



# Provider case study

## Bradford College The 'hub and spoke' approach

### Introduction

Bradford College in Yorkshire and the Humber is a large further education college with 25,000 learners taking courses from Entry-level to masters. It serves a culturally and socially diverse city and covers all curriculum areas.

### Aims

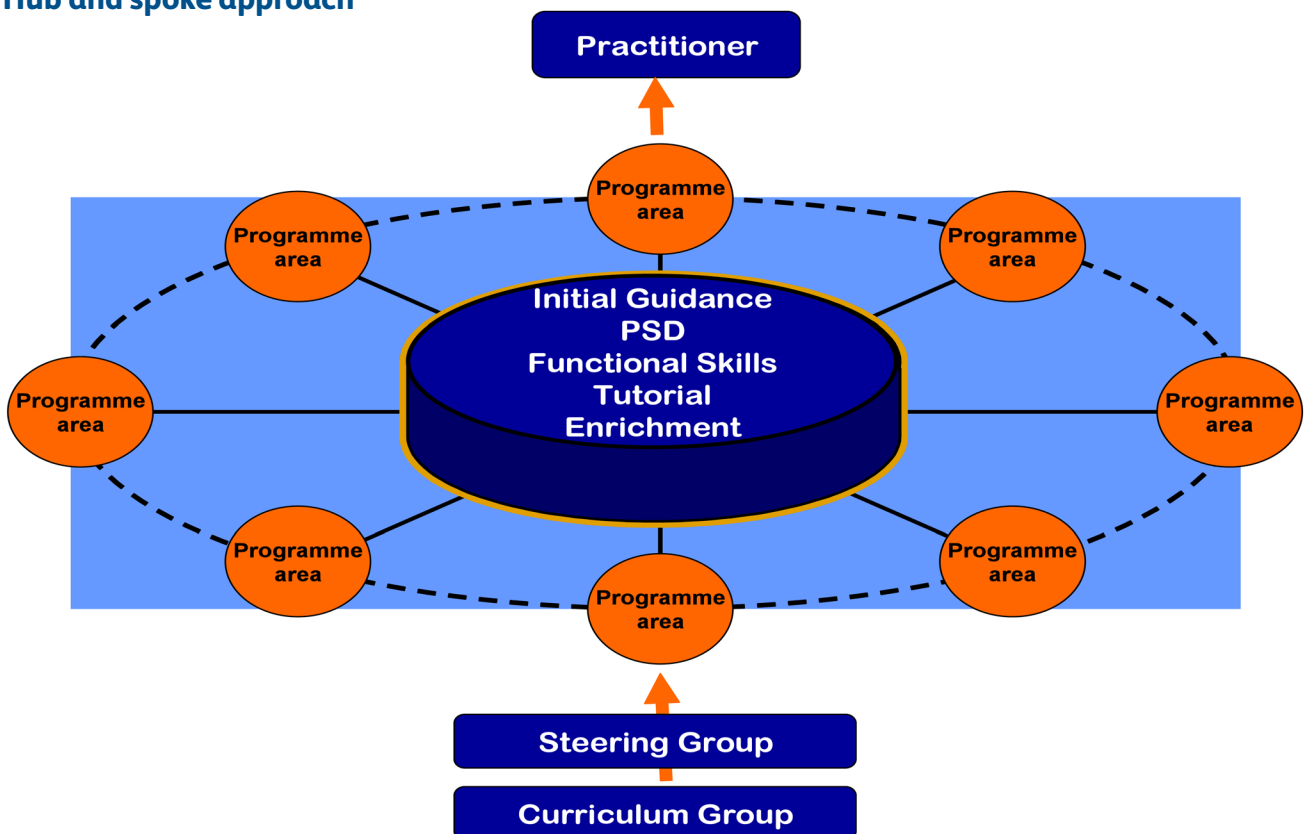
In the Bradford College area, achievement at Key Stage 4 is significantly below the national average. For some years the college has worked on addressing the issue of a high rate of young people not in education,

employment or training (NEET) in Bradford. They have re-engineered the curriculum away from the emphasis on Level 3 provision to ensure that all curriculum areas have a Level 1 offer and created a flexible college year with multiple entry points. The development of Foundation Learning is seen as a key strategy in meeting the needs of learners studying at Entry level and Level 1.

### Approach

The Foundation Learning model (Figure 1) developed by the college was based on a 'hub and spoke' approach.

**Figure 1**  
**Hub and spoke approach**



The hub comprised a specialist team responsible for:

- initial guidance;
- personal and social development;
- functional skills;
- tutorial support;
- enrichment.

The intention was that the specialists in the hub would work with all programme areas and Level 1 programmes throughout the college. Each programme area identified an advocate who acted as the link to the hub and ensured that information was cascaded to the programme teams.

The college started by mapping all existing Level 1 provision to the qualifications accredited to Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF), approved for use with Foundation Learning.

They worked closely with ASPIREi, the local careers advisory company, to identify learners at risk of becoming NEET and to target information, advice and guidance as part of their ongoing widening participation strategy. They also worked closely with partner schools and the local authority Foundation Learning coordinator across the city to try to secure the common use of qualifications such as NOCN Step Up and Edexcel Work Skills. This development should support seamless progression for learners and ensure that recognising prior learning and credit accumulation and transfer when learners transfer at the end of Key Stage 4 is straightforward.

The college has also changed their approach to learner support to make it proactive and interventionist, so that any barriers to learning are addressed. Close working relationships with the Connexions service mean that the college has a good knowledge of learner support needs before the learners start their programmes of study.

They set up a steering group with representatives from functions across the college including Learner Services, the Quality Unit and Management Information Services (MIS) to oversee the introduction of Foundation Learning.

## Impact

The number of 16–18 year-old learners has grown significantly as a result of the college's widening participation initiatives.

The college now runs a flexible year with entry points to programmes in September, January and after Easter. In summer, a summer school caters for up to 450 learners who have not decided their curriculum area.

## Lessons learned

- The lessons learned from development of Foundation Learning are being applied across the college in anticipation of the wider roll-out of the QCF.
- An interventionist approach to learner support enables speedy follow-up with learners who are in danger of dropping out of college.
- A flexible college year makes it easier for learners to move between programme areas and this helps to reduce drop out.
- A key issue has been winning hearts and minds of staff through one-to-one work and dissemination events so that everyone understands the nature and needs of the potential learners in the college's catchment area.
- The whole-college approach of the hub and spoke model has created a shared vision and goal that extends beyond the college to its external partners.

## Next steps

What started out as an approach for Foundation Learning has provided the college with a good model for the introduction of the QCF.

## Contacts

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