

Two-Way Street

LEADERSHIP
EXCHANGE

Teach Too

Continuing Professional
Development (CPD) Materials:

Supporting Partnership
Approaches to Building
Occupational Expertise
for Learners, Apprentices
and Employees

Commissioned and funded by

The
**Education
& Training
Foundation**

Programme delivered by



Background

The **Teach Too Development Programme** and **Two-Way Street Leadership Exchange** programmes built on recommendations from the [Commission on Adult Vocational Teaching and Learning \(CAVTL\)](#) Report in 2013 and explored ways of developing and sustaining two-way collaboration between employers and providers. The aim of these partnerships has been to build genuine and sustained collaboration between employers and providers, develop a strong focus and clear line of sight to work for learners and support the development of effective practice in contextualising mathematics.

The programmes supported both strategic and operational partnership approaches between employers and education and training providers to ensure that professional and technical education programmes involved employers in the development, co-design and teaching within real employment situations. In these times of rapid change, if employers, as industry experts, and providers work in collaboration to plan, design, deliver and assess programmes, learners will be better equipped with the skills and knowledge needed by employers.

University College London, Institute of Education (UCL IOE), in partnership with the Association of Employment and Learning Providers (AELP), was commissioned and funded by the Education and Training Foundation to deliver the Teach Too Development and Two Way Street Leadership Exchange programmes.

Employer-provider partnerships for developing occupational expertise are successful when:

- Common goals are identified and agreed from which both parties benefit;
- Employer and provider leaders create the formal climate for high quality professional, technical and vocational education within which more informal and flexible arrangements may exist for curriculum delivery;
- They have a clear local and/or sector-specific focus;
- They are based on honest and open face-to-face dialogue about requirements and constraints;
- They have a clear plan of action, transparent lines of communication and expectations from both parties are realistic;
- Collaborative arrangements move beyond a simple 'supply and demand' relationship to joint responsibility for improving the professional, technical and vocational education and training system;
- There is engagement with wider stakeholders such as Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs), employer organisations, local authorities, and professional/trade associations.

Find out more

- [Teach Too](#)
- [Two-Way Street Leadership Exchange](#)

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Using these CPD materials

The CPD materials in this document are designed to support the development of successful employer-provider partnerships in order to build occupational expertise for learners, apprentices and employees. The materials and associated videos should help you to:

- Explore experiences of collaboration and analyse current partnership practice;
- Develop a shared understanding of employer-provider partnerships;
- 'Sell' the benefits of partnership approaches to all parties;
- Identify further staff CPD needs;
- Anticipate possible challenges;
- Support collaboration between parties involved in the planning, design, delivery and assessment of education and training programmes;
- Evaluate the impact of collaboration and share effective practice;
- Ensure that partnerships are sustainable.

The materials are designed to be used alongside:

- Five videos from the Teach Too/Two-Way Street programme – see [Barking and Dagenham College](#)
[UKTD](#)
[Carshalton College](#)
[Craven College](#)
[Boston College](#)

The videos last up to four and a half minutes each and, for reference, key points from the videos are provided in these materials.

- Case studies associated with the videos.

Video is a powerful medium for getting messages across quickly, to raise questions and to stimulate debate. It can be a motivational tool for improvement based on actually seeing (rather than being told about) authentic practice.

Video delivers the best results if it is used as part of a structured dialogue that involves analysis of the observed practice to identify key tools and concepts and the rationale behind them rather than superficial viewing.

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The CPD materials are designed to be flexible resources. You may like to use them:

- As part of one-to-one mentoring/coaching;
- With small, informal groups;
- During more formal CPD sessions.

The materials can be used by or with a range of stakeholders including:

- Curriculum managers;
- Teachers and assessors;
- Staff responsible for employer engagement;
- Employers (leaders, supervisors and other employees);
- Other stakeholders (such as representatives from LEPs, local authorities, employer organisations, and professional/trade associations);
- Learners.

Each activity gives:

- A background and aim;
- Suggested audience (i.e. the groups with which it is appropriate to use the activity);
- Activity guidance (the suggested steps for facilitating delivery).

You should feel free to adapt the activities to suit your own purposes.

Project summaries and key points from the videos

Barking & Dagenham College in partnership with Roof Ltd

Sector: Construction

Project summary

This project brought together a number of employers under the leadership of the college's Chief Operating Officer, and the Business Development Director from Roof Ltd who was also the founder of the London Region Construction Training Group. The primary aim of the project was to increase the number and diversity of young people willing and able to enter the construction industry in London: a sector that has and will continue to have considerable employment opportunities and skills needs. The college was primarily concerned that their construction provision for adults and young people would meet the needs of employers so that more of their students either gain employment or enhance their skills within employment.

Key points from the video

- Employers find it hard to recruit young people with the right skills, particularly in the newer trades;
- The video shows how the provider and employers are working together to ensure that learners are work ready and that employers' skills gaps are filled;
- There is value in leaders meeting and working strategically;
- Employers and providers are co-designing programmes to train people in new skills and technologies;
- The collaboration is an opportunity to modernise and develop the curriculum to relate it to the world of work – meeting contemporary industry standards and needs;
- The provider has joined the regional employer training group giving them access to a range of small- and medium-sized employers and providing them with invaluable information about sector skills needs;
- Wider agendas are also being tackled by the partnerships, such as improving diversity in recruitment;
- The aim is that the partnerships are long-term and sustainable.

Boston College in partnership with T H Clements

Sector: **Agribusiness**

Project summary

This project sought to enhance a college-led programme of support for management development in the local agribusiness sector. Local small- and medium-sized enterprises in this highly specialist area have complex structures and are operating in a very competitive environment. Their management needs are varied, and include on-site supervision, human relations and marketing. As numbers required for each specialism are low, T H Clements has previously brought in training consultants from some distance. This project sought to develop the capacity of the college to support a range of local, niche agribusinesses in their development of management capacity.

Key points from the video

- Previously the employer had found nothing on the provider's website relevant to their business – this was a surprise to the provider;
- The provider and employer discuss industry needs – particularly around management skills for supervisors and junior managers;
- The video shows provider staff visiting the employer's premises; this gives them an insight into the industry and helps them to really understand the needs of the business;
- The employer and provider are collaborating on the design and fine tuning of a management training module;
- In the past employers have had little input into the content of provider training programmes, so this is an innovative way of working;
- The employer appreciates that the provider is ready to listen and able to offer bespoke training for skills rather than just qualifications;
- The provider has taken the concept to the local LEP; the model of delivery can be adapted to meet the needs of other local businesses.

UKTD in partnership with Changes, Jayne and Co, MOVA, and The Hair Studio in Shinfield

Sector: **Hairdressing**

Project summary

This project involved a wide range of micro-businesses, mostly hairdressers, and addressed the recommendations of the FELTAG report – Paths forward to a digital future for Further Education and Skills, particularly in relation to the use of learners' skills, devices and technical knowledge. Occupational experts (hairdressers and salon managers) shared their expertise to develop and test the ability of online platforms to provide technical skills, soft skills, functional skills, business skills or pastoral support.

Key points from the video

- Apprentices are employer-based but the provider delivers the theory and functional skills;
- One organisation profiled in the video has been working with the provider for over 14 years and many former apprentices have continued working for this employer;
- Assessors can only visit apprentices once a month, so the provider is keen to explore new ways of improving contact between visits;
- A survey commissioned by the provider found that social media, accessed via mobiles and tablets, is widely used by both apprentices and employers ;
- Using learning from the employers and apprentices about the importance of communicating via social media, the provider is developing a virtual learning environment;
- The bank of resources include interactive learning materials, videos etc and is being used to support apprentices to learn on their own and alongside delivery staff;
- The provider is talking to other employers about creating online resources;
- The partnership is gaining the apprentices' perspective on tutorial videos; these are very appropriate for the sector because learners can take their time to learn and can actually see how things are done step by step;
- By collaborating and learning from each other, employers feel that they are taking their businesses and learners to the next level.

Craven College Aviation Academy in partnership with Swissport Ltd

Sector: **Aviation**

Project summary

The purpose of this project was to ensure learners understand how mathematics crucially underpins many functions in the safety-critical industry of airport and aircraft operations, and to encourage them to develop the required skills for the industry. Working together, curriculum and employer staff developed a collaborative programme of study to develop skills in mathematics using the work-related context of aircraft load control. College tutors first ensured that the learners had the required basic principles of mathematics. Then Swissport Ltd staff provided the line of sight to work by introducing mathematics used in aviation from the point of view of a ground handler with responsibility for aircraft load control. These sessions were totally industry based including the completion and checking of the documentation required to dispatch an aircraft. Learners used mathematics to complete activities within the load controller's daily job role and explored the implications of incorrect calculations and poor records. College staff supported and mentored Swissport Ltd staff through every stage of the process of planning and delivering their sessions. This was a desired outcome for Swissport Ltd staff who were keen to improve the delivery of in-house training within the company.

Key points from the video

- The provider is based close to the employer's site giving learners access to the working environment as part of their course; some learners eventually become employees;
- The project reinforces a unique collaboration between the employer and the provider to deliver a relevant mathematics course to more than 60 learners;
- The programme is being adapted as part of the provider's science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) project for schools;
- The video shows provider staff sitting in on the employer-delivered sessions to develop their experience, ensure that their own teaching is realistic and provide a clear line of sight to work;
- Provider and employer staff are working together to ensure that the course is up to date, based on real-life situations, relevant for the current aviation industry and of interest to learners;
- The employer has seen an improvement in the quality of recruits who have been on the course;
- Employer-learner relationships are developed before the learners go through the employer's doorway;
- Recruits with a basic understanding of how the job works save the employer time during recruitment and on-the-job training;
- Employer staff are developing their own teaching skills, which has benefits in their own workplace;
- In the video, the employer states that if similar partnership programmes were delivered at their bases across the UK, the cost savings would be enormous.

Carshalton College in partnership with Mirobot

Sector: **Digital industries**

Project summary

This project used the study of robotics as a tool for teaching learners how different disciplines work together in production and had a clear line of sight to work in the digital industries through the design of a project-based robotics module within the provider's IT curriculum. Learners developed 'Macrobot', a 'Rover' robot that can sense its environment and move both autonomously and under external control. Many of the components were 3D printable so learners developed skills in working with this emerging technology.

Key points from the video

- The partners agree regular time slots for the employer to come in and co-design the teaching/delivery of the module;
- In the video, two different groups of learners came to together to be taught – this was a new approach for the provider;
- The employer sets industrial targets and suggests research routes; provider staff observe that learners listen attentively to the employer;
- Provider staff are learning new workplace skills that they wouldn't have had access to without the partnership, and this is helping them develop new and more relevant ways to teach;
- The provider is gaining information on current working practices, production techniques and pricing, and these cross over into many different areas such as functional skills in mathematics and English;
- Teachers are moving from a model of delivery where they were the experts to a project-based approach and joint learning;
- The learners are involved in a project that motivates them, teaches them up-to-date skills, and gives them a chance to link with an employer and learn how the real world operates;
- The partners are gaining an insight into what each other does;
- The employer is interested in how teenagers interact with technology, so observing them is helpful for market research.

ACTIVITY 1:

The benefits of partnership working

Background and aim: By examining the benefits for employers, providers and learners, the aim of this activity is to get different parties on board with partnership working in order to build occupational expertise. Some of the main benefits are outlined in the page below, but this activity looks at the benefits in the real world.

Suggested audience: Ideally this exercise would be conducted with a mixed group of provider and employer representatives. It is suitable to use with (or be adapted to be used with):

- Provider staff, including those responsible for curriculum management and planning, employer engagement and delivery;
- Employers who have shown an initial interest in becoming partners
- Members of LEPs, local authorities, employer organisations, and professional/trade associations and other stakeholder groups;
- Potential learners, e.g. to emphasise a clear line of sight from learning to work.

Activity guidance: This activity can be used with one or more of the five Teach Too/Two-Way Street videos. You can either view the videos in turn or choose those most appropriate for the sector/s in which you operate.

1. Give out a copy of the following chart or adapt this for your own use
2. After watching the video/s, ask the participants to jot down on the chart examples of how the partnership arrangement/s profiled in the video/s have benefitted employers, providers and learners
3. Use this as a basis for a wider discussion about the benefits that can be gained from partnership working
4. Ask those who have already had some experience of working in an employer-provider partnership to explain any additional benefits they have observed
5. Discuss what benefits there might be for wider stakeholders.
6. Compare the benefits for partnership that you have identified with the 'Potential benefits on Page 10'

Potential Benefits

Employers

- Professional, technical and vocational education and training that is more closely aligned with current and future employment needs;
- Access to co-designed and bespoke education and training focused on skills not just qualifications;
- More highly skilled employees with a clearer understanding of the culture and demands of the workplace;
- The opportunity for employers to engage with a variety of potential employees over a period of time to support effective recruitment and selection;
- Broadening and enriching the professional identity, confidence and capacity of staff through their active involvement in education and training;
- Increased understanding of the opportunities offered by local education and training providers;
- Improved access to research and ideas for innovation;
- Better use of local professional, technical and vocational resources and facilities;
- Higher profile within the community.

Providers

- Clearer picture of the current and future education and training needs of employers in the locality;
- Improved understanding of how employer organisations work and the demands of current work practices;
- Opening up of opportunities for business development including apprenticeships;
- New ways of structuring education and training to reflect workplace practices;
- Opportunities for curriculum specialists and leaders to update their professional knowledge and skills;
- Improved learner retention and progression into employment;
- More effective use of the resources and facilities of both partners;
- Improved reputation as a trusted partner supporting the local community.

Learners

- A more direct 'line of sight to work' enhancing motivation and engagement;
- A learning experience that builds the skills either to gain initial employment or to progress within their current work role;
- Greater employer involvement in learning programmes to ensure their relevance to real working practice;
- Access to work-based activities where theory is contextualised;
- Opportunities to work with the latest technology and innovative practice;
- Relevant, attractive and up-to-date careers education, information, advice and guidance;
- Greater awareness of the range of employment opportunities available in particular sectors with clear progression routes and skills escalators;
- Consistent messages from both employers and providers about the requirements for success.

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Partnership	Benefits for employers	Benefits for providers	Benefits for learners
Barking & Dagenham College in partnership with Roofff Ltd			
Boston College in partnership with T H Clements			
UKTD in partnership with Changes, Jayne and Co, MOVA, and The Hair Studio in Shinfield			
Craven College Aviation Academy in partnership with Swissport Lt			
Carshalton College in partnership with Mirobot			

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ACTIVITY 2:

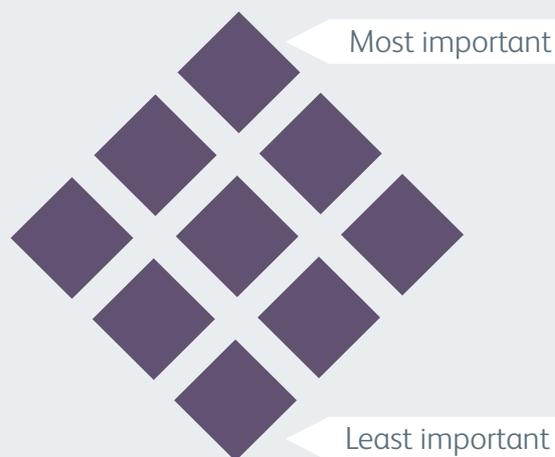
Diamond 9 – features of successful partnerships

Background and aim: The aim of this activity is to use Diamond 9 to explore the features of successful employer-provider partnership arrangements in order to develop occupational expertise.

Suggested audience: Provider staff in a wide range of roles. Could also be used with employers.

Activity guidance:

1. Divide into small groups (2-4 people)
2. Give each group a set of cards (see page 13)
3. Ask participants to choose and prioritise the statements on the cards into a diamond shape – 1,2,3,2,1 – based on discussion as to which features of successful partnerships they feel are of greater or lesser importance. The shape allows participants to rank chosen statements as most important at the top, equal second underneath and so on, down to least important feature at the bottom. Note that there are 12 cards but only 9 are required to create the Diamond 9 shape as shown right:
4. Ask participants to list the criteria they have used to accomplish the task
5. Encourage each group to share their decisions with the whole group; discuss similarities and differences
6. Lead a discussion asking participants to give ideas about how they can introduce the success factors they have identified into their own practice.



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Joint responsibility for improving the professional, technical and vocational education and training system which moves beyond a simple 'supply and demand' relationship



Realistic understanding of the obligations and contributions of all parties



Honest and open face-to-face dialogue about expectations, requirements and constraints to develop the **trust** required for meaningful collaborative activity



Clear **business case** for all contributing parties



Common short-term and long-term **goals** from which all parties benefit and that provide quick wins and a reason for sustainable activity



A **clear plan of action** including regular meetings to monitor progress



Strong **local and/or sector-specific focus** rather than a generic concept of employer engagement



Leaders in their respective organisations drive the agenda and create the formal climate within which more informal and flexible arrangements may exist for curriculum delivery



Collaboration in a range of activities such as curriculum development, joint staff development, learner assessment, programme delivery and evaluation



Engagement with wider stakeholders such as Local Enterprise Partnerships, employer organisations, local authorities and professional/trade associations



Rationalising the different ways of working of employer and provider organisations with their different demands and constraints, language and culture



Building on (strengthening and deepening) existing contacts and employer-provider relationships, **shifting from a 'buyer-seller relationship' to a 'partnership relationship'**

ACTIVITY 3a: Exploratory questions

Background and aim: This activity helps provider staff to consider some of the key points made in the videos in order to forge effective employer-provider partnerships for developing occupational expertise. Staff who are in direct contact with employers and learners on a regular basis are often in the best position to establish opportunities for collaboration.

Suggested audience: Delivery staff (teachers and assessors) and others who are closely involved with learners and/or employers on a day-to-day basis.

Activity guidance: Use these questions to discuss current practice, explore opportunities for the future and consider the practical issues involved in partnership working.

Employer engagement and communications

- What skills needs are you aware of in your region in the sectors in which you work?
- How might you make initial contact with new employers in order to establish their training needs?
- What employer groups exist in your region? Which do you belong to? Which could you join?
- How might you contribute to marketing resources in order to interest employers in your provision and in potential partnership arrangements?
- What media do you currently use to communicate with learners and employers in the workplace? How might you explore possibilities for new communication methods?
- What challenges do you face when trying to engage employers in partnership arrangements?

Opportunities to collaborate on the planning, design, delivery and assessment of education and training

- In which areas of the curriculum are there opportunities for employers to get involved in planning, design, delivery and assessment?
- How might existing programmes/modules be adapted to meet the needs of an employer?
- How can you work with employers to ensure that education and training is up to date, realistic, relevant and of interest to learners?
- How can you ensure that there is a clear line of sight to work for learner?
- How can you ensure that standards are met for the employer, for the provider and for awarding organisations?

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Practicalities of co-designing and co-delivering education and training

- What is the best time and place to meet with partners to discuss opportunities, and plan and co-design education and training?
- When organising training for an employer, what steps could you take to reduce any disruption caused to normal operations?
- How feasible is it to group learners from different programmes together to maximise benefits?
- How can you ensure that opportunities for cross-curricula learning are maximised?
- How might you use technology to improve delivery, learning and assessment?
- In what ways can you measure the success of programmes that have involved employer collaboration?
- How can occupational experts in the workplace be supported to develop their skills in delivery and assessment?

Other opportunities arising from partnership arrangements

- What CPD opportunities are there to develop your occupational expertise?
- How could you adapt existing partnership delivery models for other uses, such as outreach projects, or for different employers?
- Apart from curriculum delivery and assessment, in what other ways can you help to address employer skills gaps?

ACTIVITY 3b:

Action planning for employer collaboration on the planning, design, delivery and assessment of education and training

Background and aim: Once an area of curriculum has been identified where collaboration with an employer will help to meet an identified skills need, and partnership working has been agreed, more detailed plans need to be put into place. This activity provides a simple tool to ensure that identified partnership opportunities are translated into reality and are sustainable in the future.

Suggested audience: Curriculum planning and delivery staff with appropriate employer representatives, e.g. those involved in human resources/training.

Activity guidance:

1. Set up regular meetings to discuss plans to design, deliver and assess the identified area of learning
2. Use the chart below (or a similar one) to record joint decisions, tasks, responsibilities and timeframes
3. At the beginning of each meeting, review progress.

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Joint decisions, tasks, responsibilities and timeframes

Action to be taken	By when?	By whom?	Achieved?	Further actions needed

ACTIVITY 4:

Evaluating current partnership working for developing occupational expertise

Background and aim: The questions in this activity are partly based on issues explored in the videos. They are intended for use by providers to help them explore current practice at a strategic level, with the view to improving the effectiveness of existing partnerships.

Suggested audience: Senior managers in provider organisations.

Activity guidance: Use the questions in the checklist to evaluate your current partnership arrangements.

Allocate a RAG (red, amber, green) rating for each question:

- 'R' (red) if you are confident that it is happening well within your organisation;
- 'A' (amber) if there are areas where it could be improved;
- 'G' (green) if you are not sure that it is happening at all or there are areas of concern.

Use your responses to discuss current practice in more detail. What are your organisation's strengths? What areas need to be improved?

N.B. More detailed exploratory questions designed to be used with delivery staff can be found in Activity 3a.

Checklist for evaluating current partnership working to develop occupational expertise

Consideration	R	A	G	Strengths	Areas for improvement
Programmes are in place that are explicitly concerned with developing learners' occupational knowledge and skills through employer-provider partnerships					
New occupational/curriculum areas for employer-provider collaboration are identified on an ongoing basis					
A range of strategies is used to engage with small and large employers to develop learners' occupational knowledge, skills and behaviours					
The provider is well represented in relevant employer groups in the region					
The full commitment and backing of senior staff is given to those involved in developing partnerships					
Delivery and employer-facing staff are offered the training and support necessary to develop their competence and confidence in partnership working					
Delivery staff are given the time needed to work with partners to co-plan, design, deliver and assess education and training					
Staff are able to take advantage of joint staff development opportunities to develop their own occupational expertise and share good practice					
The necessary resources and facilities are made available to those involved in partnership delivery					
The provider shares (or is willing to explore the possibility of sharing) facilities and resources with local employers					
The provider's website and marketing materials encourage employers to make contact and provide examples of areas in which collaboration is possible					
Staff responsibilities within employer-provider partnerships are made clear					
Arrangements and activities that have been established to meet learners', employers' and providers' goals are regularly reviewed					
Learners' feedback about employer-provider contributions to their programmes is captured and used to improve future partnership approaches					
Priority is given to ensuring that partnerships are sustainable.					

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