



Award of Personal Effectiveness Level 3

Coventry East and West Partnerships Pilot



Introduction

The Award of Personal Effectiveness (AoPE) Level 3 was introduced as a QCF qualification in September 2011 to address the 'breadth' requirement of 16-19 Study Programmes. It offers schools and colleges the opportunity to provide personalised learning; students develop transferable skills alongside their chosen curriculum or pathway.

The flexibility of AoPE means that students only need to complete three units (75glh) from a choice of seven to achieve the qualification. AoPE has been modelled on the well established Level 3 Certificate of Personal Effectiveness (CoPE) and is recognised by UCAS, having been allocated 30 UCAS tariff points.

With a focus on pathways such as higher education and apprenticeships, AoPE provides an ideal programme to address breadth and personalised skills development 16-19.

- Table 1 outlines the choices available to learners considering different destination routes.
- Tables 2 and 3 outline units students might follow depending on their chosen career or destination pathway.

In order to measure the viability, co-ordination and value of AoPE Post-16 ASDAN worked with Coventry East and West Partnerships to provide a supported pilot for schools looking to engage with 16-19 Study Programmes, a year in advance of their implementation. The pilot was also used to establish the types and forms of evidence that could support Ofsted inspection criteria.

Table 1: AoPE Units

Career Exploration
Improving skills in Preparing and Presenting Information
Learning through Work Wxperience
Planning and Reviewing Learning
Research Skills
Tackling Problems
Team Working

Table 2: Planning on going to university

Research Skills
Improving skills in Preparing and Presenting Information
Career Exploration

Table 3: Planning on applying for an Apprenticeship

Career Exploration
Learning through Work Wxperience
Team Working

What is Ofsted looking for?

A new Post-16 inspection framework was introduced from September and the following inspection criteria can be supported by ASDAN qualifications and programmes.

Outcomes for learners

Inspectors will make a judgement on outcomes for learners by evaluating the extent to which:

- Learners develop personal, social and employability skills
- Learners progress to courses leading to higher-level qualifications and into jobs that meet local and national needs

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Inspectors will make a judgement on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by evaluating the extent to which:

- Teaching and learning develop English, mathematics and functional skills and support achievement of learning and careers aims
- Appropriate and timely information, advice and guidance support learning effectively



Schools involved in the pilot

The pilot involved four schools all working with a significant number of Year 12 students (300+ in total). The schools involved were mixed comprehensive schools from the east and west of the city:

- Finham Park School
- Stoke Park School
- President Kennedy School
- John Cleveland School

The supported pilot ensured that cluster network meetings (similar to the ASDAN national programme for CoPE delivery) were available for centres to access. At such meetings, co-ordinators were able to discuss progress and view live work. Each school selected a different set of units, with Career Exploration being common to all schools. All schools were entered for external moderation in the summer of 2013 and were successful with students entered.



General feedback on delivery

Choice and flexibility proved a clear selling point across the pilot, with centres able to tailor the choice of units to academic and vocational learners accordingly.

The AoPE student book provided a good ideas bank that supported schools in tailoring challenges for PSHE, Study Skills, IAG and Enrichment-related activities.

Feedback from schools indicated that introducing careers exploration motivated students, with many taking responsibility for choosing their destination. The structured framework provided through the Career Exploration unit ensured that schools made use of available resources and applied an impartial approach as required by the statutory duty. This unit was useful, as it opened learners' eyes to more options; some realised that an Apprenticeship was a better route for them. This unit also helped schools shape the way they delivered and supported IAG.

The schools acknowledged the flexibility and choice involved with AoPE. Staff commented that, although it was challenging to have 100+ students doing different units, centres were able to select units that fitted with the profile of their learners, resources and teaching staff from the choice available. As a result, choice and flexibility proved a clear selling point across the pilot, with centres able to tailor the choice of units to academic and vocational learners accordingly. They also recognised that learning through work experience could be offered to students and saw this unit as being used more widely with 16-19 study programmes from September 2013, when the focus of work experience shifts towards Post-16.

Schools acknowledged that planned activities with clear assignment briefs helped learners focus on the skills being developed. The AoPE student book provided a good ideas bank that supported schools in tailoring challenges for PSHE, Study Skills, IAG and Enrichment-related activities. With significant numbers involved, schools commented that planning and robust internal quality processes were essential for successful delivery.

In the majority of cases, trained learning mentors were able to support the delivery and class co-ordination activities with a full-time teaching staff member overseeing and delivering the programme. However, schools recognised the need to have more staff trained to support delivery. Dedicated timetabling of 1-2 hours per week proved sufficient for teaching and evidence-gathering to be completed.

There was recognition by some of the schools involved that following units such as Research Skills and Planning & Reviewing Learning acted as a useful precursor for learners following EPQ (Extended Project Qualification).

Specific feedback from co-ordinators

Team Working used as a starter unit complemented the sixth-form experience well. This experience allowed learners to work with others in a co-operative manner. It also allowed teams to engage in detailed planning, making use of Gantt charts.

Introducing Career Exploration proved useful in supporting IAG and encouraged students to focus on the reasons why they were in the sixth form. This unit was helpful in getting learners to think about 'sectors' in regard to future opportunities and enabling them to self-reflect on the skills and qualities needed.

The development of transferable skills was helpful to the study of main subject areas. AoPE has supported our study skills programme and the Research skills unit has complemented the Extended Project Qualification by acting as a 'spring board'.

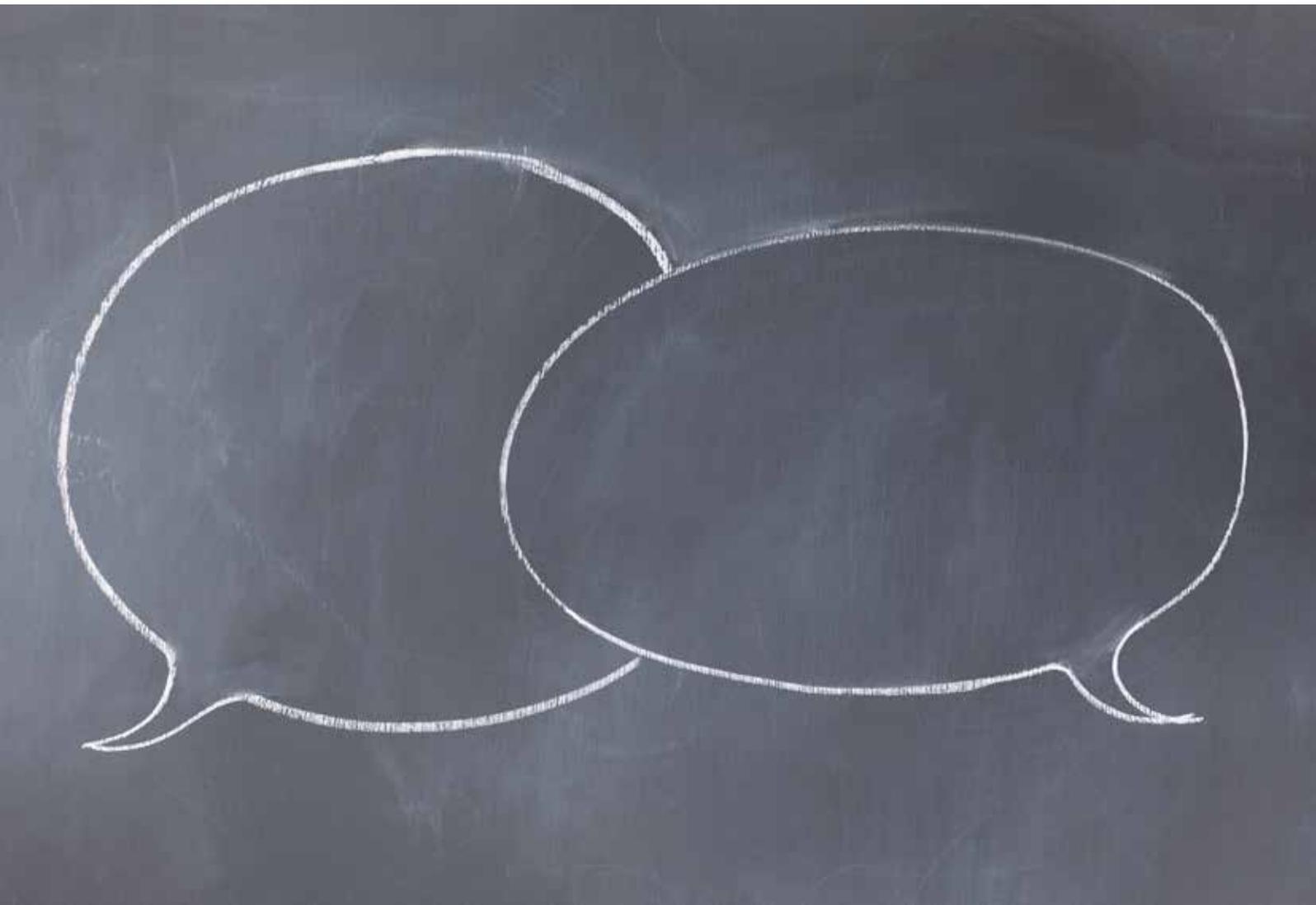
Learners have responded well to this experience and have shown a positive attitude to the completion of their portfolio. The programme is suitable for both academic and work-related students in the sixth form.

For those not intent on going to university, the AoPE programme has helped them to focus on other things, such as Apprenticeships.

The programme has been useful in helping students with their personal statements and reflecting on the skills and qualities they had developed. The careers exploration unit ensured that better use could be made of guidance resources and HE careers fairs.

The external moderator responsible for quality assurance of the pilot commented:

“Activities were appropriate, providing sufficient scope and complexity for candidates to demonstrate Level 3 working. Planning and self-reflection were particular strengths evident in candidates’ work.”



Student feedback

On completion of the programme, students were asked for their views via an online questionnaire. More than 60 responses were received.

Q1: List aspects of the AoPE course that you found enjoyable and interesting

Based on the activities undertaken, the following were identified as the most enjoyable and interesting:

- Team working (and associated activities)
- Researching new areas such as careers

The benefits of learning new skills, working in different ways, planning events and working more independently were cited in the more general responses.

Q2: Of your three assessed skills, which do you think you developed most effectively as part of AoPE?

The following skills gained the most votes:

- Career Exploration
- Team Working
- Research Skills

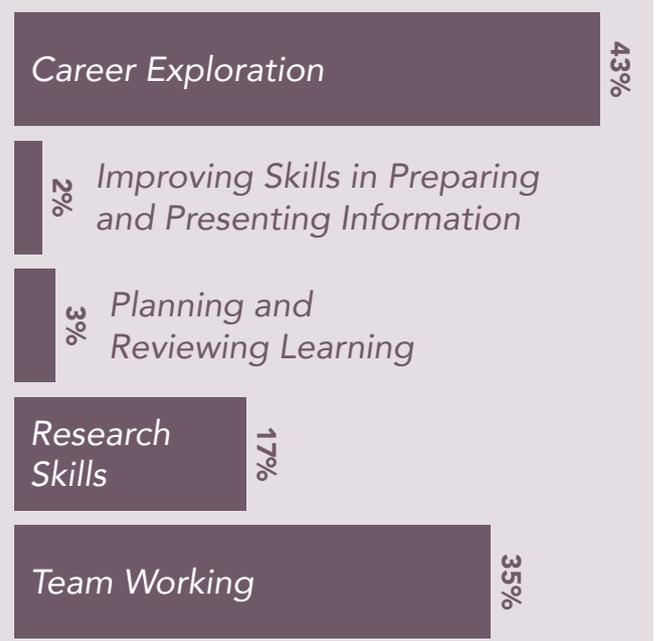
Q3: List other skills and qualities that you feel you have developed during the completion of AoPE?

Skills cited included:

- Communication
- Confidence
- Working independently
- Listening skills
- Organisation
- Presentation
- Problem Solving
- Time Management
- Report Writing
- Leadership



Students were asked to state which skill they felt they had developed most effectively as part of AoPE:



The following is a selection of comments received about students' experiences:

It has improved my teamwork and leadership skills, which I will need in the RAF.

Career Exploration has allowed me to research the best ways to enter careers and what courses to follow.

It has enabled me to plan my career... and made me realise that university is probably not for me.

It will help me write in more detail when completing my CV.

The UCAS points will help my application to university and I will know how to work as part of a team in the future.

The research project provided an insight into the expectations of university-standard independent research, which will be a useful thing to have experience of beforehand.

The course came in useful during the exam period.

I already knew about a lot of the skills and how to apply them to situations, but the actual award makes me stand out and gives me experience and evidence for interviews.

It is a good qualification to have to help learn about yourself and prepare for university life.

CEWP review

A key purpose of the Coventry East and West Partnerships (CEWP) is that members work together in partnership, in the best interest of learners, to provide a broader range of opportunities, greater breadth, and additional diversity, whilst also being able to make an offer that is inclusive to all students' needs within the locality.

To deliver these goals, Heads of Post-16 from the respective partnerships work together to:

- Share innovative Post-16 curriculum and practices (including CEIAG).
- Support the implementation of collaborative provision that students from the CEWP can access.
- Maximise progression opportunities for Post-16 learners.
- Share best practice in relation to analysis and understanding of data and tracking.
- Ensure effective interaction and communication with other citywide Post-16 networks.

The Award of Personal Effectiveness Level 3

The AoPE qualification pilot successfully reflects the working of the Partnerships. The CEWP/ASDAN facilitated the introduction of this successful Level 3 qualification in September 2012. AoPE is one of the programmes/qualifications that has allowed participating schools within the Partnership to respond to the requirements of evolving Key Stage 5 study programmes.

The focus of AoPE delivered within the Partnership has been to:

- ensure work undertaken by schools to meet statutory IAG requirements forms part of the KS5 study programmes (and meets Ofsted requirements)
- explore/bring together Work Experience and Careers Exploration (under statutory IAG requirements up to 19)

The pilot has been supported by CEWP/ASDAN and centres have engaged well. All the schools have undertaken different units, but have all followed Career Exploration as one of the three required units.

Success of AoPE

The introduction of AoPE is underpinned by a collaborative approach that supports the employability and personal development of learners, whilst developing and reinforcing career exploration and work-experience expectations. The pilot will provide a platform for schools to work together to ensure learners develop essential skills and awareness of work experience and Career Exploration as part of their curriculum.

Conclusion

This pilot has demonstrated that AoPE provides a suitable way of developing and accrediting personalised learning and is able to support Post-16 programmes, catering for both academic and vocational learning programmes. The choice of units and flexible delivery options available can accommodate careers IAG and work experience.

Learners, centre co-ordinators and the external moderator have all acknowledged the value this programme offers in developing personal skills and supporting academic and vocational learning programmes. As a result, AoPE provides a suitable method for developing and accrediting personal, social and employability skills and supporting learner destinations. AoPE can also be used as evidence in support of Ofsted inspection criteria for teaching and learning and outcomes for learners.





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