

TEACH TOO PHASE 3: MILTON KEYNES COLLEGE- OFFENDER LEARNING

Lead contact: Maxine Bennett
Employers: Wamitab, RMT Construction



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TEACH TOO PHASE 3

Teach Too Phase 3 was commissioned and funded by the Education and Training Foundation (ETF) and managed by the Association of Colleges (AoC), working in partnership with the Association of Employment and Learning Providers (AELP) and HOLEX, the lead body for adult community education and learning.

Phase 3 of Teach Too built on the principles identified in earlier phases and, to give an indication of the scale of work undertaken, the 12 projects involved 675 learners, 120 provider staff and 100 employer staff.

The concept of Teach Too is identified by the Commission on Adult Vocational Teaching and Learning (CAVTL) in its 2013 report as one of the ways to secure excellent vocational teaching and learning.

THE PROJECT

The project shared occupational expertise between the three partners: Milton Keynes College, and employers Wamitab and RMT Construction, as well as work exchanges to improve the line of sight to work in the construction sector for offenders and ex-offenders. The project delivered skills exchanges, where employer staff taught in the secure education settings and college staff visited employer sites.



The project allowed teaching to be really relevant. For example, a qualification requires learners to construct a chimney from brick. Pre-built chimney stacks are increasingly used on site.

On one construction site all the employees, apart from the site manager, were ex-offenders.

**MAXINE BENNETT
OFFENDER LEARNING
MILTON KEYNES COLLEGE**



We were very impressed with the levels of engagement at each of the classes we visited; there was consistent respectful discussion which was really good to see.

**WAMITAB EMPLOYEES
PRISON EXCHANGE VISIT**





Project aims

- To improve the occupational relevance of the curriculum for ex-offenders.
- To improve the skills development and industry knowledge of teaching staff.
- To support employers in developing coaching and mentoring skills.

Project description

The project focused on work exchanges between the college and the employers to make the line of sight to work as clear as possible for offender learners. The curriculum was updated to be as relevant as possible to industry needs. In construction, technology in the industry is moving quickly and qualifications may lag behind. A prime example from the project is the pre-built chimney stack which is now used in industry, but the qualification includes the need to construct a brick-built chimney.

Positive impacts

- Teachers have been able to bring experience of the 'real world' into prison education settings. Twelve teachers undertook exchanges with construction employers and 14 teachers in the recycling setting. This has increased the motivation of offender learners by allowing these teachers to use examples relevant to employment in their delivery in enhancing links to employability.
- Employers have enhanced their understanding of the strengths of ex-offenders as employees, both with transferable skills and occupational expertise. This has been facilitated through six Wamitab and seven RMT Construction employees undertaking placements in prisons.
- Teachers and employers have a better mutual understanding of the relevance of qualifications and industry 'tickets' and 'licences' for employability. These include Health and Safety qualifications and banksman (for safe vehicle manoeuvring) licences.
- Employers have access to a skills pipeline in areas of local and regional skills shortages.
- Resettlement and rehabilitation of ex-offenders has been enhanced. For example, 17 learners at HMP Hewell have been introduced to employers willing to employ them. It is anticipated that up to 270 learners will benefit in the next phase.

- Employers gained an enhanced understanding of barriers and disadvantage experienced by many offender learners, including low levels of maths and English.
- Teacher motivation and morale has been enhanced.

Key learning points

- Ensure that opportunities are maximised through looking for potential in other vocational sectors. New areas being explored including retail, catering and other areas of construction.
- Opportunities for sustainability are important including the use of networking and exploring the potential of virtual technology. This has strengthened the possibility of extending the initiative across all 27 of the resettlement prisons where the college provides offender learning.
- Success relies on a real synergy between partners, including an understanding of 'what it does for us' as well as contributing to collective gains.

Recommendations for developing employer partnerships

- Make sure the relationships are based on 'win-win', building on shared objectives. These include opportunities for profile raising through coverage in the local and national media.
- Explore links with local management information and data on skills shortages.
- Acknowledge that short timescales may not be compatible with the time-consuming nature of developing employer-provider relationships.
- Do not be afraid to approach employers to participate in relationships underpinned by Teach Too principles.

Links and contact details

Maxine Bennett - Deputy Director of Offender Learning: Innovation & Development

Maxine.Bennett@mkcollege.ac.uk

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