

Teach Too

Mathematics and SAGE



Blackburn College

LEAD CONTACT

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EMPLOYER

PM+M Solutions for Business LLP

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Introduction to Teach Too

Teach Too is an ETF-funded project delivered in partnership by UCL Institute of Education and the Association of Employment and Learning Providers (AELP). Deriving from a key recommendation of the Commission on Adult Vocational Teaching and Learning (CAVTL) Report in 2013, it sets out to explore and evaluate different models of collaborative activity between employers and providers at practitioner level, in the co-design, delivery and assessment of vocational education and training programmes. Project findings show that these collaborative partnerships have produced significant short and medium-term benefits for employers, providers and learners, and enrich and strengthen local economies and communities.

Jay Derrick Director of Teacher Education (post-compulsory),
UCL, Institute of Education

Project aims

- To work with an employer to create a specific SAGE Accounts course
- To identify the maths skills involved in this course
- To bring the employer into the classroom to provide learners with an insight into accountancy and the maths involved
- To improve the employability of learners through the acquisition of specific new skills and through direct interaction with a local employer.

Project description

The development of vocationally relevant maths, through the use of real world accountancy examples, is vital to supporting the development of maths skills for accounting students. In this project the College collaborated with a firm of local accountants to create and deliver a programme of sessions on the application of core mathematics through the use of SAGE accounts and payroll software. Included in these sessions were the interpretation and analysis of data and the use of new cloud technologies.

Working collaboratively, College staff and employees from a firm of local accountants planned and delivered a 6 week SAGE accountancy course to 16 accounting students. Employees were involved in the delivery of the sessions to students, supported by College staff. This provided an opportunity for employees of the local accountants to develop new skills in the delivery of training to students.

All students successfully completed the course and, as well as developing new skills in accuracy, inputting and report generation, gained valuable insight into the day to day duties and practices of an accountant. Students also gained insight into possible progression pathways from the accountancy employees describing their own career development experiences.

Positive impacts

- Students were motivated by the real world context and developed confidence in use of maths and new skills through the practical application of SAGE accounts
- Students employability was improved by their ability to successfully use SAGE accounts and payroll software as well as new cloud technologies
- Four members of College staff were up-skilled through increased understanding of SAGE accounts and other cloud based accountancy software
- The development of employer relationships and partnership working with a local employer was enhanced
- The project provided a local employer with an insight into the skills of students within the local area.

Key learning points

- Do not place too much emphasis on formal written agreements with employers; a commitment by the employer because they are genuinely interested in the project is worth much more
- Employers need to be supported within the classroom environment, and need support in planning the delivery of sessions
- Providing employers with an opportunity to be involved in curriculum delivery is a worthwhile activity, but the project should not be too ambitious. A series of short workshops can have greatest impact on students and are much easier to plan for both College staff and employers
- Ensure that college policies and procedures do not become a barrier to successfully delivering the project, whilst health and safety and risk assessments are important they should be implemented appropriately
- Projects with employers should be planned in sufficient time, preferably at the start of the year to ensure there is no conflict with timetables and employer work schedules.

Recommendations for developing employer partnerships

- Employers need to be clear about what the specific purpose of the project is and what their commitment will be, so they can ensure that they have the capacity to take part
- It is often easiest to plan and deliver a project working with an employer that the college already has an initial partnership or developing relationship with
- A series of short workshops can have greatest impact on students and employers are often able to commit to a short intensive project than a longer term commitment
- Employers need to be able to see that their commitment to the project is something which is well within their expertise, in this case their knowledge and understanding of SAGE accounts and payroll systems
- Employers need to see that there will also be some benefit to them from the partnership/project, in this case the skills of training/delivering workshop sessions were developed in employees through the support of college staff. Local employer was also able to see first hand the skills/talents of a local group of students.

Links and contact details

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