

CASE STUDY 9

Providing pre-apprenticeship opportunities: Future Skills College Dundee

Partners

Dundee City Council, Angus Council, Dundee & Angus College, Northwood Charitable Trust, local employers, secondary schools and others¹

Focus

A pre-apprenticeship pathway designed for secondary school students delivered in college and the workplace

Success factors:

- A pre-apprenticeship pathway
- Involves a work placement
- Delivered in college while learners are still enrolled at school
- Progression to a full-time apprenticeship possible
- Managing transitions to work
- Addressing the school-work gap

¹ The partnership also includes links with Dundee and Angus Chamber of Commerce, Dundee and Angus Developing the Young Workforce, Skills Development Scotland and the University of Dundee.

➤ “The Future Skills College is a future focused programme that supports the transition from school to college and prepares young people for work. The courses equip young people with the skills, knowledge and crucially, the experience that our local employers are looking for in their employees. Dundee and Angus College is proud to be part of a partnership that provides sustainable career pathways for the young people in our region.”

Julie Grace, Vice Principal Curriculum and Attainment

➤ “At the beginning of the Future Skills course I was shy and nervous around new people and didn’t really know anything about this course but now I feel I am more confident as a person, and I know many different things about childcare that will help me in the future.”

Brooke, FSC Early Learning and Childcare

Future Skills College (FSC)² is a collaboration between Dundee City Council, Angus Council, Dundee & Angus College, Northwood Charitable Trust and local secondary schools.

A pre-apprenticeship pathway

FSC is a response to research that highlights a concern that many young people, despite having successfully secured an initial positive destination on leaving school, had not sustained this at age 19.

A highly innovative approach to managing the transition from secondary education into the world of work, Future Skills College is a full-time, one year, pre-apprenticeship pathway designed for secondary school students.

Potential full-time apprenticeship opportunities with local employers are identified then learners secure these places through the school course choice process prior to entering S5 and S6 in Dundee City and Angus Council secondary schools.

Managing transitions to work

Learners have access to a wide range of pre-apprenticeship courses including:

- Early learning and childcare
- Plumbing
- Joinery
- Electrical

FSC students usually spend one day per week on work placement with their future employer. This gives students the opportunity to work directly with other staff and be better ready to start an apprenticeship at the end of the course. They spend four days per week in college following specially designed pre-apprenticeship college courses in their chosen area of employment.

2 <https://www.futureskillscollege.org.uk/>

In addition, they have access to a broad curriculum, with a strong focus on literacy and numeracy as well as Health and Wellbeing and take part in a wide range of activities to build their confidence, widen their experience and gain additional qualifications. This has included Growth Mindset workshops, outdoor education activities as well as the Youth and Philanthropy Initiative (YPI)³.

FSC also has a full-time student support officer working on their behalf.

This innovative pathway to work also gives employers an opportunity to start building their own young workforce, enhancing recruitment opportunities and developing support for new employees.

Addressing the school-work gap

Future Skills College represents a highly innovative approach to managing the transition from full-time secondary education into the world of work via college. The intervention closes the school-work gap by securing full-time employment for young people as apprentices in their chosen field.

Impact

FSC opened in June 2017 and is currently in its 4th year of operation. 90 students have completed the course in its first three years. Despite COVID hitting last year's cohort very hard 48 FSC graduates secured full-time apprenticeships. At the time of writing all but 4 of the others are still in other positive destinations.

3 <https://ypiscotland.org.uk/>

