

Skills for Work CASE STUDY

Practical Experiences: Construction and Engineering Access 3

Kilmarnock College is delivering the Course in partnership with a number of local schools in East Ayrshire.

Rationale

The new Skills for Work Access 3 Course in Construction and Engineering appeared to meet the needs of a client group of students emerging from other programmes such as the Youth Strategy for East Ayrshire and School Link. Existing programmes had no award associated. The appeal of the Skills for Work Course being that this was the first Course for this group with an award. Therefore, there was something tangible at the end for the student, the school and the college.

Partnership Arrangements

Kilmarnock College's Schools Liaison Officer, Craig Kilpatrick, acts as the link between the college and participating schools. He also regularly meets with Local Authority representatives.



Delivery Approaches

The Course is delivered over two years. Initially, the schools recommend potential students for the Course. The students then attend a session at the college to hear more in-depth information about the Course and what is expected of and then decide if the Course is for them. The session is run by the Schools Liaison Officer and the Course Lecturer.

Students starting the Course are all S3. A number of schools are within walking distance of the college and the rest travel by a mix of bus and taxi.

The model the college has adopted is to focus on one practical area in each year with employability skills split across the practical units.

At the outset the Course committee got together to work out how best to deliver the Course in Kilmarnock College.

In total 17 students are on the Course. There are two classes. The first class attends for two hours on a Monday morning and the other for two hours on a Tuesday afternoon.

In year one the students study engineering and in year two they study construction.

All elements of the Course are delivered in the college workshops.



Delivery Approaches

The college staff delivering the Skills for Work Course have been carefully selected as those with proven success in bringing out the best from students in this type of environment.

Each of the two classes has a different leader. They work together to ensure that each class of students is developed in a similar way.

All assessments are carried out using the NABS. In addition the SFEU support materials were very welcome and have been used extensively to support Course delivery.

In the early days there were some discipline issues. A couple of students were removed from the Course by their school for a wider mix of reasons. The change in dynamic created a more focussed environment for the remaining group.

Good ongoing communication with all parties has ensured the success of the Course.

Employability Skills

The employability skills unit has been aligned with the practical units and are delivered as one package. Therefore the full Course is delivered in a workshop environment. The students became diligent at completing their evaluations.

“ The Construction and Engineering course is a combination of Practical Vocational Skills and Employability Skills which appeals to this age group. The practical aspect of the course has helped the candidates become a close working group who are eager to complete each practical task. The introduction to the job roles and career paths of both the Construction Industry and Engineering Industry helps to provide each candidate with a realistic employment expectation. ”

**Craig Kilpatrick, Kilmarnock College,
Schools Liaison Officer**

“ I go to college one afternoon a week to attend Skills for Work Construction and Engineering class. I’ve made lots of things in my class. I’ve passed all the assessments in the Skills for Work course, which I am really pleased about. Once I finish the course, I will have a proper qualification. ”

Greg Campbell, Stewarton Academy

Centre Evaluation

The Course was monitored on an ongoing basis to ensure it fully met the needs of the students.

Delivery of the practical side was speeded up as it was found that students picked up skills quicker than expected.

During the first year the group developed considerably. Once the discipline issues were resolved the group began to gel and worked solidly and interested in what they were doing. Over the year confidence really grew. Changes in communication skills were clear with students developing the ability to converse easily with tutors and visitors. Health and safety considerations became automatic behaviours. Discipline issues disappeared and maturity grew.

Future Delivery Plans

The intention is to start two fresh Access 3 groups each academic year. The college plans to deliver the new Intermediate 1 Engineering Skills. Issues such as geography and transport could limit further growth, particularly from schools situated further away from the college.

Advice

Take the time to select appropriate staff. Deal with issues as they arise. Keep regular communication between all parties.



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BD3832/15 September 2007