

Yorkshire Coast Employability Charter

What is the Yorkshire Coast Employability Charter?

The Charter is an agreement between local schools, colleges and employers to work together with the aim of:

Supporting every young person on the Yorkshire Coast to gain the knowledge, skills and personal qualities required to find employment and thrive in the workplace.

Driven by the Yorkshire Coast Business Partnership, a 'Skills Summit' took place in February 2012 where key employers, schools, colleges and universities in the Scarborough Borough agreed to work together to improve the employability of young people in the area. Further down the line, the concept of The Employability Charter was formed, which will embed an employability programme into local schools (primary and secondary) as well as further and higher education.

An Employability Working Group has identified four shared principles to which employers and education institutions will make a commitment:

1. To ensure that the curriculum enables students to gain the employability skills required for the workplace
2. To provide access to high quality careers information and advice
3. To provide a rewarding experience of the work environment
4. To create job opportunities for young people and provide practical support to help students secure employment on leaving full time education.

To support this and related developments a consortium led by Scarborough Borough Council was successful in a bid to the national Coastal Communities Fund. Part of this funding will be dedicated to developing and co-ordinating the Charter and facilitating activities bringing students and employers together to provide a basis for the employability programme.

The Charter is one strand of the Coastal Communities Fund and it is important that the Charter developments will link with these other priorities such as an increase in the availability of apprenticeships in the local area.

Why is it needed?

Education and business share a need to:

- » Ensure that young people have the skills and knowledge they will need to make informed choices about their future and to do well in their chosen career path
- » Shape the future workforce to respond to the needs of a growing economy

Over the next five years we will see unprecedented investment in the Scarborough Borough, potentially in excess of £2 billion, in the following key sectors:

- Potash Mining
- Offshore Wind
- Engineering and Manufacturing
- Housing
- Leisure

Skills are a key driver of economic growth. The availability of skills in the local labour market contributes significantly to the economic well-being of an area. The Charter will enable the Yorkshire Coast to grow the workforce required to respond to the area's economic needs and opportunities.

How will it work?

There will be a wide range of opportunities on offer for employers to engage with schools/colleges in a way that suits them. Activities will range from work experience placements to sector related links with the curriculum, and from mock interviews to events and competitions.

Schools/colleges will be encouraged and supported to increase the level of employer involvement in the curriculum and to identify the best ways of increasing the employability skills of their students. Students themselves will engage directly in the Charter by gaining recognition for and ownership of their 'employability'.

Building on existing links between schools/colleges and employers, we plan to increase both the volume and quality of this activity to a level that has a significant impact on young people, on employers and on our coastal communities.

We also aim to develop appropriate quality measures/awards that enable all those involved to measure their progress, identify further quality improvements and gain recognition for their commitment to the employability of new entrants to the workforce. Appropriate awards will be developed in keeping with what is meaningful to schools, colleges, employers and young people themselves. It is planned that these 'awards' will form an integral part of Charter developments beyond initial commitment.

What will be the benefits of the Charter?

Employers will be able to:

- » Influence the skills, knowledge and attitudes of future employees
- » Find new recruits
- » Promote their company and their sector
- » Have their contribution recognised through the Charter.

Schools/colleges will be able to:

- » Engage directly with local employers to support the curriculum
- » Have confidence that their students are making well informed choices and will thrive in the workplace
- » Use employability activity to increase the motivation of their students
- » Promote the benefits of the Charter to current and prospective students and parents/carers.

Young people will be able to:

- » Gain a better understanding of their skills and abilities
- » Make well informed choices about their future
- » Demonstrate their value to local employers
- » Find employment and thrive in the workplace.

When will the Charter be set up?

Development work is under way and the Charter will be launched officially this autumn. We expect momentum to build over the next two years and are planning for long term sustainability of the Charter.

A central database of employers, schools, colleges and opportunities will be managed centrally to ensure that all are matched appropriately to meet mutual need and minimise duplication.

How can I get more information?

Look out for regular newsletters, presentations at network meetings, website and twitter feed – all in development. If you let us have your contact details we will keep you up to date with all developments and opportunities.

The Charter will soon have its own unique branding – a competition is currently under way to find a winning design by a local design student from schools and colleges in the area.

How can I get involved?

- » Provide your ideas and suggestions to ensure that project development meets your needs
- » Sign up to the Charter and receive regular information bulletins about engagement opportunities.

Who can I talk to about the Charter and where should I send my contact details?

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