

Press release

July 2016

**REED NCFE is excited to be launching a brand new Baseline Employability Skills Test 'BESTest'**

Within the work preparation element of a Study Programme do you have difficulty:

- identifying and agreeing your learners' baseline strengths and weaknesses;
- designing tailored and personal learning plans based upon those strengths and weaknesses;
- Achieving learner buy-in for enrichment activities; or
- accurately tracking distance travelled from the start to the end of their course?

'BESTest' will answer all of these questions and more.

In conjunction with the University of Leeds Business School Organisational Behaviour team REED NCFE have developed a new psychometric test which quickly, accurately and objectively measures your learners' employability skills. As well as an overall score each learner receives a set of ten underlying scores that relate to the usual employability skills indicators such as; interview techniques and job search skills, and to those personal qualities such as; motivation and sociability, that make all the difference with employers. The table below shows the criteria that is assessed and scored:

Overall learner work readiness	
Key Employability Indicators	Personal Qualities
CV	Motivation
Job Search	Professionalism
Interview Technique	Resilience
Workplace Behaviours	Organisation
	Sociability
	Initiative

Already trialled with almost 1,000 learners, not only has 'BESTest' proved to be an invaluable tool for providers but it has also transformed learners' self-awareness and motivation to learn. It will become an invaluable asset to Colleges seeking to differentiate and improve their employability skills provision and, in addition, it will provide reliable and objective evidence of distance travelled.

The link below takes you to a pre-recorded webinar in which REED NCFE Managing Director; Tom Millar demonstrates the test, the results that the learner sees, the results that the College see and how you can use it to:

- design individualised learning plans based on each person's strengths and weaknesses;
- accurately track and evidence distance travelled; provide further evidence of achievement;
- inform curriculum planning; and
- benchmark scores both across your entire College cohort and nationally.

#### **Using BESTest with Study Programme learners**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NyNclHofOQ>

Now comes the best part, during 2016-17 REED NCFE will be offering 1,000 'BESTest' assessments free of charge to all 215 generalist FE Colleges in England, for use with their Study Programme learners. Any additional licenses in 2016-17 cost £2 per learner, inclusive of VAT.

Tom Millar, REED NCFE's Managing Director says, *"By taking the time and effort to ensure that your learners understand the importance of the key employability skills, the only feedback you will have from employers will be along the lines of "have you got any more learners like that?" and "Can I take on one of your learners as an apprentice?"*

Here at REED NCFE we passionately believe in helping learners and in the advantage you can give them by enabling them to demonstrate that they possess the skills, attitudes and mindsets employers base their recruitment decisions on whilst at the same time providing you with the tools to measure and monitor their development.

If you have any questions, please contact Stephen King on 07712 324022 or [StephenKing@reed-ncfe.org.uk](mailto:StephenKing@reed-ncfe.org.uk)