



LEICESTER COLLEGE

'CLASSROOM OF THE FUTURE' PROJECT

0115 846 4000

www.xma.co.uk

Full week work experience with XMA for 68 Computing learners

Leicester College serves over 20,000 learners and in 2016 was rated fifth nationally for college student satisfaction in the National Student Survey. In 2017, Leicester College approached XMA to lead a major work-experience programme for 68 learners of Computing.

The College wished to give Diploma learners a taste of a career in the IT (Information Technology) industry with a major player. XMA was the perfect partner for this as they specialise in IT, support, and services to schools, colleges and universities.

“In the past, the College struggled to find employers to place such large numbers of learners and quality had been a challenge. For many, this is their first experience of business life, so quality is important, meaning that their experience needs to lead to an understanding of what the business does, what makes it successful, who their customers are and their needs, career opportunities and routes in and progression.”

Sue Bassi, Work Placement & Progression
Co-ordinator at Leicester College

The College first collaborated with Industrial Cadets to help them find the best employer partner that could provide a proven structure for a full week of learning and activity.

Industrial Cadets', Christina Bond, recommended XMA. XMA supports many communities and education outreach projects including sponsoring poets, children's authors, scientists and even astronauts to work with schools and colleges to inspire and engage learners in different routes to success in IT and employment.



“XMA's enthusiasm and commitment enabled us to create a great, bespoke programme to captivate the learners in a largely project-based format, so the learners could use their creative talents, experience and understanding of ICT use in school and college life.”

Christina Bond, Industrial Cadets

XMA's Education Solutions Sales Director, Guy Bates, had led the company's support of a science project at Space Studio West London, which ran for the Academy by the Industrial Cadets.

“It enabled XMA's staff to do what they do best - working with groups of learners and staff with technology, whilst the Industrial Cadets team facilitate planning with all the parties.

In their work experience week the learners did not just learn about employers and IT; they developed key employability skills such as communication, teamwork, problem solving, decision making and judgement. My XMA colleagues and I work in schools to help them make the best use of IT.

It is great to get a step closer to the learning experience by enabling learners to see what a career could be like at XMA in today's exciting IT industry.

This work experience week engaged the learners with dozens of XMA staff. They shared their personal career journey and how they help our educational customers. Fortunately, we had a fantastic response from staff wishing to participate in this community exercise. People at all stages of their careers wanted to support the learners. We have all been in their shoes!”

To make the learners' time as engaging and creative as possible, the week began with setting a project for the learners to pursue in 11 groups. Each group had the task of developing a concept for a 'Classroom of the Future'.

They needed to consider the best use of IT, space and resources to help learners and teachers get the best from primary or secondary education.

Learners were to consider a hypothetical customer, who would want the best for their learners. Innovation was to be valued, as were considerations for access and inclusion for learners with special educational needs. Their environment was constructed with consideration for the wider environment including carbon conservation and sustainability of the learning environment.

Work Experience Week Timetable

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Activity	Briefing on XMA, our customers, offerings, business structures, career opportunities. Set learners their project challenge – "Creating the classroom of the future"	Team role setting. Mind mapping. Research. Decisions on what to include. Designing. How will the classroom support special educational needs?	Tour of XMA Nottingham. Learners engage with key teams, especially those well placed to add value to the student projects e.g. Project Manager Frankie Tyler-Gale. What are people's roles in XMA and what do they do in a typical day/week?	Refining design of the classroom concepts. Building models. Planning the presentations. Building presentation slides. Anticipating questions from the panel.	Preparation for Dragons' Den style panel interviews for each of the 11 teams. Learners present to a panel of College, XMA and other employer staff
Skills & Knowledge	How a business works. What do our customers expect of us? What roles & paths exist?	Communication Teamwork. Research. Customer focus.	Research. Teamwork. Innovations. Collaboration & productivity from Google & Microsoft. AV, client devices. Decision making. Problem solving.	Design thinking. Teamwork. Communication. Computing. Public speaking and presenting.	Public speaking Presenting. Reflection. Sharing success. Supporting colleagues.

The week culminated in a Dragons' Den style presentation, whereby each student group would 'sell' the Panel their classroom concept. All of the project concepts were outstanding, with the learners displaying considerable confidence and demonstrating their grasp of the brief, alongside innovations they had discussed within their teams. Judging became a tough task!



Classroom of the Future top teams receive their winners' certificates at XMA

The top two groups both sold the Panel on their ideas and their individual and group credibility. As winners of the XMA Classroom of the Future Project, the groups were invited refine their ideas at XMA's Nottingham office and present to an industry audience, including Ian Wedgewood of market-leading education audio-visual specialists Promethean.



“Each group showed a huge amount of work behind their ideas and presented them in a very professional way. They have great potential to go a long way!”

Comments Ian Wedgewood
Promethean

“The Industrial Cadets programme lead by XMA was a huge success for the Computing learners at Leicester College.”

Chris Seaton
Leicester College

“Thanks for letting me come back to XMA to gain more knowledge about how a business runs, as well as helping me understand my future goals. It’s been a great big help and an amazing opportunity you have given me so all I have to say is a massive thank you and I hope I will see you in the future.”

Qaaid,
Leicester College Learner

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