



European Union
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Investing in jobs and skills

This project is funded by:



Leading learning and skills

Individual case study

Salford City Council, The Right Step

James Parish

Project Overview

The Right Step is a structured 13 week programme for NEET (not in education employment or training) 16-18 year olds. The project aims to engage learners through a range of interesting structured activities and develop the literacy, numeracy, ICT and overall employability skills of beneficiaries to support participants into employment or learning opportunities.

Salford City Council received funding for the programme from the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) as part of its 2007-10 European Social Fund (ESF) Co-finance Plan, and deliver the programme through YMCA Training.

The scheme is run in conjunction with other initiatives as part of the wider ESF funded programme, Post 16 Preventing and Reducing NEET, which works with 16-19 year olds living within the city of Salford.

How it Works

Participants are recruited onto the scheme through the close links YMCA Training has with organisations such as Connexions Salford, Youth Offending Teams, supported housing provider Salford Foyer and national young people's charity Fairbridge. Project staff are also involved in the local communities so are ideally placed to identify young people who may benefit from taking part in the scheme.

Learners from a variety of backgrounds are enrolled onto the course, and then take part in a one-on-one intensive interview to assess their individual circumstances and needs and also to identify potential outcomes.

As social and personal development is a key aim of the project, participants take part in community based activities to build confidence and teamwork. Outdoor pursuits such as abseiling, snow boarding and go-carting are part of the offer, with a view to engage learners and instil teamwork, motivation and determination.

During the programme participants study for a Level 1 in numeracy, literacy and ICT and get the opportunity to gain further qualifications in first aid, basic food hygiene, manual handling and drug awareness. As well as achieving qualifications, the programme offers participants a 'taster' in a working environment. Through strong relationships with local employers in a range of occupational areas, the young people can gain appropriate and relevant experience as the project team place them with a company that fits in with their future ambitions and aspirations.

Impact and Success

Participant James Parish was referred to The Right Step course through SMART (Substance Misuse Advice and Referral Team). Having left mainstream education at 16 with few qualifications and limited work experience, James found himself NEET and with no income which was affecting his health, appearance and self esteem.

After being in trouble with the police and experiencing a breakdown with family relations resulting in him moving out of home, James was struggling to find accommodation and needed guidance, support and motivation to get his life back on track.

James said: "After being referred to The Right Step programme, I was able to speak to someone about what I wanted to achieve and where I wanted to be.

"It was great to be able to get out and about on all the trips they had on offer which were really interesting, and I met lots of new people and a few new friends which was just what I needed."

Throughout The Right Step programme, James showed dedication and had excellent attendance and a positive attitude towards the course. He made the decision to work

on the relationship with his family and consequently moved back home and his confidence improved making him more upbeat about his abilities and future.

During the course James achieved first aid, food hygiene and winning skills certificates and completed a fire awareness course at Eccles Fire Station, going on to complete a two week work placement there. Feedback from the placement was 100% positive and a written reference for future employment was provided.

James continued: "I was able to get some good qualifications and am working on creating a CV now so it definitely helps to be able to put them down.

"During my work placement I accompanied the Fire Brigade out to schools in the local area to discuss the danger of fires and fireworks during the November bonfire season, I really enjoyed my time there and found it a useful taster into working life."

James is still with engaged with YMCA Training on an Entry to Employment (e2e) course and is working towards a Level 2 in numeracy and literacy.

James concludes: "Following my e2e course I am going to start looking for a job, with my training and qualifications behind me it has given me extra confidence to tackle application forms and I have a more positive approach to interviews.

"I would definitely recommend the programme to other young people who were in my position, not only was it great fun, it's given me some valuable qualifications to move on with."