

East London Business Alliance (ELBA)

East London Business Alliance (ELBA) is a leading social regeneration charity. With 25 years' experience working with over 100 City and Canary Wharf companies, it facilitates corporate involvement in community development, education and employment programmes across East London.

After attending the launch in May 2013, ELBA chose to pilot the JET framework with its Business Action Groups for Schools (BAGS) activities. ELBA had previously commissioned external agencies to measure the impact of some of its work, as well as using tools developed internally to capture qualitative data, but had not developed a way to implement a measurement framework across an entire programme before.

Jordan Brooks, one of the BAGS Project Managers, explains that *'measurement and evaluation are very important to us. We do a lot of work with corporates who want to know the impact of the programmes they're involved in, and we ourselves want to understand if what we're doing is helpful for young people.'*

ELBA selected the Careers Junction event which belongs to BAGS' Career Insight Series delivered through the BAGS programme. Students vote for the sectors they are most interested in, before dividing into small groups and spending 30-60 minutes with speakers working in these areas.

Before piloting JET, each school and Business Action Group (which includes at least five corporate members) were given an introduction to the tools. *'Getting buy-in from schools was really important'*, says Jordan, *'because they are the ones who have to manage the circulation and collection of the questionnaires.'*

She went on to explain that schools were keen to see evidence of impact, *'not least because the findings can be included in evidence for Ofsted.'* Schools are required to promote and evaluate "pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development" (Ofsted 2004), so it *'can also show the impact that enrichment activities may or may not have on attainment in certain target groups.'*

Organisations using JET need to hand out two sets of surveys to students—before and after an intervention—to track change over time. This can be tricky for projects like the Careers Junction, which take place over a single day.

Aware of this, ELBA decided to experiment. At first, pre-surveys were distributed on the morning of the event and post-surveys later that day. *'We got a good response rate but were concerned that young people still remembered their answers from the first questionnaire'*, says Jordan. And so the second time round they asked students to fill out pre-surveys a week before the event, and then gathered the post-surveys after the event; *'although this took a bit of organising, we found it easier to manage because there was less to do on the day, and we trusted the answers the students were giving.'*

Jordan explains that using paper-based questionnaires worked well; *'although we had a lot of paper to deal with, collecting the surveys then and there on the day ensured we had a good response rate'*. But when it came to analysing the data, Jordan found inputting the answers quite burdensome; *'an electronic solution, or one which allows the prepopulated answers in the JET spreadsheets to be pre-assigned a numerical value, would significantly cut the amount of time spent on data entry.'*

The JET resources were found to be helpful when analysing the data; *'we used the spreadsheets which were available as part of the JET resources, and then did our own analysis. The tools allow us to view the overall impact of activity in a very simple format. It is also good to know we can directly compare results across schools and charities measuring the impact of similar interventions.'* Jordan also liked the detail of the scales; *'not only is it possible to use JET to show we are achieving our outcomes, we can also drill down into the statements that make up the scales and get at some really interesting findings.'*

The JET framework has allowed ELBA to focus on impact, so it can refine its offering to ensure it remains valid and maximises outcomes for young people. ELBA is now reviewing how they implement JET across its entire education programme, including their work with universities.