

## Effective practice in Pre-Apprenticeship programmes

### Final Report

A report by the Sussex Council of Training Providers for GFE South

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## 1. Background & Purpose

1.1. Apprenticeships are increasingly being seen as a key driver for economic growth and support to reduce youth unemployment. Budget 2011<sup>1</sup> announced further impetus to this drive with an additional 50,000 Apprenticeship places over the next 2-3 years, with many focused upon higher level, technical frameworks.

1.2. This increased focus upon Apprenticeships is positive for all providers but there remain a large number of young people who are not ready or suitably qualified for entry into a full apprenticeship. Those learners have been supported with a plethora of different initiatives and programmes including most recently, Entry to Employment and Foundation Learning. This provision has sometimes enabled young people to bridge that gap between L1 and Intermediate Level Apprenticeships, but more often than not it hasn't.

1.3. The Wolf Report<sup>2</sup> also reflects this view and suggests that significant numbers of young people are being failed by the current vocational system, especially 16-18 year olds who can revolve in and out of inappropriate level 1 provision and that there is not enough work experience for this age range.

1.4. There is also a natural link to the coalition commitment of Raising of the Participation Age (RoPA) to 17 by 2013 with many young people within the NEET category stating that employment is their preferred option.

1.5. The development of more Pre-Apprenticeship Programmes would enable young people to bridge those gaps more effectively and the purpose of this project is to provide some shared evidence of best practice in effective delivery and access to funding in current Pre-Apprenticeship programmes delivered in London and the South East. The project also allows a first look at the provider response to and implementation of new Access to Apprenticeship flexibilities introduced from 1<sup>st</sup> August 2011.

## 2. Methodology

2.1. GFE South is a new company limited by guarantee that was started by 20 FE Colleges in the South East to bid for regional tenders. GFE South submitted a bid to develop a research project that sought to identify, record and present existing examples of good practice in Pre-Apprenticeship delivery.

2.2. GFE South agreed to work with the Sussex Council of Training Providers (SCTP) to undertake the research element of the project and the following process was identified to support the achievement of this aim. A call for evidence was issued in the week beginning 12<sup>th</sup> July via a range of provider representative groups and other bodies. This was designed to be as inclusive as possible giving a wide range of providers the chance to respond and make a case for being included.

2.3. The call for evidence was further widened by internet based research and the use of informal networking.

2.4. For all the provider contacts made, an initial conversation took place to assess the suitability of the provision in relation to the project aims. Provision was sought that was focussed on apprenticeship progression (with, where possible, a successful track record);

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<sup>1</sup> [http://cdn.hm-treasury.gov.uk/2011budget\\_pressnotice1.pdf](http://cdn.hm-treasury.gov.uk/2011budget_pressnotice1.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/The%20Wolf%20Report.pdf>

involved the NEET group; was based in London in the South East and with the provision having a reasonable likelihood of sustainability and replication. Efforts were made to include different types of providers across a wide geography. The outcomes of these conversations were recorded on an Initial Conversation Record. Of the 12 contacts made, 11 were taken forward, 1 contact approached the researcher after all required contacts had been made.

2.5. Between the 2<sup>nd</sup> August and 11<sup>th</sup> October 2011 visits were made to 10 of the 11 contacts to interview key member(s) of staff in the provider organisations. 1 provider submitted a case study of a project in which the researcher had already been involved so a visit wasn't necessary.

2.6. Case studies were written up for all 11 contacts and were sent for approval of accuracy and approval for publication.

2.7. A broader perspective on Access to Apprenticeship policy was acquired through a meeting with Hayley Tod of the SFA South Central Business Development Team.

### **3. Access to Apprenticeships (A2A)**

3.1. 'Access to Apprenticeships' was introduced as a funding flexibility from the 1<sup>st</sup> August 2011 following on from the May 2010 publication *Supporting Youth Employment*<sup>3</sup> which included the announcement of 10,000 Access to Apprenticeship places in 2011/12. It is not a new funding stream but a new way that SFA-funded apprenticeship providers can make use of their mainstream—contract value to attract young people that are not quite ready for apprenticeships. It is not an apprenticeship in itself but is a pathway to a full Apprenticeship. The main difference is that the learner on this pathway is not required to be in employment on the first day of their Apprenticeship. Programmes will therefore normally be comprised of work experience plus the competence and knowledge based elements of an apprenticeship programme plus key/functional skills – although only the latter can be certificated whilst learners are on the programme. The duration of an A2A programme is up to 6 months but expected to average 3 months before moving to a full Apprenticeship with a contract of employment. Eligibility is for those 16-24 year olds that can demonstrate that they have been NEET for the whole of the preceding 13 weeks or have evidence of Additional Social Needs or Additional Learning Needs. More information, including FAQs is available on the national apprenticeships website<sup>4</sup>.

3.2. Discussions with Hayley Tod at the NAS have emphasised the focus of A2A provision on progression to apprenticeship and therefore employment. The volume of learners will be monitored closely to ensure the target client group receive the additional support needed to start a full Apprenticeship. However, anecdotal evidence reported by the SFA to the South East Learning & Skills Forum suggested that A2A 'may not be meeting expectations about addressing the NEET problem<sup>5</sup>'. Time will tell.

3.3. The timing of this research into best practice in Pre-Apprenticeship programmes has enabled the inclusion of an initial look at the response of providers to the new Access to Apprenticeship opportunities. This report therefore, provides a resource for providers to use in developing ideas and plans for potential A2A introduction as it aims to give providers real examples of operational A2A and Pre-Apprenticeship programmes on which to base the

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<sup>3</sup> <http://www.number10.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/support-youth-employment.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk/Partners/Policy/AccessstoApprenticeships.aspx>

<sup>5</sup> Minutes of the SE Learning and Skills Forum 12<sup>th</sup> October 2011

development of new A2A programmes that will enable more young people to progress into Apprenticeships.

#### **4. Case Studies - Overview**

4.1. The following case studies have been completed and can be found at Appendix 2

- Adult College, Barking & Dagenham, Access to Apprenticeship Provision
- Avanta, Academy – Foundation Learning and Access to Apprenticeships
- Chichester College, Work Skills Pre-Apprenticeship Programme
- Harrow College, Futures First Pre-Apprenticeship Programme
- Hastings Furniture Service, ‘L-earn’ Provision
- JACE, Access to Apprenticeship Programme
- Northbrook College, WorkMATES Provision
- PETA, Pre-Apprenticeship Provision
- SATRO, Construction Bus
- SET, Workskills / Step Up Programmes
- Working Rite Work Pairing Provision (with East Sussex County Council)

4.2. The 11 case studies draw on the experiences from the third, independent and college sector providers, some of these delivering apprenticeships and some not. Featured providers cover a wide geography including all areas of the South East and London. The case studies are short with each designed to give the reader a brief window into how other providers are operating their Pre-Apprenticeship provision and how they are planning to respond to the new opportunities available including Access to Apprenticeships.

#### **5. Summary of Case Study Findings**

5.1. The 11 case studies feature a broad range of provision from Key Stage 4 NEET intervention to short input Pre-Apprenticeship programmes to help people make a brief transition into apprenticeships. All can be broadly termed Pre-Apprenticeship programmes, a term increasingly used in recognition of its power to attract learners and the ultimate ambition of the provision to open a progression route into apprenticeship programmes.

5.2. There is much good and diverse practice delivered by many committed staff in a range of different organisations via different funding streams with most providers reporting positive progressions statistics into work, further learning or apprenticeships.

5.3 Individual programmes tend to have a focus on NEET reduction/prevention or apprenticeship progression but are rarely able to achieve both. Combinations of programmes from one provider, ranging from engagement to apprenticeship preparation, are often the most effective. As a result some of the most attractive Pre-Apprenticeship offers (most commonly found in colleges) involve a provider using multiple funding sources to provide a choice of Pre-Apprenticeship entry points arranged as a ladder of progression opportunities that match the abilities and aspirations of new learners. A ‘something for everyone’ approach.

5.4. Even where a provider is offering a suite of Pre-Apprenticeship learning programmes the importance of ensuring that ladders of provision offer truly seamless provision (e.g. Foundation Learning to Apprenticeships) is still a challenge, especially in larger colleges. This also relates to the need to ensure that those learners that drop out of learning (perhaps from full-time courses) can be picked up and offered alternative learning options, including Pre-Apprenticeship programmes. This is particularly important given the reduction in Connexions service activity.

5.5. According to the focus of the provision, selection and delivery can vary greatly. NEET focussed provision is more likely to offer open access recruitment, have an ethos of engagement led support and pastoral care, be longer, focussed on a broad range of learner needs and offer alternative learning environments. However, apprenticeship feeder programmes are more likely to be highly selective, have a focus on outcomes led support, be short-term and focussed on getting work and an apprenticeship place and are characterised by some of the providers as a 'tough option'.

5.6. Where Pre Apprenticeship programmes are not delivered by apprenticeship providers then links to apprenticeship providers and their offers often may need improvement and learner support for people in finding jobs insufficient or unclear.

5.7. Conversely where Pre-Apprenticeship programmes are delivered by apprenticeship providers full use can be made of the provider's employer relationships and job matching functions to support the learner in making the transition into a job and an apprenticeship.

5.8. There is a consensus regarding effective programme content e.g. sound initial assessment, work preparation, CV writing, practicing interview skills, confidence building and engagement through skill-based activities usually at Level 1, sometimes including work experience with much of the activity offering some form of accreditation. All case studies feature some or all of these elements with the background objective being to help the learner to make the transition to adulthood and an adult working environment.

5.9. Pre Apprenticeship Programmes are being funded via a range of sources including Local Authorities, Foundation Learning, Adult Single Budget, European Social Fund, Learner Responsive and now via mainstream apprenticeship budgets through Access to Apprenticeship funding flexibilities.

5.10. Financial support for learners on Pre-Apprenticeship programmes varied greatly according to programme funding stream and purpose. The best providers took care to access allowances, travel and achievement incentives wherever possible without having a negative impact on learner benefit claims.

5.11. Some of the more innovative apprenticeship providers had already started to use Access to Apprenticeship funding flexibilities to offer provision that support learners who are not ready for Apprenticeships. This enabled these providers to extend eligibility and cast the recruitment net wider while maximising the use of mainstream 16-18 apprenticeship funding. It is likely that these providers will gain a competitive advantage in the market for 16-18 year old learners as a result.

5.12. Apprenticeship providers with a history of dealing with learners that are not ready for work, such as those that already deliver Foundation Learning or work preparation programmes for the unemployed are more likely to have the experience and expertise to be able to respond quickly to the opportunities offered by Access to Apprenticeships.

5.13. Apprenticeship providers without Pre-Apprenticeship expertise may be able to collaborate with other providers (e.g. Foundation Learning providers) to design a suite of Pre-Apprenticeship programmes that offer open access, moving through to apprenticeship progression, at all times focussing on learner need.

5.14. There is some evidence that offering employers the chance to have a potential apprentice on extended A2A work experience, at no cost, as a work trial, is an attractive prospect for many employers.

5.15. Some providers expressed the desire to build seamless employability programmes for all ages from NEET engagement at pre-16, to Pre-Apprenticeship at 16-18, to programmes for the unemployed at 19+.

5.16. Many Apprenticeship providers have not introduced Access to Apprenticeship programmes. Case studies and anecdotal evidence from providers suggest at least 4 possible reasons:

- a) because providers already deliver the required range of provision options covered by other funding routes;
- b) because it does not fit their business model;
- c) because they see learners from Pre-Apprenticeship programmes as a recruitment risk (that might impact on success rates or funding) and
- d) at this stage providers have neither the understanding nor confidence in the new flexibilities being offered (e.g. apparent limit on the number of places available, perceived threat of audit not supporting innovative approaches).

## **6. Conclusions & Recommendations**

6.1. There is a range of excellent Pre-Apprenticeship provision leading to positive outcomes for learners. This provision is being delivered by committed people in innovative organisations. This provides a sound base for moving forward and encouraging providers to emulate the creativity that some have shown in meeting learner needs in an increasingly flexible contracting environment.

6.2. There is a real opportunity for providers to use available funding streams and flexibilities to create a range of Pre-Apprenticeship programmes that draw in 16-18 year olds and provide ladders of progression, ultimately into apprenticeships. Where this cannot be achieved within the provision of a single provider collaboration with other providers could be appropriate.

6.3. It is possible that those providers that do not take the opportunity to provide learner-friendly access points to Pre-Apprenticeship style provision will lose out in the recruitment market for 16-18 year old apprentices.

6.4. For some providers building effective Pre-Apprenticeship provision will not be best achieved alone but through collaboration with other providers in terms of access to funding, expertise in delivery and utilising all available progression routes.

6.5. Access to Apprenticeship is being utilised with enthusiasm as a new programme by some providers but there is evidence that at present many providers are unaware of, or cautious about taking the opportunities available.

6.6. Consideration needs to be given as to how best to draw together information for young people on available Pre-Apprenticeship provision in a locality. With dwindling resources available for 14-19 IAG the development of effective provision needs to be matched by sound marketing and IAG for young people.

6.7. This report is designed to be a starting point in helping providers to design creative Pre-Apprenticeship provision that will reduce NEET numbers and inspire progression to apprenticeships. However, more needs to be done by LSIS, SFA, and provider networks to provide information, encouragement, resource and brokering of partnerships to enable providers to move forward with confidence in creating effective ladders of Pre-Apprenticeship provision within each provider and across localities.

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SCTP, GFE South, LSIS and NIACE would like to express their thanks to all the individuals and organisations who gave their time and energy to support this project.

## Appendix 1

### Call for Evidence – Organisations Used As a Channel of Communication

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Reason for Inclusion</b>
GFE South	Access to 20 GFE colleges in the South East.
Sussex Council of Training Providers (SCTP)	Access to over 60 WBL providers (including colleges) operating in Sussex.
Kent Association of Training Organisations (KATO)	Access to over 60 WBL providers (including colleges) operating in Kent.
Thames Valley Regional Network (TVRN)	Access to over 50 WBL providers (including colleges) operating in the Thames Valley area.
Association of Learning Providers Hampshire & IOW (ALPHI)	Access to over 30 WBL providers (including colleges) operating in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.
Association of Learning Providers Surrey (ALPS)	Access to over 30 WBL providers (including colleges) operating in Surrey.
Association of Learning Providers South East (ALPSE)	An alternative communication route to the providers and colleges that are members of the local WBL provider networks.
Skills Funding Agency (SFA)	Access to expertise of key contacts potentially able to recommend known good practice.
National Apprenticeship Service (NAS)	Access to expertise of key contacts potentially able to recommend known good practice.
RAISE (Regional Representative Body for Voluntary and Community Sector)	Access to voluntary and community sector providers across the region.
Local Authorities in the South East	Circulation to Local Authority contacts across the South East potentially able to recommend known good practice.

## Appendix 2

### Case Studies

1.	Adult College, Barking & Dagenham, Access to Apprenticeship Provision
2.	Avanta, Academy – Foundational Learning and Access to Apprenticeships
3.	Chichester College, Work Skills Pre-Apprenticeship Programme
4.	Harrow College, Futures First Pre-Apprenticeship Programme
5.	Hastings Furniture Service ‘L-earn’ Provision
6.	JACE, Access to Apprenticeship Programme
7.	Northbrook College, WorkMATES Provision
8.	PETA, Pre-Apprenticeship Programme
9.	SATRO, Construction Bus
10.	SET, Workskills / Step Up Programmes
11.	Working Rite, Work Pairing Provision (with East Sussex County Council)

**Pre-Apprenticeship Research – Case Study Report –**  
**The Adult College Barking & Dagenham**

<b>Provider Name and Address:</b>	The Adult College Barking & Dagenham, Fanshawe Crescent, Dagenham, RM9 5QA
<b>Programme Name:</b>	Access To Apprenticeship (A2A)
<b>Key Contact:</b>	Yvonne Bennett, Business Support Manager, 020 8270 6510
<b>Website address:</b>	<a href="http://www.barking-dagenham.gov.uk/adultcollege/">www.barking-dagenham.gov.uk/adultcollege/</a>
<b>Programme Description, Rationale &amp; Objectives</b>	
<p>The Adult College’s Pre-Apprenticeship programme is called Access To Apprenticeship (A2A) has run every year for the last 3 years. It was named well in advance of the SFA introducing the Access To Apprenticeship funding flexibilities in August 2011. It was developed as a result of the outcomes of initial assessments carried out with apprenticeship applicants. It was found that many applicants were not quite ready to enter an apprenticeship programme and needed some extra input to lift them to the point where they could enter a full apprenticeship programme.</p>	
<b>Learner Target Groups</b>	
<p>16-18 year olds who aspire to be an apprentice but need some help in getting there. Older age groups can also participate. The college works closely with Prospects (Connexions) to promote their offer to the local NEET group.</p>	
<b>Recruitment &amp; Selection</b>	
<p>All applicants undergo a thorough 2-day initial assessment. Participants may be NEET but that is not a requirement. There has been a high demand for the Apprenticeship Scheme with this year’s course attracting 300 applicants coming forward with 20 starting the A2A programme in September. Those that don’t enter the Apprenticeship Scheme or the A2A programme are supported to enter the college’s Skills For Life programme, ESOL programme, or other courses. For those applicants that want to follow a vocational area that is not offered by the college information, advice and guidance is offered, supporting the applicant where possible referring to another provider that specialises in the occupational area required if necessary.</p>	
<b>Learner Pay &amp; Commitments</b>	
<p>Learners do not get paid while on the (A2A) programme since the demise of EMA but do carry on receiving benefits.</p>	
<b>Programme Content &amp; Duration</b>	
<p>The A2A course runs for up to 18 weeks with actual duration based on learner need. The course covering Personal and Social Development (PSD), Functional Skills (Maths, English, IT), confidence building, attitude, interview preparation, job application, Employer Rights and Responsibilities, work preparation and employability skills as well as focussing on a vocational area – a choice of Health &amp; Social Care, Childcare, Pharmacy Services, Business Admin, IT or Customer Service. Learners attend between 9.00am-300pm Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays. Attendance is limited to 16 hours so that participants do not lose benefits. It is possible for learners to do work experience as part of the programme. Wherever possible Functional Skills are accredited to the level below that required by the</p>	

relevant apprenticeship as ideal preparation; PSD, is also accredited. The course is delivered in the classroom as one whole A2A group with the various vocational aspects addressed via contextualised assignments.

### **Retention, Achievement & Progression**

After 3 years there is evidence that the A2A programme is getting the desired results. A high percentage of those participating go into mainstream apprenticeships with many more entering Foundation Learning (FL), full-time courses, courses with other providers, getting a job without training or being referred back to Connexions. Progression is supported by offering learners 9 months of support after the A2A programme (working with Connexions). For some, the 3-day a week commitment required by the A2A programme is not manageable and some learners drop out in the first couple of weeks. These learners are helped to find other more suitable options. The college works to support all applicants. The high demand for apprenticeships is outstripping the availability of employers and this is a constraint on apprenticeship progression although there are good links with the National Apprenticeship Service and the local council, who take on apprentices.

### **Programme Funding**

The A2A programme is funded through Learner Responsive Funding.

### **Sustainability & Replication**

As the A2A programme is funded through mainstream Learner Responsive funding.

### **Key Learning Points**

- Where providers can access multiple funding streams a ladder of opportunity can be created that creates a 'no wrong door' approach where all learners can be supported.
- Thorough initial assessment is key to engaging learners and understanding their individual needs.
- The A2A programme clearly shows learners that their individual needs come first and that the college will put a programme together for them rather than trying to fit them into the pre-existing college offer.

## Pre-Apprenticeship Research – Case Study Report – Avanta Academy

<b>Name and Address:</b>	Avanta, Unit 28, 1 <sup>st</sup> Floor, Lloyds Court, 662 North Road, Milton Keynes, MK9 3AP
<b>Programme Name:</b>	Avanta Academy (Delivering Foundation Learning & Access to Apprenticeships A2A and onto full Apprenticeships)
<b>Key Contact:</b>	Dave Carson, Academies Manager, The Avanta Academies, 01908 309940
<b>Website address:</b>	<a href="http://www.avanta.com">www.avanta.com</a> & <a href="http://www.gobedo.co.uk">www.gobedo.co.uk</a>
<b>Programme Description, Rationale &amp; Objectives</b>	
<p>Avanta has previously delivered the now-discontinued Programme-led Apprenticeships and were looking of an alternative programme to support young people who were nearly ready for an apprenticeship but were facing barriers either relating to their own work readiness or lack of a job. The Avanta Academy Pre-apprenticeship programme was launched when the Skills Funding Agency signalled that mainstream apprenticeship funding could be used to run a new programme called Access To Apprenticeships (A2A).</p>	
<b>Learner Target Groups</b>	
<p>16-18 year olds who are motivated to work hard to find employment &amp; start an apprenticeship in their chosen career.</p>	
<b>Recruitment &amp; Selection</b>	
<p>Applicants must want to work, the right attitude and motivation is needed as a starting point. As Avanta says in its literature 'we do expect students to have a passion to get into the workplace and we will put in as much effort as you do'. 80% of the time applicants are unsure of their occupational choice but learners who want other occupations not covered by Avanta are referred to partner organisations that cover these. Recruitment is not selective but initial assessment is comprehensive covering Functional Skills, occupational assessments (where relevant), a specially designed Employment Needs Questionnaire that grades students for job readiness and identifies barriers and a software programme called 'Adult Direction' is also used to help the young people identify what they are good at and gives them choices to match to prospective career preferences – all this feeding into a Focused Action Plan. If applicants are assessed as below Entry Level 3 in Maths, English &amp; ICT or have other complex needs that need intensive support, then referral is made to the roll-on, roll-off Avanta Foundation Learning programme (8-16 weeks to prepare for their onward progression). The fact that the A2A funding stream requires students to have been NEET for 13 weeks or have additional learning or social needs has not been a problem as for most students one or both of these criteria can be easily met. Avanta Academy promotional material is colourful and striking with a contemporary look and message. Avanta have planned to have 20 starts a month.</p>	
<b>Learner Pay &amp; Commitments</b>	
<p>As stated above the need for motivation and hard work is the serious commitment required from students. Students do not get paid but do receive £10 in phone vouchers after one week on the programme as well as £10 for achieving the Employability Award and £10 for achieving each Functional Skill. Avanta also pays half the travel costs for students to attend its centre. Learners will be entitled to a bursary if they meet the set criteria.</p>	

## Programme Content & Duration

The Avanta Academy offers a roll-on, roll-off, 3-6 month A2A programme using the template offered by the A2A funding stream. The programme is therefore like an apprenticeship but without employment at the start. Students attend the academy Monday to Friday 9.30am-4.30pm with Friday being devoted to independent job search. Work tasters are provided for students to “try before they buy” for the majority of their time at the Academy. A range of occupations can be covered including Customer Service, Retail, Business Admin, Warehousing Childcare and Care. This is backed up with training and support on CV and letter writing, team building, practicing interview skills, filling in application forms and job search. This learning leads to an Employability Certificate for all learners. These modules are based on the delivery of Avanta’s adult provision for the unemployed. Reviews are held with students every two weeks. The expectations of students are high and if a student repeatedly fails to respond to support they are constantly supported to achieve their goals, this and the whole progression pathway into apprenticeships is explained to students at the start of the programme. Every week the Avanta team meets to agree which students are job ready and that can be passed to the Employment Team who will then look to set up the job interviews that will lead to an employer apprenticeship place. Students are carefully assessed so as not to push them towards interviews too early and also so that Avanta’s reputation with employers of supplying job ready applicants can be preserved. If students are unsuccessful at interview feedback is sought from the employer and this is reviewed with the student and any necessary support provided. If successful the student moves onto the apprenticeship programme. Realistic assessments are made of any student who has not found a job by the end of 3-6 months on the programme. The emphasis is on effective action, timely progress and supporting as many students as possible all of whom are dealt with in positive exciting learning environment with ‘positive & motivated’ Avanta staff.

## Retention, Achievement & Progression

Based on statistics available for the previous programme-led apprenticeship delivery, 50% of learners move onto mainstream apprenticeships and 7 out of 10 students that progress to the full apprenticeship complete their apprenticeship programme. This is therefore being shown to be an effective route to recruit and progress young people originally not-suitable for apprenticeships, into high-achieving apprenticeship participants.

## Programme Funding

Avanta is using both its Foundation Learning contract for students requiring additional support to get them nearer to the job market & the A2A funding flexibility that allows the main SFA apprenticeship budget to be used to support apprenticeship preparation programmes. The Government announced that only 10,000 A2A places would be available nationally; Avanta has been keen to start using this opportunity early in case there is any limit on capacity. However, Avanta believes that more capacity will be released if there is demand for the programme from 16-18 year olds.

## Sustainability & Replication

Avanta has trialled the academy concept at their Milton Keynes centre and is now looking to expand into other Avanta centres in the North West and South East of England. As a provider of programmes for unemployed adults Avanta is looking to establish an integrated approach to its Foundation Learning, A2A and Apprenticeship on the job training programmes by ensuring there can be effective common delivery between its 16-18 and 18+ programmes. As all SFA apprenticeship contractors (and their sub-contractors) can use A2A funding flexibilities then this type of pre-apprenticeship programme could be delivered by any apprenticeship provider. However, Avanta acknowledges that it is hard work dealing with this client group and that they have the advantage of having the experience and skills as a result of delivering similar programmes to unemployed adults.

## Key Learning Points

- Use of psychometric assessment of job readiness focuses programmes on key learning objectives that will help students get a job.
- Allowing learners to attend work tasters with a number of employers in their chosen vocational areas has proved to be successful.
- A2A funding flexibilities can be used effectively to widen the recruitment net to those 16-18 year olds who are not yet ready for apprenticeships.
- A programme which is a short intervention rather than its longer FL counterparts can make an impact on those who are close to being ready for an apprenticeship and motivated to get one.

## Pre-Apprenticeship Research – Case Study Report – Chichester College

<b>Provider Name and Address:</b>	Chichester College, Westgate Fields, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 1SB
<b>Programme Name:</b>	Work Skills Pre-Apprenticeship Programme
<b>Key Contact:</b>	Sue Forsyth, Partnership Manager, 01243 786321 Ext 2043, <a href="mailto:susan.forsyth@chichester.ac.uk">susan.forsyth@chichester.ac.uk</a>
<b>Website address:</b>	<a href="http://www.chichester.ac.uk">www.chichester.ac.uk</a>
<b>Programme Description, Rationale &amp; Objectives</b>	
Chichester College is keen to provide programmes of training and support that offer something to all 16-18 years olds regardless of circumstances and ability. To achieve this they offer two programmes – a ‘Work Skills’ Pre-Apprenticeship programme for those needing limited support to access apprenticeships and an E-routes programme to help those who need more support. The aim is to offer these programmes in a flexible way offering a ladder of opportunity and progression.	
<b>Learner Target Groups</b>	
The programmes are aimed at all 16-18 year olds. These may be NEET, seeking apprenticeships or just undecided about what they want to do next. NEET young people are more likely to be suited to the E-routes programme.	
<b>Recruitment &amp; Selection</b>	
<p>The college provides a monthly ‘Apprenticeship Information Session’ for all comers of any age or ability. This is widely publicised. It enables people to come and find out about what it is like to be an apprentice. Those that have an ambition to be an apprentice are then taken through an initial assessment process using a product called ‘Target Skills Gold’ which identifies the person’s current level of learning. Those 16-18 year olds that are not immediately ready to enter apprenticeships, perhaps because they haven’t got an immediate job prospect or are not felt to be work ready but are at a Level 1 level of learning, meet with a college liaison officer and are offered the chance to attend a 3-day Work Skills course. Those who are below Level 1 or uncertain of their career path are offered the E-routes programme.</p> <p>In addition the college is looking to become more efficient in picking up leavers from full time programmes and offering them the chance to join Work Skills or E-routes. There will be a link up with the main curriculum areas after 6 weeks of the start of the Autumn term to identify learners at risk of leaving that may benefit from an alternative opportunity.</p>	
<b>Learner Pay &amp; Commitments</b>	
Learners on the Work Skills Pre-Apprenticeship do not get paid. It is felt that the opportunity of attending the 3 days of training that may lead to an apprenticeship needs to be motivation enough for learners. E-routes is a Foundation Learning programme and as such learners are able to access bursary funding if they meet the criteria or can apply for other support subject to funds being available. Once again the key commitment required for this programme is the learners’ motivation towards moving forward in their careers and their lives.	

### **Programme Content & Duration**

The Work Skills programme runs every month at the Chichester site and lasts for 3 consecutive days. This leads to an Edexcel Work Skills qualification at Level 1 or Level 2 whichever is more appropriate for the learner. This covers CV writing, interview skills and job search – looking for an employer to support the apprenticeship working with the college’s apprenticeship team. Basic skills needs can be addressed by accessing support from the college’s basic skills team. The last of the 3 days focuses on progression and plans the next steps for the learner including referral on to the apprenticeship team (who offer a full employer matching service to learners) or the E-routes team. The E-routes programme runs at Chichester, Brinsbury and Bognor sites. It is less likely to feed directly into the mainstream apprenticeship programme and is more likely to facilitate progression onto the Work Skills programme. E-routes includes the opportunity to experience work tasters in 10 different occupational areas and is accredited under the BTEC Vocational Studies Level 1 qualification as well as the development of academic, personal and social skills.

### **Retention, Achievement & Progression**

There have only been 2 small cohorts through the Work Skills programme so far with future groups expected to be much larger. From the 5 learners so far 4 achieved their qualification and 3 progressed to apprenticeships. Outcomes from E-routes show that 75% progressed to full-time education, 18% progressed to employment without training, 5% went onto an apprenticeship and 2% were classified as ‘other’. The possibility of progressing to the Work Skills programme and from there onto an apprenticeship is a more recent innovation. The college is looking to improve internal links between the E-routes programme and its apprenticeship provision. This has been identified as a key development area.

### **Programme Funding**

The Work Skills Pre-Apprenticeship programme is funded through the college’s mainstream single adult skills budget with funding triggered by the achievement of the Edexcel Work Skills qualification. E-routes is funded by the YPLA through mainstream Foundation Learning funding. The apprenticeship matching service provided by the apprenticeship team is funded via the college’s main SFA apprenticeship contract. All programmes are self financing with no financial support from central college budgets.

### **Sustainability & Replication**

The college makes use of mainstream budgets for Foundation Learning, Adult Skills and Apprenticeships. As such these funding streams are sustainable, subject to the normal caveats surrounding learner numbers and outcomes. There is no apparent reason why all providers could not seek to replicate this approach now that all providers can access the ‘Single Adult Skills’ budget, a funding stream which until July 2011 was only available to colleges.

The college sees no need to make use of new Access to Apprenticeship (A2A) flexibilities in its SFA Apprenticeship budget as it has a full suite of flexible options available from existing funding routes. Furthermore, A2A would steal capacity from the main SFA apprenticeship contract value that could be used for full apprenticeships and A2A has restrictions on recruitment such as participants needing to be NEET for 13 weeks. It is not an option that the college will be using.

However, the college may look at infilling non-employed apprentices with groups of apprentices funded via the adult skills budget on qualification achievement and then transfer them onto apprenticeships when they get a job (3 possible entry points a year).

## Key Learning Points

- Providers have the potential to maximise the use of a range of funding streams to support provision which provides a choice of entry points and a ladder of opportunity for young people.
- It is important that all programmes operating for 16-18 learners are closely linked to maximise progression and recruitment opportunities.
- Access To Apprenticeship flexibilities have limited use to those providers that are all already maximising the use of a range of funding streams.

## Pre-Apprenticeship Research – Case Study Report – Harrow College

<b>Provider Name and Address:</b>	Harrow College, Brookshill, Harrow Weald, Middlesex HA3 6RR
<b>Programme Name:</b>	Futures First, Pre-Apprenticeship Programme
<b>Key Contact:</b>	Pat Brown, Head of Department FL & Skills, <a href="mailto:PBrown@harrow.ac.uk">PBrown@harrow.ac.uk</a>
<b>Website address:</b>	<a href="http://www.harrow.ac.uk">www.harrow.ac.uk</a>
<b>Programme Description, Rationale &amp; Objectives</b>	
<p>The Futures First programme was introduced as a result of the realisation by college senior managers that many young people that were approaching the college interested in apprenticeships were not suitable to enter apprenticeships either in terms of work readiness or having a job that would support an apprenticeship. The Futures First programme is delivered by the Foundation Learning (FL) &amp; Skills department alongside FL programmes with Pat Brown being the link between this department and the Work based Learning (WBL) department which operates from the college’s other campus at Harrow-on-the-Hill. Clearly the college is making it a priority to ensure effective collaboration between their FL and WBL departments across two different sites.</p>	
<b>Learner Target Groups</b>	
<p>The Futures First programme is aimed at 16-18 year olds interested in starting an apprenticeship. Typically this will be school leavers, NEETS and those who have not got the GCSEs required for full-time education and who want to work. The Pre-Apprenticeship concept was felt to be an attractive proposition to young people as it includes the ‘apprenticeship’ word which has positive associations for young people although there is a danger that learners might think that have actually secured a full apprenticeship which needs to be monitored.</p>	
<b>Recruitment &amp; Selection</b>	
<p>Applicants are required to be 16-18 years of age, motivated and have 4 GCSEs D-F and/or successful achievement of Entry 3 or above on initial diagnostic assessments in literacy and numeracy. Applicants are also required to be successful at initial interview. The college describes Futures First as a ‘tough but rewarding option’ so it important to recruit learners that are going to be able to benefit from and suited to, the opportunity. For those that are not successful at interview there is a Foundation Learning programmes called ‘Your Choice’ that is a 34 week vocational taster programme covering choice of vocational areas plus functional skills in English, Maths, IT, self confidence, interpersonal and study skills. The aim is to develop learning and employability skills whilst preparing learners for further study or employment.</p>	
<b>Learner Pay &amp; Commitments</b>	
<p>Learners are not paid as ‘they are not ready for work’. As Futures First is FL funded so bursary funding would be available to eligible learners with the possibility of other support subject to availability.</p>	
<b>Programme Content &amp; Duration</b>	
<p>The Futures First Pre-Apprenticeship is a 20 week programme, at the Harrow Weald campus with a choice of 4 vocational areas – Business Admin, Childcare, Customer Service and IT. There are 2 entry points a year with programmes starting in September and February. For the first 7 weeks learners attend college on a full timetable covering interview techniques (including mock interviews with real</p>	

employers), CV preparation, communication skills, time management, appearance, attitude and work in simulated work environments. These activities can lead to a range of recognised qualifications at Level 1. The programme is delivered by subject specific tutors to ensure that the experience is as realistic as possible. All learners are required to satisfactorily complete the first 7 weeks, be successful at interview with the WBL department and complete Literacy & Numeracy assessments in order to progress on to a Pre-Apprenticeship placement in the following 13 weeks. Then, for the following 13 weeks, learners attend college 2.5 days per week continuing the programme of learning as stated above and work for up to 2 days per week with a real employer. Placements are organised by the FL & Skills team. The programme is 'like a FL programme but with work experience'.

### **Retention, Achievement & Progression**

All learners that complete the programme are guaranteed an interview to join an apprenticeship programme at level 2. As the programme is new for September 2011 it is too early to measure progression. Progression rates for the Your Choice programme are 75% positive with a hope to increase progression into apprenticeships rather than predominantly full time college courses.

### **Programme Funding**

The programme is funded by the YPLA through Foundation Learning funding.

### **Sustainability & Replication**

As the programme is funded by mainstream FL funding the programme is sustainable and could be replicated by other providers who have access to SFA and YPLA funding streams or perhaps between different providers who between them have access to these streams. At this stage there had been no discussions as to whether the college would look at using Access To Apprenticeship funding flexibilities via the college's main SFA contract.

### **Key Learning Points**

- Bringing together the expertise of those working in Foundation Learning together with those working with apprenticeships can create meaningful and innovative apprenticeship progression programmes.
- Making Pre-apprenticeships selective, supportive and realistic is believed to be the key to effective engagement and successful outcomes.
- Including 2 days a week of real employment for 13 weeks increases the chances of learners becoming truly work ready and the chances of the placement turning into an apprenticeship place.

## Pre-Apprenticeship Research – Case Study Report – Hastings Furniture Services

<b>Provider Name and Address:</b>	Hastings Furniture Services (HFS), 6-10 Dorset Place, Hastings, TN34 1LG and 47 London Road, Bexhill, TN39 3JZ
<b>Programme Name:</b>	L-EARN
<b>Key Contact:</b>	Naomi Ridley, Programme Manager, <b>01424 44 11 12</b> , <a href="mailto:Naomi@hfs.org.uk">Naomi@hfs.org.uk</a>
<b>Website address:</b>	<a href="http://www.hfs.org.uk">www.hfs.org.uk</a>

### Programme Description, Rationale & Objectives

The programme was introduced in response to the gap left by the end of Future Jobs Fund funding and increasing youth unemployment. There remained a need to support disadvantaged young people (many with Behavioural Emotional Social Difficulties) and employers into apprenticeships and with demand for apprenticeship places from young people outstripping supply the social enterprises in the area spotted the gap and wanted to help. A partnership led by HFS and comprising 1066 Enterprise (since renamed as Let's Do Business), BHT Finding Futures, Hastings Trust and Rother Voluntary Action committed to offer a programme of support. The aim was to get participants qualified at level 2 wherever possible, with sound work experience, a strong CV and a good chance of progressing to work or training, including apprenticeships.

### Learner Target Groups

The programme has capacity for a maximum of ten 16-18 year olds living in the Hastings & Rother area who are NEET and want to work and earn while they learn. The project has been designed to help young people who did not get on well with academic subjects at school and want to get started in a real workplace.

### Recruitment & Selection

Applicants initially get in touch with Hastings Trust who handle the initial recruitment. This is a supportive process (e.g. support filling in application forms) with the focus on access for all rather than sifting out applicants, with motivation being the key quality required. The aim of the interviews is to match the applicants who would benefit most from the programme available with the ideal applicant being seen as 'someone who is motivated but has got barriers that the programme could address'. As a result higher ability applicants that are already closer to accessing the labour market are less likely to get a place as are those with psychological or more severe behavioural difficulties. Successful applicants typically have some or all of the following: low confidence, no work experience, no qualifications, limited communication skills, chaotic home lives (half of the participants live away from home). Given this applicant profile it was found to be important to emphasise that the training element was not carried out at a college but was individualised, work-based and in small groups – this made it clear that the programme would not be a repeat of the school environment that many applicants had already rejected. 25 applicants were interviewed for the 10 available places with most of the referrals coming from IAG agencies Connexions/CRI (which could be a challenge in future with the removal of the Connexions service in E Sussex).

### Learner Pay & Commitments

Participants are paid the minimum wage rate for their age (approximately £58 per week - carefully worked out so that the weekly rate is a little more than the jobseekers allowance – and therefore not a disincentive) for the 16 hours a week they are employed and travel expenses for the voluntary

elements of their programme. However, the commitment made by participants at the start of the programme is to attend both the employed *and* voluntary components of the programme.

### **Programme Content & Duration**

The programme lasts for up to 6 months during which the participants are employed for 16 hours a week, with the rest of the week including voluntary training sessions outside of the workplace. The training offered is both practical work-based training plus more general training in areas such as First Aid, Health & Safety, Literacy and Numeracy and Personal Effectiveness. Qualifications are available at Level 1 and 2 in many of these areas as well as Furniture Restoration or Redecoration (via the NCFE awarding body – with whom HFS and BHT Finding Futures have direct claims status). Delivery of the programme is shared between the partners with Finding Futures delivering the Literacy & Numeracy training (a Level 1 or 2 NCFE qualification, delivered in Hastings), 1066 Enterprise providing valuable employer links and Hastings Trust providing initial support through their Community Enablers scheme. HFS and Hastings Trust make the commitment to employ, supervise and pay the participants and ensure that they get meaningful work experience while Rother Voluntary Action refers possible participants and brokers partnerships. Work tasters are included in the programme wherever possible.

As the programme seeks to help those with significant issues it was important to balance support with clear expectations and the enforcement of these. The fact that participants were actually employed by the partner organisations (on a 6-month fixed term contract) was a crucial lever in addressing any poor attendance or challenging behaviour. Participants were expected to behave like any other employee and were treated as such – an adult, responsible approach which is reported to have worked and gained the respect of the participants. The combination of the clear expectations of an employment relationship but with the caring and supportive of approach of a social enterprise is regarded as key to the success of the project. DfE and YPLA have both visited the L-EARN programme – evidence that this blend of work reality and caring support is attracting attention in high places.

### **Retention, Achievement & Progression**

Progression is a constant focus throughout the six month programme. Progression is discussed at the initial interview (so individual goals are clear) and throughout the programme with tutors. This leads to research and activities that support progression such as CV writing and support with job/apprenticeship applications. The programme has good links with Sussex Coast College Hastings for apprenticeships and full time college courses (although many participants feel that they lack the confidence to feel comfortable attending a large institution and favour a work-based route). HFS would like to extend their links to open up a wider range of potential progression routes. 1066 Enterprise assists in opening up job opportunities with its members.

Of the 10 participants that started in April (with still 2 months of the programme still to go) 1 has moved on to a full time job, 2 will start a college course in September (one at level 2 and one at level 3), 1 is moving to Devon and taking up a Childcare apprenticeship and 1 has left with no progression route, the rest remain on the programme. HFS would seek to employ participants beyond their 6 month contract if permanent vacancies arise. Retention is therefore high and is a consequence of the practical nature of the programme, the support given, the pay received and the reported sense of pride that participants have in the activities that they undertake.

### **Programme Funding**

The L-EARN programme is supported by pilot funding from East Sussex County Council (ESCC). The initial funding period lasts from January to September 2011.

## Sustainability & Replication

Looking ahead to the sustainability of the programme after the ESCC funding has expired; HFS is looking to redesign L-EARN to fit mainstream funding criteria for Foundation Learning with the aim to sub-contract to a FL lead provider. Ideally the programme could be expanded across East Sussex to 100+ participants. The programme costs £3,000 per participant to deliver including participant wages. Other possibilities being explored with support from ESCC are the Access To Apprenticeship programme, Jobcentre Plus's Innovation Fund and the possibility of schools funding a bridging programme from January for Year 11 leavers with HFS becoming a recognised pre-16 Alternative Education Provider.

## Key Learning Points

- The strength of a partnership approach where different agencies bring different strengths to the whole.
- The motivating effect of an employment relationship backed by strong pastoral support.
- The effectiveness of a programme that has the freedom and flexibility to recruit and select those learners most likely to be helped by the programme rather than those who are most likely to achieve qualifications.
- A mix of occupational and generic training engages learners and broadens their essential skill base.

## Pre-Apprenticeship Research – Case Study Report – JACE Training

<b>Provider Name and Address:</b>	JACE, Jancett House, 16 Stanley Park Road, Wallington, SM6 0AB
<b>Programme Name:</b>	Access To Apprenticeship
<b>Key Contact:</b>	Chris Pritchard, Proprietor, 020 8669 1725 Ext 1297
<b>Website address:</b>	<a href="http://www.jace-training.co.uk/jace">www.jace-training.co.uk/jace</a>

### Programme Description, Rationale & Objectives

JACE Training is an independent training provider operating across the South East region. Originally the training business grew out of the need to train staff for the organisation's nursery staff but has expanded beyond childcare to a range of other related occupational areas. JACE is a lead SFA provider and as such was well placed to take advantage of the flexibility in its SFA contract to offer an Access to Apprenticeship (A2A) programme to help those young people not ready for an Apprenticeship to gain the employment or training that they need to be able to start an apprenticeship programme.

### Learner Target Groups

Young people aged 16-24 that are not ready for apprenticeships.

### Recruitment & Selection

Recruitment has been strong. There are currently between 30 and 40 learners on the A2A programme in occupational groups of not more than 8 learners. In order to be eligible for any A2A programme learners must have been NEET for 13 weeks or have been diagnostically assessed by the provider as having learning or social needs which require additional support as defined by the SFA. NEET is defined for the purposes of the A2A programme as (a) those people who are unemployed and in receipt of a qualifying allowance (JSA or ESA in the Work Related Activity Group) or (b) have spent a minimum of 13 weeks outside of employment, education or learning. As the 13 week NEET qualifying period runs from the last Friday in June most school leavers could become NEET from the 26<sup>th</sup> September this year. As a result the eligibility rules have not as yet been a barrier to JACE's recruitment. JACE carries out an initial assessment of all applicants. If an applicant has deeper or more complex needs and as a result is not ready for A2A and is 16-18 years old, then they will be referred to JACE's Foundation Learning (FL) programme. The JACE FL programme is 3 days per week for an average of 26 weeks (2 further days being spent on assignments and other work via the VLE) and is actually called 'Progression to Apprenticeship' to be more attractive to learners and signal the intention to progress – most learners achieve a level 1 standard. The A2A programme then acts as a bridge between the FL programme and a full apprenticeship, thus providing a ladder of opportunity and a range of entry points. Persons of 19+ years of age who request FL are generally offered A2A if they do not have the special needs evidence for FL.

### Learner Pay & Commitments

Learners are not paid on A2A. However 16-18 year old learners can access Government bursary funds while this facility is not open to learners aged 19+. Travel is paid to 16-18 year old learners on A2A via a local Surrey-based European Social Fund project.

### **Programme Content & Duration**

The A2A programme lasts between 3 and 6 months. The content of the programme combines 2-3 days a week of work experience with an employer with one day a week of learning at one of the JACE training centres covering the underpinning knowledge required to support the practical work undertaken on work experience whether this be in admin, childcare, customer service, playwork, hospitality or IT. This will incorporate the requirements of the apprenticeship framework at level 2. The programme will be for at least 30 hours a week of training or work experience. The programme is basically an apprenticeship without the employment element and is focussed on getting people on to a full apprenticeship programme by helping them to find a job while covering social skills, job search activities, CV writing, interview skills and functional skills if needed. Learners also have access to the JACE Virtual Learning Environment (VLE).

To date employers from the JACE long list of contacts have been forthcoming in offering work experience, attracted by the chance to have a look at a possible apprentice for free.

### **Retention, Achievement & Progression**

On an A2A programme learners are not permitted to complete any parts of the apprenticeship framework apart from Functional Skills. Attainment measures would therefore be limited to Functional Skills and progression measured onto full apprenticeships – the latter due to be used for 25% output funding in the 2012-13 contract year. As the programme was introduced on the 1<sup>st</sup> August 2011 it is too early to have outcome data.

### **Programme Funding**

JACE uses the flexibility open to providers from the 1<sup>st</sup> August to use its SFA apprenticeship contract to support A2A provision. JACE is not at present maximising the use of its main contract so was keen to use those funds to support a programme that will help people to access the main apprenticeship programme. JACE is hopeful that the SFA will continue to support their A2A numbers and if 16-18 contract capacity is exceeded, that extra contract capacity would be forthcoming. However, JACE does have some outstanding queries about the A2A funding methodology which need to be resolved before JACE commits long term to using this funding stream. FL funding is via the YPLA.

### **Sustainability & Replication**

These funding flexibilities are open to all apprenticeships providers either direct through their SFA contract or through sub-contracts with such a lead provider. It is therefore possible for any apprenticeship provider to deliver this provision but it is perhaps easier for a provider delivering FL and apprenticeships to add the A2A stepping stone between the two other more established programmes as there is an existing skill set and resource for dealing with pre-apprenticeship learners.

### **Key Learning Points**

- A2A can be used as an important new flexibility to apprenticeship providers and their sub-contractors to widen the entry ability range of would-be apprentices.
- A2A can be a useful addition to a portfolio of learning programmes that provide a ladder of opportunity with multiple access points based on learner ability and need.
- A2A is a new funding stream. There remain some uncertainties that will need to be resolved before more providers are willing to make the most of the opportunities offered by A2A.
- Apprenticeship providers without a history of dealing with more challenging pre-apprenticeship learners may find it challenging to make this transition.

## Pre-Apprenticeship Research – Case Study Report – Northbrook College

<b>Provider Name and Address:</b>	Northbrook College, 17 Liverpool Gardens, Worthing, BN11 1RY
<b>Programme Name:</b>	Work MATES (Motivation, Aspiration, Team Building, Employability, Support)
<b>Key Contact:</b>	Anne Feldberg, Head of Business Development, 01903 606264
<b>Website address:</b>	<a href="http://www.northbrook.ac.uk">www.northbrook.ac.uk</a>
<b>Programme Description, Rationale &amp; Objectives</b>	
<p>The aim of this LSIS-funded project was to close the gap between the college's post-16 Foundation Learning (FL) and Apprenticeship programmes so as to make the pathway attainable for learners. The project decided to focus on the hospitality sector along the south coast where there is work opportunity albeit feedback from employers had shown a reluctance to employ these individuals because of lack of work readiness. The project decided to do this by engaging with employers and a small cohort of learners as a pilot group to explore what changes were needed to the current curriculum so as to develop curriculum at level 1 which prepares these learners to progress into the workplace and/or become potential candidates for an apprenticeship scheme. As a result, these learners would have an appreciation of employer expectations and the demands of a chosen career path, be more confident and prepared for the workplace in terms of vocational and personal skills, have clarity of progression and career choices and be empowered to take their progression forward. Employers would also gain by having a higher level of work ready young people to recruit and develop through apprenticeship programmes.</p>	
<b>Learner Target Groups</b>	
<p>FL learners who have traditionally been challenging and have a high propensity to return to NEET status either during or completion of a level 1 course.</p>	
<b>Recruitment &amp; Selection</b>	
<p>FL learners were asked to take part in a screening process which involved a completing a progression questionnaire, a one-to-one interview and performance input provided by the learner's curriculum area. The project identified 6 out of the potential 15 learners to take part in the design of a 3 day intervention programme (Work MATES) which focused on providing motivation, aspiration, team building and employability skills as well as support to develop confidence. Out of the 6 identified learners, 4 decided to engage with the programme.</p>	
<b>Learner Pay &amp; Commitments</b>	
<p>Learners did not receive any payments for being involved in Work MATES over and above those available to other FL learners (EMA/Bursary).</p>	
<b>Programme Content &amp; Duration</b>	
<p>Day 1 consisted of industry information and opportunities, gaining learner input to the type of support they would require for workplace readiness, finding out about their aspirations and providing insight into apprenticeships and other career routes. Day 2 which was shaped through learner feedback and involved bespoke learner support to fully prepare learners for the workplace which included developing job application and interview skills as well as key interpersonal skills such as teamwork and an appreciation of the career options available to them in the hospitality sector. Day 3 was an</p>	

employability day which focused on employers promoting their organisations and vacancies and the learners applying their skills developed through the first two support days to promote themselves to prospective employers. Within this day, was also a celebration component that offered the learners a certificate of study.

### **Retention, Achievement & Progression**

As a result of the Work MATES programme, learners have fed back that they now feel 'confident' about having different types of conversations with staff, industry experts and employers, have developed interview, CV writing and teamwork skills, have a more 'open mind' to what's possible and available in the hospitality sector and have an understanding of apprenticeships. 3 of the learners who had been previously ruled out from being considered as potential candidates for level 2 programmes of learning because of their behavioural challenges have now been keen to progress to level 2 and have now been offered an apprenticeship place in September after a successful interview. All 4 learners have shown ownership with regards to their learning during and post programme. Some examples include; attending the programme, writing their own CV, attending all 3 interviews and giving their best performance. They are now having conversations about what's next for them in terms of progression with all 4 attending job interviews.

### **Programme Funding**

The programme was created using funding received from LSIS as part of the 14-19 Peer Review Development Programme.

### **Sustainability & Replication**

In terms of creating sustainability, the project group will introduce Work MATES into different sectors and find alternative funding strategies such as gaining local employer sponsorship (from the private or charity sector). They will also link the intervention programme to Northbrook College's strategic themes so that the methodology can be used across other departments and programme content can be applied to adult learners. Continuing with the theme of learner voice and empowerment, the project group plans to use the learners involved in this pilot to be role models to the following level 1 targeted learners therefore creating peer to peer support and inspiration. The emphasis here is on enhancing the experience of learners on Foundation Learning or other broadly 'pre-apprenticeship' programmes and learning from this project how to maximise the effectiveness of programme content to deliver the best outcomes for learners. There may or may not be a resource implication here for other providers seeking to replicate Northbrook College's work.

### **Key Learning Points**

- The importance of engaging the learner in programme design.
- The importance of offering personalised learner support in engaging learners.
- The importance of offering learners a different learning experience which was achieved by having non-curriculum staff involved and a programme which took learners outside of their normal day-to-day experience and focused on work and apprenticeship opportunities.

## Pre-Apprenticeship Research – Case Study Report - PETA

<b>Provider Name and Address:</b>	PETA, One Access Point, Northarbour Road, Portsmouth, Hants PO6 3TE
<b>Programme Name:</b>	PETA Pre-Apprenticeships
<b>Key Contact:</b>	Bob Hiskey, Director, 02382 538700
<b>Website address:</b>	<a href="http://www.peta.co.uk">www.peta.co.uk</a>
<b>Programme Description, Rationale &amp; Objectives</b>	
<p>PETA had long recognised the importance of providing support and training for those young people who are not ready to enter their apprenticeship programmes and who typically might ‘have good hand skills but are not able to write a CV’ . Making it easier to access their apprenticeship programmes has made business sense as well as providing young people with more post-16 options. Previously, PETA had offered Programme-Led Apprenticeships which had fulfilled this function but when these were discontinued by the Skills Funding Agency PETA sought an alternative programme to fill the gap. At the same time PETA was looking to make maximum use of their Foundation Learning (FL) contract with their FL programmes struggling to recruit as a result of reductions in Connexions services, EMA and programme flexibility. Using these FL resources they were able to design a Pre-Apprenticeship programme that would provide the answer by offering occupationally focussed work-readiness training, job search and Level 1 qualifications as a route into apprenticeships. PETA is now able to present the Pre-Apprenticeship to employers, learners and parents as part of a ladder of progression from Level 1 through to Higher Education.</p>	
<b>Learner Target Groups</b>	
<p>The Pre-Apprenticeship programme is aimed at young people aged 16-18 who are close to, but not fully ready for an apprenticeship. Most often this is because they lack a job, and/or job search skills and/or work readiness - due mainly to them not previously being exposed to the 'real' expectations of employers. It should be noted that PETA offers a suite of programmes for those young people who are not yet apprenticeship ready - so those who are undecided on their career direction can opt for the ‘Right Direction’ programme, while those who are more focussed on getting a job can access the ‘Work Ready’ programme. In this sense PETA is able to target all 16-18 learners with the Pre-Apprenticeship programme being the most challenging.</p>	
<b>Recruitment &amp; Selection</b>	
<p>All applicants for the Pre-Apprenticeship programme are interviewed to determine motivation and suitability. Engineering applicants are asked to complete the ‘Select Ahead’ aptitude test. PETA is selective on Pre-Apprenticeship entry but has open access for the Right Direction and Work Ready programmes which act as an alternative option for those not yet ready for Pre-Apprenticeships. If applicants are suitable for Pre-Apprenticeships but wish to follow an alternative occupational area, or cannot access the PETA centres, then they are signposted to another provider via the ALPHI training provider network.</p>	
<b>Learner Pay &amp; Commitments</b>	
<p>As the Pre-Apprenticeship programme is FL funded unemployed learners may be eligible to claim the new Learner Support Bursary Fund (£40 per week); although there are doubts as to whether this is sufficient to meet all learners’ needs. Learners also receive reimbursement of up to £25 per week for</p>	

travel expenses and attract a £25 achievement bonus. Learners need to demonstrate at interview and throughout the programme that they are committed to learning and ultimately securing an apprenticeship place.

### **Programme Content & Duration**

In Jan 2011 PETA introduced 5 occupational Pre-Apprenticeship programmes namely Business Administration, Customer Service, IT, Engineering and Retail. These programmes were offered across PETA's 5 centres spread across Hampshire. Experience has shown that only 3 of these occupational areas recruit sufficient learners to be viable namely Business Administration, Engineering and IT. Learners follow a structured programme of off-the-job training that includes Level 1 qualifications that are both occupationally specific and generic (e.g. health and safety, functional skills). Attendance at PETA centres is required 2 days a week from 8.45-4.45 for 15 weeks for Business Admin, 4 days a week for 17 weeks for Engineering and 2 days per week from 8.45-4.30 for 14 weeks for IT. There are 2 intakes (January & September) of 2 groups of 10 learners each year with 80 learners going through the programme so far. As an apprenticeship provider PETA is able to pack the programme with the essential skills needed to find and retain a job including qualifications that prepare learners for a subsequent apprenticeship programme (although not encroaching into the qualification requirements of the Intermediate Apprenticeship Framework at Level 2 as this would have detrimental funding implications). Learners also benefit from PETA's existing relationships with a large number of local employers with Pre-Apprentices being able to work with PETA staff responsible for opening up apprenticeship job opportunities with new or existing employers. However, work experience does not form part of the programme as this is beyond the resources available. PETA regards it as an important part of the Pre-Apprenticeship programme to maintain high standards of learner behaviour (consistent with employer expectations) with a combination of discipline and support with inappropriate behaviour dealt with quickly and resolved.

### **Retention, Achievement & Progression**

The 3 occupational programmes that are to continue have estimated progression rates into apprenticeships of 90%-100% (Engineering), 70% (Business Admin) and 70%-90% (IT). Those not progressing often leave the programme as a result of getting a job – one that isn't suitable for an apprenticeship. PETA states that 'It is rare for young people to leave with nothing'.

### **Programme Funding**

The Pre-Apprenticeship programme as well as the Right Direction and Work Ready programmes are all funded by the YPLA under Foundation Learning.

### **Sustainability & Replication**

The mainstream nature of PETA's funding streams suggests that PETA's provision has strong sustainability. All providers that have access to mainstream apprenticeship and FL funding could replicate the PETA approach although this tends to be a minority of providers at present outside of FE colleges. Most providers are apprenticeship specialists. PETA has looked at Access To Apprenticeship (A2A) flexibilities via its main SFA contract but feels that they already have the full range of progression options available via their 'Right Direction', 'Work Ready' and 'Pre-Apprenticeship' programmes. Furthermore, the Foundation Learning funding route used to support the Pre-Apprenticeship programme is more flexible than A2A as the latter requires participants to have been NEET for 13 weeks - on this basis half of the learners on the PETA Pre-Apprenticeship programme would be ineligible. PETA does however acknowledge that for providers without a Foundation Learning contract the A2A route may be a useful funding route for supporting pre-apprentices.

## Key Learning Points

- An apprenticeship provider with a FL contract has the flexibility to recruit Pre-Apprenticeship learners without restriction and link learners' apprenticeship aspirations with the provider's knowledge of apprenticeship entry requirements and existing employer links.
- FL funding can be used by a single organisation to offer a range of sub-apprenticeship entry points for 16-18 years olds matching provision to learners' level of occupational focus and work/apprenticeship readiness.
- For an apprenticeship provider, a Pre-Apprenticeship programme is a useful way to expand into the market of 'nearly' suitable 16-18 year olds and offer them a new viable apprenticeship entry point.

## Pre-Apprenticeship Research – Case Study Report - SATRO

<b>Provider Name and Address:</b>	SATRO, 1 Tannery Lane, Send, Woking, Surrey GU23 7EF
<b>Programme Name:</b>	The SATRO Construction Bus
<b>Key Contact:</b>	Rob Riddelsdell, Manager, 01483 226311, rob@satro.org.uk
<b>Website address:</b>	www.satro.org.uk
<b>Programme Description, Rationale &amp; Objectives</b>	
<p>SATRO (originally named Science and Technology Regional Organisation) has a fleet of 6 fully equipped mobile training vehicles staffed by tutors that are skilled craftsmen from the building industry. Acting as stand-alone classrooms they visit schools and youth organisations throughout Surrey and beyond. SATRO visits 25-30 schools/organisations each year usually one day each week, teaching about 350 students across 40 sessions a week as part of schools' alternative curriculum. The aim is to engage students through construction based alternative curriculum activities that are significantly different in content and delivery whilst still achieving a qualification. SATRO has been providing this service for the past 5 years. Until the end of July SATRO was also the Education Business Partnership for the county.</p>	
<b>Learner Target Groups</b>	
<p>Most of the students are in school Years 10 and 11 – both mainstream and special schools, many of whom are in danger of becoming NEET. SATRO also works with post-16 young people, young people that are NEET and with adults. Typically, the client group are those who would benefit from an alternative experience on school sites rather than an off-site college experience for a number of reasons such as individuals being less confident than others or not trusted to act responsibly. SATRO believes that the typical student on their courses is not attracted by the qualification on offer but by an alternative experience that the school believes will benefit students. The emphasis is on learners who want to do something practical and less formal. The BTEC Level 1 in Construction allows this and as it is quite flexible, it can cope with students who work at different speeds.</p>	
<b>Recruitment &amp; Selection</b>	
<p>The programme is open to all students that are deemed suitable by the client organisations. The programme is not only for those students who want to do construction as a career but also operates as a vehicle for broader learning for those who want to do something interesting and practical or perhaps learn differently from other students.</p>	
<b>Learner Pay &amp; Commitments</b>	
<p>Students do not get paid by SATRO as their programmes form part of a broader curriculum provided by client organisations. The students are required to be motivated and committed to learn from the programme available.</p>	
<b>Programme Content &amp; Duration</b>	
<p>SATRO offers one-off 2 hour sessions, short courses of 10-12 weeks or one or two year courses, usually on a half day per week pattern, leading to qualifications such as the BTEC Level 1 Certificate in Construction. The emphasis is on hands-on learning through doing, with a minimum amount of technical explanation – just enough to show use or relevance. This is reported to engage the client group not only in the activity itself but also stimulates students' engagement in other activities. As part of the programme students learn transferable skills with literacy and numeracy being embedded in the construction activities. Students are also encouraged to develop self-reliance and confidence through</p>	

practical tasks, plan their own work using drawings and specifications, take responsibility for using hazardous tools, gain a recognised qualification, learn about the construction industry and possible progression routes including apprenticeships. Group sizes are kept intentionally small (maximum 10, average 7 students) which allows individual attention. It is regarded as important that the tutors, although necessarily qualified to teach are primarily craftsman from the trades who have a very different background and attitude and are able to relate to students in a different way to mainstream teaching. This gives students an opportunity to respond differently and positively to a new approach. It is also reported as a key aspect of delivery that a member of school staff sits in on all sessions to provide continuity and to support SATRO tutors.

### **Retention, Achievement & Progression**

SATRO finds it challenging to track post-course progression as their learners are the responsibility of other institutions and therefore contact is lost as is information on final destinations, although this could be accessed via schools. It is known anecdotally that some students go into relevant apprenticeships while others take vocational full time courses at local colleges. SATRO and partner schools have tried to open up progression routes for students, for example by arranging for specialist national training provider, Construction Skills to talk to students about apprenticeships. While useful, this rightly emphasised that for students to get an apprenticeship they need a job but it remained unclear where support for job search might be available. SATRO would be keen to access more information of apprenticeship progression routes and how training providers can help especially as support for students from Connexions is reducing.

### **Programme Funding**

The programme is fully funded from school budgets. The schools value the provision with some saying that 'this is the only way we keep some of the kids in school'. It is important that SATRO is paid by the visit not on learner numbers - a reasonable approach as SATRO has little control over the broader issues in the student's lives that can impact on retention. Schools also benefit from being able to count the achievement of the BTEC Level 1 Certificate in Construction in their league tables. As far as Access To Apprenticeship (A2A) funding was concerned SATRO had little knowledge of this - understandable as the funding is only available via apprenticeship providers with a Skills Funding Agency contract. SATRO would investigate becoming involved in possible A2A pre-apprenticeship programmes.

### **Sustainability & Replication**

As the SATRO programmes are funded by schools, sustainability is ensured as long as schools continue to value the positive impact on students and league tables. In terms of other providers replicating the provision, putting a fully equipped vehicle on the road is quite costly but not difficult to do. However, SATRO believes that their tutors are the key to the success of the programme; in addition to having the right building industry experience they have the commitment, desire and ability to work with a demanding cohort.

### **Key Learning Points**

- Confirmation that practical, occupational based learning experiences can be transformational for students.
- The importance of different 'real world' teaching styles in giving students an alternative approach to respond to.
- An understanding that programmes regarded as 'pre-apprenticeship' and effective in NEET engagement can still be quite removed from the realities of apprenticeship progression.
- Evidence that flexible programmes that truly offer students in schools a positive experience and relevant qualifications will still be purchased by schools.

## Pre-Apprenticeship Research – Case Study Report - SET

<b>Provider Name and Address:</b>	SET (Springfield Education & Training Ltd), Unit 8a, Swanscombe Business Centre, 17 London Road, Swanscombe, Kent, DA10 0LH
<b>Programme Name:</b>	Workskills/Step Up
<b>Key Contact:</b>	Janet Robinson, Executive Manager, 01322 423358
<b>Website address:</b>	<a href="http://www.settraining.co.uk">www.settraining.co.uk</a>

### **Programme Description, Rationale & Objectives**

The programme developed as part of SET's desire to offer learning opportunities for those young people that needed the support to access a mainstream training provision or work. SET has been delivering a programme called Workskills but this has recently been transformed into their Step Up programme due to a change of funding source and lead provider. SET also delivers apprenticeships via K College, Mid Kent College and KEITS.

### **Learner Target Groups**

16-18 year old young people including the NEET group.

### **Recruitment & Selection**

Workskills and Step Up are not selective programmes in that anyone who has a chance of being helped by the programme is allowed to participate. The recent reduction in the Connexions service has reduced the number of young people being referred to the programme so SET's own links with schools have become more important.

### **Learner Pay & Commitments**

For the Workskills programme learners were in effect college learners so were able to claim EMA and travel costs. Under Workskills learners were paid financial incentives for passing Key Skills (£100). There will be no financial support for learners under the Step Up programme.

### **Programme Content & Duration**

Workskills was a 20 week classroom based programme that covered interview skills, CV writing, team building, completing application forms, community work, work preparation, employees rights and responsibilities, safeguarding, personal social development, health & safety, equal opportunities, managing money, functional skills, job search, confidence building and first aid. The programme had a choice of occupational pathways in childcare, teaching & learning, retail, beauty, mechanics and horticulture – these options could be tailored to individual aspirations. After 6 weeks of full time attendance at SET the programme split into 3 days a week at the centre and 2 days a week on relevant work experience. This gave the participants the chance to progress onto an apprenticeship with the work experience employer or an alternative employer sourced by the SET apprenticeship team. Accreditation came via an Edexcel Certificate in Work skills.

A new 6-week Step Up programme is now being prepared with 5 options. Caring for Children, Employability Skills, Hospitality Travel & Tourism, Understanding Retail and Customer Service. The focus of the Step Up programme is to provide a simple introduction to training and work in order to get the participants focussed on their next steps. The programme is flexible with learners being able to move from one programme strand to another. The programme contains many of the employability aspects of Work Skills (PSD, Interview Skills, Team Work Skills) but cannot cover the

breadth in the shorter time period. Accreditation is through a range of occupation awards mostly at level 1 with some at level 2. Functional skills can still be covered but this is sub-contracted to a specialist company (that receives their own Skills for Life funding) so that learners can achieve the Functional Skills at a level below that required by their apprenticeship. The pattern of attendance is 3 days per week in training at SET and 2 days a week on work experience. A celebration day is held to value learners' achievements.

### **Retention, Achievement & Progression**

Under the Workskills programme the completion and progression rates of the 59 participants have varied across the 3 delivery sites as follows. Swanscombe – completion 78%, progression 28%; Thanet - completion 73%, progression 56%; Dover - completion 71%, progression 0% (awaiting statistics from K College); Progression from the childcare strand (at Thanet) is historically higher as jobs can be more readily found. 15 of the 59 (25%) went into apprenticeships. The progression statistics are reasonable given that many of the learners are those with severe or multiple needs, ex-offenders and those with mental health issues. A serious progression barrier was found to be the need for CSCS cards in order for learners to get construction jobs – some learners were too young for this. The new Step Up programme will be more occupationally focussed on occupations where apprenticeship progression is more established. Effort is also being made to get more employers involved to improve the availability of apprenticeship opportunities and work experience.

### **Programme Funding**

SET continues to seek and access a range of funding streams that support its Pre-Apprenticeship provision. The Workskills programme was funded via K College using Adult Learner responsive funding. The Step Up programme is funded by Connexions Direct & NACRO under an ESF NEET project. SET receives a start payment, an achievement payment and a progression payment (work or apprenticeship outcomes). SET is also hoping to deliver a Foundation Learning version of Step Up for NACRO in the future. SET is excited about the possibilities offered by Access To Apprenticeship (A2A) flexibilities as they hope to be able to open up funding via their lead providers to support employer engagement work as part of a longer term programme of apprenticeship preparation and open up an even more effective source of recruitment for their apprenticeship programmes. SET is also interested in delivering a version of Step Up for adults based on the fact that many issues, in terms of developing work readiness, are the same for adults as for young people. Discussion are taking place with a lead provider that would give access to Jobcentre Plus funding.

### **Sustainability & Replication**

SET are highly skilled in opening up and managing a range of diverse funding streams all contributing to a common delivery, focussed on work preparation and personal support. Sometimes the funding streams available are short term and require switches of lead provider and programme design but SET takes this in their stride. The funding streams used are in many cases mainstream (apprenticeships, adult learner responsive, potentially FL) and in some cases are short term sources such as ESF. However, there is nothing in theory from stopping other providers using the speculative and entrepreneurial approach adopted by SET.

### **Key Learning Points**

- With a pro-active approach providers can use a portfolio of funding streams to deliver provision that meets the needs of learners.
- Even where a provider runs its own pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programmes progression is still challenging when recruitment is non-selective.

## Pre-Apprenticeship Research – Case Study Report – Working Rite

<b>Provider Name and Address:</b>	Working Rite, c/o East Sussex County Council, County Hall, Lewes, E Sussex
<b>Programme Name:</b>	Work Pairing
<b>Key Contact:</b>	Caroline McKiddie, ESCC, Partnership Manager, (Education, Employment & Training), 01323 463729
<b>Website address:</b>	<a href="http://www.workingrite.co.uk">www.workingrite.co.uk</a>

### **Programme Description, Rationale & Objectives**

Work Pairing is based around the concept of a 'deal' that both the youngsters and tradesmen/businesses agree to and understand. It's a brokered 6 month work placement - a working partnership between the trainee and tradesman. Both parties regard it as real work - not a 'project' or a course. Work pairing is a local pilot linked to a national project, with East Sussex County Council represented on the national steering group which is headed by DfE. It is a partnership between East Sussex County Council, Sussex Downs College, Sussex Coast College Hastings and Working Rite. The aim is to provide a cost-effective method for placing non-academic school leavers on the path to maturity and sustainable employment. The programme started in September 2010.

### **Learner Target Groups**

Motivated young people who are NEET and aged 16-18 and are keen to learn new skills with local businesses and trades people.

### **Recruitment & Selection**

Matching the right young person to the right employer is a crucial aspect of the underlying success of the programme. Motivated learners and supportive employers are key. Employer selection also involves the programme co-ordinator carrying out Health & Safety and Employers Liability Insurance (ELI) checks although if acquiring ELI is a barrier for the employer this can be paid for from programme funds.

### **Learner Pay & Commitments**

Learners work 5 days per week and are paid £10 per day by the employer for up to 6 months. Learner travel and equipment is paid for from programme funds.

### **Programme Content & Duration**

The programme consists of a 6 month, 4-5 day a week work placement with a local small or medium sized business or tradesman. This gives the learner real work experience in a real working environment, an industry specific mentor, industry specific qualifications, employability, maths, English and ICT skills. A wide range of occupational areas are on offer. One of the key aspects of the programme is that it takes learners away from their peers and peer influence and introduces them to the adult world of work and responsibility and enables them to experience learning a skill in which they have an interest. This supports learners in the transition to becoming adults. Learners are visited weekly by the project co-ordinator to ensure that all parties are satisfied with progress and to encourage learners to record their learning. If and when an employer and their learner decide that the learner is ready to undertake a qualification then this will be delivered either on site or via day release.

### **Retention, Achievement & Progression**

Learners are supported throughout the programme to focus on progression to their preferred outcome which might include apprenticeship, full-time employment or full time further training. Every learner also receives an aftercare package where they can contact their project co-ordinator for careers education, information, advice, guidance and local employer information (the project co-ordinator is employed by Sussex Downs College so can easily access a range of possible progression routes). The ideal outcome is that learners progress to an apprenticeship either with their work placement employer or another employer. So far 7 trainees completed the pilot. Two have already progressed onto Level 2 Apprenticeships. Five have sustained their placements and continue to thrive in them. Two started placements but left due to a change in vocational interest and one left due to moving out of the county.

### **Programme Funding**

The programme is funded by YPLA using a Foundation Learning funding route via the two partner colleges. If the learner undertakes a qualification then funding would move from FL Weekly Aims funding to Qualification Aims funding.

### **Sustainability & Replication**

As the programme is supported by mainstream Foundation Learning funding the programme is sustainable and has the ability to be extended and operated by other providers.

### **Key Learning Points**

- The importance of a simple programme that offers mutual benefits to employers and young people – easily understood and promoted.
- The strength of a programme that gives real work experience and uses that experience to support young people to make the transition to adult life.