

Vi-Ability Evaluation Report

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1. Introduction

This part of the report provides background information about Vi-Ability, the project and, the scope of this report.

1.1 About this report

This report looks at the work of Vi-Ability and specifically the work completed as part of an application to the Cabinet Office and Nesta Centre For Social Action Innovation Fund (CSAIF). Vi-Ability began replication into London with support of the CSAIF in September 2014 with a view of doubling the reach of the programme by the end of the 18-month grant period in March 2016

At the time of writing this report (March 2016), Vi-Ability is 55% of the way through the initial replication programme. As such, this evaluation seeks to look at what has been achieved to date and provide an analysis of the impact achieved so far, as well as provide key learning to inform the planning for additional replication. The key focus is on Programme Outcomes 1, 2 and 3 that relate to impacts for participants (see Section 1.4). The impact on the clubs (Outcome 4), sits outside the remit of this report as the final findings were not available at the time of writing and the club engagement process is over a longer period of time.

1.2 What is Vi-Ability?

Vi-Ability is a unique social enterprise that helps young people develop their skills and get into work, while supporting community sports clubs to become financially sustainable. Vi-Ability's core activity is an eight-week programme for young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET). This programme introduces young people to the commercial management of sports clubs while supporting them to make a positive difference to their local community on a daily basis through social action.

Vi-Ability's business model is based around addressing two distinct challenges:

- **Challenge One: Reducing the number of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET)**

Whilst there has been some decline in the number of NEET young people in the UK (down 0.3 per cent on the previous quarter in January 2016), there remains a significant youth unemployment problem with 5.8 percent of the youth population categorised as NEET, a total of 1,020,000 young people.¹

Within this category of NEET young people, Vi-Ability specifically target the following:

Young people open to learning but who may have made poor choices in terms of progression or have dropped out, but would be keen to take up a more suitable opportunity. They may have achieved Level 2 qualifications (GCSEs grades A*-C, BTEC First Diplomas and Certificates, OCR Nationals, Key Skills level 2, NVQs and / or Essential Skills).

Young people who are unable to make up their minds about what they want to do, or are unable to access the type of provision they want to pursue in the area where they live. Typically they exhibit negative attitudes to school and they often appear to lack the resilience or skills to access suitable opportunities.

Young people who are harder to reach and may come from deprived backgrounds; have no recent history of employment, low educational attainment, and have very negative experiences of school, often with no experience of employment or training.

¹ <https://www2.learningandwork.org.uk/statistics/labour/january-2016> (January 2016)

The Vi-Ability programme is designed to provide high quality, unpaid work placements and facilitate opportunities for social action. It is built on the basis that participants need encouragement, support and guidance alongside tailored learning that takes place in a relaxed and inspirational environment.

As stated by Adam O'Boyle, CEO of Student Hubs, "In order to ensure that young people make lifetime connections to their communities, it is vital that participants have ongoing access to volunteering, high-impact work placements and opportunities for social action: facilitating a lifecycle of social solidarity and positive giving behavior."²

Further evidence is available from DEMOS: "Evidence from academic research and programme impact evaluations suggests that participation in practical social action activities is positively correlated with meta-cognitive skills, character capabilities, emotional wellbeing, educational attainment, as well as other dimensions of active citizenship like formal political engagement, social cohesion, and lower crime and anti-social behaviour."³

- **Challenge Two: Reducing the number of sport clubs currently in or threatened by administration**

Sports clubs face an uncertain financial future. Vi-Ability works with clubs across a range of sports including hockey, swimming, cricket, golf, netball, tennis and gymnastics. Amateur/semi professional 'community clubs' appear to be most vulnerable according to studies carried out. For example, Dr John Beech, the Head of Sport Research at Coventry University, and author of the blog "Football Management," has analysed 20 years of European football/sport-related financial data. His research establishes that over that period 68 non-league clubs have suffered "insolvency events" compared with 36 of their professional counterparts.

Vi-Ability has developed a great deal of expertise in supporting clubs to develop their commercial viability. It has, for example, created two targeted, accredited qualifications, (BTEC and ILM). Following an initial club diagnostic to ascertain the clubs baseline data, the focus is on workforce development, in particular to generate income and better engage their local community. The clubs that Vi-Ability works with are largely run by volunteers, and so additional capacity created via the participants recruited onto the programme is welcome. The qualifications up-skill the participants in order to provide them with the knowledge needed to support the commercial viability of the club.

In order to address the above challenges, the programme trains young people in a variety of commercial roles within sports clubs, while supporting them to volunteer to help the club and the local community.

² Student Hubs - Students, Volunteering and Social Action in the UK: History and Policies, (www.studenthubs.org), 2014

³ The state of the service nation: Youth social action in the UK, DEMOS, www.demos.co.uk, June 2013

1.3 About the programme

Vi-Ability's vision and solution is to transform sports clubs into community hubs through the talents of young people. The aim is to work with six sports clubs per year, and engage 300 young people (75% of whom will enter employment, education or training) in each geographical area where the organisation is operating. To achieve this, over a 12-month period, Vi-Ability's core delivery model, at each of the identified clubs will offer:

- 4 x 8-week work based learning programmes (2 days a week, 10am till 3pm) – offering 50 NEET young individuals in total the experience of running a sports club, which develops key transferrable employability and life skills.
- 'Hand Holding' 1-day a week support programme - offered to existing staff and volunteers, which will assist them to grow a strong community engagement programme and a viable business.

Each programme runs for eight weeks with groups (on average) of ten young people. This includes formal training where participants are taught how to plan and run activities that help develop their skills (including working towards accredited qualifications) while generating revenue for the club and making a difference to the community in which they are based. Each week a social action activity is undertaken to add value to both the participant and the local community and strategies devised feedback to the club to implement. The structure of the programme and examples of social action is shown below:

Week	Social Action Examples
1. Induction and Personal Development	No social action as this is an introductory week
2. Commercialisation within Sport	No social action as the week the BTEC is delivered and Outcomes Stars are completed
3. Human Resources & Marketing within Sports Clubs	Participants are expected to market their own product of choice (for example, new membership packages for the club reflecting the needs of the community) to address a local, and social need for the club and community. This helps participants to gain knowledge on how companies grow in the market and also allows them to understand how to manage different employees.
4. Finance in Sport	Participants are challenged to develop their own personal budget as well as a project budget for their social action task. They need to take into consideration local demand, realistic costs for the community to engage and how they can work with the club can generate the income for the project.
5. Community Engagement	Participants will be expected to design and run a project that helps address a social, health or educational issue. E.g. a 'late night football' project which helps the participants to improve their ability to coach youngsters with challenging attitudes and behaviours, while also helping to tackle antisocial behaviour in the local community.
6. Ticketing Strategies within the sports industry	Participants will identify potential ticketing strategies for their club and for the project identified in week five. This will reflect the needs of social groups in the club and local community.
7. Running an Enterprising Sports Activity	Participants are asked to come up with their own activity that they have to plan and deliver. This helps them to get experience on how to design and implement an event of their own with the aim to inspire them to hopefully to run their own business.
8. Career development	No social action as this week is focused on career development

The eight-week Vi-Ability programme has a range of awards and qualifications embedded within it as outline below:

1.3.1. Level 2 BTEC Award in Football Industries

The BTEC in Football Industries is unique to Vi-Ability and has proven to be an attractive element of the programme for participants. This qualification has been developed as a key component of the programme in introducing the participants to the commercial industry of sports clubs. It is offered within week one to both facilitate an introduction to what will follow in the resulting weeks, and also to give all participants the opportunity to start the programme in a positive manner by the achievement of a qualification early on. The assessments methods for the qualification are varied and include work booklets, photographs, group work, videos and question and answers.

1.3.2 Emergency First Aid

This is a qualification in emergency first aid. It has been chosen as it is especially suited for nominated first aiders in smaller, low risk working environments. It also develops life skills and is deemed to make participants more employable as it develops key skills such as communication skills, leadership and team working. It is delivered within week five and the assessment is in the form of a multiple-choice test and a practical assessment of application of learning.

1.3.3 Go Lead Award

The Go Lead Award is the main practical element of the programme and allows participants to develop their leadership skills through activity leadership. Delivered in week six this award lays the foundations for developing skills such as communication, organising, planning and evaluation as well as working in groups and adapting activities. This award supports the participants ability to deliver enterprising activities and enhances their volunteering skills. Assessment is conducted throughout the day by the lead tutor and based on their competency to meet the requirements of the award through practical application of what they have learnt on the day of the course. There is no formal assessment.

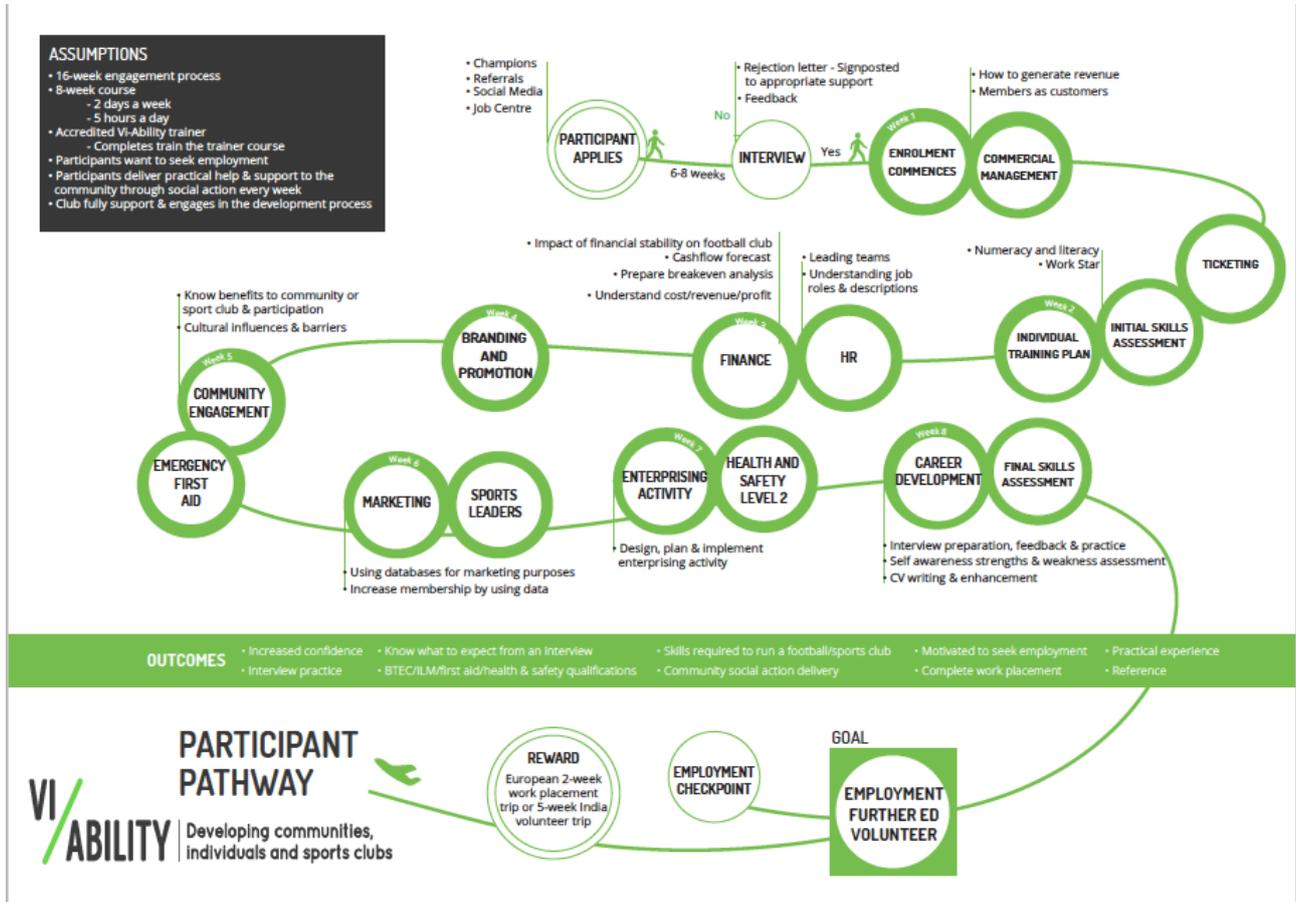
1.3.4 Level 2 Health & Safety at Work

This qualification is aimed at providing essential knowledge and understanding of health and safety in the workplace. Delivered in week seven this qualification helps to develop the participants employability and readiness for work as it contributes to making them more competent in health and safety, developing a positive attitude towards health and safety and, helping them to think about staying safe as they prepare to enter work. Following a session delivered by the tutor, the participants undertake a pre-booked online assessment. Where online facilities are not available the assessment can be conducted via paper copies.

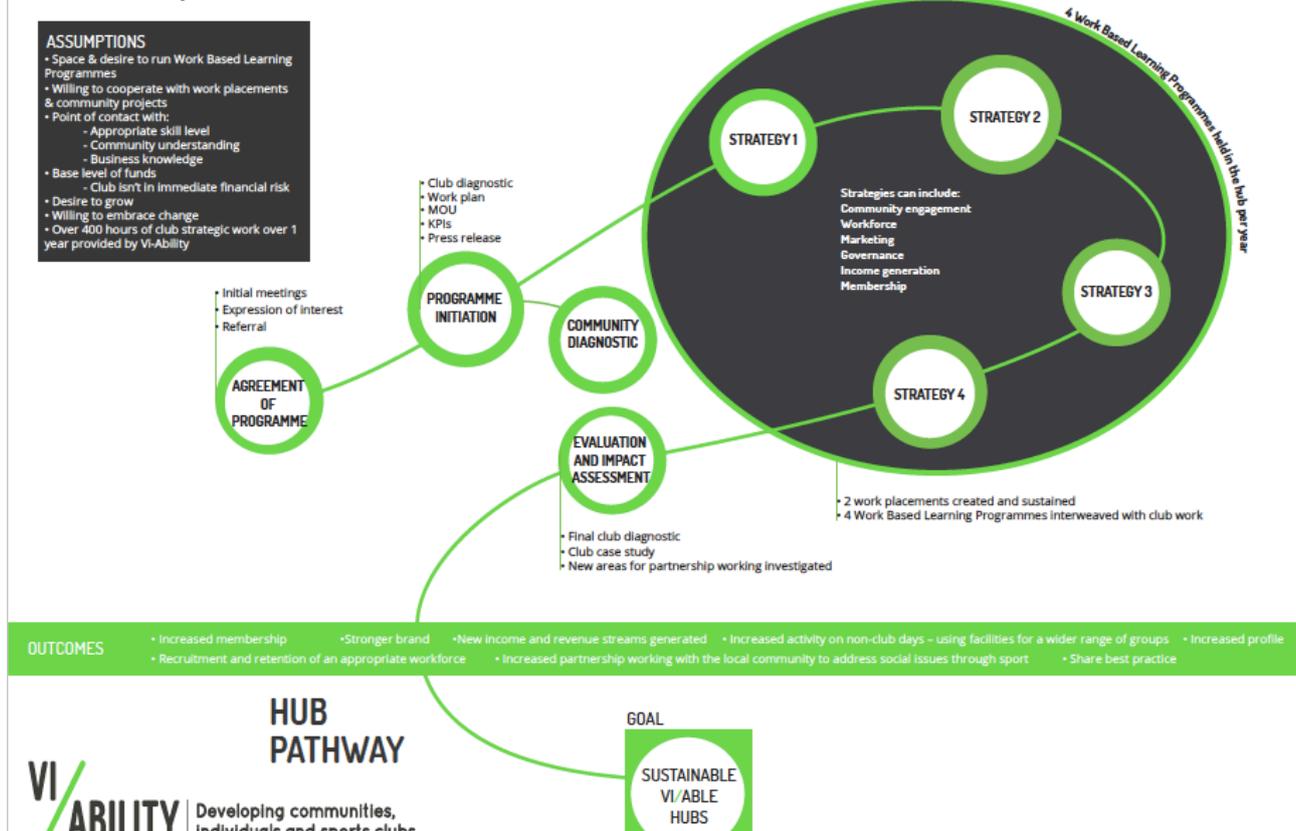
Programme Pathways

Prior to the replication into London supported by the CSAIF, Vi-Ability developed both the participant and club pathways and the intention was that they would be replicated:

Participant Pathway



Club Pathway



Whilst the focus is on supporting participants into a positive destination at the end of the eight-week programme, for some participants, this is not always possible. This may be due to destinations of choice not being available within the time frame or that, more support is needed to gain a positive destination. In these cases, Vi-Ability offer on-going ad hoc support beyond the programme for these individuals. This support is often in the form of one-to-one meetings, calls or email correspondence to address the specific issues stopping the participant from progressing. For some, Vi-Ability is also able to facilitate work experience opportunities to help them gain further experience. This ad hoc support is offered as Vi-Ability likes to stay the course with participants wherever possible, and for participants to feel they can count on Vi-Ability to be a steady presence in their lives should they need additional support.

Club Selection

In the replication Vi-Ability pursued different strategies for recruiting clubs. In some instances clubs were recruited who wanted to work to improve their club, and wanted to adopt the hub model outlined above. In other cases Vi-Ability partnered with Premier League or Championship clubs because they felt that this was a good way to attract and reach out to young people, and help establish the model and reputation of the work in London.

Participant Selection

Participants were openly recruited via the routes outline in section 3 later in this report based on the criteria of being not in education, employment or training and residing within a London borough. The primary target group was 16 – 25 year olds. Section 3.2 details the breakdown of who was recruited as part of this programme.

1.4 The Programme Outcomes

In establishing replication plans, Vi-Ability identified outcomes that the work would aim to achieve or contribute to within London:

- Outcome 1: Young people have gained recognised qualifications that benefit their (future) employment.
- Outcome 2: Young people have improved knowledge, experience and skills that contribute to their employability.
- Outcome 3: Young people enter into education, employment, training and/or volunteering as a result of their participation on a Vi-Ability programme.
- Outcome 4: Sports Clubs have improved sustainability as a result of their participation in a Vi-Ability programme. (This outcome falls outside the scope of this report and there is not included in section 4: Progress against the outcomes.)

2. The evaluation methods

This part of the report provides information on the evaluation methods chosen by Vi-Ability, how and when they are implemented, and the limitations of the tools.

2.1 Evaluation Methods

This evaluation has gathered information through a variety of techniques and methods, chosen as part of an investment into the development of new tools to support the evaluation procedures of Vi-Ability programmes. These tools were selected to allow Vi-Ability to collect key data to help demonstrate impact. Tools were implemented across a timetable and included:

- **Enrolment forms** – completed prior to the start of a programme to capture the baseline data of participants booking onto Vi-Ability programmes. This form may be used in a one-to-one meeting with a participant, as part of a focus group or completed and submitted on behalf of a participant by a case worker. The data collected in the form includes participant details, eligibility, ethnicity, qualification level and any other priority criteria e.g. NEET, ex-offender (Appendix Three).
- **Outcomes Star for Work ©** - This is a widely endorsed tool designed for use with participants out of work or returning to the workplace. It was selected because it offers the opportunity to capture data at different points within the programme, and it initiates discussion between the participant and the trainer. It is completed online in weeks two and eight of the programme with the trainer working on a one-to-one basis with each participant. Where online facilities are not available, or a participant prefers a paper copy, this tool can be used in hard copy format and transferred into the online portal retrospectively. Numbers allocated along each point of the star are agreed between the trainer and the participant as part of the one-to-one discussion. Each number equates to a description of the five stages of the journey to work (called the Journey of Change) as detailed in Appendix Two. The Star is completed in week two as it allows the trainer and participant a chance to build a rapport in week one before having a more in depth one-to-one conversation.
- **Destination forms** – completed in week eight and signed off within a month of the completion of a programme. This is used to record destinations into education, employment, training and/or volunteering for participants who have completed Vi-Ability programmes. This form is used in a one-to-one meeting between the participant and lead trainer (Appendix Four).
- **Group review activity** - completed in week eight and designed to generate feedback about the quality of the Vi-Ability course and the process the young people have experienced. This tool is facilitated within a group activity environment, by the trainer. This tool focuses on process evaluation (Appendix Five).
- **Participant case studies** – completed in week eight and designed to highlight and gather more in-depth information from participants who have completed the Vi-Ability programme. Case studies are ideally selected on a random basis, but in practice, are often with participants who show more confidence and willingness to be involved. To date, the tutors have asked for volunteers from the group to take part in more detailed discussions to form the case studies. The structure for completing the case studies is a question and answer format to help facilitate discussion. This can be captured through written response, video or dictation (Appendix Six).
- **End of course review** – completed within a month of a programme ending, this is a structured format for the programme manager and trainer to review the programme, discuss outcomes and identify areas for improvement. This review also facilitates a discussion over the data captured within the Outcomes Star for Work©, participant case studies and group review activity to assess outcomes and drive service improvement. The review also covers the outcomes achieved for

participants and the data gathered as well as who still needs on-going support. This is to intended to help create process insights, and to ensure that the young people are supported beyond the formal programme where appropriate (Appendix Seven).

- **Follow up phone interviews** – to discuss the progress and stability within the initial destination outcome with participants, taking place at 13 and 26 weeks post programme completion. There is unfortunately no data using this method in this report. The reasons for this and the limitations of the data are included in section 5.1 (Appendix Eight).
- **Club diagnostic tool** – initially implemented a month in advance of a programme start date to capture the baseline data of clubs that will host Vi-Ability programmes and then again after six months. This tool is beyond the scope of this report, which is focused on the impact on the programme participants (Appendix Nine).

These methods were selected to provide a format for capturing data whilst remaining user friendly for the participants and the trainers. All but the case studies are used with every participant rather than on a sampling basis. The tools were also selected to ensure that evidence could be provided against the outcomes as outlined above and the table below shows how the tools are implemented across the programme:

Outcome	Method	When	How
Outcome 1: Young people have gained recognised qualifications that benefit their (future) employment.	Outcomes star	Weeks two and eight	One-to-one with participant and trainer
	Follow up phone interview	Weeks 13 and 26 weeks post programme completion	Telephone call from trainer or admin staff
	Destination form	Week eight	One-to-one with participant and trainer
	Participant end of course group review activity	Week eight	Group activity led by trainer
Outcome 2: Young people have improved knowledge, experience and skills that contribute to their employability.	Outcomes star	Weeks two and eight	One-to-one with participant and trainer
	Participant end of course group review activity	Week eight	Group activity led by trainer
	Vi-Ability end of course review	One week post programme completion	Meeting between manager and trainer
	Participant case study interview	Week seven	One-to-one with participant and trainer
	Team meeting evaluation agenda item	Monthly	Manager led as part of a team meeting
Outcome 3: Young people enter into education, employment, training and/or	Participant end of course group review activity	Week eight	Group activity led by trainer

volunteering as a result of their participation on a V-Ability programme.	Team meeting evaluation agenda item	Monthly	Manager led as part of a team meeting
Outcome 4: Sports Clubs have improved sustainability as a result of their participation in a Vi-Ability programme Note: these tools and data are beyond the scope of this report, which focuses on programme participants.	Club diagnostic tool Club case study interview	One month prior to programme start	Meeting with manager, trainer and nominated contact at the club Meeting with manager, trainer and nominated contact at the club

2.2 Data analysis

The following table summarises the data analysis approach for the evaluation tools that provide data for this report.

Tool	Analysis method
Outcomes Star	Online data analysis built into the tool – measures analysed include score change from baseline to programme end, numerically and by percentage against each of the seven points. Measures have been applied to each individual programme and project wide.
Destination forms	Data collated and interrogated using Excel.
Participant case study interview	Interview notes taken of interview and transcribed, or completed by interviewee. Notes summarised for inclusion as case studies in the report and checked with the interviewee for accuracy.
Vi-Ability end of course review	Summary notes recorded after the meeting. Notes reviewed for common themes about project delivery.
Quotes included in this report	Outcomes Star notes and case study notes reviewed to select quotes suitable to illustrate key points in the report, attempting to reflect different participant perspectives.

Limitations of methods chosen

Outcomes Star

There are several potential limitations with the Outcomes Star due to its requirement for a one-to-one conversation between the trainer and the participant. These limitations are as follows:

- Sufficient, dedicated time needs to be devoted to the activity and this has not consistently happened during the programmes
- The trainers may not have had the confidence, skills or commitment to the methodology to apply the kind of questioning required to drill down on participants' responses and to secure robust answers
- Trainers have the scope to influence responses and to interpret them differently when translating them to a score
- Participants may 'over-score' in the initial Outcomes Star, reflecting the difficulties in scoring when 'they don't know what they don't know'

- There may be times instances where scores cannot be agreed on and finding a solution to this may mean data is not as accurate as it could be.

While a process evaluation has not been completed, there has been some reflection by Vi-Ability staff that the results of the Outcomes Star may have been affected by these factors. However, the Outcomes Star remains an extremely useful tool for the organisation, to help benchmark participants and to guide the delivery of individual programmes.

No comparison group

Given that this was the first replication of the Vi-Ability model and that it was anticipated that there would be a need for further refinement and adaptation of the model, it was considered that a comparison group would not be a suitable methodology for evaluation at this stage. However, without using this type of method, it is not possible to be certain that positive change in outcomes is because of the programme, rather than other factors. This is something to consider and strengthen as the programme develops in the future.

No post programme follow-up

As outlined elsewhere in the report, the original design of the evaluation tools included a post follow up call to understand if the outcomes were sustained by participants. Due to a number of resource challenges this tool was not implemented for this programme. It is therefore only possible to outline the immediate destination of young people. This process has now been implemented, and this post programme data, will be produced but in the timeframes it has not been possible to include this data in this report.

Selective case studies

Case studies selected were generally with participants who were the most confident or willing to take part, which likely means the data is positively skewed towards participants who had a better experience and may also have experienced greater impact. This is a common limitation with many evaluations, but it is acknowledged that these case studies are not representative.

3. What Vi-Ability did

This part of the report provides information on what Vi-Ability delivered and who has been engaged.

3.1 What has been delivered

To ensure this report captures the evaluation from completed Vi-Ability programmes, any programmes still operating at the time of writing have been excluded. Seven programmes have been completed to date with a further eight currently underway. This evaluation examines the seven completed programmes only.

Vi-Ability has worked with a range of clubs in an attempt to look at how the model can be replicated in a variety of settings and environments. The six clubs included in this evaluation are:

- Avenues Youth Project, Westminster
- Fulham FC Foundation, Hammersmith & Fulham
- Ilford Sports Club, Redbridge
- London Tigers FC, Ealing
- St Matthews Project, Lambeth
- West Ham United FC Foundation, Newham

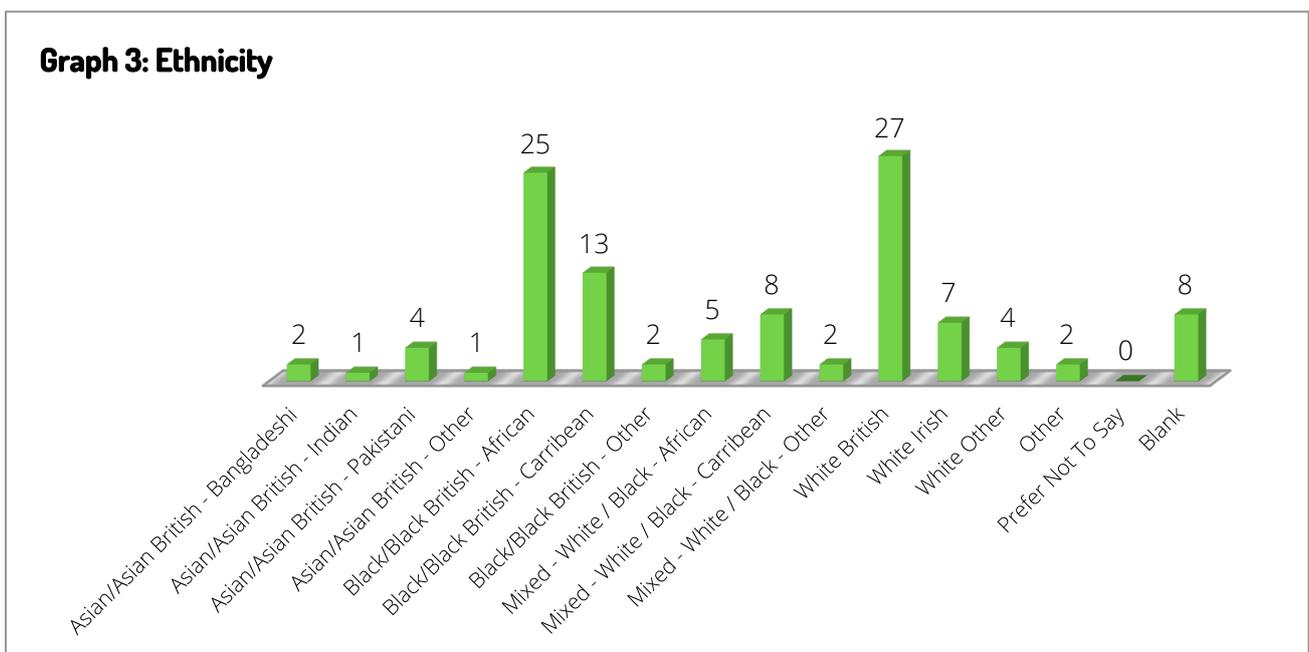
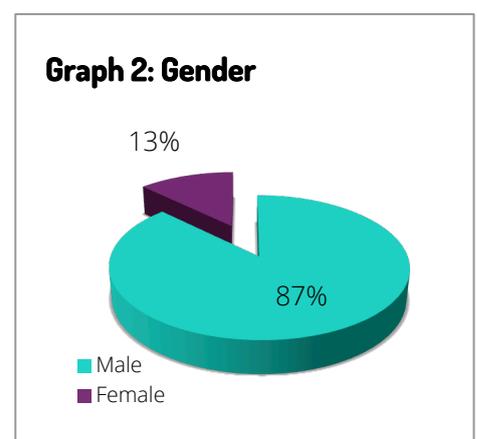
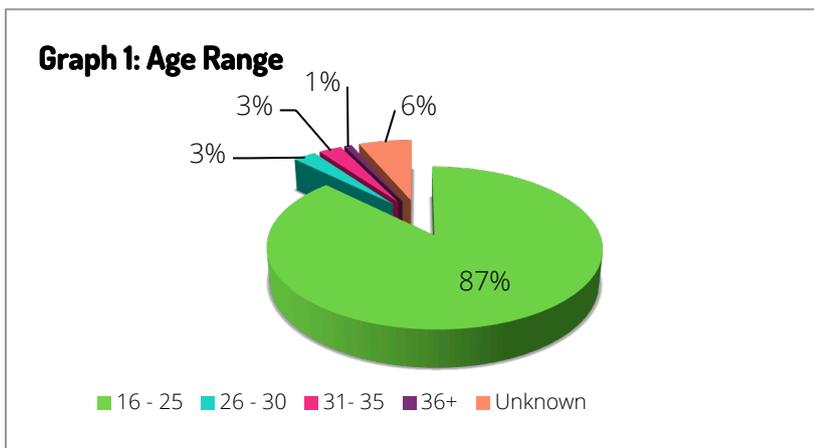
The St Matthews Project has hosted two programmes with all other clubs hosting one



3.2 The participants

3.2.1 Who enrolled

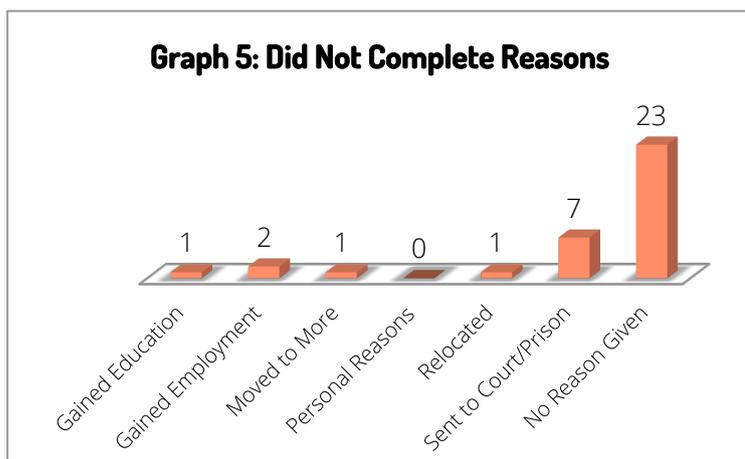
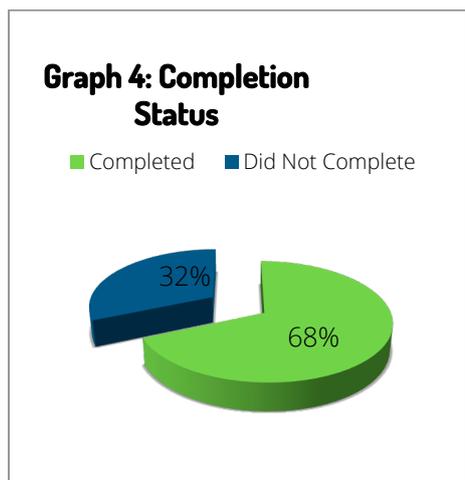
- 111 participants enrolled across the seven programmes in London.
- 87% of these were within the 16 – 25 age group. 6% declined to stipulate their age and 6% were split equally within the 26 – 30 and 31 – 35 age groups. 1% of recruited participants were over the age of 36 (Graph 1)
- 87% of participants were male, 13% female (Graph 2)
- Participants were predominately White British or Black/British (African) (Graph 3)



This shows that the programme has been successful in primarily targeting young people between the ages of 16 and 25. Whilst the programme did not set out to attract any participants over the age of 25, the small number of those attracted were either only just outside of this age group or, looking for a way back into work and to get socially involved in their community following a period of economic inactivity.

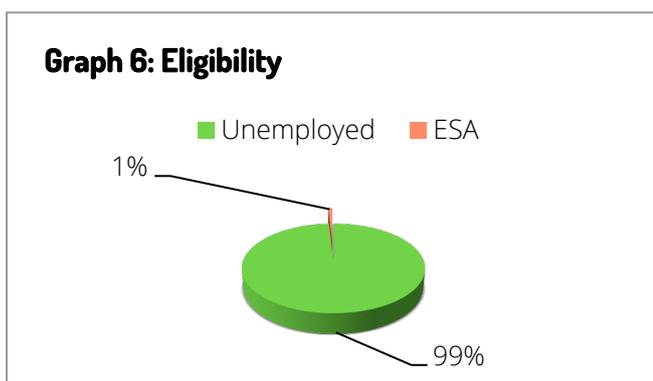
68% of the participants who enrolled completed the full programme (Graph 4) and on exit gained a positive destination. Of the 32% who did not complete the eight weeks (Graph 5), 23 (65%) did not give a reason to trainers as to why they were not going to return. However, four (12%) of the participants left as they secured a positive destination mid way through the programme (not necessarily attributable to the work of Vi-Ability). Seven (21%) were arrested or requested to appear in court on previous or new charges and could not complete the programme in the timeframe it was running; one participant was relocated to a different area and could no longer travel to the programme location.

This drop out rate is higher than the programme saw in Wales before replication. Feedback from trainers suggests that the referral and recruitment process could be tighter to get a better match of participants to the programme.

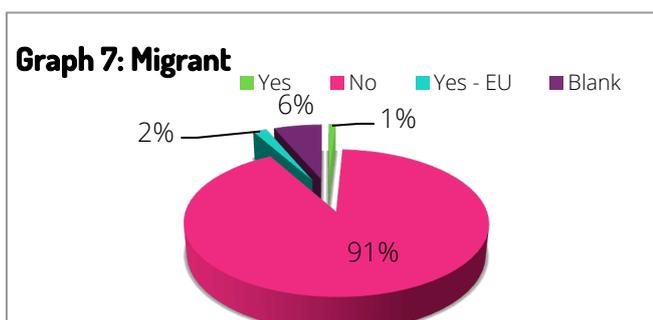


3.2.2 Participants' eligibility and previous educational attainment

- 99% of participants identified as Unemployed (e.g. in receipt of JSA or under redundancy) (Graph 6)
- 3% self-identified as being of migrant status (Graph 7)
- 49% of participants had existing qualifications at level two or three (Graph 8)

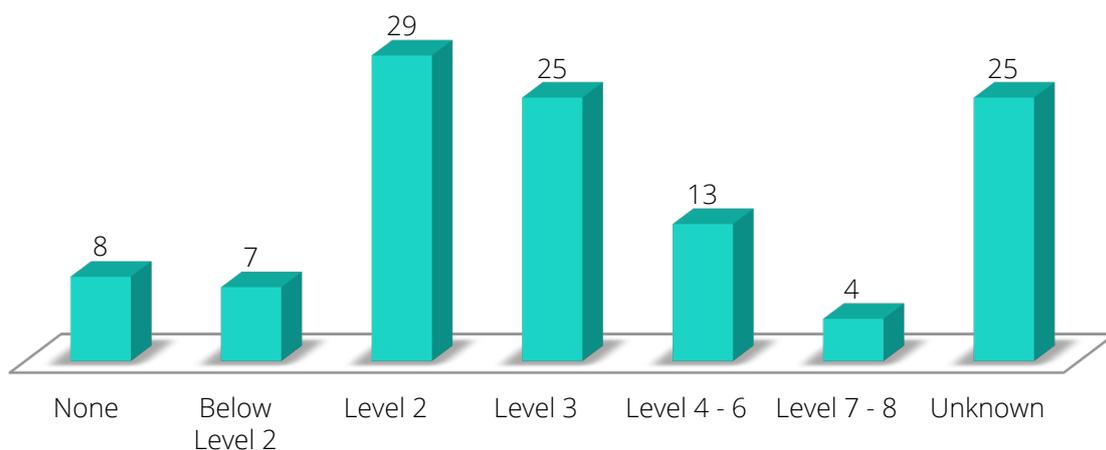


99% of the participants recruited stated that they were Unemployed (e.g. in receipt of JSA or under redundancy) at the point of enrolment with 1% in receipt of the Employment and Support Allowance (ESA).



91% of the participants recruited stated they were not migrants. 6% declined to state their migration status, 2% identified as being a migrant from within the European Union and 1% as being a migrant from outside of the European Union.

Graph 8: Qualification level at start



Predominantly the participants recruited had already gained qualifications at Level 2 or 3. This was higher than Vi-Ability initially anticipated. It was also not anticipated that participants with qualifications at Level 4 or above would apply to attend the programme. The broad range of attendees meant that there was a wide spectrum of learning abilities and this at times was problematic for the trainers, especially where groups included participants with no current qualifications, who needed more support.

It is hard to establish how long participants have been NEET and this is not known for over half of those attending. For the remaining proportion around 30% have been NEET for between one and five years.

Participants recruited for the eight-week programmes have come via a range of avenues. Participants predominantly came from within the host boroughs of each of the programmes. Whilst the host clubs were the most common referral source, referrals came from a variety of sources including:

- Air Football
- Community Links
- Host clubs
- Job Centres
- Local Authority children and young people's services
- Local Authority community development
- Local Authority sports development
- Social Services
- Street League
- Volunteer centres
- Work clubs
- Youth Offending services
- Youth Services.

4 Progress against the outcomes

4.1 Outcome 1: Young people have gained recognised qualifications that benefit their (future) employment.

Key achievements:

- 55 participants got at least 1 qualification with 56 participants awaiting the outcome of the BTEC qualification
- 23% of participants got all the qualifications there were available
- All four accreditations (Level 2 BTEC in Football Industries, Emergency First Aid, Go Lead Award, Level 2 Health and Safety at Work) were included at each of the seven programmes

The table below shows the number of qualifications gained by participants:

Number of Qualifications Gained Per Participant	
Four	26
Three	10
Two	6
One	13
One* awaiting certification of the BTEC	56
Zero	0

The main reason for some participants getting more qualifications than others was due to attendance on the days the qualifications were being delivered. Where engagement and attendance across the eight weeks was consistent, participants gained more qualifications. At the time of writing the report, Vi-Ability are awaiting receipt of the qualifications gained by the 56 participants as the evidence is with the verification bodies and is currently being assessed.

The quotes below demonstrated the importance of gaining new qualifications to some of the participants:

“The opportunity to learn about football was good, we were also given the chance to gain new qualifications which helps our CVs.” St Matthews Project Programme 1 participant

“We learnt lots of new things about the industry that we did not know before, helped me to have some structure to my days, really liked Go Lead and First Aid.” London Tigers FC participant

“We gained good knowledge of the industry, took part in new activities and undertook new qualifications, this has all helped us to progress.” Avenues Youth Project participant

When asked, “What would you say to other young people thinking of going on a Vi-Ability programme?” one participant commented; “You should join the programme as you learn a lot about the football industry and have the chance to gain (free) qualifications as well.” St Matthews Project Programme 2 participant

4.2 Outcome 2: Young people have improved knowledge, experience and skills that contribute to their employability.

Key achievements:

- Across all areas of the work star, young people experienced positive change in their pre and post programme scores
- The biggest change was seen in job search skills, with an average increase of 1.6 scale points (out of a 1-10 scale) (Table 1)
- 54% participants saw a 'big' increase across all scales (defined as more than one point up) (Table 2)

The data below shows the overall data collected for all participants on the Vi-Ability programme. To date, a total of 62 completed pairs of Outcome Stars have been completed during the programme delivery phase for this report. 25 participants only completed first stars due to them either gaining a positive destination before week eight or, not completing the programme (See Graph Five above). 24 participants did not complete a Star at all and this is because they joined the programme after week two and this left insufficient time to use a time travelled tool such as the Star. It is important to note that due to a limitation of the reporting function of the Outcomes Star for Work®, 6 of the Stars are not applicable to this programme but could not be removed from the overall organisational data. The participant Outcomes Stars for each programme are included as Appendix Three to this report.

Table 1: Average increase and decrease in scores for each scale

The table below shows the average first and last scores for the participants. The difference between these two is the 'change', shown in the column on the right. The movement up the scale was in a positive direction for all areas. This degree of progression indicates that the programme is currently more effective in achieving positive change in job specific skills, aspiration and motivation and job search skills. However, it is currently less effective across the other areas.

Scale	Initial	Final	Change
Job-specific skills	6.8	8.1	1.2
Aspiration and motivation	7.0	8.3	1.4
Job-search skills	6.6	8.2	1.6
Stability	7.9	9.1	1.2
Basic skills	8.0	8.9	0.8
Social skills for work	8.2	9.0	0.8
Challenges	7.9	9.1	1.1
Average	7.5	8.7	1.2

Table 2: Percentage change across all scales

The table below shows the proportion of the participants who are making progress, staying the same or slipping back based on their overall Star score, i.e. an average of their scores for each scale. A 'big' increase or decrease is defined as more than one point up or down across all scales. 'No change' means an average change per scale of between -0.25 and + 0.25. This shows that the Vi-Ability programme is largely achieving points changes of 0.5 to 1 points for all participants.

Big Decrease	Small Decrease	Same	Small Increase	Big Increase
2%	6%	3%	35%	54%

Table 3: Collated percentage change per Star Outcome for the programme

This table shows the average proportion of the participants whose score for a scale has increased, decreased or stayed the same. It is evident that through the programme delivery, greater gains in a participant's improved knowledge, experience and skills that contribute to their employability are being made with job search skills, aspiration and motivation and job specific skills. However, work needs to be done to ensure the programmes are also supporting increases in the other areas. As an example, a smaller increase is seen in social skills for work and it is this same area that shows the highest decrease. This suggests that the programme delivered may not be currently balanced in offering support for young people to progress across each area of the Outcomes Star.

Scale	Decrease	Same	Increase
Job-specific skills	9%	26%	65%
Aspiration and motivation	9%	13%	78%
Job-search skills	7%	12%	81%
Stability	15%	33%	52%
Basic skills	13%	31%	56%
Social skills for work	19%	33%	48%
Challenges	11%	35%	54%

The Outcomes Star for Work© is completed on a one-to-one basis between a participant and a trainer and discussions are recorded by the trainer on the online system once the numerical point has been agreed. The following notes provide some insights into the kinds of comments made by participants against each of the Star Outcomes.

Job Search Skills

The job search skills element ranks first out of the seven areas for showing progress. Of the 62 participants with completed pairs of Stars, 53 (85%) recorded or described progression within this area.

"I know how to apply for work and I know where to look and I feel confident that I can do this successfully. I would like some more help in doing this though." (participant feedback, second star, week eight).

"I am good at finding jobs and researching different organisations." (participant feedback, second star, week eight).

Aspiration & Motivation

The aspiration and motivation element ranks second out of the seven areas for showing progress. Of the 62 participants with completed pairs of Stars, 49 (78%) recorded or described progression within this area.

"I have a clear image of what I want to do. I just need to overcome the barriers affecting me from getting there." (participant feedback, second star, week eight).

"Motivated to gain employment, various opportunities on the horizon and eager to pick the right one and become successful within that industry." (participant feedback, second star, week eight).

Job Specific Skills

The job specific skills element ranks third out of the seven areas for showing progress. Of the 62 participants with completed pairs of Stars, 46 (74%) recorded or described progression within this area.

"Participant has gained some very good skills including great communication, organisation and time keeping, the participant has also developed high levels of self-confidence." (trainer feedback, second star, week eight).

"Has developed skills that he feels would benefit him in the workplace. He also has a lot of knowledge regarding the business of sport." (trainer feedback, second star, week eight).

Basic Skills

The basic skills element ranks fourth out of the seven areas for showing progress. Of the 62 participants with completed pairs of Stars, 42 (68%) recorded or described progression within this area. These findings suggest that the programme may need to be adjusted to be doing more to support the participants with their basic skills, engaging local support agencies and be stronger at supporting those who recognise this is an area that they need support on. Progress in this area has been identified as an area for improvement by Vi-Ability and a review of how to manage this is underway. Where progress has been made, participants have shown small improvements in basic skills.

"Low on qualifications, doesn't feel he has much to offer any organisation or doesn't believe he can any additional qualifications." (trainer feedback, first star, week two), to "Basic skills have improved and looking to gain Maths and English qualifications and improve these skills further." (trainer feedback, second star, week eight).

"My basic skills are good but I want to improve them a bit more." (participant feedback, first Star, Week two), to "My basic skills are fine." (participant feedback, second star, week eight).

Challenges

The challenges element ranks fifth out of the seven areas for showing progress. Of the 62 participants with completed pairs of Stars, 35 (56%) recorded or described progression within this area.

"Doesn't have the self-confidence to challenge himself at the moment. (trainer feedback, first star, week two)", to "Looking to the future I feel I can challenge myself in a variety of different environments." (participant feedback, second star, week eight).

"It is really hard for me to work at the moment but I will have a look around." (participant feedback, first star, week two), to "I can face challenges with support." (participant feedback, second star, week eight).

Stability

The stability element ranks sixth out of the seven areas for showing progress. Of the 62 participants with completed pairs of Stars, 43 (78%) recorded or described progression within this area. Stability also scored the second highest on the 'No Change' scale suggesting that at present, the programme has areas for improvement in how it can support the stability of the participants engaged and that it is not currently set up to achieve change in this area. However, a baseline of data for participants is useful for trainers to be able to support participants.

"Life at home is becoming more stable, I am still living with a friend however, I am now looking and saving to move out." (participant feedback, second star, week eight).

Social Skills for Work

The social skills for work element ranks last out of the seven areas for showing progress. Of the 62 participants with completed pairs of Outcome Stars, 35 (56%) recorded or described progression within this area.

One participant at the start of the programme commented "I am a very reserved member of the group. I do like working in a group but speaking up in front of others is something that I struggle with." (participant feedback, first star, week two) and at the end of the eight weeks, the same participant commented; "I am a bubbly character who works well within a group, I help others complete tasks when I can." (participant feedback, second star, week eight).

"Social skills are good, participant is very shy and needs to improve (social skills) prior to going into work." (trainer feedback, first star, week two), to "Great at leading a group and working in a team, real team player." (trainer feedback, second star, week eight).

4.3 Outcome 3: Young people enter into education, employment, training and/or volunteering as a result of their participation on a Vi-Ability programme.

Key achievements:

- 80 (72%) of participants have entered employment, education or training, at the end of the programme
- 68% of participants that completed the programme have secured an outcome into education, employment or training at the end of the programme

A key focus of the Vi-Ability programme was to support participants into employment, education, training and/or volunteering (a positive destination). Destination Forms have been completed for all participants. The data below is based on the destination form only.

Achievement of all destinations	
Employment Full Time	22
Employment Part Time	32
Self Employed	4
Education	15
Training	7

Employment

Of the 54 participants who went into employment, 22 (41%) went into full-time employment and 32 (59%) into part-time employment of eight hours or more per week. Looking at where the participants were employed, 10 (20%) of participants gained employment at the host club, 8 (15%) went into employment within retail, 8 (15%) into sports coaching roles, 5 (10%) into the catering or restaurant industry and 21 (40%) moved into a variety of other sectors. This included employment with companies such as Network Rail, Local Authorities and also within the construction industry.

Education

Of the 15 participants who entered education, 11 (81%) enrolled within a further education institution and 3 (19%) into a higher education establishment. All of the young people who went into education are undertaking sports based study programmes.

Training

Of the seven participants who have gone into further training, this has largely been into Talent Match programmes as the participants needed further support before being ready for work.

Self-Employed

Of the four participants who have moved into self-employment, this has predominantly been into a family business with one participant setting up their own Community Interest Company.

Other

Whilst not included in the outcome data, Vi-Ability is continuing to support six participants to supported to gain a positive destination. This aftercare is being provided on a one to one remote basis with the trainer linked to opportunities identified though employer partnerships of Vi-Ability.

5 What Vi-Ability has learnt

This part of the report covers the key challenges faced in replication of the programme, what this means for future delivery, and what next for Vi-Ability

5.1 Challenges faced by the programme

The evaluation has highlighted a number of areas that have affected the achievement of the programme to date. In order to impact on future planning, and to help improve future delivery, these have been noted as part of this evaluation.

Recruitment of participants

Noted within all manager and trainer reviews was a lack of time for recruitment. The current pathway suggests a four week recruitment timeframe, but in order to attract the targeted number of participants, in practice this needs to be doubled to eight weeks. More time also needs to be spent in the recruitment catchment areas, and dedicated time spent on developing partnerships for referrals with a clear plan and strategy in place.

Outcome Stars

These have been a useful tool to ascertain work readiness but fundamental changes to how Vi-Ability use the Star need to be considered. The first point is to use the Star as the central point to work from in helping participants to progress with clear action plans both for themselves and the programme itself.

Secondly, capacity within the delivery team needs to be considered to ensure the participants are getting the dedicated time needed to make this a useful and positive exercise. Thirdly, the structure of the sessions within which the Stars sits need to be remodeled to ensure the engagement of all participants is not lost while Stars are being completed on a one-to-one basis. Lastly, and as a result of this evaluation, the administration of the Stars within the online portal should be amended to ensure reports can be run by project or contract and not be set up per programme.

Group Numbers

The programme was designed to work with 15 participants per programme but the reality has shown this has not been the case. However, experience with this programme suggests that optimum group numbers are nearer to 10 and in some cases eight. Programmes that have had less than five participants have proven to be difficult to sustain an experiential learning environment. Consideration about the minimum and maximum numbers on future programmes should be taken.

Staff Cover

Activities were occasionally compromised due to lack of staff cover. The number of delivery programmes agreed at the outset of the programme, whilst revised, leaves no capacity for contingencies. Future projects need to ensure there is capacity within the team for unexpected circumstances such as staff sickness.

Preparation and Set Up Time

The Vi-Ability staff noted repeatedly that the pressures associated with the creation, promotion and recruitment for the programme set up were significant. Future planning should offer all staff a realistic lead in time prior to delivery to ensure standards of preparation are high.

Multi functional roles

Due to the staff structure and a number of multi function roles, some areas of the programme have received less attention and as such, there have been imbalances in the quality of delivery across the programme areas.

Follow up phone interviews

As part of ascertaining the stability of the destinations achieved by the participants follow up phone interviews were due to take place at 13 and 26 weeks post programme completion. Decisions about task prioritisation meant that the 13 week phone interviews did not take place as scheduled. However, at the time of writing the report, these are now being conducted through the North Wales Vi-Ability office. Consideration into other tools to capture this data (such as text messaging surveys) is also being investigated to ensure all future programmes capture data at both checkpoints.

4.2 What next

Along with the limitations outlined in Section 2.2, the points noted are here those that have a wider impact on Vi-Ability's delivery of programmes and future replication. They are learning which has the capacity to inform future programmes and best practice.

Club identification

Investment into the identification of the right club and subsequently, in the planning and delivery of the programme, is key to the success of an experiential learning programme. Trainers need to be involved from the start and a clear programme outlined to ensure the programme is experiential and not only theoretical.

Sports club financial sustainability

Capacity has meant this area of the programme was not given the attention it needed to succeed. Where work has taken place it has had positive feedback from the clubs. However, moving forwards capacity and strategy for this area of work needs greater consideration.

Positive destinations engagement

Investment into a role focused on this area across Vi-Ability would allow for dedicated time to be spent on securing partnerships that are of benefit to the participants. This includes employers, apprenticeship providers, training agencies and educational establishments.

Career Development

A review of where this unit sits within the programme is underway to ensure there is an employability thread throughout the programme, and not just covered in one session at week eight. This review would be likely to lead to more positive destinations being achieved and a more comprehensive employability offer being provided. Expertise also needs to be sought in staff training for this area and providing extra capacity to ensure participants are fully supported and receiving the best possible guidance.

Outcomes Star

Improvements should be made in how the Star is used as the focus of planning to support participant development, not just as an additional activity to undertake with them. Stars can also be better used to review each programme to ensure it is able to achieve Vi-Ability's aspirations for it. For example, using the Star to identify the areas of the programme that score lower and focus attention to improve provision for these elements.

Evaluation of the Outcomes Stars suggest that the programme may need to be adjusted to be doing more to support the participants with their basic skills, engaging local support agencies, and stronger at supporting those who recognise this is an area that they need support on.

Qualification Delivery

Level 2 BTEC Award in Football Industries: Following feedback from Vi-Ability's internal verifier, emphasis on evidence gathering has moved away from just the completion of workbooks and now includes more evidence from group work and practical application of learning. This has been a positive step forward for both the trainers participants on programmes and an area we will look to enhance further going forwards.

Level 2 Health & Safety at Work Award: This was the least popular of the accreditations on offer and whilst industry relevant, there may be a number of reasons for this. Firstly, being a non-sports based topic, the relevance of this to the participants needs to be more clearly articulated by trainers. Secondly, being an on-line based assessment, there have been issues with some venues in being able to access IT equipment leading to not all participants completing the qualification. Lastly, when being told in advance about this unit and its timing, the online assessment is often a barrier and as such, attendance on this day of the programme has declined. Whilst we wish to continue to offer this qualification, there are a number of things we will look to do differently moving forwards:

- Consider altering the delivery style of the qualification to make it more interactive
- Research alternative comparative qualifications
- Establish a practice assessment in advance of the formal assessment to ensure participants feel comfortable with the format

Look at how the qualification is explained with a focus put on industry relevance, and enhancing employability.

Go Lead: This session has worked well when there have been groups of ten or more but has been limited on a couple of occasions where numbers have been lower. Positive feedback from learners has been received on this element, as it allows for the facilitation of a sports based practical aspect. A consideration for the delivery of this award is to ensure an appropriate space is available for its delivery. This may include alternating the venue, merging small groups and also planning an additional practical session for participants to lead activities to ensure their understanding of what they have learnt.

Emergency First Aid Award: As a life skill, this has been well received and all participants who have undertaken the training have passed. In rolling out this element of the programme Vi-Ability has been reliant on trained staff from its Welsh team for delivery. This has impacted on when this qualification has been delivered within the eight weeks. Moving forwards, a change in delivery is being explored with the following being taken into consideration:

- Tutor training for one of the London based staff to ensure a more sustainable delivery framework going forwards. This may also provide Vi-Ability with a new income stream outside of the programme delivery.
- Partnership development with a private first aid training provider.
- Partnership with St John's Ambulance RISE programme, offering free first aid training for the same client group being targeted by Vi-Ability

In summary, with limited capacity, Vi-Ability have identified that to be able to provide this number of qualifications, trainers needs to be up skilled to be able to deliver in their own geographical area. Delivery of accreditations that require access to IT facilities need to be carefully planned into each programme to ensure the correct equipment is available, and participants need a better brief as to the accreditation process to ensure they understand the process and the learning outcomes.

Database

The development of a database for Vi-Ability is paramount if the organisation is to scale moving forwards. Existing methods of data capture do not facilitate an easy to use process that allows for reporting information to be easily accessed and utilised. The sheer amount of data being collected is also becoming unmanageable in the current format. In addition to this, with separate systems being used for different geographical locations and projects there is no joined up way of working on data across the organisation

which affects productivity of staff who may be accessing the data at the same time as well as trying to view specific data sets.

5. Conclusion

The Vi-Ability replication into London, supported by CSAIF has generated a number of achievements. Vi-Ability has worked extremely hard to engage with their target audience of NEET participants, identify clubs to host programmes, and, build brand new partnerships in a relatively short time scale. Whilst doing this, a constant improvement in practice and procedures has been sought.

The evaluation to date confirms that the programme is making an impact, but, being at the start of the replication plan, medium to long-term effects will only be seen if the learning to date is implemented and constant improvement continues to be at the forefront of the work of Vi-Ability. The data collected as part of this replication shows that the programme makes a contribution to the development of the young people engaged but, with key learning implemented, it would contribute further to making an even greater impact.

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It is the intention of Vi-Ability to use this report, alongside the continuing work on scaling and process evaluation, to ensure a robust model is in place that can be easily replicated. The programme aim of helping young Londoners and London based sports clubs remains an overall aim of Vi-Ability and this report, combined with the process evaluation will allow for improvements to be made to all Vi-Ability programmes going forwards.

With this stronger foundation, Vi-Ability has the potential to scale its movement if it implements the learning found as part of this evaluation. Over the next three years, following the process review underway, Vi-Ability has identified a number of key milestones to be part of the strategy for the continued growth of the programme. This includes the maintaining of operations in Wales and London, embedding of a new model and staffing structure to assist with capacity and the impact of Vi-Ability's work as well as replication into new geographical areas across the UK.