



Fast-Track Apprenticeships Grant Funding Project Case Study

Name of Registered Training Organisation

Chisholm Institute

Title of Project

Accelerated Learning – Building Studies

Apprenticeship Details

- BCG 30798 Certificate III General Construction (Carpentry, Formwork, Finishing)
- Reduce training by 12 months
- Apprentice numbers – 24
- Industry partners –
 - Master Builders Association.
 - Peninsula Aluminium.
 - M & M Builders.

Aim of the Project

To :

- Reduce attrition rate – more successful completions due to reduced timeframe.
- Cost effective delivery model – meets industry needs.
- Increase number of mature aged apprentices – enjoy the benefit of full employment status.
- Increased productivity and morale in the workplace – apprentice becomes a more valued employee.

Successful Strategies / Models

This project found that many mature minded apprentices did not always fit into mainstream programs, particularly when the majority of the program is occupied by a younger less mature student cohort. The research found the mature student generally had a higher level of knowledge or awareness of the skills required of them in industry.

While these students are mature, they are not all the same and still require individualized instruction within the program. These students fully utilise the opportunities that are afforded them.

These opportunities consist of a Monday evening class that allows the apprentice, teacher access for specific skills development or to progress future theory components of competencies or clusters. The evening session is an opportunity for the students to work collaboratively in designing learning and assessment projects that they undertake in their timetabled 40 hour attendance blocks.

These attendance blocks occur five times per annum and have no mandated content or task assigned to them. Students work either individually or collaboratively to undertake learning and assessment tasks identified as a learning need; determined by teacher mediated skills analysis. Some tasks are assessment only where the student can identify suitable learning in the workplace and by discussion between the teacher and the employer or supervisor. The Monday night classes have been running for over a twelve month period and 2009 is the second year of implementing these flexible attendance blocks in order to allow large project

based learning and assessment strategies.

As the students are individual it is not mandatory for the students to attend all of the classes and is very much a self-directed learning rationale. Some students are timetabled to attend specific mainstream classes as an identified need in their individual learning and assessment plan.

The program shows great signs of success with the average block release of 40 hours returning over 130 hours of competency assessment. It is the combination of employer, teacher and student discussion. Key tasks carried out in the workplace and assessment only solutions enables learners to create learning and assessment projects based on their individual needs, not restricted by the concept of hours or a timeline.

The flexible Monday evenings and site communications allows the development of theoretical components and real-world conceptualisation to design and plan the learning and assessment activities so that the 40 hour blocks are fully utilised for their intended purpose. The student is not required to study content that they have already learned. The apprentice can avoid the waiting time in regard to teacher instruction. This flexible mature delivery strategy would fail to work without the Monday night and site based student and employer communications.

Key Project Achievement

The response from industry has been very positive with the project initially allocating a timeframe of one hour per employer. During the first initial timetabled site visits, the feedback indicated that it was the teacher who had to execute a cessation of the meeting at the 1 1/2 hour point due to arrangements made to meet other employers.

The employer communications and site visits are the initial point of contact in regard to student welfare and concerns. This enables teaching staff to be more attuned to the individual requirements of their learners. Learning can then be customised to suit the best possible outcomes. This is evident by high assessment outcomes in specific blocks of attendance.

Contact Details for Further Information

Rodger Carroll
Manager, Building & Furniture Department
Chisholm Institute
(03) 92388468

* http://www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au/RTO/Fast_track.asp