

Motivation case studies: for each of the learners below then read the transcript and consider the factors that may be impacting the motivation of each of these and are there any factors that may contribute to any behavioural issues.

Lester

Lester is in his first year and is studying three A levels: Sociology, History and Law. His ambition is to go on to Higher Education and get a Law degree which he'll then use to train as a solicitor. Here's what he says:

Lester: I didn't do that well at school. Nobody expected me to do that well. And I didn't. They wouldn't let me stay to take A levels at school. They thought I was a waste of time.

Interviewer: Why do you think that was?

Lester: Because of my ethnic group. They just think, oh well, he'll end up driving a taxi or something. Being on the dole or something. So they couldn't be bothered. That's what I think, anyway. But it's different here [FE College]. They treat you different. There's more respect. It's like you're independent. It's like you're an adult. And the teachers are all more relaxed. They talk to you like you're all people – not teacher and learners but just all people, all working together.

Interviewer: And what about the subjects you're studying? Do you enjoy those?

Lester: I do enjoy them, yes. Because I chose them. My dad wanted me to be an engineer. He wanted me to do all sciences. All my family had this thing about me being an engineer. But that wasn't what I wanted to do. I chose what I wanted to do because I knew I'd enjoy it. And I know where I want to go with it, and I'm going to get there. Because it's my life, do you know what I mean?

Kylie

Kylie also did not do particularly well at school. None of her GCSEs were above grade E. She has come to college to retake four of these.

Kylie: Why did I come to this college? This particular one? It's near my house, isn't it. Why a college? Because I had to retake my GCSEs. If I haven't got them I can't do anything, can I?

Interviewer: How are you enjoying it?

Kylie: Childcare's alright. It's easy. I quite like that. That's my best one. I hate Sociology. It's rubbish. The teacher's stupid. You can't even talk to her. She's just like, 'Shut up and get on with it.' And I'm like, 'If that's the way you feel about it—' You know? She can stick it. Nobody likes her. We just don't turn up. There used to be about 20 of us. Hardly anybody goes now. What's the point of it, anyway? Even if I got it, what am I going to do? I'll never get my maths. You can't get a job without maths. Not a proper job anyway.

Aaron

Aaron is in his early twenties and was diagnosed at school as having moderate learning difficulties. He has been a learner in FE for over six years. On first leaving school he attended a Basic Skills programme in order to improve his communication skills. He then enrolled on a regional Intermediate programme of Land-based Studies. From this he has progressed to an NVQ 1 in Horticulture.

Aaron: I do it because that's what I like. My mum said, 'Go on, then. It's time we had a gardener in the family.' Because she thinks it's about gardening.

Interviewer: What do you like best about it?

Aaron: I like doing things. I like it when we have to do things and we go out and we really do it. I don't like it when we have to read stuff or just watch stuff. That's when I mess about. I don't like it when we just have to listen. I don't like writing the lists because they go too quick and I can't do that so I don't like it. I just mess about. And I don't like Mr [X] because he shouts at you and he makes you stay out when it's raining and you get soaked. I like doing computers. And I like it when it's just like a few of you – just a few of you and the teacher. Or just me and the teacher because then he helps me.

Interviewer: So do you enjoy college, then?

Aaron: It's cool, yeah. Everybody here's my friends. And so are the teachers an' all.

Tony

Tony is in his thirties and has left the army after a head injury which has affected his speech and his short-term memory. He enrolled at the college on the recommendation of his neurologist, as part of his recovery programme. Initially he found himself placed on a Life Skills programme for learners with moderate to severe learning difficulties. He didn't feel this was appropriate to his particular needs, and the frustration he felt over this resulted in some episodes of aggressive behaviour. He is now on a personalised learning support programme.

Tony: I can't remember stuff. I have to keep learning it. I can't remember. I do it, and then they say to me, 'We did this last week.' And it scares me. Sometimes there's words and I can't – you know. There's things I'm meaning to say but it's like there isn't a word. And they're looking at me, you know? They're thinking I'm thick. But I'm not thick. It gets me – you know – I just go ballistic. It's all in here, you know?

Interviewer: What's your goal at the moment?

Tony: Get the memory back.