



Learning+Skills Council



# Approaches to the delivery of E2E

**Focussed  
progression**

# **Entry to Employment Support and Development Programme**

**The 2003–4 Entry to Employment  
National Support and Development  
Programme was funded by the  
Learning and Skills Council and  
delivered by the Learning and Skills  
Development Agency.**

The Entry to Employment  
Support and Development Programme  
is part of

The logo consists of the lowercase letters 'e2e' in a bold, white, sans-serif font. The '2' is smaller and positioned between the two 'e's.

e2e is Entry to Level 1 provision on the work-based learning route for those young people not yet ready or able to immediately access an Apprenticeship, further learning towards Level 2 or employment. E2E offers a flexible and individualised programme, designed to support young people's progression and achievement. E2E may include those people who have or are in danger of becoming disaffected or disengaged from education, training and society as a whole.

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Commissioned by the Learning and Skills Council

Published by the Learning and Skills Development Agency

[www.LSDA.org.uk](http://www.LSDA.org.uk)

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Registered with the Charity Commissioners

Copyedited and designed by thingswedo

Printed by Blackmore Ltd, Shaftesbury, Dorset

ISBN 1 84572 020 2

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## Preface

Progression on Entry to Employment (E2E) programmes was one of the key areas the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) asked the Learning and Skills Development Agency (LSDA) to focus on as part of the portfolio of development projects forming an aspect of the E2E National Support and Development Programme (2003/04) that LSDA undertook on behalf of the LSC.

Feedback from the Pathfinder phase of E2E, and from the initial inspection and evaluation reports from the first phase of the national establishment of E2E, identified progress in supporting and guiding learners through E2E programmes and emerging issues in the provision of effective progression opportunities for E2E learners. The development project described in this report aimed to identify good practice in progressing learners on E2E programmes. The initial focus has been on learners who were relatively close to the labour market and progression to Level 2 learning programmes and Apprenticeships. In the early stages of the project, the term 'fast track' was used but this was later changed to 'focused progression' for the reasons outlined on page 4.

This report describes each stage of the project, reporting on the key processes and outcomes, and identifying emerging lessons for E2E practitioners. It is hoped that the report will be useful to E2E providers in developing progression strategies not just for learners close to Level 2 achievements but for the whole cohort of learners on E2E programmes. This is certainly the goal that has been set by the providers involved in the project.

We would like to thank the providers that volunteered to be involved in the project and the individual practitioners who committed much time and energy to ensure that the project was carried out successfully.

## Scoping the project

A seminar was held at LSDA in December 2003 to consider the scope and range of the progression project. The seminar involved a number of professionals including:

- Connexions Personal Advisers ( PAs )
- representatives from the Department for Education and Skills ( DfES )  
Apprenticeship Strategic Delivery Unit
- E2E tutors
- LSC national officers
- local LSC staff
- LSDA development advisers
- LSDA consultants.

The participants considered an introductory paper outlining three different profiles of learners on E2E programmes together with examples of strategies that might be used to support the learners ( see Appendix 1 ).

It was suggested at the seminar that although the learner profiles provided a useful reference point for all learners, the project would concentrate on learners with a profile similar to Profile 2 ( as summarised on page 2 ), with a more detailed outline in Appendix 1. These learners were typically quite focused and close to Level 2 progression, but needed a structured approach to identifying and undertaking a progression strategy. It was also decided that the progression focus would be on Apprenticeship programmes.

### Learner profile 2: summary



Learners with this type of learning profile are likely to come to the programme with a definite or near-definite idea of the progression route they want to pursue on their E2E programme. They will be relatively close to Level 1 achievement and will also be ready to or close to being able to commit to the demands of learning programmes such as Apprenticeships.

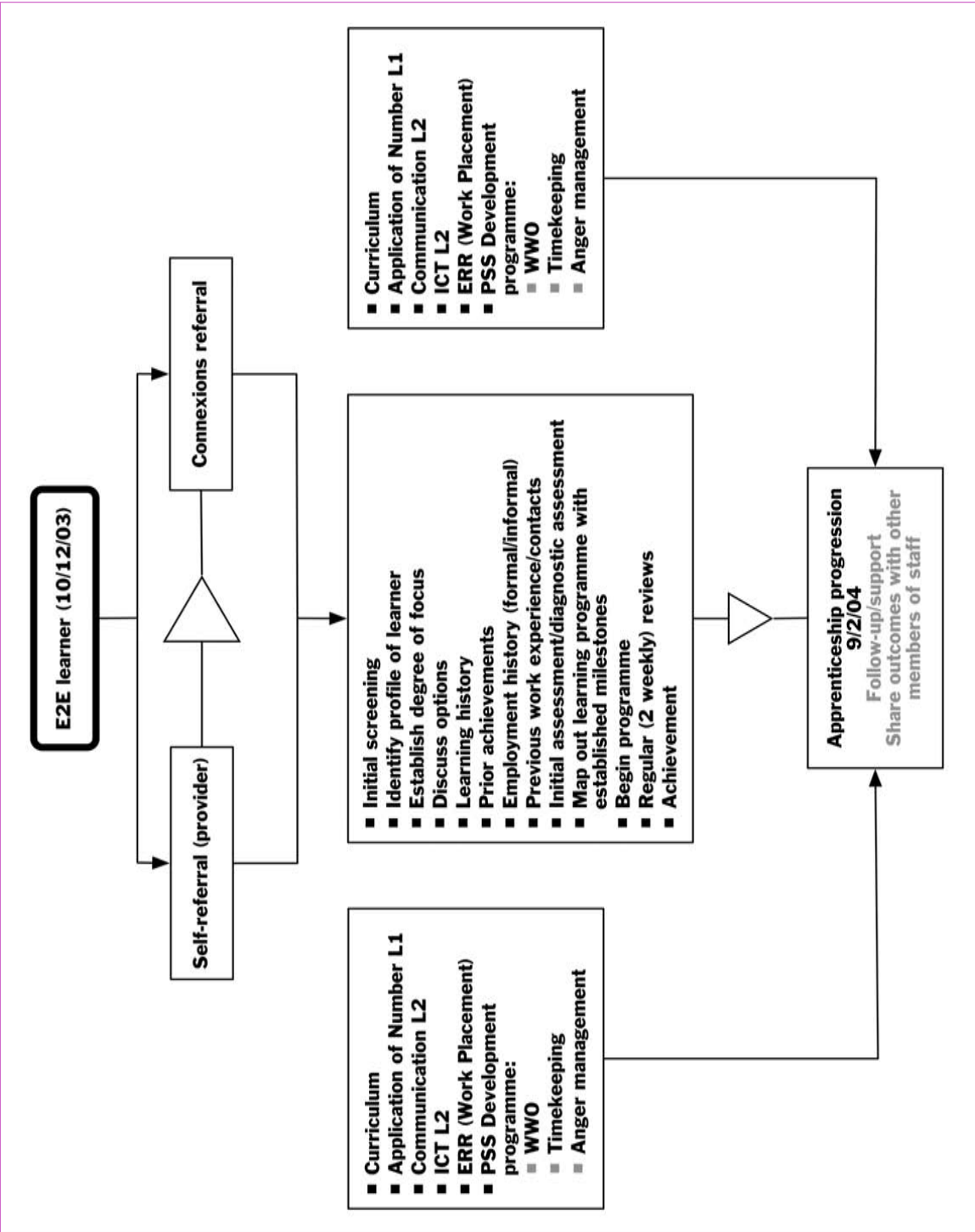
**Finding focus** This stage may involve the learner in ‘fine-tuning’ their preferred progression route. They may, for example, have a strong focus on the construction or beauty industries but not yet have decided which aspect of the industry they want to follow up.

**Consolidation** With a learning profile spanning Entry level 3 and Level 1, this type of learner needs a ‘consolidating’ learning programme that prioritises the development needs below Level 1 while – where appropriate – providing challenging opportunities for learners to achieve units of Level 2 learning, for example in NVQs or key skills.

**Progression** Progression rates will be relatively narrower and closely defined, which should enable the provider to do more prior work on identifying appropriate progression destinations in the early stages of the programme. This will prove an additional impetus for the learner to maintain their individual learning plan and achieve the learning targets that they have agreed.

Discussion at the seminar identified the need for a model to support the progression of learners and a template was provided for this (see Figure 1, page 3).

Figure 1 E2E fast-track/focused progression model



As can be seen the model maps the 'learner journey' from E2E referral to progression. It allowed providers taking part in the project to 'tailor' the journey to suit the support and learning needs of the individual learner.

Providers were encouraged to assess how long it might take for learners to come through E2E, developing the skills and knowledge necessary to support their progression and transition to an Apprenticeship. It was felt this would help the progression plan in areas such as developing work placements and identifying opportunities for vocational learning, as well as in achievement of other learning such as key skills.

There was also space in the model to identify how the E2E Entitlement Curriculum could be mapped together with the support that the learner would need. It was acknowledged that many learners might come to the programme with personal and social skills development needs, some with personal problems or crises that will need to be supported to enable them to progress.

At the seminar, it was decided to reorient the project from 'fast track' to 'focused progression'. This was felt to be important for a number of reasons including the following.

- The term 'fast track' might put learners under undue pressure just when they are beginning to make progress.
- The 'fast-track' label could create a two-tier E2E cohort with those not on the 'fast-track' route feeling as though they are low achievers.
- Learners should be free to 're-focus' their progression throughout the programme. 'Fast track' gives the impression that there is only a single route to progression on E2E programmes.

It was decided to retitling the model and to present it at the next seminar, which was a provider-focused seminar that would precede the project being initiated in three LSC areas.

## The learners and their profiles

The project focused on identifying strategies for supporting learners who join E2E with an achievement profile relatively close to that required for transition to an Apprenticeship as their primary progression route.

These learners are typically young people who may even have started an Apprenticeship but dropped out early because they lacked the necessary skills or commitment. They are likely to be just below the achievement threshold for Apprenticeship, which gave the project a clear focus on the learners' progression. This approach involves assessing – based on the outcomes of a comprehensive initial and diagnostic assessment – how long it will take for the learner to consolidate their achievement and to access their chosen Apprenticeship programme successfully.

The areas that the individual learners will need to develop are likely to be linked to :

- commitment
- literacy skills
- numeracy skills
- vocational competence
- study skills

to enable them to achieve the range of assessments required throughout the Apprenticeship framework. Learners may also need to develop their personal and social skills to become more effective in the workplace.

Programme design for learners focusing on Apprenticeship progression should address, as a priority, the learning outcomes individuals need to achieve to be prepared and eligible for their chosen Apprenticeship. If, for example, the learner has an identified development need in numeracy, this should be identified as a priority for the learning programme. With literacy and numeracy needs, a diagnostic assessment tool is used to determine the profile of the learner *within the level*. For many learners, this generates a range of learning outcomes at Level 1 – though probably not the whole range of the Level 1 outcome. For example, in numeracy, the learner may be capable of achieving Level 1 in 'Number' but need to develop their knowledge and application of 'Measures, Shapes and Space' (MSS). In this case, MSS would take priority in the learning programme. The primary aim is to consolidate the learner profile at Level 1 and to ensure effective progression to Level 2.

## The learners and their programmes

Promoting some Level 2 achievements will be both effective and appropriately challenging for some learners. Indeed, many NVQs start at Level 2 and learners often want to tackle units of NVQs as they develop their vocational skills. Elements of the Apprenticeship programme, where appropriate, may be introduced as part of the E2E programme. For example, a learner with Level 1 in literacy may want to begin to develop a Level 2 Communication key skills portfolio, based on the vocational area they have chosen. This will enable them to gain in confidence, reassuring them that they are ready to achieve at Level 2. It will also make them more attractive to employers and training providers, having already 'banked' elements of the Apprenticeship framework. For many employers and providers, this would be particularly welcome in the case of key skills. The learners' programmes are many and varied but all focus on preparation for progression. Programmes may involve:

- prioritising appropriate key skills
- linking personal and social development to achievement of the relevant 'Employee Rights and Responsibilities Unit'
- completing units of appropriate NVQs at Level 2 or technical certificate
- closely aligning the review process to targets for progression
- sitting in on Apprenticeship learning activities such as sessions supporting the technical certificate
- work tasters and placements.

There is no centrally prescribed length of stay for learners on E2E. Imposing one would negate the programme's ability to respond to the needs of the individual. However, one of the key aims of the project was to enable the young person to make the transition from E2E to an Apprenticeship as efficiently and effectively as possible. For this reason, the provider/Connexions PA and the young person needed, wherever possible, to agree a target time for progression to the Apprenticeship. In some cases this may be six weeks, in others it may be six months. What is important is that the target is realistic and achievable, and is underpinned by a strategy for progression with built-in milestones. It is also important to remove as many barriers to progression as possible during the programme. For this reason, issues such as progression destinations, work placements and registration for qualifications are sorted out, as far as possible, at the beginning of the programme.

## Focused progression in action

Following the second seminar, which mainly involved providers and the supporting consultants, those taking part in the projects went back to their centres to identify learners that they felt would benefit from the project. Five providers took part in the project. The seminar was attended by one representative from each provider; representatives from all of the five corresponding local LSCs; two consultants; one contact from LSC National Office; and the lead Development Adviser from LSDA. The case-study profiles of these learners are reproduced in Appendix 2. This section of the report focuses briefly on the lessons drawn from the experience of guiding and supporting learners and using the ideas generated at the previous focused progression seminars.

In supporting this work each of the centres was visited twice by one or more of the project consultants for open discussions about experiences with the learners. On the second visits there were also some interviews with students and these too are reproduced at the end of the case studies (see Appendix 3).

The first visits identified a wide range of issues including the following.

- When attention is focused on learners, potential for Apprenticeship progression can be supported and realised.
- Brokerage – both vertical (to another programme / provider) and horizontal (same provider / different programme) – is a very important element of success.
- Intra-provider cooperation – that is, between different vocational areas and different programmes – is still relatively under-developed in relation to the needs of the learners.
- Connexions Service liaison depends largely on the local service and is very variable.
- Provision that provides a unique ‘hook’ to learning is particularly effective in supporting motivation and progression.
- Using effective initial assessment has significantly helped individual planning.
- Diagnostic assessment is a very important element of the learning process – particularly in generating appropriate learning programmes and avoiding repetitive assessment and teaching.
- The ability to offer work experience is nearly always a positive influence on learning and progression.

- Work experience continues to be difficult to broker and maintain, particularly for this client group.
- Properly supported, work experience is an excellent opportunity to explore the wider opportunities available in an industry.
- A degree of informed ‘fine-tuning’ is often required to ensure that learners’ progression plans are both realistic and realisable.
- Learners need to combine the positive support they receive on E2E with an appropriately challenging programme of work.
- Compact arrangements for progression, where established, are very effective in supporting progression.

The centres themselves provided further observations in writing after the final visit. One centre observed the following.

- Focused learners demonstrate awareness of the need for constant support and guidance to help them with commitment and motivation.
- If, after assessment, E2E learners are considered suitable for an Apprenticeship, they generally continue to need more support than learners who have entered Apprenticeships from other routes.
- A prescriptive timetable is impractical. Some placements, for instance, are more difficult and time-consuming to arrange than others.
- Adequate time is needed to develop security within a placement and prepare the learner for Apprenticeship before a transferral can be made.
- Although learners demonstrate ability, aptitude and potential throughout the interview / induction process, they can still find it difficult to commit to the responsibility of a placement.

That centre was also particularly concerned about the following issues.

- The volume of work needed for an Apprenticeship is vast and off-putting to learners who have followed the E2E route ; they don’t have the maturity needed to commit to such a structured and work-heavy programme. (We must remember that there is usually a good reason, often social, for a trainee joining E2E in the first place.)
- Although learners successfully manage the learning requirements of key skills Level 1 ( in numeracy, literacy and IT ), they find the skills needed at Level 2 difficult.

Another centre noted :

Since the conception of E2E the programme has improved in all areas, especially in the delivery of basic skills. The programme has become a lot more structured and we can track the progress of each learner by more frequent reviews, ie action-planning and four-weekly reviews. Our retention figures have always been good. We have recently opened our own vocational areas in music and nail technology [and] we hope to maintain and improve our already recognised high retention and progression rates.

We do, however, lack one main ingredient. Because we are a small private training provider we have always found it difficult to establish credible links with employers and colleges for work placements. In the past we have spent hours on the telephone and visiting organisations, trying to create a 'bank' of companies that could give work experience opportunities to the learners. Unfortunately, even with the best intentions, sometimes the learners don't attend or perhaps the placement doesn't work out as well as you might have hoped and this in turn creates issues.

One other point that I have noticed in respect to the new E2E contract is that we don't seem to have the same working relationship with the Connexions Service. We have always had a very good partnership with at least one of our local careers services. However, since E2E, our links at Connexions have reduced dramatically and our link PAs do not seem to be visiting as frequently. This in turn affects the learners, as they do not get regular career reviews.

We have used this project to establish links with local colleges and employers, and obtain more work or college placements. These have received a mixed response : some colleges and organisations have been more positive than others.

On the whole we think that E2E, as well as our involvement in this project, has been a positive step forward for us. We hope that this will help us develop an area where we have always had problems and that we can identify and supply courses that are tailor-made for each individual. This, in turn, will motivate and encourage our learners to progress on to their chosen career path.

## Key learning outcomes

The final seminar held with providers had a more reflective emphasis. The providers worked with the consultants to bring together some of the key learning outcomes of the project and to identify some of the lessons for:

- providers
- local LSCs
- LSC National Office.

First, consideration was given to 'facilitators' to progression, identifying factors that supported and assisted learners to make meaningful progression. Second, they identified the issues that required change or work on behalf of providers, or of their local LSC or, finally, nationally by national bodies or agencies including LSC.

### Facilitators

- A key issue is sufficient money and financial resources for providers to build meaningful programmes and to facilitate the engagement of learners in the programme.
- Support in basic skills development is crucial for many learners providing that the initial and diagnostic assessment processes have effectively identified learner needs.
- Work tasters and placements can play a significant role in motivating learners; if job satisfaction can be achieved, progression can be secured effectively.
- Providing clear and realistic visions of career prospects and the availability of opportunities ahead is crucial.
- Drug and alcohol awareness programmes are important to many E2E learners; they have underpinned the progression and transition of many learners.
- Personal achievement, its celebration and the acknowledgement of a learner's personal and social development, are important; improving self-perception and self-worth are crucial.

- Generating a sense of belonging is valuable but it is important that this does not become a feeling of dependence – developing independence is equally important.
- Qualifications – gaining certificates of achievement associated with the vocational training – are good motivators ; they engender a sense of achievement.

## The need for change

### **Providers need to :**

- offer more facilities
- provide a more holistic approach
- provide one-to-one support – need more staff time
- ensure that staff are adequately trained to work on the programme.

### **Local LSCs and LSC National Office need to :**

- ensure the funding necessary to run the programme
- provide information on local businesses for placements and work tasters
- work with Connexions Services to raise the PAs' awareness of E2E
- ensure local information for providers including labour market intelligence and other vocational offers in the area.

## Key issues and recommendations

### Communications and internal marketing

Communications within and across, up and down and between partners and key stakeholders are crucial.

#### Focused progression : lessons for the E2E pre-apprenticeship offer

The 'Focused progression' development project can provide some useful lessons to inform the modelling of an E2E pre-apprenticeship offer. The project itself was borne out of a concern to promote improved progression strategies for E2E learners through a range of methods selected by providers. Providers identified a wide range of barriers to progression at the beginning of the project as outlined below.

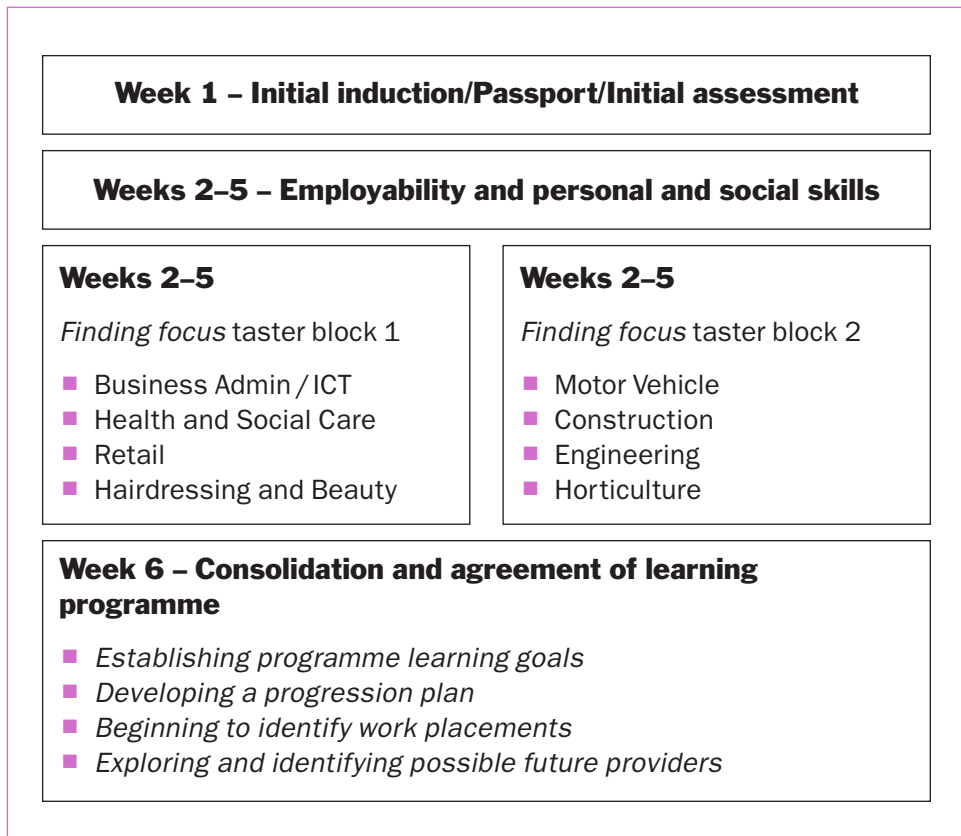
- **Difficulty providing vocational training for the learner in areas outside the scope of the provider:** Most E2E providers cover 2–5 vocational areas and cannot meet the needs of learners outside their portfolio. During the project, recognition of this barrier stimulated providers to make greater use of all provision within the E2E partnership. By pooling resources across the partnership, opportunities can be made available for many more vocational training opportunities across different sectors. Local LSCs have different approaches to developing the partnership: some leave it to lead providers to broker, others take a more proactive lead.
- **Inadequate diagnosis of learning needs:** One of the lessons of the project is that the more that is put into effective initial and diagnostic assessment of learners during the induction phase of E2E, the more focused the learning programme. This in turn makes the programme more effective, allowing the learner to progress into Apprenticeship programmes at a more efficient rate. This could have been crucial in some cases because, due to a lack of roll-on-roll-off provision by some Apprenticeship providers, learners might well have missed the September intake if they had been engaged in learning that they did not need.

This has been particularly important in the diagnosis of language, literacy and numeracy skills. By using the Adult Basic Skills Strategy Unit (ABSSU) diagnostic assessment tool, providers are able to establish learning needs **within** the level rather than identifying the level that the learner needs. This minimises time spent and reduces over-assessment. For example, a learner at Entry level 3 may have understood all the elements of E3 apart from 'Measures, Shape and Space'. Initial assessment would indicate that they needed to complete Entry level 3 when in fact they only need to complete a quarter of this level.

- **Lack of ‘focus finding’ in the induction period:** Many learners beginning E2E clearly have no vocational focus or have a focus that is perhaps ill-informed or unrealistic. Effective use of the E2E induction period, building in ‘finding focus’/taster activities during the six weeks, can help to accelerate the **transitional** learning that E2E learners need to do before progressing on to Apprenticeships or other positive outcomes. If this is left until later in the programme, some learners may have become very comfortable in the environment and perhaps be reluctant to move on. If they can find an early focus, they are much more likely to go out on work placements and look for their next step from E2E.

One centre has developed a new approach to induction that involves the following model, Figure 2.

**Figure 2 A college approach to E2E induction**



This model ensures that attention is paid to the wider E2E curriculum strands throughout the induction period, giving the learner a realistic experience of the type of learning programme they are joining from the beginning and focusing on progression. This type of induction presents the E2E offer firmly as a **transitional** learning programme closely relating to the progression route identified by the learner. It also means that the end of the period produces some very tangible learning outcomes to address throughout the programme.

Clearly, some learners who are particularly focused at the beginning of the programme will need to have their induction period tailored to that particular need, but many of the core activities and guidance will still be relevant. Similarly, we cannot expect all learners to emerge from the induction programme with a clear idea of where they want to progress, though they may at least have an idea of progression routes they do not want.

Some providers will find this type of induction model quite challenging unless they can collaborate with other providers to pool resources. Obviously, the choice of vocational areas on offer will depend on the local labour market profile, learner requirements and the capacity of providers to resource the offer.

### **Developing a model for tracking and supporting progression**

The project developed a model – see Figure 1, page 3 – that helped to articulate the learning goals of the learner as well as the support they would need during their E2E programme.

The design of the model deliberately articulated the start and end points of the project, providing the opportunity to include target dates for completion by mutual agreement between the learner and the provider. It also ensured that the personal and social skills development needs of the learner were articulated along with the language, literacy and numeracy skills. Participants were encouraged to ensure that delivery strategies were integrated and the model was in no way meant to encourage a ‘bolt-on’ approach to language, literacy and numeracy skills, or personal and social skills.

Providers stated that they found the model useful in a number of ways, as listed below.

- It established and maintained a momentum for progressions.
- It encompassed the three strands of the E2E learning cycle in a holistic way.
- It was clearly accessible to the learner and could be included in their personal plans.
- It provided a useful and comprehensive checklist of the steps needed to support the learner.
- It was compatible with the E2E Passport.
- It could be applicable to all learners, though it was particularly useful for learners with a strong focus who needed to maintain their momentum to achieve their end-goal according to targets they have set themselves.
- It provided a very useful tool for the review of learning.

### **Work placements/variability of providers**

Through taking part in the project, many providers realised the crucial role that work experience plays in supporting the progression plan and providing an early and stimulating impetus for the learning programme. Although some providers are able to provide a wide range of contacts for work experience, they are in the minority. Given the central importance of structured work placements with clear learning outcomes, a more extensive engagement of learners into apprenticeships will require a significant intervention. While many providers are trying to increase the number of placements available organically, it is a difficult and arduous task that may detract from other core activities in supporting the learner. Where providers have been able to depend on the support of other agencies, this has been much more effective. One of the key lessons of the programme is that there needs to be a multi-partnership and multi-agency approach to developing work placements, bringing in a range of organisations including Education Business Link Organisations and others to develop and expand the number of quality placements available for E2E learners.

## Conclusions

The 'Focused progression' project has been able to demonstrate some significant success with the learners selected and supported through progression. We have outlined some of the learning gains in this paper. However, we need to recognise that this project was limited to providing support for a relatively small group of learners in order to identify strategies for improving progression. If these strategies are to succeed for wider cohorts of E2E learners, particularly those focused on the apprenticeship routes, there will need to be changes in the way individual providers work with their learners and this will need to be supplemented by changes to the way providers work with their partnerships and ways in which the E2E partnership links and interacts with other agencies providing support and progression routes for E2E learners.

## Appendix 1 Learning programmes and profiles in E2E

### Paper presented to Seminar 1

Entry to Employment (E2E) is a new provision replacing three preceding programmes:

- Preparatory Training
- Life Skills
- NVQ1.

Between them, these programmes addressed the needs of a wide cohort of learners with very different learning profiles ranging from the pre-entry level curriculum to Level 1. With the amalgamation of provision in E2E, providers are faced with the challenge of both *identifying* and *meeting the needs* of learners with very different profiles. Factors such as individual programme design, programme length, advice, guidance and support needs are bound to vary between individuals. The range will extend from learners who need to access a variety of bite-sized learning opportunities to become engaged in the learning process and demonstrate to themselves that they are ready to achieve, albeit with small chunks of learning; to those in need of a limited range of consolidating learning to enable them to progress to their desired progression route, which for most learners is likely to be Apprenticeship, Level 2 learning programmes or employment.

To illustrate the heterogeneous nature of the E2E cohort, we have modelled three different learner profiles. They are not meant to stereotype or compartmentalise learners into neat categories – this would only undermine the individual learning that is at the centre of E2E provision. However, modelling the different types of 'learners' can help us to begin to think about appropriate learning programmes, support mechanisms and progression strategies on a needs-led basis that relate to some of the support needs of E2E learners.

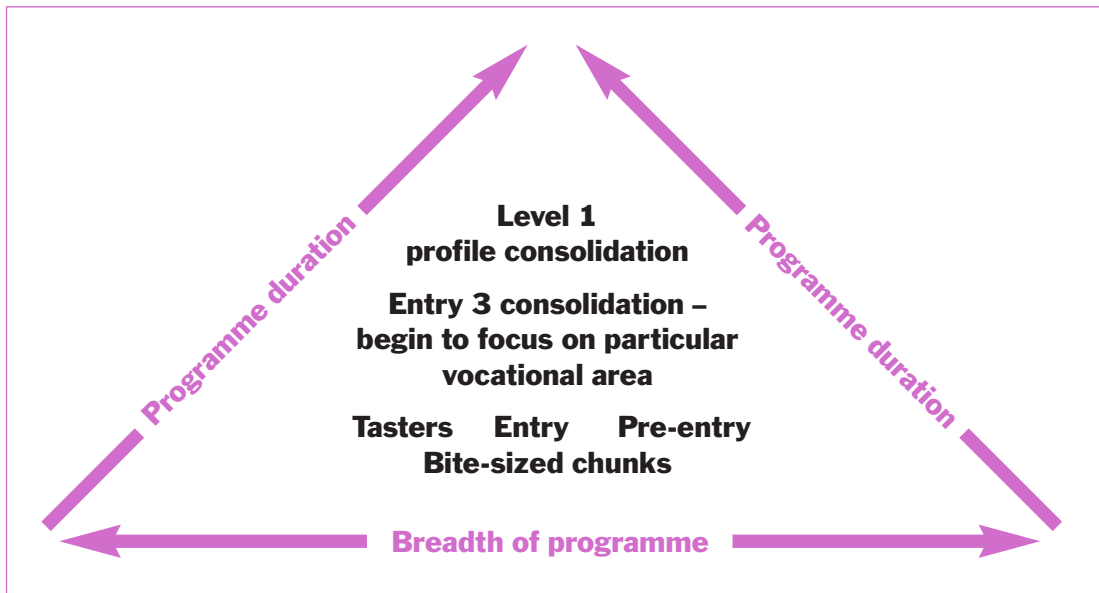
On the diagrams of the learning profiles, the vertical dimension represents the time on programme, starting at the base, while the horizontal dimension represents the breadth of the learning needed on the programme. It can be seen that the breadth of the learning programme differs, while the length of stay is consistent.

## Learner profile 1



In Learning profile 1, learners are likely to need all the support offered by an E2E programme to develop their potential and progress successfully from E2E provision.

### Progression to employment, Apprenticeship or FE environment (at or below Level 2)



Learners with a similar profile to this will pursue the following type of learner journey.

**Stimulation** E2E should provide a supportive and stimulating environment to encourage the young person to want to learn. The learning environment may well be very different to anything the learner has previously experienced at school, college or in employment.

**Engagement** By offering the learner a range of choices – again this may be a first – the programme can engage the learner in the learning process. The learner will not view all of these E2E learning experiences as positive, but it is hoped that there will be a sufficient range of choices to enable the learner to choose a learning pathway that they can achieve on.

**Skills development** Building on the stimulation and engagement phases, the learner may now have settled into their learning programme and be developing their skills base largely through integrated and embedded approaches building on their preferred learning contexts and learning styles.

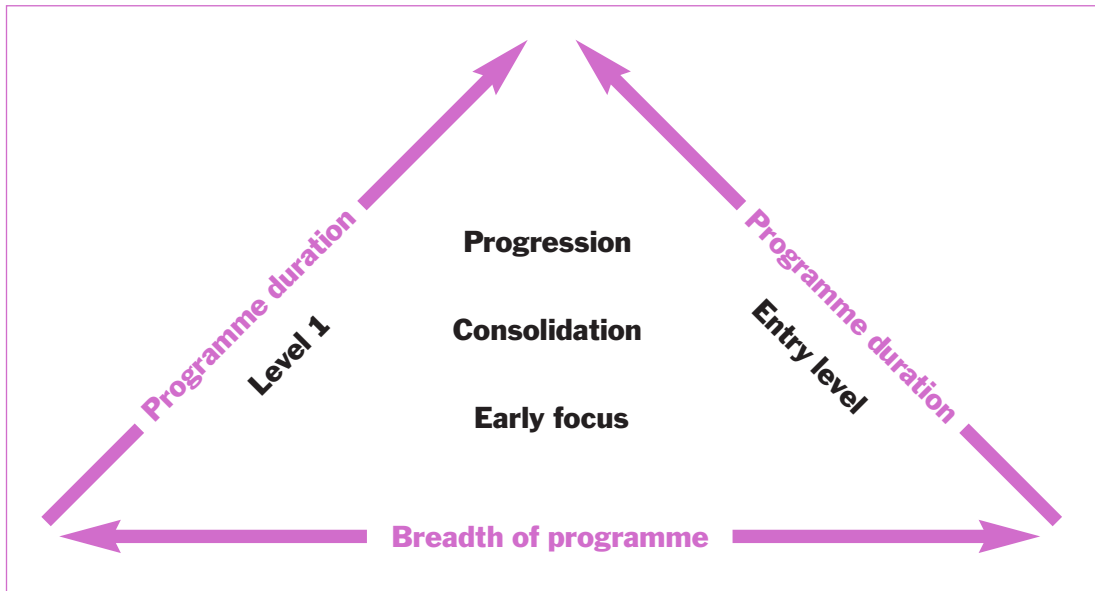
**Self-esteem building** By this stage of the programme, the learner may be able to reflect on a healthy set of learning experiences and achievements, mediated by supportive tutors providing positive feedback and reinforcing their self-confidence and self-esteem. The learner may be demonstrating more independence at this stage, opting for activities such as work experience and feeling much more confident in both learning and the assessment of learning.

**Focus** At this stage the learner should be beginning to make choices about what they want to do in the future. These choices will have been informed by the range of bite-sized and taster activities that the learner is likely to be provided with. The learner will by now be making choices about likely points of progression beyond E2E. This will help to inform the final phase of the individual learning of the E2E learner, which is likely to be concentrated on a particular vocational area.

**Progression** The final phase of the E2E learning journey for this young person is the progression point where the learner is likely to move to a positive destination beyond E2E. As we have identified above, most progression points are likely to be at Level 2 or equivalent employment. However, with this type of profile, we must also be prepared to view sub-Level 1 progression as positive for some learners. Although Level 2 progression is a desirable target, it is not a grail to be pursued at all costs.

We can see then that learners at this level are likely to need all the learning and engagement strategies that should be available on E2E programmes.

## Learner profile 2



Learners with this type of learning profile are likely to come to the programme with a definite or near-definite idea of the progression route they want to pursue on their E2E programme. They may need to pursue a limited range of tasters to clarify their learning goals but they are likely to find their focus fairly quickly. In terms of achievement profiles, these learners will be relatively close to Level 1 achievement and will also be ready or close to ready to commit to the demands of learning programmes such as Apprenticeships.

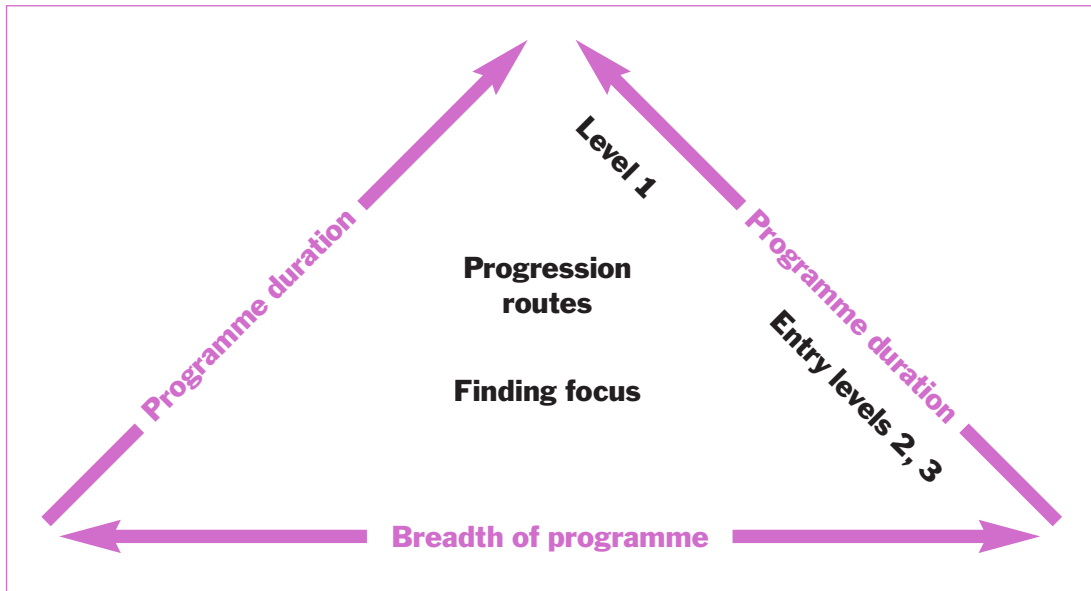
**Finding focus** This stage may involve the learner in ‘fine-tuning’ their preferred progression route. They may, for example, have a strong focus on the construction or beauty industries but not yet have decided which aspect of the industry they want to follow up.

Early focus tasters or structured work experience programmes offering opportunities to access multi-skill environments are likely to be the best strategies for helping the learner to find a focus. This strategy will also be usefully reinforced if the learner is able to follow up with projects finding out about the industry and the opportunities available in the local area. The whole strategy at this stage is to help the learner develop a focus to ensure that an engaging and challenging learning programme can be put together to support their learning needs.

**Consolidation** With a profile spanning Entry level 3 and Level 1, it is important to put together a ‘consolidating’ learning programme that prioritises development needs below Level 1 while – where appropriate – providing challenging opportunities to achieve units of Level 2 learning, for example in NVQs or key skills. It is also important to remember that as yet unidentified barriers to learning may well be at the root of the inability of the learner – though apparently so close – to commit to the demands of learning programmes at Level 2 and beyond. For this reason, an early effective diagnostic assessment of personal and social skills, as well as liaison with Connexions staff who may have undertaken an APIR with the young person, will be essential. Where behavioural barriers to learning are identified, strategies to overcome them should feature as a core element in the individual’s learning programme both in the centre and on wider work experience placements.

**Progression** Progression routes for this young person will be narrower and more closely defined than those for Profile 1. This should enable the provider to do more prior work on identifying appropriate progression destinations in the early stages of the programme. This will prove an additional impetus for the learner to maintain their individual learning plan and achieve the learning targets that they have agreed. Regular visits to the learning provider, perhaps coupled with attendance on Apprenticeship workshops, will also help to build confidence and maintain the momentum of the programme.

### Learning profile 3



Learners with this type of profile will come on to the programme with a higher level mixed achievement set than learner profile 1, perhaps spanning Entry level 2 through Entry level 3 and Level 1. These learners may well have well-developed skills in literacy but have written off numeracy (or maths as they will know it) at an early stage in their school career. Similarly, they may have had very little practical work or vocational experience but a strong inclination towards work-based learning and achievement.

**Engagement** For these learners, it is important to encourage them to identify their interests and begin to put a menu together of appropriate vocational tasters and work experience. It may also be useful to design tasters and work placements that have Entry level 3/Level 1 and even Level 2 learning goals to challenge and stimulate them. The review process for taster / work placements should be sufficiently thorough to ensure that the learner explores all the points for and against a vocational area. Learners may also complete projects and reports investigating the appropriate industrial sectors and the employment opportunities they have on offer.

**Skills development/Focus** Unlike profile 1 learners, who may want to try bite-sized tasters in the early stages of their courses, tasters for profile 3 learners should provide excellent opportunities for embedded and integrated skills development covering other elements of the E2E curriculum drawn from key and basic skills, as well as personal and social skills development. Finding a focus for these learners may come at a relatively late stage in their E2E programme. For this reason it is essential that learners use this formative stage, where they are finding a vocational focus to identify opportunities for skills development and to evidence achievement of skills such as citizenship, working with others or application of number.

Once a focus has been developed and adopted, strategies will need to be put into place to maintain the momentum and identify likely progression options for the young person.

**Progression** For some learners with a profile similar to this, progression options and routes will become closely defined as the programme develops. For others it may be as well to offer a range of progression options for the young person to choose from right up to the end of the programme. The eventual choice might be better informed by the use of late placements with employers, colleges and training providers. This strategy will also help to ensure that the young person, who may have experienced significant barriers to learning and progression before joining E2E and may well find it difficult to maintain the commitment required of Level 2 progression, has selected a sustainable progression route.

## Appendix 2 Learner case-study profiles

### Profile Carol

Carol is an 18 year old who is interested in hair and beauty. On referral to E2E she was identified as a likely candidate for the 'Focused progression' project with a view to progressing to an Apprenticeship in hair and beauty at a local training provider.

Carol is enjoying her hair and beauty taster sessions within her E2E programme and feels that she would now like to progress to a full-time hair and beauty course at a local FE college.

#### Basic and key skills

Carol's initial assessment showed that she was operating at Level 1 for literacy and Level 1 for numeracy. Diagnostic assessment revealed:

**Numeracy** Comfortable in all aspects of numeracy at Level 1, and is now working on Level 2 tasks.

**Literacy** Carol is operating comfortably at Level 1 with reading, writing and speaking and listening, and is now working on Level 2 tasks. Some improvement needed with punctuation at Level 1.

#### Vocational skills and employability

Carol has had some problems in her compulsory education and completed her education at a local tutorial school. Although confident, Carol has not been in regular full-time education for some time and feels that she needs to consolidate her basic skills to reach her full potential.

She was unemployed before being referred to E2E by her Connexions PA and is keen to take this opportunity to look at her long-term career goals. In the future, she aspires to set up her own small hairdressing business.

#### Personal and social skills

Carol has two younger siblings and helps her mother with them. This makes her more responsible as she feels she needs to set them a good example.

## Previous employment experience

Carol has had a number of practical paid work experiences since leaving school, including working in an office environment, the retail sector and warehouse settings. She feels her past work experience has made her comfortable with meeting new people and has improved her communication skills. Carol has just completed the 'Breakthrough to success' course and found it very valuable and rewarding.

## Profile Catherine

Catherine is 17 and is interested in becoming a hairdresser. She was fed up with sitting around at home and felt she needed to be doing something that would help her move towards her career goal in hair and beauty. Catherine initially approached Connexions to look for an Apprenticeship, but both she and her PA felt that she needed to get back into a learning environment to gain confidence in her abilities.

### Basic and key skills

Catherine's initial assessment showed that she was operating at Level 1 for literacy and Entry level 2 for numeracy.

**Numeracy** Whole numbers and common fractions : comfortable at Entry level 2 could try Entry level 3. Multiplying using single-digit whole numbers : comfortable at Entry level 2 could try Entry level 3. Recall addition and subtraction facts to 10: comfortable at Entry level 2 could try Entry level 3. Find halves and quarters of small numbers of items or shapes : comfortable at Entry level 2 could try Entry level 3.

**Literacy** Comfortable at Level 1 in all aspects of reading, will try Level 2 reading tasks. Speaking and listening : comfortable at Level 1, will try Level 2 speaking and listening tasks. Writing : comfortable at Level 1, however requires extra support in this area to enable her to cope with the NVQ element of Apprenticeship.

### Vocational skills and employability

Catherine has been unemployed since leaving school in June 2003. She has three GCSE passes in English, drama and maths. She began a GNVQ in leisure and tourism at a local college in September 2003. She left in November 2003, as she wasn't enjoying the course and found it demotivating. She had applied for training vacancies advertised in the Connexions Centre without success.

Catherine has just completed the 'Breakthrough to success' course, which she thoroughly enjoyed. She now feels more positive about herself, more confident to set goals and more in control.

### Personal and social skills

Catherine presents as a pleasant student and completes all tasks set to the best of her ability. She comes from a supportive family background.

### Previous employment experience

Catherine had two weeks' work experience in Year 10 (2002) at an Afro hairdressers, her duties included washing hair, blow-drying and sweeping up. She also worked in a local hairdresser on a Saturday performing similar tasks. Catherine feels that the above experiences have given her an insight into her chosen career field.

## Profile David

David started with a local training provider, having been referred to us from Connexions during December 2003. Academically, David did well at school gaining eight GCSEs grades A–C and 2 Ds. He has gone on record that he did not enjoy school finding it 'boring, disliking the routine!'. David took A-levels in drama, English and history and left before completion.

David does not get along with his parents and, consequently, has very little contact with them. He is currently estranged from home and living with his girlfriend with the view to getting a council flat.

David has stated that he would like a career in youth work and appears, just now, to be singularly determined to pursue this path.

### Basic and key skills

**Literacy** Reading: comfortable at Level 1, Level 2 attempt recommended. Writing: as per reading, at ease with Level 1 standards, spelling excellent. Speaking and listening: can follow involved and complex conversations with ease.

David has a relaxed and easy speaking style with company that is known to him. Development to enable him to deal with strangers in a more confident manner would benefit him, considering his expressed career interest.

**Numeracy** Whole numbers, fractions, decimals and percentages, measures, shapes and space are all at Level 1. David would be capable of attaining Level 2 with a reasonable amount of tuition and coaching.

## Placement

At our suggestion David was placed at a coffee bar in the market square, initially as a tester placement. The coffee bar is funded by the European Commission, primarily as a drop-in counselling centre. The target group is 14–25 year olds, male and female. Services on offer include education and training, and advice on a range of issues associated with young people including sexual health, housing and substance misuse.

David's role in the coffee bar is to prepare meals and make coffee and to talk with young people about their problems.

## Qualifications

Since joining the coffee bar, David has become a member of The Connexions Youth Forum, which provides a vocal perspective for local youth.

He has gained a drug awareness certificate issued by Connexions, which will prove relevant to his work with young people.

David is scheduled to take first aid and basic food hygiene certificates during May and June respectively.

It has been proposed that David might consider attending college to take a First Diploma in public services (consisting of three core options and specialist units including workplace welfare, outdoor activities and public services, community and cultural awareness, and law and the individual). This would lead to a possible progression towards a BTEC National Diploma in public services. This course is designed to equip students with a broad range of skills considered necessary for David's intended career.

## Personal and social skills

David is a mature and balanced individual possessing good social skills, but lacking confidence. He would like to increase his confidence in dealing with people to enable him to work with a broader range of people, tackling larger and more complex issues.

## Previous employment experience

Having previously worked at a motor factory and at the Tourist Information Centre, David has skills in dealing with the public. He is not afraid of hard work and in fact voluntarily works extra hours at his placement.

## Profile Jack

Jack is nearly 18 years old and is interested in an Apprenticeship in construction. He left school in June 2003 after taking GCSEs. He felt that he under-achieved because of personal problems at the time but nevertheless he achieved 3 D grades. Since then Jack has been looking for work with no success. In discussion with his Connexions PA it was felt that Jack would benefit from taking the construction course, with a view to moving him onto Apprenticeship.

### Basic and key skills

Jack's initial assessment showed that he was operating at Entry level 3 for both numeracy and literacy. Diagnostic assessment revealed the following.

**Numeracy** He is comfortable with counting, reading and writing, ordering and comparing numbers up to 100 at Entry level 3, and adding and subtracting using three-digit numbers. However, he needs to improve his multiplication skills.

**Literacy/Communication** He is sound in literacy at Entry level 3 and will try Level 1 tasks.

### Vocational skills and employability

At school, Jack's best subject was science because of the experiments. He enjoyed PE: he is an all-round sportsman. He also enjoyed practical subjects. However, he did not attend regularly in Year 11 because of personal problems. Jack has a mature attitude and is now determined to make up for lost time and will work hard.

### Personal and social skills

Jack makes friends easily and has a lot of friends that he still sees from school.

He has eight brothers and gets little time to himself because he shares his room with four of them. His mum is a single parent and survives on benefits. Jack spends a lot of time helping his mum with his brothers and takes them to school every morning.

The environment that Jack lives in is not ideal, as there is a lot of crime. Jack would like to move out in about a year, but he is happy for the moment.

### Previous employment experience

The only work experience Jack has had was in Year 10 at a swimming pool, which he enjoyed. Jack has not had any paid employment yet and feels he needs some help with this.

## Profile Jared

Jared is an 18 year old who left school in June 2003 with eight GCSEs including C for sports science, E for English, D for maths and E for science. Jared had applied to go to college in September to start a basic skills course but after discussion with his Connexions PA, it was agreed that he should do an E2E programme as this would be a good way of gaining training in a practical career, as he likes the idea of fixing and building things.

### Basic and key skills

Jared's initial assessment showed that he is operating at Level 1 for both numeracy and literacy. However, he needs to improve his writing skills.

### Vocational skills and employability

At school Jared mostly attended regularly although he did not feel that the school suited his learning style, which is kinaesthetic. He did food technology at school because he was thinking of becoming a chef but changed his mind when he became interested in construction.

For work experience at school, Jared went to the army for two weeks. He found it a good experience.

### Personal and social skills

Jared lives happily at home with his mum. He has two brothers and one sister who are older than him.

### Previous employment experience

Jared is mature and capable of holding down a full-time job, and has no problem getting up early in the morning. He has also worked for 2–3 months as a labourer, when he gained experience in carpentry, bricklaying and soldering. He was working 10 hours a day when he was labouring.

## Profile Natasha

Natasha left school in June 2003 with six GCSEs (E–G grades) including maths and English. She had been unemployed until she started her E2E programme. Aged 18, her main career interests are hairdressing and childcare. She had previously considered hairdressing as a hobby but is now interested in it as a career. Natasha was identified as a candidate for the project because she was interested in using the college's E2E programme as a step towards an apprenticeship.

### Basic and key skills

Natasha's initial assessment showed that she was operating at Level 1 for both numeracy and literacy. Diagnostic assessment revealed the following.

**Numeracy** Comfortable at Level 1 with whole numbers, adding and subtracting. Comfortable with fractions but has difficulty with decimals and percentages at Level 1.

**Literacy** Natasha is operating comfortably at Level 1 with reading, writing and speaking and listening, and is now working on Level 2 tasks. However, she needs to pay particular attention to punctuation.

### Vocational skills and employability

Natasha did not enjoy school but shows a more positive attitude towards E2E. She was very disappointed with her GCSE results and has been finding it difficult to be motivated as a result.

### Personal and social skills

Natasha is a pleasant member of the group. She lacks confidence in group discussions, but when prompted makes valuable contributions.

### Previous employment experience

Natasha has had two weeks' work experience as a classroom assistant in a local primary school where she gained some skills in working with others, but she feels that she still needs to improve her confidence in meeting new people.

Natasha has just successfully completed the 'Breakthrough to Success' course, which she enjoyed very much. She now feels more positive and confident about herself and is keen to use some of the ideas presented on the course.

## Appendix 3 Learner commentaries : notes from learner interviews

### Profile **Becky**

Becky was referred to E2E by her Connexions PA after feeling that she was 'not getting anywhere' applying for jobs. When she began the E2E programme she was unsure what she wanted to do, but she had a strong interest in art and history. This was discussed with her E2E tutor who suggested they try to arrange a work placement for Becky in the arts / heritage industry. They looked at several options including work in an art gallery or in a museum. Eventually a placement was found for Becky at a local arts bookshop. As part of the placement, Becky will be undertaking an NVQ in customer care and she will also be completing her key skills Communication portfolio. As part of the transition to the placement, Becky was taken to the bookshop where she met the staff and started to identify some of the learning outcomes she wanted to generate from the programme.

Becky feels that she has gained tremendously from her E2E programme. It has helped her to find a focus and identify opportunities to pursue the focus area through her work placement. She is also able to gain the qualifications she needs to progress, she hopes, to an Apprenticeship in the arts / heritage industry. She feels that E2E has helped her to develop her self-esteem and self-confidence so that she can now move on, much more confident in herself and her abilities.

### Profile **Lynda**

Lynda came on to the programme after talking to a friend who was already on E2E. She contacted her PA and was soon on the programme. Lynda felt that she lacked a focus and she wanted to have some time to make up her mind about what she wanted to do while developing her personal profile of qualifications and skills. E2E was ideal for this purpose.

Compared to school, Lynda felt that on E2E the personal training staff were very helpful and supportive. Since coming on to the programme, she has developed a strong interest in working in the music industry or in some sort of customer service role.

After discussing her plans in her E2E review, Lynda found a placement at a local sports and fitness centre. She will undertake a range of customer care-related tasks including reception work and showing prospective customers round the centre. Lynda feels that E2E has raised her awareness of employability skills, particularly developing her self-confidence and interview skills.

The placement is working very well and the workplace – a national sports chain – runs an apprenticeship scheme for staff involved in customer-care activities.

## Profile Nadia

Nadia left school before completing her exams, which put her in a difficult position. After speaking to her PA, she came to the E2E centre and found that this was exactly what she was looking for. She would be able to try out a range of things while developing her qualifications, such as key skills in Communication, ICT and Application of Number. Nadia was particularly impressed by the wide-ranging curriculum offered by E2E in comparison to school, where she felt she had little choice.

During her time on E2E, Nadia has developed a strong interest in childcare and has decided this is the area she wants to pursue through an Apprenticeship.

Nadia's priorities on E2E are improving her numeracy and ICT skills as she felt that these were very important for progressing. At the time of interview, she had just completed her assessments for key skills and was confidently awaiting her results. Nadia is also completing AQA units in childcare and hopes that this qualification will help her to secure employment in the future.

## Profile Shane

Shane was referred to E2E by her Connexions PA in February, having left school in June to complete a course at college. What she really wanted to do was a hairdressing and beauty course but because there were no places available she started on a health and social care course. Shane dropped out of the college and spent a period of time unsure of what she could do. She did not want to wait until the next intake at the college, which was September. E2E provided an excellent opportunity for Shane to develop her skills and make sure that she really wanted to do hairdressing and beauty. In fact, Shane really wanted to concentrate on beauty but found that all the courses available at Level 1 involved doing both hairdressing and beauty. Eventually she reconciled herself to this, realising that this combination of skills offers better opportunities for employment.

Shane felt that E2E gave her a much better understanding of the courses that were available and staff took time to explain the various options. Her training advisers are arranging a work placement at a local salon and she is looking forward to working in the industry.

Prior to E2E, Shane had not really considered Apprenticeships, preferring to gain knowledge and skills through practical work experience. She now realises that an Apprenticeship will offer much more structured and comprehensive training and – in the long run – will provide much more secure employment opportunities.

On her E2E programme, Shane feels that she has greatly improved her numeracy through the key skills course she is doing. She feels that numeracy is presented much more practically and there is much greater opportunity to work through difficulties with the tutor on a one-to-one basis without 'feeling stupid'.

## Profile Jon

Jon joined E2E in September 2003 on recommendation from his friends. This was after he had applied to a local FE college to follow a plumbing course. His application was late and was not considered by the college, as all places had been filled.

In his application to the E2E programme Jon indicated that he was still focused on plumbing as a career. He is also interested in music. Having first been interviewed by the Connexions Service he was interviewed by the E2E provider and began his E2E programme a couple of weeks later.

He has clear learning goals and targets associated with the programme. He is 'keeping up' his skills in communication and number and working towards a CLAIT award. He is also building a music folder from his time in the provider's studios.

Jon feels that the target-setting and review system has helped him a lot: it 'keeps you focused'. The review system records achievements and targets and therefore his tutors 'don't just forget'.

The music work has been key to Jon's engagement. He stays longer than necessary almost every day. Jon is aware that without this programme he could easily slip into waking up late and lose his ambition and drive. Although his music work is important to him, he recognises that this may not be his full-time career. He wishes to keep it up as a hobby and perhaps to make some money from 'extra' work in the industry – plus he 'hopes' he will 'make it'.

Nevertheless he is keen to get onto his plumbing course and he undertook work experience in an electrical manufacturing plant. He is clear that he doesn't want to do carpentry or engineering and does want to do plumbing. Jon says that he has always been interested in plumbing and 'water' type work – even before he learned that it can be very well paid in south London!

He has enjoyed his PC work towards the CLAIT award and has learned a great deal about applying for jobs, and finding accommodation and living independently in a flat. He has learned 'how to do' things.

Jon has had an interview at a local college for a September 2004 start on a plumbing course. He is not sure what qualification he will be working towards although the interviewer has asked for his GCSE results (he achieved 'some Cs and Ds I think'). If he could have started plumbing earlier he would have done so. He has not been able to undertake a work placement or any work experience since he has been on his E2E programme. He is not sure what he needs to do about becoming a plumber and sees college as the route starting in September.

Jon feels he has learned a great deal in the recording studios even though he does not see this as a full-time career. He has stayed focused and 'kept up' his work in number and communications; he reads music, but 'I don't read books'. He has developed his IT skills preparing for the CLAIT assessments. Jon's description of himself at the centre was 'I'm getting full use out of the place'. His tutor is pushing him, and his knowledge of applying for jobs and independent living is far greater.

# Entry to Employment Support and Development Programme

**This publication describes a project undertaken by the E2E National Support and Development Programme to identify good practice in progressing learners on E2E programmes. It outlines each stage of the project, reporting on the key processes and outcomes, and identifying emerging lessons for E2E practitioners. It is hoped that the publication will be useful to E2E providers in developing progression strategies.**

ISBN 1 84572 020 2