

APPENDIX – Learner Case Studies		
Report Title	Community Education Lewisham	Date: 9 February 2015

DZ - Case Study 1

DZ came to the UK from Côte d'Ivoire in 2008. She was eager to progress in the UK and felt passionate about fulfilling a caring role in society. Before joining the Understanding the Language of Work programme DZ had volunteered at her 6 year old's primary school and had completed qualifications in caring for children and adults at CEL and Lewisham and Southwark College. However, despite her experience and qualifications, DZ found it very difficult to find a job because of her poor English and her childcare responsibilities.

After completing the language classes the pathfinder helped DZ find an appropriate child minder for her son which overcame her major barrier to employment. The pathfinder then encouraged DZ to try a wider range of voluntary roles where she could get practical experience of using her qualifications in a more varied setting than a primary school. DZ completed voluntary placements at the British Heart Foundation and in a Nursery. DZ was also supported through the process of becoming DBS checked which is required for most care work.

The pathfinder worked with DZ to apply for care roles, and after mock interview practice and application guidance, DZ was successful and secured two roles. One as a care worker for TIG Heavens and a second organising children's parties for Party Cakes. She hopes to do both part-time.

EK - Case Study 2

EK came to the UK from Greece in 2013. Since then he has been regularly attending Job Centre Plus to sign on for his JSA. EK was getting frustrated that he couldn't find work because he had lots of experience and qualifications in Electrical Engineering and Computer repair. However his low level of English and lack of work experience in the UK was stopping him getting a job. When EK was referred to Understanding the Languages of Work, he was enthusiastic about the opportunity to improve his English and gain relevant work experience. EK was eager to learn, on top of the ESOL course, EK improved his English by using books and websites suggested by the pathfinder. During the one to one sessions with the pathfinder EK focused on building his confidence and learning the technical words for computing in English. The pathfinder arranged for EK to do a work placement at Eco Communities repairing computers so that he could gain experience as well as improve his English computer vocabulary.

The pathfinder supported him to make job applications and ran practice interview sessions for EK. This gave him the confidence he previously lacked and he was successful in securing a job as a shop assistant at Lidl. The pathfinder encouraged EK to promote his technical abilities during the interview so that he can transition to a role within Lidl where he can use his skills. The pathfinder is continuing to support EK as he progresses.

Now EK has, he is a lot more confidence, he knows he has a future and is capable of learning and developing other skills to progress. He feels positive about reaching his goals.

MS - Case Study 3

MS came to the UK as a refugee from Iran 8 years ago, but he only received definite leave to remain a year ago. MS speaks Farsi and Arabic, but speaks little English and has very poor written English. For the previous 7 years MS was sleeping rough and developed alcohol dependency. His status change has meant that he has recently been placed in Temporary Accommodation and has been claiming JSA for the last year. Since then JCP have sent him on two courses; one ESOL course and a CCTV monitoring course. However the ESOL course did not improve his English skills enough to get a job and MS discovered he was unable to use his CCTV qualifications because he did not have a SIA License, which is required for security work, and could not get onto a course to receive it.

Although MS attended all of the language classes it was clear when he met with the pathfinder that his alcoholism was the primary barrier to employment. The pathfinder referred him on to New Direction Lewisham which provides an integrated treatment system for adults who have problems with drugs and alcohol. MS embraced the opportunity and his situation improved considerably, and the pathfinder reports that he no longer smells of alcohol when they meet. The pathfinder also helped MS navigate the housing system to solve problems with his accommodation. MS has said that before he was given support from the pathfinder he saw no positive way out of his situation, but the pathfinder helped him to put things into perspective by showing MS options that he could take with definite outcomes.

The pathfinder was able to arrange for MS to attend targeted training courses to provide the skills he was lacking in general IT, Excel and Health and Safety. The pathfinder also supported MS to apply for various roles and gave CV and interview advice. With this support MS was offered a part time role as an invigilator at the International House Language School. However as soon as MS started this job his employer noticed his enthusiasm and appointed him to be a full time Facilities Manager for the school. MS is now earning enough to fully support himself and he is hoping to move out of TA soon.

MS said *"If I had this course when I first came to the UK, I would be flying by now!"*

VBV - Case Study 4

VBV moved to the UK 2 years ago from Portugal with her 5 year old daughter. During the last 2 years VBV had been balancing childcare with low paid 5-10 hour a week cleaning job, but was struggling to make ends meet. This job ended and VBV has had to claim JSA for the last 3 months, she is also in receipt of Housing Benefit.

When VBV began the Understanding the Language of Work course there was confusion at JCP and she was signed off from JSA. This meant sorting out childcare became a major difficulty for VBV. The pathfinder quickly identified this issue and helped VBV arrange local childcare through contacts at her child's primary school. The pathfinder also helped navigate VBV through the JCP processes so that the error could be corrected and she could receive JSA again.

Once these immediate problems were resolved the pathfinder was able to focus on VBV's employability skills and gave her help with writing covering letters and developing her CV. The pathfinder identified that VBV would be interested in working as a carer so they supported her to apply for those roles and helped her tailor her CV to be appropriate for these jobs.

VBV secured a role as a Care Assistant where she travels to people's home to provide care. She is also receiving training to become a qualified Care Worker and is hoping to eventually work at a care home. At their last meeting the pathfinder reported that VBV seemed a lot happier having found work and now being on a path that leads to job progression.

RM - Case Study 5

RM came to the UK in 2009 from Poland with her youngest son. RM is 52 and has qualifications in Dentistry from Poland. Since she arrived RM has been on JSA. She has completed the Work Programme without securing employment, but when she moved down to London from Manchester her records were lost so she was referred to the Work Programme a second time. Her limited English language was a major barrier to finding work and also made communication with SEETEC, the work programme provider difficult. When RM, was referred to Understanding the Language of Work, she was surprised but comforted that the course provided one to one support.

The pathfinder helped RM to sort out her records with SEETEC, so that she could get her travel expenses paid and stop receiving communications from the Work Programme in Manchester. The pathfinder worked closely with the Lewisham JCP to get this issue resolved.

RM attended the ESOL classes and developed her language skills. During one to one sessions the pathfinder helped RM to learn the dental vocabulary and enabled RM to navigate the General Dental Council process of transferring her qualifications from Poland. Together with RM the pathfinder investigated opportunities at King's College Hospital, and supported her through the application process for a Dental Nursing Conversion Course, where she has been accepted to start in March 2015. The course involves on the job training so she will be paid a salary for her work.

RM was keen to find work before starting the Dental course. RM expressed interest in social care so the pathfinder arranged for her to be DBS checked and set up training opportunities where her skills could be developed. She also completed relevant courses: First aid, paediatric first aid and health and safety. To gain some work experience, the pathfinder arranged for RM to do a work placement at Pre-school Learning Alliance.

The pathfinder helped RM to apply for social care jobs and the pathfinder did mock interviews with RM. RM English was developed at this point but she lacked interview skills. The pathfinder encouraged RM to demonstrate her skills through examples when in an interview. The hard work paid off and now RM is working for Beverly Martins Limited as a Home Carer, while she waits to start her conversion course in March 2015.

LCP - Case Study 6

LCP came over from France, where he had worked as an auto-mechanic. When he came to the UK in 2011, he wanted to pursue his interest in Graphics design. Although, LCP initially found work, his English was a barrier to progression and when the job ended he was left unemployed and then he signed onto JSA. When LCP was referred to Understanding the Languages of Work, he was enthusiastic and thought it was *'a good opportunity for many people like me to improve English, CV and interview skills'*.

LCP was a keen student and worked hard in the ESOL classes. During the one to one sessions, the pathfinder helped LCP to set goals for the future and suggested different avenues for reaching his goals. LCP started a work placement in the voluntary sector doing graphics design work. He was unable to complete the work placement as his partner fell ill. The pathfinder helped LCP to find a training course to help him and his family better cope with his partners illness. LCP is very grateful for the support of the pathfinder, and says she is *'always available to help and support the students'*.

The pathfinder worked with LCP to assist him with his job search and develop his interview skills. The pathfinder asked for feedback after LCP had unsuccessful interviews so they were able to work on his weaknesses. Group interviews were still to difficult for LCP because he felt he was being held back by his English abilities. The pathfinder and JCP, started to target the job search to exclude those with group interviews. After all the practice and hard work LCP was successful and found a job as a cleaner.

The pathfinder is still supporting LCP to progress into a job in the graphic design industry. LCP is happy that he is in work and is confident that he can reach his goals. LCP plan is to save money to buy a graphics design software and to start a higher education graphics design course in September 2015. The pathfinder *'gave me some way (direction)'*.