



Our journey, your way

*High performance. Delivered.*

## The Royal Society of Arts (RSA)

“The curriculum is outstanding. An innovative approach in Year 7 provides integrated work across subjects, developing students’ personal skills and competencies excellently.”  
Ofsted report on Opening Minds school.

### The Royal Society of Arts

Founded over 250 years ago the Royal Society of Arts (RSA) for the encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce, the RSA’s approach is multi-disciplinary, politically independent and combines cutting edge research and policy development with practical action. It seeks to achieve this through encouraging critical debate by providing platforms for leading experts to share new ideas on contemporary issues. Its projects seek to generate new models for tackling the current social challenges.

### Business Challenge - ‘Opening Minds’ – Formal RSA project title

In 1998 Accenture partnered with the RSA to research and deliver its report “Redefining Work”. The report looked at the changing world of work, and its consequences for the individual, the organisation and the State. It concluded that the majority of adults in the workplace were not equipped with the necessary skills to thrive in an environment where the pace of change would be a continual challenge. Of more significance was the report’s finding that far from this problem being limited to those who had left education several decades ago, young people currently in the education system, were being equally ill-equipped to succeed, despite the introduction of the National Curriculum into schools. As an organisation primarily concerned with how new

approaches could be applied to social challenges, the RSA argued that it had the critical expertise to address this mismatch, and the following year invited Accenture to join them again in a second programme of research – to address what an education system that did develop those skills, would look like.

### Accenture’s Response

Specifically Accenture assisted the core research team in defining the failings of the current system and the ways in which a new curriculum could address those failing. Through extensive workshops with leading businesses, large employers, policy makers, OSTED, educational experts, curriculum practitioners, teachers, head teachers and pupils, the project team sought to create a truly innovative way of looking at skills development

Through Accenture’s support for the project a creative and innovative approach was taken to the second phase of research with a competence based curriculum designed which focused on core and critical workplace (?) skills. The intent was to establish a creative and flexible framework which would prepare pupils to succeed in an environment of economic and social uncertainty. The curriculum focussed on five main areas: citizenship, learning, managing information, relating to people and managing situations. .

- Consulting • Technology • Outsourcing

Once the curriculum was developed, the RSA team led a number of pilots in schools in the UK – with the emphasis on using the curriculum in successful rather than failing institutions, to avoid the conclusion that this was a curriculum of last resort. Following the publication of the pilot's initial results, the curriculum has been adopted by over 200 UK schools in its entirety and an additional 100 are using it as the basis for their curriculum development.

### Change within Accenture

Whether working with clients or as a large scale employer within the UK, the quality of skills of the working population is of critical importance to Accenture. The collaboration with RSA has delivered:

- The Opening Minds curriculum is currently being used in over 200 UK schools. Currently, the majority of schools use it within their Key Stage 3 pupils (11-14) though increasingly it is being continued through Key Stage 4 and a growing number of primary schools are also adopting the approach.
- An Opening Minds pilot is being rolled out in Europe in 2009
- Accenture remains engaged, mentoring the project lead, hosting workshops and speaking at Opening Minds conferences.
- In November 2008 the RSA opened an Academy School in Tipton – the first school founded entirely on the principles and framework of the Opening Minds curriculum.
- In October 2008 the RSA tendered to Manchester LEA to create a bespoke regional curriculum and has been successfully awarded the work.

Ofsted reports on schools implementing Opening Minds have frequently mentioned the positive effect of Opening Minds on learning skills, linking this explicitly to a student's ability to progress well at the school. OFSTED also cites that the curriculum is particularly successful in the helping schools in the following:

- Meeting the needs of students
- Aiding transition from primary school

- Behaviour and engagement of students
- Impact on teaching quality
- Results and attainment

Although the Opening Minds competencies can be taught in many different ways and every school develops its own curriculum based on the competencies, there are certain pedagogical, timetable and other organisational implications that have led many schools to rethink the way teaching and learning is organised. This in turn has led to several of the schools becoming beacons within their communities – extending the school day, providing access for adult and other learners, becoming a technology hub for primary schools in their areas and in one case, becoming a teacher development centre for schools that are new to the Opening Minds methodology.

### About Accenture

Accenture is a global management consulting, technology services and outsourcing company. Combining unparalleled experience, comprehensive capabilities across all industries and business functions, and extensive research on the world's most successful companies, Accenture collaborates with clients to help them become high-performance businesses and governments. With more than 186,000 people serving clients in over 120 countries, the company generated net revenues of US\$23.39 billion for the fiscal year ended Aug. 31, 2008. Its home page is [www.accenture.com](http://www.accenture.com).

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