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Leading learning and skills

### *Project Case Study*

## **Salford City Council, The Right Step**

### **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**

The programme has achieved significant success by meeting its original literacy and numeracy objectives with all learners and has been able to offer all participants work placements within an area of their choice.

Within the first cohort of ten learners, all participants took part in literacy, numeracy, drug awareness and equality and diversity sessions. All ten beneficiaries gained first aid and food hygiene certificates.

Following the course four of the learners moved onto sustainable employment, two learners progressed onto Entry to Employment, (e2e), courses, one learner undertook the Remploy programme and two have moved onto further studies at Salford College.

Julie Riley, Project Manager for The Right Step commented: "The programme has had some excellent results, beneficiaries were well supported throughout the programme and the majority have moved onto positive destinations."

Participant James Parish was referred to The Right Step course through SMART (Substance Misuse Advice and Referral Team). 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.

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 and then continued 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 is still engaged with YMCA Training on the e2e course and is working towards a Level 2 in numeracy and literacy with a view to attending Salford College in September 2009 to complete a carpentry and joinery course.

Currently working with a second cohort of learners, the programme will have worked with four separate groups and a total of 40 beneficiaries over the next year.

**ENDS**

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