



Catching up with Barry O'Dwyer from AMES Liverpool is like catching up with an old friend. The same energy resonates from his team. Staff are always smiling and welcoming.

Barry manages the Job Active contract delivered from the Liverpool office, with his team. They have been supporting local job seekers in finding meaningful employment and realising their employment goals for over 2 years now.

Workplacement was a natural extension of their community involvement. To quote Barry, *'it is about giving back to the community and creating opportunities for all.'*

AMES had been hosting Workplacement students for over 2 years in the Bankstown area. When they opened their office in Liverpool, South West Connect was contacted, so they could offer local students the same opportunity.

'It provides the student with an insight to workplace culture'. It is satisfying watching the student grow in confidence over the week and watching them integrate and become part of the team.

Students attending AMES for their Workplacement are studying a Business Services AQF course and will achieve a Cert II in Business for their HSC. They come equipped with certain skills and knowledge learnt in the classroom that help them easily adapt to the office work. The students complete a range of tasks from reception and taking calls, general administrative duties as well as collecting and sorting mail and stationary orders.



Though they get a chance to practice the above skills, the major benefit to the student is developing their interpersonal skills. Through the interaction with staff and clients, the student can further develop their communication skills in the context of a workplace. According to Barry, this is where the real learning happens.

Through hosting students for Workplacement, the staff at AMES have had the opportunity to develop their skills further. It is an opportunity to develop staff to the next level of management. There have been great results from empowering staff and allowing them to mentor the Workplacement students.

Another positive outcome of hosting students has been the opportunity to network with other employers hosting students as well. *'The collaboration between hosting employers has been invaluable, especially in this industry.'*

Barry has commented that *'there are a lot of benefits to hosting students and employers should give it a go'*. He goes on to say that *'we have great support from South West Connect, making the process and experience easy, positive and satisfying.'*



Workplacement is a one week placement in businesses to enhance student's skills learned in the classroom.

Year 11 and 12 students studying a Vocational Education and Training course for the HSC must complete a mandatory component of 70 hours workplace learning.

If you can host a student for a Workplacement or would like more information, please contact our: Employment Liaison Consultant – Chrissy Potamianos (02) 9822 9370 or email chrissy@swconnect.org.au

Barry is excited about the future of Job Active and the community as a whole. He can see there is great job opportunities in the South West with all the infrastructure development and economic growth.

He relishes in having the opportunity to contribute to that by managing and developing a successful team as well as providing opportunities to local students. AMES's vision is **'full participation for all in a cohesive and diverse society'** and this is definitely evident at AMES Liverpool.

