

APPRENTICESHIP WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT: FINAL CASE STUDY

Provider Network Collaboration – Collaborative Project

Exeter College

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CREATED BY

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Provider Network Collaboration

Project Overview

The core of this project is in our belief that as a community we are stronger working together and actively seek partnerships that make a difference to our region.

The challenges in the apprenticeship sphere are well documented. Is wider collaboration and support the key to solving these challenges? This project explored the benefits of network-led quality improvement sessions, delivered by peers. By developing a series of masterclasses that span the learner and employer journeys, providers were given a unique insight into eight key themes, to explore and glean best practice. Delivered in a safe and supportive environment, debate and questioning was at the heart of the improvement strategies. The resources developed by industry for industry are available to all as a legacy improvement practice.

The project aimed to focus on our three strategic pillars of success:

1. Clear line of sight to high quality LMI and aspirations for our learners, meeting community, local skills, and learner needs.
2. Credibility by ensuring high quality delivery by subject experts.
3. Added value that goes beyond the expected and partnerships that shape our curriculum and add value for the learners.

We planned to do this by:

- Identifying areas of strength in apprenticeship delivery amongst the provider networks.
- Identifying areas of development in delivery and quality amongst the provider networks.
- Creating a series of provider-led masterclass sessions covering the most identified challenges/topics.
- Developing provider confidence and capability, aiming to improve the overall quality of education and apprenticeship provision in the region.
- Adding value and building a further sense of a trusted community for network members.

Addressing the challenges that relate to provider performance, learner experience and employer engagement can have a positive impact on the quality of apprenticeship delivery, leading to improvements in achievement rates, retention, withdrawals, and overall satisfaction for both apprentices and employers. The masterclass design embedded the following underlying tenets:

Compliance: interpretation of the Apprenticeship Funding Regulations. Encourage a share and compare ethos. By sharing interpretations, providers can learn from each other's experiences and insights, leading to a more accurate and comprehensive understanding of the regulations, reducing the chances of unintentional non-compliance.

Achievement Rates: By identifying and promoting the most effective practices of the best-performing providers, apprenticeship programmes can become more efficient and impactful. Apprentices may receive better support, guidance, and resources, which can lead to increased success in completing their apprenticeship and achieving their learning goals.

Retention: Improving the learner journey and learning experience can enhance the overall satisfaction of apprentices. When learners feel engaged, supported, and valued in their training, they are more likely to remain committed to their apprenticeship programme, leading to improved retention rates.

Withdrawals: Addressing the identified challenges can help reduce the factors that contribute to apprentice withdrawals. For example, enhancing employer engagement can ensure that apprentices have meaningful and relevant on-the-job experiences, which may reduce the likelihood of them leaving the programme prematurely.

Apprentice Satisfaction: As the quality of apprenticeship delivery improves, apprentices are more likely to be satisfied with their learning experiences. This can lead to increased motivation, dedication, and a positive perception of the apprenticeship programme, creating a conducive learning environment.

Employer Satisfaction: Employers who are actively engaged and see the value of apprenticeship training are more likely to be satisfied with the programme outcomes. When employers witness improvements in the knowledge, skills and behaviours which enhance the performance of their apprentices, they are more inclined to continue participating in apprenticeship schemes and invest in the development of future apprentices.

Positive Impact and Expected Outcomes

The three events hosted a total of 243 individual instances of learning.

We hosted 91 individual attendees across a range of 33 different organisations, including Further Education, Independent Training Providers, Higher Education Institutes and Employer Providers.

Feedback responses captured during the events told us the following:

- 100% of attendees stated that all three events met their aims.

Masterclass	Percentage of attendees that stated they had acquired new information is:	Percentage of attendees that stated they would be making changes as a result:
Programme Design	96%	87%
Employer Engagement	80%	88%
Compliance	100%	80%
On the Job and Off the Job Training	97%	83%
Initial Assessment and Onboarding	95%	90%
Progress Reviews, Gateway, and EPA	92%	92%
Quality & Programme Development	100%	100%
Preparing for Ofsted	100%	100%

Project Outputs

The eight masterclass voiceover presentations summarise the delivery and include answers to questions that were raised at the masterclasses have been made available as a project output.

“This project has truly shown the power of collaboration and partnership, it has enabled open and transparent discussion and the sharing of expertise, all of which support the aim of the project, that of raising the quality of Apprenticeship delivery.”

Sharron Robbie MBE - Managing Director, Devon and Cornwall Training Provider Network

Future Activity

Sustaining Engagement

The Provider Network will continue to engage with providers to monitor their progress in implementing quality practices and encourage providers to collaborate with one another on quality initiatives. Further masterclass activity is planned across the South West region, creating a community of practice around quality apprenticeship delivery, encouraging ongoing discussions and collaboration among providers. This community can serve as a platform for continuous learning and improvement.

Mentorship Programmes

Consider rolling out a regional mentorship programme where providers with a strong record in quality can mentor those who are seeking to improve in this area. The sharing of interpretations can drive a culture of continuous improvement within the industry.

Recommendations for effective collaborative partnership working to address quality improvement in apprenticeship delivery.

Alignment with Sector Priorities: Ensure that all activity remains aligned with sector priorities, such as those outlined in the LSIP report, and continues to contribute to the regional and sector-wide improvement of apprenticeship provision.

Facilitate a safe environment approach: Provider networks are the ideal forum for nurturing a collaborative eco-system. This is essential for providers to openly share queries, experiences and seek advice and guidance in areas they are struggling or require support. This in turn benefits the region and apprenticeships as reputations and success are strengthened.

Mentorship Programmes: A regional mentorship programme where providers with a strong record in quality can mentor those who are new providers and/or who are seeking to improve. The sharing of interpretations, process, systems, and intelligence can drive a culture of continuous improvement.

Where can colleagues find more information?

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