

case study

Crelos develops teachers to deliver Progression Skills

Background to Progression Skills

During 2008 and 2009 Crelos were a key supplier on the DCSF funded City GATES Progression Academies. These one or two day workshops, run in the three challenge areas of Greater London, Greater Manchester and the Black Country for young people between the ages of 14 and 18, had the aim of addressing the issue of the lack of progression to higher education of these Gifted and Talented young people from challenged areas.

A number of 'progression skills' were identified that it was felt were blocking these young people's progression to good universities and ultimately rewarding careers. These skills included setting career and life objectives, understanding yourself, your strengths and weaknesses, learning communication techniques, managing important stakeholders and working in teams. The aim is to help students increase their self-awareness by understanding their environment and how it influences their behaviour and decision-making. Another skill is for young people to understand how to set themselves personal objectives and understand what level of effort and support they need to make these happen.

Crelos delivered the Progression Academies for two academic years using a pool of thirty tutors, recruited specifically for their empathy with young people and their skill in key techniques such as coaching, facilitation and higher-order questioning skills.

Progression Skills delivered across England

Following excellent feedback from young learners and teachers alike, the newly named DfE (Department for Education) decided that young people across the whole of England should have the opportunity to be developed in Progression Skills.

Unfortunately this dramatic increase in scale meant that it was no longer financially feasible for the government to fund the delivery of Progression Academies by the Crelos tutor pool. Instead, a new model was developed to allow for in-school delivery by teachers of Progression Skills Modules; short, bite-sized modules to be delivered during the length of a normal lesson.

With teachers now responsible for delivering Progression Skills Modules in the best way, through facilitation and coaching, rather than a "chalk and talk" directive style, it was recognised that teachers might need some support. The DfE approached Crelos to design a one-day workshop, aimed at introducing the Progression Skills Modules.

Research from the City GATES Progression Academies had shown that the young learners got the most out of these events when the tutor played a facilitative role in the learning experience, establishing an environment that was conducive to self-exploration, questioning and challenge, more like a management development intervention, than a day at school.

The rest of the workshop was therefore spent developing and practising the skills of group facilitation, coaching, giving constructive feedback and different types of questioning, such as open questions and leading questions.

Twenty events were delivered at locations across England, to approximately 100 teachers, mentors and people otherwise involved in developing Gifted and Talented young learners, in the space of two months.

Funding from the DfE has since ceased, but local authorities, councils and schools have approached Crelos to design and deliver bespoke events to both teachers and pupils.

"Really enjoyed the course. Feel very positive. The facilitator managed to cover a lot of complex ideas in a clear way using good analogies. Excellent course leaders."

Participant

"Great, interesting, useful and relevant."

Participant

"I have found the day informative and enjoyable. The time here has been useful and will help me."

Participant