



## **Bedford College**

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**LSIS FIF - From Worklessness to Employment**  
**Collaborative project with Aspire, Advance Achieve Ltd**

# The Project:



- To research, model and present a delivery model to reflect how specific pre-employment training for agency staff significantly improves chances of securing permanent work.
- To follow project participants to measure success of gaining permanent employment.
- To increase understanding by providers, staffing agencies and employers of how links between employability and skills can be developed and integrated.

# Pre Employment Training Pilot and Delivery Model – Logistics and Manufacturing sectors



**Staffing agency carry out a process of interviewing and assessing potential recruits for their books.**



**Staffing agency select candidates, identified as requiring additional tutoring in literacy and or numeracy, to increase their potential to be employed.**



**Staffing agency work with 3As/Bedford College to support literacy and numeracy tutoring with the aim of helping potential recruits to achieve a nationally recognised qualification and increase employment opportunities.**

## Pre Employment Training

- 1 Initial assessment** for literacy and numeracy with IAG.
- 2 SfL delivery** - diagnostic assessment and specific tutoring with one-to-one support.
- 3 Start employment** with staffing agency.
- 4 2 hour Site induction** – H&S and sector specific for warehousing and logistics.
- 5 Seek permanent employment** with specific sector training

## Workplace Options

### Further training

- Apprenticeship
- NVQ 2 or 3 - sector
- Foundation Degree
  
- Skills for Life – next level
- Full English / Maths qual

- Individual Learning Plans reviewed regularly and progression routes into permanent employment investigated.
- Interviews with Staffing Agencies
- Interviews with Permanent Employers
- Interviews with Learners / Employees.

# Learner Participants

## 202 in total



- 33 from London
- 56 from Nottingham
- 67 from Liverpool
- 46 from Leicester

# Employer Participants

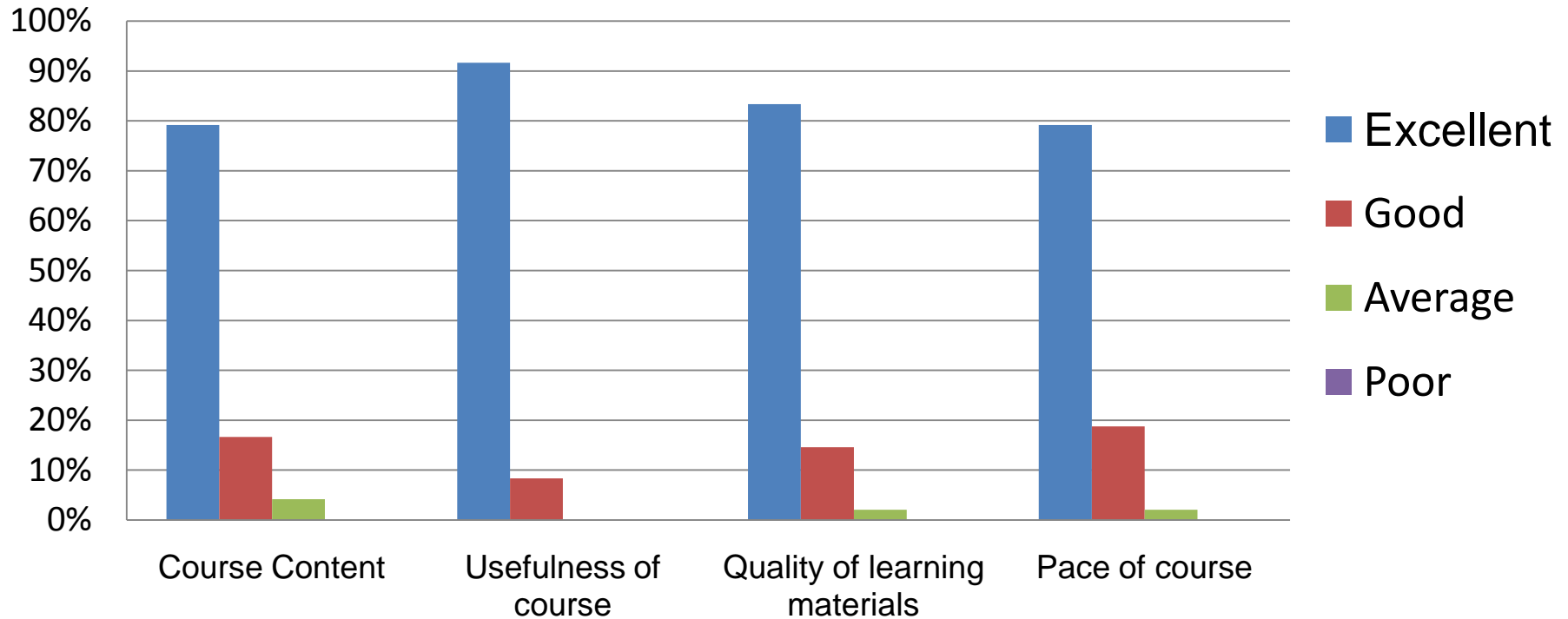


- London - United Biscuits
- Nottingham – Pizza Factory
- Nottingham - Pork Farms
- Nottingham - Riverside Bakery
- Liverpool – Jacobs
- Leicester - Jacobs

# Learner Evaluation

202 learners

## Evaluation of course



# Learner Comments



- It has been a pleasure.
- Very good course Brill, enjoyed it.
- The course was very helpful and both tutors provided excellent help.
- Was tutored very well and taught in a way which was easy to understand.
- It's been emotional. (Alan left school at 14) Brilliant Thank You.
- Thoroughly enjoyed the course has helped me to grow in confidence.
- Didn't think I could achieve a level 2 but enjoyed the course.
- Very enjoyable course I enjoyed the 3 day course the tutors were fantastic and helpful.
- Tutors exceptionally considerate, understanding and helpful. Worked brilliantly to help people achieve. I have enjoyed the course.
- It's been very good for me.
- Thank You. I will miss you guys.

# Staffing Agency Comments



- These courses instil confidence in our employees.
- They show our commitment to training and progressing to a permanent job.
- This model could really help our recruits to improve their employment chances on a more general level.
- Agency staff are sometimes seen as a last resort by employers and through this model we were able to show permanent employers how we can offer a more skilled potential employee than their own recruitment model.
- Learners showed more confidence in the work place.
- Have greater capabilities within their role.
- Become a team player and a further benefit to the employer having gained better writing and numeracy skills.



# Permanent Employer Comments



- Agency employees who completed literacy and numeracy courses were much more confident at interview. They were more work ready than previous agency candidates put forward for permanent work with our site.
- Feedback from learners taking the course was really positive. They all said how they had benefited and some accessed internet sites to gain more knowledge.
- We could see how the learners had grown in confidence from the courses and we feel this has helped them gain full-time positions with the site.

# Progress so far.....



- 202 Staffing agency employees completed skills for life courses with a 98% pass rate via on line testing.
- 100 progressed to take an NVQ at level 2 in the workplace.
- 47 have left the employ of the original agency.
- 75 are continuing employment with the agency.
- 20 have so far gained permanent employment. (10%)

# Progress to Employment



- 20 agency staff from the pilot have progressed to permanent employment
- The agency supported their employees to progress into employment with references that included feedback on their commitment to improving their basic English and Maths skills and knowledge.
- The HR Director at the permanent site had observed the agency staff in a learning situation as a training room at the site had been hired for the SFL tutoring and for taking the on-line tests.

# The Journey



- Initial ideas and project plan – had to change  
Reality of working with busy staffing agencies
- Flexibility with planning and respectful of learner having to prioritise changed shift patterns to ensure a wage.
- Flexibility with Agency around peaks and troughs – e.g. Xmas prep in a biscuit factory with peaks in April and September.
- Training for warehousing and manufacturing had to be part of site inductions. It was difficult to do this separately as the equipment was being serviced or being used to train new staff in company specific ways and means.  
(e.g. Fork Lift Trucks, Cherry Pickers, factory specific kit in a food processing environment).
- Generic training was less important to some of the permanent employers.

# The Process



- The project was modified to reflect the needs of the businesses and the agency staff with whom we engaged.
- Our aim of increasing understanding of the link between employability skills and job outcomes specifically for agency staff has been delivered in part.
- The SfL tutoring and successful test results for individuals has been a positive outcome for those involved and the gaining of a national qualification has added value to the personal lives of many of the agency staff.
- Of the 20 people in the pilot who gained a successful permanent job outcome – all commented on how the SfL tutoring had helped to increase their confidence to apply for a job, certainly to complete application forms more effectively.

# The Process



- The process moved from an outcome focused project to one which saw more of an enabling approach for individual participants.
- The more rigid pre-employment training envisaged at the beginning of the project became more of a specific literacy and numeracy improvement model.
- Although the agency staff had increased knowledge, skills and for the majority a qualification at the end of the pilot – they also indirectly gained new skills that would have enormous benefits in their wider lives.
- The increased confidence that a literacy and / or numeracy qualification can give to an individual was certainly an unintended positive part of the process!

# The Learning



- Over 85% of the agency staff who participated in the pilot felt that the process had been a positive one and that they were keen to continue their learning either in the workplace or via a course of some description.
- The achievement of a nationally recognised qualification for so many individuals in the pilot was not part of the original plan but became crucial as the pilot progressed – so that individuals had something tangible for when they were trying to secure permanent jobs.

# Summary



- Initial research and actual activity shows early results
- **Challenges** of project – availability of staffing agency recruits during very busy times – Sept to Dec crucial time for Logistics and Manufacturing sectors in the pre-run to Christmas, so access to staff and opportunities to carry out tutoring was limited.
- **Recruits** onto the research programme valued the intervention and the opportunity to increase their employability.
- **Staffing agencies** supported the project and linked carefully to their sector specific induction training (e.g. warehousing skills such as: scanning, hi-reach and counter balance truck skills and knowledge).
- Those who have so far gained permanent employment have appreciated the contribution that the pre-training including skills for life, made to their own confidence and abilities.
- The robust and intensive Literacy and Numeracy tutoring worked very well with adults and helped learners to retain new information and to see immediate feedback and results following an on line test.



# Next Steps



- The pilot concludes at the end of March 2011
- Ongoing contact with a group from the pilot will continue
- Follow up phone calls or face-to-face interviews to take place after 3 months / 6 months / 9 months to ascertain additional numbers moving to permanent employment as well as other positive outcomes.
- 100% of the learners participating stated that the programme had definitely provided a benefit in their search for permanent employment.