

International students' experiences of the Career Development Module

Asuka - First Step

Asuka, a mature student from Japan, gained valuable work experience whilst studying for an MA in Applied Linguistics and TESOL (Teaching English as a Second or Additional Language) through a Career Development Module placement at the First Step programme in Newcastle.

Asuka helped support the aims of this project, which provides women from other countries with education, training and support in a non-threatening and sympathetic environment. Asuka was able to build on her previous teaching experience in Japan and America by leading English language classes, introducing her own ideas and activities to meet the

needs of the group and improve their confidence.



Her supervisor was impressed with the 'consistent and highly competent support' Asuka provided, as well as the 'cleverly designed and highly personalised resources' she developed, and the flexible approach that allowed all members of her mixed-ability group were to learn effectively. Asuka enjoyed the experience so much that she returned to First Step in Semester 2! She plans to use the

experience alongside the theory learned on her MA to help her gain a job teaching English to refugees and asylum seekers in the UK upon graduation.

Shirley - Kingston Park Primary School

Shirley completed a placement working with pupils at a local primary school. She worked with small groups of learners to support the class teacher across a range of subjects. Shirley enjoyed her experience and felt she had gained a lot from it; developing relationships with students and staff, improving her communication skills and gaining a sense of achievement through supporting individual pupils, especially those with Special Educational Needs. She compared her experience of the Career Development Module to 'an internship in a primary school' and felt this would be useful experience to help her to achieve her career aim of working as a teacher of English to primary-age pupils English in her home country of China.

Shirley's supervisor was impressed by her diligence in planning sessions with learners, and her use of initiative to identify and work with those pupils most in need of additional support.

Sean – Gateshead College

Sean was placed at Gateshead College and worked with refugees and asylum seekers learning English as a second language, on a one-to-one basis as well as with small groups. To help enhance levels of vocabulary and understanding of English within this pre-entry class (who had only very basic levels of spoken and written English) Sean developed activities including role plays and word tests. He also supported students by monitoring presentations they were working on for important speaking exams and led some whole class sessions, using varied approaches to explain key concepts of English language and grammar.

Sean's supervisors were impressed by how he was able to use his understanding of the way languages work to engage with a range of students, as well as his collaboration with teaching staff to ensure lessons ran smoothly and his flexible communication skills with learners from a variety of different countries and educational backgrounds.



After completing his MA at Newcastle Sean plans to return to China to continue teaching English to secondary school pupils. He felt that his confidence when teaching large groups and managing the classroom environment had been greatly increased by this experience working with adult learners in Gateshead. Working in a UK classroom environment also enhanced Sean's dissertation project which focused on cultural differences between teaching and learning styles in the UK and China.

Xin Yao – Student Communications Team

Xin Yao worked for the Careers Service's Student Communications Team, who are employed as ambassadors for the Careers Service; giving short presentations about the service in lectures, helping out at recruitment fairs and taking part in other promotional activities. She particularly impressed her supervisor by her willingness to actively seek out student feedback on Careers Service events by visiting Halls of Residence and other areas, and talking with students there.

Xin Yao really enjoyed the opportunity to get involved with a range of activities to promote the service, and to learn new skills including presenting to an audience and writing reports on the findings of her research into student perceptions. She also welcomed the experience of taking part in an assessed interview for the module which is modelled on the interview process for graduate jobs as she plans to look for a graduate-level job in the UK after completing her undergraduate degree in Financial and Business Economics.