a team under time pressures. Each workshop contains group and individual reflection and feedback.

Experience has shown that experiential learning works best. Students become engaged and energised by practical exercises designed to recognise and further develop skills such as team-working and problem solving. Exercises are not always work-related but designed to be complex and interesting enough to hold students attention and allow them to demonstrate different behaviours/strengths. Team and individual reflection plays an important part in the learning process and students are supported to recognise their existing skills as well as develop new ones. One-to-one verbal feedback (on presentations for example) works very well, especially when delivered by employers involved in the programme.

A significant amount of emphasis is put on developing a supportive environment. This is important for effective teamwork exercises, particularly where students are required to give and receive feedback on strengths and weaknesses.

Learning Outcomes

Learning and assessment activities are designed to address the following Programme Learning Outcomes:

By the end of the LAES programme successful students will have:

- reflected critically on own career and learning development
- demonstrated research, problem solving and decision making skills and techniques
- demonstrated the following employability skills: project planning and management techniques, written and oral communication skills, ability to manage own time, leadership skills, working in a team and under own initiative
- had the opportunity to exercise skills in networking and working in a team
- shown self awareness and a good understanding of personal and professional development management

Assessment

Students complete two pieces of assessed written work and one presentation. The first written assignment focuses on problem solving and decision making in the workplace. It also asks students to consider their team working style and provide examples of effective team working, drawing on their current work experience. Assignment Two requires students to use their networking skills to make contact with an individual in industry, undertake a job study and complete a tailor-made CV, all a part of preparations for their chosen career as graduates. The final assignment is a ten minute oral presentation that is assessed by graduate employers.

For each of these three assignments students receive written and oral feedback to help consolidate their learning, draw out examples of employability skills that they may not have considered and point them in the direction of additional help and networks.

The Leicester Award has recently been added to students' transcripts, which has added to the programme's weight and credibility across the institution.

Attracting students

The main reason that students provide for participating in the programme is 'getting a good job' and having something positive to put on their CV. The programme has a significant career management focus as well as pure 'employability skills' development, such as input on work trends, mock interviews, and so forth. Career choice and recruitment is a very immediate concern for most students and it is unlikely that a purely skills-based course would be as attractive to them. However, during the course students tend to recognise that skill development and increased self-awareness will help them with both recruitment process and career decision making.

The Leicester Award is endorsed by the Institute of Leadership and Management which has proved attractive to students and employers. Students place a high value on management related qualifications and ILM has gravitas.

The course will be delivered by e-learning for the first time this year to allow students with summer jobs to participate.

Grad School Programme

A residential programme similar to the Leicester Award is run for postgraduate research students. This is funded with monies from the Roberts review. Postgraduate students benefit from developing a range of employability skills and more particularly in developing the communication skills to articulate the benefits of their research to employers and the wider community.

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19 Young Enterprise, Company Programme

Developing employability through the help of a charity

Themes

Employer Involvement, Programme Design and Delivery

Background

Young Enterprise is an enterprise education charity, which was founded in 1963, based upon the American Junior Achievement model. The charity works with over 5,500 schools, colleges and universities throughout the UK to help young people aged 4 to 25+, to develop their skills and capabilities for enterprise, business and the world of work. There is a menu of Young Enterprise programmes targeting different ages and specific topics available to students in primary, secondary, higher and further education. All are based on the philosophy: learning by doing. Young Enterprise draws on the support of 3,500 UK businesses who provide business volunteers to deliver the programmes in schools.

Among the programmes that Young Enterprise offers to students 15 to 19 years of age is the Company Programme, which allows students to set up and run their own real company for a year and will be the focus of this case study.

Programme Overview

Once a school has decided to do the Company Programme, a teacher will meet with a Young Enterprise regional staff member, their main point of contact at the charity, to register the school as a Young Enterprise centre. The teacher will also begin to recruit students to participate in the programme. Participating groups range from 6-25 students per company. The Young Enterprise regional point of contact will match the school with a business advisor, recruited by Young Enterprise regional boards as volunteers, who will work with the students throughout the year. Teachers and business advisors attend a regional induction briefing and training session together that provides background on how the programme works and allows time to start planning for the year. After this, teachers, students and business advisors progress through the stages described below:

Getting Started (August-September)

The first company meeting is held at the beginning of the school year. During this initial meeting, students are introduced to each other and to their business advisor. They receive an overview of the programme and an introduction to how a company operates. Guided by their business advisor, students begin thinking about what type of company they want to set up, the name of the company and the role they want to play in the company. They also schedule future meetings.

Once the students have settled on the main details of their company, the teacher will register the company online, which sets them up as a branch of their local Young

Enterprise organisation. This status provides the students' company with extensive public liability insurance, arranged by Young Enterprise, and enables students to sell shares, set up their own bank account and trade goods/services with the public. Students also receive a range of materials that will support them throughout the year which include director diaries for each student, an administration box for the company and access to the new Company Programme website which provides online tools and resources to help them run their company.

During the second company meeting, with guidance from their business advisor, students begin to discuss the products or services they want to create. They complete a Memorandum and Articles of Association, discuss a business plan and select a managing director. At this point, the student who has taken on the role of Finance Director will set up their company's bank account.

Planning (October)

During the planning stage, students focus on: health and safety issues, raising capital, finishing their business plan, writing a mission statement and self assessment objectives, and developing a production plan.

Up and Running (October Onwards)

Meeting regularly, students spend the rest of the year running their company and are encouraged to make all business decisions themselves supported by their business advisor. Products and services have included jewellery, cards, bags, scrapbooks, magazines, clocks, recipe books, maps, radio stations, web design services, workshops and more.

Over the course of the year students get more comfortable with the process and are encouraged to expand their horizons. For example, they may start off selling their goods within the school community and end up working with customers and suppliers outside of school and selling their products to local stores. Young Enterprise regional boards run sales and trade fairs at which each company can have a stand from which to sell their goods.

Ending the Year (May Onwards)

Students wind-up their companies and produce a Young Enterprise Company Report and Final Accounts. Students also complete a final self-assessment.

The work of the students is recognised at an end of year competition and celebration of the best all around companies, regionally and nationally, based not only on profitability, but also on team involvement, business understanding and the creativity of their approach.

The Company Programme engages students because it provides a real and challenging experience – a real company, real money, real bank accounts and real business with customers. Through participation, students develop employability and enterprise skills. Students who fully participate in the programme can take a Young Enterprise Qualification awarded by OCR and part of NQF. The Company Programme is fully mapped against the

Work Related Learning Framework and the new secondary curriculum and supports a range of qualifications including GCSE A-Level, BTEC, NVQ and the new Diplomas.

Impact

Among the key findings of a recent evaluation of Young Enterprise Company Programme alumni was that:

- participation in the Young Enterprise Company Programme correlates with better future earnings. In particular in the 30+ age group alumni earn a third more than their peers
- Young Enterprise Company Programme alumni are twice as likely to start their own business as their peers
- alumni had a greater appreciation of their skills and the opportunities available to them on leaving school
- the Young Enterprise alumni are more passionate about their jobs than their peers with 77 per cent of alumni fulfilled and engaged by their jobs, compared to only 59 per cent of the Control Group
- alumni are more successful in their careers than their non-participating counterparts (even when taking into account family affluence)
- alumni are more likely to get involved in voluntary work (55 per cent compared to 39 per cent for the Control Group)
- amongst business-owning alumni, Young Enterprise was ranked as the most significant experience they drew upon when establishing and building their venture
- overall, Young Enterprise alumni felt that Young Enterprise contributed to their skill development more than anything else, including work experience, extra-curricular activities and school

Contact

Schools and teachers should contact their regional Young Enterprise organisation.

Contact details can be found through the Young Enterprise website

www.young-enterprise.org.uk

20 Ysgol Basaleg (Bassaleg School)

Developing employability through a comprehensive school

Themes

Employer Involvement, Leadership and Resources, Programme Design and Delivery

Background

Located in Newport, Bassaleg School is an 11-18 mixed comprehensive. The school was formed in 1971 and has approximately 1700 pupils, including a sixth form. In 2004, inspectors found the school to be overall Grade 1: very good, which echoes the school's mission: "*We strive for excellence in all aspects of school life.*"

Programme Overview

Bassaleg School takes both an embedded and focused approach to developing students' employability skills. Many of the skills, attitudes and behaviours identified by the school as enhancing a student's employability are contained within the cross-curricular elements of the core and foundation subjects – building on a 'whole-school' approach.

In September 2008, the Department for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills (DCELLS) introduced a revised curriculum called Careers and the World of Work¹¹. This replaced the frameworks for Work-related learning and Careers Education and Guidance. The revised curriculum focuses on the relationships between young people, their learning and the world of work. It aims to help students to:

- Explore the attitudes and values required for employability and lifelong learning
- Plan and manage their pathway through the range of opportunities in learning and work
- Make effective career choices
- Become entrepreneurial
- Flourish in a variety of work settings
- Become motivated, set long term goals and overcome barriers
- See the relevance of their studies to their life and work
- Develop Key Skills and other skills required by employers
- Prepare for the challenges, choices and responsibilities of work and adult life

In response to the revised curriculum, Bassaleg School has updated its programme to prepare students for further study and employment. Students build on their employability skills and awareness of work as they progress in the school, from a general introduction to developing specific skills and knowledge needed to make informed choices and the transition into continuing education, training and employment.

11 DCELLS (2008). Careers and the world of work: a framework for 11 to 19-year-olds in Wales.

<http://new.wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/curriculumassessment/arevisedcurriculumforwales/careereworldofwork/careersworldofworkframework/?lang=en>

The Careers and the World of Work programme is delivered through Personal, Social and Careers Education (PSCE) lessons by a team of specialist teachers to Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 students. At Key Stage 4, there is an additional programme which is provided for years 10 and 11 through both PSCE lessons and/or dedicated Careers and the World of Work lessons. The programme guides students towards their individual career paths, strengthens their knowledge of self, makes them more financially effective and encourages them to develop a positive attitude towards others.

Careers Programme: Years 7 to 11

Year 7

- Personality
- Neighbourhood jobs
- Ambitions
- What skills do you have?

Year 8

- What do I know about work?
- Personality quiz
- Managing time
- Personal organisation

Year 9

- Options
- Making choices
- Dreams
- Choice talk – Head of Year

Year 10

- How do others and barriers impact on our choices and careers?
- Computer room research
- Goals and the future
- Preparing for work experience

Year 11

- Employability – would you employ these candidates?
- The future
- Characteristics and skills
- Career Wales website

Careers and the World of Work: Key Stage 4

Year 10

- Introduction to Careers
- My Future – how to work smart
- Assess your skills – strengths and weaknesses
- Target setting
- Study skills
- Banking Matters – financial literacy
- Preparing for Experience of Work
- Health & Safety in the workplace
- Visiting employer speaker
- Employment rights and responsibilities
- Finding out about different jobs using online tools
- Examination success
- A+ for Attitude – how to impress your boss and colleagues
- Budgeting – understanding money
- Being an Entrepreneur – thinking about enterprise
- The Real Me
- Career Wales debrief on Experience of Work

Year 11

- Preparing a draft CV
What can I do after Year 11? – Learning Pathways
- Ensuring success – study skills
- The job process – application forms
- Interview techniques
- Equal Opportunities
- Trades Unions – their role in the world of work
- Taking credit – understanding money
- Understanding the wage slip
- Avoiding debt and planning a pension
- Securing examination success – study skills
- Paying bills and understanding benefits

During the Careers programme, student research is encouraged via the Careers Wales website¹² and computer programmes such as Odessey and Pathfinder. These programmes allow students to search occupational databases where they can match different occupations to their personal interests.

In addition to the structured Careers programmes, Careers information is available to all students and is provided by:

- The school's PSCE Coordinator – Mrs H Roy
- Head of Years 12 and 13, and support staff
- Careers Wales Gwent, who visit to interview students in year 11 and year 12, and other students, on request

Some of the skills and knowledge developed through the Career programme are assessed and accredited through the achievement of qualifications – with opportunities to achieve Key Skills¹³, ASDAN Certificate of Personal Effectiveness, and Duke of Edinburgh awards. All students are assessed throughout the programme and success is recognised in summative reports produced during year 10 and year 11.

In May 2007, the school was awarded the Career Wales Quality Award in recognition of the high quality and effective practice demonstrated in the delivery of the Careers and the World of Work programme.

Thinking for learning

Running alongside the Careers programme in PSCE lessons, all Year 7 students undertake a 19 hour course: *Thinking for Learning*. Lessons are delivered once a fortnight and focus on building students' skills in:

Communication	Social Awareness	Problem Solving
Listening	Manners	Planning strategies
Teamwork	Emotional intelligence	Decision making
Confidence	Interpersonal decision making	Making sense of information
Oral Presentation	Body language Creativity/generating ideas	
Questioning		
Getting unstuck		

Links with employers

The school actively seeks to introduce students into the world of work by encouraging students to experience the workplace and interact with employers. In June 2008, 179 students went on work placement with a range of local, regional and national employers.

12 www.careerswales.com

13 <http://old.accac.org.uk/eng/content.php?mID=675>

Other active links with employers and industry include:

- The National Assembly/Careers Wales Dynamo Project¹⁴ – helping Years 9 to 12 to develop entrepreneurial skills and gain an insight into a variety of alternative career pathways by listening to visiting successful entrepreneurs
- Year 12 students in Business Studies participated in a one-week Experience of Work placement in the spring term as part of their studies. The students were complimented on their attitude and effort and found the week of value in producing case studies. A number of students have participated in voluntary placements in local schools during the year and found the experience worthwhile
- Year 9 attended the Newport Area Roadshow on 14-19 Learning Pathways. Students undertook a range of practical activities and browsed exhibition stands, to investigate the numerous career pathways available to them
- The Science Department entered a team of Year 12 students in the Engineering Education Scheme Wales. Students were given a brief to design a ‘green bridge’ with a local engineering company, and construct a model of it
- Year 10 Business Dynamics – In March, Year 10 students demonstrated their teamwork, planning, design and construction skills during this event. Each group of students took on the role of small business teams with the challenge of locating, designing and marketing a theme park, as well as building a working model of a rollercoaster. The Technology department, with mentors from the Patent Office, University of Wales Institute, and Careers Wales, assisted the students in this challenging task
- Direct input by employers Costain, Gwent Healthcare and the Army into the World of Work lessons for Year 10 and Year 11. The Army gave an insight to Year 10 students about career opportunities in Human Resources and bursaries for Medicine and Officer training
- Access to employer premises for coursework assignments e.g. AS Technology, AS Health & Social Care, and AS Business
- Pupil participation in competitions sponsored by employers and related to an industry or profession. Examples include Young Consumer of the Year, Magistrates Court Law Competition, and Learn to be an Entrepreneur for the day
- Teacher industry links – Dr Bucknell, a teacher from the Chemistry department, spent a day at Penn Pharmaceuticals on liaison

Partnership working with Careers Wales (Gwent)

In addition to students attending local and regional careers events, Careers Wales (Gwent) work closely with them. A Careers Wales Adviser visits the school three times a week to offer careers advice and information on request. They also interview Year 11 students, and support the students and the school by attending Parents’ Evenings for Years 9, 10 and 11, to discuss any careers-related concerns.

14 <http://www.projectdynamo.com>

Impact

The aim of the Careers and the World of Work programme is to prepare students to make the transition from school to further learning, training and employment. As such, it combines a mix of skills and knowledge required to develop students' personal effectiveness, applicable to continued learning and employment. One of the key approaches taken by the school is to encourage the students to develop their ability to reflect and self assess. The outcomes of this help direct support to meet the students needs, and also supports the student to get a taste for manage their own development effectively.

The introduction of the revised Careers and the World of Work in September 2008 is too recent to be able to gauge its impact on the students learning. However, the programme is a revision of the approach the school had already adopted and the impact of their approach is reflected in the high proportion of students continuing education, training and employment.

Pupil destinations, Autumn 2007

At the end of Year 11:

- number of students completing Year 11 = 295
- continue to full time education at Bassaleg School – 59 per cent
- continue to full time education (FE College) – 22 per cent
- enter employment outside work-based training – 6 per cent
- enter work-based training – 5 per cent

At the end of Year 12:

- number of students completing Year 12 – 181
- continuing in full time education at Bassaleg School – 79 per cent
- continuing in full time education (FE College) – 8 per cent
- enter employment outside work-based training – 7 per cent
- enter work-based training – 1 per cent

At the end of Year 13:

- number of students completing Year 13 – 158
- continue to full time education at University – 75 per cent
- continue to full time education at an FE College – 3 per cent
- enter employment outside work-based training – 10 per cent
- enter work-based training – 1 per cent
- take a Gap Year – 8 per cent

The school identifies two key factors to which they attribute their success in preparing students for continued learning, training and employment:

1. The building of a dedicated team of teachers used to deliver the careers aspects of PSCE in years 7-11, and the discrete careers lessons specifically delivered to years 10 and 11, Key Stage 4
2. Having a structured programme which runs from year 7, allows the school to gradually build skills and awareness of work-related issues

Deputy Head Teacher, Sarah Logan, summarises the approach taken by the school in preparing students for further learning and employment:

"In re-writing the Key Stage 3 programmes of study ready for September 2008, an experience of work element has been planned into lessons across the whole curriculum so that pupils see work related issues as an integral part of the work they do in school."

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Launched on 1 April 2008, the UK Commission for Employment and Skills is a key recommendation in Lord Leitch's 2006 review *Prosperity for All in the Global Economy: World Class Skills*. Ours is a genuinely employer-led organisation, with Commissioners drawn from the highest levels of the private, public and voluntary sectors, supported by trade union leadership.

Our aim is to raise prosperity and opportunity by improving employment and skills. Our ambition is to benefit individuals, employers, government and society by providing independent advice to the highest levels of UK government on how improved employment and skills systems can help the UK become a world-class leader in productivity, in employment and in having a fair and inclusive society: all this in the context of a fast-changing global economy.

The Full Report and Executive Summary are also available from The UK Commission. Contact us to order a copy of the report or download at our website ukces.org.uk

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