

Case Study 1

South West College – Enniskillen Campus

South West College operates across four campuses – in Cookstown, Dungannon, Enniskillen and Omagh – covering the counties of Tyrone and Fermanagh. This case study focuses on the training programme delivered at the Enniskillen campus.

The Enniskillen campus provides education and training mainly for people from Fermanagh, but it also caters for students from County Cavan, Leitrim and Tyrone. Trainees in the Enniskillen campus have a wide range of abilities and diverse social backgrounds.

Our vision in South West College is ‘Developing People and Achieving Potential’. The programme we offer to our Training for Success trainees centres around this goal, and this certainly applies to how we use Progress File; first we aim to develop the trainees themselves, and through this to equip them with the skills to reach their full potential and the confidence to find work. Training for Success is a two-year programme (104 weeks).

In using Progress File we aim to blend the Widening Horizons materials with the City & Guilds Employability and Personal Development qualification. This offers a broad range of units across different learning areas and is the main focus of our curriculum for trainees.

The Employability and Personal Development qualification is a one-year programme; we deliver it during the first 52 weeks of the full Training for Success programme.

Blending Progress File into the Training Programme

The Employability and Personal Development qualification shares content with the Widening Horizons materials in a number of areas. So, to avoid duplication of delivery, Vocational tutors, Essential Skills tutors and Training Support Officers have devised a programme for delivering Progress File; this blends Widening Horizons materials, materials used in Employability and Personal Development, and the administration to monitor trainees’ progress.

To develop our programme we mapped the activities in Widening Horizons to the Employability portfolio, trainees’ six-weekly reviews, and Essential Skills provision. Staff could then identify gaps in our provision of Widening Horizons and make arrangements to deliver the additional material we needed to cover.

Implementing a Blended Progress File

We introduce all our Training for Success trainees to the Progress File, Presenter and Widening Horizons materials during their induction, which includes a General Induction delivered by Training Support Officers and a Specific Induction by Vocational tutors.

Many of the materials we use to deliver the City & Guilds Employability qualification meet the aims of Progress File but are enhanced by the inclusion of activities from Widening Horizons. Trainees cover the evidence for Employability in Widening Horizons and store it in their Employability File.

The Vocational tutor is responsible for delivering Employability and adapts materials to make them trade specific. The Vocational tutor also carries out the trainees' six-weekly reviews, and the evidence used covers the learning in Widening Horizons. This is stored in the Administration File.

While the Vocational tutor covers some elements of Widening Horizons in trainees' induction and in Employability, others are the responsibility of the Essential Skills tutor. We store the evidence for these in an Essential Skills File.

Reviewing the Implementation

The main challenge for us is having limited time to deliver the Employability qualification and Progress File programme. We deliver Progress File mainly in the first 52 weeks of Training for Success, while trainees are taking their City & Guilds Employability and Personal Development qualification. In the second 52 weeks, trainees review their CVs, continue their six-weekly reviews and add documents such as certificates to their Presenters.

Nevertheless, including Progress File in the training programme enables the trainees to become engaged in the learning process. They are able to take ownership of the qualifications they are striving to achieve. The trainees also develop wider skills, which enhance their employability and prepare them for work with local and national employers.

In our experience, these have been the main benefits of blending Progress File with the Employability and Personal Development qualification:

- Trainees develop wider skill sets.
- The scheme of work we use to prepare for employment post training is more cohesive.
- We are able to chart trainees' progress more clearly.
- Trainees can see the qualification they are taking in a practical context, including how it can be applied outside the training environment and used for their own benefit.