


VET STUDY VISIT IN ROMFORD, ENGLAND AND CARDIFF, WALES (UNITED KINGDOM)

30th November – 4th December 2011

Visits details

Study visit participants :

Margit Theis-Scholz (expert from Germany)
Marie Johnsson (expert from Sweden)
Vincent Borg (expert from Malta)
Linda Jordan (expert from UK England and host)
Sharon Gould (expert from UK England and host)
Stephen Beyer (expert from UK Wales and host)
Mary Kyriazopoulou (European Agency staff member)
Anabel Corral Granados (European Agency staff member)

Programme:

1st day afternoon

Meeting at Sbectrwm (a Vision 21 base)

Tour of Sbectrwm, which included project visits to Fairwater Industrial Pottery, Fairwater Community Garden and Gegin Fach - the community café. Discussions with the staff and people with learning disabilities who work in these projects.

Stephen Beyer presented Vocational Training and Employment in Wales

1. Learning Pathways 14-19

There are three elements to learner provision:

- Individual Learning Pathway: - to meet the needs of each individual, including formal, non-formal and informal strands;
- Wider choice and flexibility of courses – leading to qualifications from a local curriculum;
- Wider learning from the Learning Core – including skills, knowledge, attitudes, values and experiences that all 14-19 year olds will need whatever their pathway.

Types of learner support are:

- Access to a Learning Coach – greater learning support for those in greater need;
- Access to Personal Support - to help overcome personal barriers to learning;
- Impartial Careers Advice and Guidance

2. Further Education and Training

National Planning and Funding System

- A single planning and funding system for all post-compulsory learning in Wales run by DCELLS in WAG

Further Education Institutions

- WAG central lead in planning and funding: The Learner Provision Team, DCELLS
- 21 colleges of FE



- Special Needs allocation – Based on “Section 149” assessments by the Careers service, this allocates any special resources needed to the College

Resident college placement

- This may involve local authorities paying for the transport of care components of the residential element

Work Based Learning Providers

- Unemployed over 6 months?: Where an employer has received approval from Jobcentre Plus to employ an individual, the new recruit will be eligible for financial support of up to 1.500 pounds.
- This funding pays for the cost of training that will assist him/her in undertaking the new job role
- Foundation Apprenticeship and Apprenticeship Employed with Levels 2,3,4 training

Adult community learning

- Flexible learning opportunities for adults delivered in community venues to meet local needs
- 19+, this includes both formal and informal/non-accredited learning opportunities

Individual Learning Accounts

- Budget to contribute 10-200 pounds to any course
- Withdrawn March 2011

Government Employment provision

The Work Programme

- Replaces a range of programmes and provides a generic route for those not in employment to pursue work
- Includes NEETs (with an overlap to SEN)
- Includes provision for some people with health problems, but expectation that they will be fit for work in 3-months

Workstep – Work Choices

- Welfare to work for people with more substantial disabilities

Ad hoc Local Authority and Voluntary sector provision

- Range of providers
- Range of employment skills and work experience
- May link to wider qualifications and awarding institutions
- Usually paid for by social services and charitable grants.

Barry Shiers presented the history of Vision 21 and the development of the social enterprise sector and future plans and opportunities

VISION 21:

Vision 21 has been in existence for 23 years and helped 200 learners to move into employment. This project started with a motivated social worker who trained two trainees with disabilities in his own house. Nowadays it is an organisation consisting of 16 different projects (6 or 7 people per project). The director referred to these programmes as social enterprises with a focus on accommodating individual needs. There is a mix of therapeutic and vocational projects (learners don't get paid) with a focal point on stability; the trainees can stay in the projects as long as they want, they offer an environment that is safe where they can feel happy.



Vision 21 focus group: it is broad, with learners aged from 15 to 72 years old that live in the surrounding area. They come from several institutions, schools, colleges, social services etc. Some of them have tried other services in the past.

The groups of students aged from 14-19 years old participate in summer schemes and vocational training one day a week as part of their transition project (individual projects and portfolio). It is normally a group of 20 or 30 learners per year.

Organisation staff: 66 working staff and 40 volunteers

PROGRAMME CHARACTERISTICS:

Relevance of good “Project Drivers”: This organisation aims to employ the “right people” for managing its projects. The profile of the people employed is based on the skills needed for the project activities (they need to understand the industry), being good managers (focus on business) and working well with the students. In the interview process they are brought into the setting so the organisation can observe how they work. When they are taken on, the organisation supports them with continuous training in the disability field and on strategies as systematic instructions.

Portfolio as “individual follow ups of students”: students normally come without information on their own abilities (focus in labelling). We develop detailed resources with information on their abilities, strengths and their support needs.

Open to the community: projects are integrated into public spaces or are in places where the local community are participants.

Their learning is focused on the National Qualification System: Focus on soft skills training that increases their independence and helps them to face problems. Each of the trainees has their own personal development plan, daily logs and individual achievement modular units. The units are divided and broken down in objectives relating to the working activities. Each group has a manager who coordinates the information between the activities.

2nd day

Visit to Fieldway, the Oaks Garden Centre and to Roots Horticultural Enterprise in Bettws

A tour to Fieldways Workshop, ICT Suite and Creative choices/Training and Mentoring and discussion with the staff and learners

Visit and lunch in the Belle Vue Tea Rooms in Belle View Park, where people with disabilities run a restaurant

Visit and tour to Roots Horticultural Enterprise in Bettws and discussion with the staff and trainers



Travelled back to London

3rd day

Visit to the ROSE project in Romford

Introduction to the Rose project by the managers Sharon Gould and Jenny Carr

ROSE PROJECT

Aims: supported employment together with parents and professionals from a higher education college.

Focus group: principally young people (40 clients per year). During the last years 73 have obtained a job and 60 have kept it.

In 2006, two parents of children with disabilities and teachers of SEN visited a job coaching program in Liverpool and decided to implement it locally. They are a strong team with vision and great leadership skills.

PROGRAMME CHARACTERISTICS:

An essential role of job coaching: following job profile standards, flexibility, being a people person, having experience in care industry and no need of formal qualifications. They receive training on health and safety qualifications, information on systematic instructions and teaching counselling.

Importance of curricula development, interview skills and personal centred profile: they look at the job description, risk assessment safety rules, client motivation, skills and abilities. They allocate the student to the job, being honest and realistic. They concentrate on the person's abilities based on competences and the client being able to create good results.

Network with enterprises: Intended that organisations contain a number of people with disabilities. A Key role on the "Job Developer" to get the right staff on each organisation. For example in Mc Donalds, they have 7 clients from this project.

One to one in job individual support: programmes are planned individually following a Traffic light system:

- Red: normally of one month duration in which the job coach is always present and accompanies the client during his daily job activities.
- Orange: employer, employee and job coach conduct a review. They normally decide that the job coach will work with the client half of the time.
- Green: employer, employee and job coach conduct a review. They will decide when the client is able to work alone.
- Formal visits 3 times per year

In service training on disability awareness and systematic instructions from staff in the organisations where their clients work

Open possibility to retraining of clients: career development of their clients. They offer information to their clients on up-skilling



SOME OUTPUTS

Example of client 1: 4 years working in Mc Donalds. He feels that their support has been very helpful. His self esteem and confidence have increased. He is living alone; he feels independent and enjoys more of his free time. It is starting to apply to do a degree in hospitality.

Example of client 2: she is working in an administrative position at the local town hall. She has been in that position for 1 year and 8 months. She loves the job and feels that “everybody loves her” as she feels that she is very appreciated. She is motivated to start an administrative foundation course. (see doc 2)

Visit to Employer – Mc Donald’s, The Mall, Romford Essex .

We spoke with Gerry Byrne, the manager of Mc Donald’s, about his experience employing people with SEN. His attitude was very positive. He has employed a number of perons with SEN and so far has not had any problems. The people taking part in the ROSE project initially go to work with a coach, who gradually reduces his time until the person with SEN can do the job on his own without assistance.

We also spoke with a young person with SEN working in Mc Donald’s who was very happy with his job.I

Visit to Employer – Richard Allen Liddell Solicitors, in Essex.

We discussed with Richard Allen Liddell about his experience of employing a person with SEN. He is very happy with the person and has never had any problems.

We also spoke with Mathew Lyne who is working in the solicitors office with the support of the ROSE project. He was very happy with his job.

Meeting Parents and young people with SEN.

We met and discussed with 4 parents and one young woman with SEN that works with the support of the ROSE project in the municipality.

The parents said that the main barrier is that some benefits are lost once people with SEN get a paid job, so some parents do not want to lose the benefits. In many cases people with SEN prefer to work part time in order not to lose the benefits.

It is very important to have real professionals as job coaches. They need to not only support the person but also to inform the employer and the other employees.

Usually the total support is up to a year. During the first month the job coach is always with the person with SEN. During the second month the coach is with them almost half of the time, the third month is 1 hour per day, and so on.

They believe that it is more cost effective for people with SEN to work with the support of job coaching than live on benefits.

We also spoke with a young girl with SEN who is working in the municipality and is supported by the ROSE project. She presented her life story, explaining the difficulties she had at school and she was very happy with her job.