

Skills for Work CASE STUDY

Construction Crafts Intermediate 1

Aberdeen College, Northfield Academy and Aberdeen City Education Department have been involved successfully in this new course.

Rationale

The partners unanimously agreed that Skills for Work highlights and strengthens the long-standing relationship the three of them enjoy.

When Northfield Academy expressed interest in offering this course at this level, the college responded to the request and worked with it to deliver a pilot award.



Partnership Arrangements

A good flow of information was maintained through regular meetings between the school, the college's Child Protection and Schools' Liaison Co-ordinator as well construction staff.

At a strategic level, a formal memorandum of understanding set out the roles and responsibilities of the three parties involved while local authority support also exists through a specially established NQ Steering Group.

Pupil transportation is the local authority's responsibility and the college updates the school on a daily basis on absences and prepares reports for parents in line with the school reporting procedure.

Delivery Approaches

It was discovered that pupils selected by the school tended to have a genuine interest in a career in the construction industry.

Parents have been able to view construction facilities and discuss the progress of their children. Pupils received a full induction to college premises and policies and were expected to abide by the School Pupil Code of Commitment that sets out an acceptable standard of behaviour.

Pupils attended college for two and a half hours per week and the entire course was delivered by Aberdeen college at the construction and electrical workshops at its Gallowgate and Altens sites. The college made every effort to ensure continuity of teaching staff.

Assessment was ongoing and pupils were given constructive feedback to help improve their performance and build their confidence. Schools are issued with regular reports.

Teaching staff were pleased with the SFEU support materials and, due to the flexibility of the course, these were adapted as lecturers became more familiar with the most enjoyable and rewarding tasks.

Meetings with training/industry agents such as the Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) and the Scottish and Northern Ireland Plumbing Employers Federation (SNIPEF) were arranged to further pupils' opportunities of employment in industry.



Employability Skills

Employability skills are embedded within the delivery of each Unit. Both school and the college stressed the importance of punctuality, wearing appropriate personal protective equipment and organisational skills. Particular emphasis was placed on health and safety issues.

Mixing with college students gave pupils a number of benefits, including a new level of maturity, as they were encouraged to think more for themselves and to question anything they did not understand.

Undoubtedly, this boosted their confidence and, at the same time, encouraged them to use their own initiative. They quickly learned that any decision they made, or any action they took, could have an effect on others. As a result, they listened and willingly took instruction, making them more attractive candidates for employment.

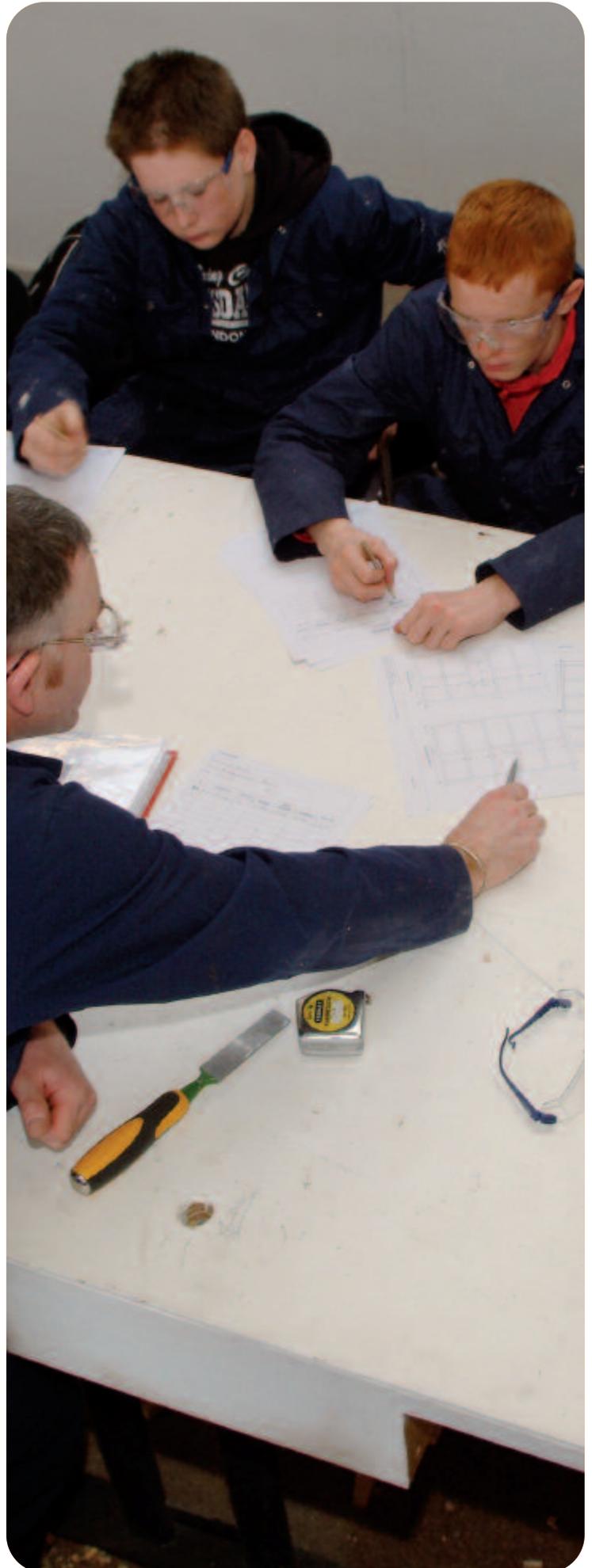
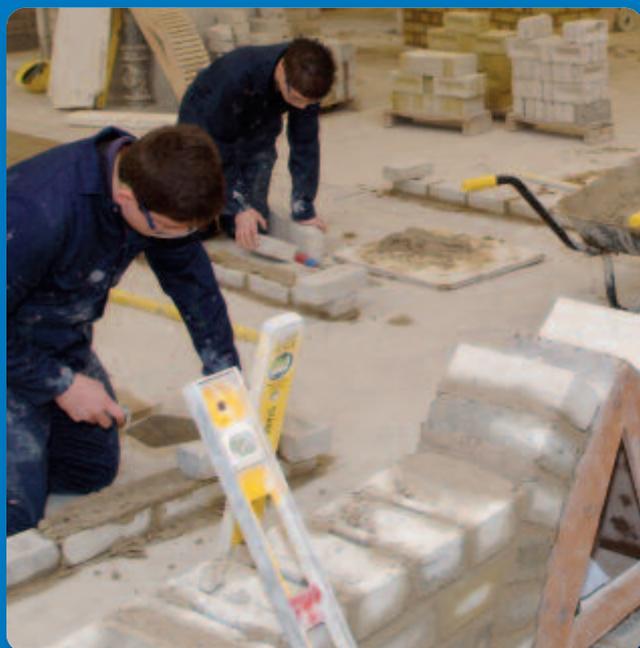
Centre Evaluation

Thanks to the school, correct selection was vital to the success of this pilot as the eager pupils involved showed a genuine interest and willingness to learn.

For their part, pupils were very positive about the course and the college staff felt it is aimed at just the right level to challenge but not overwhelm students. College staff have enjoyed the enthusiasm of the pupils and found them a real pleasure to teach.

“ It’s good because it prepares you for work and because you are around adults, you are treated like one. I liked having the chance to try different skills and trades such as painting and decorating, which I would like to do when I leave school ”

Quote from a Candidate



Future Delivery Plans

Aberdeen College is hoping to offer the course to an increased number of groups with Northfield Academy remaining actively involved.

Due to the success of this pilot, the college has been encouraged to extend its facilities to accommodate the course and plans to adapt existing facilities at the college's Clinterty Centre are progressing.

Now a Skills Competition is planned for pupils attending the college from Northfield Academy and pupils from other schools involved in the same course.

Advice

The course can be very rewarding for both staff and pupils. It depends on appropriate selection of pupils for its success.

“One of the reasons for the success of this pilot is that the partners have communicated well and taken action to address each others comments – there is a real sense of partnership, supported by the very positive feedback from pupils”

**View from Pat Cromar,
Curriculum Manager, Construction**