



TEACH TOO LOCAL PROJECT

Project overview

This project focussed on SEN students and their support needs in relation to accessing, starting and attending industry work placements. We hoped to further broaden our placement offer for this particular group of students, by increasing the number of employers we worked with. We also wanted to research the needs of new placement providers, especially in relation to offering opportunities for industry work-experience in a range of settings. Ultimately, the focus of the research project was to explore the placement, progression and employment opportunities available to SEN

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of employing SEN learners and broadening the awareness of the needs of SEN learners, to allow them to progress successfully in to work.

Positive outcomes and impact

Everyone involved in the project engaged extremely well with it; students, staff and employers were keen to share their experiences and knowledge. The purpose of their participation was to inform future students and employers of the challenges faced by starting and being successful in a work placement, and to share the individual strategies used to support students and staff to ensure success. Student input specifically helped to create resources to share with other students – information leaflets, which identified possible student placement concerns, how input from staff can provide support, guidance and development of skills and competencies for placement success. The leaflets also included advice and guidance from the students themselves about managing possible placement concerns and/or problems, and in one curriculum area, the level 2 students plan to share their leaflet with level 1 students, in a session which will be activity-based and further develop their own skills and confidence.

The sharing of experiences highlighted areas for improvement and development across a range of contexts and settings:

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Future activity

Activities will continue to explore the needs of SEN students in relation to being effectively prepared for and successful in their work experience placements. Review of the requirements and capacity of employers, and how to best match students to work placements, will be ongoing; it is vital that the support and development needs of individual students are used to identify the most appropriate employer to match them for their work placement.

The students have really enjoyed producing the information leaflets, and these will be shared with the project participants. Employers, mentors and teachers will carry out similar activities in their organisations to pass on the experience and knowledge of the students in their curriculum area / context.

Completion and sharing of the leaflet in LDD / Supported Internship; this is currently in draft stage.

Further develop working relationships with employers and organisations in the area; offering support and guidance for employers to enable them to effectively support the students they work with, whilst sharing best practice and successful strategies for working with students with SEN / LDD needs.

Recommendations for developing local collaborative arrangements

Develop effective methods for contacting and communicating with employers within the local area making better use of existing contacts and building on these further.

Making use of the key players within the local area who are influential and are able to assist with making further contacts; for example the local LEA, health service contacts, strategic level business partners and a wider range of vocational / curriculum areas.

Being flexible and be prepared to work in a variety of ways to suit the different needs of local organisations.

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