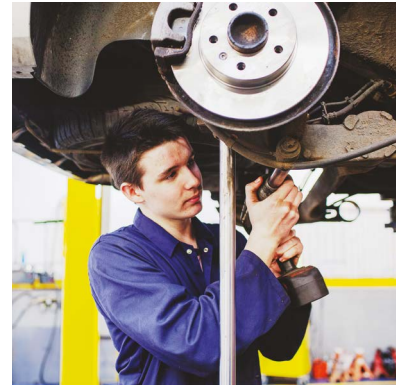


# workingrite works!

A review of our youth employment programme, 2016



## ABOUT WORKINGRITE

WorkingRite matches 16-19 year olds with small or medium sized businesses for work placements lasting up to six months. Before and during the programme, our Project Co-ordinators deliver training to prepare our young people for, and enhance, their experience in the workplace. Our trainees receive on-the-job training, mentoring, and a weekly training allowance, as well as the opportunity to prove themselves in the real world of work and potentially gain a job or apprenticeship.

## OUR IMPACT

Since 2010, **we have helped over 1,500 unemployed young people** to gain confidence, skills and experience to make a successful transition to working life.



# EVALUATION OF OUR MODEL

Independent evaluators, Assenti Research, assessed the impact of our programme in Whiteinch and Scotstoun, Glasgow, in March 2016.

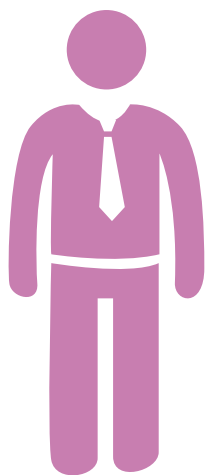
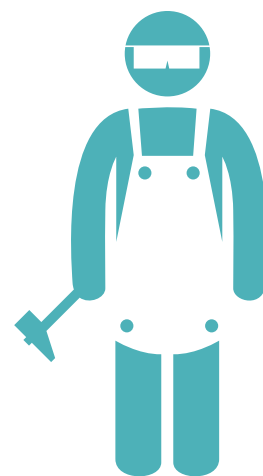
The project supported 62 young people over three years. As of April 2016, 35 (56%) had secured a job, apprenticeship or college place.

Whilst following our core work-based mentoring model, this project focuses on those young people who face greater barriers to employment such as: poor academic record and school attendance, chaotic home lives, alcohol or substance abuse, family history of unemployment, low self-esteem, learning difficulties, mental health issues and offending behaviour.

**Because all the research interviews were conducted in confidence, all quotes given from trainees and employers are therefore anonymous.**

## MOTIVATIONS

The fact that there was potential for a full time job at the end of the placement was the primary motivating factor for trainees. Most had not enjoyed school and disliked the classroom environment. There was a strong desire to begin earning money.



Small employers were attracted by the opportunity to mentor young people and impart their own skills and experience. Local engagement was high and this was seen as a positive thing – encouraging local jobs for local people and ensuring that ‘wages’ paid out went back into the local economy. Employers particularly liked the idea of being able to give something back to their own community.

*“I didn’t like school. The teachers didn’t understand why I never did better and I didn’t get the help I needed. I just wanted out of school as quickly as possible, get a job and start earning.” – Trainee*

*“I felt pretty bad. I wasn’t really doing anything. I kept applying for jobs but I wasn’t even hearing anything back so it felt like a waste of time.”*

– Trainee

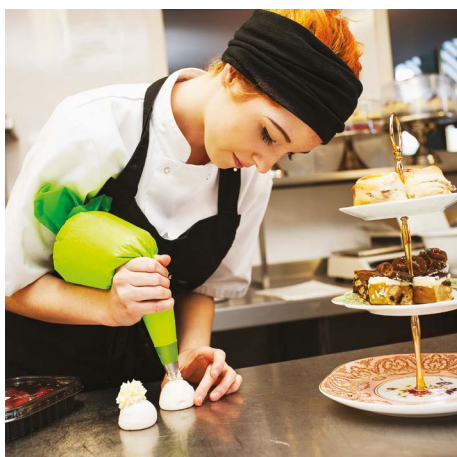
*“I didn’t think there was really a job there for me so I did [WorkingRite] for the experience and the money. It was only when I started up that I realised I could actually get a job.”*

– Trainee

## BUSINESSES INVOLVED

Trainees chose a wide range of placements. Most common were hairdressing, joinery, electrics, plumbing, sheet metal work, retail and construction.

The workplaces were often small businesses, offering an opportunity to be mentored by the business owner.



## CASE STUDY - ELLIE



Ellie heard about WorkingRite from her best friend. At interview, she was very quiet. Her self-esteem was extremely low and she was convinced that everything she did wasn't good enough. Her dream was hairdressing, but would she be able to cope with a bustling salon? Nevertheless the Project Co-ordinator found a supportive salon and coached Ellie on her presentation and communication so that when she met her prospective employer, she impressed.

Throughout her placement Ellie never had a day off sick and had impeccable timekeeping. At each review she was progressing well, but she continued to put a lot of

pressure on herself. She often became gripped by self-doubt, and right at the end when she was offered an apprenticeship, she panicked that she wouldn't be able to handle the college. With the Project Co-ordinator's support and reassurance, Ellie started her apprenticeship and now has a more positive outlook on her future. She has learned a lot about how to overcome her deep self-doubts and has transformed herself into a chatty, relaxed young woman, with dreams of one day moving to Australia with her new found trade.

The name of this trainee has been changed to protect her confidentiality'

# TRAINING, MENTORING & SUPPORT

Employers felt well prepared for their trainees and the additional support offered by WorkingRite was highly valued. Some trainees were considered work ready, but most had some challenges. The on-the-job mentoring went further than simple instruction on how to complete tasks and included a lot of input around what employers expect of their staff.

The young respondents had all enjoyed their placements and perceived the key benefits of the WorkingRite programme to be:

- ✓ Learning new skills related to the job
- ✓ Adapting to the workplace / getting into a work routine
- ✓ Working with other people as part of a team
- ✓ Gaining confidence
- ✓ Showing the employer that they could do the job



Meanwhile, employers stated the main benefits for them were:

- ✓ Opportunity to employ/access local young people
- ✓ Opportunity to work with their trainee over a long period of time to establish if they fit their business
- ✓ Trainees who were interested in their area of work
- ✓ Taking away the hassle of interviewing lots of candidates
- ✓ Help with paperwork
- ✓ Help with mentoring and supporting the trainee
- ✓ Low financial risk

*"I learned what I was good at and also I wasn't good for asking how things worked and I was struggling 'cos I wouldn't like to ask. I feel better about that, now I know how to communicate better."* – Trainee

*"They aren't used to hard work or work full stop. Sometimes after a few weeks they start taking the mickey, maybe not even on purpose. You have to teach them that it's not ok to be 10 minutes late every day, they have to learn to stop checking their phone whenever they want, they have to understand that they can't just be off sick whenever they don't feel 100%. It's all part of growing up."* – Employer

*"It's like a really long job interview. Before you commit to them, you know them – warts and all."* – Employer

*"When I was in school, I thought it would be harder in the real world. But it's so much better than school – much more enjoyable. I think more, I'm being challenged all the time and learning new things."* – Trainee

# OUTCOMES

Of the 35 young people who progressed to a positive destination, **49%** were offered an apprenticeship, **42%** were offered a job and **9%** went to college



■ Apprenticeships ■ Jobs ■ Re-engaged with education

The young people who had completed their placements and been kept on by their employers anticipated they would still be doing the same thing in a year's time. Motivation was high across most of them.

In 5 years' time, most of those who had completed their placement expected to have achieved some career progression in the same field either being qualified, promoted or being self-employed. Those still on placement were less confident and certain.

If the project hadn't existed, whilst there was an expectation or a hope among most that they would have got a job, there was a sense that it might not have been in the area they wanted to work. Some thought they would have continued being passed from one employability project to another or just given up trying.

All of the trainees would recommend the WorkingRite project to their friends and indeed, many already had. The project was highly valued by trainees who saw it as fundamentally important in them being able to find employment in the area they wanted to work in.

*"I'd like to think I would have got there in the end by myself but I don't know, I wasn't having much luck before." – Trainee*

*"I had applied for every apprenticeship going and I was getting nowhere because of my grades. I would have just ended up labouring but now I'm about to pass my first year." – Trainee*

*"He was very quiet but he listened to what you said and watched you once and he could do it himself. I can see him being a site foreman when he is time served." – Employer*

*"She has gone from strength to strength. Don't know what we would do without her now. She's not the quiet wee girl who first started." – Employer*

Not all trainees completed their placements or developed as employers hoped, but employing and training young people was not expected to be an easy, smooth process. Critically, the additional support offered by WorkingRite gave the trainees the best possible chance and made life easier for employers.

Where trainees were kept on, there was a strong sense that they had developed significantly over the 16 week period – often beyond the employers' early expectations. In most cases, there had been significant improvements in confidence, team working, skills and reliability.

All of the employers were open to taking trainees from WorkingRite in the future should they have a need. Only one was slightly reticent as they had three previous trainees, none of whom had completed the 16 weeks.

All of the employers would recommend working with WorkingRite to other businesses.

If you would like to read the full Assenti Research report, please visit our website

[www.workingrite.co.uk/impact](http://www.workingrite.co.uk/impact)



## CASE STUDY - JASON

Jason had recently moved into the area to live with his father having experienced abuse with his alcoholic mother previously. He had left school with few qualifications, very low self-esteem and admitted to using alcohol to escape his feelings. Jason had a genuine interest in becoming a joiner and had some experience of this working with his father. Jason was keen to start and said he would try anything physical and hands on. Unfortunately there was no joinery placement available at the time.

He was therefore placed with a sheet metal business but only attended for two days and then ignored phone calls from the Project Co-ordinator. WorkingRite finally managed to make contact through the Housing Officer and his father. Jason admitted that he didn't like the placement but had not known how to communicate this. After taking part in a confidence and motivational workshop he was offered a second placement and this time WorkingRite were able to offer joinery. The placement went well and his employers were delighted with his progress. Jason's new focus and hard work certainly paid off, when to his delight his employers offered him a joinery apprenticeship.

The name of this trainee has been changed to protect his confidentiality.

## WORKINGRITE PIONEERS EARLY INTERVENTION PROGRAMME

From 2013 to 2016, WorkingRite developed a more intensive, holistic programme to support 15-17 year olds furthest removed from the labour market.

The 82 young people who benefited from this programme across Edinburgh, Glasgow, Renfrewshire and East Renfrewshire experienced multiple and complex barriers to employment, and most had entirely disengaged with education.

The Pioneers programme sought to tackle the young people's barriers and improve their wellbeing, independence and confidence before entering the workplace at all. An extended induction (6 weeks) utilised the expertise of partners to deliver engaging, effective workshops in the areas of drug and alcohol awareness, equality, LGBT issues, health & nutrition, networks & relationships, and overcoming challenges. The Pioneers experienced the programme as a group and the peer support that this encouraged proved highly successful.

The second phase of the programme was much more like WorkingRite's core programme – matching each young person to a local employer for a supported work placement. However, our Pioneers were eased into working life gradually – only increasing their time in the workplace as and when they were ready.

**The pilot Pioneers programme in Edinburgh achieved unprecedented success, with 89% of 36 participants moving into jobs, apprenticeships or college. It also received a SURF Award in 2014 in the 'Preparing for Employment' category.**

**In the west, 46 young people were supported, with 59% of them achieving positive destinations.**

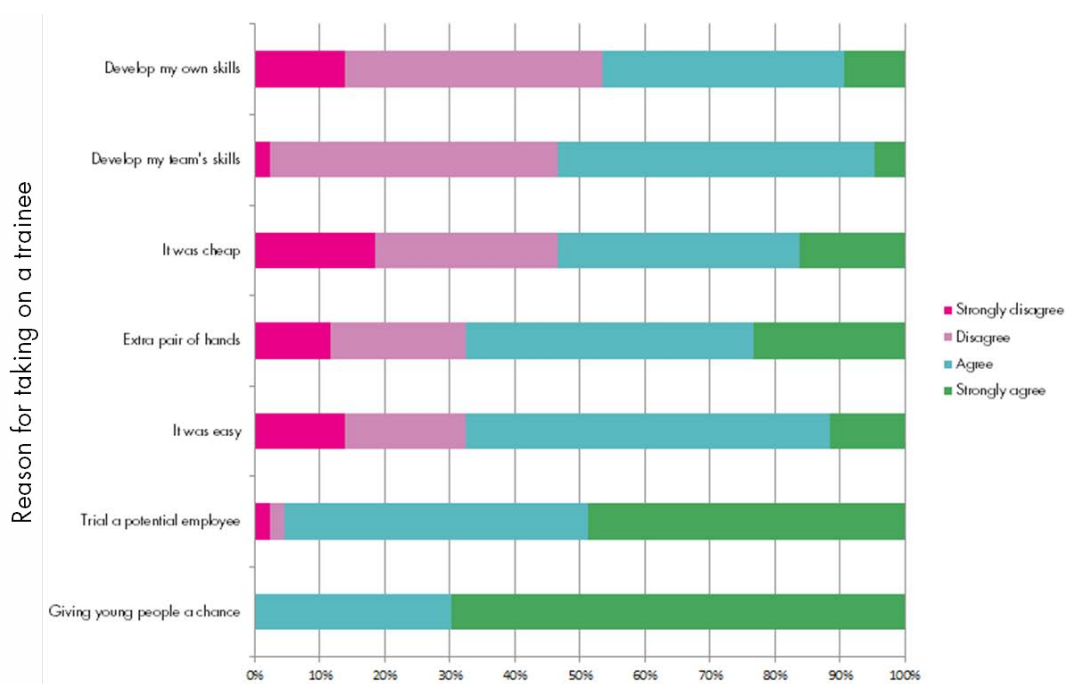
We have used the valuable learnings from the Pioneers programme to inform aspects of our core model – extending the induction period, phasing young people into work gradually if they need it, and being more aware of the other pressures young people experience that might affect their employability.

# EMPLOYER PERSPECTIVES

## Results from our annual employer survey.

Fundamental to WorkingRite's success is identifying and supporting socially conscious, committed and patient employers to take on one of our trainees and teach them on-the-job. It is imperative that placement employers do not use the programme as a source of 'cheap labour' and that there is genuine potential for the placement to turn into a job or apprenticeship at the end. We are therefore not surprised that a key motivator for joining our programme is to give local young people a chance.

SMEs also value our programme as a way of trialling a potential employee or apprentice, stating that the programme is like an "extended interview".



Responses from 43 employers

Rating the experience overall (1-10), 82% of employers surveyed gave WorkingRite a score of 8-10. All employers rated the programme as 5 or higher.

When asked if they would recommend us to other businesses, 93% said 'yes', and the remainder replied 'maybe'.

*"It gave us an opportunity to practice a training programme and has shaped future training programmes. We also now feel more confident about employing young people."*

*"Bringing in young people who have little or no experience is always a learning curve. As a business we have had to tighten up our procedures, ensure we are explicit in our instructions and look at how comprehensible our instructions are. This is a benefit to everyone; we're slicker for the effort."*

*"Having young keen minds to learn from our older workforce means key skills and important knowledge can be passed down and retained within the company."*

*"WorkingRite have delivered exactly what they promised – an enthusiastic young individual with the support and back-up of a friendly and professional team."*

*"It is rewarding to give back the knowledge I was once given."*

*"The WorkingRite programme gives us the opportunity to see a young person's work over a longer period of time. Before WorkingRite, I wouldn't hire anyone without a Higher in Maths and Physics, but they've changed the way I think about recruiting."*

## TESTIMONIALS FROM PARTNERS AND REFERRERS

*"Some work programmes are classroom based but these young people are trying to escape classrooms and they have no attention span – often someone who doesn't care is just talking at them. I've filtered out a lot of partners and WorkingRite is the only one I'm using for employability."*

– DRC Youthwork, Glasgow

*"I would be at a bit of a loss without it. It's unique in its stage of the pipeline for young people who are ready. WorkingRite are there to help them make that transition."*

– Staff member of Skills Development Scotland, Glasgow

*"It's extremely valuable and worthwhile. The main outcome is the individual benefit to young people – the majority are getting positive outcomes and some highly positive – we hear wonderful stories of them getting support to fulfill their potential."*

– Whiteinch & Scotstoun Housing Association

*"West Highland Housing Association is delighted to be a partner in the WorkingRite Project. This project provides employment opportunities for young local people and over the past three years, a high number of those assisted through WorkingRite have gone on to permanent employment. This is an excellent result for small, local employers and the young people."*

– West Highland Housing Association

*"Glen Oaks believes that we will only regenerate our community if we also try to improve the quality of life for all our residents. This includes giving our young people a helping hand to boost their employment prospects."*

– Glen Oaks Housing Association

*"Langstane Housing Association is very pleased to host the WorkingRite project in our offices in Aberdeen which ensures that our young tenants have the best opportunity to participate in the programme and be given a great start to their working life".*

– Langstane Housing Association

## ONGOING MONITORING

WorkingRite has recently developed an impact assessment tool in order to capture the 'soft' outcomes of our programme. Until now, we have collected anecdotes about our trainees' experiences, but we are now formalising this and collecting complementary quantitative data. As well as gathering evidence that our programme impacts on a young person's confidence, aspiration and maturity, we also plan to use the data to understand any areas for improvement or development within our programme.

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