

## WHAT ARE THE ISSUES LEADING TO US MISSING OPPORTUNITIES TO EMBED FUNCTIONAL SKILLS IN WORKSHOP SESSIONS?

### AIM:

To explore the reasons why a recent Ofsted inspector commented that we 'missed opportunities' to embed Maths and English skills within workshop sessions.

### METHOD:

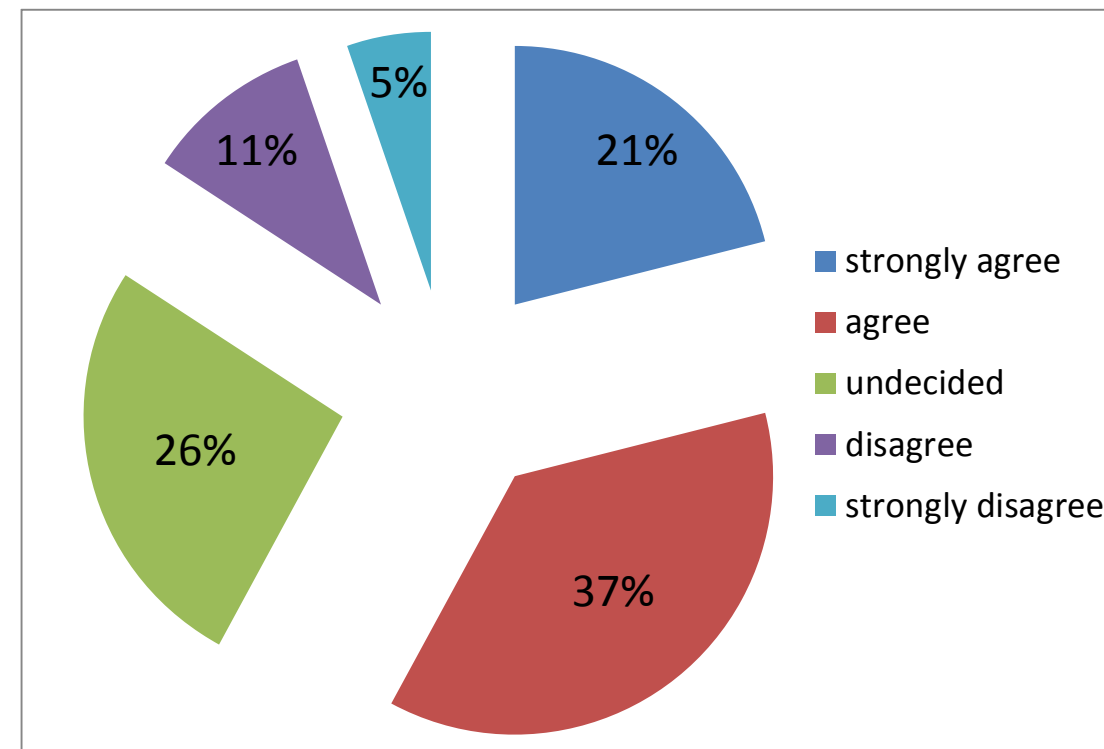
- Survey all workshop learners regarding their opinions on/knowledge of Functional Skills (FS).
- Observe and 'team teach' workshop sessions to identify areas for the improvement of embedding.
- Participate in two CPD sessions with all workshop staff on FS and embedding.
- Observe a workshop session at Birmingham Metropolitan College to view another organisations best practice.

### QUALITATIVE FINDINGS

- The pedagogical side of the tutors work was excellent when observed. They wished to embed and did embed FS when comfortable with what they were embedding.
- Tutors stated that if they had more knowledge of/confidence with the FS criteria, they would be able to embed more.
- Tutors valued the support of their colleagues and being given the time to discuss issues.
- Some tutors may have LLN issues of their own which must be addressed.
- Most tutors do not engage regularly with the FS skills criteria which their students must use to pass level 1 and hence have a limited or 'rusty' understanding of the criteria.

### QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS:

*'MY TUTOR MAKES IT CLEAR TO ME WHEN I USE MATHS AND ENGLISH IN THE WORKSHOP'*



- Most learners agreed that their teachers did make it clear when they were using Maths and English in workshop sessions. However just over 40% were either undecided, disagreed or strongly disagreed.
- 45% of students were either not confident enough to attend FS sessions or were undecided.
- More students saw English as relevant to their workshop than Maths

### RECOMMENDATIONS:

- A poster for the wall/student workbooks outlining the specialist vocabulary needed for their workshop.
- All tutors to engage with a CPD session which will focus on L1 Maths and English assessments.

### RECOMMENDATIONS (CONT.):

- A simplified, learner friendly poster of the Level 1 FS skills criteria to be made and put on to the walls of all workshops. This could be used as a tool within lessons and during plenary sessions. This will also help to engage workshop tutors with the Maths and English skills that their students need on a regular basis.
- Staff will be taken through L1 Maths and English assessments and given time to think of how they can adapt their curriculum to suit the topics/skills covered.
- Tutors to be offered to join in/have private help with any LLN issues they may have themselves. This will increase their confidence/engagement with FS criteria

### LIMITATIONS:

- Our quantitative research sampled a very small number of students (unavoidable due to small size of school).
- Our qualitative research predominantly focused on one case study so our findings may lack generalizability.
- A wide range of reasons were discovered to be leading us to 'missing opportunities' to embed LLN; it will take time and careful planning to fully address all of them.

### STRENGTHS:

- Recommendations are tailor-made to improve our organisation and focus on improving specifically targeted areas of our provision.
- We used a 'mixed methods' approach, combining quantitative and qualitative data. This provides statistics to supplement and substantiate anecdotal/interview based evidence.

