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English Language at Work

Work-based English for speakers of other languages



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The role of English language and communication skills in meeting our social and economic needs has been well documented. The Commission for Integration and Cohesion report of June 2007 'Our Shared Future' stated that 'English is both an important part in our shared heritage, and a key access factor for new communities to the labour market and wider society'.

Equally as important, the government's recent response to Lord Leitch's review, 'World Class Skills' notes that: 'For employers, a more highly-skilled workforce is a route to achieving higher productivity and, in the private sector, greater competitiveness and profitability'.

To prioritise resources for the most disadvantaged, the government introduced funding changes to ESOL* in August 2007. At the same time, we've been working to identify and address the specific ESOL needs of those at work.

In publishing this collection of ESOL

* English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL).

case-studies, we recognise the importance of English language skills in determining both an individual's ability to integrate and progress in life and work in the UK, and the associated benefits to employers; with wider gains for a cohesive society and the economy as a whole. These case studies demonstrate advantages to employees, employers and society in addressing English language teaching needs.

We also showcase the achievements of those employers, unions and providers who have created English language learning opportunities for workers, across a range of sectors and industries, and in a variety of ways. Their best practice reinforces the point that we need a two-way approach to integration. In other words, just as employers, whether in the public, private or voluntary sector, need clear information on the impacts of ESOL at work, and choice, relevance and flexibility in options for contribution; so too do learners, whose skills, aspirations and abilities bring shared benefits to us all.

Bill Rammell



We believe that migration delivers economic gains with the potential to improve all our lives. Migrant workers make a significant contribution to our country. It has been estimated that in 2006 alone new migration added about £6 billion to the economy – around a sixth of the total growth. However, it is vital that migrant workers and those from settled communities are not exploited because of poor language skills, and are able to integrate with their local communities.

Effective communication is key. Without English, workers will have less opportunity to develop their careers and their ability to contribute to economic and social life will be constrained. And employers will not be able to make the most of their skills and talents.

Employers are contributing in a variety of ways and this has delivered

real business benefits, as this publication underlines. Trade unions are working with employers and learning reps to encourage workers to improve their language skills. Workers are also making the most of the opportunities available to them.

The prizes here are significant: fairness at work and increased confidence for individuals, and greater business performance and competitiveness for their employers.

Brendan Barber,
General Secretary, TUC

Richard Lambert,
Director General, CBI

Introduction

The UK has a long tradition of migration, and both recent migrants and people from settled communities play a key role in the economy. CBI surveys indicate continuing strong demand for migrant workers – just under two thirds of employers expect to hire skilled staff from new EU members and over a third expect to hire unskilled staff.

While many migrants already have good English language skills, this is not universally the case. A good grasp of English is an essential building block for success in the workplace and in everyday life. Unions report that workers with English language needs have high levels of enthusiasm for learning English.

The Government has made an important contribution, helping almost two million people learn English over the last six years. Supporting migrant workers to develop language and communication skills is key. This year, a new suite of ESOL for Work qualifications was launched to provide shorter, more job-focused courses with a more flexible approach to assessment.

And as the case studies in this short report show, there is much good work already going on in the workplace. For business there are clear benefits from investing in English language skills for employees. These can include better communication, improved customer care, greater efficiency and higher productivity.

Support from employers can take a variety of forms - from giving advice and information to providing English language training in the workplace. This might include some time to learn. Creating a welcoming workplace is essential.

For workers, learning English can dramatically improve confidence, understanding of work processes and employment rights. It can also mean the opportunity to progress at work and improve pay. For many, the workplace offers the opportunity to mix with a diverse cross section of society through colleagues and customers. Building friendships at work helps boost learners' confidence with English.

All firms, whatever their size, can play their part – by supporting their staff to take opportunities to learn

Introduction continued

English. The new ESOL for Work qualifications are designed to give a great start on their road to fluency (page 23).

The CBI's recent survey shows that over a third of large organisations provide English language training or signpost workers to relevant courses. And nearly four out of ten large firms help with initial orientation and practical information on life in the UK.

Trade unions play an important role in raising awareness of the benefits of ESOL training and encouraging individuals to take part. Union Learning Reps are playing a key part, working with employers and learners to help ensure learners access the training they need.

Unions have developed a wide range of initiatives to support workers with ESOL needs. Around 4,000 ESOL learners were trained last year, supported by ULRs. Unions have also developed employment rights information in a variety of languages, Welcome Packs for migrant workers from the European Union, and worked with community organisations to support migrant workers.

Good English skills also help to promote integration and community cohesion. This is about creating a society where everyone feels valued and is able to contribute to the economic and social life in the areas where they live. Employers and trade unions can promote community cohesion, enhanced awareness of health and safety and improve their organisations, business or service.

Investing in language improves business performance and community integration

Firms across a wide range of sectors and sizes are finding that raising language skills brings benefits to both the firm and to employees' integration within local communities

Red Carnation Hotels

Red Carnation Hotels is an international luxury hotel chain with hotels in London, Dorset, Switzerland and South Africa. There are 650 employees in the UK. High quality customer service lies at the heart of Red Carnation Hotels' mission. To achieve improvements in staff retention and English language skills of employees, a programme of English language training was introduced. Employees have training for 2 hours a week, giving up one hour of their own time and receiving one hour from their employer.

To support the courses and promote integration and workforce cohesion, there are staff social events and tea

parties every month, during which employees receive their course certificates. These activities also help to improve staff morale.

Since introducing the programme, Red Carnation Hotels have seen real business benefits: an increase in customer service quality; reduced staff turnover and improved staff motivation as employees see opportunities to be promoted and to progress professionally and personally. Employees are now happy to strike up conversations with guests, where previously they were less confident. The hotel has developed a reputation as an employer of choice – reducing recruitment costs.



Tesco

Tesco is one of the leading supermarkets with over 250,000 members of staff in the UK, making it the country's largest private sector employer. Tesco's commitment to skills development and training is a core part of its business strategy and at the heart of its commitment to its people.

English language training takes place in some stores and depots across the country as part of a wider programme of training. Tesco worked with Oaklands College in the Hertfordshire area and Skills Bank across the South East to develop flexible assessments that fit in with shift patterns. The courses were designed in bite-sized modules and based on every day language which is also relevant to the workplace. These include topics such as "Health & Safety", "reporting to your line manager" and "describing your experience and feelings".

As the union Usdaw says "Experienced, enthusiastic managers, working with the Union Learning Reps are key to encouraging staff to participate in the training'. In the Fenny Lock Depot, again working closely in partnership with Usdaw, one of the largest ESOL groups saw 250 enrolments last year.

Tesco has experienced clear benefits through improved communication and better understanding of verbal instructions and written communications, including Health & Safety information. The training has also helped new Polish colleagues integrate into the workplace and the wider community. Some of the Polish migrant workers who have benefited from the English language training have now built up the confidence to become Union Learning Reps in their workplace – and encourage other colleagues to learn too.

To help welcome staff and customers of different faiths and cultures Tesco provides employees with a Religions and Cultural toolkit which enables them to learn more about different cultures and faiths with information on history, ethics, diet, prayer, dress and suggestions on how to support staff during festivals. This includes celebrating a range of festivals including Christmas, Easter, Eid and Diwali through a combination of in-store information, posters, activities, competitions and decorations.

Gunstones Bakery

Gunstones Bakery in Sheffield, part of the Northern Foods Group, produces a wide range of sandwiches, sushi and bread based products. The company employs over 1600 people, including a large number of migrant workers. Twenty two languages are spoken onsite.

ESOL is part of a wider commitment to learning and development by both the employer and the recognised union, the Bakers, Food and Allied Workers' Union (BFAWU). Following the changes to ESOL funding, Gunstones agreed to fund ESOL training and to continue the existing provision from the company training budget. This includes release to attend the course.

Elaine Neale, HR Manager explains "ESOL plays a major part in the development programme. The company has committed to funding this delivery to ensure all team members are not excluded from the learning experience. Managers are tasked as part of their Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) to ensure team members attend their training programmes and they are all agreed that their team members training and development can only be an added bonus. Everyone has the right to learn".

Elaine also explains why ESOL is important at Gunstones: "Exemplary

standards of hygiene are required to assure our customers of the safety of their food and it goes without saying that the Health and Safety of all employees is of paramount importance. Therefore all employees need to be conversant with health and safety, food safety and hygiene requirements. It is also important that Gunstones employees feel part of the Gunstones team and are able to participate in the many forums and methods of involvement and communications employed".

ULR Dave Wallace sums up the company's commitment "Gunstones take up the challenge and show that they support life long learning by paying for ESOL for their employees that need it". ULR Lisa Greenfield also endorses the company's approach "it's nice to show they appreciate their workforce".



Developing people and offering progression

High-quality ESOL provision, designed to meet industry and workplace needs, is key to positive outcomes for organisations and their employees

University College London Hospital

Over the past six years, University College of London Hospital (UCLH) has had a partnership arrangement between Unison, the College of North East London and the Hospital Training Department to deliver high quality ESOL courses leading to qualification from Entry level to Level 2. This successful partnership has seen over 100 learners take up this opportunity and five union learning reps have been trained to support learning in the workplace.

The learners include those working as health care assistants, domestics, nurses and radiographers. Topics

have included dealing with conflict in the workplace and the changing face of healthcare in the UK, as well as developing skills in giving and receiving instructions, dealing with hospital jargon and filling in forms. The courses are spread over 10 weeks and learners are given paid time off to attend. Learners are advised about follow-on courses at the end of the course.

Managers and the union agree that those who have attended the course have improved in confidence and there has been a direct improvement in the service - a clear benefit of a joint approach to staff development.



Strathaird Salmon

Part of the Young's Seafood group, Strathaird in Inverness is a leading supplier of premium quality Scottish salmon products. The company is a major employer with around 350 employees rising to around 500 during peak production times. In recent years the company has recruited migrant workers to overcome difficulties in local recruitment. The number of workers from Eastern Europe and Iraq employed with Strathaird Salmon has risen rapidly and now accounts for around 75% of the workforce.

The company recognised that a key factor in the success of this recruitment policy would be the use of English as the core language by all employees. For the factory to run safely and effectively all employees needed English language skills in areas such as food hygiene, quality standards and health and safety. It was felt that some migrant worker employees, understandably, were afraid to admit that they did not understand what was being asked of them.

Initially, the company encouraged its employees to attend general English community classes. However, in January 2006, it asked the Workers' Educational Association (WEA) to provide English at Work classes on-site, tailored to the business context by the ESOL tutors and coordinator in consultation with managers and supervisors from the company.

Strathaird Salmon provided the premises, class time at shift end and motivational support from charge-hands and line managers. Tutors were given factory tours and materials for producing learning resources. Provision of English at Work classes is supported from the head office of the Young's Seafoods group.

After 14 months the WEA progressed to offering 10 week SQA accredited courses to learners from all areas of the factory. Training covers essential induction topics including contractual rights and expectations, requesting time off, hygiene and health and safety. On-site delivery allows for the adaption of lessons to meet the language needs of the business as they arise. Classes are now offered four times a week but are carefully planned not to conflict with peak production times of the year and holiday periods.

Supervisors have reported a marked improvement in learners and their ability to progress at work. Communication and morale have improved and there is a closer working relationship between migrant workers and the company. The company's management reports that the factory is operating more efficiently and safely. Waste and errors have been reduced and the company is promoting ethical health and safety training programmes - a key aspect in customer perception.

Cumbria View Care Service

Based in the North West with 120 employees, Cumbria View Care Service is a domiciliary care agency. Migrant workers now make up a fifth of the total workforce, and although they met the required minimum standards in English when recruited, it became apparent that the organisation would benefit if the workers improved their English language skills.

The firm has taken part in a pilot run by the Care Sector Alliance in Cumbria, where the employer is paid to release staff for one day (6 hours) a week for ten weeks to participate in an ESOL course. The course was developed purely to meet the needs of the care sector and aims to raise confidence and give employees opportunities to improve their English language skills, identify and practise effective communication skills in a Care environment. Employees can achieve a Level 1 Literacy national qualification.

The company's management feels the course has had a positive impact. Improving English has been key to helping the workers do their job more effectively. Employees feel more confident in their work, particularly answering the phone, writing reports and communicating with service users.

Diane Smillie, General Manager: "We have been delighted with the improvement in the telephone skills of staff when speaking to service users and GPs. The students have greatly benefited learning from the experienced ESOL tutor. It is imperative that the learners have a good understanding of the needs of service users and the health care professionals and so we are thrilled that the ESOL course has begun to show benefits!"

ESOL learners report that they feel more confident in their communication as a result of this course.



Improving teamwork, communication and customer service

Developing English language skills has led to improved team working and more confident staff

DHL Aviation (UK limited)

As an international company with 850 employees based around the UK, DHL Aviation wanted to attract people from a variety of ethnic groups to reflect diversity in the community. It soon became clear that many did not have English as a first language and that this could impact on the organisation. DHL Aviation has a German parent company and as a result of this, a training programme was also set up in England for German workers, who needed support.

DHL Aviation reports that, as a result of their ESOL programme, communication has improved with benefits for staff confidence, prospects and overall efficiency. Due to DHL Aviation's overall learning programme (within which ESOL accounts for over half of the company's basic skills training), there has been an increase in productivity, an increase in retention and a decrease in absenteeism.

An ESOL Learner says "ESOL training has improved my confidence and

communication at work and in everyday life".

Tom Harrison, EMA Operations Manager reports "The provision of ESOL training in-house has been extremely beneficial to DHL Aviation. We currently run two classes a week and both are full! The training has really boosted morale and performance of the learners and has helped DHL Aviation to maintain and promote a diverse workforce".



FirstGroup, Bus Division

FirstGroup is the largest surface passenger transport company in the UK with a turnover of £3bn and a total of 25,000 employees, about 20,000 of whom are bus drivers. The Bus Division's European Recruitment Programme has recruited over 1,100 employees from Europe. For three months prior to employment, applicants receive free English language training based on everyday language, relevant for the workplace, including essential health and safety issues. Applicants are only recruited once they are considered to be able to communicate in English. Once in the UK, employees are encouraged to continue their ESOL training, through a local provider or with the support of a Union Learning Representative (ULR) in an onsite Lifelong learning centre.

FIRST IN MANCHESTER

Working with ULRs from Unite-T&G Section, specially tailored courses have been written and run for First in Manchester. Learning takes place in the on-site learning centre. Based on the requirements of the industry as well as everyday situations staff will come across outside of work, these courses have proved very successful.

There is an agreement between First in Manchester and Unite-T&G Section where the union provides

ESOL to the drivers and other workers, and the company releases employees during working hours to attend. The provision of ESOL has meant that workers are able to function more safely and effectively. Confidence levels have improved, and lifelong learning has improved cohesion in the workplace by creating 'common goals'.

Bob Mason, Service Delivery Director at First in Manchester recently said "Lifelong learning has improved staff retention, which in turn, reduces our training costs significantly because we are now training fewer people than we have done previously".

FirstGroup, Bus Division also helps arrange bank accounts for new employees and supports them in their search for rented accommodation in the first six months after moving to the UK. Such an approach has delivered real bottom line benefits – reducing staff turnover and increasing profitability. Customer service, which is of vital importance to the firm, has also been dramatically improved.

Tate Catering

Tate Catering has catering outlets in the four Tate Art Galleries across the country as well as the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge and the Bluecoat Arts Centre in Liverpool. They employ around 400 staff. A large number of the London employees have English as a second or other language. As part of the process towards Investors in People accreditation, Tate Catering underwent a training needs analysis and ESOL needs were identified. As part of a Skills for Life programme tackling poor literacy and numeracy skills, an ESOL course was developed and piloted at Tate Modern. As it was so successful - improving communication skills and customer service - the programme is now being rolled out across Tate Catering. The firm has now achieved Investors in People accreditation - which it uses as a foundation for continuous improvement and to align its learning and development objectives with business needs.

Claire Mant, Training Manager for Tate Catering, comments "Skills for Life are an integral part of our learning and development strategy, and are now aligned to what the business needs. It is of course demand led. Our training provider has been great and has fitted into our business. We are seeing huge improvements, not

only have communication skills improved, operations are running more smoothly, with less errors and friction at work, and language ability and confidence has improved as a result. We have also had a number of internal promotions where staff that now have improved language skills are able to progress."

Sebastian Walach, Assistant Manager, Tate Modern Restaurant says "Having the opportunity to improve my language skills at work was a fantastic break for me. The alternative option - studying in the evenings - would have left me worn out and broke! I suppose the third option would have been not to bother working on my English at all, but then I wouldn't have been able to progress in my career. I started at Tate as a bartender, with improved confidence in my written and spoken English I have been able to work my way up to become Assistant Manager of one of the best restaurants in London."

Tailored courses deliver tangible business benefits

Firms investing in language skills tailored to the workplace have seen cost savings arising from increased retention and lower staff turnover

Bodycare stores

Bodycare Stores is a health and beauty retailer with 1,600 employees and a turnover of £123 million.

Working with Skillsmart, the Sector Skills Council for retail, Bodycare Stores have used a basic skills and ESOL programme on CD-ROM to assess individuals at induction, performance review or when putting staff forward for vocational qualifications. This flexible system has been tailored by retailers to suit sector-specific needs, offering an

accessible, bite-sized approach that can be shaped to suit individual learning with minimal impact on working time. After employees are assessed, Bodycare Stores uses the personalised feedback to build individual progression routes encompassing basic skills and job-specific training. As a result of this integrated approach to training across the business, productivity has increased dramatically and staff motivation has improved. Staff turnover has reduced by 40%, saving Bodycare Stores over £100,000 in a year.



Fowler Welch Coolchain

Fowler Welch Coolchain is one of the UK's leading distributors of fresh produce, and chilled products to supermarkets and wholesalers. By improving the language skills of migrant drivers, Fowler Welch has solved driver shortages, slashed recruitment costs and created an inclusive working environment.

As part of a broader programme to tackle a growing shortage of drivers, FWC introduced a programme of job-related English language training that was delivered on site in partnership with the University of Lincoln. The programme, which provides 36 hours of tuition, has

delivered substantial business benefits, including an annual saving on interpreters. All of the drivers who have received language training have remained with FWC – which has dramatically reduced recruitment and induction costs. Lower staff turnover has meant that FWC has saved each year because the firm no longer uses expensive, overseas recruitment. It has also changed the perceptions of foreign drivers in the workplace and enhanced workforce integration. For the first time a Polish driver has been elected by his peers to be their management representative.



Courtaulds UK, Ltd

Courtaulds UK Ltd, Derbyshire, manufacture hosiery, producing many well-known brands. The company has been through a period of expansion, which involved the recruitment of significant numbers of eastern European workers, many of whom have needed support with English language and work-based communications. The company employs 420 workers, and recognises Community.

Working together to promote health and safety on-site, and support integration of the new workers, Community put forward an action plan of ESOL training to the company. Courtaulds, working with Community, provides for paid release for new starters to attend on site courses. Courses are provided by Broxtowe College and supported by LSC local funding.

Benefiting from ESOL provision, new staff have been able to communicate effectively with their co-workers, and feel more like part of a team with a knock-on benefit for morale. Provision of ESOL has meant that they have been able to participate fully in the factory community and the social environment. People are able to act on allotted tasks and contribute at all levels of factory life.

Mel Freeman, Human Resources Manager says "We are happy to run this course again if need be, the feedback from the group has been very positive. It has helped build the team spirit we have. It has made it easier to train staff and improve quality. As part of the company induction process, we promote this course as part of an individual's development".



VT Shipbuilding

VT Shipbuilding, part of VT Group, has over 900 employees and contractors. Of these, 400 are skilled craft workers involved in building vessels such as the Type 45 Destroyers for the MoD. In 2002 the shipyard relocated from a 100 year old site at Southampton to a new state-of-the-art-facility in Portsmouth with a £50m investment in new buildings and technology.

For this new facility to be successful and productive it was essential that staff were flexible and adapted to new ways of working. The organisation also faced a number of sector specific skills shortages and the prospect of losing a significant proportion of skilled staff to retirement.

The company worked in close partnership with the recognised trade unions, the local Learning and Skills Council and Eastleigh College to secure funding for their Workplace Learning Centre. The centre opened in August 2002 to deliver training to employees.

Critical to the success of the programme is a network of ten trained Union Learner Representatives (ULRs) who engage staff and managers in training. ULRs are able to communicate the training available to fellow employees in a confidential environment, reducing the stigma sometimes attached to adult learning.

The education department recently organised ESOL courses at the workplace learning centre. The course was set up to accommodate a group of Polish welders who were GMB members. Both the recognised unions and the company were keen for this training to assist with both improving internal communications and in integrating workers into the local community.

The learning partnership agreement between the company and recognised trade unions allowed for learners to attend Skills for Life training, including ESOL, during working hours without loss of earnings.

This successful partnership with the unions is now being used as a model to develop initiatives and learning centres at sites across the country. Perceptions of the company locally and beyond are slowly starting to change from seeing shipbuilding as a "hire and fire" industry to one that is willing to invest in developing a capable and flexible workforce.



Increased awareness of health and safety

English language skills development is closely aligned with increased awareness of health and safety, and fewer errors at work

Bovis Lend Lease Waagner Biro

Bovis Lend Lease is an international construction project management company with over 3,000 employees in the UK and a turnover in excess of £2bn.

Bovis worked with UCATT to introduce ESOL training at two construction sites in London – Bankside in 2006 and Bishopsgate from September 2007. At Bishopsgate there are now 23 people attending the course, and there is another class about to begin due to increased demand.

Both the union and the company worked together to fund and support ESOL provision delivered onsite in partnership with Lewisham College. The training is available for both Bovis employees and contractors and is available at a variety of levels to suit the needs of the individual. The course is ongoing, so each person can study for as long as they need to. Employees study in their own time but tuition and assessment are provided free of charge.

Training manager Paul Warren explains the benefits: "As a major contractor, we are aware of the health and safety risks posed by a lack of English language skills on a busy construction site. Since introducing ESOL, we have also recognised that providing language skills training helps our migrant workers to better integrate with the wider workforce."

WAAGNER BIRO, LIVERPOOL KINGS DOCK

Kings Waterfront is the single largest development site in Liverpool City Centre. By the end of the project, around 2,000 people with over 20 different languages will have worked on site.

Due to local skills shortages and the specialist nature of the work, Waagner Biro, a company specialising in architectural steel engineering and glass-cladding, employed 35 Czech workers (and 15 English labourers).

UCATT approached the company and they jointly agreed to provide financial resources for ESOL training. ►

Courses were delivered in the onsite learning centre, a product of the learning partnership between UCATT, Bovis, Liverpool Community College, Constructionskills and Unionlearn. Learning happened on a 'give an hour take an hour basis'.

The employer reports "The provision of the on-site ESOL course has been invaluable in helping to integrate our Czech workers into the workplace and local community. We viewed the ESOL courses as an investment and a 'tool' to help practically support our staff, address essential communication and health and safety issues".

One learner, Jarsolav Sedluk says "I've really enjoyed the ESOL courses because we learnt about more than just how to speak English. The course helped familiarise me with workplace rules and regulations and the tutor was able to provide explanations for some of the things I didn't understand about working and living in Liverpool".



Where next to access help and support

LEARNING AND SKILLS COUNCIL (LSC) AND TRAIN TO GAIN

For further information on access to funding for ESOL and local support, contact your local LSC

LSC Helpdesk
Email: info@lsc.gov.uk
Tel: 0870 900 6800

The Learning and Skills Council's Train to Gain service provides impartial, independent advice on training to businesses across England. It can help businesses improve their productivity and competitiveness by ensuring that employees have the right skills to do the best job. Train to Gain gives you access to a Skills Broker who will carry out a needs analysis of training within your business and help you assess what skills your business has now and what you will need in the future

Website: www.traintogain.gov.uk
Helpdesk: 0845 019 4170

NATIONAL EMPLOYER SERVICE (NES)

The Learning and Skills Council's National Employer Service (NES) helps large companies understand the support available for workforce development.

NES currently works with more than 80 large employers, providing advice and support to McDonalds, Sainsbury's, Tesco, British Aerospace, British Gas, Vodafone and Royal Mail.

NES contacts:
Telephone: 0845 019 4170
Fax: 024 7682 3675
Email: NESEnquiries@lsc.gov.uk

TUC CONTACT www.tuc.org.uk

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NATIONAL UNIONLEARN

Unionlearn is the TUC's learning and skills organisation. Contact unionlearn for more information on working with the TUC and unions in supporting learners with ESOL needs.

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SECTOR SKILLS COUNCIL CONTACTS

Asset Skills currently takes a lead role on ESOL development across the SSCs. For advice and signposting to relevant, sectoral ESOL contacts: enquiries@assetskills.org

ESOL for Work Qualifications

As part of the government's review of ESOL provision in 2006, a significant change in the type of learner accessing ESOL provision was identified, showing a far greater take up from migrant workers. To address this, the government requested the development of a new suite of English language qualifications called ESOL for work.

These new qualifications are designed to meet the immediate English language needs of learners who are in employment or who are intending to work in this country. The intention is to offer opportunities for the rapid acquisition of English for work, through flexible programmes of delivery that can target the immediate, broad, work-related needs of candidates.

The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) has worked with 8 awarding bodies to develop and accredit the ESOL for Work qualifications.

The awarding bodies offering the new qualifications are, in alphabetical order:

Cambridge ESOL
esolhelpdesk@cambridgeesol.org

City & Guilds
skillsforlife@cityandguilds.com

Edexcel
www.edexcel.org.uk

English Speaking Board
admin@esbuk.org

National Open College Network (NOCN) www.nocn.org.uk

Open College of the North-West (OCNW)
b.rockliffe@lancaster.ac.uk

Scottish Qualifications Authority
Eunice.McAllister@sqa.org.uk

Trinity College London
glyn.jones@trinitycollege.co.uk

The development also included consultation with the Sector Skills Development Agency (SSDA) and some Sector Skills Councils (SSC).

ESOL for Work qualifications focus on the skills needed for employment and employability. They cover topics such as health and safety, customer care, food hygiene, common work practices, equality and diversity with some sector focused induction into jobs or other job specific elements. They also offer options for flexible assessment and delivery.

Further details of the new ESOL for Work qualifications are available:
www.dfes.gov.uk/readwriteplus

FUNDING

ESOL for Work qualifications will be funded at a listed rate. They do not attract automatic fee remission. The fee element will be known upfront by employers.

The listed rate for 2007/2008 is £880. Where learners are not eligible for automatic fee remission, up to 37.5% of this fee, which translates into £330, will need to be paid by the employer and/or learner.

Contributing partners – acknowledgments

The Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills would like to thank contributing partners for their support and input in developing this publication



The Confederation of British Industry



Trades Union Congress

Business in The Community is a movement of over 800 member companies, with a further 3,000 engaged in programmes and campaigns.

Business Action on Skills, funded by the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills, is a key element within Business in the Community's workplace initiatives, supporting large businesses in developing and implementing literacy, numeracy and language training in the workplace and promoting the Skills Pledge.

Key elements of the campaign include:

SKILLS PRACTITIONER NETWORK

The Skills Practitioner Network was established by Business in the Community as a forum for companies engaged in Skills to share learning, experience and knowledge. Each meeting is hosted by a leading skills company.

AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE

The Skills for Life Award is part of Business in the Community's Awards for Excellence. Launched in 1997, the awards are now in their 11th

year and are established as the UK's most prestigious recognition for responsible business practice.

SKILLSTORIES.ORG

Skillstories is a new project funded by the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS) and has been developed by Business in the Community.

Skillstories.org is an online network where employers and partners can promote their work on skills. The site encompasses employer profiles, shared learning from examples of best practice, supported by a comprehensive directory of skills resources and events.

USEFUL WEBSITES

www.unionlearn@tuc.org.uk
www.cbi.org.uk
www.bitc.org.uk/SKILLS
www.investorsinpeople.co.uk
www.traintogain.gov.uk
www.dius.gov.uk
www.lsc.gov.uk
www.learndirect.co.uk
www.basic-skills.co.uk
www.lifelonglearning.co.uk
www.qca.org.uk
www.ssda.org.uk
www.tuc.org.uk

