

Skills for Work CASE STUDY

Financial Services Intermediate Two

St George's School for Girls in Edinburgh and the Royal Bank of Scotland (RBS) School Bank Service were successfully involved in this pilot.

Rationale

The school identified a personal financial awareness gap in its curriculum that was plugged appropriately by this course.

To make the course interesting and alive the school sought to create hands on experiences at every opportunity plus an interactive approach to teaching and learning.

Staff achieved this in a number of ways by inviting specialist financial sector speakers to address students, arranging bank visits and, through its partnership with the RBS, students also enjoyed experiences working as Bank Tellers.



Partnership Arrangements

Students had the chance to work for a Royal Bank of Scotland School Bank Service. The students were trained as Tellers and Customer Care Administrators by Royal Bank staff who supported them until they were competent in the day-to-day running of this particular service.

Pupils developed interview, customer care and team working skills through interaction with customers and colleagues. The hands on approach meant they dealt with financial products while working with real business people.

Data Protection, Health and Safety legislation and ethical issues in dealing with money were among an intriguing range of topics covered.

Delivery Approaches

An induction period gave students involved an overview of the course. During these formative weeks, the students were interviewed for the role of teller in the RBS School Bank Service.

Taught over seven periods per week, the course was staffed by two teachers with one covering Employability Skills and the other focussing on topics of Personal Financial Awareness and Introduction to the Financial Sector. Both teachers taught the final unit, Building Positive Relationships for Customers and Colleagues.

Both teachers undertook assessments of written tests and portfolio work. Scottish Further Education Unit materials supplied were well received by the students, who also made use of quality websites to support the Personal Financial Awareness unit.

Such was the impact of the course the school, in addition to RBS, established partnerships with a range of businesses and organisations such as the Dunfermline Building Society, Careers Scotland and Aegon (formerly Scottish Equitable.) Visits were made to each their offices.

Overall, the school believes that two major challenges have to be faced: the need for support with the administration of the day-to-day running of the bank and keeping the subject alive by arranging contacts and visits.



Employability Skills

The school used an integrated approach with the course. One example was that after lessons on interview techniques, students were interviewed for a Bank Teller role within the school. On their trip to the Dunfermline Building Society the students had a "mock" interview, which would form part of their overall assessment.

The benefits of the course could be seen in the confidence and knowledge that the students acquired. It is to their credit that they have delivered presentations at assemblies about the School Bank Service.

They also accompanied the Headmistress to a Financial Services Event at Edinburgh's Balmoral Hotel where they were able to talk about the course with prominent people from the Financial Sector.

The school is satisfied that these students are well equipped with transferable skills that they will continue to develop in their future lives and careers.

Centre Evaluation

This course has been well received by students as they found the new mixture of class work, computer work and hands on activities interesting and stimulating. Clearly, they got a real sense of achievement in their roles within the Bank Service.

They have grown in confidence and are regarded as responsible citizens within the St George's school community. They have been most effective in setting up the school bank service and promoting it throughout the school.

The two members of staff enjoyed teaching the course and watching the students develop and mature. Parents, too, have also appreciated the range of opportunities and experiences given to their daughters and are very proud, and rightly so, of their achievements. RBS support staff have said they also enjoyed working with the school and students to develop the School Bank Service.

“Setting up the school Bank and promoting it in the school has been really interesting. Overall, I have enjoyed the course, the responsibilities involved and the new skills I've learned”

View from a student



Future Delivery Plans

The course is being offered again to the S5/S6 age group.

Advice

The school believes this model works extremely well as the RBS willingly puts time and effort into the partnership. Some form of administration support in school to help with the day to day running of the Bank is regarded as crucial.

“ These students are well equipped with transferable skills which they will continue to develop in their future lives and careers ”

View from the school



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BD3832/05 June 2007