

Disability

1. Identifying and disseminating best practice for apprentices with a SEN

Abingdon and Witney College's SFA/ECU GPF case study and resources

Throughout the process, we focussed not on 'How did we do it?'

*But that we **WANTED** to do it!*

Not 'Is this possible?'

*But 'This **IS** possible!'*



Click on the image above to watch the video in a new window.

Aims

This project focused on raising the profile of equality issues within apprenticeship provision. The project aimed to deliver significant benefits for SEN^{definition} learners accessing vocational apprenticeship training pathways through rolling out a best practice model to employers and providers across Oxfordshire.

Evidence shows that special educational needs (SEN) learners are significantly underrepresented amongst apprentice cohorts. This project aimed to tackle this underrepresentation by delivering an outstanding apprenticeship pilot programme for SEN learners. The programme planned to use innovative and appropriately tailored

teaching and assessment methodologies to maintain the standard of the qualification, while also adopting a holistic approach, supporting not just achievement of the qualification, but the longer term goals and aspirations of the apprentices. The overarching aim is to increase access to high quality, vocational apprenticeship training pathways that have hitherto been restricted.

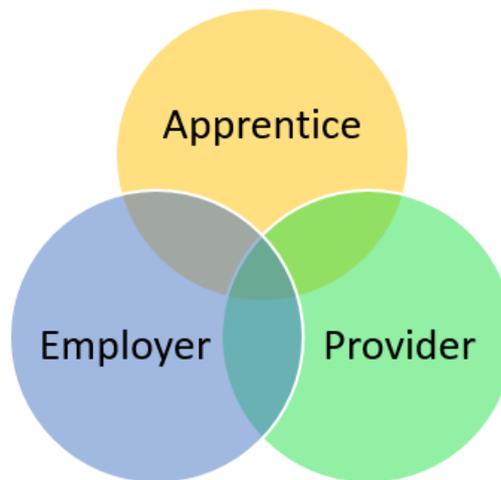
Working in partnership with an employer, the project's aim was to develop a best practice model to highlight innovative ways to collect evidence and teach the necessary knowledge to SEN learners in a workplace setting.

Outcomes

This project has:

- Identified best practice for apprentices with SEN and disseminated this best practice through the production of 'How to' guide for training providers.
- Delivered a successful apprenticeship programme for SEN learners therefore demonstrating that it is possible to maintain the standards of an apprenticeship framework whilst working with SEN learners.

A successful apprenticeship is a three-way partnership between employer, the apprentice and the training provider.



Resources

How to guide for delivering apprenticeships to learners with SEN - download using the link below.

The project produced a guide which includes advice, guidance and tips. The project team point out that much of the suggested model which would apply to any apprenticeship, to any learning and assessment scenario or to any work-based training session.

Attachment

Size

[Abingdon-Witney-How-to-Guide-to-Delivering-Apprenticeships.pdf](#)

2. Learning Difficulties and Disabilities Calendar project

Barking and Dagenham College's SFA/ECU Good Practice Fund project



Aims

The project aimed to provide opportunity for LDD learners to develop entrepreneurial skills to provide local employers with more information about specific learning difficulties and disabilities.

The learners involved in the project will be given a 'live brief' to produce a calendar for employers that provides them with information about LDD. Learners led the project from start to finish; they designed and created a calendar, choosing the disabilities they want to highlight to employers. The brief required learners to consider the marketing of their calendars, giving them the responsibility for promoting and selling the calendar via their own learning business.

It also aimed to give learners opportunity for greater engagement with employers and to sell their skills as potential trainees or apprentices.

Outcomes

The calendar itself has raised awareness of learning disabilities among parents, community stakeholders, staff and local residents.

The project provided a model for LDD students to engage with entrepreneurial project work, and enabled maths and English to be embedded.

The students proved themselves to be very adept at sales and promotion, which has showcased their potential in retail activities. In the long term, it is hoped this will give them confidence and experience which could enable them to tackle a traineeship, or lead to work opportunities.

This entrepreneurial challenge will now become an annual feature of the LDD programme.

Resources

The calendar highlights a different learning difficulty or disability on each page, it can be downloaded below.

Attachment

[Barking & Dagenham - LDD Calendar.pdf](#)

3. Overcoming barriers faced by young people with learning difficulties and disabilities on entry to FE sector

Aims

This project aimed to explore the barriers and constraints faced by young people with learning difficulties and disabilities (LDD) on entry to the further education sector, and the impact of these challenges on young people's decisions and progression. In the long-term, the project aimed to increase the uptake in FE^{definition} by LDD learners.

Outcomes

Web pages were developed with sections for young people, parents/carers and professionals. Content includes quotes, advice, film footage and case studies from the research participants.

A mechanism and format was agreed that enabled the final results and findings to be embedded in an internal equality and diversity training programme; to be disseminated to staff working with clients with LDD across the whole FE sector and to other sectors and professionals working within the LDD field.

Who took part in our project?

CSW project research focused on 'previously stated' young people from the following groups: Post 18 currently in FE, Post 18 currently in Apprenticeships & Traineeships and post 16 NEET^{definition} and seeking apprenticeships, traineeships or full time FE. We targeted young people with LDD in the categories of Moderate Learning Disability^{definition} (MLD), Social, Emotional and Mental Health issues (SEMH). We also contacted families and providers in order to get a full picture of the barriers

and constraints faced by young people with LDD. Baseline data was gathered by running reports from the CSW Group client database. The research was carried out by a team of three researchers with a broad range of experience and expertise in working with young people with learning difficulties and disabilities.

- We interviewed 63 young people and parents;
- All 13 FE Colleges in the project area engaged positively and assisted our advisers in carrying out research interviews with their learners;
- Twelve training providers across the area were contacted with five responding positively with meetings set up to discuss involvement and access to learners and employers;
- We met and worked with over twenty other agencies including Job Centre, Education Business Partnership, local special schools, training providers, employment projects, support agencies and health workers.

Our findings confirm national issues but also highlight some of the barriers that young people with LDD face locally. We spoke to young people who have successfully accessed college courses to find out what worked for them. Young people who have LDD are not a homogenous group and as such will have had a range of different experiences and face a various barriers and difficulties. One of the most common issues that came up was the lack of individualised packages of support where a 'one size fits all' approach to learning support and to delivery does not meet the needs of the learner or take their needs into account. Often, there is a lack of understanding and dialogue which is causing a barrier. Our advice to those seeking to support these young people is therefore straightforward:

listen, understand, support & C.A.R.E. (Communicate, Advocate, Remember Equality^{definition!})

Resources

These resources are no longer available.

4. Sexual Orienteering



What was the need?

Learners with learning difficulties, particularly those on the autistic spectrum, have difficulties with understanding relationships within an inclusive learning environment. This project aimed to give learners with learning difficulties a set of activities and resources, tailored to their learning requirements. This would enable greater understanding of sexual orientation, greater ability to recognise diversity in their communities and make informed choices about their own sexuality.



What was the idea?

Gloucestershire College in partnership with National Star College, a specialist college for learners with disabilities, would hold four action learning sets with staff and learners from each organisation to develop four interactive and differentiated activities. The activities aim to develop and contextualise a clear understanding of sexual orientation for adults with learning difficulties. The four activities will focus on:

- heterosexual/bisexual relationships
- homosexual/gay relationships
- lesbian relationships
- gender identity

The project will also produce an activity plan, develop specific interactive age-appropriate resources for each activity, video teacher tips for delivery, and video learner perceptions and views of sexual orientation. The resources that are developed will be available nationally through a specialist website resource portal. www.ark-hive.co.uk



What did we do?

The four resources have been developed through Action Learning Sets made up from staff working in both organisations. Staff came from teaching roles, support roles, therapy and residential services, therefore there was a mix of expertise and experience from different areas of work. The groups met four times for one hour meetings to explore barriers and issues facing staff and learners and to develop a specific resource. Four resources were produced;

- **Blurred Lines** - "The meaning and impact of language"
- **Boxed Identities** - "Everyone is different" – change management and gender identity
- **Diverse City** - "Exploring different relationships" – relating to the world of work
- **How do you feel?** - "Difference through mediums" – a social story

Each of the resources is downloadable as a pdf attached below. These contain clear instructions of how to use the resources along with teacher tips for each.

Attachment

[Blurred Lines.pdf](#)

[Boxed Identities.pdf](#)

[Diverse City.pdf](#)

[How do you feel.pdf](#)

[Sexual Orienteering Final Report.doc](#)

Learners perceptions of sexual orientation

Learners with learning difficulties have made a film about their own perceptions of sexual orientation. They respond in different ways to a series of set questions.

<https://youtu.be/VTMFu6pm3O8>



What did we learn?

The use of Action Learning Sets to form working parties to design the resources has been an effective tool for a synergy of practice between teachers from Gloucestershire College and National Star College.

The use of technology to establish a baseline measurement and summative evaluation of confidence levels among the staff has been an effective tool. Confidence levels amongst teachers delivering this subject increased during the project by 20% above their baseline scores.

Good practice is sustained and spread by the availability of the resources through the online web portal www.ark-hive.co.uk. This allows teaching staff nationally to access the resources and the "Teacher tips".

Each resource has been specially designed to be flexible so that teachers can adapt the basic principle to their own requirements without losing the overall themes and content.



What difference did it make?

Teachers who took part in the project grew in their confidence particularly in delivering learning about sexual orientation. The project became a focus to introduce the subject to learners and the resources helped to support the structure of teaching sessions through both activity and discussion.

Each resource developed was used in a class which was formally observed in order to assess the impact the teaching was having on the learners' understanding of the subject.

All learners thought the sessions were fun and improved their understanding of gender assignment and sexual orientation. The sessions improved learners' awareness of where to seek advice and guidance about sexual orientation and relationships.



What would we do differently?

To **be flexible** to ensure that teacher working patterns are not too disruptive. Consider staff time management and availability. Keep open the channels of communication and be as informative as possible throughout the project timeline.

Being organised is key and establishing a timeline of activities with dates helps the overall process and informs teachers as to deadlines in order to schedule their activities around their current work.

Praise and encouragement. Project work like this is usually carried out over and above participants' existing workloads. Feedback to teachers as work is undertaken is essential to both motivate and coordinate the work.

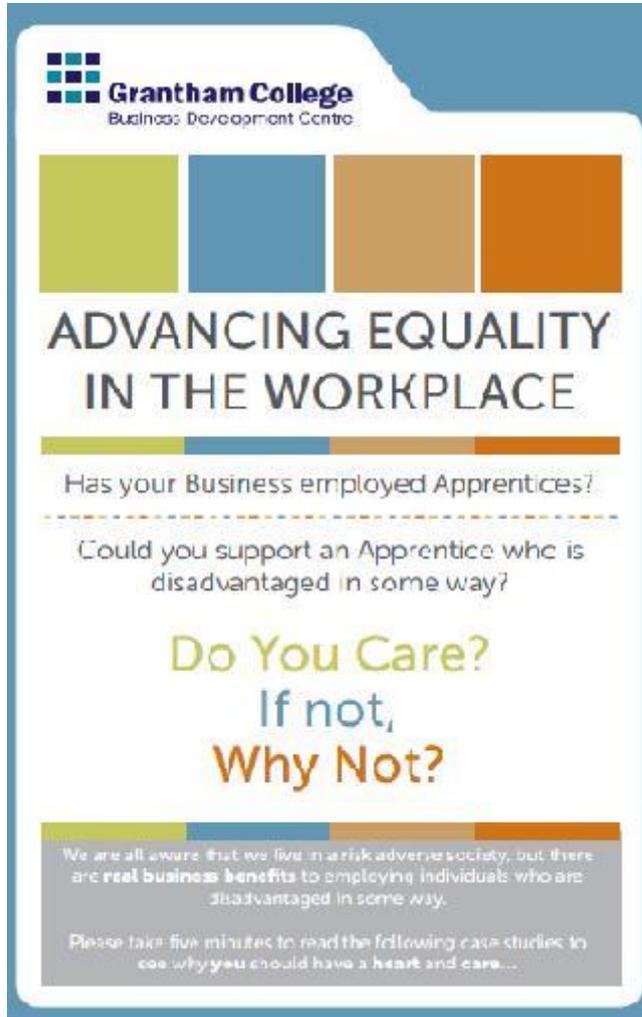
Talk more about the project in meetings, organisation bulletins as well as socially. The more people that become interested in the work the better the outcome will be received and most importantly, used.

5. Advancing equality for disabled learners in workplace learning

It may be about work, and making money, but wouldn't it be wonderful if you and your organisation could make a difference to someone's life

*at work.
Imagine that!*

Aim



The aim of Grantham College's project was to address the underrepresentation and stereotyping of disabled learners in the workplace, particularly in traineeships and apprenticeships.

Outcomes

The project adopted a multifaceted approach, working collaboratively to:

- increase opportunities for disabled learners
- make progression pathways clear to both learners and employers
- challenge perceptions of potential learners and employers – enabling positive attitudes
- increase the number of employers who would consider employing a trainee or apprentice

- demonstrate to employers how they can make their recruitment practices more inclusive

Working with Jobcentre Plus, Linkage College, Work Based Learning Alliance, South Kesteven District Council (SKDC), as well as learners and employers, resources were developed to address underrepresentation in the workplace for those with disabilities.

The project team engaged and worked with employers and SKDC to identify and promote effective and inclusive recruitment practices. Guidelines for employers have been produced with input from learners.

Resources

These resources are no longer available.

6. Deaf awareness ambassadors: Paving the way for inclusion

<https://youtu.be/p2zMfOzRriQ>

Aim

The aim of Hackney London Borough Council's project was to pilot specific support to integrate deaf and hearing learners on existing community learning provision, to challenge stereotypes, promote awareness and develop understanding and appreciation of the experience of deaf learners.

Outcomes

The project trained ten deaf awareness ambassadors to engage with and support hearing impaired, deaf with speech and profoundly deaf learners to access mainstream adult community learning classes in Hackney. Through the project the ambassadors were trained in British Sign Language (BSL), promoting a pathway to training as interpreters. Eight achieved a BSL Level one qualification. In addition a BSL club was established to enable ambassadors to gain more practice.

Collaboratively tutors, ambassadors and learners developed strategies to enable joint learning. The project supported training providers who deliver creative provision (ie sewing, cookery and pottery) to prepare and adapt their course delivery to include deaf learners and ambassadors in the classroom.

7. Cornwall Equality Project



Cornwall
Equality
Project

<https://youtu.be/8YSWMIPWj5s>

Aims

The Learning Partnership for Cornwall (LPCo) delivers European Social Fund, Adult Skills Budget and 16–18 apprenticeship training through 50 partners including training providers, third sector and business organisations. LPCo data from 30,000 qualifications over five years shows learners with a learning disability, mental health disability or who are care leavers have lower success rates, take fewer qualifications and progress less well than other learners. The aim of this project was to:

- increase the number of LPCo learners with these characteristics
- decrease the gap in success rates between these learners and other learners
- increase the number of these learners progressing into apprenticeships from other qualifications
- improve the level of support for these learners during their training
- raise awareness of the target group among employers to increase the number progressing to work experience, employment and apprenticeships

Outcomes

The project developed and established a set of mentors. It recruited nine individuals from the target groups to act as mentors to LPCo provider partners for a minimum of three months. The project developed best practice guides/toolkits to provide information, advice and guidance. Alongside this, the project held three workshops, each dedicated to a target group, to disseminate best good practice across the providers in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly.

Resources

Attachment

[Cornwall - CEP Self Assessment Toolkit.xlsx](#)

[Cornwall - Learner Questionnaire.docx](#)

[Cornwall - Mystery Shopper Processes.docx](#)

[Cornwall - Mystery Shopper Questions.doc](#)

8. Pathways to apprenticeships – Petroc

Aims

This project aimed to widen access to apprenticeships and traineeships for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD) by analysing, embedding, expanding and spreading good practice in delivering supported internships and progression pathways.

Working in partnership with local employers, the project developed a range of progression pathways to create opportunities for learners with LDD to progress into traineeships and apprenticeships through gaining and, more importantly, evidencing a range of employability and vocational skills.

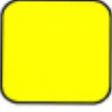
The project aimed to improve progression rates into employment for learners with LDD and increase their independence. Petroc had already been working with a local hospital, the largest employer in our remote rural area, and Pluss, to deliver supported internships for learners with LDD. While this partnership was a positive example of good practice, it was limited to a small number of learners in low-level occupations with one employer.

Who prepared you for work?

Place stickers in the circles to show who you think helped you prepare for work.

This could be paid work or volunteering.

You can put stickers in more than one circle.

	Very helpful
	Helped a bit
	No help
	Unhelpful

Outcomes

- The project analysed the success of their model and published a research paper including case studies
- They worked with the hospital to develop structured progression pathways into traineeships and apprenticeships
- They identified a wider range of suitable job roles for developing structured supported pathways
- They engaged a pool of employers able to support learners with LDD through supported internships, traineeships and apprenticeships
- They developed toolkits to facilitate the transfer of our learning

Resources

The following project resources are available:

- [Pathways to Success](#) - a detailed project report providing advice to other providers.