

OUTSTANDING TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT TECHNICAL SKILLS NATIONAL PROGRAMME

Case study: Excellence in Hospitality

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EXCELLENCE IN HOSPITALITY



Project Overview

The aim of this project was to develop an innovative, industry-led learning model focusing on the development of world-class technical skills of vocational learners within the hospitality industry. The project explored the technical and employability skills required by hospitality industry partners to ensure learners are confidently prepared to take their next steps on completion of their qualification.

Learners were given the opportunity to attend a variety of masterclasses delivered by industry experts, all of which were brought to life back in the classroom, training kitchens and restaurant venues. On completion of each masterclass learners had access to further training opportunities and industry placements that would prepare them for future employment within the international hospitality industry.

The project enabled industry partners to have a hands-on approach to shaping and collaboratively developing the learning model for technical teaching, learning and assessment, to ensure that upon achievement of their qualifications, learners are industry-ready.

This project provided teaching and learning coaching sessions for industry professionals to enhance the learning process during work experience placements, masterclasses, and other learning opportunities, which were further supported by the development of a teaching toolkit for employers.

A professional network of teachers, employers and training providers came together in this project in a mutual exchange of cutting-edge industry knowledge and experience and educational pedagogy to ensure that learners receive the best preparation for successful employment within the hospitality industry.

Project Partners

Working in partnership with London South East Colleges on this project were two training providers; Welcome Skills and Springboard UK, and three employers; Royal Lancaster London, D & D London and C H & Co.

Project Participants

	Direct	Indirect
Managers and Senior Leaders	5	32
Practitioners (Teachers, Trainers, Tutors, Coaches etc)	15	47
Learners	168	253
Providers	2	0
Employers	3	8

The Project Journey

The project intended to create a 360° industry-led learning model, where the boundaries between vocational teaching, learning, assessment and work experience are removed. Through the creation of this learning model all environments (e.g. classrooms, kitchens, restaurants, workplaces) are seen as teaching and learning environments, and all staff (e.g. lecturers, support workers, chefs, employers etc) are seen as teachers/trainers/assessors. The 360° learning model acted as the bridge between education and employment and this has enabled learners to be better prepared for transitioning from education to employment.

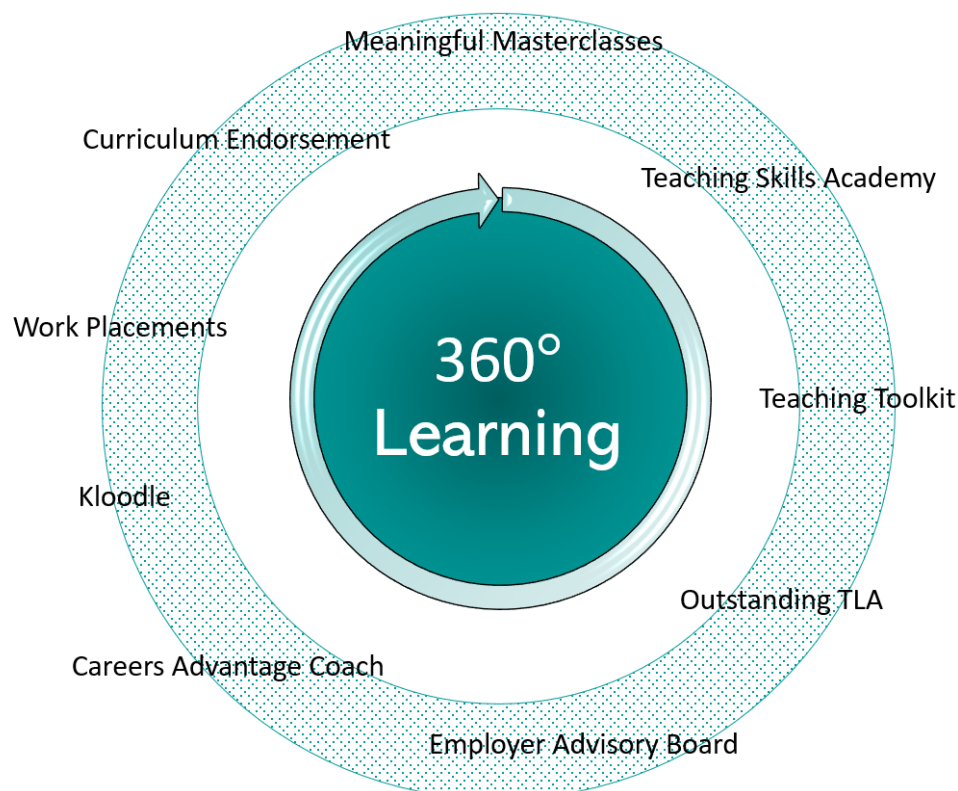


Fig 1: The learning model puts the learners at the very centre of learning, with the tools for enabling learning placed around the surface.

Delivering an outstanding Teaching Skills Academy coaching programme to develop the teaching and learning skills of employers was a key focus of the project. This took the form of bespoke coaching sessions for employers to upskill them on the content of the curriculum, how work placements can be better mapped to the requirements of the qualification, and how to deliver meaningful masterclasses. The coaching programme also provided employers with effective strategies for working with learners with additional learning support needs and learners from disadvantaged backgrounds. For further information on the coaching model please refer to 'The Coaching Programme' document produced as part of this project.

The coaching programme was enhanced by the creation of a 'Career Advantage Coach' role. This role went above and beyond the standard work placement coordinator and included acting as a mentor for both the employers and the learners in preparation for the placement and whilst learners were at the place of employment. Carefully coordinated work placements were matched to learners' skills, behaviours and attitudes, and this enabled learners to synthesise knowledge into practice, and develop the skills relevant to them.

A Teaching Toolkit was created in partnership with employers to enable them to deliver meaningful and effective work placements and masterclasses. The toolkit is a really visually engaging resource that employers have used to support their coaching sessions, it also acts as a quick reference guide to refer to at any time.

A selection of high quality, meaningful masterclasses were delivered by our prestigious employer partners, and these included showcasing the preparation of dishes such as gin-cured salmon, slow braised pork belly, stuffed saddle of lamb, gluten free cookies and a selection of venison dishes. Intensive one-to-one coaching sessions on the fundamentals of teaching and learning in Further Education were provided to employers in preparation for the delivery of masterclasses. This enabled



First year hospitality student Joe, from Bromley, is an aspiring chef and sees his work placement as his big break. He says: *"I'm experiencing the workings of a very high-end and sophisticated business. The chefs here show us how to do certain things correctly and will then watch us do them ourselves; correcting us if we go wrong. After this, we are expected to get it right - surprisingly, this works really well."*



First year Hospitality student Gabriel, from Brockley, aims to become a chef and has spent much of his youth working for his family's Italian restaurant in south London. During his work placement he says: *"So far, I have learnt to do some of the simplest things really well. I'm amazed at the incredibly high standards here and the emphasis on quality. The clientele at this restaurant expect the best. Because of this, I expected the kitchen environment to be frantic and stressful. It's actually the complete opposite. It is relatively quiet, calm and very well organised. Each order is treated as an operation and all members of the staff understand their roles in the execution of delivering the perfect meal and highest standard of service."*

masterclasses to become far more student-centred and learners became actively engaged in their learning. As the project progressed, learners were more curious to learn and they thrived in developing their knowledge and understanding of different dishes, recipes and food preparation techniques. The masterclasses have increased learners' curiosity in the industry which has had a positive impact on learners' attitudes to achieving their learning goals.

The follow up to the masterclasses was equally as important as the delivery of them. Enabling learners to continue practising the skills they had developed during the masterclass was fundamental to their success. Learners continued to prepare the showcased dishes within their practical sessions in the training kitchens. This enabled learners to build confidence and familiarity with the skills and techniques in a safe and supportive environment. Learners then progressed onto preparing these dishes in the student-run restaurant, for paying customers to select from the menu. This enabled learners to demonstrate their technical skills directly within the hospitality industry. This had a notable impact on improving learning and equipped learners well for progressing to their next steps. For further information please refer to the 'Meaningful Masterclasses' document produced as part of this project.



Teaching Skills Academy Manager, Lola Olutimehin, states: *"One of the key things that came out of the bespoke coaching programme for hospitality teachers was the increased ability of staff to self-reflect. It made teachers give greater consideration to their teaching practice, what they were doing, why they were doing it, and what impact this had on teaching and learning."*

Previously, at times teachers found themselves doing the same thing over and over again, and not taking the time to reflect why it was not effective. The coaching programme gave teachers the opportunity to actively reflect and therefore identify gaps in their practice and adopt new strategies to develop and improve teaching, learning and assessment towards outstanding. Teachers particularly liked the opportunity to plan, do, observe and reflect."

All teaching staff within the hospitality curriculum area were assigned a Teaching Skills Academy Coach who provided personalised one-to-one mentoring and support. A quality assurance programme of learning walks, work scrutiny, teaching and learning conversations and developmental observations provided further support to teachers and gave them a clear focus to develop areas of learning, behaviour and technical skills. These processes were specifically designed to evaluate the progress made within teaching, learning and assessment towards outstanding. Teachers were encouraged to self-assess their professional development through reflective practice, which has proven to be extremely beneficial. Powerful teaching and learning conversations have led to an increase in the teachers' own powers of observation, promoting reflection and the development of self-evaluation skills.

To ensure maximum impact, the key findings from quality assurance procedures were used to create targeted action plans. Support and development opportunities were recommended as

part of the developmental observation process and these included the offer of additional coaching sessions, targeted professional development, referral to the Teaching Skills Academy (TSA), signposting to How2 resources, peer observations of a TSA fellow, selected resources on twitter etc.

Outstanding Teaching, Learning and Assessment

At the heart of the Outstanding Teaching Learning and Assessment (OTLA) Technical Skills Programme is the aim of working towards outstanding provision for all learners on technical routes. Focussing on supporting learners' development of technical skills, teaching practice and stronger employer-provider partnerships, the project sought a better understanding of what constitutes 'outstanding' practice within Hospitality.

Drawing together findings from focussed discussions with a diverse range of learners, teachers and employers, this project has been able to obtain the different perspectives of what 'outstanding' looks and feels like within Hospitality.

	Learners	Teachers	Employers
1	Lessons are inspiring and engaging	Learners are fully engaged in their learning	Excellent punctuality and time management skills
2	Teachers have excellent technical skills	There are regular checks on learning	Learners have a passion and love of hospitality
3	Teachers have excellent knowledge of the hospitality industry	Learners make excellent progress towards their goals	Learners have a positive attitude
4	We have access to very successful employers	Learners are motivated and keen to learn	Learners are enthusiastic and keen to learn
5	We enjoy learning and lessons are fun	Teaching stretches and challenges learners to deepen their knowledge and understanding	Learners demonstrate good knife skills
6	Teachers motivate us to do well	Teaching caters for learners' individual needs	Learners are able to listen attentively and take instruction
7	We can practice our skills in a real environment	Lessons are well-planned	Learners have excellent communication skills
8	We are well-supported to achieve	Excellent attendance and punctuality	Learners have a good understanding of the industry
9	We are involved in our learning	Employers are involved in shaping the curriculum	Learners are resilient and able to have difficult conversations
10	We exceed our targets	Learners are able to work independently	Learners have the confidence to ask questions

Fig 2: The 'Outstanding Top Ten' identifies the most popular responses from learners, teachers and employers of what outstanding is within Hospitality.

Skill Development

At the start of the project great emphasis was placed on establishing appropriate procedures for measuring learners' progress and skill development. This proved to be a real benefit not only to the project evaluation, but more importantly, to the learning experience.

An employability and technical skills audit was devised in collaboration with employer partners and awarding body qualification specifications. This was issued to learners at the start of the project, and again at the end, in order to obtain quantitative data on the impact of the project on learners' skill development.

The added benefit of conducting this audit at the start of the project allowed teachers, trainers and support staff to personalise teaching, learning and assessment activities to meet learners' individual skill development needs. It also enabled work placement opportunities to be closely matched to learners' skills gaps and gave employers a focus for skill development whilst on placement.

The greatest employability skill development identified by the learners at the end of the project was found in the following skills; entrepreneurship (+2.0 average rank), flexibility (+1.8 average rank), written communication (+1.8 average rank), networking (+1.8 average rank) and communication techniques (+1.8 average rank).

The greatest technical skill development identified by the learners at the end of the project was found in the following skills; prepare poultry and game to dish specifications (+1.9 average rank), produce petits fours to recipe specifications (+1.7 average rank), prepare meat, cuts, joints and associated products to dish specifications (+1.5 average rank), use technology in line with business procedures (+1.4 average rank), communicate in a fair and equal manner with colleagues (+1.2 average rank).

For further information on these skills audits please refer to the 'Hospitality Skills Audit' document created as part of this project.

Teachers, trainers and coaches completed The Education and Training Foundation Professional Standards self-assessment at the start of the project, and again at the end of the project. This demonstrated the journey teachers have taken in making judgements about what works and does not work in their own teaching practice, developing knowledge and understanding in theory and practice, and developing expertise and skills to ensure the best possible outcomes for learners.

The biggest improvements were seen in the following professional standards:

- 6. Build positive and collaborative relationships with colleagues and learners (+ 0.8 average rank)
- 10. Evaluate your practice with others and assess its impact on learning (+ 0.8 average rank)
- 18. Apply appropriate and fair methods of assessment and provide constructive and timely feedback to support progression and achievement (+ 0.8 average rank)
- 4. Be creative and innovative in selecting and adapting strategies to help learners to learn (+ 0.7 average rank)
- 14. Plan and deliver effective learning programmes for diverse groups or individuals in a safe and inclusive environment (+ 0.6 average rank).

Preparation for the Introduction of the Skills Plan

This project has provided a platform from which employer partners can have a real voice in shaping curriculum provision to meet the technical and employability skills required to work within the hospitality industry. This has enabled employers to become involved in curriculum planning processes and endorse curriculum components to demonstrate industry standard approval, in response to the demands the industry requires. In preparation for the introduction of the Post-16 Skills Plan employers must play a leading role and the creation of the Hospitality Employer Advisory Board has been fundamental to enabling employers to define the skills, knowledge and behaviours required for skilled employment within the hospitality industry.

The creation of the 360° learning model has removed the barriers between college-based and employment-based teaching, learning and assessment. The close integration of partnership working has enabled effective learning to take place in any environment. Quality work placements have been an essential platform for technical skill development as part of this project and the need to for this to grow and develop is a crucial component in preparing for the future of technical education.

Lessons Learnt

It is essential to plan curriculum delivery in collaboration with employers to ensure partnerships are mutually beneficial. Successful partnerships depend upon excellent communication and the sharing of transparent roles, responsibilities and expectations. For example, the Christmas period is one of the busiest times of the year within the hospitality sector so we needed to have realistic expectations of employer partner involvement during this time. During the project the main focus for December changed to moving towards outstanding teaching, learning and assessment of hospitality teaching teams, accommodating the pressures on the hospitality industry during this period of time.

Reviewing the different perspectives of what outstanding looks and feels like within the hospitality industry highlighted the emphasis from employers on the preferred development of employability skills over technical skills, with the exception of knife skills. Therefore it is essential that technical qualifications have a core focus on the employability skills required by industry, and opportunities for employability skill development are well planned to compliment and enhance the programme of study.

What Next?

In order to ensure sustainability of this project, planned roll out of the 360° learning model to other vocational areas delivering technical qualifications will take place, such as hair and beauty, travel and tourism, sport and health and care industries.

The development and progression of powerful learning conversations with Teaching Skills Academy Coaches will enhance the learning model to further promote the development of self-reflection and metacognitive skills of teachers, learners and employers.

Cross-campus professional development activities will continue to be delivered across the wider organisation to ensure that a much wider pool of teaching staff can benefit from relevant, up-to-date industry experience and the knowledge and understanding of the skills needed in sector specific job roles and how our curriculum offer can reflect this need.

Employer contributions to innovative curriculum development and curriculum endorsement year on year will ensure the curriculum offer continues to flex and respond to changing trends and needs of the sector, whilst supplying a highly skilled workforce to reduce the skills gaps within the industry.

The planned growth of members within the hospitality and catering employer advisory board will extend the reach of project to enable all industry partners to have a direct influence on the strategic direction of our work within the catering and hospitality sector, shaping how this interfaces with wider policy agendas in London and nationally. In the longer term, this project aims to deliver a supply chain of talented, technically competent young professionals into the hospitality industry therefore building a two-way street which benefits learners and employers.

Jobs in catering and hospitality are predicted to increase by +7.0% between 2017-2014*. It is therefore essential to provide technical education to meet the growing demands of the industry. The greatest % change is expected to take place in chef and cook occupations and therefore curriculum planning needs to take account of this labour market intelligence and reflect the changing development needs of the industry. Employer partnerships are fundamental in directly influencing curriculum delivery in response to the demands the industry requires. Employers must continue to be at the forefront of discussions relating to skills and development needs of the future.

*Ref: Emsi Q1 2017 Data Set, www.economicmodelling.com, November 2017.

Learning Takeaway

Do not underestimate the power of strong employer partnerships to shape the curriculum provision in response to the demands the industry requires. Employers are fundamental to enriching the learner journey, and the successful progression of learners taking their next steps into employment within the hospitality industry.

