



IOEE ACADEMY

FRANCHISINGWORKS

We spoke to Vicky Berry, Franchising Works Programme Manager to understand their plans and ambitions for their status as an IOEE Academy.

Tell us a bit about your background and how you got to doing what you're doing now.

FranchisingWorks is a Social Enterprise with over 10 years' experience within the Business support advice and consultancy sector, supporting clients to start a franchise or their own business. By offering people an alternative solution to employment, by helping and supporting them into self-employment and business start-up, the company has developed an innovative model that tackles both unemployment and local economic development. With the potential for multiple positive outcomes, we believe this to be a progressive way of tackling unemployment as new local community business often create new jobs for people within the community.

We have engaged with over 1,400 people in the North West and helped over 300 people start new franchise enterprises or their own business. To increase their prospects of success, we support them and their businesses for their first 12 months, highlighting and overcoming common business obstacles. In addition, many of those who approach us end up deciding on a more standard route into employment. In

such situations we help them to get the right job by offering advice, guidance and support based on their individual needs.

What does your business do?

We have been delivering programmes for the past 10 years funded via various avenues including European, local economy and private funding. We are currently delivering ESF Community Grant programmes in the Liverpool City region and Greater Manchester and have also been a delivery partner in "The Enterprise Hub", an ERDF funded programme for the Liverpool City region.

As a well-established Business Support and consultancy company, we started by providing specialised advice and guidance to individuals looking at getting onto the Franchise sector. We then expanded our range to support all types of business start-ups. Our focus is on developing Enterprise skills, employability and providing impartial information and advice. We run a range of training and information courses and workshops, as well as 1-2-1 business advice and support.

You have a great variety of support you provide, why was it important to you and FranchisingWorks to gain IOEE accreditation?



Having looked at a range of options for accreditation, we carried out comprehensive research on several organisations. We decided IOEE had the best fit with our business model and ethos than other companies, and liked your history, and the reputation of your accreditation. Plus, the company showed understanding and passion about the sector, like our team. We also felt that the qualifications on offer were something that fitted in with our delivery and our aims as a business.

Now that you have gained your IOEE Accrediation, how did you find the approval process?

We found the team and the process uncomplicated, welcoming and supportive. As we have quite a small team, this was extremely useful.

Almost every business has been affected by lockdown. How did this affect FranchisingWorks?

We have had to put our face to face delivery and engagement on hold due to Covid-19 pandemic. This has had a negative impact on the business but given us the opportunity to adapt to the new environment and look at other ways to engage and continue with our delivery and support to learners. We are now trialling the delivery of 1-2-1 support via online platforms and remote telephone sessions, so far with good results.

Being able to adapt and offer support via different means is a great development to have made during such tough times. What are your plans for your newly gained IOEE Academy status?

We plan to increase the range of accredited and non-accredited courses & workshops that we can offer on our two programmes: Venture Initiative Programme (VIP) and Find out about Franchising (FOAF). Both of these use a combination of workshops and 1-2-1 sessions with individual clients over 6-week period.

Our programme is designed to help the client meet their own personal goals, offering advice and guidance tailored to their individual needs. This giving them a strong foundation and structure, plus information and the right tools they need to develop their own skills and confidence, and an understanding of how to progress onto the next steps of their journey. It also builds their life skills, such as budgeting, planning and IT and social media abilities.

The curriculum is based around personal development, enterprise, and employability skills. We then work flexibly to support the clients into either setting up their own business (via franchise or independent start-up), self-employment or other forms of employment or progression.

To find out more about how your organisation can benefit from Academy status go to <http://ioee.uk/training-providers-and-fe>