

Developing Future Leaders – University of Wales, Trinity Saint David

Creativity / Innovation:

The Growing Workforces through Learning And Development (GWLAD) project is an innovative programme developed by the Wales Institute for Work Based Learning (WIWBL) at University of Wales Trinity Saint David (UWTSD). The project secured EU funding to deliver accredited work-based learning programmes, supporting the ongoing professional development of employees across South West Wales and was initiated in January 2016.

The GWLAD Project offers bespoke work-based courses which reflect the specific needs of a range of sectors, collaborating with organisations to develop programmes that are responsive, flexible and which add value to the workplace. The Project offering is innovative in that all academic staff have been recruited from businesses in the region and offer a wealth of practical and theoretical knowledge and experience. Additionally, the programmes are designed to help equip the workforce in terms of improving competence and confidence, developing existing skills further and by offering accredited higher education programmes. One of the underlying principles of this Project is the promotion of lifelong learning for the organisation as well as the individual.

Sustainability:

The factors outlined above facilitate growth in relation to the knowledge economy and increase productivity levels throughout the region, developing transferable skills to maintain a broader long-term and sustainable impact. To date, the programme has been delivered to a cohort from the Care Sector, two cohorts from the Food Wholesale sector and learners from the Third sector. Further enquiries have recently been received from the Hospitality sector. One such employer to take advantage of the opportunities offered under the Project are Fieldbay, a health and social care provider.

Fieldbay provides high quality services for people who have complex needs associated with mental illness, learning disabilities, challenging behaviour and dementia. Their staff take pride in the care they provide, treating their users as they would want to be treated themselves. The organisation has a unique ethos and culture, one that is rarely found in other organisations within the sector.

Fieldbay's strategy of expansion ran the risk of diluting their ethos and culture. To counter this and meet succession planning needs, they developed their Leadership Academy. In collaboration with the GWLAD Project within WIWBL at UWTSD, four accredited Leadership modules were developed and delivered. The modules cover all aspects of Leadership, providing both theory and opportunity for application within the workplace. They are available at both Undergraduate and Postgraduate levels.

Transferability:

Being accredited modules successful completion of all four can lead to recognised academic qualifications; the Level 4 Certificate in Higher Education and the Level 7 Post Graduate Diploma in Higher Education.

The modules were initially developed by the GWLAD Project to be generic enough to meet the business needs of a range of sectors. Discussions held with Fieldbay resulted in a programme designed to meet their plans for developing existing staff; the modules were seen as a means to underpin their learning and development strategy. The Academy sought to address identified succession planning needs as they implemented their business strategy and opened new homes. This would safeguard the organisation's ethos and culture from dilution, as they could appoint from within rather than recruit senior positions externally. The Project would also act as a catalyst for stimulating the learners' enthusiasm for lifelong learning and the importance of embedding robust personal development plans in the workplace. Having development plans in place which address both personal needs and the organisation's strategy, is one of the key assessment requirement of the first module.

The work the Project has undertaken in collaboration with Fieldbay, has resulted in the organisation being recognised with the 'Excellence in Learning and Development' award, by the regional CIPD team.

Impact:

Currently the Project is engaging with 118 learners and 53 different employers, reflecting the demographics of the region. It is promoting a legacy of a well-researched and developed leadership programme within each learner's workplace, ensuring that the project has continued to deliver benefits long after the module has been successfully completed. The project serves to reinforce the University's ethos, *transforming education, transforming lives*.

Quotes from those taking part in Fieldbay's Leadership Academy on 22/9/16 include the following:

"Interactive and relevant course for managers of varying experiences, delivered by knowledgeable and friendly tutors".

“As a new manager, the leadership course has given me invaluable skills I didn’t have before”.

“This course has helped me recognise how to manage my staff through different situations”.

“I did not think I would be doing a University course at my age. I’m enjoying, if I can do it anyone can”.

Nick Samuel

Trinity Saint David