

Webinar script

Pre-Employment Provision

Course design

Time: 30 minutes

Style: information giving with activities

Introduction

Welcome to this webinar on Course Design for Pre-Employment Provision. The webinar will provide you with basic information about planning and developing courses that meet the needs of learners and potential employers.

In the webinar, we will cover four main points.

- Stakeholders.
- Consultation with learners and employers.
- The curriculum of the future.
- Engaging and motivating learners.

There will be set points for you to consider your current practice and to begin planning how you can develop an appropriate curriculum for potential learners.

Stakeholders

Whenever you are planning any activity you need to think about the people it will affect. Designing pre-employment courses requires you to think widely about who will benefit from the courses and how you can best meet their needs. Your stakeholders will influence, directly or indirectly, what you plan and how you deliver it so it is important to map out who your stakeholders are and to consult with them before running courses.

Ask yourself

- Who are our stakeholders?
- Do we involve them during the planning process?
- Who are the most important stakeholders and why?
- Do all stakeholders have the same influence?
- What can we do to best meet the needs of all our stakeholders?

The following is a list of potential stakeholders who will need to be considered when you are planning what and how to deliver:

- potential learners;
- potential employers;
- local communities;
- funders;

- delivery and support staff;
- senior managers;
- governors;
- local and national government;
- Ofsted; and
- Other providers, particularly schools.

Not surprisingly it's difficult to balance some of the competing interests of your stakeholders but the priority is to plan on the basis of what learners and employers need – even though you may feel like you have to focus on what the funding bodies or inspectorate want!

Consultation with Learners and Employers

How can you be expected to know what stakeholders want and need? You can't always– but you can find out. Some stakeholders will tell you directly – like the funders and the government. But the two most important stakeholders, learners and employers, are unlikely to tell you so clearly. So you need to design mechanisms to consult them before and during courses.

It is always worth checking what has already been offered and whether or not it has worked. For instance, there is no point offering CV writing if prospective learners have already had this input at school but it hasn't worked. You need to find a new way of providing this so that it addresses the learning needs of your potential group of learners. The best way to do this is to involve existing and/or potential learners in the design of the course, and even the delivery.

And don't forget to talk to employers...

Even though this is pre-employment provision you still need to have employers involved and on board so that:

- you know you're delivering the skills they need for their workforce;
- you have relevant, contemporary resources and ideas direct from the workplace; and
- you have potential work placements for learners.

Involve employers in planning and delivering the courses. They can help with practical things like simulated interviews or access to resources for specific jobs. They may also want to be involved in supporting community activities which are part of pre-employment provision. The more you involve employers, the more realistic and relevant the pre-employment courses will be.

The Curriculum of the Future

It would be great to have a crystal ball when planning the curriculum because things change so quickly now. Technology, the global economy, government initiatives all drive how we need to think about the learning activities we offer and more and more of them are likely to be outside traditional College classrooms.

The likely impacts

- More learning activities will take place beyond traditional college classrooms.
- Technology will be a fundamental part of all jobs.
- More people are likely to be self-employed.
- New skills will be needed in order to enter and function in the workplace.
- Employability skills will require more flexibility and the ability to retrain frequently throughout a career – real lifelong learning.

Think about all the places that pre-employment learning could take place.

Presenter note:

This could be an opportunity for some interaction with attendees. Ask them for some examples if they're willing to share.

Some of the most profound learning takes place when a learner is on their own, working on a vocational problem with others or trying out their skills in a work-based situation. As the economy is unlikely to grow rapidly and government targets are likely to want to move more people off benefits and into employment, we need to think widely about the pre-employment skills we must provide.

Be creative! Have you considered any of the following?

- Residential community projects – you can immerse learners in the behaviours and attitudes needed to be successful in life and work. This may be really valuable for learners from dysfunctional and chaotic backgrounds that don't have some of the basic building blocks needed to learn or gain employment.
- Targeting non-traditional learners. For example, running access type courses into childcare for young men or engineering for young women. These approaches often attract additional funding and lots of publicity.
- Learning Mentors have had a lot of success in challenging environments. Setting up a formal system for all learners to have a named Learning Mentor - someone who has been through the system and now wants to role model positive attitudes and behaviours – is a powerful way of showing commitment to learners and keeping a track on vulnerable learners. It also provides the Learning Mentor with useful skills and experience to support their own career aspirations.
- Industry sponsored courses: some vocational areas have shortages of staff and may be interested in working with you to develop work-placements, training materials or taster activities to give learners a more realistic idea of what specific jobs entail.

- Enterprise days: Pre-employment can mean preparing for self-employment so you could offer entrepreneurial training and involve local banks to talk about finance, Chamber of Commerce to give a view on local needs, self-employed people to give a realistic picture of what it takes to be successful.

Presenter note:

- This could be an opportunity for some interaction with attendees. Ask them for some examples if they're willing to share.

Using a planning tool such a [SWOT Analysis](#) or [PEST Analysis](#) might help you to complete your wider thinking. Link this to your consultations with learners and employers and you are more likely to design pre-employment courses that are relevant, interesting and have an impact.

Engaging and motivating learners

There are many existing motivational tools and concepts for working with learners. Have a look at some of the resources referred to in this section, which are either from the www.buisnessballs.com or the www.excellencegateway.com.

[Motivational Dialogue](#)

[Fantasticat](#)

[Career/New Business Planner](#)

[Job Hunting in Tough Times](#)

[Active Learning](#)

There is no single, simple answer to how to engage and motivate learners but there are some basic principles.

- Listen to your learners – their hopes and dreams for work are relevant and your role is to guide them to be the best they can be.
- Work with your learners to find out their starting point in terms of skills, experience, knowledge and attitudes.
- Set high standards and expect your learners to achieve those high standards.
- Involve the learners in planning what will be covered.
- Use active learning approaches.
- Use real, relevant and recent resources.
- Make effective use of technology.
- Plan with the learner what they will do after the course ends.

Presenter note:

This could be an opportunity for some interaction with attendees. Ask them for some examples if they're willing to share. Alternatively, open up the discussion for Q&A.