



**Making the
Most of Masters**
Work based projects

Investigating Training Approaches for Low Literate Populations

Elizabeth McLeod worked with The Soapbox Collaborative during her Placement. The Soapbox Collaborative is an Aberdeen based charity which promotes clean safe care at birth in low and middle income countries, to reduce maternal and newborn deaths.

In their focus countries, Soapbox had found that cleaners receive no formal training in hygiene and infection prevention & control (IPC).

During the Placement...

Elizabeth carried out a systematic review to find evidence on training approaches used with low literate populations and in low income settings which could be used to inform the development of essential training in hygiene and IPC for staff with low literacy levels in poorly resourced settings.

I learned to ask for help when needed—and got support from my supervisors...

What is a work-based placement?

A task planned by an organisation that can be completed by the student in the time available, with academic rigour. Students apply for 3 placements in a competitive process, based on CV and cover letter. Students complete the placement one day per week, over 10 weeks, at the organisation or in Aberdeen. The output is flexible (agreed by the organisation and the University) so that the organisation gets a useful resource from the placement eg web site, protocol, literature review or findings from data analyses. Students gain real life work experience and develop networks that improve their employability.



EMPLOYER EXPERIENCE

THE SOAPBOX COLLABORATIVE

“Soapbox was extremely fortunate to have an excellent student who was able to undertake a piece of work that we didn’t have capacity to complete ourselves.

We had initial reservations about the time required to support Liz, but she used her own initiative and worked well independently.

Problems arose from the lack of information on the topic and this was where the complementary roles of the Soapbox and University supervisors came in to play and regular communication between Liz and both of her supervisors was of great benefit.

Ultimately, Liz’s placement led her to do her project with us, the results of which will form the basis of a significant piece of work for Soapbox. The mutual benefits of having students of this calibre join our organisation are great and we would certainly consider a placement again in the future.”

STUDENT FEEDBACK

ELIZABETH MCLEOD - MSc GLOBAL HEALTH AND MANAGEMENT, UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

“My work based placement with The Soapbox Collaborative was a tremendous experience for growth and personal development.

I learned to ask for help when needed—and got support from my supervisors at The Soapbox Collaborative and the University.

I learned that in research, you have to be flexible as it may not be possible to answer the original research question.

The skill set I gained from the Work Based Placement was invaluable when it came to carrying out my MSc Project, from which I was awarded the Prize for the Best Thesis.”

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