

# Amazing Careers in the NE

## George Stephenson High School

### National Curriculum subject content

Year 12 Careers Education

### Project Summary

The aim of this project was to introduce the Year 12 students to a range of different career opportunities, but to do so in a way that would also develop skills useful in their futures. A brief was set by the North East Local Enterprise Partnership (NE LEP) who had recently produced a film and materials for school age students which focused on the key industry growth sectors in the NE. The sixth formers were asked to produce a lesson plan and activities/resources for Year 8 students that teachers would be able to use in careers lessons which would include reference to the LEP's materials. The final versions of the lesson plans and resources were to be judged by the LEP, with those of high enough quality published and put on the organisation's website for any teachers to download.

The project took place once a week for eight weeks with the students working in groups of five to produce their final product. The students started by thinking about what makes a 'great' lesson. They were asked to consider this both in terms of what the school senior leaders would think, but also Year 8 students. This was achieved through using the school lesson plan forma, working with teaching staff and talking to the Year 8's during their form time.

Over the project timeframe, visitors from the university and local businesses came in who provided content that the students could then build in to their lesson plans. These visits took the form of a panel discussion and small group Q &A.

Ongoing feedback was provided informally by the sixth form staff and Head of Careers and then in formal group sessions.

### Skill development

- Team work
- Working to a project brief
- Working to deadlines
- Interviewing adults and young people
- Producing work for a specific target audience
- Presenting to an external audience



## Cultural capital

One of the early project sessions was led by an education officer from Newcastle University library who introduced the students to research skills (information literacy) and the resources available for sixth form students to help them with their A Level studies. Although this session took place at the school, it also runs in the university library (see resources section)

This was followed by visits from representatives from a range of local businesses, including apprentices, who talked about their industries and the careers within them e.g. Rolls Royce, Sterling Pharmaceuticals, Home Group, Northumbria Police, and Northumberland County Council.

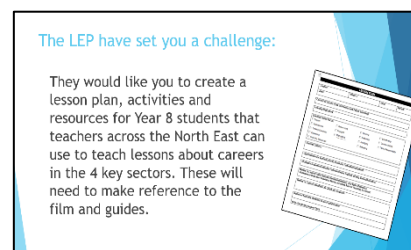
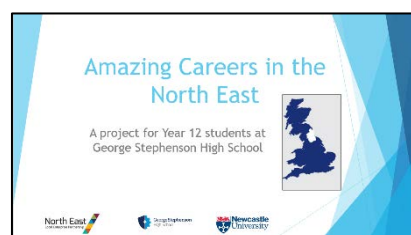
## Project activity with timeline

Pre-project	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6	Week 7	Week 8
<p>Launch event</p> <p>Pre-project task</p> <p>Split students into groups</p> <p>Research in Year 8 class</p>	<p>Give out project brief</p> <p>Introduction to library skills – how to research.</p>	<p>Panel discussions with employers and Sector leads from the LEP.</p> <p>Feedback from sixth form staff</p>	<p>Students make the lesson plans and resources</p> <p>Deadline 1: Lesson plan to be completed including an 'identify your needs' section</p> <p>Feedback from sixth form staff</p>	<p>Employer visit</p> <p>Students continue making the resources</p> <p>Feedback from sixth form staff</p>	<p>Employer visit</p> <p>students to put together lesson resources</p> <p>Feedback from Head of Careers</p>	<p>Employer visit</p> <p>versions of resources ready for trialling</p>	<p>Trialling lesson with Year 8's</p> <p>Deadline 2: Final version of lesson plan completed</p> <p>All resources completed.</p>	<p>Presentation</p> <p>Students to make revisions based on the feedback from the panel</p>

## Entry event

The entry event took place just before Christmas with the actual project due to start after the holiday. This was to give the students time to do a pre-project task that would get them thinking.

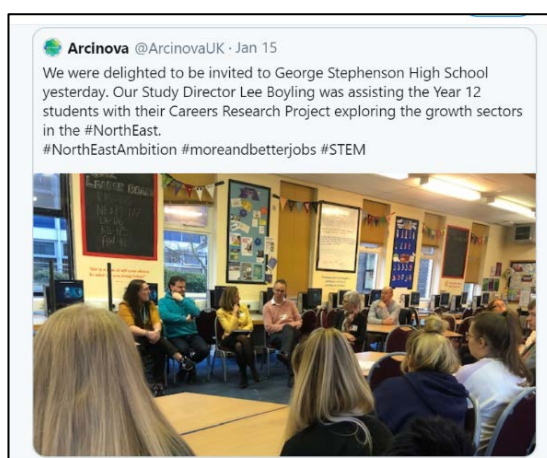
The entry event took the form of an assembly led by a representative from the LEP, the Head of the Sixth form who was running the project, plus the Head of Careers. The LEP introduced the brief and set out success criteria. The head of the Sixth Form plus Head of Careers outlined the pre-project task. (See the presentation for the all of the information presented to the students.)



## Final product and presentation event

[Please note that due to the closure of schools during the Covid 19 pandemic, the showcase event did not take place]

The students produced a lesson plan and accompanying resources e.g. powerpoint presentations, worksheets, quizzes, that would enable the form tutors in Year 8 to teach lessons about the careers in the growth sectors in the North East. These products were due to be tested by the students in a lesson and then presented to a panel made of the LEP, the school SLT, employers and university staff. This presentation event was also due to include a formal lunch for the students, staff and visitors.



The student panel discussions with local employers representing the health and life sciences sector plus the sector lead from North East LEP

## Assessment

The aim of the project was for the students to produce resources that could be used by teachers in the school and could also be put on the North East LEP's website for teachers around the region to use. It was therefore critical that the quality of the resources would be such that this would be possible. The students were provided with criteria for what their lesson plans must include and were asked to use the school's lesson plan pro-forma. This had been adapted slightly to include aspects such as how a teaching assistant was to be deployed – something that the students may not have thought about.

The students were set mini deadlines to ensure that they kept to the timings of the project. Formal formative feedback sessions took place with each group and the Head of Careers where the students had to discuss their presentations and then act on any comments.

The students were also asked to trial a short 10 minute section of their lesson with the Year 8 students in order to assess how it was working and to get feedback from the class teachers and Year 8 students.

The final presentation event was due to take place with panels made up of employers, university staff and the school senior leadership team. A question protocol was designed that the panellists would use to question the students. This would be given to the students prior to the presentation so that they could prepare. Feedback for final revisions would be provided to the students with time then given for them to act on this.

## Planning the project: who, how?

The planning took place over several months and involved the Head of the Sixth form, the sixth form learning mentor, the Head of Careers, a researcher in project based learning (PBL) from Newcastle University School of Education and two representatives from the NE LEP. Involving this group of people had three important impacts:

1. It ensured the development of an interesting and authentic project that drew on the ideas and knowledge all of the contributors.
2. It ensured that the context of all stakeholders was understood. For example, the sixth form staff knew what their students' needs were and how the project could be delivered on a practical week by week basis. The Head of Careers was able to provide the context of the Year 8 careers curriculum. The LEP were able to provide the NE careers context and their requirements for a product. The university researcher helped support the sixth form staff to create and deliver the project through the provision of planning tools and exemplification of potential approaches.
3. The stakeholders were able to draw on their networks to ask for the input from employers, school and university staff.

The planning took place from October to December using the planning map and timetable as a starting point. This document was refined and revised at every meeting ensuring that by the start of the project all participants were clear on their roles and were happy with the project content and logistics.

The meetings continued throughout the project and tweaks were made in order to:

- address student interest e.g. a visit from the cybercrime team at Northumbria Police was arranged;
- provide additional feedback e.g. the trialling with Year 8's,
- lengthen the timeframe e.g. two additional weeks were added to ensure a high quality product would be produced and to organise a final event with a formal lunch.

There was a structure to it, which was like a framework, but not so rigid that it didn't not allow for any flexibility.

And yeah, it did it kind of organically developed as the course went on.

*Head of Sixth form*

## Learning for next time

- All of the participants agreed that the time allocated to the planning before and during the project was critical to its success.
- Being flexible, making 'tweaks' and allowing the project to take a slightly different course ensured it remained interesting, relevant and practical.
- The teaching staff equally felt under pressure to ensure that a high-quality product was created. Be prepared for this.
- The sixth form team created the student groups based on their knowledge of them and their interests, but also using advice/information from other tutors/staff about who would work well together. For example quieter students were put together with more confident students and all were assigned to careers sectors that the staff felt they might be interested in. Although this system worked very effectively, the Head of the Sixth form reflected after the project that she would be interested to trial it again with friendship groupings to see if this created any differences.
- The final products (activities and resources) that the students created were all quite similar despite there being 8 groups. The pre-project task (what makes a great/good lesson) would have benefited from being broken down into smaller steps encouraging the whole year group to share ideas. e.g. taking the words put on the post-it wall like 'interactive' and breaking that down into activities/approaches like 'make a game/ a quiz/ a poster.

## Useful resources

NE Local Enterprise Partnership <https://www.northeastlep.co.uk/focus-areas/skills-employment-inclusion-and-progression>

Growth sectors video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4RqQGBuK0OU>

There are LEPs across all of the regions of the country. What are the key growth sectors in your area? <https://www.lepnetwork.net/>

Newcastle University Robinson Library: Education Outreach:

[https://www.ncl.ac.uk/library/services/education-outreach/#library\\_skills](https://www.ncl.ac.uk/library/services/education-outreach/#library_skills)

The study skills resources for sixth formers are free to everyone. The workshops take place at Newcastle University, but does your local university offer something similar?

Resources from the project and on the website:

The planning map plus timetable

The launch presentation with brief

Employer ask – email example

The presentation panel's question proforma

Example final products

