

TEACH TOO LOCAL PROJECT

A case study on the Teach Too local project in the Thames Valley Region led by Activate Learning





Project overview

Led by Activate Learning, this project was a collaboration between seven colleges, two schools, eleven employers, three local employer groups, two LEPs and one local council. The project aimed to develop a roadmap for facilitating long lasting collaboration between education providers and employers across the local area. To do this we tested our model of working from several angles with different education providers approaching a range of employers to ascertain if it has the potential to facilitate the creation of long-term partnerships between different organisations. Embedded within our model were several of the documents from the collection of Teach Too resources (including the Collaboration readiness Checklist, the Business Case Planning Toolkit, and the Co-curriculum Design and Delivery Toolkit), which provided new partnerships with a means of strengthening the basis of their collaboration.

Project aims

Building on our previous work developing cross-curricular projects with employers, we sought to develop a “road map” for partnership working between education providers and employers in our local area. Education providers involved included Reading College, City of Oxford College, Oxfordshire UTC, Reading UTC, Abingdon and Witney College, Bracknell and Wokingham College, Havant and South Downs College, and Newberry College. Employers consulted included Beard Construction, BMW MINI, Cisco, Mavreel, Peter Brett Associates, REME, Skanska, Tenable, UKCloud, and Volume AI. With support from Thames Valley Berkshire LEP and Oxfordshire LEP we were looking to consolidate expertise within the region to ensure that teachers are supported to undertake work with employers, that employers are equipped to work with teachers and students, and ultimately all students have the opportunity to access high quality employment-related educational experiences that smooth their transition into the workplace.

Positive impact and expected outcomes

Our work led to the creation and strengthening of a wide range of working relationships between employers and education providers, local employer groups and education providers, and between different education providers. So, for example, representatives of Reading College worked with representatives of the UTCs to develop and refine ideas about employer education based on their experiences in different educational settings. Representatives from the schools and colleges consulted with employers, including Beard

Construction and BMW MINI during advisory board meetings, 1:1 meetings between representatives from City of Oxford College and Reading College and Beard Construction and Volume AI took place to develop project briefs, and conversations concerning the roadmap took place between representatives of Activate Learning, UKCloud and Mavreel at networking events. This has given us the opportunity to pool our collective knowledge around collaboration and to develop a robust model for continuing this work within the region.

Our road map has formed the basis of conversations between emerging partnerships with examples progressing to the provision of seven industry placements for teaching staff and the development of new projects. These include staff placements with British Airways, BMW MINI, Cisco, and Volume AI. The map has also given us a means of invigorating existing partnerships and of providing a clear framework for extending and developing them in the long term; our working partnership with Peter Brett Associates is now in its third year and we have used this experience to reflect on the development and characteristics of true “two-way-street” working (see our recent blogpost for the ETF: <https://www.et-foundation.co.uk/blog/developing-a-two-way-street-partnership-between-college-and-industry/>). A new curriculum-focussed project was developed with Volume AI. This is specifically for Level 3 Computing Students developing Computer Games. Volume ‘gamify’ marketing experiences and students are tasked with coming up with creative marketing solutions. Students have already completed workplace visits and will gain support via Volume employees who will act as project mentors. There will be a finale when students have to present back their computer games.

Gemma Hood, Chief Operating Officer at Volume AI, describes the impact she hopes the project will have on students:

“By using our technical skills and approach with clients, we have been able to construct an engaging brief for students – encouraging them to learn how to develop a virtual-reality (VR) application. We’ll be showing them future trends in VR and augmented reality (AR), whilst highlighting the value immersive solutions can bring to a challenge. We will run through how we would deliver a technical project, understanding the key steps for a seamless delivery. Meeting designers and developers first-hand will hopefully open the students’ minds and motivate them to start their new project!”

And also the impact the project has had on Volume AI:

“My background is in HR, so from my point of view, I’m thinking ‘how can we close the skills gap? How can I start to build talent pools of the future?’ Actually, some of the roles we are recruiting for here at Volume don’t even exist in the industry yet. We’re almost crafting and building teams on what we’re learning. We’re so cutting edge in what we’re delivering. Working with students, they can see what we’re doing day-to-day and we can start to grow and build those talent pools for the future.”

Following a recent visit to Volume AI, IT teacher Rachel Crowther said:

“The visit to Volume AI had a big impact on the students and myself. The students are motivated to work as a team on their gaming projects which they will present to Volume AI. I saw the impact soft skills has and that young people with skills are needed at work”.



Future activity

Our road map has been developed into a printed guide for employers looking to work with education providers which we will be disseminating across the local region. It forms a partnership document to a guide we have developed for teaching staff, both of which have been developed out research in the field of education-employer collaboration and thoroughly field-tested by educators and people in industry. We will now be seeking formal endorsement from Thames Valley LEP and Oxfordshire LEP and disseminating the guide at employer events and LEP events. An example of this event is a T Level Breakfast Briefing organised by Activate Learning, Thames Valley Berkshire LEP, and the Education and Skills Funding Agency. This networking and information event will include businesses from across Berkshire interested in learning more about how T Levels will help to address local skills shortages. Furthermore, Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce are being consulted, and we are seeking support for a Thames Valley Talent Transfer Programme, with the intended aim of strengthening industry-provider partnerships and ultimately improving learning experiences. We anticipate that this work will form the basis for developing meaningful and long-lasting collaborative relationships between education providers and employers, leading to improved and more relevant skills development in young people in the local area.

T Level vocational qualifications are coming

[REGISTER NOW >](#)

Find out what they mean for your business at our Breakfast Briefing:

Thursday 21 March 2019

Green Park Conference Centre, Reading – 08:00 to 10:30



This free event will show you how to nurture the young talent your business needs through high quality industry placements, and outline the upcoming T Level qualifications.

Join Activate Learning, Thames Valley Berkshire LEP, the Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) and businesses across Berkshire at a free networking and information event.

We'll guide you through current industry placement opportunities for students to support local businesses and explain how the new T Level qualifications – designed in partnership with business – will help you to overcome skills shortage barriers to growth.

Recommendations for developing local collaborative arrangements

At the heart of collaborative local agreements are the relationships developed between the individuals involved; time and resources need to be set aside to cultivate those relationships. To this end, we are recommending teacher placements- aligned to our Talent Transfer Programme- to strengthen relationships and to create wider opportunity for collaboration.

It helps if all parties are clear about what they want to achieve from the collaboration, how they want to achieve it, and what they will need to see at the end as evidence that their goals have been achieved

Flexibility is key with both parties being open to exploring how the partnership grows and develops: start small and grow as opportunities emerge!

See our roadmap for a step-by-step outline of the process we have developed.



Topic: Educating today's children for jobs that will emerge from new technologies

Speakers:

Giles Orr, Head of CPD, Consultancy and Training at Oxford Brookes University

Richard Byard, Director of Business Development at OXLEP

Alex Warner, Director of Faculty: Technology at Activate Learning

Join us for a discussion surrounding the key challenges for the future of education, employment and skills in UK.

This forum is open to all members, who will be given the opportunity to share their views live with a panel of experts.

Agenda:

- 07:30 – Arrival and registration
- 08:00 – Breakfast
- 08:30 – Welcome
- 08:45 – Panel discussion
- 09:30 – End of discussion and opportunity for networking

Wed 27 March 2019

07:30 - 09:30

De Vere Oxford
Thames Hotel

Henley Road
Sandford on Thames
OXFORD
OX4 4GX



[Book here](#)