

PRD project – case study: Phase 2

Building effective practice in partnership working to support young people (18- 24) to progress to employment, including apprenticeships



Project title - Understanding and overcoming the barriers and issues on participation by the 18+ NEET group (continuation) – Bringing the MTQ48 NEET solution to Hampshire and the IoW

Worth reading if you are interested in:

- Findings related to lack of participation in learning by 18+ NEET young people
- Understanding the use of NOMIS data for identifying NEET hot spots
- Lessons learnt from engaging with multiple agencies all of whom have an offer to NEET young people
- Collaboration to avoid duplicating effort and make events more attractive to the potential client group.
- Understanding a little about the MTQ48 psychometric test and how it can be applied to the 'at risk' or NEET groups.
- Understanding the impact of learning about resilience and mental toughness to the client group and their tutors.

Contact information

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Name of Peer Review and Development (PRD) group: South Hampshire PRD

Participating organisation(s): Fareport, Enham, Portsmouth City Council, Hampshire County Council, IYSS, Pupil Referral Units, Highbury, Catch 22, Brockenhurst College, SETA, Totton College, Wheatsheaf Trust, NAS

What was the original PRD project designed to achieve?

In Phase 1 of the project we set out to...

*..(please indicate **why** you used the approach that you did)*

The original project set out to take stock of the underlying issues that are causing the current increase in the number of young people aged 18+ to become NEET in the South Hampshire areas. The partners researched with current and recent NEET young people the reasons for the recent increase in NEET numbers. They then reviewed their individual efforts and the wider local offer available to assess measures available to minimise the NEET group. Network Exchange events took place to bring together the multitude of providers each with their own offer in order to increase understanding, opportunities to network and collaborate and generate face to face contacts to promote cross referrals. The groups prepared action plans which

identified gaps in the offer and landscape for learners which need to be filled to ensure that learners have the most appropriate learning offer available to meet their identified needs.

and we achieved

1. Researched available NEET data to identify NEET hotspots on which to concentrate efforts.
2. Researched with NEET and no longer NEET young people the barriers to participation. We found that the main barriers were barriers to learning – many tangible such as finances, dealing with personal issues and health related reasons but they remained a very low awareness of the offer, the support available, training opportunities and Apprenticeships. If the initial adviser was not able to engage with a person they were likely to be lost and hence all providers needed information on how to support all needs even if this meant signposting.
3. Made contacts with new organisations in the localities of Portsmouth and Southampton which are able to add breadth and depth to the offer of support to young people to help to overcome the barriers to participation.
4. Ran network exchange events in the hotspot areas to bring together the multiple agencies able to provide elements of support.
5. Created a local action plan, directory of offer and up to date contacts sheet for organisations able to support the NEET young people in the area.
6. These directories are now maintained by both of the Local Authorities in the hot spot areas
7. Through the links created cross referral of learners between programmes and onto Apprenticeships have been secured.
8. The foundation has been built on in the Hotspot areas with positive outcomes that include:
 - NAS have supported the Hotspots with further NEET related funding to ensure opportunities to support NEETS are in place.
 - The links made through the projects have provided easy access to ready-made project teams to work on ongoing initiatives making rapid response easily achievable.

What still needs to be done

1. Continued joint working to build on the contacts and provide opportunities to continue to collaborate and share opportunities and resources

How did the phase 2 activities embed or extend the work undertaken in phase 1 of the project?

In phase 2 we wanted to....

The Hants and IoW NEET PRD group have learnt about the MTQ48 psychometric test which has been used with much success for NEET learners in other areas. We were keen to undergo the training to become competent to administer the test for our NEET groups in order to run a pilot in this region. The MTQ48 test measures mental toughness and resilience and this pilot would provide the training and skills for local practitioners to administer, read and provide feedback to candidates on the findings as well as enabling the results to help pinpoint individual learning that can be built into their personal curriculum in order that the learner has better chances of success. The NEET PRD group was seeking to work together to enhance and innovate in order to provide the most effective learning curriculum for NEET young people. Networks are in place through the previous project to ensure that the right learners are supported to find appropriate training or other positive next steps. This project

seeks to make an enhancement to the learning provision by administering MTQ48 Mental Toughness psychometric tests. The results of the test provide the tutor and learner with feedback on 10 areas associated with aspects of mental toughness which enable people to thrive in life. The results enable 1:1 discussions around gaps identified to help tutors to build a bespoke curriculum which will enable the learner to add to their toughness skill stock and hence progress to positive outcomes.

Outcomes from this project were to include staff qualified to administer the MTQ48, 50 MTQ48 psychometric tests and the analysis and curriculum development which will result from the learning from these. These outcomes will enhance the skills and abilities of the staff involved and will lay a solid foundation for the organisation to continue to use this test if the pilot proves to be successful.

and we achieved or are working towards achieving....

The training took place on the 20th November and 12 delegates attended. As a result all were able to administer the MTQ48 tests. A pilot study was launched and 4 providers signed up to the study. However, this did cover the required number of learners.

The pilots are proving very slow to get off the ground. Providers have had numerous reasons why they have been unable to administer their first test – ranging from waiting for a critical mass group to start, OFSTED Inspection priorities and other business priorities. All remain committed to the piloting of the tests but there is slippage in the dates.

AQR who franchise the MTQ48 test have matched our purchase of MTQ48 meters to enable a summative test to take place with each learner to help test distance travelled. They will also be involved in the ongoing evaluation.

AQR have engaged the University of Hull as they too are interested in the evaluation results from this study to help support the development and understanding of MTQ48 in general.

What has been the main impact of the project and how will this affect key stakeholders such as learners, the PRD group and participating organisations?

Definition – impact = “A change in behaviour as a result of engagement with the PRD activity.”

The main **impact for the PRD group** has been or will be

The main **impact for the participating organisations** has been or will be

The main **impact for the learners** has been or will be

Has there been an **impact for other stakeholders**?

What will be done differently and what are the key learning points?

From the original project:

1. The key barriers to participation are not about the offer, they are about extrinsic factors which need to be addressed prior to any interest in learning and progression opportunities.
2. The understanding by NEET and unemployed young people on 18+ programmes available is minimal and all agencies need to understand the widest landscape if they are to engage these hard to help young people.
3. The understanding by inter-agencies of others in their locality that could support their cohort is low and needs constant update as staff change and

offers change. This cannot be a one off effort. The Local Authority directory is a key to ongoing support of this agenda.

4. There is a potential for duplication of effort if agencies do not collaborate and support one another.
5. There is a belief that unemployment is 'acceptable' and so the motivation to gain support is lower in times of higher unemployment.

From the continuation project:

6. The enormous enthusiasm to participate in the training to administer the tests has not been backed up with timely commitment to the piloting and evaluation.
7. Trying to engage with organisations from outside of the ALPHI network, although a good idea in principle, adds a dimension in terms of loss of control. The PRU and Wheatsheaf Trust were desperate to pilot the tests but they have proved least effective at ongoing implementation in line with their commitment.
- 8.

What resources should be shared with the FE and Skills sector?

(Please list and submit with the case study)

1. The NEET questionnaires
2. The templates, briefing sheet and papers supporting the organisation of the Network Exchange events
3. NOMIS data on the Portsmouth and Southampton NEET hotspots
4. A database of the multiple agencies offering support in an identified hot spot.
5. Outline programme on administering the MTQ48 tests.
6. The evaluation template and spreadsheet
7. Evaluation of a different pilot project in another area of the country.
8. An evaluation report (to follow)