



Quality in Careers >>>>

**A CASE STUDY in the form of a Question & Answer Session
with Liz Mannion, Careers Leader, Richmond School and Sixth Form College,
North Yorkshire**

(interviewed by Paul Anthony Chubb, Quality in Careers Director, 5th January 2021)

Introducing Richmond School, North Yorkshire

Richmond School is based in rural North Yorkshire. There are 1,308 students on roll, from 15 feeder schools in a catchment area of around 350 square miles. The School serves the area of Richmondshire, taking in many outlying villages, Catterick and extending up to the top of Swaledale, with approximately half of its students travelling to school by bus.

Despite its rural location, Liz says:

“As a school, we’re very much outward facing and convinced of the value of collaboration, including the many partnerships we have with employers and universities. There’s a big commitment to CEIAG for all of our students and the school has been awarded the Quality in Careers Standard, holding it now for the past three years.”

Paul: Why did you decide to seek national accreditation through the national Standard?

Liz: The Standard demonstrates our commitment to CEIAG, and it helps in so many ways. It shows that we take Careers seriously, it attracts students to the school and, most importantly, it supports students with their career planning and destinations Post-16 and Post-18. The school’s motto is "Being the best we can be" – and Quality in Careers helps our students to achieve this. It places Careers at the heart of Richmond School strategy.

Paul: How did you persuade your SLT to fund it?

Liz: I didn't need to. In 2015, North Yorkshire schools were asked to apply for a funding grant from the LA to work towards the Quality Award and 20 schools were successful.

We received £1500 which was a real kick-start to the project and enabled us to meet the national Quality Standard working with an external provider (the Awarding Body: we chose

to work with Positive Steps – Inspiring IAG). At the time I attended a few hub meetings and had to evidence how the funding was being used. We were awarded Stage 1 of the Award in 2017 and, in 2018, we were awarded the full Quality in Careers Standard.

It took time to develop this, but it was very worth it. Since then I've successfully built in a provision into the careers budget for annual reviews and this has been welcomed by SLT. On reflection the initial funding was a big driver of success - with a supportive and engaged SLT.

Paul: What difference has it made to your careers provision and what impact has it had on your students?

Liz: We've made significant progress against Gatsby Benchmarks including launching work experience for Year 12.

More students have attended visits to higher education and further education providers. More recently, we've partnered with online providers Unifrog and Uptree and this has helped to support students working remotely. More students now apply to higher education and we've built strong partnerships with Russell Group universities such as York, Leeds and Newcastle.

More students are also starting apprenticeships and degree apprenticeships. Beyond doubt, our students are more "work-ready" and have the skills to apply for jobs in the future in their early career phase.

Paul: Having achieved the national Standard what advice would you give other schools to encourage them to work towards it too?

Liz: It's hard work but pays off in dividends. It just takes an injection of budget to get started and the support of a lead SLT contact. Working closely with Lead Teachers really helps to embed the Standard in the curriculum.

Students will benefit and also it helps achieve the Gatsby Benchmarks, with Compass Tracker and Destinations data! As more students find a better career fit, they're more likely to stay with their course/apprenticeship.

We've had very successful partnerships with external providers, including Uni Connect, which has made a big difference to what we can have been able to achieve.

Our experience is that the national Quality Standard is great evidence for Ofsted and the whole school can see positive outcomes - such as careers in the curriculum activities. As a result, 'Careers' is no longer the responsibility of one person, it's now part of the whole school culture.

Liz's contact email: emannion@richmondschool.net

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