Delivering Skills for Life:

The national strategy for improving adult literacy and numeracy skills

Raising Standards

A Contextual Guide to Support Success in Literacy, Numeracy and ESOL Provision

E-learning

CONSULTATION DOCUMENT

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Raising Standards

A Contextual Guide to Support Success in Literacy, Numeracy and ESOL Provision

E-learning

Contents

Foreword

Each new learner must be given a high-quality learning experience that motivates him or her to keep on learning and to achieve.

Skills for Life (DfES, 2001)

At the present time, it is estimated that one in five adults in the United Kingdom has difficulties with literacy and/or numeracy. This is a situation that adversely affects both our economy and our society, but, equally importantly, has a debilitating effect on the life of individuals and their families. Without these essential skills, these individuals are more likely than ever to be excluded from our fast-moving society.

Since the launch of *Skills for Life* in 2001, we have gained an even greater insight into the effect that low levels of literacy and numeracy skills have on individuals and their families. Much has been done, and continues to be done, to bridge the skills gap and address the needs of these individuals.

One of the key ways of addressing these needs is through improving the quality of teaching and learning in literacy, numeracy and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) provision, and by increasing learner achievement through the new national infrastructure with its focus on teaching, learning and assessment arrangements. Together, these will contribute to removing the barriers to learning and raising achievement levels.

Over the past two years, much progress has been made and we have seen some exciting developments in improving literacy and numeracy provision and in making it more accessible and effective. We recognise that robust inspection and realistic self-assessment support and ensure the quality of these developments and result in continuous improvement. To assist this process and in response to requests from learning organisations we have developed this series of six contextual guides, each one tailored to the needs of a specific learning setting. The guides follow the publication of *Success in Adult Literacy, Numeracy and ESOL Provision* (DfES, 2002), which aimed to help learning institutions use the Common Inspection Framework to guide their work in raising the achievement levels of adult learners. These publications have been designed to complement the effective practice guides produced by OFSTED and the ALI that help to communicate the need for continuous improvement in literacy, numeracy and ESOL delivery, and offer practical advice both to those who are teaching this provision, and those responsible for inspecting it.

Each contextual guide in the series provides further help to providers, and in particular is designed to bridge the gap between understanding generic advice on improving quality, and taking appropriate and effective action in a specific learning context or setting, be that a general further education college, a prison, the workplace or in one of the varied settings found in adult and community learning. Providers need to feel confident that, if they put their learners at the centre of their provision and get the delivery right, good inspection grades will follow.

The guides are intended to provide practical help to providers in meeting this goal. As Director of the Adult Basic Skills Strategy Unit, I commend the guides to you, and hope that their use will help to secure the successful, positive and enhancing learning experiences for adults that lie at the heart of the *Skills for Life* strategy.

Susan Pember
Director, Adult Basic Skills Strategy Unit

Introduction

Inspection should value innovation. We want to encourage creativity and new approaches to learning. Charles Clarke, Secretary of State for Education and Skills

I thought to myself, if my kids can use a computer then why can't I?
Adult learner on a **learndirect** course

CURRENT ISSUES IN E-LEARNING

We live in an era where information is increasingly captured, stored, transmitted and distributed in digital form. One very live issue in e-learning today is the issue of social inclusion in relation to information and communications technology (ICT). People who lack access to the information and opportunities available in electronic environments, such as those relating to e-government, educational or job opportunities, parenting skills, health advice and citizenship, are disempowered. To deny a particular group of people access to the Internet, email and chat rooms, or not to help them become at ease with the everyday use of ICT is irresponsible. Where learners have an entitlement and the proper encouragement to acquire the ICT skills that will help them participate and contribute fully to their communities and society, and where ICT extends their choices, enriches their competencies and strengthens their autonomy, e-learning will be making the step-change needed to adjust to the increasingly complex world of the 21st century.

E-learning in relation to adult literacy, numeracy and language skills development is comparatively new. The emergence of the University for Industry (Ufi) and its network of learning centres providing **learndirect** programmes in 1999 was when its full potential for teaching literacy, numeracy and ESOL began to be recognised because of the significant uptake of courses and the positive feedback from learners. E-learning is becoming increasingly acknowledged as an effective mode of teaching and promoting learning in a wide range of contexts. E-learning is cited as an important lever for change in *Skills for Life: The national strategy for improving adult literacy and numeracy skills*. E-learning offers opportunities for self-directed, differentiated learning that engages and motivates learners, responds to their individual needs and brings with it none of the negativity associated with past experiences of education.

However, it is important that e-learning, wherever it takes place, should aspire to the same high quality and standards as more traditional teaching methods. It should not be seen as something that is tagged on, but rather as an important tool that is integral to the learning process.

So, exactly what is meant by e-learning in the *Skills for Life* context? Put simply, e-learning is the process of learning through the medium of ICT. ICT in this context includes the use of computers, email, the Internet, online tutoring, online groupwork, portable devices, mobile phones, PowerPoint, word-processing software and interactive whiteboards. The *Skills for Life* strategy

recognised the potential for e-learning to increase access and uptake from its launch in March 2001. However, many organisations initially interpreted and delivered programmes in a traditional way using teachers and paper-based materials. This is a valid and valuable approach that is useful for many adults, but it is not the whole story. This traditional approach does not suit large numbers of other potential learners who are resistant to classroom-based provision and group provision in general and who are concerned about acknowledging their need for literacy, numeracy and ESOL learning. For these learners, e-learning can be an attractive, flexible alternative, which with the right level of support and pedagogical design can be effective either on its own in a learning centre context or as part of classroom-based blended approach to teaching.
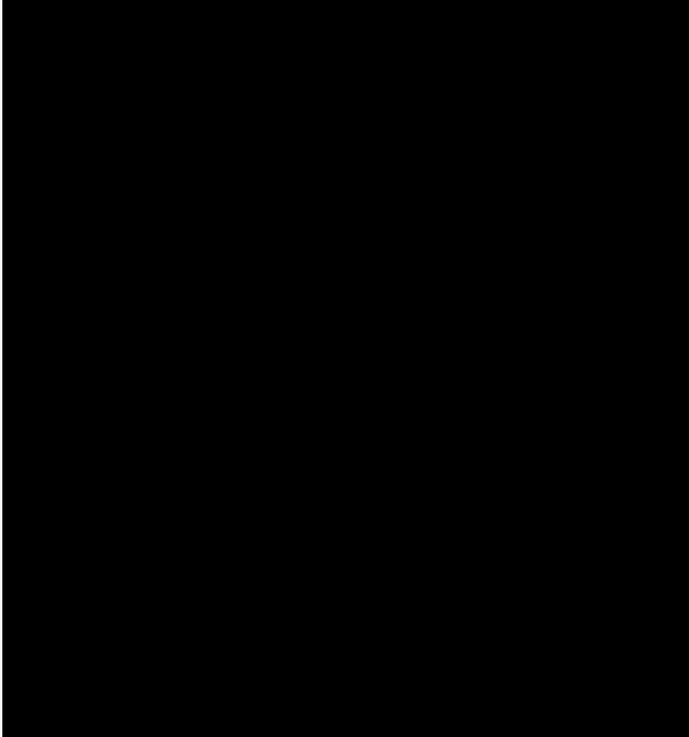
Sometimes the absence of e-learning in programmes of work can be owing to the teacher's lack of familiarity and confidence in the use of ICT, or scepticism about its effectiveness. It is important that teachers become familiar with and trained in the use of ICT, not only in the classroom but also for their own personal use, so that they understand where and how e-learning can make its greatest contribution in *Skills for Life* learning, and are convinced of its value.

THE SCOPE OF THIS GUIDE

This Guide is designed to help providers achieve excellence in their literacy, numeracy and ESOL provision using e-learning and in e-learning contexts. By taking each of the seven questions in the Common Inspection Framework in turn, it is designed to help providers undertake realistic self-assessment and secure continuous improvement by interpreting the requirements of the Common Inspection Framework within the context of the adult literacy, numeracy and ESOL curricula and their provision in speaking and listening, reading, writing and numeracy.

It also offers help by setting out the characteristics of effective practice in literacy, numeracy and ESOL teaching in the e-learning context, again in relation to the seven questions of the Common Inspection Framework. It provides guidelines to help providers assess the quality of their e-learning provision and ensure that it meets the performance criteria for high-level learner achievement and continuous improvement. It explores how practitioners can use e-learning as a medium for achieving high standards, and it is hoped that the many practical examples and ideas of how to achieve best practice in this area will encourage and inspire. It also makes reference to *Skills for Life* documents that have been designed to help providers improve their practice.

We wanted this series of guides to offer practical help to providers and practioners – a 'How to' guide that would really focus on what works. For that reason, as well as providing sample materials that can be adapted for different learning environments, all the guides illustrate what success might look like. For example, how do we know when a learner has made an important new step in their learning? What might be the outcomes of a successful initial assessment? The short descriptions of the progress made by real learners in real situations help to answer such questions.

Finally, the guides include comments from inspectors on this area of work in inspection reports and other documents. These extracts are included to help readers gain an insight on how OFSTED and the ALI evaluate and report on this context for learning.

WHAT IS SUCCESS IN THE E-LEARNING CONTEXT?

Effective practice in e-learning involves combining it with traditional approaches such as classroom-based or individual teaching and discussion or study using printed material as well as online tutorials and groupwork. This is referred to as blended learning, and its use

can add value to the learning experience for *Skills for Life* learners. For example, learners can independently use Internet access for information and research, exchanging emails, visiting chat rooms and finding exercises and information that are linked to learning. On the other hand, a teacher may choose to supplement traditional teaching materials and approaches with PowerPoint, data projectors or interactive whiteboards. One advantage of e-learning is that learning can also take place outside scheduled learning times to complement a main programme, as in the case of web research, reinforcement or revision exercises, additional practice or online peer and teacher communication. Such activities allow learners remote access to learning materials and enable learners to work at their own pace and at times that are convenient for them.

The materials used for e-learning are widely available. **learndirect** is one of the leaders in creating fit-for-purpose *Skills for Life* courses and its multimedia courses are matched to the new literacy, numeracy and ESOL standards and curricula. These materials can be accessed through **learndirect**'s national network of learning centres. The BBC also have a dedicated site called Skillswise which is designed to help adults improve their skills to Level One. Skillswise can be accessed through the BBC's digital services. There is also an increasingly wide range of commercially produced materials in this category.

Appropriate support for learners at critical points in their learning is essential to the success of e-learning. There is emerging evidence that *Skills for Life* learners in all types of learning situations can improve their literacy, numeracy and ESOL skills by using well-designed e-learning materials and by using the Internet and other forms of ICT. The benefits include higher motivation, the chance to learn more autonomously and opportunities to learn in ways that suit a wide range of learning styles. E-learning programmes allow learners to develop and practise skills in a non-stigmatised environment. Most *Skills for Life* learners using ICT have little difficulty in using the technology to enhance their learning. A key feature of e-learning confidence is the rapidly expanding access to on-screen and on-line assessment leading to national qualifications in literacy and numeracy at levels 1 and 2. Awarding bodies who are offering this opportunity highlight the ease at which learners complete the tests and the capability and confidence they secure as the result of their achievements.

An important aspect of using ICT and e-learning for literacy, numeracy and ESOL teaching is that it familiarises learners with the use of ICT as the standard way of working, reflecting the increasingly widespread and extensive role of ICT at work and in community and leisure activities. For example, in the school curriculum it is now usual for children aged six and above to use PowerPoint and other electronic tools for projects and presentations.

E-learning is here to stay and *Skills for Life* learners are embracing it in many ways to improve their skills. For example:

- a **learndirect** centre in a Foyer is using computer-based packages to bring young people who have not had a positive experience of school into learning

- learners in a college-based ESOL class use computer-assisted language learning to find out information from the Internet and to communicate with friends and relatives back home

- a community group uses the BBC's Skillswise website to give learners practice in using a message board

- a literacy teacher asks learners to email her their work, which she corrects and returns electronically

- a teacher uses an interactive whiteboard with a group of learners to create content for a newsletter

- the increasing number of non-traditional learners in the workplace who are seeking on-screen and on-line assessments because they differ so dramatically from their previous educational experiences.

E-learning is a different way of learning. It is a new culture that offers an enormous variety of ways of enhancing the learning experience. It is vital that *Skills for Life* teachers embrace it, understand it and learn how to use it effectively.

ACHIEVEMENT AND STANDARDS

1. How well do learners achieve?

1

1. HOW WELL DO LEARNERS ACHIEVE?

Effective practice which secures continuous improvement is evidenced by:

- success in achieving challenging targets, including qualifications and learning goals, and results over time;

- the standards of learners' work in relation to their learning goals;

- learners' progress relative to their prior attainment and potential; and

- the development of personal and learning skills.

Sources of evidence could include:

- success in achieving challenging targets, including qualifications and learning goals and results over time compared with national benchmarks where available;

- the amount and effectiveness of appropriate support offered to learners in a learning centre or classroom;

- individual learning plans (ILPs) that specifically identify learners' e-learning;

- indications of how learners' e-learning work reflects improvements in their literacy, numeracy or language skills; and

- the extent to which learners' preferred learning styles are identified and considered when choosing multimedia materials.

IN THE COMMON INSPECTION FRAMEWORK ACHIEVEMENT IS JUDGED BY THE EXTENT TO WHICH…	SUCCESS IN ADULT LITERACY, NUMERACY AND ESOL PROVISION IN THE E-LEARNING CONTEXT MEANS…
1.1 results and retention rates compare well with local and national averages.	1.1.1 learners' achievements in literacy, numeracy and language in relation to e-learning are included, isolated and compared with local and national averages in data produced by the provider.
	1.1.2 data on candidate registrations and success in the online national tests are collected, analysed and reported on regularly.

IN THE COMMON INSPECTION FRAMEWORK ACHIEVEMENT IS JUDGED BY THE EXTENT TO WHICH…	SUCCESS IN ADULT LITERACY, NUMERACY AND ESOL PROVISION IN THE E-LEARNING CONTEXT MEANS…
1.2 trends in performance over time show continuous improvement or the maintenance of very high standards.	**1.2.1** providers' records demonstrate that the number of learners achieving the literacy, numeracy, and language goals specifically through e-learning in their individual learning plans (ILPs) is growing.
	1.2.2 achievement rates and evidence of *Skills for Life* qualifications achieved online are recorded, analysed and reported on regularly and over time.
1.3 the analysis of added value indicates that learners make at least the progress expected of them.	**1.3.1** initial assessments record learners' starting points at entry and form part of the ILP.
	1.3.2 data from diagnostic and initial assessment are compared systematically with achievement measures, for example, national tests, on completion of the learners' programme.
1.4 standards are consistently high across the provider's work.	**1.4.1** achievement measures in e-learning of literacy, numeracy and ESOL are compared to the national standards.
1.5 challenging learning goals and targets are achieved.	**1.5.1** e-learning opportunities are relevant to learners' competence and are used to create challenging targets.
	1.5.2 e-learning is shown to be actively helping learners achieve the targets in the ILP.

IN THE COMMON INSPECTION FRAMEWORK ACHIEVEMENT IS JUDGED BY THE EXTENT TO WHICH LEARNERS…	SUCCESS IN ADULT LITERACY, NUMERACY AND ESOL PROVISION IN THE E-LEARNING CONTEXT MEANS LEARNERS…
1.6 make significant progress towards fulfilling their goals and potential.	**1.6.1** are tracked using electronic progress-tracking systems where appropriate.
	1.6.2 are subject to regular progress checks, for example, online self-assessments, which are recorded against the elements of the literacy, numeracy and ESOL core curricula.
	1.6.3 are offered interim certification, for example, City and Guilds Wordwise or National Open College Network (NOCN) credit certificates as part of the e-learning programme.
	1.6.4 have access to resources that can be printed out to create evidence for a portfolio, or other systems that allow them to keep a record of completed work.
1.7 are prepared for effective participation in the workplace and in the community.	**1.7.1** have opportunities to demonstrate that their achievements in ICT skills are integrated with *Skills for Life* programmes identified in the ILP.
1.8 progress to relevant further or higher education, training or employment.	**1.8.1** progress to new opportunities which enable them to use their newly acquired ICT skills as well as their literacy, numeracy or ESOL skills.
1.9 reach appropriate levels in basic and/or key skills consistent with their main programmes of study or training.	**1.9.1** develop skills in a vocational context that is relevant to their ambitions.

IN THE COMMON INSPECTION FRAMEWORK ACHIEVEMENT IS JUDGED BY THE EXTENT TO WHICH LEARNERS…	SUCCESS IN ADULT LITERACY, NUMERACY AND ESOL PROVISION IN THE E-LEARNING CONTEXT MEANS LEARNERS…
1.10 develop the skills of critical evaluation, research and analysis.	**1.10.1** have opportunities to use interactive packages that develop these skills.
	1.10.2 have access to the Internet and the opportunity to develop search and other appropriate skills.
1.11 develop the attitudes and skills necessary to maintain lifelong learning, including the capacity to work independently and collaboratively.	**1.11.1** have acquired ICT skills that will enable them to participate fully in society, including where appropriate in employment.
1.12 attend regularly and are punctual.	**1.12.1** have the assurance that, even when e-learning is undertaken on an irregular basis, systems are in place which can track progress and ensure adequate participation.
	1.12.2 have e-teachers who contact them regularly.
	1.12.3 have easy access to email.

HOW TO ACHIEVE SUCCESS

Learner achievement through e-learning is judged in the same way as other types of learning – it's just the context that might be different. When self-assessing provision, it's worth remembering that e-learning is a process, not an outcome.

There are three factors in e-learning that help measure achievement:

- individual learning plans (ILPs)
- data collection
- appropriately trained teachers.

Individual learning plans

Successful providers recognise three stages that prepare for drawing up the ILP. These are approved screening, assessment and diagnostic processes. Screening shows the likelihood that someone has a basic skills need. Initial assessment identifies the required skills and levels to

give a starting point for the ILP. Diagnostic assessment helps provide a detailed learner profile against the national standards and curriculum, and will preferably include information on preferred learning styles. The assessment is the starting point for a learning journey that will include suggestions for learning and appropriate courses aimed at giving learners confidence in their ability to improve their skills.

Assessment tools can be paper based or electronic or a mixture of both. Providers offering online assessment should obtain and adhere to the British Standard Code of Practice for the use of IT in performing assessments (BS 7988:2002).

The Ufi has been running a pilot project offering basic skills qualifications online and has concluded that candidate reaction to online assessments was generally very favourable. However, there is evidence from early pilot activity that it is essential for learners to have acquired confidence in using IT before sitting online assessments. This point needs to be addressed by centres, which need clear guidance on appropriate routes to testing in order to ensure equality of opportunity for all future learners.

An interview is often the best way of assessing and agreeing individual learner needs. The outcome of the interview is an ILP that can be updated as the learner progresses, and that provides opportunities for the learner to self-assess their progress. In the following example, Jeanette, a mum with small children, is currently unemployed. Jeanette contacted **learndirect** when she decided she wanted to improve her numeracy skills for long-term job purposes. The outcome of the interview was an ILP, learner record and diagnostic printout.

SAMPLE ILP

Learner name

Jeanette Timmins

Interview Date

5.2.03

Interviewed by

CP

Current situation

Currently unable to actively seek employment. However, children now in full-time education and would like to acquire skills in preparation for future employment.

Long-term goals

Gain employment, term-time only, in a school/college office.

Short-term goals

Identify level of numeracy skills

Remedy weaknesses

Suggested courses

Number Skills Check

Getting a Job

Word-processing

Learning

In the centre ✓   At work   At home

Employed No ✓   Self-employed   Employer name

Individual learning plan ✓

Enrolment form ✓

Benefit evidence ✗

Induction checklist ✓

Signed (learner)...

Signed (interviewer)...

SAMPLE LEARNER RECORD

Course	L/A	Start date	Expected end date	Actual end date
Getting a Job	✓	5/2/03	26/2/03	19/2/03
Word-processing	✓	4/3/03	8/4/03	
Number Skills Check	✓	10/2/03	14/2/03	14/2/03

Comments

Jeanette has progressed well and has an appointment with Liz re next steps and starting on some literacy work next.

SAMPLE DIAGNOSTIC PRINTOUT

This is the summary of your Personal Learning Plan:

	Entry Level 1	Entry Level 2	Entry Level 3	Entry Level 4	Entry Level 5
Shapes and spaces	➡	➡			
Numbers	➡	➡			
Common Measures	➡	➡	➡		
Data	➡	➡			
Calculations	➡	➡	➡	➡	
Probability	▬	▬	▬	➡	
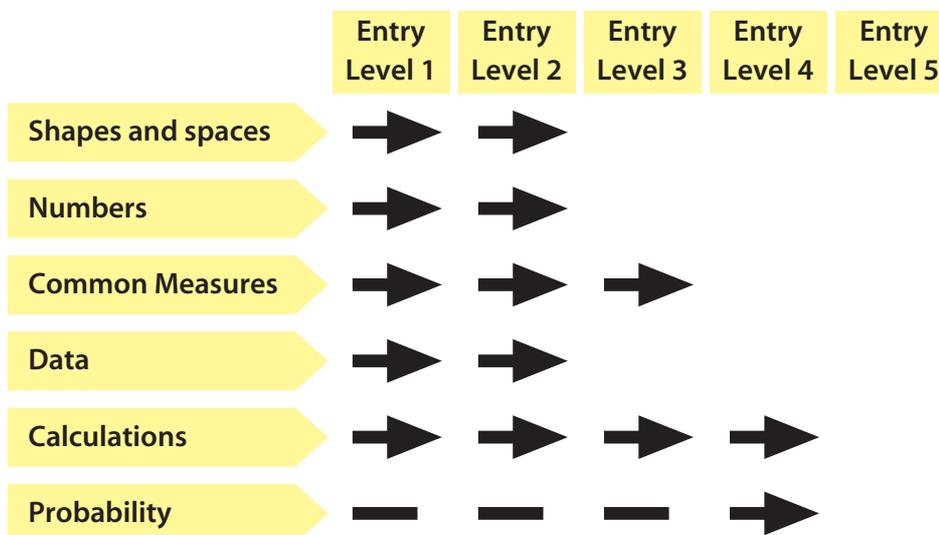
You last checked your skills on 17/2/2003.

SAMPLE DIAGNOSTIC RECORD

Shapes and spaces

You are now at: Entry Level 2

Move on, by learning about these Entry Level 3 skills:

Shapes and spaces

It is important that in drawing up the ILP, appropriate e-learning opportunities are identified. These may be through **learndirect** programmes or in blended learning situations where e-learning is part of what is happening in the classroom or resource centre.

Good ILPs in an e-learning context should:

- identify how e-learning will be used to help achieve the learner's goals and ambitions
- contain the outcomes of the screening, initial assessment and diagnostic processes
- include where possible a diagnostic assessment of the learner's preferred learning styles, linked to e-learning opportunities
- have SMART learning goals that include e-learning
- identify the skills and knowledge needed to meet these objectives, referenced to the national curricula
- identify e-learning methods and resources
- provide a timescale for review
- record achievement and progression.

learndirect has produced for inspection purposes a list of terms appropriate to the e-learning mode of delivery. The description of the term 'learning goals' is:

…learning objectives agreed with the learner at the beginning of their learning. These objectives may be credits towards (or whole) nationally recognised qualifications or targets learners wish or need to reach in order to become more employable or to meet personal learning goals. Attainment of goals may be entered into a learning log maintained by each learner which is confidential to the learner. Learners may receive a certificate recognising course completion. Records of learning goals are also kept by centre staff.

Data collection

The creation of reliable data collection systems (paper based or electronic) is vital so that information about e-learning can be collected, stored and used to measure progress, achievement and accreditation outcomes.

Some organisations such as the Ufi already have systems for collecting learner data electronically. However if an organisation is going to collect information electronically, then it must be registered with the Data Protection Act 1998. The organisation must also ensure total confidentiality of information about the learner and ensure that any system adopted is not accessible by unauthorised personnel.

Appropriately trained teachers

Effective e-learning needs teachers with appropriate training and qualifications who understand e-learning and know how to use it in a variety of contexts, such as a learning centre, a virtual learning environment, a workshop, at home or in the classroom. Such teachers have a crucial role to play in monitoring attendance and progress in what can often be a very fluid situation.

Useful advice from **learndirect** recommends that learning centre staff take learners through the following step-by-step process.

- Step 1: Induction and screening

- Step 2: Initial assessment using an online assessment tool

- Step 3: Skills check diagnostics using an online diagnostic tool

- Step 4: Individual learning plan drawn up with a teacher

- Step 5: Finding the right course

- Step 6: Revisit diagnostic and review with teacher

- Step 7: National test (possibly online) and further assessment

- Step 8: Further learning.

> **The Adult Basic Skills Strategy Unit's Regional Co-ordinators are responsible for *Skills for Life* at a regional level. They can give you specific support and advice on implementing and securing continuous improvement for literacy, numeracy and ESOL provision.**

WHAT IS SUCCESS?

Aesha

Aesha left school at 16 without any qualifications, and is keen to get back into learning so that she can acquire skills for work and get a job when her children are older. 'I knew I was struggling with reading and writing and that I needed to do something about it,' explains Aesha. 'I was finding it difficult to fill in forms, such as my Council tax form. Then I saw an advert on the telly for **learndirect** *and the next day I had a word with a friend who was already learning with* **learndirect***. Without her encouragement, I would never have gone to the centre and asked how they could help me.'*

Aesha has worked her way through three **learndirect** *courses – Word Skills Check, A Way with Words and Spelling it Out – and is really enjoying the flexibility that allows her to fit her learning in around her other commitments. 'It's great being able to come and go as I choose,' she says. 'The centre is really convenient, near where I live and where my children go to school. There's no pressure to finish things in a given time, and I can see for myself what progress I'm making.'*

Learning to use a computer has been ideal for Aesha, and has helped her feel less intimidated by learning. 'I had no idea how to use a computer before I started with **learndirect***,' she explains. 'I was scared I'd be shouted at in front of other learners, but learning with computers is nothing like being in a classroom. Now I feel so much better about learning. I can go at my own pace and set my own goals.'*

Aesha finds that the help she receives from her facilitator Emelda is just right for her. It's led her to her first qualification as well. Emelda asked Aesha if she would like to take part in a pilot for online testing. Aesha says, 'I jumped at the chance, and have done the tests in Level 1 literacy and numeracy. Believe it or not, I found the tests enjoyable, as the screens are easy to follow and the tests are multiple-choice. I passed the literacy test and I've got to do the numeracy test again. That's fine by me, as I know what I can do and what I need to work on, so I feel really good about myself.' What's next for Aesha? She is planning to do more **learndirect** *courses so she can learn Microsoft Office to help her get a job. And form-filling? 'I'm finding it so much easier now.'*

Embedding literacy, numeracy and language within a CLAIT course

Online@Wareham is a Community Learning Centre run by an independent voluntary organisation in Dorset. A course was set up to attract new and existing learners and to improve people's basic skills. The group taking the course had two tutors, a basic skills tutor and an ICT tutor, both of whom had qualifications in the other's subject area.

All learners were given an initial assessment to work out their literacy and numeracy levels and all had individual learning plans. Although the course was marketed with ICT as a hook and designed to teach people CLAIT, it was also made clear from the beginning that there would be sessions on literacy and numeracy. Learners were given tasks that combined ICT with literacy or numeracy.

One task for the learners at Entry Level 3 in numeracy combined conventional learning with e-learning. Learners were asked to investigate a subject of their choice, such as booking a holiday or buying a new hi-fi. They were asked to write down the different prices and compare them before creating a spreadsheet to demonstrate the results of this activity.

Another task linked Speaking and Communicating at Level 1 with ICT. This time, learners researched information on the Data Protection Act 1998 on the Internet. To complete the task, learners then wrote a short piece of the computer, giving the information that they felt was important. Finally, learners told a fellow learner about what they had found out.

One learner who had completed the course said, 'I have enjoyed being involved in the project at Online@Wareham. I have had help with my spelling and also long division which I could not even do at school. I have greatly improved my word-processing skills and would like to carry on learning more about computers and also to improve my spelling and maths.'

Extracts of effective practice from OFSTED and ALI inspection reports

> *'The retention rates are good. Over the past two years, retention rates have increased from 89 per cent to 93 per cent. In the current year, the proportion of learners who have completed their courses is nearly 10 per cent and 88 per cent of learners are still active. Many of the learning centres have retention rates of over 90 per cent. Good retention rates are identified as a strength in the self-assessment report.'*

> *'Targets have been set for recruitment of some under-represented groups and new learning centres have been sited in locations which are convenient to these groups. Recruitment of minority ethnic learners exceeds that of the partner colleges. Where the local population has a significant proportion of people from mainly minority ethnic groups, recruitment reflects the local population.'*

THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING

2. How effective are teaching, training and learning?

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2

2. HOW EFFECTIVE ARE TEACHING, TRAINING AND LEARNING?

Effective practice which secures continuous improvement is evidenced by:

- how well teaching and training meet individuals' needs and course or programme requirements;

- how well learners learn and make progress; and

- learners' progress relative to their prior attainment and potential.

IN THE COMMON INSPECTION FRAMEWORK ACHIEVEMENT IS JUDGED BY THE EXTENT TO WHICH TEACHERS…	SUCCESS IN ADULT LITERACY, NUMERACY AND ESOL PROVISION IN THE E-LEARNING CONTEXT MEANS TEACHERS…
2.1 show knowledge, technical competence and up-to-date expertise, at a level consistent with effective teaching, training and assessment of the course or programme.	**2.1.1** participate in training in computer literacy and receive training in the specific skills needed to use e-learning as a teaching tool, for example, in facilitating learning through ICT.
	2.1.2 support and manage the learning process with ICT when available.
	2.1.3 understand how the pedagogy of e-learning can be an integral part of the new teaching and learning infrastructure including the national standards and the core curricula.
	2.1.4 understand and apply pedagogic principles and skills appropriately to e-learning settings such as moderating, conferences and managing online groups.

IN THE COMMON INSPECTION FRAMEWORK ACHIEVEMENT IS JUDGED BY THE EXTENT TO WHICH TEACHERS…	SUCCESS IN ADULT LITERACY, NUMERACY AND ESOL PROVISION IN THE E-LEARNING CONTEXT MEANS TEACHERS…
2.2 plan effectively with clear objectives that all learners understand.	**2.2.1** ensure that the use of ICT is effectively planned across the entire learning programme so that an appropriate balance of teaching methods is created.
	2.2.2 ensure that as part of the process of assessing learners' needs and interests and developing an individual learning plan (ILP), some relevant e-learning is included in the agreed learning programme.
	2.2.3 understand the kind of specialised support needed in an e-learning situation.
	2.2.4 evaluate learners' confidence in using ICT.
2.3 use methods and styles of teaching and training that are consistent with the aims of their programmes and learners' personal objectives.	**2.3.1** know that e-learning always needs a level of support, especially for learners at Entry Levels 1 and 2, but that it has great potential as a motivational and engagement tool.
	2.3.2 ensure that e-learning is an integral part of programmes and ILPs and not a substitute for existing and well-tried forms of learning and teaching.
	2.3.3 recognise that e-learning can be a powerfully enriching experience at all levels including Pre-entry.
	2.3.4 know that blended learning, where e-learning is one component of a multi-modal approach using new and traditional methods, is often most appropriate.

IN THE COMMON INSPECTION FRAMEWORK ACHIEVEMENT IS JUDGED BY THE EXTENT TO WHICH TEACHERS…	SUCCESS IN ADULT LITERACY, NUMERACY AND ESOL PROVISION IN THE E-LEARNING CONTEXT MEANS TEACHERS…	
2.3	**2.3.5**	understand the **learndirect** approach, which puts the adult learner at the centre of the learning process and provides a range of additional support.
	2.3.6	understand that e-learners must be enabled to operate flexibly so that learning can happen at the right pace, time and location to suit the learner.
	2.3.7	ask questions online using appropriate language that will encourage the right kind of response.
	2.3.8	develop e-circles of learners for peer support.
	2.3.9	know that some learners can work autonomously and may prefer to, especially at Levels 1 and 2.
2.4 challenge and inspire learners.	**2.4.1**	use and understand the potential of e-learning opportunities to create exciting and different ways of learning.
	2.4.2	share effective practice to expand their knowledge of e-learning.
	2.4.3	show by doing and engaging with e-learning themselves.
	2.4.4	give choices and control to learners as much as possible, and understand that e-learning is a powerful resource for that.
2.5 set, use and mark assignments and other tasks in a way that helps learners to progress.	**2.5.1**	understand that assignments can be handled electronically and that portfolio evidence can be generated, stored and submitted electronically.

IN THE COMMON INSPECTION FRAMEWORK ACHIEVEMENT IS JUDGED BY THE EXTENT TO WHICH TEACHERS…	SUCCESS IN ADULT LITERACY, NUMERACY AND ESOL PROVISION IN THE E-LEARNING CONTEXT MEANS TEACHERS…
2.6 with learners, develop individual learning plans informed by initial assessment that are reviewed and updated regularly.	**2.6.1** use multimedia tools mapped to the curricula to carry out initial and diagnostic assessments that will inform the development of the ILP.
2.7 promote good working relationships that foster learning.	**2.7.1** allow e-learners to work individually and in groups and to communicate through emails, online conferences and chat rooms with a wider community of learners.
2.8 use materials and teaching methods that promote equality of opportunity.	**2.8.1** have up-to-date knowledge of, and expertise in the range of available multimedia materials.
	2.8.2 are able to select multimedia materials that meet current standards in equal opportunities and positively represent the full range of diversity in society.
	2.8.3 understand that the conversion of existing paper-based resources into effective e-learning resources requires specialist skills.

IN THE COMMON INSPECTION FRAMEWORK ACHIEVEMENT IS JUDGED BY THE EXTENT TO WHICH LEARNERS…	SUCCESS IN ADULT LITERACY, NUMERACY AND ESOL PROVISION IN THE E-LEARNING CONTEXT MEANS LEARNERS…
2.9 acquire new knowledge and skills, develop ideas and increase their understanding.	**2.9.1** have completion of a basic ICT course in their ILP to enable them to feel confident about using a computer.
	2.9.2 are aware of the importance of developing ICT skills as part of their literacy, numeracy and ESOL learning.
	2.9.3 are aware that ICT skills will bring them wider access to information, opportunities and greater participation, for example, in civic life through e-polling.
2.10 understand and are confident in what they are doing, how well they are progressing and what they need to do to improve.	**2.10.1** will have the effectiveness of their e-learning measured in order to identify further progression opportunities.
	2.10.2 are fully engaged with progress reviews and the consideration of progression opportunities.
2.11 apply effort to succeed with their work, work productively and make effective use of their time.	**2.11.1** are allowed to exploit the flexibility that e-learning brings to the learning context so they can learn in their own time and at a pace that suits them where appropriate.
2.12 are stimulated and show interest in their work.	**2.12.1** have e-learning included in their programmes in a way that increases their motivation and adds variety to the learning process.

E-learners in a Learning Centre work in a group setting.

HOW TO ACHIEVE SUCCESS

Teachers need to have the expertise to include e-learning as part of their practice 'blend' in teaching literacy, numeracy and ESOL. This means that they should be able to plan, teach and assess programmes of literacy, numeracy and ESOL support with learners in relation to e-learning.

The effectiveness of the use of e-learning will be assessed by the extent to which teachers use methods and materials that are up to date and relevant for learners and which motivate and encourage them to develop their literacy, numeracy and language skills through this medium. It's not just about materials on computers. For example, learners can be encouraged to participate and be creative with ICT by:

- developing websites with themselves as publisher

- using tools such as slideshow, word-processing and spreadsheets as part of learning

- using text messaging as a medium

- using online conference boards and chat rooms.

The effectiveness of teaching, training and learning will also be measured by the amount of confidence learners are gaining in the use of e-learning and whether they understand the significance and relevance of the support they are receiving.

Although a number of *Skills for Life* teacher training courses which meet the FENTO standards for Teaching and Supporting Learning are offered, there is nothing available at the time of writing that includes ICT and e-learning.

It is not only *Skills for Life* teachers who will be involved in the successful use of e-learning to teach literacy, numeracy and ESOL, but also ICT practitioners, learning resources staff, learner support staff and vocational teachers.

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E-learning can take place in almost any setting.

The following points are examples of ways in which e-learning can be shown to have a positive effect on teaching, training and learning:

- specialist training for staff to show teachers how to facilitate e-learning

- dissemination events to share effective practice in e-learning

- visits to Centres of Excellence that have achieved success in this area of learning, including **learndirect** centres

- sharing e-learning resources and ideas

- programmes of support for embedding e-learning into all learning programmes

- learner chat rooms and email groups that link with other organisations to encourage the wider use of ICT

- the use of electronic systems to record learners' ILPs and progress

- making qualifications that include elements of e-learning available and accessible for staff as part of their continuing professional development

- teachers themselves using ICT to share effective practice and exchange ideas to provide a good model for learners

- training programmes based on existing effective practice in e-learning.

Online teacher training

learndirect's Basic Skills Online (BSOL) course was offered to staff in its centres as a professional development opportunity for members of staff involved in supporting basic skills learners. The course was designed to deliver key information about delivering the *Skills for Life* strategy and to give a nationally dispersed group of teachers the opportunity to create an online professional community in which to reflect on, share, discuss and build their mutual resource of experience in teaching *Skills for Life*. Learning materials were delivered in eight mandatory modules and a choice of two optional modules. The duration of the course was 10 weeks, but completion was staggered over eight months.

Each module addressed a specific aspect of teaching literacy, numeracy and ESOL in accordance with the *Skills for Life* strategy. Discussion and support was facilitated using the **learndirect** staff development discussion board or email. **learndirect** also provided technical support. Groups of between 10 and 22 tutees were assigned to teachers. Each group was given its own structured conference area as well as access to a general area for all groups in order to share and reinforce their learning through group reflection.

This model is particularly useful in the **learndirect** context as staff across a national network of learning centres work to different part-time, full-time or flexible patterns, with evening and weekend work being common. There is often no physical interaction between centres and little opportunity for staff to discuss issues with staff at other centres or even their own centre. As with any professional environment, staff are pressured for time and they benefited greatly from the flexibility that online learning gave them.

Informal group mentoring was used, with the group teacher performing the roles of both facilitator and mentor. Mentees were able to benefit from both group and individual advice, support and guidance. Mentoring was done publicly on the discussion board and chat rooms or privately by email.

learndirect's BSOL was a non-accredited professional development course. The assessment method required each tutee to post a short assignment to the conference area in response to an activity or case study in each module. The content of the case study or activity varied considerably, but specific instructions were posted in the introductory message of each module.

Tutees had the opportunity to comment on or respond to other tutees' postings, but each assessed posting had to be the tutee's own work.

Learners with disabilities

The JISC Techdisk service aims to improve provision for disabled staff and learners in higher and further education through the use of ICT. Under the staff development section, there is a simple 'wizard tool' to create a User Style Sheet. These can be very useful for learners with visual impairments, scoptic sensitivity or visual processing difficulties, including some forms of dyslexia. There is also an extensive database of technologies which can be searched by disability or by equipment such as screen readers. The website can be found at www.techdisk.ac.uk.

It is important to explore options for accessibility in the context of learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Some degree of accessibility, such as 'Sticky Keys' which enable users to press single keys instead of combinations, or features that replace sound warnings with visual warnings, is built into most PCs. Different operating systems will have slightly different features, but most PCs contain accessibility features in the control panel or equivalent.
The FERL website has a 'How To' help sheet about accessibility at
www.ferl.org.uk/display.cfm?resID=1425%20.

Lesson planning

Lesson plans should integrate e-learning within a context that is relevant for learners, as in the sample lesson outline, plan and handouts given below that were used in a session with a group of ESOL learners that looked at using the Internet and email.

SAMPLE LESSON OUTLINE

Date
Thursday, 6 March 2003
Time
3pm – 5pm
Duration
2 hours
Room
Adult Learners' Centre – Open Learning
Course
PGCE/Cert Ed
Subject
ESOL IT
No. of learners
15
Topic
Internet Review Search Engine
Email Review
cc: Review
Lesson aims
This lesson will reinforce Internet Search Engine function, sending and receiving an email, and replying to an email.
Specific learning outcomes
Learners will be able to:
• search for a topic of interest using the Yahoo! Internet search engine
• use the copy and paste function to transfer the topic from the Internet to email
• use email to inform another learner (email pen pal)
• copy the teacher in on their work via email (using the cc: function).

Previous knowledge assumed

Basic use of Word, search engines, sending and receiving email and email copy function.

Materials and equipment required

Handouts, register, hat, learner email addresses, PCs.

Assessment method

Circulate, monitor their work, check completion of work via my own email.

Homework

None.

Notes on differentiation and equal opportunities

- use basic language to communicate

- demonstrate all activities first to reinforce understanding

- support individuals as required

- pair stronger with weaker learners

- the assistant will give additional support in problem-solving IT technical glitches

- the assistant will help in the demonstrations to allow all learners to view comfortably and to provide additional learner support.

SAMPLE LESSON PLAN

Time or stage	Subject matter or content	Activity: teacher	Activity: learners	Resources, notes and differentiation
5 min	Take register.	Register. Use roll call to confirm learners' email addresses. Put names/email address slips in a hat as learners are called off. This will create some curiosity and anticipation as they have used this technique in the past to pick an email pen pal for the lesson.	Respond.	Register, hat.

Activity 1

Time or stage	Subject matter or content	Activity: teacher	Activity: learners	Resources, notes and differentiation
20 min	Giving instructions and demonstrating.	Ask learners to form a circle. Distribute handout for Activity 1.	Observe, ask questions, follow handout as required.	Handout for Activity 1: step-by-step instructions on how to access Internet.
	Engaging learners.	Ask learners to write the name of their hobby on the handout.	Write topic of interest they want to explore on the Internet.	Handout for Activity 1.
	Demonstration.	Demonstrate how to open and use the Yahoo! search engine to explore a topic of interest to them.	Observe demonstration on PC.	

Time or stage	Subject matter or content	Activity: teacher	Activity: learners	Resources, notes and differentiation
	Check understanding.	Prompt and answer questions.	Ask questions.	
45 min	Practical session of supported learning.	Circulate and support.	Follow handout for Activity 1 to open Internet and use Yahoo!	Handout for Activity 1.
Activity 2				
5 min	Gathering materials.	Ask learners to choose an email pen pal from the selection put in the hat when the register was called.	Select an Internet email pal at random from the hat.	Email names and addresses, hat.
5 min	Giving instructions.	Hand out instructions for Activity 2.		Handout for Activity 2: step-by-step instructions for copy and paste between Internet Explorer and email.
5 min	Demonstration.	Demonstrate copy and paste between Internet and email.	Observe, ask questions, follow using handout for Activity 2.	Handout for Activity 2.
5 min	Demonstration.	Demonstrate opening email, typing in email pen pal's address in the To: box.	Observe, ask questions, follow using handout for Activity 2.	Handout for Activity 2.

Time or stage	Subject matter or content	Activity: teacher	Activity: learners	Resources, notes and differentiation
5 min	Using cc: in email.	Ask learners to copy me in on cc: box so that I can review their work.	Observe, ask questions, follow using handout for Activity 2.	Handout for Activity 2.
5 min	Copy and paste.	Ask learners to paste their hobby into the email.	Observe, ask questions. Copy and paste.	
5 min	Send emails.	Get learners to send the email.	Observe, ask questions.	
1 hr 25 min	Practical session of supported learning.	Circulate classroom and offer support.	Activity 1 and Activity 2.	Handouts for Activity 1 and Activity 2.
	Differentiation.	Ask learners who complete quickly to open and reply to emails received.	Learners open, read and reply to received emails.	
	Differentiation.	Ask other learners to repeat Activity 1 and Activity 2 using a different hobby and a classmate's email address.	Learners repeat Activity 1 and Activity 2 with their neighbour.	

SAMPLE HANDOUT FOR ACTIVITY 1

Opening the Internet

- take your mouse
- move to the Internet shortcut on your desktop (screen)
- double-click on the shortcut
- when the window is open, move your pointer to the Address space
- copy the following address http://www.yahoo.co.uk
- click on Enter.

Searching

- what is your hobby? Write it here:...............................
- type your hobby in the Search space
- click on Search
- choose a web page from the hits
- if you don't like it, choose Back to find another.

SAMPLE HANDOUT FOR ACTIVITY 2

Copying from the Internet to email

- to select text, take your mouse, left-click and hold and drag your mouse over the Internet text you want
- when you have selected the text, remove your finger from the left-click of the mouse
- go to Edit
- choose Copy
- choose Back until you get back to the Yahoo! web page.

Opening your email from the Internet

- take your mouse
- click on the Mail icon
- type in your Yahoo ID (yourname@Yahoo.co.uk)
- type in your password
- press Enter.

To send a new email

- choose the Compose button

- type in your email pen pal's address in the To: box

- in the Subject: box, type your hobby name

- in the cc: box, type in your teacher's email address.

To paste text from the Internet into email

- click your mouse into the text area of your email

- choose Edit

- choose Paste.

The text that you copied from the Internet should now be in the email. To send this to your email pen pal, press the Send button.

Resources

The Basic Skills Agency recently launched a new online resource, the Basic Skills Observatory (at www.basic-skills-observatory.co.uk). This is an online resource for teachers and basic skills practitioners with information on policy, effective practice and research on literacy, numeracy and language across all phases and sectors from early years to post-16. The Basic Skills Observatory brings together for the first time an overview of information about basic skills in one place.

Email discussion lists

Email discussion lists can be a good way to keep up to date with new resources, events or jobs. You can also ask questions and get help from other practitioners. Email can help overcome some of the isolation you might feel if you work part time or if you work in a small department. Well-managed mailing lists allow you to sign off when you choose, or suspend your mail if you are away, and they are looked after by facilitators who ensure that the discussion stays focused and constructive. Details of two useful examples from JISCmail and the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE) are given below.

The email discussion group run by JISCmail looks after a large number of discussion lists for the UK post-16 educational community. The list is an excellent forum for discussion and news for those involved with basic skills work with adults. To subscribe, go to www.jiscmail.ac.uk/lists/basic-skills.html and click on the link to 'Join the list' and fill in the form. Once you have sent the form, you will receive an email that you have to open in order to be added to the list.

NIACE maintains a list which is available from the NIACE website at www.niace.org.uk. To subscribe, follow the links for email discussion groups and fill in and send the form.

The *Skills for Life* professional development programme for staff across all sectors is to be announced shortly by the Learning and Skills Council. The programme will provide core curricula and specialist training for all staff engaged in teaching adult literacy, numeracy and ESOL, including those who work with learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Training at Level 3 for vocational specialists will also be provided. The programme leads staff to take relevant qualifications. Further information on the new qualifications framework for teachers of literacy, numeracy and ESOL can be found in *A guide to the Skills for Life Teaching Qualifications* framework available through www.dfes.gov.uk/read-writeplus.

WHAT IS SUCCESS?

Those learning centres that share best practice with others in their Hub, regionally or nationally, say that building a network of good ideas and sharing them with others leads to vast improvements in staff motivation and morale and brings improved practice on the ground.

learndirect *Skills for Life Handbook*

Widening participation

One college in Dorset has developed a course called Teaching Literacy through IT. It was developed to enlist potential learners who might not otherwise join basic skills classes. The course had 10 sessions and each session had a theme that combined literacy and IT skills. For example, context reading, spelling and vocabulary were taught alongside word-processing skills. The course was accredited in 1999 and 124 learners achieved the qualification.

Following on from the course, there is now a newspaper group. The group produces a termly newspaper called Return to Learn for which learners use the IT and literacy skills they have gained. Learners also often progress to other basic skills and IT courses. The evaluation of the course showed that learners like the fact that they can say to friends that they are doing a computer course rather than a literacy course.

Teacher training

A consortium of 22 colleges provided training for basic skills teachers in IT skills. The course is called Online for the Future. The aim of the course is to help teachers use IT to enhance and extend their teaching skills. An electronic discussion board is an integral part of the course and all of the tasks involve a discussion element where participants are expected to exchange and share ideas and experiences. In particular, they are encouraged to explore and reflect on the practicalities of how these ideas could be implemented in their own teaching environment. Course outcomes include the establishment of a web forum for practitioners to exchange ideas and best practice, the creation of a web discussion board for basic skills learners and the development of electronic worksheets and other ICT learning resources. Information on the course is at www.baselineuk.com.

Alice

*Alice was a very motivated and successful tutee on **learndirect**'s Basic Skills Online (BSOL) course, and she participated in all the discussions and online chat activities. She contributed enthusiastically to the conferences and organised online chats for her group. Before the course started, Alice wrote, 'I started teaching in a large mixed grammar school in Belfast where I taught for 13 years before taking a break to have children. I came into basic skills when I started teaching on a part-time basis in the Prison Service Education and Training Branch. Now I am involved in setting up an interface between an education centre and the Army Learning Centre/learndirect as we are keen to make greater use of IT in the classroom. I am looking forward very much to this course, which I am certain will greatly enhance my knowledge of ICT in Skills for Life learning.'*

After the course Alice wrote, 'Although I've been extremely strapped for time, and sometimes wished I'd never started the course, I must admit that I have enjoyed it as a learning experience. It focused my thinking and made me look at things, and you have been an example to me of online tutoring – something I am going to have to get involved with in the very near future. Thanks for your patience and encouragement.'

Extracts of effective practice from OFSTED and ALI inspection reports

> *'Staff are helpful, friendly and enthusiastic and provide excellent individual support for learners. Staff are responsive to the learners' needs, they are encouraging and supportive and help learners to progress to more complex and challenging courses.'*

> *'Staff changeovers are planned to minimise the impact on learners and to ensure the high level of support is maintained. Learners are encouraged to work on one course at a time. They are encouraged by staff to take additional courses to broaden their skills or to progress to more advanced courses when appropriate. Learners are very enthusiastic and well motivated, and many comment on their increased confidence.'*

> *'There is good support for learners when they attend learning centres. Staff are enthusiastic and offer good encouragement. Learners appreciate the effective individual support they receive and many attribute their successes to the help and encouragement that their tutors give. When learners are working away from learning centres, staff contact them regularly each month to check on their progress. Most learners can effectively communicate with staff by email or telephone as well as in person if they need help with their courses. Staff respond very quickly to learners' requests and give as much assistance as possible. The regular contact is identified as a strength in the self-assessment report.'*

THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING

3. How are achievement and learning affected
   by resources?

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3

3. HOW ARE ACHIEVEMENT AND LEARNING AFFECTED BY RESOURCES?

Effective practice which secures continuous improvement is evidenced by:

- the adequacy and suitability of staff; and

- the adequacy, suitability and use of specialist equipment, learning resources and accommodation.

Sources of evidence could include:

- learning presented in a variety of ways to accommodate different learning styles;

- a clear strategy to achieve learning that allows opportunities for learner activity, reflection, reinforcement and self-assessment;

- clear learning outcomes;

- where appropriate, pre-testing and post-testing in relation to the learning outcomes;

- user-centred provision;

- materials that produce lots of interactivity;

- materials that are easy to use and navigate;

- materials that are relevant to adult life and work;

- activities and materials offered in small chunks or modules;

- instructions provided in a variety of formats, for example, oral instructions as well as written ones;

- materials that are matched to the literacy, numeracy and ESOL national standards and curricula;

- constructive user feedback;

- appropriate help facilities;

- comprehensive teacher notes;

- clear and effective learner support strategies;

- arrangements to encourage peer dialogue where appropriate;

- signposts for further learning opportunities; and

- access to information about opportunities for assessment.

IN THE COMMON INSPECTION FRAMEWORK ACHIEVEMENT AND LEARNING ARE JUDGED BY THE EXTENT TO WHICH…	SUCCESS IN ADULT LITERACY, NUMERACY AND ESOL PROVISION IN THE E-LEARNING CONTEXT MEANS…
3.1 there are enough qualified and experienced teaching, training and support staff to match the demands of programmes and the range of learners.	**3.1.1** teachers have relevant and nationally recognised specialist qualifications in the teaching of literacy, numeracy or ESOL at, or above, national standards.
	3.1.2 teachers have an appropriate qualification in online tutoring, mentoring or supporting e-learning.
	3.1.3 e-learning is included in the range of teaching methods used and takes place in a range of appropriate settings.
	3.1.4 teachers are skilled in supporting learners who have difficulties with ICT or who are technophobic.
	3.1.5 support staff have relevant and nationally recognised qualifications in e-learning and are aware of the range of teaching methods used.
3.2 the professional development of staff contributes to their effectiveness.	**3.2.1** teachers attend training and updating sessions about the use of e-learning and how to include it in programmes of learning.
	3.2.2 virtual support communities are available for teachers and include online forums and message boards to share effective practice.
	3.2.3 training in e-learning support is provided for support staff.
	3.2.4 teachers and support staff develop their own ICT skills.

IN THE COMMON INSPECTION FRAMEWORK ACHIEVEMENT AND LEARNING ARE JUDGED BY THE EXTENT TO WHICH TEACHERS…	SUCCESS IN ADULT LITERACY, NUMERACY AND ESOL PROVISION IN THE E-LEARNING CONTEXT MEANS…
3.3 specialist equipment and materials are used, including facilities which are relevant to the workplace and meet current industrial standards.	**3.3.1** learners have access to up-to-date computers and other technologies in college, community and work settings. **3.3.2** multimedia materials are mapped to the new national standards and core curricula. **3.3.3** multimedia materials are fit for purpose.
3.4 accommodation provides a suitable setting for good teaching, training and learning and support for learners.	**3.4.1** comfortable, safe machines are available for learners to use. **3.4.2** health and safety rules relevant to a computer-based environment are observed. **3.4.3** providers agree a minimum standard of facilities for learners that covers access to workstations, VDUs, bandwidth and so on.
3.5 learners have access to learning resources that are appropriate for effective independent study.	**3.5.1** learners are aware of where they can use computers for their learning, for example, UK Online centres, **learndirect** centres, college-based learning centres, community-based resource centres, libraries and at work. **3.5.2** learners can access some or all of their e-learning at any time that computers are available, for example, any time the college or institution is open, including non-scheduled times.

IN THE COMMON INSPECTION FRAMEWORK ACHIEVEMENT AND LEARNING ARE JUDGED BY THE EXTENT TO WHICH…	SUCCESS IN ADULT LITERACY, NUMERACY AND ESOL PROVISION IN THE E-LEARNING CONTEXT MEANS…
3.6 learners work in a safe and healthy environment.	**3.6.1** access to workstations and computers is safe and equipment is regularly tested.
	3.6.2 venues for e-learning are inclusive and accessible.
3.7 resources are used to best effect in promoting learning.	**3.7.1** good-quality, approved e-learning resources and teacher guides are used and these are closely mapped to the new national standards and core curricula.
	3.7.2 multimedia packages are easy to navigate.
	3.7.3 tried and tested websites are used.
	3.7.4 resources are pedagogically sound and have clearly defined learning outcomes.
3.8 learning resources and accommodation allow all learners to participate fully.	**3.8.1** wherever possible, the multimedia resources and websites used are accessible to learners who have sensory or physical difficulties and/or disabilities and they can be adapted to different needs.
	3.8.2 staff understand the needs of learners who have sensory or physical difficulties and/or disabilities.
	3.8.3 staff understand how age, gender, race and religion may affect learners' attitudes to e-learning.

HOW TO ACHIEVE SUCCESS

Staff qualifications and training

The new qualifications framework and subject specifications for literacy, numeracy and ESOL teachers must form the basis of all future qualifications gained by specialist subject teachers involved in e-learning provision. All volunteers and support workers should undertake recognised initial training in supporting literacy, numeracy and ESOL development. These staff must be of high calibre, be skilfully deployed and well supervised to ensure that learners

receive the help that they need. Vocational teachers should undertake literacy, numeracy and ESOL training courses wherever possible leading to national accreditation.

E-learning can be effective with *Skills for Life* learners. But this is only if there are qualified staff who understand its role and who can use it effectively as part of the learning process. Just as a teacher in a more traditional role must use good resources, the same applies to e-learning contexts. Colleges and organisations need to do the following to ensure success:

- organise e-learning training sessions for staff on the benefits of using e-learning in the classroom

- organise e-learning training sessions to look at how learners learn from e-learning

- encourage staff to attend events looking at the pedagogy of e-learning

- work out a system so the different kinds of support needed can be identified and established, for example, online and face-to-face

- set up awareness sessions about **learndirect** (contact your nearest Ufi regional office – a list is available at www.ufi.com)

- carry out task-based reviews of relevant materials to check the level of support that is integrated into materials

- plot and review the evidence of learning outcomes

- create electronic forums where teachers can exchange ideas and best practice

- provide a range of ICT tools for teachers and learners to use in addition to computers

- show staff how to adapt computer screens and keyboards for people with disabilities.

E-learning resources

Listed below are some examples of effective e-learning resources. A webography is also available at the end of this Guide with a more extensive list of resources.

learndirect

learndirect has developed a wide range of multimedia resources for use by *Skills for Life* learners in its network of learning centres. The resources are all matched to the new curricula and are accompanied by comprehensive teacher guides.

A good example of one of these packages is Cash Crescent, which aims to develop the numeracy and literacy skills needed for managing personal finances. It has been developed using both the national standards for literacy and numeracy and the new adult financial capability framework. The teacher's notes for the package have a full breakdown of the learning outcomes covered by the package.

Instructions for activities are usually given in audio with a replay facility, as learners may wish to hear instructions several times. On-screen text is, as far as possible, appropriate to the level at which the learner is currently working. Cash Crescent should take about 15 hours to complete. Each module can be visited separately and the learner's progress through the modules is logged. A visual update on their progress through each section is available at all times.

At regular intervals in each module, the learner is invited through audio and visual prompts to do more practice. When the on-screen button is pressed, the learner is taken to a text-only screen. The learner can either copy six further examples or print them off. The expectation is that the learner will work on the examples using pencil and paper and keep the finished work in their portfolio.

Ufi

Ufi has made significant progress in developing standards for staff working to support learners within the **learndirect** network. These standards will form the basis of a suite of qualifications that Ufi is developing with City and Guilds.

BBC Skillswise

The BBC Skillswise site at www.bbc.co.uk/skillswise/ was launched in early 2002 and is an excellent resource for both teachers and learners. It is primarily aimed at learners working just below Level 1 in the literacy and numeracy curricula. There are areas for learners on numbers and words, including quizzes and games, which you could use with learners in the classroom, as a group or individually. The site is growing all the time in response to teachers' feedback and includes:

- an extensive Teachers' Area that aims to offer 'inspiration from other BBC websites and from other sites on the worldwide web', from soaps to the weather

- a message board that allows teachers to exchange ideas and help each other, whether it's to find good resources or get tips on teaching. You can register (free) to take part in the discussion, or if you prefer you can start off by 'eavesdropping' on the list, just reading the messages others send

- an On TV section includes a range of quizzes, fact sheets, worksheets, video clips and activities such as crosswords, all linked to popular BBC TV programmes. To use the video clips you may need to download some free software onto your computer. Instructions for this are given on the site, but you may need to contact your local IT staff for advice

- occasional live chat sessions. These are a cross between email and a radio phone-in and they allow learners to send questions to celebrities online. The replies come up live on the computer screen. This can be a good way to extend learners' literacy skills in a motivating context

- a free *Skillswise* magazine for learners – you can order copies online

- a weekly *Skillswise* newsletter that keeps you up to date with new additions to the site and other tips. Signing up is simple – go to the Skillswise site, select the Teachers' Area and you'll find a space to enter your email address to join the *Skillswise* mailing list.

The main BBC site at www.bbc.co.uk also offers useful resources such as news items for literacy or weather reports for numeracy. E-cards are fun to create and receive, and the BBC has free ones at www.bbc.co.uk/e-cards. Examples include cards showing Dr Who and characters from Fawlty Towers.

LETTOL

The Learning to Teach Online (LETTOL) course provides accredited training and awareness-raising for teachers who will be supporting learners online and developing courses online. The objective of LETTOL is to enable potential online teachers to experience a course where there is a substantial overlap between the medium of the course (online distance learning) and its content (how to teach, manage, design and evaluate materials and activities for online use).

A multimedia approach to Language Experience

This technique to use multimedia facilities for learning literacy and language skills was developed by Read Write Click! teacher Ruth Simons and featured in the March 2002 edition of *Basic Skills Magazine* with instructions on how to carry out the activity.

> *Language Experience for beginner reading has been an acknowledged valuable tool for basic skills tutors for many years. Its enduring usefulness is evidenced by its inclusion in the new adult literacy core curriculum for use in sentence focus work in reading at Entry Level 1. Advances in multimedia technology mean we can improve upon the original card and scissors approach to Language Experience in ways that the original users of the technique could never have envisaged.*
>
> Ruth Simons, Read Write Click! teacher

A major benefit of the Language Experience technique is the way it puts a learner's own words into the context of their own life experience. This benefit can be enhanced by making the context even more relevant and interesting by adding the learner's own photographs, pictures, sounds, even their own voice, to the text. The presentation of the written word becomes much more 'attention-grabbing' and the whole activity becomes much more exciting to the learner. The multimedia facilities of current PCs enable us to do this with stunning results.

Tutoring practice

The Continuing Professional Development Department at the City University in London offers a Certificate and a Postgraduate Diploma in online learning which have been developed in

conjunction with the London Central North **learndirect** Hub. Online tutoring practice for both courses is provided with **learndirect** ICT and *Skills for Life* learners.

Computer Assisted Language Learning

Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) takes different forms. A programme can be devised to teach basic computing skills (for instance, using Microsoft Word) while developing learners' language skills. Much of the original CALL, before most colleges were set up to allow learners unlimited access to the Internet, took this approach.

There are also cases where learners can use specific language learning software. Most of this was designed for the global English as a Foreign Language (EFL) market, which also has a long tradition of CALL. The best language learning software can be authored, which means that teachers can design their own tasks using the language they are currently working on with learners.

The worldwide web is an amazing resource for language learning. Again, many of the English language learning resources were originally designed for the EFL market but, with careful selection by teachers, there is plenty there to suit all needs. There are interactive resources that enable learners to work on exercises and to check and correct their own work, bilingual dictionaries and exercises, games, listening exercises, chat rooms, newspapers – the list is endless. Additionally, teachers can plan research tasks and classroom work based on web resources or even arrange 'key pals' for their learners by linking up with language learners in other countries. A search for 'ESOL' will produce thousands of sites, but good starting points for ESOL teachers are the BECTA site (www.becta.org.uk/inclusion/inclusion_lang/esol) and the BBC's English Zone and the World Service English language site (follow the links from www.bbc.co.uk).

ESOL learners usually enjoy CALL and appreciate the chance to develop their language skills using computers. Teachers interested in the theory behind CALL might like to start by following up some of the links on Mark Warschauer's website at www.gse.uci.edu/markw.

> The Learning and Skills Council is in the process of updating its guidance, *Adult Literacy, Numeracy and ESOL: A Guide to Learning and Skills Council Funding 2002/03*. It is expected to be ready for publication in June 2003.

WHAT IS SUCCESS?

Read Write Click!

A basic skills unit at a local authority adult education service offers a bi-weekly course for literacy and IT learners at Entry Levels 1 and 2, using its community school as the venue. Read Write Click! is taught by a teacher with the help of one volunteer and offers intensive ICT-based learning for up to eight learners.

Each learner is working towards two nationally recognised qualifications: an NOCN Certificate in Adult Literacy (Entry Level) and a Chiltern Region Open College Network (OCN) Certificate in Introduction to Computing (Entry Level). After an individual initial interview and assessment, learners come to Read Write Click! sessions on a regular basis and continue to attend for as long as they need. The on-site crèche attracts local mums, many of whom have older children at the school too.

Most sessions contain whole-class teaching and groupwork for teaching underpinning skills and knowledge. Each learner also works individually to practise these skills and develop their knowledge at their own level and pace using ICT equipment. Group sessions are usually delivered verbally, with the class sitting together, maybe working on an activity, around a table in the middle of the room. Frequent use is made of multimedia PowerPoint presentations and tutorials, which are given using an LCD projector.

Individual or pairwork is done at the table or on the bank of computers sited around the edge of the room. Frequently, this comprises activities or worksheets to complete using Microsoft Word, spelling games using Starspell, or CD-based activities with dedicated basic skills software. Software packages that are common in home computing are very popular – Print Artist is a particular favourite for making greetings cards, signs and banners, and a home shopping CD catalogue from Asda proved very popular. With Entry Level 1 learners, much use is made of multimedia Language Experience activities (see page 48). The favourite ICT learning resource by far was the BBC's Becoming Webwise. Learners particularly enjoyed the football game to learn mouse control!

Each learner stores the work on floppy disk and has an individual learning plan and learner diary in which to record his or her progress. Every learner has a progress review and records achievements and new goals at least once a term. Once accreditation has been achieved, the learner is offered a choice of progression routes – into open learning, other basic skills classes or other ICT classes, for example. The only problem is that most of them don't want to go!

The NIACE Laptop Initiative

In March 1999, the Basic Skills Agency (BSA) and the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE) undertook the management of a project to loan 1,500 laptop computers and associated equipment to local education services and voluntary and community organisations.

The intention of the initiative was to provide organisations with modern computer equipment that could contribute to widening participation, including learning in basic skills. Many of the organisations taking part found that the laptops provided an added incentive for attracting and retaining basic skills learners. Learners became familiar with learning again through the use of laptops, which they perceived as non-threatening. By the time basic skills sessions were suggested, the learners themselves were aware of how poor literacy and numeracy skills had prevented them from fully accessing the work they had been doing previously. In a number of cases, teachers said that the learners themselves initiated the need for basic skills learning because they were unable to make full use of ICT.

The organisation involved in the initiative experimented with different delivery models with the support of ICT. One-to-one work with learners was the model adopted most frequently. About half the organisations used short courses, a successful model that encouraged progression to other basic skills and ICT courses. Because individuals were able to upskill themselves in ICT and literacy and numeracy, they changed their view of their own position in society. Many began to use their new skills to support community activities and their families and friends.

The laptop initiative also had a very important influence on staff. The initiative built capacity within each organisation as well as within the community it served. The emphasis placed by the initiative on organisational support and staff development was key. Without a commitment to monitoring, support staff would have worked very much in isolation and would not have had the opportunity to share and learn from each other. In most cases it was the staff who motivated the community to take part and helped to identify and meet individual needs.

Extracts of effective practice from OFSTED and ALI inspection reports

'Learners value the flexibility of the provision which allows them to progress at their own pace and to cope with domestic or employment situations.'

'Most learning centres are attractive, quiet and welcoming environments which are easily accessible, especially for those with mobility problems.'

'The Hub promotes inclusion. It has an increasingly diverse and expanding range of learning centres across the country, offering differing learning environments. Long opening hours help attendance and most learning centres have good access, facilities and equipment for learners with disabilities.'

'Tutors are aware of the needs of learners and support them throughout their courses. Learners are given good information about suitable courses and are told how they will develop their skills and knowledge if they join **learndirect**. *Tutors are well aware of the importance of dealing sensitively with basic skills needs, to avoid causing embarrassment to learners. They regularly monitor learners' progress when they are in learning centres and ensure that their learning logs are updated to reflect their progress.'*

'When learners are working from home or from their workplace, tutors make contact with them every four weeks, or more frequently, using the telephone and emails. The Hub target is every three weeks.'

THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING

4. How effective are the assessment and monitoring
   of learners' progress?

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4

4. HOW EFFECTIVE ARE THE ASSESSMENT AND MONITORING OF LEARNERS' PROGRESS?

Effective practice which secures continuous improvement is evidenced by:

- the suitability and rigour of assessment; and

- the uses of assessment in planning learning and monitoring learners' progress.

IN THE COMMON INSPECTION FRAMEWORK ACHIEVEMENT AND PROGRESS ARE JUDGED BY THE EXTENT TO WHICH…	SUCCESS IN ADULT LITERACY, NUMERACY AND ESOL PROVISION IN THE E-LEARNING CONTEXT MEANS…
4.1 forms of assessment and recording are suitable for the courses and programmes being followed.	**4.1.1** learners demonstrate progress in e-learning in line with the national standards, core curricula and individual learning goals matched to their different abilities and needs.
	4.1.2 learners are offered a range of e-assessments that:
	• map current skills, learning needs and achievements to the national *Skills for Life* curricula.
	• use multimedia to address their preferred learning style, for example, audio, visual.
	• require a level of ICT skill concomitant with the learner's ability.
4.2 assessment is fair, accurate and carried out regularly.	**4.2.1** learners are offered regular reviews of progress toward specific objectives and goals by using e-assessments at agreed intervals and ensuring new results are dated and recorded separately from previous e-assessments.
	4.2.2 learners have detailed relevant and specific individual learning objectives and goals recorded on an online individual learning plan (ILP), a disk-based ILP or on paper, stored securely and accessible to both learner and

IN THE COMMON INSPECTION FRAMEWORK ACHIEVEMENT AND PROGRESS ARE JUDGED BY THE EXTENT TO WHICH…	SUCCESS IN ADULT LITERACY, NUMERACY AND ESOL PROVISION IN THE E-LEARNING CONTEXT MEANS…
4.3 initial assessment provides an accurate basis on which to plan an appropriate programme of work.	**4.3.1** learners experience accurate assessment of their learning needs using online or computer-based screening and initial assessment tools that comprehensively identify and record their skills and learning needs accurately, reliably and securely.
	4.3.2 learners have their prior literacy, numeracy, ESOL and ICT skills, knowledge, experience and aspirations identified and used in the development of their ILPs.
4.4 assessment is used to monitor progress and inform individual learners about how they are performing and how they might develop further.	**4.4.1** learners experience both formal and informal e-assessments that are made integral to the e-learning process, and which help them to know and understand what they have learnt.
	4.4.2 learners participate in the e-assessment process and are encouraged to respond to changing learning objectives and goals.
	4.4.3 learners understand the progress they are making through regular interim e-assessments, evaluations of learning gains, and clear verbal, written or electronic feedback.
	4.4.4 learners have their progress recorded in paper or electronic format and receive clear and constructive feedback to enable them to prioritise and take responsibility for further learning.

IN THE COMMON INSPECTION FRAMEWORK ACHIEVEMENT AND PROGRESS ARE JUDGED BY THE EXTENT TO WHICH…	SUCCESS IN ADULT LITERACY, NUMERACY AND ESOL PROVISION IN THE E-LEARNING CONTEXT MEANS…
4.5 achievements towards learning goals and qualifications are recorded and accredited.	**4.5.1** learners collect paper or electronic evidence of progress based on the demonstration of new or improved skills. **4.5.2** learners produce and collect a relevant range of evidence of achievement in e-learning or e-assessments. **4.5.3** learners help to keep effective paper or electronic records that describe specific learning gains in addition to completed activities and other gains in learning such as occupational or vocational skills.
4.6 assessment information, including the analysis of the performance of different groups of learners, is used to guide course and programme development.	**4.6.1** learners use the outcomes from e-assessments to inform the ongoing planning and design of their e-learning activities. **4.6.2** learners are given the opportunity to work online towards national qualifications at an appropriate level.
4.7 assessment, verification and moderation procedures follow regulatory body requirements.	**4.7.1** learners are made aware of and understand the requirements and regulations in respect of online or on-screen assessments towards national qualifications. **4.7.2** learners produce evidence of achieving qualifications or completing summative e-assessment activities in line with awarding body regulations.

IN THE COMMON INSPECTION FRAMEWORK ACHIEVEMENT AND PROGRESS ARE JUDGED BY THE EXTENT TO WHICH…	SUCCESS IN ADULT LITERACY, NUMERACY AND ESOL PROVISION IN THE E-LEARNING CONTEXT MEANS…
4.8 those with legitimate interest, such as employers or parents, are clearly and regularly informed about learners' progress.	4.8.1 learners are clear about how to share the progress they have made in e-learning with employers, peers or parents.
	4.8.2 learners are properly advised and supported on how, when and in what circumstances information can be shared, particularly with regard to the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998.

HOW TO ACHIEVE SUCCESS

E-assessment exploits the potential of ICT to interact with the learner, to present questions or tasks, to monitor steps of achievement and patterns of learning, to analyse performance and accumulate evidence, and to guide subsequent steps in learning. In most cases this approach has the potential to reduce or close the gap between a programme of learning and the subsequent assessment for certification purposes, a gap which is a major disincentive or barrier to many learners.

Effective assessment is the cornerstone of teaching and learning. Accurate e-assessment and monitoring provide a starting point, a clear direction and a guide to progress on the route to achievement within the learning journey. Used properly, they also build confidence and give motivation, helping the learner to see objectively what they have achieved and where they need to do more. At the journey's end, a formal qualification is both recognition of that achievement and a reward for the effort and perseverance required.

The benefits that e-learning brings to this process are in terms of autonomy, by allowing learners to have more control over the process of assessment, and objectivity, whereby learners find out for themselves in an impartial way what they can do without being dependent upon a teacher's view. Learners are also encouraged to take responsibility for their learning, by seeing for themselves what their learning needs are. In short, e-assessment allows learners to take greater ownership and responsibility for their own learning needs.

The most effective e-learning provision uses assessments that:

- conform to the definitions of assessment in the national *Skills for Life* strategy. These are:
  - screening tools to identify possible need

- initial assessment tools to identify learners' levels of skills

- diagnostic assessment tools to gain a detailed learner profile to inform the ILP

- formative assessment tools to obtain regular reviews of progress to inform the learning programme

- summative assessments to gain qualifications, for example, the Certificate in Adult Literacy or Numeracy

- provide measures of learners' skill levels, learning needs and achievements mapped to the national adult basic skills standards and core curricula

- are offered to learners who have an appropriate level of ICT skills and confidence

- meet the learners' needs for accessibility at their skill level

- are offered together with appropriate teacher support

- are appropriate to the learning situation.

Effective monitoring tools in e-learning:

- use media appropriate to the learning situation, for example, online, disk-based or paper-based ILPs

- are stored in an easily accessible way for learners, teaching and support staff and allow input from learners and staff

- enable learning to be planned and progress to be recorded simply, quickly and securely.

Some of the e-learning tools available for use in learner assessments, including self-assessments, are described below.

Screening tools

The Fast Track Screening Tools for Literacy and Numeracy are available from the Basic Skills Agency. An ESOL version is currently in production. Although these resources are not currently available online or on CD, they can be used with e-learners.

learndirect has an online screening tool which will determine whether a learner requires help with literacy or numeracy.

Initial assessment tools

The Initial Assessment Pack for Literacy and Numeracy is available from the Basic Skills Agency. An ESOL version is currently in production. Although these resources are not currently available online or on CD, they can be used with e-learners.

learndirect has an initial assessment tool available online which will identify whether a learner's literacy or numeracy skill level is at Entry Level, or at Level 1 or Level 2 of the adult core curricula.

CTAD's Target Skills Initial Assessment provides a CD-based assessment for literacy and numeracy against the adult core curricula.

Diagnostic assessment tools

Diagnostic assessment materials are currently being developed and delivered by a consortium led by the Basic Skills Agency. They will offer both paper-based and ICT tools to diagnose the skill levels and learning needs of literacy, numeracy and ESOL learners and will map them to the adult core curricula in either an individual or group setting. The ICT version includes a Merles-Irlen syndrome assessment which will allow the learner to select the colour overlay that best enhances that individual's vision.

learndirect has diagnostic assessment tools, Word Skills Check, Number Skills Check and English Skills Check, which are available online or on CD. Each Skills Check diagnoses the learner's skill levels and learning needs for each subject area of the adult core curricula.

Formative assessment tools

Diagnostic assessments can be re-taken by a learner after a course of learning to identify whether learning has been successful and to provide evidence of progression.

There are self-check activities available online or on CD, such as the tests integral to **learndirect**'s ELLIS course.

Another source are the teacher-devised tests and multiple-choice games using freeware such as Hot Potatoes (see the FERL or BECTA websites for details) or advanced features of Microsoft Word such as 'forms'.

Activities such as online games and quizzes are available on the BBC's Skillswise website. The Adult Basic Skills Resource Centre at http://members.aol.com/skillsworkshop/ can provide useful formative assessment material for monitoring learner progress.

Formative assessment may also take the shape of asking learners to perform a specific task or activity using Microsoft Word, Internet Explorer, Outlook or Excel in order to demonstrate a particular competence, for example, letter-writing, calculating percentages, researching a topic on the Internet or sending an email.

Summative assessment tools

Evidence of achievement generated within e-learning can be submitted towards portfolio, short-task and assignment-based qualifications at Entry Level in literacy and numeracy from awarding bodies approved by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA).

Online or on-screen assessments toward the National Certificates in Adult Literacy or Numeracy at Level 1 or Level 2 are currently being piloted nationally by a number of QCA-approved awarding bodies either individually or in conjunction with **learndirect**.

Evidence of achievement generated within e-learning can be submitted towards general ESOL qualifications and national vocational qualification (NVQ) language units from QCA-approved awarding bodies.

> There are moves to make tests available on demand and on-screen to improve access and provide a more motivating and rewarding experience for learners. A CD of practice on-screen tests, including the mini-tests that give a preliminary indication of which level to try, will soon be available via the Read Write Plus website, as well as being distributed with the test toolkit. This will include the review feedback for each test item.

WHAT IS SUCCESS?

Zoe and Georgia

Nine months ago, using her new qualifications and increased confidence, Zoe was successful in gaining a job as a Customer Service Representative at a major call centre. Now she is moving to an even better paid position with a large government department in Liverpool, as an Administrator. But Zoe left school at 16 before taking any exams. 'I wasn't happy at school and wanted to leave as soon as possible,' she says. After working for a time in a sweet factory, she became pregnant with her daughter Georgia. Finding herself as a single mum on income support, Zoe decided she would have to train to find a better job that would give her and Georgia a better standard of living.

'I wanted to better myself,' says Zoe, 'but most jobs need people who know about computers and, although I had a computer at home, I didn't know how to use it. My little brother used it mainly for computer games. I wasn't confident, and the thought of going into the workplace frightened me, as I had been unemployed for 18 months.'

*Zoe approached her local **learndirect** centre for help in training for a better job. The staff assessed Zoe's competence using a mix of paper-based, CD and online resources. Her teacher advised Zoe to prepare for interviews by increasing her confidence with computers and brushing up her word and number skills through **learndirect**. These aims were reflected in Zoe's ILP, and for two weeks, Zoe attended the centre from 9.30 am to 4.30 pm. Zoe's family helped with looking after Georgia and the centre also helped with paying for a childminder.*

*'I was very nervous about doing the courses,' says Zoe. 'I went to the centre with a thousand worries but, as soon as I walked through the door, I was greeted by friendly, smiling staff and the atmosphere was relaxed and comfortable. I did the **learndirect** word skills and number skills courses and they really boosted my confidence. It was a really good way of getting me used to computers before I applied for a job.*

'My family is very proud of what I have achieved and I would encourage anyone to go to the **learndirect** centre. The staff gave me the confidence to even stand up and talk in front of the class, something I thought I would never do. I was able to go for an interview and feel sure I would get the job. Applying for the Job Centre position was particularly gruelling with lots of interviews and problem-solving tests – they ran on for weeks! I start my new job at the beginning of September. It will be so much better as the hours are 9 to 5, Monday to Friday. We will be able to have a normal home life.'

Zoe would like to continue developing her skills with the **learndirect** centre and improve her computer skills even further with **learndirect**. 'It's given me and my daughter a head start in life and the opportunity to live a comfortable lifestyle.'

Electronic assessment

HMP Featherstone is an Adult Male Category C Training Establishment. All education in the prison is by request and assessment. In order to get on the education programmes, prisoners are asked to take part in a one-day induction programme run by education staff and colleagues from Industry and Training.

Tony Locker is the Education Manager at HMP Featherstone. He says, 'Originally, the men were asked to participate in a paper-based initial assessment. Staff found that this created a lot of frustration and anger, so they decided to switch to an electronic assessment process. The package we chose was CTAD's Target Skills. The learners really like the computer-based approach – it is interactive and has audio links. For learners with epilepsy, a suite of laptops is available which doesn't disadvantage them in any way. Even though some of the men have never used a computer before, there have been under 10 refusals out of over 700 assessments.'

One of the main advantages of the computer-based assessment is the instant feedback the learners receive on their level of skills, linked to the adult literacy and numeracy curricula. Doing the initial assessment in this way allows up to 20 learners to go through induction at any one time with expert support from at least four members of staff.

The computer-based assessment process is followed up when learners and tutors draw up an individual learning and training plan before moving on to computer-based learning at an appropriate level. The education department is well equipped for this.

Tony adds, 'This method of initial assessment is obviously a great success because it not only introduces the men to computer-based learning but it increases their confidence and ability to participate in the learning process.'

THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING

5. How well do the programmes and courses meet the needs and interests of learners?

5

5. HOW WELL DO THE PROGRAMMES AND COURSES MEET THE NEEDS AND INTERESTS OF LEARNERS?

Effective practice which secures continuous improvement is evidenced by:

- the extent to which courses or programmes match learners' aspirations and potential, building on prior attainment and experience; and

- how far programmes or the curriculum meet external requirements and are responsive to local circumstances.

IN THE COMMON INSPECTION FRAMEWORK HOW FAR LEARNERS' NEEDS ARE MET IS JUDGED BY THE EXTENT TO WHICH…	SUCCESS IN ADULT LITERACY, NUMERACY AND ESOL PROVISION IN THE E-LEARNING CONTEXT MEANS…
5.1 learners have access to an appropriate range of courses or programmes and, where appropriate, achieve suitable qualifications.	5.1.1 e-learning is an integral part of courses, programmes and individual learning plans (ILPs). 5.1.2 e-learning is included in programmes that lead, where appropriate, to suitable qualifications.
5.2 the curriculum or an individual programme of work is planned and managed effectively to provide coherence and progression.	5.2.1 e-learning resources are developed within the framework of the national standards and curricula for literacy, numeracy and ESOL. 5.2.2 the use of e-learning is contributing to overall coherence and progression.
5.3 the curriculum or programmes of work are socially inclusive, ensuring equality of access and opportunities for learners.	5.3.1 resources are offered that can be adapted for people with disabilities. 5.3.2 resources comply with common accessibility guidelines such as the Web Accessibility Initiative from the Worldwide Web Consortium, and www.cast.org/bobby, a web-based tool that analyses the accessibility of web pages.

IN THE COMMON INSPECTION FRAMEWORK HOW FAR LEARNERS' NEEDS ARE MET IS JUDGED BY THE EXTENT TO WHICH…	SUCCESS IN ADULT LITERACY, NUMERACY AND ESOL PROVISION IN THE E-LEARNING CONTEXT MEANS…
5.4 learners have the opportunity to broaden their experience and enhance their personal development through a suitable variety of enrichment activities.	**5.4.1** learners develop e-skills so that they are not disadvantaged in the realm of employment. **5.4.2** e-learning helps learners acquire the skills to enable them to be contributing members of society, and to support their lives, extend their choices, enrich their competencies and strengthen their autonomy at home, at work and in the community. **5.4.3** e-learning helps to close the digital divide.
5.5 programmes of work take account of community and employer needs.	**5.5.1** an analysis of local employment opportunities that require learners to have ICT skills is completed.
5.6 legal requirements in relation to religious education and collective worship are fulfilled where they apply.	**5.6.1** there is sensitivity to learners' religious and cultural backgrounds when selecting e-learning resources.
5.7 multi-site provision and resources are effectively integrated to give a coherent programme of learning.	**5.7.1** a range of venues in the community is used for e-learning to exploit the flexibility for learners typical of e-learning.

HOW TO ACHIEVE SUCCESS

Successful e-learning that forms part of literacy, numeracy and ESOL programmes makes sure that learning opportunities are relevant to learners, and that they are provided at a time and in a context acceptable to learners. Many *Skills for Life* learners will be not be familiar with using ICT and may not immediately see its relevance. However, it can be used as a motivator to encourage literacy, numeracy and language learning when learners see how the skills they are acquiring can be used in other contexts, such as personal management, music, design etc.

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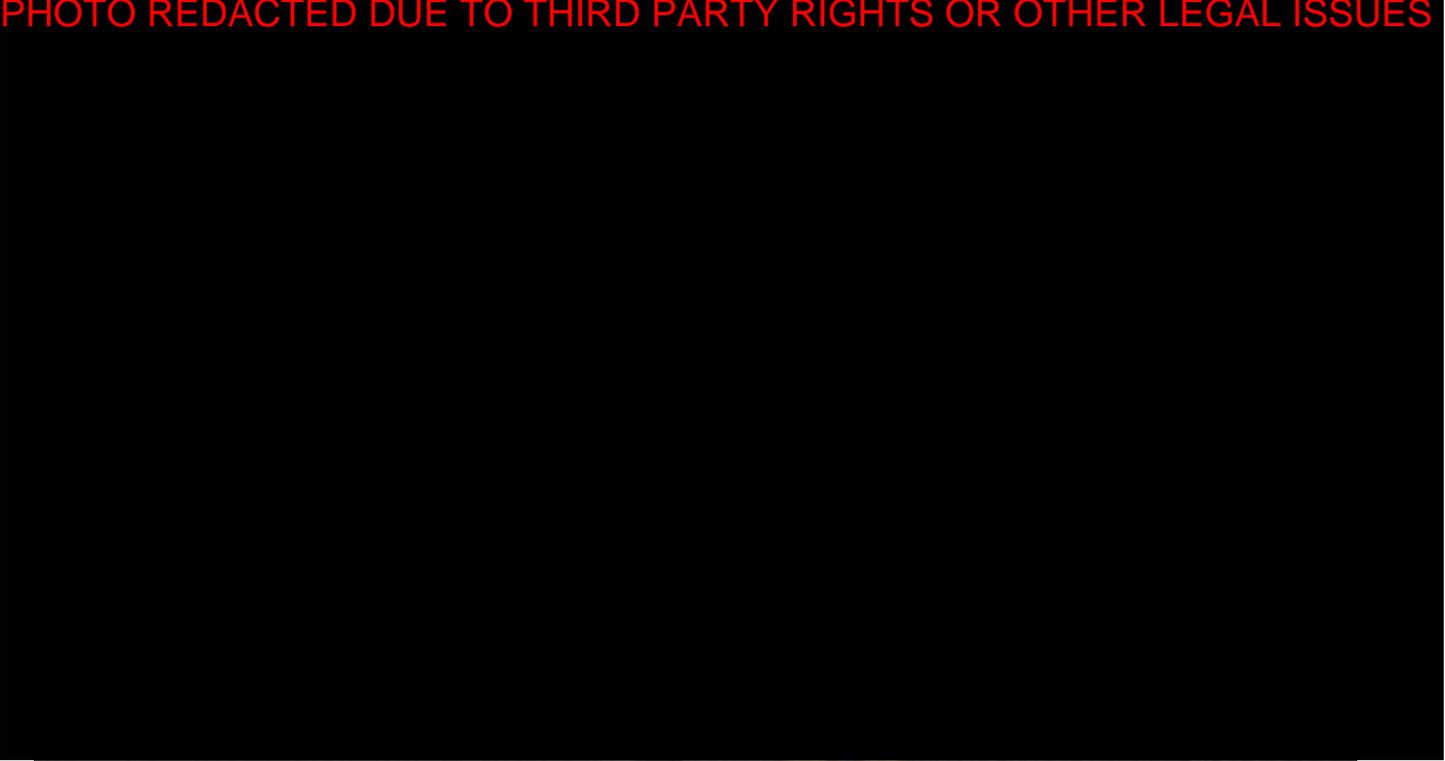
It is important that e-learning, whether it takes place in a learning or resource centre or in the classroom, is seen to be relevant to the learners' needs and interests. This can be at a personal level or in a work or community context. Providers need to ask themselves the following questions:

- do learners have access to a wide range of e-learning opportunities in a wide range of venues?

- are these opportunities easily accessible and inclusive?

- is e-learning included in course plans and design?

- are forms of e-learning identified in the learner's ILP?

- are e-learning courses and resources matched to the literacy, numeracy and ESOL curricula?

- do learners understand the relevance and importance of acquiring ICT skills?

learndirect has produced a range of multimedia courses for learners which are designed to appeal to a range of needs and interests. For example, there are work-related packages such as Getting a Job and Skills City: Retail and Essential Skills for Work. There are also lifestyle packages such as Fishing Challenge and life skills courses such as Helping your Child. There are also games designed to motivate people who are reluctant to learn.

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So that teachers can have access to information in order to make a judgement about the appropriateness of each course for the needs and interests of individual learners, Ufi has created a mapping database which not only contains information about the *Skills for Life* portfolio but also shows how the courses are matched to the core curricula for adult literacy and numeracy.

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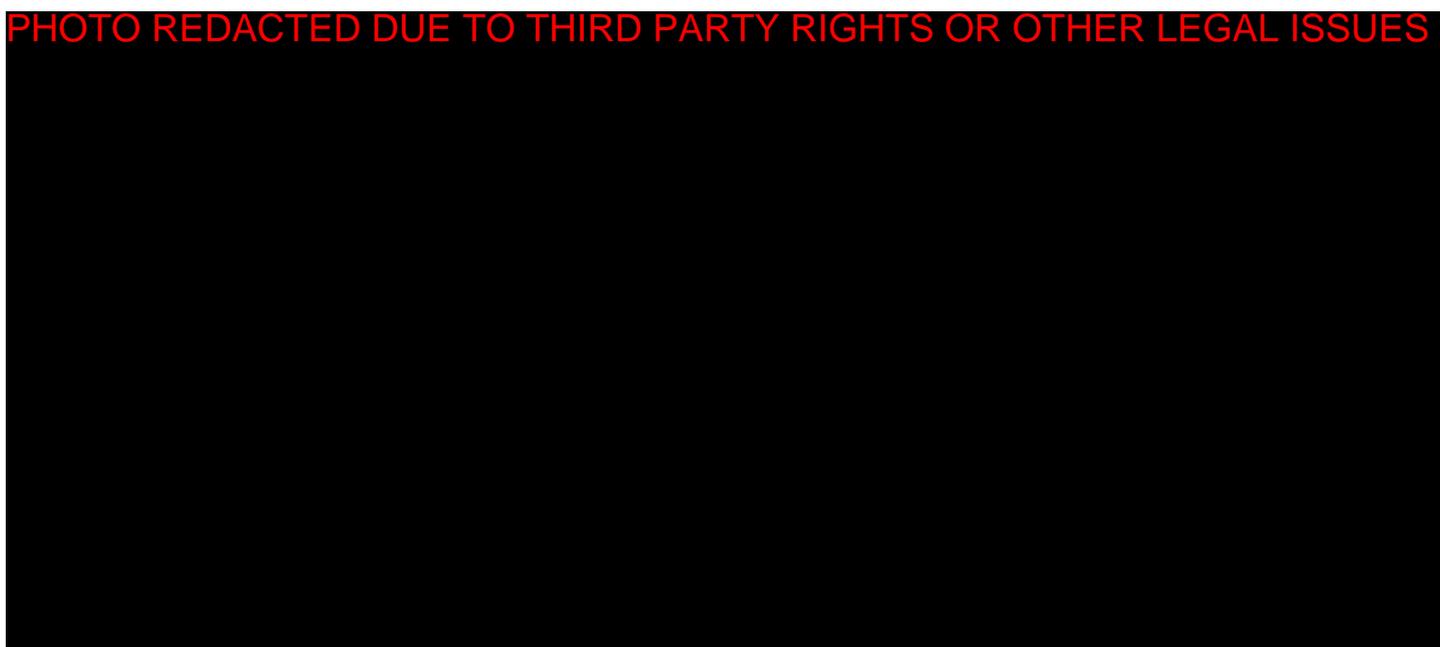
Success in Adult Literacy, Numeracy and ESOL Provision **is published by the DfES on behalf of OFSTED and the ALI. The ALI and OFSTED guides aim to help inspectors and staff in colleges to evaluate standards and the quality of post-16 provision. The DfES guide identifies the seven key questions set out in the Common Inspection Framework and details what is expected of learning organisations where programmes of literacy, numeracy and ESOL are provided. The guides help learning institutions to:**

- **carry out an analysis of their organisation's strengths, weaknesses and opportunities**

- **devise an action plan.**

WHAT IS SUCCESS?

Ensuring relevance

One college was having problems attracting people to participate in a particular geographical area when it promoted its basic skills class, even though potential learners for the course had been identified in that area as a result of an intensive and successful Family Literacy course. It was felt that a new recruitment strategy was needed. The college enlisted the help of other workers in the community and offered the use of laptops in class. Word spread, and learner numbers grew as learners became keen to try out the computers and develop new skills. For example, one mother wanted to write an account of her son's birth and early years, while another learner wanted to create a CV and type out letters for jobs. Other examples of activities covered included:

- *making cards and invitations*

- *designing posters showing spelling rules, punctuation and grammar to go on the resource centre walls*

- *producing a community newsletter*

- *designing T-shirt transfers*

- *taking pictures with a digital camera, inserting them into a Word document and adding text.*

Poor handwriting became less of an issue for some learners and certainly the stigma normally attached to attendance at an adult literacy class was removed by the inclusion of the laptops. The drawbacks of spellcheckers became apparent to learners, and as a result they started using dictionaries more confidently. The main lessons learnt from this work were:

- *computers should be used as an integral part of the learning process, not just as a filler*

- *the teacher must have good ICT skills and be confident when things go wrong*

- *a variety of up-to-date software should be available*

- *peripheral equipment should be available, such as printers, digital cameras and scanners.*

A warm welcome

One college's warm welcome is obvious from the moment you arrive – the sign outside says 'Welcome' in 14 languages and the bright and lively atmosphere puts learners at their ease. An important aspect of the college's work is to offer a 'one-stop shop', so its services include careers guidance and help with jobsearch, as well as help for local employers in finding new staff. Welfare advisors are on hand to help with benefits queries and professional college councillors are present to help clients with any aspect of student welfare. This across-the-board provision may help to attract learners who would not otherwise go into a learning institution.

Most learners come in wanting to gain IT skills or to improve existing IT skills. Often after a short IT course in a workshop environment, staff will have gained the trust of the learner to make it possible to broach the subject of basic skills. They encourage the learner to undertake a confidential **learndirect** *Skills Check. Following the assessment, a member of staff discusses learning options with the learner, focusing on the needs revealed in assessment and the learner's personal interests and ambitions.*

In the adult basic education classroom, ICT plays a major part in the learning activity, with the use of software packages such as TextHelp and Units of Sound, as well as giving learners the opportunity to use the Internet and Microsoft Word. Teacher Liz Bellamy says she thinks learners achieve more using computers because they are looking on a vertical plane rather than a horizontal one. 'In other words,' she says, 'we teach our learners to look up rather than to keep their heads down!'

Linking basic skills and vocational training

A training centre in London provides training for the construction industry and offers nationally recognised qualifications. It offers training to anyone aged 14 to 64, but a high proportion of its learners are unemployed young men aged 16 to 24 who want to learn new skills and improve their job prospects. For unemployed learners, courses are free, and grants are often given for travel. Using a team of qualified trainers, construction training is offered in Carpentry/Joinery, Bricklaying, Painting and Decorating, Plastering and Dry Lining. One day a week, the same learners come to the **learndirect** *centre to undertake courses in literacy, numeracy and ICT skills as well as interviewing and jobsearch skills. Typically, learners will study for 26 weeks and at the end of that time the training centre will help trainees to find work or establish themselves in business. To date, 400 learners a year have achieved recognised qualifications and 250 trainees have gone on to achieve sustainable employment.*

One candidate joined on the recommendation of his sister's boyfriend. 'I didn't finish school because I broke my arm. I did some IT and English but got no qualifications. I'll be very happy to get a certificate, it will be the first certificate I ever got in anything, plus I'm learning a good trade. My mum and dad will be really happy!'

Extracts of effective practice from OFSTED and ALI inspection reports

'The locations of learning centres have been chosen to encourage participation by learners who might not normally take part in further education.'

'The basic skills registrations have significantly increased from 2 per cent in 2000-01, to 7 per cent this year.'

'Learners are very satisfied with their **learndirect** *courses. They appreciate the flexibility of* **learndirect** *and the way in which they can learn when it is convenient for them to do so. They enjoy the informal, relaxed style of learning and the chance to work at their own pace. Some learners have not studied for many years and make good progress with their learning. Learners often go on to further, more advanced courses and develop a range of ICT competences.'*

'Much of the successful work of the Hub is helped by the depth and range of its partnerships, within and outside trades unions. The Hub was the outcome of successful collaboration with unions and further education colleges. This strength is identified in the self-assessment report. Close working continues and most recently has been complemented by partnerships with employers. For example, a recently opened learning centre at a bakery in Newcastle engages unions and employers to meet the ICT and basic skills needs of members and employees. The learning centre will shortly be available to families and friends of employees.'

THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING

6. How well are learners guided and supported?

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6

6. HOW WELL ARE LEARNERS GUIDED AND SUPPORTED?

Effective practice which secures continuous improvement is evidenced by:

- the quality and accessibility of information, advice and guidance to learners in relation to courses and programmes and career progression;

- the diagnosis of, and provision for, individual learning needs; and

- the access learners have to relevant, effective support on personal issues.

IN THE COMMON INSPECTION FRAMEWORK THE QUALITY OF I.A.G. IS JUDGED BY THE EXTENT TO WHICH…	SUCCESS IN ADULT LITERACY, NUMERACY AND ESOL PROVISION IN THE E-LEARNING CONTEXT MEANS…
6.1 support arrangements are planned and managed coherently.	**6.1.1** a supportive learning environment is created.
	6.1.2 multimedia resources have support in the form of a 'help' button built into them to help the learner when they need additional on-screen support.
	6.1.3 staff understand and are qualified to offer the different kinds of support needed in an e-learning context.
	6.1.4 support from suitably qualified staff is available for learners online, by telephone as well as face-to-face.
	6.1.5 virtual support communities are available for teachers.
6.2 impartial guidance enables learners to choose the course or programme which is right for them.	**6.2.1** information, advice and guidance (IAG) is available on the college or organisation's intranet and/or website to allow learners and potential learners to explore and re-visit course and programme information.
	6.2.2 guidance sessions are held where people feel they can talk freely and confidentially.

IN THE COMMON INSPECTION FRAMEWORK THE QUALITY OF I.A.G. IS JUDGED BY THE EXTENT TO WHICH…	SUCCESS IN ADULT LITERACY, NUMERACY AND ESOL PROVISION IN THE E-LEARNING CONTEXT MEANS…
6.3 careers education and guidance are effective in guiding learners towards opportunities available to them when they have completed their studies or training.	**6.3.1** ICT or computer-aided guidance materials such as Adult Directions or **learndirect** Futures are used. **6.3.2** ICT is used in identifying job opportunities.
6.4 procedures are in place for recognising poor punctuality, non-attendance and poor performance early and for taking appropriate action.	**6.4.1** systems are in place to track progress, ensure adequate participation and record targets for achievement and improvement. **6.4.2** teachers contact learners who are using e-learning independently on a regular basis.
6.5 induction programmes enable learners to settle into their programmes quickly, to understand their rights and responsibilities and the demands of the course or programme.	**6.5.1** an assessment to discover the preferred learning style for each learner is carried out. **6.5.2** introductory courses use tried and tested resources. **6.5.3** the learning contract tells learners how much support to expect.
6.6 individual learning needs are accurately diagnosed and learners receive effective additional support throughout their studies or training.	**6.6.1** learners are accurately screened, assessed and diagnosed for their literacy, numeracy and ESOL needs. **6.6.2** systems are in place to recognise other learning needs such as dyslexia or visual impairment.
6.7 learners have effective personal support to help them complete their course or programme, including access to specialist support services.	**6.7.1** support is in place and is suitable for the e-learning that learners are engaged in.

IN THE COMMON INSPECTION FRAMEWORK THE QUALITY OF I.A.G. IS JUDGED BY THE EXTENT TO WHICH…	SUCCESS IN ADULT LITERACY, NUMERACY AND ESOL PROVISION IN THE E-LEARNING CONTEXT MEANS…
6.8 guidance and support are sensitive to equality of opportunity.	**6.8.1** the national guidance standards are known and adhered to by all staff.
	6.8.2 all learners have access to a range of support services.
6.9 partnerships with other providers and relevant agencies involved in advice and guidance are effective.	**6.9.1** effective contact networks and partnerships are in place so that partners know what is offered in terms of e-learning.
	6.9.2 information and demonstration sessions are conducted regularly to keep partners and other agencies, including employers, informed.

HOW TO ACHIEVE SUCCESS

If the correct levels and types of guidance and support are offered to learners participating in any form of e-learning, then the following benefits will be seen: higher retention, completion and attainment rates and higher levels of participation and inclusion in e-learning courses.

Learners need to have a wide range of learning opportunities identified when they receive IAG about available provision. E-learning needs to be part of the offer to learners and all of the people involved in referrals and guidance need to understand this. To ensure that effective systems for conveying this information are in place, successful providers:

- set up networks to share relevant information

- run demonstration sessions about e-learning for partners and employers

- use electronic methods of guidance and information alongside more traditional ways

- run taster sessions for learners to get them used to ICT and to demystify it

- run taster sessions for teachers.

Ufi has defined seven support roles that should be offered to learners:

- information provider/access enabler

- initial assessor

- advice and guidance provider

- learning facilitator

- ICT coach

- virtual online teacher

- **learndirect** product champion.

Roles 1, 2 and 3 give basic support to get the learner started on a course. Roles 4 and 5 give general support to the learner throughout their course and keep records of learner activity. Roles 6 and 7 give subject-specialist support. All roles may be delivered virtually and may be combined.

Adult Directions is one of the most commonly used adult guidance packages. It is a software programme that suggests careers based on the individual's work and personal experience. There is also an Internet version called Careers Match which learners can use online at www.careersmatch.co.uk.

The DfES has produced two resource packs for learners with specific needs. *Basic Skills for Adults with Learning Difficulties or Disabilities* is on CD, and it aims to support staff development in this area. *Working with Refugees and Asylum Seekers: Support materials for ESOL providers* provides information and training materials for all organisations and teachers offering ESOL provision to refugees and asylum seekers in the post-compulsory education sector. A downloadable pdf version is available on the Read Write Plus website (www.dfes.gov.uk/readwriteplus/teachingandlearning).

WHAT IS SUCCESS?

Kathleen

When Kathleen first walked into her local **learndirect** *centre, she knew she wanted a life change. She had turned 40, and after spending most of her life caring for her husband and raising two children, she decided it was time to start working in a different environment and to get a new job. 'I left school at 16 and got married the year after,' she says. 'I felt like years were going by and that I wanted to further myself, do something different and get back into the working environment.'*

At her initial interview, Kathleen quickly realised she didn't need to start from scratch. Guidance staff helped her establish that she needed to refresh her existing English and Maths skills. 'What I needed most was a boost of confidence. I didn't want to have to go back to school and sit in a classroom at the college. **learndirect** *gave me the flexibility I needed as I could learn in my own time, when I wanted and where I wanted.'*

The **learndirect** *experience was exactly what Kathleen was looking for. 'The courses are excellent. They are interactive and fun and they are designed in a way where you know exactly what to do without being told.' Kathleen also enjoys the friendly and relaxed environment at the centre. 'The staff are fantastic and I really love being able to learn as much or as little as I want without having to be tested constantly.'*

Cathy, the centre manager, has praised her hard work. 'Kathleen has shown immense commitment and dedication. She has progressed very fast and has a very positive attitude towards learning.'

Only six months after first going into the **learndirect** *centre, Kathleen received the centre's award for Skills for Life learner of the year. She has also started work as a Field Development Officer with a local cross-community school. 'I help set up IT, arts and Sign classes for adults to encourage them to get back into learning,' she says. '***learndirect** *has given me the confidence I needed and has opened new doors. It has been a fantastic experience and I would recommend it to anyone who wants to get back into the working mode or simply wants to do something different.'*

Motivating learners with ICT

One college provides tuition in literacy, numeracy and language for Remploy Ltd and the NHS Trust. After using the Basic and Keyskill Builder as diagnostic testing tools to screen each learner, an individual learning plan is negotiated with the learner to form personal, achievable goals. Regular reviews and tutorials are essential to both learner and tutor in ensuring high-quality teaching practices. Each session provides an informal learning environment. Sessions are varied to include groupwork and games as well as individual work.

Debbie Brown, the essential skills tutor at the college, explains, 'ICT is a fantastic asset to both the tutor and the learner. For literacy learners it can take away the fear of writing words down, as all work looks professional and neat when produced on a computer. We can use digital cameras or Clip Art to personalise work or add colour, which encourages experimentation and adds to the fun of learning. In the same way, the computer is an excellent tool for those studying numeracy. There are so many ways of producing charts, tables and graphs using Excel, again in colour, and of course the keyboard is an additional resource to familiarise learners with numbers and symbols.'

Learners at Remploy Ltd have used ICT to enhance their work roles and improve their employment prospects. Many learners have also chosen to take up ICT in order to equip themselves at home to learn alongside their children or grandchildren. Debbie adds, 'Learners initially need plenty of support and reassurance, but once the learning has cemented, many learners are keen to develop further using other computer applications whilst enhancing their literacy and numeracy skills.'

Learners at Remploy Ltd have access to the Internet, which means that there are online educational worksheets, games and test papers available to them. Learners actively search the Internet for relevant materials relating to their personal interests, which develops reading skills. Debbie says, 'Online games are wonderful to use as icebreakers or to conclude a session. The learners are still learning but in a more relaxed, interactive way. The key to our success is making our programmes varied whilst always ensuring they are what the learner wants.'

Extracts of effective practice from OFSTED and ALI inspection reports

> *'Learners who attend learning centres are given good initial advice and guidance and an excellent level of individual support. Learning environments are well resourced and attractive, and many have specialist facilities and support for learners who have a disability. Equipment exceeds the minimum standards and is well maintained. Many learners benefit from the good supplementary materials produced by the Hub's staff and by attending additional workshops.'*

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

7. How effective are leadership and management
   in raising achievement and supporting all learners?

7

7. HOW EFFECTIVE ARE LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT IN RAISING ACHIEVEMENT AND SUPPORTING ALL LEARNERS?

Effective practice which secures continuous improvement is evidenced by:

- how well leaders and managers set a clear direction leading to high-quality education and training;

- how effectively, through quality assurance and self-assessment, performance is monitored and evaluated and how effectively steps are taken to secure improvement;

- how well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled, so that all learners achieve their potential;

- where relevant, the extent to which governors or other supervisory boards meet their responsibilities; and

- how effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money.

IN THE COMMON INSPECTION FRAMEWORK LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT ARE JUDGED BY THE EXTENT TO WHICH…	SUCCESS IN ADULT LITERACY, NUMERACY AND ESOL PROVISION IN THE E-LEARNING CONTEXT MEANS…
7.1 clear direction is given through strategic objectives, targets and values that are fully understood by staff, including subcontractors and work placement providers.	**7.1.1** e-learning is explicitly referred to in charters, mission or vision statements and strategic and operational plan objectives. **7.1.2** all staff have an entitlement and understanding of the methods and benefits of e-learning.
7.2 demanding targets for retention, achievement, progression and employment are set and met.	**7.2.1** e-learning programmes have the same methods for identifying, monitoring and reviewing targets as other programmes.
7.3 the quality assurance arrangements are systematic and informed by the views of all interested parties.	**7.3.1** all stakeholders, including learners, are involved in the self-assessment or quality assurance process.
7.4 rigorous self-assessment leads to identified priorities and challenging targets for improvement.	**7.4.1** ICT is used a mechanism for self-assessment, particularly with stakeholders since it allows them a degree of confidentiality.

IN THE COMMON INSPECTION FRAMEWORK LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT ARE JUDGED BY THE EXTENT TO WHICH…	SUCCESS IN ADULT LITERACY, NUMERACY AND ESOL PROVISION IN THE E-LEARNING CONTEXT MEANS…
7.5 priorities are supported through responsible financial management.	**7.5.1** organisations identify unit costs for the delivery and support of e-learning in order to come up with the best-value solutions.
7.6 staff understand and are fully involved in the organisation's quality assurance arrangements.	**7.6.1** e-learning is an integral part of the quality assurance process.
7.7 the information needs of managers and other staff are met and management information is used effectively to the benefit of learners.	**7.7.1** all organisational information services report and record learners' success in e-learning. **7.7.2** information can be reported to learners so that they know the value of e-learning.
7.8 performance management, staff appraisal and review are effective in improving the quality of provision.	**7.8.1** support for e-learning is recognised as a key appraisal target for staff. **7.8.2** learner achievement in e-learning is recognised throughout the organisation in terms of managing performance. **7.8.3** e-learning is not marginalised and is part of the core business of the organisation.
7.9 there are explicit aims, values and strategies promoting equality for all, and these are reflected in the provider's work.	**7.9.1** equal opportunities and inclusion policies embrace e-learning as a tool.

IN THE COMMON INSPECTION FRAMEWORK LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT ARE JUDGED BY THE EXTENT TO WHICH…	SUCCESS IN ADULT LITERACY, NUMERACY AND ESOL PROVISION IN THE E-LEARNING CONTEXT MEANS…
7.10 governors or other supervisory boards effectively oversee the provider's strategic direction, and regularly monitor the quality of provision and their own performance.	**7.10.1** regular reports sent to governors, corporation boards, etc. include a statement on e-learning. **7.10.2** opportunities are available for governors and board members to participate in an e-learning experience.
7.11 there are effective procedures for dealing with appeals and complaints.	**7.11.1** the complaints procedure is also available online to include e-learners. **7.11.2** a charter on e-learning shows how learners can raise concerns online as well as on paper.
7.12 efficient and effective use is made of resources.	**7.12.1** a virtual learning environment is available for teachers to store and share e-learning resources.
7.13 the 'best value' principles of comparison, challenges, consultation and competition are applied in securing resources and services.	**7.13.1** e-learning resource costs are subject to the same rigorous monitoring and financial management procedures as costs for other resources.

HOW TO ACHIEVE SUCCESS

It is important for organisations that are providing any form of literacy, numeracy and ESOL training to ensure that the approach taken to e-learning is clearly communicated to all staff. Therefore, in mission and vision statements and strategic plans, there should be explicit reference to e-learning. It should be an integral part of the learning process and not seen as something which happens in an *ad hoc* or insignificant way.

The overall management of e-learning is a complex concept for organisations to grasp. In order to demonstrate that there is a holistic strategic approach, providers need to be able to answer these questions:

- is there someone within the organisation who is responsible for e-learning?

- do you have any e-learning champions?

- do you show, in your strategic plans, the importance of e-learning as a learning tool in your organisation?

- do you enable e-learning to take place anywhere, any time?

- are you working with other organisations to facilitate e-learning?

- is there a joined-up approach in your area?

- does your promotional material identify you as an organisation that incorporates e-learning into its learning programmes?

- are you investing in piloting activities that allow you to find out the best way of teaching literacy, numeracy and ESOL through e-learning?

- do you encourage and reward innovation in e-learning for literacy, numeracy and ESOL learners?

- is the prevailing organisational culture positive about using e-learning to teach literacy, numeracy and ESOL skills?

Managing Success: A study of the management systems and styles that promote the successful teaching of literacy and numeracy to adults **was undertaken on commission by the Association of Colleges and is now available. The study identifies effective practice in further education and sixth form colleges in leading and managing provision. It has been designed to help staff in these institutions to review their current systems and structures, in the light of other's experiences, for leading and managing the delivery of literacy and numeracy provision.**

The much-awaited *Skills for Life Leadership and Management* **programme was recently announced by the Learning and Skills Council. The three-part programme will provide:**

- **a professional training and development programme for leaders and managers**

- **management and further development of the quality initiative facilitator network**

- **staff and organisational development materials.**

WHAT IS SUCCESS?

Leading the way

One local council has taken a long-term proactive approach to tackling the issue of poor basic skills in the borough. Research commissioned by the Basic Skills Agency in 1996 and 1997 placed the east London borough fourth from bottom in the UK for literacy and second from bottom in numeracy. Taken together, these were the worst figures in London. It was estimated that approximately one-third of adults had very poor literacy or numeracy skills, and adults in the region held the least number of higher education qualifications in the country.

Funded directly from Council reserves, the Adult Basic Skills Initiative was launched at the same time as the Skills for Life strategy in March 2001. A management group was established, incorporating representatives from all Council departments as well as key strategic partners.

External consultants were commissioned to carry out an audit of the borough's existing provision across all sectors. A subsequent consultancy provided a programme audit and a Whole-Borough Framework for Action was written. A team of adult literacy, numeracy and ESOL specialists was set up within the Community Inspection and Advisory service. Its brief was to establish quality benchmarks and to provide the necessary capacity for teaching literacy, numeracy and language skills. A teacher training group was also set up to link providers across all sectors.

The curriculum materials that are being developed exemplify the borough's pedagogy of interactive whole-group teaching, which follows the example set by the national adult core curricula training. Providing adult basic skills teachers with materials and training that will support the new qualifications, standards and infrastructure of Skills for Life is a key aim. Partners in the process have been an important feature, not least because they have helped bring in additional funding through successful joint bids for European Social Funding and Neighbourhood Renewal Funding.

Five of the borough's UK Online centres will become additional adult college venues, making the aim of providing venues 'just a pram-push away' more of a reality. Two centres located in libraries have opened for business. Venues use online and CD-based learning materials from **learndirect** *and CTAD. All the venues will have integral teaching spaces to accommodate group and one-to-one teaching. They will be equipped with modern audio-visual and interactive technology, including electronic screens, ceiling-mounted projectors, hi-fi, DVD and video. Staff are being trained in the use of the new technology.*

All of this is intended to help the Council meet its objective of meeting and exceeding the national targets for participation and achievement set for 2007. This council intends to banish the gremlins from its east London borough forever!
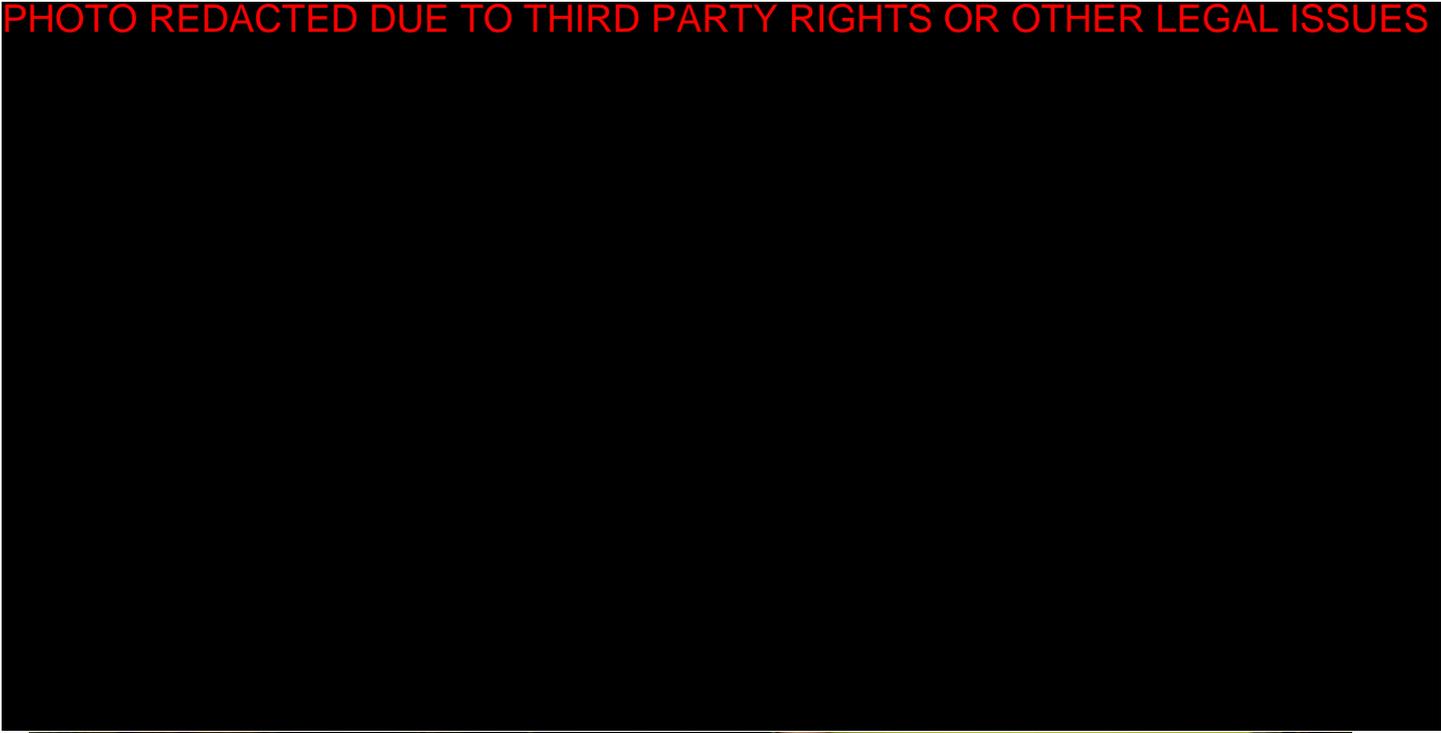
Extracts of effective practice from OFSTED and ALI inspection reports

'Leadership and management are good. The Hub management committee gives clear strategic direction and the partnership is well informed. The Hub has made strong links with the community and has a good self-assessment process. Quality assurance procedures are well understood.'

'The Hub has a detailed marketing plan which contains a clear operating statement on how the marketing will be carried out. The plan takes account of the economic nature and employment and skills needs of [the region]. The wide range of successful marketing includes leaflet distribution to all households ... , advertising in free newspapers, magazines and radio, newsletters to existing learners, branded stationery and crockery, and posters in libraries and the waiting rooms of doctors' and dentists' surgeries. These arrangements have improved the number of course registrations significantly over the past two years from 1,227 registrations and 749 learners in 1999-2000, to 13,612 registrations and 6,455 learners in 2001-02.'

THE E-LEARNING CONTEXT
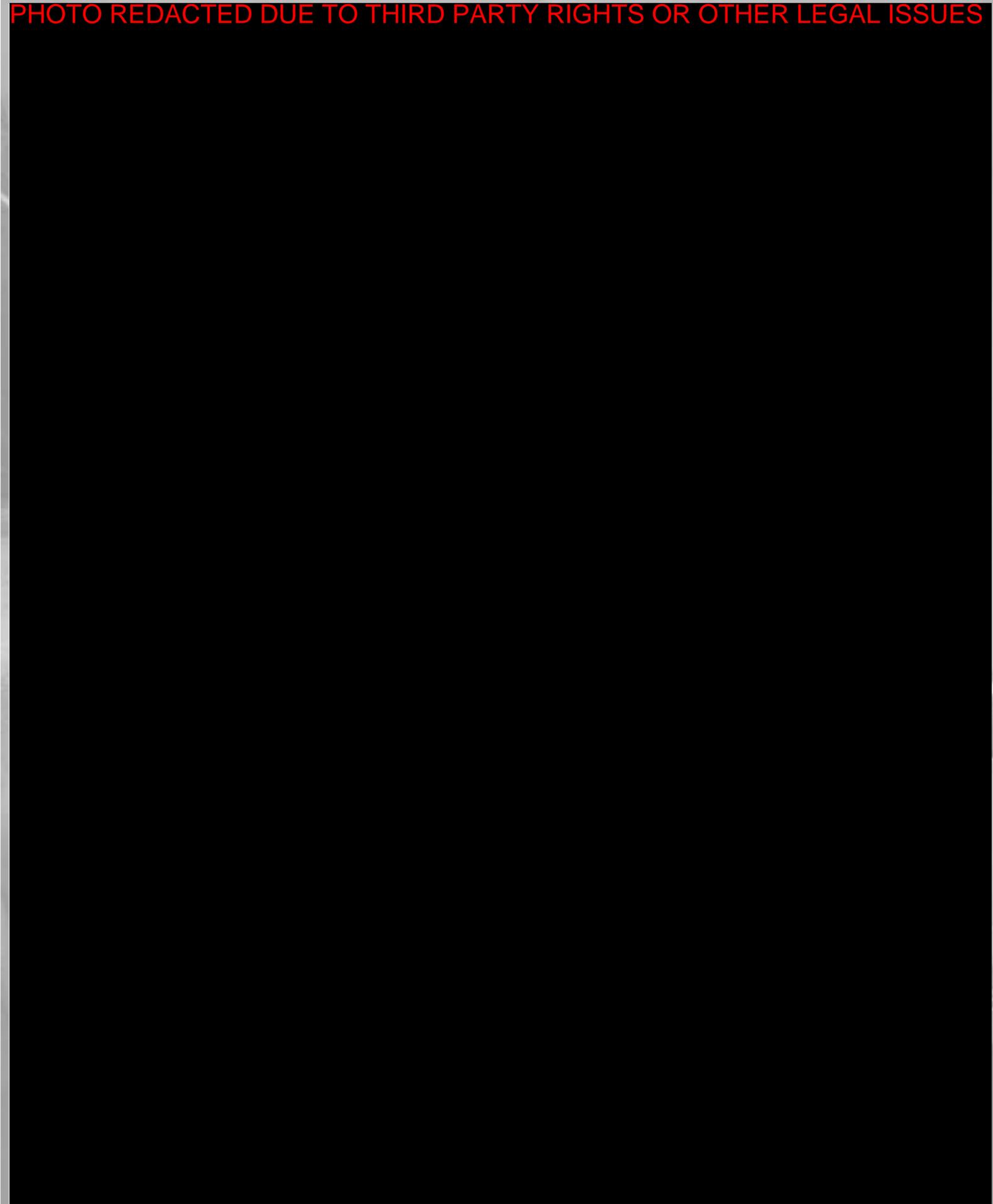
What *Skills for Life* provision in e-learning should include

An adult learning in literacy, numeracy and ESOL in an e-learning context will be underpinned by:

- the national standards for literacy and numeracy at Entry Level, Level 1 and Level 2

- the core curricula for literacy, numeracy and ESOL, with a curriculum framework for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities

- a common screening tool

- a common approach to initial assessment

- diagnostic assessment

- appropriate learning materials.

What an adult learner can expect

An adult learner receiving tuition in literacy, numeracy and ESOL in an e-learning context should expect:

- good advice on how to improve their skills

- a report resulting from their diagnostic assessment

- an individual learning plan

- a programme of learning relating to the national standards and matching their aims and aspirations

- full involvement in planning and reviewing their learning

- feedback and support on their progress

- flexible forms of learning which suit their needs and preferences

- a range of opportunities to acquire non-externally accredited achievements as a springboard to nationally recognised qualifications

- expert and impartial advice on progression routes to other education, training or employment opportunities.

What a learning organisation in e-learning should provide

All providers of literacy, numeracy and ESOL in an e-learning context must:

- prepare and undertake an annual self-assessment that informs their plans to address weaknesses and secure continuous improvement

- monitor, recognise and record all learner progress through non-externally accredited achievement as well as through national qualifications

- raise the level of competence of all teachers of literacy, numeracy and ESOl by offering opportunities for continuing professional development and access to programmes of training that lead to nationally recognised qualifications.

The Adult Basic Skills Strategy Unit is committed to ensuring that all learners seeking to improve their skills have access to high quality materials and support in literacy, numeracy and ESOL irrespective of past experience, skill level or learning context.

Help for Providers Preparing for Inspection

All organisations that provide teaching in literacy, numeracy and ESOL are required to undertake some form of self-assessment and will be inspected on a regular basis. In order to help providers produce the right kind of evidence, the following list can be used as a checklist for literacy, numeracy and ESOL teaching through e-learning.

Providers may also want to refer to the lists of points attached to the seven key questions from the Common Inspection Framework earlier in this Guide to help with this process.

HOW TO PREPARE FOR ASSESSMENT AND INSPECTION
- Work towards creating a prevailing institutional culture that is positive about using e-learning and ICT to teach literacy, numeracy and ESOL.

- Make sure that e-learning is seen as part of the core business of the organisation.

- Ensure that e-learning is explicitly referred to in charters and mission and vision statements and in strategic or organisational plans.

- Ensure that the college or organisation records, monitors and reviews the use of e-learning in literacy, numeracy and ESOL.

- Check that learner surveys and other data-gathering methods for literacy, numeracy and ESOL identify the use of and influence of e-learning experiences and outcomes.

- Ensure that the self-assessment report and strategy documents identify the role and use of e-learning in literacy, numeracy and ESOL.

- Check that data from the college or organisation's management information system on attendance, retention rates and progression are used to support judgements in the self-assessment report.

- Provide evidence that staff at all levels are being given training on the use of e-learning and on how they can support learners effectively in literacy, numeracy and ESOL.

- Ensure that libraries and resource centres also produce a self-assessment report that identifies the use of literacy, numeracy and ESOL e-learning resources.

- Ensure that student services, guidance services and learner support services produce a self-assessment report showing that e-learning resources are used for learning.

- Collect data on learner achievements, including qualifications in relation to e-learning.

- Use electronic progress-tracking.

- Provide opportunities for staff to become familiar and comfortable with ICT and to develop their skills.

- Ensure that the organisation and its staff understand the pedagogy of e-learning.

- Screen e-learning resources and make sure they meet the requirements of equality of opportunity policies.

- Create an 'anywhere, any time' approach to learning.

- Ensure that staff have access to appropriate ICT, for example, computers and electronic whiteboards.

- Ensure that all staff have Internet and email access to encourage the use of online forums and to ensure appropriate support for e-learners.

- Set up virtual support communities for staff.

- Use electronic guidance systems.

Webography

A *Skills for Life* Resource Guide

Electronic resources have a lot to offer learners and teachers in *Skills for Life*. They can be a good way to offer learners a chance to learn in an individual way and to practise valuable ICT skills at the same time.

The following tables (1–10) give examples of sites and organisations that can provide information about resources. The information here is not exhaustive, but readers are encouraged to use the websites given here as a starting point and to expand their knowledge by going beyond these suggestions.

Table 1. Organisations offering advice, information and resources.

Title	Website address	Comments
Adult Basic Skills Strategy Unit	www.dfes.gov.uk/readwriteplus	The website of the DfES Strategy Unit for all aspects relating to the *Skills for Life* strategy.
Adult Learning Inspectorate	www.ali.gov.uk	
Basic Skills Agency	www.basic-skills.co.uk	The leading authority on basic skills in the UK. There is a free basic skills magazine available online with a regular website guide.
Basic Skills Observatory	www.basic-skills-observatory.co.uk	A brand new resource area from the Basic Skills Agency.
BECTA/FERL	http://ferl.becta.org.uk	Practical resources and information provided by *Skills for Life* professionals.

Title	Website address	Comments
FENTO	www.fento.org.uk	
learndirect	www.learndirect.co.uk	
Institute of Education	www.ioe.ac.uk	A substantial resource of *Skills for Life* materials and other information.
National Institute of Adult Continuing Education	www.niace.org.uk	
National Research and Development Centre for Adult Literacy and Numeracy	www.nrdc.co.uk	Formed to research all aspects of adult basic skills teaching and learning as part of the *Skills for Life* strategy.
Office for Standards in Education	www.ofsted.gov.uk	
Qualifications and Curriculum Authority	www.qca.org.uk	
South Notts Webography	www.south-nottingham.ac.uk/21kproject/basicskillssites.htm	A webography of useful basic skills sites developed by South Nottingham College.
Talent	www.talent.ac.uk	A dedicated website for *Skills for Life* professionals.
The Workplace Basic Skills Network	www.lancs.ac.uk/wbsnet	Focuses on basic skills in the workplace.

Table 2. Awarding bodies offering Skills for Life accreditation.

Title	Website address	Comments
AQA	www.aqa.org.uk	Assessment and Qualifications Alliance.
CCEA	www.ccea.org.uk	Council for Curriculum Examinations and Assessment – relates to Northern Ireland.
City and Guilds	www.city_and_guilds.co.uk	
Edexcel	www.edexcel.org.uk	
LCCIEB	www.lccieb.com	London Chamber of Commerce and Industry Examinations Board.
NCFE	www.ncfe.org.uk	Northern Council for Further Education.
National Open College Network	www.nocn.ac.uk/ocn	
Oxford and Cambridge RSA	www.ocr.org.uk	

Table 3. Software and media suppliers.

Title	Website address	Comments
CTAD	www.ctad.co.uk	Suppliers of Target Skills and other learning resources for key and basic skills.
West Nottinghamshire College	www.westnotts.ac.uk	Basic and key skills assessments and learning resources.

Table 4. Classroom e-learning resources.

Website address	Comments
www.ahajokes.com	There are a lot of joke sites, but some are quite unpleasant. This is one that claims to be clean and safe (but still funny, well, some of the time).
www.aplusmath.com	
www.bbc.co.uk/webwise	
www.btinternet.com/-trifonovs	
www.dictionary.com	
www.funbrain.com	
www.murge.com	
www.puzzlemaker.com	
http://web/uvic.ca/hrd/hotpot	Software for those involved in educational use, providing that the end quizzes are hosted on the web.

Table 5. Literacy and ESOL websites.

Website address	Comments
www.bbc.co.uk/skillswise/words/index.shtml	A huge site for adult literacy and numeracy aimed at teachers and learners.
www.bbc.co.uk/radio4/routesofenglish/storysofar/programme3_1.shtml	Melvyn Bragg's *Routes of English* series is on the web with many lovely features, such as sound files to illustrate different dialects including the 'Ashington Burr'. A seriously useful resource to stimulate discussion about different Englishes, the rise and rise of estuary English etc. This link takes you to programme 3.
www.bluemountain.com	Web cards are a great activity for learners, are free and are relevant all year round. There are many sites – for a huge listing try a search engine, but this site is a good start (it had the marvellous *Santa's Amazing Holiday Snowrun*).

Website address	Comments
www.dictionary.com	This is a great site for much more than word work. An excellent activity for learners is to 'ask Dr Dictionary' any question about grammar. You'll get an answer from a human being. There's a daily interactive crossword and word search game.
www.educate.org.uk/teacher_zone/ classroom/literacy	The Schoolsnet is a superb resource for teachers and has lots of useful ideas, worksheets, activity plans and links. Although the activities are mainly school level, there's plenty that can be used or adapted for adults.
www.englishclub.net/quizzes	There's a great set of quizzes on this site.
www.literacytrust.org.uk	This National Literacy Trust site is excellent, with information, resources and discussions on literacy at all ages and in all settings.
www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk	Take your learners to the NHS Direct site, one of a growing number of authoritative medical sites. It's marvellous for Family Literacy. It covers healthy living, common conditions, symptoms using an interactive body map, and there are audio files in English, Bengali, Punjabi, Gujarati and Urdu. Look at the medicine chest – useful for both holidays and spelling challenges.
www.nifl.gov/lincs/whats_new/ flash_1_2000.html	A large US national literacy site with plenty of 'lincs' (sic).
www.paragraphpunch.com	Paragraph Punch lets you try some online tutoring in paragraph work. You can get quite a long way for free, but you have to pay for the whole package.

Website address	Comments
http://pw1.netcom.com/~rlederer	Richard Lederer is a verbivore; find out what that is at this site. He wrote a very good book called *Crazy English* and his website is full of things like: *Where did Noah keep his bees? In the ark hives, of course*. A must-see.
www.sbu.ac.uk/LLLU	The London Language and Literacy Unit site, perhaps the most important site for adult literacy professional issues.
www.Postcards.com	More web cards – on this site, you can find out your local weather forecast and send it as a postcard. Virtual cards are often multimedia – you can add music and sometimes your own voice. Use them tomorrow!
http://titania.cobuild.collins.co.uk/index.html	Collins COBUILD website has lots of useful free resources, especially for ESOL learners, including a multimedia dictionary (it will download sound files to help with pronunciation), the idiom of the day (today's was 'Hit the buffers') and a rather good definitions game. They give you a definition, you have to guess the word. This is a fascinating example of the way companies are giving away very useful things to promote their products, in this case, dictionaries. I recommend a visit – there's no attempt to trap you into buying anything.
www.warwick.ac.uk/staff/D.J.Wray	David Wray is Professor of Literacy Education at the University of Warwick. His site contains a mix of practical stuff and descriptions of research projects he has carried out.
www.webster.commnet.edu/HP/pages/ darling/grammar.htm	How about a spot of grammar? This is a very big and very comprehensive site with hundreds of exercises and quizzes on grammar. Embarrass yourself by attempting some of them.

Table 6. Bookshops.

Website address	Comments
www.amazon.co.uk	Amazon, the most famous Internet bookshop.
www.bookfinder.com, www.bibliofind.com, www.abebooks.com and usedbooksearch.co.uk	Just four of the sites that let you search for second-hand and out-of-print books (so you can find that copy of *Black's Writing Dictionary*).
www.sentex.net/~mmcadams/index.htm	Aspiring writers of hypertext (the stuff of the worldwide web and most computer-based books), might have a look at Mindy McAdam's famous site. Mindy is a journalist (and, incidentally, a professor of journalism at the University of Florida), and a real lover of hypertext (that is, text that lets you click on hyperlinks to navigate the document). At least try the quiz on this page. And ask her if she has a sense of humour.

Table 7. Numeracy websites.

Website address	Comments
http://members.aol.com/skillsworkshop/number2.htm	
www.bbc.co.uk/skillswise/numbers	
www.cne.gmu.edu/modules/dau/algebra/ basicarith/arith1_frm.html	This site helps with negative numbers.
www.dfes.gov.uk/statistics	
http://education.guardian.co.uk/netclass/schools/links/0,5607,81862,00.html	A good maths webography from the *Guardian* online. Have a look at the Adult Numeracy Network on the same site.
www.education-world.com/a_lesson/lesson045.shtml	

Website address	Comments
www.learner.org/exhibits/dailymath/index.html	Over the water, marvel at Math in Daily Life, a simple and gently interactive maths site. It has 'Exhibits' on gambling, cooking, population growth, decorating and savings, and a piece on the universal language of math (as *they* say). It's wordy, so you have to be quite literate, but the content is first rate.
www.quickmath.com/www02/pages/ modules/numbers/percentages/basic/ index.shtml www.ex.ac.uk/cimt/res2/calcs/calpcent.htm www.bbc.co.uk/scotland/revision/ maths/rev016.shtml www.mathslessons.co.uk/lessonplans/ percentages/title.htm www.netcomuk.co.uk/~jenolive/percent.html http://members.aol.com/ukhostmths/ mathson/maths/number/interactive_tests/ Percentages.htm http://coe.west.asu.edu/explorer/seeds/ staffdevelopment/Percentages.html http://www.hellam.net/maths/mathfun1.htm http://luna.spaceports.com/~sheilast/ pcent10.htm www.std.com/anpn	All these sites give resources on percentages.
www.teachingideas.co.uk/maths/ contents.htm	A sponsored site for schoolteachers, Maths Ideas is a great resource. Again, teachers of adults will find things that work or can be adapted, and parents can work with their kids on some exercises.

Table 8. Websites for specific learning difficulties.

Website address	Comments
www.afasic.org.uk	Focuses on helping children and adults with speech and language difficulties to strengthen their abilities.
www.bild.org.uk	Site of the British Institute for Learning Difficulties.
www.cast.org/bobby	A web-based tool that analyses the accessibility of web pages.
www.ctad.co.uk/basil	Basic Skills for Inclusive Learning (BASIL).
www.dyslexia.com	This site gives information and resources to support learners with dyslexia.
www.mld.co.uk	Provides links to sites connected with learning difficulties.

Table 9. *Skills for Life* professional development training courses.

Website address	Comments
www.baselineuk.com	Online for the Future is a practical online course for basic skills teachers originally developed by a partnership of 22 colleges across Hampshire, included colleges in Southampton, Portsmouth and the Isle of Wight.
www.city.ac.uk/conted/cpd.htm	City University offers e-learning courses for professionals in conjunction with London Central north **learndirect** Hub.
www.literacy.lancs.ac.uk	Part-time distance learning postgraduate Diploma and MA courses in basic skills.
www.sheffcol.ac.uk/lettol	LETTOL is an award-winning course that helps participants gain the skills needed to develop and teach online courses of all kinds.
www.sheffield.ac.uk	Part-time distance learning Diploma and MA courses in basic skills.

Table 10. Resources used in producing this Guide.

Title/Website address	Publisher
ALI Inspection Reports	ALI
Basic Skills Magazine March 2002	BSA
www.bbc.co.uk/skillswise	BBC
http://ferl.becta.org.uk	BECTA/FERL
*Delivering Skills for Life: The national strategy for improving adult literacy and numeracy skills (*the delivering *Skills for Life* pack).	DfES
Delivering Skills for Life: Success in adult literacy, numeracy and ESOL provision: A guide to support the Common Inspection Framework.	DfES
www.dfes.gov.uk/readwriteplus	DfES *Skills for Life* Strategy Unit
Bob Powell, Sarah Knight and Ros Smith *Managing Inspection and ILT.*	BECTA
Report of the Learning and Skills Council's Distributed and Electronic Learning Group.	LSC
www.nilta.org.uk	National Information and Learning Technologies Association (NILTA)
Skills for Life Handbook.	**learndirect**
Using ICT to Develop Literacy and Numeracy: A guide for learning centres working with adult learners.	Ufi Ltd, DfES and the BSA
Using ICT as a Hook.	**learndirect**: Ufi Northern Ireland

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THE RAISING STANDARDS SERIES

A Contextual Guide to Support Success in Literacy, Numeracy and ESOL Provision: Adult and Community Learning

A Contextual Guide to Support Success in Literacy, Numeracy and ESOL Provision: Further Education Colleges

A Contextual Guide to Support Success in Literacy, Numeracy and ESOL Provision: Learners with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities

A Contextual Guide to Support Success in Literacy, Numeracy and ESOL Provision: Prisons

A Contextual Guide to Support Success in Literacy, Numeracy and ESOL Provision: Work-based and Work-related Learning

Success in Adult Literacy, Numeracy and ESOL provision. A guide to Support the Common Inspection Framework (ref: GCIF02/2002)

Resources

Unless otherwise stated, all publications and other resources are available from DfES Publications Tel 0845 60 222 60, or visit the Read Write Plus website (www.dfes.gov.uk/readwriteplus).

A guide to the National Test in Adult Literacy and Numeracy. DfES (ref: DSFL/NT)

Access For All: Guidance on making the adult literacy and numeracy core curricula accessible. Basic Skills Agency Distribution (0870 60 02 400)

Adult ESOL Core Curriculum. Basic Skills Agency Distribution (0870 60 02 400)

Adult ESOL Core Curriculum: Interactive CD version of the Adult ESOL Core Curriculum. Online versions of the Adult ESOL Core Curriculum with *Access for All* can be accessed from the Read Write Plus website (www.dfes.gov.uk/readwriteplus/LearningInfrastructureCurricula), along with details for ordering CD copies. DfES (ref: CDAECC)

Adult Literacy Core Curriculum: Includes material on spoken communication. Basic Skills Agency Distribution (0870 60 02 400)

Adult Literacy Core Curriculum and *Access for All:* Interactive CD version of the Adult Literacy Core Curriculum, searchable and cross-referenced to *Access for All*. Online versions of the Adult Literacy Core Curriculum with *Access for All* can be accessed from the Read Write Plus website (www.dfes.gov.uk/readwriteplus/LearningInfrastructureCurricula), along with details for ordering CD copies. DfES (ref: CDALCC)

Adult Numeracy Core Curriculum. Basic Skills Agency Distribution (0870 60 02 400)

Adult Numeracy Core Curriculum and *Access for All:* Interactive CD version of the Adult Numeracy Core Curriculum cross-referenced to *Access for All*. Online versions of the Adult Numeracy Core Curriculum with *Access for All* can be accessed from the Read Write Plus website (www.dfes.gov.uk/readwriteplus/LearningInfrastructureCurricula), along with details for ordering CD copies. DfES (ref: CDANCC)

Adult Pre-entry Curriculum Framework for Literacy and Numeracy. Basic Skills Agency Distribution (0870 60 02 400)

Adult Pre-entry Curriculum Framework for Literacy and Numeracy: Interactive CD of the Adult Pre-entry Curriculum Framework for Literacy and Numeracy. Online versions of the Adult Pre-entry Curriculum Framework for Literacy and Numeracy can be accessed from the Read Write Plus website (www.dfes.gov.uk/readwriteplus/LearningInfrastructureCurricula), along with details for ordering CD copies. DfES (ref: CDAPCF)

Basic Skills for Adults with Learning Difficulties or Disabilities: A resource pack to support staff development in this area. Also available on CD. DfES

Breaking the Language Barriers: The report of the working group on English for Speakers of Other Languages. DfES (ref: BLB)

Delivering Skills for Life: A briefing pack comprising a booklet and CD that is designed to assist organisations as they prepare to deliver the new teaching and learning infrastructure. DfES (ref: DSFL/booklet)

Delivering Skills for Life Toolkit: A shelf-top library box containing nine Adult Basic Skills Strategy Unit publications and a CD. DfES (ref: DSFL)

Diagnostic Assessment: In June 2003, the diagnostic assessment materials will be available to people who attended the training events. Invitations to order additional packs will be sent to curriculum managers in June 2003 and bulk orders of materials will be distributed from July 2003. DfES (ref: DAM3 (literacy), DAM2 (numeracy))

Freedom to Learn: The report of the working group into basic skills needs for adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Available in large print. DfES (ref: FTLB)

Learning Materials: In June 2003, the learning materials will be sent to people who attended the training events. Invitations to order additional teacher packs and learner materials will be sent to curriculum managers in June 2003 and bulk orders of materials will be distributed from July 2003. DfES

Living our Lives: Life stories of 10 people with learning difficulties, a resource for learners and teachers. An audio CD is supplied with the books. DfES (ref: LOL)

National Standards for Literacy and Numeracy Skills. DfES (ref: NSALN)

On-line Mapping of Adult Literacy and Numeracy Standards to Occupational Standards: This DfES-funded project extends and enhances the BSA's Getting the Basics Right in… booklets, which map the adult literacy and numeracy standards to a range of occupational standards, working with a selection of sector skills councils. The on-line maps are intended for use in training and development for staff within each sector. The website is now live (www.dfes.gov.uk/readwriteplus/nosmapping). DfES

Pathways to Proficiency: Contains the results of the QCA's mapping report on the alignment of language proficiency scales for assessing competence in the English language. This includes tables comparing the equivalencies of the national standards with other language scales. A downloadable portable document format (pdf) version is available on the Read Write Plus website (www.dfes.gov.uk/readwriteplus/LearningInfrastructureAccreditation). DfES (ref: PTP)

Planning Learning, Recording Progress and Reporting Achievements: This project has now produced draft guidance for consultation, models of effective practice and advice on the funding and audit implications of planning learning and reporting achievements (PLRA). These are available on the Read Write Plus website (www.dfes.gov.uk/readwriteplus/LearningInfrastructurePlanningLearning). DfES

Self-advocacy Action Pack: A pack written for adults with learning difficulties on speaking up and self-advocacy. An audio CD is supplied with the pack. DfES (ref: SAAP)

Skills Explorer: A CD with literacy and numeracy activities for learners at Entry Level. DfES

Skills Explorer for British Sign Language Users: Practical literacy activities for British Sign Language users at Entry Level. DfES (ref: SEBSL)

Skills for Life: a guide to funding adult literacy and numeracy learning programmes 2002–2003. DfES (ref: SFNFG 02/03)

Skills for Life: the national strategy for improving adult literacy and numeracy skills. DfES (ref: SFLLN)

Skills for Life: the national strategy for improving adult literacy and numeracy skills. Focus on delivery to 2007. DfES (ref: SFLNS2)

Subject Specifications for teachers of adult literacy and numeracy. DfES (ref: SS01/2002)

Subject Specifications for teachers of English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL). DfES (ref: ESOL/SS01/2002)

Tests and ESOL Qualifications: A detailed list of all accredited ESOL qualifications and the awarding body requirements for 2002 to 2004 is available on the teaching and learning section of the Read Write Plus website (www.dfes.gov.uk/readwriteplus/ESOLQualificationsReport).

Test and Qualifications in Literacy and Numeracy: This overview table of information on the QCA-accredited Entry Level literacy and numeracy qualifications is available on the Read Write Plus website (www.dfes.gov.uk/readwriteplus/AdultLiteracyEntryLevelQualifications and www.dfes.gov.uk/readwriteplus/AdultNumeracyEntryLevelQualifications). DfES

The National Test Toolkit: The toolkit, incorporating the Move On course outlines and practice tests, will be available in June 2003. A specification for a three-year Move On project has been drawn up. An overview table of information comparing awarding body arrangements for the national tests is available on the Read Write Plus website (www.dfes.gov.uk/readwriteplus/bank.cfm?section=523). DfES (ref: SFLNTT)

Working with Refugees and Asylum Seekers: Support materials for ESOL providers: This pack provides information and training materials for all organisations and teachers offering ESOL provision to refugees and asylum seekers in the post-compulsory education sector. It includes sections on Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs), learners, setting up ESOL provision, training, resources and sources of further information. It will be useful for anyone who works with refugees and asylum seekers and particularly helpful for organisations with little experience of this work. A downloadable pdf version is available on the Read Write Plus website (www.dfes.gov.uk/readwriteplus/teachingandlearning). DfES (ref: WRASPACK)

Yesterday I Never Stopped Writing: Guidance on developing community-based provision for adults with learning difficulties or disabilities. DfES (ref: YNSW)

GLOSSARY

Achievement
This does not necessarily mean the achievement of qualifications. It includes measurable improvement and progression in literacy, numeracy and for language skills in vocational, academic, social and personal contexts.

Adults
In education, adults include all learners after the age of 16; outside education, 18 is often taken as the benchmark age for adulthood, since it is the legal age of majority.

Appropriate
Describes a text, word, utterance, style, method or choice that is suitable for its intended audience, form or purpose. 'Appropriate' incorporates the idea that different contexts require different treatments and is in this respect to be differentiated from 'correct', which is associated more with the right grammatical formulation of an expression, or the 'right' choice or response, etc.

Assessment
Means collecting information in order to make decisions. Assessment should provide the information required to build and maintain a profile of the learner. This will enable teachers and trainers to establish and review both the learner's requirements and the learning opportunities that can be provided for him or her. It will also provide feedback to the learner on his or her progress.

Assistant
An assistant is likely to be the person providing additional training or teaching in literacy, numeracy and/or ESOL support.

Audience
The people addressed by a message in any medium. The term includes listeners, readers of print, film/TV audiences, and users of information technology.

Basic Skills
A shorthand to describe the skills which are the focus of the *Skills for Life* strategy.

Capacity
Availability of opportunities for literacy and numeracy learning.

Coherence
The underlying logical connectedness of a text, whereby concepts and relationships are relevant to each other and it is possible to make plausible inferences about underlying meaning.

Common Inspection Framework
Sets out the principles applicable to the inspections of post-16 non-higher education and training that meet the requirements under Part III of the Learning and Skills Act 2000. Inspections are carried out by the Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED) and the Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI).

The Framework also includes the more specific evaluation requirements that apply to the inspection of individual providers of education and training. The requirements reflect the principles and the general requirements of the Act for Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools (HMCI) and the Chief Inspector of Adult Learning to keep the Secretary of State informed about:

- the quality of education and training;

- the standards achieved by those receiving that education and training;

- whether financial resources made available to those providing that education and training are managed efficiently and used in a way that provides value for money.

The specific requirements for other types of inspections will be guided by the principles in the Framework insofar as they are appropriate. *The Common Inspection Framework for Inspecting Post-16 Education and Training February 2001.*

Common	Used to describe words, signs and symbols, patterns of spelling and grammatical constructions that occur frequently in the learner's everyday experiences, and also units, measures, instruments, tools, etc. that are widely used in everyday life in non-specialist contexts.
Context	The non-linguistic situation in which spoken or written language is used, and in which the learner is operating.
Curriculum	A planned approach to learning made up of identified activities.
Curriculum Framework	A document that sets out the entitlement to learning against which clear and detailed steps can be planned to enable learners to progress in a structured way.
Data	Information of a quantitative nature consisting of counts or measurements.
Discrete literacy, numeracy and ESOL provision	Where literacy, numeracy and ESOL is the main learning programme, literacy, numeracy and ESOL provision is inspected under area of learning.
Disability	*The Disability Discrimination Act* 1995 defines a disabled person as someone who has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)	The ability to understand and employ English language in daily activities at home, at work and in the community to achieve one's goals, and to develop one's knowledge and potential.
Feedback	The ongoing reaction given by an audience to those communicating, which helps them evaluate the success of their communication. Feedback may be verbal or non-verbal (e.g. through facial expressions or action).
Images	Pictures, photographs, graphs, charts or graphical representations.
Indicators	- the specific learning outcomes towards which a learner will work. - the skills, knowledge and understanding that a learner will not only have acquired but also be capable of using and applying when he or she has been assessed to have achieved these outcomes. Indicators do not prescribe delivery or dictate the activities a learner will be doing.
Individual learning plan	The output of initial assessment, setting out what the learner plans to learn, by when, the ways he or she will undertake the learning and the resources required to bring the plan into action.
Initial assessment	This may include initial screening to identify whether learners require additional support. It may also include diagnostic assessment to identify the specific areas of literacy, numeracy and ESOL learners need to work on to achieve their main learning goal.
Key Skills	Literacy, numeracy and/or language learning concentrates on developing skills, knowledge and understanding, whereas key skills concentrates on their application. The key skills are Communication, Application of Number, IT, Improving Own Learning and Performance, Working with Others, and Problem Solving.
Learner	In relation to the literacy, numeracy and ESOL curricula, a learner is anyone over 16 undergoing a programme of education or training in any context.
Learning infrastructure	The term describes the new *Skills for Life* framework for delivering adult literacy, language and numeracy learning programmes. The key elements are: - National standards for adult literacy and numeracy, upon which all learning programmes are based. - The Adult Literacy Core Curriculum, Adult Numeracy Core Curriculum, Adult ESOL Core Curriculum and the Pre-Entry Curriculum Framework.

- The *Access for All* guidance manual that supports teachers in meeting the needs of learners with learning difficulties and disabilities.

- Screening, initial and diagnostic assessment materials for adult literacy, language and numeracy.

- Systems for developing individual learning plans (ILPs).

- Systems for recording learner progress and reporting learner achievements.

- National qualifications for adult literacy, language and numeracy, including the national literacy and numeracy tests, and systems for making these qualifications more accessible.

Learning objectives	Literacy, numeracy and/or language qualifications and other learning objectives that enhance learners' employment and career prospects.
Learning support	In relation to the literacy, numeracy and ESOL curricula, is the support provided to anyone over 16 undergoing a programme of education or training in any context.
Literacy, language and numeracy	The ability to read, write and speak in English and to use mathematics at a level necessary to function at work and in society in general.
Literacy	The ability to understand and employ printed information in daily activities at home, at work and in the community to achieve one's goals, and to develop one's knowledge and potential.
Literacy, numeracy and/or ESOL support	Learning that forms part of the learner's main learning programme. This could be offered on an individual or group basis in separate sessions or as part of the mainstream learning. It may include additional support for learners with specific learning difficulties.
Medium	The way in which language is transmitted from one person, or an agency, to another. The three basic media of language are phonic (speech), graphic (writing) and signing (sign language for hearing impaired people). The term is also used to denote the means of communication (e.g. television, telephone, film, radio, computer, press).
Mentor	A person providing additional support and guidance.
Milestones	Significant points along the continuum in this curriculum framework that have relevance to assessing a learner's attainment: that help identify the learner's literacy and numeracy skills at the most appropriate of these points.

National Qualifications Framework	The list of qualifications that have been accredited by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Qualifications are organised into three categories – general, vocation-related/vocational and occupational – and assigned to one of six levels (according to degree of knowledge, skills and understanding, autonomy, analysis and creative thinking within the qualification).
New Qualifications Framework for teachers of literacy, numeracy and ESOL	New qualifications have been introduced for teachers (Subject Specialists) at Level 4 of the NQF, and Subject Support staff (Level 3) in Literacy and Numeracy, available from Autumn 2002. Equivalent ESOL qualifications will be available from Autumn 2003. A new qualification for Adult Learner Support (Literacy/Numeracy/ESOL) at Level 2 will also be available from Autumn 2002.
	Summary of new qualifications
	Level 4 – Certificate for Adult Literacy/Numeracy/ESOL **Subject Specialists**
	Level 3 – Certificate for Adult Literacy/Numeracy/ESOL **Subject Support**
	Level 2 – Certificate for Adult Literacy/Numeracy/ESOL **Learner Support**
Numeracy	The ability to understand and employ numerical information in daily activities at home, at work and in the community to achieve one's goals, and to develop one's knowledge and potential.
Personal development skills	Key skills and skills that enhance learners' employment prospects.
Progression	The measurable improvement or development in learning or teaching that a learner or teacher has achieved.
Provider	Any organisation providing education and training.
Range	A measure of spread in statistics; the difference between the greatest and the least in a set of numerical data.
Skills for Life	In March 2001 the Government published *Skills for Life*, the national strategy for improving adult literacy and numeracy skills.
Style	A difficult term to define because of its many uses, but it can be defined as the selection of a set of linguistic features from all the possibilities in a language, in relation to context, purpose, audience.
Subject Specifications	Definitions of the knowledge, personal skills and understanding required by teachers and those who support teaching and learning in adult literacy and numeracy programmes. See *National Qualifications Framework, Teaching infrastructure.*

Teaching infrastructure	The new *Skills for Life* framework for delivering adult literacy, language and numeracy teaching programmes.

The key elements are:

- *New Subject Specifications for Teachers of Adult Literacy and Numeracy* (from 1 September 2002) and *English for Speakers of Other Languages* (from 1 September 2003) at Levels 3 and 4 of the National Qualifications Framework (from August 2002). These documents outline the essential skills and knowledge required of teachers and subject support staff involved in literacy, numeracy and ESOL provision.

- New qualifications for teachers and support staff involved with literacy, numeracy and ESOL provision, that recognise the subject specifications.

- New Level 2 Qualifications in Adult Learner Support to cater for a variety of support roles in literacy, numeracy and ESOL provision.

- Training programmes for teachers in the use of *Access for All* and the Core Curriculum and professional development programmes for existing staff.

ACRONYMS

ABSSU	Adult Basic Skills Strategy Unit
ALI	Adult Learning Inspectorate
BSA	Basic Skills Agency
ESOL	English for Speakers of Other Languages
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
LLDD (or SLDD)	Learners with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities or Students with Learning Difficulties and or/Disabilities. It is recommended that both are shown in full instead of using the acronym of LLDD or SLDD.
LSC	Learning and Skills Council
OFSTED	Office for Standards in Education
Ufi/Learndirect	University for Industry

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Skills for Life: the national
strategy for improving adult
literacy and numeracy skills
is available from the
read write plus website –
www.dfes.gov.uk/readwriteplus

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