teach too phase 3: solihull college and university centre

Contact lead: Rosa Wells

Employers: the Buckingham Group, Capita, JS Wright and Cundall



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# The Project

Solihull College worked with Engineering employers: the Buckingham Group, Capita, JS Wright and Cundall to update the curriculum so it is up to date and relevant. This was mainly achieved through job shadowing and mentoring.

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| It was good to develop an understanding of the structure of the civil engineering course and influence the curriculum development. Tristan tregartha pre-construction managerbuckingham groupIn Teach Too there has always been a focus on improving the gender balance. We have improved participation for women to 11%, well above the sector average of 6%.**Rosa Wells****Director of Employment and Skills** **Solihull College**  |
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|  | Aims * For college lecturers to shadow employer engineers to ensure their teaching and learning is informed by up to date knowledge
* To improve learning for apprentices in the workplace
* To reflect two-way street collaborations between employers and college staff.
* To broaden community links with employers to create a recruitment strategy to diversify participation in apprenticeships.
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## Project Description

The project focussed on engagement with four engineering employers to enhance apprenticeship delivery across the partnership. The companies varied considerably in size and this enhanced shadowing and mentoring opportunities for college lecturers and other staff.

Teach Too principles were used to underpin curriculum development that provides a clear line of sight to work. A particular focus was the use of new technology, for example, using drones in surveying contexts.

The project has informed discussions relating to the suitability of the new apprenticeship standards for SMEs and medium sized companies.

The project partners will be working with Gatsby in further developments. These will be complemented by the college’s support network for Women in STEM careers.

## Positive Impacts

* Teach Too allowed the college to engage with four employer partners for the first time. This has improved the range of contexts that can be used to support high quality teaching and learning. Enhanced teacher motivation and confidence also resulted.
* A very wide range of activities was developed between teachers and employers. This included: discussions with apprentices about ‘what worked for them’; observation of mentoring and coaching sessions in the workplace; using new technology on site, and ensuring that curriculum projects are ‘fit for purpose’ in the workplace.
* Employers gained a deeper understanding of teaching and related skills needed to support apprentices following the new standards. Capita, for example, reviewed their mentoring handbook for staff to ensure that apprentices are supported with personal development as well as gaining industry specific knowledge.
* The understanding of progression routes was enhanced. This was particularly the case when employers are looking at apprentices moving onto Higher Apprenticeships rather than Higher National Certificates.
* Employers could access more opportunities to recruit apprentices. This was particularly welcome in Building Services Engineering and Civil Engineering.
* A strengthened understanding was developed of how school and community links can be enhanced to widen participation. Women into Science and Engineering (WISE) and the Chartered Institution of Building Services Engineers (CIBSE) were important partners here.
* New systems were developed within the college to broaden the pool of applicants for apprenticeships. This has been strongly welcomed by employers.

## Key Learning Points

* Teach Too needs reinforcing as a concept to take collaboration beyond employer engagement.
* Communication of expectations and the partners’ respective responsibilities need to be clear.
* The development of close partnerships has significant potential to reduce duplication for apprentices.

## Recommendations for developing employer partnerships

* Make sure that the mutual benefits for all the partners are clear and made explicit. Employers’ benefits of this Teach Too project included access to a broader pool of potential applications and enhanced coaching and mentoring skills.
* Position partnerships in the context of the needs of the local area. This project resulted in establishing better progression pathways, enhanced links with schools and redesigned recruitment processes that widen participation.

# project participants

## Links and contact details

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