



Foundation Learning Support

Provider case study

Moulton College, Hinwick Hall College, CANTO Collaborating to provide effective Foundation Learning provision

Introduction

This initiative was undertaken by three collaborating providers:

- Moulton College (a specialist land-based college that also provides construction and sports courses);
- Hinwick Hall College (a residential college for young people with profound physical and learning difficulties and disabilities); and
- Career and New Training Opportunities (CANTO, a training provider specialising in supporting learners developing life skills, using project-based activities and work experience).

They realised that working together they could offer learners work-based learning, further education in a college and independent specialist education and training.

Northamptonshire Learning and Skills Council (LSC) funded the project.

Aim

The three providers aimed to work collaboratively to create personalised learning programmes for learners working at Entry level and to support them to develop the skills needed for independent living and employment. The common characteristics of the two cohorts of learners recruited by CANTO were that they were 16+ and were either not in education, employment or training (NEET), or at risk of becoming NEET. Some were referred through social services from a care setting, others from Connexions. The third cohort was recruited directly from current students at Hinwick Hall College.

Approach

Following a comprehensive initial assessment of each learner's starting point, they designed the individual learning programmes. Learning and other personal support was funded and provided by a range of external agencies including the local authority (LA) Children's Services, Care Services Direct Payments, and the Learning and Skills Council through Additional Learning Support funding.

Learners were based primarily at the provider who recruited them:

- Cohort 1 was based at Hinwick Hall College with one day each at CANTO and Moulton College per week.
- Cohorts 2 and 3 were based primarily at CANTO with one day each at Hinwick Hall College and Moulton College per week.

The programme was designed to use the strengths of each organisation. Moulton College provided the vocational learning part of the programme. Vocational tasters included Small Animal Care, Horse Care, Horticulture, Agriculture, Conservation and Floristry and were delivered in a 12-weekly cycle. Life Skills and Independent Living Skills were developed at Hinwick Hall. CANTO specialised in personal and social development and confidence-building activities.

Vocational experiences were used to illustrate the usefulness of functional skills and were delivered according to individual learner needs and abilities.

Specialist staff in each organisation delivered the learning with the support of the cohort leader who stayed with the learners. Learners were transported between the centres by mini-bus and the cohort leader set en-route tasks for them.

Impact

This model of delivery provided a variety of learning environments while the cohort leaders provided continuity and consistency. Cohort leaders were able to monitor learners' progress, identify and respond to any issues that might arise and also motivate the participants to remain on-task and retain their place on the programme. Daily reports were provided for the parent-institution course manager who used them to compile a daily portfolio of evidence and an audit trail. An e-portfolio was compiled for each student's achievements to record learner outcomes and progress. Learners were working towards criteria from the National Proficiency Training Centre (NPTC) in the vocational tasters and functional skills and personal and social development qualifications from OCN at an appropriate level.

The programme is only half-way through but it is already clear that the learners are really enjoying the changes in environment and staff; using practical vocational experience provides realistic information and experience and the chance to explore different vocational options before making informed choices about their future. Some learners were nervous about the different delivery pattern, but they have all adjusted well and quickly.

Lessons learned

- Senior management team and operational staff need a common understanding of the proposed delivery model and how it can be most effectively managed before implementation begins.
- Collaboration between partners is essential to smooth delivery and ensure clear allocation of responsibility and accountability.
- Continuing professional development is needed on the model and intended outcomes for staff to ensure whole organisation clarity of purpose and action.
- Be clear about management responsibilities for delivery.
- Good teachers always rise to the challenge, whatever the model. Be confident in the expertise and talent of delivery teams.

Next steps

Moulton College resolved most of the mechanics of getting Foundation Learning to work for the learners, the issue now is doing it without pilot project funding.

Contact

Richard Dewing

Head of Faculty

Moulton College

Pitsford Campus

Moulton

Northampton NN3 7RR

Email: Richard.dewing@moulton.ac.uk

Telephone: 01604 491131