

E-learning – helping students to achieve and progress at Ousedale School

Ousedale School in Buckinghamshire is offering students a new way to succeed and thrive through the achievement of work-related qualifications studied online with vision2learn for **schools**.

Dave Wilkes, Head of Personalised and Inclusive Learning at the secondary school, says: *“We were keen to expand our BTEC offering here at Ousedale and we really liked the idea of the Edexcel **WorkSkills** programme on vision2learn for **schools**. It’s ideal for meeting learners’ needs because the students can study and progress under their own steam, with help when they need it.”*

More than 50 students in years 10 and 11 at Ousedale School are currently completing vision2learn for **schools** online Edexcel **WorkSkills** units alongside their GCSE studies, as part of an integrated Key Stage 4 achievement programme. **WorkSkills** is extremely flexible and enables learners to ‘pick and mix’ units to suit their needs and build them up to achieve a range of BTEC **WorkSkills** qualifications at Award, Certificate, Extended Certificate or Diploma level.

E-learning that’s relevant, practical and progressive

Mr Wilkes believes **WorkSkills** helps students to gain the practical knowledge and skills they need to progress in the working world. He says, *“It’s helped our students to take a step outside of the school environment and learn more about the world of work and business. They gain a sense of what it will be like when they leave school and start working and there are no other lessons in the school that teach them about this. **WorkSkills** is really relevant to helping them find jobs when they leave school – the ‘Searching for a Job’, ‘Applying for a Job’ and ‘Interview Skills’ units are particularly useful. When pupils who’ve completed the **WorkSkills** modules leave school, they’re fairly clued-up already about many aspects of working life.”*

The **WorkSkills** programme has also provided a very practical, structured way to help students at Ousedale School gain as much as they can from their local work experience placements.

*“All students at Ousedale do a work experience placement and **WorkSkills** has been an excellent support for this,” says Dave Wilkes. “They do the ‘Preparing for Work Placement’ unit before their placement and when they*



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come back from placement they complete the ‘Learning from Work Placement’ unit, which helps them to reflect on their experience.”

*“Many of the skills that they learn on the **WorkSkills** programme are transferable as well,” he adds. “We have a student who is completing an enterprise programme and he’s been able to transfer his skills and knowledge from the enterprise units on **WorkSkills** to help with his other enterprise work too.”*

Students take control of their learning

Learning online has given pupils in the school an opportunity to study in a new way. The Edexcel **WorkSkills** programme contains 41 short, interactive study units, which engage students and enable them to break their learning down into manageable chunks. They can very quickly see the results of their efforts, which really motivates them to continue learning.

*“Our students like the variety of different units available and the fact that they can get on with the work at their own pace,” says Dave Wilkes. “They’re able to move on when they’re ready and they don’t need to wait for anyone else. They’ve done presentations as part of the **WorkSkills** programme and it’s encouraged them to work together in groups as well.” He continues, “The students also respond well to the structured nature of the course – they like having dates to work towards and they know where they are when we set targets for them. They can also work to their own ability level. It’s motivating to see the credits building up - for example achieving the full 37 credits for a BTEC Diploma.”*

Ousedale School has a dedicated vision2learn for **schools** study centre, with 15 computers, where students can work through their courses. Learning online also means that pupils can easily continue their studies from home. Mr Wilkes says, *“Students can access vision2learn from home if they want to and that’s also a plus point. We can set work for them to complete at home and many are keen to do extra study on the WorkSkills course anyway.”*



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Advantages for teachers

Vision2learn for **schools** has plenty of benefits for teachers too. All courses are approved and endorsed by awarding bodies, learner progress is automatically tracked and stored and assessments that meet the learning outcomes are also included. Teachers don’t have the extra work of creating their own lesson plans and assignments. *“It’s a real bonus to know that the courses and assessments have all been checked over and approved by awarding bodies,”* adds Dave Wilkes.

Helping disengaged students to achieve

For students at the school who’ve become disengaged from mainstream education, studying online through vision2learn for **schools** gives them an invaluable chance to achieve and progress. Says Mr Wilkes, *“We have around 25 students who’ve been away from school for a while for a variety of reasons; they may have had a long-term illness and fallen behind, or become disengaged from their studies during year 10. These students have been studying on WorkSkills and also on the vision2learn for schools Equality and Diversity and Nutrition and Health programmes.”*

He continues, *“They can come down to the vision2learn centre, log on to the courses and just get on with it. In their eyes, there’s no teacher standing up in front of them telling them what to do. It’s been great for personalised learning because it’s like a little library of courses and units they can choose from and then complete at their own pace on the computer. If they gain 13 credits on WorkSkills, this gives them a BTEC Certificate.”*

Celebrating results

Learners at Ousedale have achieved fantastic results on their vision2learn for **schools** courses. As well as gaining additional qualifications to support their Key Stage 4 achievement programme, they’ve acquired practical skills and knowledge to help them progress into further education, training or work. Most importantly, it’s boosted many students’ sense of confidence and optimism in their ability to learn and achieve.

“Last year we had a group of year 11s who studied on WorkSkills and they all passed,” says Dave Wilkes. *“Most of these students gained a BTEC Award in WorkSkills and one student gained an Extended Certificate. This year I’m hoping that at least 20 students will gain the full BTEC Diploma and at least 10 will gain Extended Certificates. For students who’ve completed WorkSkills early, we’ve also given them the option to complete the Equality and Diversity and Nutrition and Health courses and achieve extra qualifications.”*

The school looks forward to expanding its e-learning offering during the next academic year.

“I’m keen to offer as many vision2learn for schools courses as possible because this approach really works for our learners,” concludes Mr Wilkes. *“Next year we hope to offer the Coaching Sport course and possibly the Enterprise Skills programme too.”*

Vision2learn for **schools** has over 50 accredited courses, QCF units and resources to support Key Stage 4 achievement programmes including online resources for English and Mathematics and ‘Learning to Learn’ skills to help learners identify their learning styles, motivation and improve their GCSE grades.

Contact us

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