

# Teach Too

The Manufacturing,  
Engineering and Technology  
Academy (META)



South  
Worcestershire  
College

LEAD CONTACT

**Noreen Moses**

EMPLOYER

**Rotec Engineering Ltd**

Commissioned and funded by

**The  
Education  
& Training  
Foundation**

Programme delivered by



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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 develop a partnership with a local employers to design, plan and deliver a high quality engineering curriculum based on real-work environment opportunities
- To implement a way of working that will enable local businesses to take an active role in influencing College curriculum decisions in the future
- To foster closer links with range of local engineering employers to support apprenticeship growth.

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## Project description

The Manufacturing, Engineering and Technology Academy is a partnership project between Rotec Engineering Ltd and South Worcestershire College. The academy provides level 2 and 3 qualifications for a range of students, as well as level 2 and 3 apprenticeships. These qualifications and programmes are delivered in the real working environment that the academy provides.

The partnership with Rotec Engineering Ltd has facilitated a range of activities and opportunities which would not have been possible otherwise. These activities have benefitted students, the College and the employer.

Through the project, a relationship framework has been developed and implemented. This includes a “Governance paper”, which provides a mechanism by which an employer partner can contribute to the development of the curriculum at specific stages during the academic year.

New curriculum developments have included the setting up of an Employability passport, which captures student achievement and progress on their the course. It ‘badges’ students in terms of employability skills such as team working and communication.

Learning materials have been enhanced through the relationship with Rotec. This is particularly evident in practical skills development sessions where the use of real design drawing and specifications has been used. As part of this work, learners also presented completed work to Rotec employees and developed a real feel for the constraints under which engineering companies operate. This collaborative approach to the production of learning materials and the work with engineering professionals in the workshop situation has also provided great opportunities to update and up-skill College staff.

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The academy has been able to implement a fresh approach to student recruitment, with the employer partner being involved in College open evenings. This has provided potential students with the opportunity to find out from an engineer (rather than a teacher) about possible progression routes and job roles in the sector, enabling them to make informed choices about studying engineering and possible careers. A recruitment module has also been developed for the employer which includes weekly rotational duties, to provide new trainees and apprentices with a better understanding of the company.

Working with Rotec has enhanced industry awareness and has resulted in a further 10 new sponsors being involved with the academy. These new sponsors will be involved in different ways: some will send staff to the academy to run workshops with students, others will host student's visits, and some will take on apprentices or additional apprentices.

## Positive impacts

- Learners have a high quality curriculum that has a clear line of sight to work and progression opportunities
- Additional apprentices have been taken on by the partner employer at both level 2 and level 3
- There is enhanced reputation for both the employer and the College. The partner employer has reported how its national customers, which include Jaguar and Goodridge, have followed the development of the partnership and the project activities
- The College has been able to offer business-to-business courses to other local businesses using the skills of Rotec employees
- Staff up-skilling of industrial knowledge and skills has given them increased confidence and up-to-date occupational examples to use in the classroom
- The partner employer noted that long serving employees commented on how much they enjoyed being able to share their knowledge and experience with younger people
- The partnership has opened up the opportunity to develop an apprentice exchange service between larger engineering organisations and SMEs.

## Key learning points

- Investing time in explaining and sharing objectives with a high level of honesty has increased success and enabled conversations that have reinforced shared goals
- Differing cultures and values within both organisations have required both parties to understand the parameters and economic drivers within both industry and education in order to make this partnership work and overcome potential conflicting interests and outcomes
- Diversification of the curriculum to include more digital technologies is needed to continue to address skills shortages within industry and also attract design engineers with HE aspirations. This will require a recruitment programme which directly engages with 14-16 year olds to ensure continued and increasing recruitment
- Staff continuity within both organisations has at times hampered and reduced effectiveness, timeframes and scope.

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## Recommendations for developing employer partnerships

- Choose a partner whose core business is tightly aligned with the curriculum offer to ensure relevance and shared goals
- Use staff who have had prior industrial experience in the development of the employer partnership
- Make employers aware that as an education organisation, working under certain restrictions, it is not always possible to react as quickly or provide a response within a specified time. Appreciate that employers may not need to consider such restrictions and are used to working at a faster rate
- Strive for 100% honesty: share and talk openly and repeatedly about goals and drivers
- Take time to construct and deliver a quick guide to the modern education sector, qualifications, year structure, levels and progression opportunities as well as constraints a College may have.

## Links and contact details

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