

Promoting positive progression to employment

The Entry to Employment (E2E) programme, launched in 2003, was designed to enable young learners to prepare for a range of progression opportunities and be confident and capable of a successful working life. Around 40,000 young people with a profile of low or underachievement, who have experienced, or are experiencing multiple barriers to learning, including disaffection and disengagement, start the programme each year. How is the programme faring?

An evaluation of the E2E programme found that positive progression rose by 11 per cent in its second year – fairly equally spread between employment (3 per cent), work-based learning (4 per cent) and further education (4 per cent). Around 43 per cent of learners successfully progressed, of whom 21 per cent went into jobs, 10 per cent to work-based learning and 12 per cent into further education.

The data showed that providers have improved the way they prepare learners for positive progression routes. The study found no fixed formula for how this was achieved, but did identify some common factors. These included:

- an initial assessment (over the first six weeks of the programme) of learners' aspirations, starting level in key and basic skills, vocational competence, and barriers to learning
- programmes which are based on individual learners' needs and which incorporate personal and social development, basic and key skills and vocational development
- regular reviews with learners to identify any changes in goals and whether learning objectives are suitable and being met
- good support for learners while on the programme and during transition to their next destination, for example, through handing over records of learners' achievements and needs.

In one provider's words:

"We can't do what schools do in five years ... What I try to do is a 10-week review with an eye on what progression route they're likely to go down, by which time we will know what their key skills potential is".

How might the criteria identified by this study help you to review and refine E2E programmes?

Gentleman, S. (2006) Promoting positive progression from E2E (Entry to Employment). Learning and Skills Development Agency: www.lsrc.ac.uk/publications/index.asp