

'Upskilling' the vocational teachers with subject specific skills in literacy and numeracy

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- Largest College in London
- 5 campuses across two boroughs
- 22,000 students and 1400 staff
 - 71% of students do not have English as their first language*
 - 100 languages spoken*
- College offer:
 - Key stage 4; FE; HE; International; Apprenticeships; Commercial*

Key Principles of Learner First

- Identifying and understanding **all** the learners we serve and their constituencies
- Providing staff with the support and development to enable them to work effectively with the learners
- Ensuring access to the full range of learning opportunities
- Delivering the obligation to stretch and challenge all learners whilst responding to need
- Reviewing all systems, procedures, processes to ensure that they effectively enable the learner journey and keeping them under review to ensure that that they continue to be fit for purpose
- Establishing leadership and management behaviours consistent with the principles of focus on the learner and the learner journey
- Creation of a listening culture both internally and externally to establish shared perspectives
- Developing a curriculum that is responsive, innovative and evolving to ensure it remains fit for purpose
- Develop and embed rigorous quality procedures that are based around a creative and 'bottom up' approach

What the Learner First Commitment asks of teachers

- Expert facilitators of learning
- Outstanding preparation and planning of lessons and assessments
- Collaborative with the confidence to let students lead and make decisions about their learning
- Student focussed and empathic through understanding the students' world
- Employ a range of differentiated learning activities which ensure that students enjoy and achieve
- Passionate about student success

Whole College themes underpinning the Curriculum Strategy

- Learner First Commitment
- Safeguarding
- Equality & Diversity
- Skills for Life
- Quality Improvement

The Skills for Life Strategy Involves:

- Managing Learning
- Organising learning
- Accessing learning
- Quality of learning
- Training and Development
- Impact and Measurement of Learning

What do we mean by 'upskilling'?

- The 'ideal'?
Total 'Upskilling' – the vocational teacher is also the literacy, language and numeracy teacher.
- The 'reality'?
Vocational teachers have a working awareness of literacy, language and numeracy

Why do we need to give vocational teachers this awareness?

- To improve learners' achievement and progress
- The cultural significance of language has an impact on behaviour and achievement
- Skills for life is not an indicator of lower levels of ability – students at all levels may need support
- Renewed focus from government
- **All** exam boards required to include accuracy of grammar, punctuation and spelling in assessment from Sept 2012

Why do we need to give vocational teachers this awareness?

- Employers expect learners to be at level 2 in English and Maths
- Maths and English knowledge is fundamental to future prosperity.
- Vocational teachers will be more effective in the teaching of their subject.
- LLN competence leads to greater respect from learners.
- Vocational teachers are able to complement what the LLN specialist teacher does

What have we done at EHWLC?

- Skills for Life central to teaching and learning strategy
- Skills for Life Strategy – “buy in” from all teachers - LLN skills of all staff to be developed
- Management structure
- Advanced teachers
- Teaching and Learning observation training
- Essential component in every Department’s curriculum plan
- Investment in resources e.g. 3 hrs for literacy per week
- All new staff to have level two Maths/English as a condition of employment

What have we done at EHWLC?

- Existing staff to receive necessary training
- Teacher training department
- Union support
- Distinction between literacy, language and numeracy
- Staff training courses at convenient times
- Attendance on courses is recognised as contact time.
- Skills for Life whole college training days
- Skills for Life departmental training days
- Context of criteria for student progression
- Access to resources

What have we done at EHWLC?

- All teachers are language role models
- Secondment of specialists to the vocational teams
- Initial and Diagnostic Assessment linked to Individual learning plans
- Marking and correction codes
- Implementation of literacy and language criteria to determine pass/merit/distinction
- Literacy entry requirements mapped to each qualification level for each department - compulsory qualifications for level 2 students
- IT components – Markbook, linked schemes of work, Sure Skills, Mindset, on-line materials; student portal

Issues

- Some staff do not acknowledge that there is an issue with their own LLN skills
- Staff recognise an issue but are reluctant to face it
- Reluctance to take on an additional work load that any relevant training might incur
- Cost!

Positive Outcomes

- Whole College sign up – compliance or belief
- Numeracy is embedded into ESOL programmes
- Increase in numbers of staff who have taken up the Additional Diplomas (Level 5) in Literacy and Numeracy
- Success rates are improving

Feedback from vocational staff

- “Doing the Additional Diploma in Adult Numeracy course gave me an insight into the individual needs of students (in terms of maths, language and specific needs) and the resources and skills to address them. I find that my lessons are now richer in terms of resources and activities and students respond very positively”
- “I have found the course really useful. It was particularly helpful in enabling me to embed Numeracy into the courses for Business Apprentices”

Feedback from vocational staff

- “The course really helped me to understand the rules of language and things about language that I had never thought of before. It helped me understand the concept of a variety of ‘Englishes’ – particularly useful for working with a whole range of employers with various expectations in terms of language”
- “There was a wide variety of abilities of apprentices in terms of literacy – the course helped me understand how to work with all these differing needs”

Feedback from vocational staff

- “This year there were more first time passes which I am convinced is due to my greater understanding of language”
- “Another really useful thing was that I could relate better to the literacy experts attached to the course because of my greater understanding. This helped make the course really successful”