

## Case Study

### Foundation and Higher Diplomas in Construction and the Built Environment: fully integrated Specialist Learning delivered at Croydon consortium

#### Introduction

Croydon consortium commenced delivery of their first line of learning for the Diploma in September 2008. They recruited 20 learners for the Higher and a further 12 learners for the Foundation Diploma in Construction and the Built Environment. Croydon College leads the delivery of an imaginative programme which fully integrates Specialist Learning with Principal Learning at both levels to learners aged 14-16 years from local schools.

Further lines of learning are to follow in September 2009 including Engineering, which will be delivered in the college, and Creative and Media, which will be lead by another consortium centre. There are plans for additional lines of learning by 2010: the college will lead on Hospitality, Public Services and IT Diplomas, whilst other Croydon Consortium centres will lead in Business, Administration and Finance; Sport and Active Leisure; and Society, Health and Development.



#### Background

Prior to the introduction of the Diploma, Croydon College had several years' experience of delivering integrated programmes for level 1 and 2 Construction learners. These were based on the BTEC First Certificate in Construction at level 2 and the BTEC Introductory Certificate in Construction at level 1 and included the delivery of accredited employability skills and health and safety.

## Employer engagement

Croydon work closely with local employers to ensure they delivery programmes which will provide employers with recruits with appropriate skills. Construction Skills were helpful in suggesting links to suitable employers that the consortia could use.

Construction employers have indicated they would look for new recruits who have:

- a broad understanding of the Construction and Built Environment Sector
- understanding of key principles of construction site health, safety and welfare
- appropriate construction skills
- aspirations to the highest levels of employment within the industry
- skills, attitudes and behaviours required for purposeful employment.

Critical success factors identified for successful delivery are:

- agreeing and observing clearly defined protocols for employer engagement
- effectively managing employer partnership arrangements through key personnel
- recognising that work placement experiences are only part of the contribution employers can make towards enhancing the curriculum delivery of work related learning
- valuing employer contributions.

**How is the Diploma in Construction and the Built Environment being delivered?**

Day 1	Day 2
Tutorial programme - including WorkSkills	
Diploma Research (IT room)	Diploma Principal Learning and BTEC theory (classroom)
Project Build (Project area)	Practical skills (Workshops)

Croydon have put in place a fully integrated model for level 1 and 2 learners. Two days per week at the college allows the learners to cover the requirements of both Principal and Specialist Learning in combination in delivery blocks. The tutorial system supports the delivery and assessment of WorkSkills and functional skills are delivered within the framework of the other qualifications. Both cohorts return to their schools for the rest of the week to cover core curriculum.

### Higher Diploma

These learners have been recruited from four schools including one single-sex girls' school. The Specialist Learning qualification delivered is:

[EDEXCEL Level 2 BTEC Extended Certificate in Construction and the Built Environment \(Craft\) \(500/3887/4\)](#)

**Foundation Diploma**

These learners have been recruited from eight schools. The Specialist Learning qualification delivered is:

[EDEXCEL Level 1 BTEC Certificate in Construction and the Built Environment \(500/3934/9\)](#)

**Delivery**

Each block is a minimum of 2 hours:

**Day 1**

**Diploma Research (IT room)**

Supervised research using computers to access information necessary for course work for both Principal Learning and BTEC Specialist Learning.

Although currently delivered in the college, it is envisaged that this block could in due course be delivered by a school.

**Project Build (Project area)**

Learners plan, design and build a small bungalow utilising space in the underground car park beside the college. Plans were checked by an employer before construction started. Health and safety regulations are enforced fully in the build area which is unheated.

Higher Diploma learners are constructing a 2 room bungalow whilst Foundation Diploma learners have a separate area to work on a 1 room construction.

The project allows them to develop and utilise all the practical skills they are learning on the BTEC Specialist Learning.

**Day 2**

**Diploma Principal Learning and BTEC theory (classroom)**

Learners cover the necessary theory for both Principal Learning and the BTEC Specialist Learning in this block. Health and safety issues are addressed.

Although currently delivered in the college, it is envisaged that this block could in due course be delivered by a school.

### **Practical skills (Workshops)**

Learners develop the skills to use all the necessary tools required in the BTEC and Principal Learning programmes.

### **Will this model be suitable for other lines of learning?**

Plans are well advanced for the delivery of Foundation and Higher Diplomas in Engineering from September 2009. The model developed for CBE will be used for both groups. Specialist learning will be covered using the Edexcel Level 2 BTEC Extended Certificate in Engineering which has a choice of pathways for Higher level learners and Edexcel's Level 1 BTEC Introductory Certificate in Engineering for those studying the Foundation Diploma. The Project Build will be based on the development of a 'green machine', probably a wind turbine, instead of a bungalow.

The model could also be adapted for Creative and Media learners and other lines of learning where there is a significant practical element.

### **Progression opportunities**

The consortium has not yet decided whether they will offer the Advanced Diploma in Construction and the Built Environment themselves. However they see opportunities for Higher Diploma learners to progress to Advanced Diplomas offered by other consortia in the sector or alternatively in other Lines of Learning such as Engineering or Business, Administration and Finance.

An Advanced Apprenticeship would also be suitable progression for these learners.

Foundation Diploma Construction and the Built Environment learners will be able to progress to a Higher Diploma in this sector or alternatively in Engineering delivered at Croydon.

Another option is to move on to an Apprenticeship. Croydon College currently offer this option at level 2 using the Edexcel level 2 BTEC First Diploma in Construction and BTEC WorkSkills.