



European Union
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Social Fund

Lambeth Career Cluster



Project aim

To improve the labour market relevance of learning by supporting school and college leaders in their development and implementation of a whole school approach to delivering high quality careers guidance and a careers curriculum.

Objectives

1. To ensure that young people make a successful school to work/HE transition including improving the employability skills of vulnerable and disadvantaged young people.
2. To draw effectively on labour market intelligence to inform curriculum and careers provision.
3. To increase links between schools, FE, employers and HE and improve the effectiveness and sustainability of these partnerships.
4. To improve schools and college leaders' capability to work with employers/HEIs and to help employers and HEIs identify the most effective way that they work with both individual schools and across a number of schools and colleges.



"I improved with expressing myself to others because I was nervous when I first walked into the office. But now I am more confident" – student.

"I didn't think I had the confidence to answer the phone. But I done it!" – student.



The Project

- The Lambeth Career Cluster project began in July 2016 and ended in March 2019.
- It comprised 17 Lambeth schools, inclusive of three special schools and a pupil referral unit, plus an FE college and an HEI.
- It was student-centred and included employer engagement and staff development.



- Central to retaining the schools' commitment was a service level agreement and having a single point of contact within each institution and the local authority.
- As part of the project each school created a careers strategy (Gatsby benchmark 1).
- Borough-wide cluster meetings involving all schools were held each term. These were much valued by schools as they supported networking and provided opportunities to share best practice.
- In addition 1:1 meetings were regularly conducted between the local authority project lead and the school-based career lead to keep the project on track and address any concerns.
- To support staff development, two career professionals conducted a comprehensive needs analysis and used it to develop a programme of CPD which they delivered.
"Excellent training with plenty of practical support. Well done." - teaching staff.
- As a result all schools attained level 2 of the Quality in Careers Standard and 15 received the full award.



Career fairs, conferences and targeted projects

- Supported by the FE College and HEI, two borough-wide career events were held each year involving employers, training providers and apprentices,. These were attended by over 800 young people (Gatsby benchmarks 2, 5 and 7).
"Students found it useful, although they did not want to go initially" – teacher.
- In addition a number of targeted projects were run to support BAME young people, looked-after children and high-achievers from disadvantaged backgrounds (Gatsby benchmark 3).

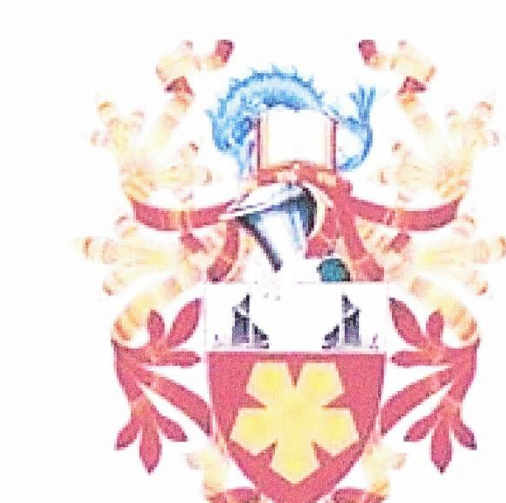


Employer engagement

- A variety of employers and all schools successfully engaged in a range of meaningful school-based employer led pilots over 26 weeks. (Gatsby Benchmarks 2, 4 and 5).
"Today I found the interview skills sessions useful because it shows me I can have confidence in real life" – student.
"The fact that we were able to talk about what we want to be has allowed me to understand it in more depth" – student.
- Over 300 work placements were secured (Gatsby benchmark 6).
"The students I interviewed came in a professional manner and all were worthy of the opportunity" – employer.
"I think the programme has worked well for the pupils and it has been great to see them grow over the time period" – employer.

Key lessons learnt

- Build in time - on average it took four months between schools meeting with employers and the first activity.
- Never underestimate young people – *"A real highlight is Carlos who has managed to get a job with us"* – employer.
- Allow time for conversations and always have a back-up plan.



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