

Apprenticeship Learners Focus Group

Level 7

17th November 2021

Background

In order to develop our apprenticeship offer to learners and ensure we meet their needs going forward, as well as to discover our impact on learners, we scheduled a focus group with employers in November 2021.

We had 8 attendees on 17th November 2021. Most other employers cited the Covid-19 pandemic as a reason for non-attendance.

We asked 4 questions:

- What have you found to be the most helpful or the most positive thing about your experience on the programme?
- What examples have you got of the impact of our programmes on your organisation?
- What would you like to see improve on the programme?
- What do you think is missing from our provision, as an employer?

Attending For NCE:

- Rachel O'Halleron
- Ben Barton
- Ruth Gilbert
- Andy Greene

Level 7 Learners:

- Jennifer Bruce, Curriculum Leader
- Warren Sheng, Business Manager
- Louise Hall, Prep Sport Coordinator
- Louise Hutton, Assistant Head
- Kuldeep Chahal, Assistant Head
- Nicole Lawson, Senior Teacher
- Chris Bateman, Assistant Head
- Hannah Griffiths, Assistant Head
- Karen Clinton, Deputy Headteacher

Roundtable Summary

What have you found to be the most helpful or the most positive thing about your experience on the programme?:

- Professional Learning days allowed to put everything into context
- Wide variety of content from within schools and outside – provides different perspectives
- Helpful support on well-being et.
- Turning theory into practice workshops.
- Regular Friday dispatches emails – on-going communications
- Smaller networking groups
- Concept of putting staff first
- Focus on something was important – working on Apprenticeship rather than watching TV!
- Checklist of standards really helpful
- Quality of the reading materials

What impact has the programme had on you and your organisation?:

- Leadership models and ideas (2-pizza meeting, snow melts at the edges) and values have impacted how I work in my school.
- The different models that we learn about can be applied in school.
- Helped me to find out what is happening strategically in school and talk about that strategy confidently but also understand the financial implications of that strategy and where the funding is coming from.
- Helped me to manage two underperforming senior leaders in my school and reading about leadership has helped me to support both of them in different ways that work for the school and the individuals.
- I am able to help in my new school as the architect of the culture through the reading on the apprenticeship and providing staff with resources we can use across our teams.
- Gives me more confidence to implement what I know is right for the organisation.

What would you like to see improve on the programme?:

- The Initial communication could be improved.
- Too much information at the beginning of the programme and not enough clarity
- Better introductions to other people in the course. Especially online – move into network groups earlier.
- Off the job is hard to understand and also what is allowed and what isn't allowed.
- More support on the apprenticeship tasks (what does a pass/merit and distinction look like)
- Academic essay writing needs better support – sample essay with a mark scheme to start with.
- More clarity of what is expected, and when, with whom (group work in particular)
- Details about the format of documents to go into OneFile

What do you think is missing from our provision?:

- Hearing from alumni and other apprentices about how they got on with the programme.
- More support from getting onto the programme to starting.
- Preparation for sitting in lectures.
- Better networking across people in similar settings/roles but in different areas across the country
- More time to reflect on the learning before the TTiP session (the day after)
- Everyone needs a buddy (to talk through the challenges with)

Recommendations and Actions

- More support earlier in the apprenticeship
- Hearing from alumni for May/September 2022 starts
- Continued and better networking
- Employer survey and additional focus group planned for end of Spring Term (early April 2022)