

AN INTRODUCTION TO EBC



Education Business Connections was formed in 1998 to support the closer joint working of schools and employers.

Originally a niche provider of a small number of work related learning programmes for a few schools, Education Business Connections employed just two staff.

Now a large team of full and part time staff deliver a wide range of work related learning and enterprise education programmes to schools right across Tyne and Wear and County Durham.

The reasons for this successful growth include:

- A flexible and responsive approach to the needs of both schools and employers.
- A delivery team with an impressive pool of skills and expertise.
- An in-depth understanding of local, regional and national education policies.
- A first class reputation with a wide range of funding agencies, and access to the skills of a professional fundraiser.
- Support and guidance from experts drawn from both the public and private sectors.

Many of the programmes offered to young people support pupils' portfolio building requirements for various academic and vocational routes including Wider Key Skills, ASDAN and COPE awards.

The growth of Education Business Connections enabled the organisation to become a Company Limited by Guarantee and a registered charity. It has a Board of Directors drawn from the private sector, supported by specialist advisors when necessary.

In 2005 EBC became one of the first in the country to secure capacity building funding from Futurebuilders - a government backed initiative designed to help voluntary sector organisations to compete for public sector contracts.

Funding and support for the work of Education Business Connections comes from a number of organisations and funding bodies committed to raising both aspirations and achievement in young people.

These include:

- Futurebuilders.
- TWEBLO.
- The Learning and Skills Council.
- ONE Northeast.
- Private sector business partners.
- Education Action Zones.
- The European Union.
- The Sunderland Partnership.
- Neighbourhood Renewal Fund.
- Back on the Map - Sunderland's New Deal for Communities initiative.
- Schools and voluntary sector organisations.

Just as important to the success of Education Business Connections is the extensive 'in kind' support it receives from more than 300 businesses across the region, and the partnerships it has forged with those businesses. The list of supporters is too long to reproduce in full, and is growing all the time, but reflects the richness and diversity of the region's economy from sole traders and partnerships through to multinational companies.

As well as individual companies Education Business Connections also works with organisations representing different sectors of the commercial world – either geographic or industry specific as well as specialist networks. These include the Construction Skills - Construction Industry Training Board (CITB), Washington Business Forum and the Regional Language Network.

Together Education Business Connections, local businesses, and local schools join forces with the single aim.

That aim is: "To Build Confidence in Young People through a creative approach to curriculum needs and business partnerships".