

NISAI SUBMISSION / LEARNING IMPACT AWARD

The Challenge: The UK has a growing issue of youngsters who end up at a dead-end with no job and no education. Almost 16% of 16 to 19 years olds in the UK, are in this category of "Not in Education, Employment or Training" – or "NEETS." The lifetime cost to the economy of NEETS is estimated at £56 billion . There have been many programmes developed to tackle NEETS, but in 2012, Nisai decided to tackle the issue with an innovative programme which focusses on the root causes which need to be overcome.

Underlying issues:

- Many youngsters become disengaged with education because they learn differently or because they have learning difficulties which mean they need a different way to learn. Many have behavioural issues as well and lack self-esteem.
- When offered vocational training as an alternative, they are still required to have English and Maths qualifications to complete further levels of vocational training. Vocational training providers do not have the skills to deliver this, especially to students who have been disengaged with school.
- To make matters worse, the Princes Trust Digital Literacy Report of 13 March 2013, identified that this group is much less likely to have the computer literacy skills they need to find a job. "Lack Of IT Skills Hinders NEETS" (not in employment, education or training) Says Princes Trust Report - 13 March 2013. One in 10 unemployed young people (10%) cannot send their CV online and more than one in six (17%) believe they would be in work today if they had better computer skills.

The Solution: The solution is to combine Nisai's Virtual Academy with its proven effectiveness in teaching academic subjects to disengaged students and those with special needs in a distinctive physical learning environment where students can alternate between hand-on experiential vocational learning and online academic studies. We call this the Nisai Learning Hub, and the first one opened its doors in September 2013, in Nottingham, England, with plans to roll out similar facilities around the country, and beyond.

At the Nisai Learning Hub, students can study hair and beauty, childcare, construction, horticulture or sports training just like in traditional vocational settings. But, now they can also receive Nisai's trusted virtual academic education. Students rotate in the day between hands on studies and computer based studies. This makes the day more interesting, and provides the basic level of mathematics and literacy needed to continue vocational training beyond age 16. Students are no longer trapped without the English and Maths needed for a proper vocational qualification or, indeed, the skills for life. And by learning online, they develop their computer skills, uploading assignments, emailing, etc. as a matter of course.

Learning Impact Outcomes: Students develop confidence in their study skills (online and offline) and as a result tend to want to succeed. They are gaining needed IT skills simultaneously with learning online and they are responding to the pedagogy of the Nisai Virtual Academy. We are seeing improved attendance, a desire to do well, and all of our students are on track to receive both vocational and academic qualifications. This will allow them to continue training or get an apprenticeship after they leave at 16.

Return on Investment:

Schools and local government have typically been spending £30,000+ for each student at risk of becoming a NEET, with little result. Our solution provides them a 50% saving on their historical provision, with better results and with the outcome that these youngsters who cannot cope with mainstream learning are developing the self-confidence and skill set to move forward in mainstream training.