



**DORSET**  
Local Enterprise Partnership

# **Digital and Enterprise Innovation Hubs**

## **End of Project Report**

**28/2/2021**

## PROJECT SUMMARY

Funding was requested to deliver a project that addresses skills gaps and supports the Dorset LEP's Strategic Economic Plan in line with the Talented Dorset ambition to achieve a highly skilled and adaptive workforce.

The project has created a physical space at North Road Poole and at the Lansdowne sites which will now support students wishing to progress into strategically important local sectors. These hubs will now provide a central focus at each site to promote the development of employability and enterprise skills to ensure students are work ready and enter industries as more productive employees.

Overall the Hubs have achieved what was initially set out in the original bid, albeit reduced currently due to students not being allowed to attend college due to Covid-19. There are two very impressive spaces that have been created, including flexible break out areas.

The students are due to return to college on the 8<sup>th</sup> March 2021 and the following sessions are planned from an early onset.

- Employability development
- Careers advice and guidance
- Individual tailored tutorial guidance
- Employer led workshops
- EABs.

Project start date	28/01/2020
Project construction start date	If applicable
Project completion date	31/10/2020

## CHANGE REQUEST

There were no change requests throughout this project

## OUTPUTS AND OUTCOMES:

The output has generated two modern facilities with break out spaces. A photo below shows an example of a new area.



The main costs provided the building works, but also provided IT equipment to help students navigate their requirements and improve their IT and digital skills. A 3d printer was also provided within the funds allocated and all these outputs will help increase the skills base of students when they leave college.

Due to COVID-19 and lockdown as well as social distancing guidance, the areas are just beginning to open to staff to be able to access them as their base of work but we are not currently able to offer a drop in service or run the hubs as we had hoped with students at this point in the academic year.

Initially, we will be offering distanced 1:2:1 Careers advice and Guidance sessions as well as 1:2:1 Employability Coaching sessions from these hubs if a student wishes to receive this support in a face-to-face environment, otherwise we are offering remote and virtual sessions at this time. As it is safe to do so, we will be using these hubs for a variety of activities including:

- Employability Skills Workshops
- Drop in's
- Confidential Careers Advice and Guidance
- Workshops/group work
- Employer visits/speakers
- Information sessions (such as apprenticeships, CV, Interviews)
- Mock Interviews- in person and virtual.
- Hosting Employer Advisory Boards
- Careers & Enterprise Meetings
- Enterprise Adviser Led workshops

These digital hubs will enable staff supporting students to access the technology required to upskill students and to develop employability skills to ensure they are best suited for a competitive job market. We will be utilising the spaces to enable students to access laptops and iPads to apply for progression options, higher education, apprenticeships or employment.

We also hope these areas will become areas that can be used to deliver staff training to promote our Careers Not Courses strategic theme.

We intend to gather feedback from students, parents/carers, staff and employers. We will also monitor the number of sessions delivered via these hubs.

### **BENEFITS REALISED TO DATE**

One of the significant benefits that these hubs have been instrumental in facilitating, is the merging and co-location of several teams that are normally very disparate across The College. This has enabled the teams to work more collaboratively and succinctly putting students at the centre, thus ensuring a holistic student experience. It has also ensured that the teams are working together to share good practice, skills and expertise to support the students who access these hubs.

### **FINANCES**

The original budget for this project was £85,928 and the project was brought in on Budget. However, during the period we were invited to bid for a further £20K for a 3D printer which was accepted therefore making the overall budget £105,928.

There was no match funding on this project, nor any savings as the project was on budget.

### **LESSONS LEARNT**

The project suffered from one element which was deliveries of items due to the Covid-19 pandemic. This was obviously unforeseen, and proved to be the only issue throughout the project. All other risks were mitigated by good project management and this was mainly to ensure that the tendered works were completed on time with the necessary specification.

### **SUCCESS STORY**

The main benefits of these hubs will be felt in the remainder of the academic year as well as moving into the next academic year when, safety permitting students can fully access the facilities. We anticipate that these hubs will bring a hive of activity where staff will work collaboratively to ensure that our students are well prepared for their next steps.

### **Dorset LEP**

Laura Zisa-Swann  
lzisa@bournemouth.ac.uk  
07708 510464  
www.dorsetlep.co.uk

### **Bournemouth & Poole College**

Paul Marks

marksp@bpc.ac.uk  
07854174600