

# English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)

Summary Report 2015 - 2016

An analysis of information provided by Community Planning Partnerships.

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# Introduction

The Scottish Government's "Welcoming our Learners: Scotland's ESOL Strategy 2015-2020" sets out the importance of supporting Scottish residents for whom English is not their first language, to enable them to contribute and participate in the society in which they live.

The English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) programme covers the four skills of speaking, writing, listening and reading, as well as offering an introduction to various aspects of everyday life in Scotland.

To support the delivery of the ESOL programme in line with this national strategy, funding of £1,455,000 was allocated to Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs) during 2015-16.

ESOL providers were invited to bid for funding to deliver programmes within their community planning area. All bids received were reviewed by the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) and Education Scotland to ensure they were in line with the strategy objectives and were directly related to ESOL before funding was administered.

This review now considers how funding has been used during 2015-16, based on the returns from end of year reports that CPPs were required to submit. This review provides an analysis of the evidence provided from these reports.

## Overview in Figures

- In 2015-16, £1,455,000 was allocated to Community Planning Partnerships to support the delivery of ESOL programmes
- As a result of this 10,401 learning opportunities were available<sup>1</sup>
- 2238 learners achieved SQA accreditation which represents just over 20% of the total number of learning opportunities made available
- 50 practitioners achieved accreditation for continuing professional development opportunities
- A total of 135 projects were proposed for the fund. 117 are reported as being complete giving an 86% completion rate

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<sup>1</sup> Although this may appear to be a decrease from previous years, comparisons with previous years is not possible. The figure does not include the number of participants taking part in one-off events or practitioners undertaking training whereas in previous years these numbers were included.

# ESOL Provision in Context

This section provides a summary of provision offered by the partner providers in each Community Planning Partnership area. Providers include college, community learning and development (CLD) and third sector organisations.

## **ESOL through Community Learning and Development Partners**

Community based provision can help learners to overcome a number of barriers including accessing provision locally through classes being run in local community centres. This is especially the case in large geographic areas where pockets of learners can be found across one local authority area. 1:1 provision has been helpful to accommodate learners with specific ESOL needs such as the need to improve language skills in order to practise in a health related profession (Argyll and Bute). Community based provision also covers non-accredited provision at beginner level as well as higher levels.

Community based provision can be offered with a focus on helping adult learners return to learning (particularly those who are literacies learners or at beginner level) and by doing this in neutral and accessible locations such as libraries and community centres. For those looking to progress from this context, the college provider will provide accredited learning options. Third sector organisations provide other learning opportunities and offer different ways in which language skills can be practised and extended (Clackmannanshire). Community outreach models also exist where provision is locally based using community centres, schools and voluntary sector venues (Dundee) and where possible classes are offered in the evening to meet the needs of learners. Outreach work happens in partnership recognising the needs of specific learners with literacy learning needs.

Community learning and development (CLD) providers also deliver programmes with a focus on employability with some working in partnership with the local Jobcentre Plus office (Clackmannanshire). ESOL is contextualised to the language needed for CV writing, completing job applications and interview processes.

Partnerships are ensuring that a range of accredited and non-accredited ESOL provision is being offered (Dumfries and Galloway, Western Isles) and there is a clear emphasis on coordination to enable smooth progression pathways:

*From Dundee City Council and Dundee International Women's Centre provision, 7 students progressed to ESOL at Dundee and Angus College. Of those continuing in ESOL at DIWC/DCC, some have expressed an interest in doing Computer and Driving Theory classes... while others have become involved in other learning opportunities e.g. cycling group, gardening group and attending job shops. Learners progress to voluntary work, other learning opportunities and employment. (Dundee)*

Where provision in the community is delivered in the main by the local authority CLD provider, it is offered at different levels to reflect the different levels of learners.

*“6 ESOL groups taught at levels from ESOL Literacy, Access 2, Access 3 and Intermediate 1 with each group delivering ESOL at a single level” (East Dunbartonshire)<sup>2</sup>*

Other areas are able to group the profiles of learners under broad categories such as those needing certification for citizenship and those needing to improve their skills for everyday communication and the workplace (Falkirk CLD).

Non-accredited ESOL in the community has a capacity-building focus. Providers delivering in this context have a strong awareness of the need to help reduce isolation of some learners and equip them with language skills to help them become more independent, access local services and understand what services are available. As providers focus on these aspects of learners' lives, it helps to increase learners' understanding of life in Scotland as well as go some way towards their integration in local communities.

Activities supporting this include:

- A two night summer camp organised for ESOL learners and learners in an employability programme. (Angus)
- A trip to the Scottish Parliament (North Lanarkshire)
- Learning English through cooking (North Lanarkshire)
- Book groups – attended by local literacies learners and ESOL learners

“Learners report that participating in book groups has helped them to understand the way people talk in Ayrshire and to learn new and interesting words.”

## **ESOL through Colleges**

Colleges continue to deliver accredited provision giving learners the opportunity to work towards a qualification. Accreditation includes the suite of SQA ESOL qualifications ranging from Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) level 2 to level 6. It also includes in some places the delivery of the SQA National Certificate in ESOL for Employability which is available at SCQF levels 4 and 5. ESOL learners also have access to other qualifications including Core Skills – Working with Others, Problem Solving, ICT and Preparing for Work and Event Organisation – some of these have also been offered through CLD partners.

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<sup>2</sup> The levels referred to equate to Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) levels 2, 3 and 4.

Colleges continue to offer a mixture of full-time, part-time and part-time evening provision which recognises the need for flexibility to support progression of students completing other part-time study at a lower level. Accessing learning at higher levels to support progression also supports their access to employment or study at higher levels in other vocational or academic areas (Dundee and Angus).

The focus on accredited learning enables learners to progress through the different language levels which has an impact in terms of their employability skills (if they are looking for work) and their study skills (enabling them to progress to further learning and vocational courses). Learners also have the benefit of being able to access wider college services offered to all students. This includes childcare, careers guidance, counselling and extended learning resources. Consideration is also given to delivering a range of levels and a range of modes to ensure classes are accessible and are appropriate to the learners. In some places, the College provider works in partnership with CLD in the local authority to deliver accredited provision in the community (South Lanarkshire).

The impact of improved language skills is varied as shown in the example below:

*As students' English improves they gain access to a wider range of mainstream jobs. For example: one student withdrew because she gained employment first as a supply teacher and then full time employment as a Primary School teacher, another student withdrew because of a promotion within SSE energy and acceptance onto a part-time degree course at Inverness UHI. A number of older students (50-60 age band) gained employment in the hotel and hospitality sector. Only two students out of the cohort were unemployed. More students were gaining permanent employment enabling them to progress in other areas for example acquiring private housing. One student was told that her English had improved sufficiently that she did not require a translator to attend meetings linked to her children's education. Students provided very positive feedback on learning and teaching. Two non-vocational students from the previous year completed a vocational qualification this year. (West Highland College, UHI)*

## **Partnership Working**

Strong partnership working is also being reported where college and community providers are developing learning and teaching materials together as well as team teaching classes to help bridge gaps between community and college provision giving the learner an opportunity to become familiar with those involved in ESOL delivery in college helping to promote a smooth progression pathway to college provision (East Ayrshire). Efforts are made by college providers to engage with learners in the community such as visits to classes in the community to provide information (West Lothian). Attempts to build bridges between the sectors was also through continuing professional development (CPD) opportunities - this has been done through practice sharing events organised by local ESOL partnerships and has also involved learners. Where this happened in West Dunbartonshire, college learners would determine content and publicity for events aimed at learners in the community.

## Young ESOL Learners

Providers are alert to the risk of young people disengaging from learning as a result of the language barrier. A number of areas are working with schools to support young ESOL learners. In Shetland, college staff are working in partnership with school service staff to identify young people in the senior phase who would benefit from college ESOL provision. This partnership gives the opportunity for young people to gain certification for their English language skills supporting them in the transition to further study or work. A similar model can be seen in Fife where other partners included in supporting young ESOL learners are Skills Development Scotland and guidance staff in schools. In Edinburgh, the partnership includes community learning and development providers as well as the college provider to plan programmes with English as an Additional Language services to support young people to develop and improve their English language skills. Certification includes the SQA ESOL qualifications and the National Certificate (NC) ESOL for Employability. In Perth and Kinross, providers worked with young learners using a project based approach with a focus on employability leading to the co-production of a website: <http://www.me-mylife-myfuture.net/>.

## Employability

Employability remains a key focus in ESOL provision across Scotland with many providers running programmes with employability embedded and in some cases includes the delivery of the NC ESOL for Employability at SCQF levels 4 and 5. Other key areas embedded in language learning include:

- CV writing
- Covering letters
- Understanding the language in application forms
- Filling in application forms
- Listening and speaking skills for job interviews - being able to talk about skills and qualifications
- Project related learning involving active engagement with local employers
- Partnership working between providers and other agencies to offer volunteer opportunities to learners
- Digital literacy skills - using the internet and social media to apply for and find work
- Understanding the employment and job search process in Scotland

All providers running programmes with an employability focus report positive outcomes including:

- Learners have improved language skills and can demonstrate this to employers
- Learners have achieved recognised qualifications and are enabled to take on further vocational qualifications
- Learners have gained work experience through volunteering
- Learners have gained employment
- Learners have retained employment
- Learners have access to a wider range of job opportunities

## **ESOL in the Workplace**

Delivery of ESOL by partners continues to happen in the workplace where employers have a number of workers with English as a second/other language. This is reported with varying degrees of success due to factors outwith providers' control. Workplace ESOL courses have a significant impact on people already in work. Reports show that it can help workers to become more effective in the workplace and the marked increase in confidence in using the language and increased levels of English has meant that interaction in customer facing roles has improved.

The wider impact of workplace ESOL learning is also reported and has included raising awareness to employers of the English language support that is available and increased motivation of learners in the workplace to pursue further learning or career opportunities. Some providers have also been successful in delivering accredited ESOL classes in the workplace.

However delivering in this context remains a challenge as shown in the reports for 15-16. Where providers have proposed a plan of delivery for people in workplaces, changes in circumstances have then led to a low or no demand for this provision once it has been organised. Companies are also reported as having re-located changing the context to a redundancy situation with a sharp shift in focus to employability skills and the language needed for this.

Where there is success in delivery in a workplace, common overarching outcomes included: improved communication between "native" and "non-native" speakers of English in the workplace; improved understanding of workplace language including language related to health and safety, pay and payslips, sickness, holidays and giving and understanding instructions. A focus on non-work related language also enabled workers to have general conversations with colleagues on a social basis.



## ESOL and Family Learning

Over a third of partnerships report carrying out activity related to Family Learning for ESOL learners. The focus is on improving the language skills of parents and involves parents and children coming together to develop their language skills on agreed themes. Outcomes of this provision include:

- General improvement of language and communication skills of parents
- Improvement in children's learning
- Reduced isolation of families in communities through fostering of relations with other parents and wider school communities
- Improved integration of families in local communities and their ability to access services
- Increased involvement of parents in their children's learning - crucial for the transition stages between nursery and primary

Wider outcomes are also reported including learners moving into employment and onto college courses.

Provision is mainly offered by CLD partner providers linking with schools and nurseries. Provision is offered in local community venues to ensure courses can be accessed locally. In some cases, providers are also offering accreditation including ESOL and Core Skills qualifications. There are also other opportunities for parents to access other learning as well as becoming more involved in their child's school life where providers are reporting that parents have joined the school parent council. (Shetland)

## Building Capacity of the Sector

Over a third of the partnerships reported on professional development activity that included recruiting and training volunteer ESOL tutors. In some areas, providers are delivering the SQA PDA Introduction to Tutoring ESOL (SCQF level 6) making reference to the Professional Development Framework for ESOL Practitioners in Scotland. Other training in relation to this framework has also included practitioners undertaking ESOL Assessment and the Scottish Framework (a unit at SCQF level 9) contributing to the SQA PDA in Applied Practitioner Studies in TESOL (SCQF level 10). Although the proportion reporting on introductory training is much greater than those reporting on continuing professional development.

Common outcomes stated for the delivery of volunteer tutor training include:

- Increased opportunities for ESOL learners to practise their language skills outwith the classroom setting (through the 1:1/buddying schemes)
- Increased support to ESOL learners in the community giving them the opportunity to improve their language skills in a friendly, relaxed and informal setting
- Increase resource of ESOL Volunteer Tutor Assistants

Providers also report on a range of other opportunities for professional learning and development. This has included collaborative events bringing tutors together for training sessions. For example, partnerships across the Ayrshire local authorities organised a series of Pan-Ayrshire training days covering topics such as ESOL Initial Assessment, ESOL Literacy, Understanding Second Language Acquisition, Understanding the Changing Demographic of ESOL Learners in Ayrshire and a session on sharing practice.

As part of continuous improvement, South Ayrshire have also taken on board feedback from tutors highlighting a more immediate need to address the training needs of ESOL practitioners in the use of online resources with learners in order to successfully facilitate online self-study with ESOL learners.

Other existing opportunities are also accessed by ESOL practitioners including IV and Assessor training, SQA' s Conducting the Assessment Process and attending SQA training on delivering the new national ESOL qualifications.

Planned training sessions can be challenging in the face of continuous restructuring, but partnerships such as Edinburgh have a strong understanding of their development needs and seek to address these. Furthermore, they have opened up the training opportunities to practitioners in other local authority areas. In the past, participants have come from the Lothians, Fife, Borders, Glasgow, Dundee and South Lanarkshire.

West Dunbartonshire and Dumfries and Galloway also report on tutors meeting to share practice or to have a focus on professional development. These sessions provide the opportunity to raise awareness of and embed national resources into practice such as the use of the ESOL Initial Assessment Guide and the Adult ESOL Curriculum Framework.

The Workers' Educational Association (WEA) in Highland has successfully delivered Language Awareness Training for Frontline Staff, a two week online course which has attracted staff from health, local government, social enterprise and third sectors. The course has proven to be very effective in helping participants to understand the range of ESOL needs that service users might have and to find out about the range of ESOL provision and providers that service users could be directed towards to get support for their language skills.

## Developments in 2015-2016

Partnerships are reporting on where they see the greatest demand. Recent developments suggest that demand for provision is greater at the lower levels i.e. SCQF level 2. Falkirk, Fife and Inverclyde all note in their reports the increase in learners at beginner and literacies level in their areas.

The changes made by the Home Office on accepted language tests have resulted in only two approved secure test centres existing in Scotland. The tests are restricted to two approved test providers which do not include SQA. This has resulted in extremely limited access for learners looking to improve their language skills and show evidence of this for immigration purposes.

Partnerships were asked to report on any impact as a result to the changes in language requirements set by the Home Office for applications for citizenship. The key points noted include:

- the cost of taking the approved tests
- the cost in travelling to the approved test centres from areas out with Edinburgh and Glasgow
- the arrangements that need to be in place (childcare/work commitments) in order to go and take the test and
- the support requested by learners for preparation for these tests (which can be time consuming and costly for providers)

However, some partnerships have begun to address some of these barriers including:

- the development of materials for preparation courses for the B1<sup>3</sup> tests (Orkney)
- preparatory courses for the Life in the UK test (Shetland)
- the mapping of SQA ESOL to the B1 tests (Argyll and Bute) and
- B1 Preparation Workshops (East Renfrewshire)

One particular difficulty reported by the Edinburgh partnership is learners in beginner and elementary level provision who need to sit a B1 exam (to avoid deportation in some cases) and who are not at the required level to readily pass. This can be stressful for both the learner and the lecturer as it puts both under a lot of pressure and learners can have unrealistic expectations about how fast they can progress to the required level and may be under pressure from family members to improve quickly. Attempts to address this have included building in the speaking topics in course programmes and supporting learners by giving them extra practice in flexible learning time. Volunteers are also deployed to work with learners needing the certification but who are unable to attend a class. Workshops focussing on the B1 test at training days also helps to support volunteers' tutors in their role. The Edinburgh Partnership reports an 80% success rate with this approach.

Partnerships are also reporting on some of the work they are involved in with supporting the recent arrival of Syrian refugee families under the Home Office Vulnerable Person's Relocation Scheme. More information is given in the Case Studies section of this report.

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<sup>3</sup> Common European Framework of Reference for Languages:  
<http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/sites/default/files/cefr-en.pdf>

Changes to the welfare system have been reflected in reports where providers are supporting learners resulting in courses embedding digital literacy skills to support learners adapt to the changes (Fife, East Renfrewshire).

Evidence can also be seen from the reports of the embedding of initial assessment processes with providers reporting on designated times and sessions for these (Clackmannanshire).

## Strategic Objectives

The refreshed ESOL Strategy for Scotland<sup>4</sup> is aligned to overarching strategic objectives for Adult Learning<sup>5</sup>. Providers are reporting on the work they are doing which supports the strategic objectives of the refreshed strategy.

Providers have reported on how learners have been involved at influencing policy at local level.

### ESOL learners talk to Shetland's Commission on Tackling Inequalities

ESOL learners A and B recently made a presentation to Shetland's Commission on Tackling Inequalities about the challenges they have experienced since moving to Shetland. Learner A is from Italy and has been in Shetland for 8 months. Learner B is from Portugal and has been here for 4 months. They talked about isolation and difficulties integrating socially into the community. They talked about difficulties finding employment, the weather, the lack of places to meet after 5.30 pm, the high cost of cultural and sporting activities and shortage of affordable housing. They spoke of difficulties accessing affordable childcare with no family or friends to provide support. However through attending English classes at Adult Learning, Learner A described how she has built her confidence and increased her work skills. Learner B spoke about how the Library and Adult Learning classes provide a means to meet others and develop friendships. The Commission's report was published in March 2016 (link below). Both learners back in their respective ESOL classes spoke of how they appreciated being asked to be part of such an important event, how it made them feel welcome and listened to and provided new networking opportunities in the local community.

[http://www.shetland.gov.uk/equal-shetland/documents/OnDaLevel\\_Summary.pdf](http://www.shetland.gov.uk/equal-shetland/documents/OnDaLevel_Summary.pdf)

Providers have given examples of how they are supporting learners in their learning journeys and ensuring access to provision.

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<sup>4</sup> [Welcoming Our Learners: Scotland's ESOL Strategy 2015-2020](#)

<sup>5</sup> [Adult Learning in Scotland: Statement of Ambition](#)

## Cairngorm Learning Partnership: ESOL in a Rural District

The biggest barrier to learning for rural residents is the time and cost of travel. The nearest college or large town for Badenoch learners is 1 to 1.5 hours away adding 2-3 hours to the learner's time away from work or family and friends. The cost of a return journey averages £23. The majority of the ESOL learners in the Badenoch area work in the hospitality trade, putting them on, or close to, the minimum wage.

A further barrier to our learners is that the hospitality trade requires the flexibility to rota employees to fit the busy times of the day or week and bookings for events or large parties can be received quite close to the event date. For these reasons rotas are often done only the week before the working week so our learners do not know in advance when their day off will be. This can make commitment to a course run at a college or larger town difficult for our learners, especially as travel adds a further 2-3 hours to the learner's time out of work.

We spoke to the employers as well as the learners discussed the most suitable time of day for the course and the most suitable location taking into account the travel needs within Badenoch of the learners to ensure they could access the course. Despite this, within 2 weeks of the courses starting several of our learners stopped attending. When we asked why, we found that even the extra 15 minutes travel each way was difficult to fit round their rotas. We spoke to the employers again and the other learners in the group and moved one of the courses to one of the employer's premises. Attendance improved until later in the year when the hospitality pattern changed. This time it was the day of the week that no longer suited the learners. Again with agreement from the whole learner group, we changed the day of the week to allow maximum attendance. The small numbers in the group and the ability of the tutor to adjust teaching days and locations allowed us to overcome these barriers as they came up and provided the learners with sessions they could access as easily as possible.

Providers are also reporting on the wider impact of ESOL learning:

### New College Lanarkshire Learner

An ESOL learner who came to Scotland in January 2016 has successfully completed an accredited ESOL programme at New College Lanarkshire. This learner quickly recognised that he needed to improve his English skills and the challenge he faced integrating into his local community. As a result, he enrolled in the college ESOL programme and said:

*"The programme really improved my English skills, especially my grammar. The support of the lecturer and mixing with other nationalities in the class has really helped me. I am more confident in my communication skills and I have even picked up a few Scottish words and sayings along the way!"*

X has a fascinating background as an award winning sports person, having represented his country for over five years, performing and coaching all over the world. With the help of improved language and communication skills, he is putting these skills to good use and is volunteering to help other young people in his community improve their fitness and gymnastic skills. Undertaking the programme has improved his personal, community, family and work life and he is now looking at other programmes which will develop and improve his employment and promotion prospects.

X says, “I would encourage anyone who needs help to join their local ESOL programmes in college and in their community. I know these skills will help me further my own career in Scotland and I am planning to enrol in a higher level ESOL programme to help me further.”

## Unmet Demand

Partnerships were asked to report on unmet demand in their areas for the period July – September 2016. Unmet demand was defined as:

### **Potential learners who are looking to access provision but have been unable to do so.**

While partnerships reported on numbers of unmet demand within this period, it is recognised that this number can change unexpectedly because of the transient nature of those looking to learn English.

Providers also reported a variety of ways in which unmet demand was recorded. This included the use of existing management information/performance systems, direct enquiries, engagement with employers and community profiling. In Glasgow where unmet demand has been consistently high, a unique system has been developed where all partner providers are using a Single Access Register to record any new people looking to access ESOL courses within the city.

Just under a third of partnerships did not report any unmet demand. For some of these partners there are no systems in place to record this specifically. Also for some of these partners, while there is no official record of people looking to access classes but are unable to do so, they are cautious about promoting services too widely because the budget for provision is restricted.

The data requested in October 2016 asked for further information on the type of unmet demand that providers were reporting. It showed that the majority of unmet demand was due to lack of capacity. No appropriate class type accounted for 11% and is related to location of classes, specific type of classes and timing of when learners want to access classes. No appropriate class level accounted for less than 2%. Other reasons that were stated included work commitments of learners and their shift patterns, tutor availability in specific locations, high demand in particular school community areas, physical access to class location due to disability, learners not yet assessed, lack of teaching capacity, lack of viable numbers to run a class, lack of funding, transport issues and other commitments.

# Conclusions and Considerations

- Partnerships' End of Year Reports for 2015-2016 show a high number of successful learning programmes across the different sectors
- All Partnerships continue to support learners under the key contexts for learning that includes personal life (including family), citizenship, employability/work and lifelong learning
- Partnerships are improving how they report on the wider impact that ESOL learning has had on learners
- Partnerships continue to address issues of accessibility and take account of additional support needs
- Unmet demand continues to be reported by a majority of areas. Partnerships should ensure they are looking at different ways to address levels of unmet demand
- Partnerships are increasingly recognising the contributions to strategic objectives in the national ESOL Strategy as well as meeting their local objectives. Going forward, all partnerships should continue to look at this in their planning of provision
- Partnerships are reporting on successful programmes of delivery but should also consider how else these successes can be shared and promoted so that other partnership areas can learn from or replicate successful models and/or processes. Education Scotland will work with local ESOL partnerships to promote and share successes to support the improvement of practice

## Case Studies

Partnerships were asked to provide a maximum of 3 case studies related to themes that:

- highlight the challenges and how they were addressed in supporting the integration of refugees and asylum seekers
- highlight the challenges and how they were addressed in supporting the integration of migrants and settled minority ethnic populations
- show the approaches used to involve learners in other groups beyond the ESOL classroom
- show the impact on personal, community, family and work life of the learner(s)
- show how barriers to learning were addressed and
- show how equality and diversity are promoted

The following is a selection which reflects the themes above.

### **Case Study 1**

Ms A and her family moved to Scotland and settled in Dumfries five years ago. She says the first four years were extremely difficult; especially for her. She had young children and no language skills to enable her to navigate through her new territory. She became housebound, had no one outside of her family to talk to, she missed her family and her life back in her home town. The situation was not helped by the birth of two more children in Scotland. It reinforced her alienation and led to depression.

It was while she was at a hospital appointment that one of the health workers told her about the Dumfries and Galloway Multicultural Association (DGMA) and encouraged her to go there. One of the main attractions of the centre is that it is a family friendly environment; secondly it runs classes in English for minority ethnic groups to facilitate integration into the community. It provides a free, safe, secure and easily accessible centre for people to meet other families in similar situations, share experiences, allow their children to mingle with other children, make friends, share skills and generally come out of isolation.

Since coming to the centre and enrolling in the English language classes, Ms A says she feels a lot happier than she felt before. Even though her English is not perfect, she has at least developed the confidence to engage with others and to converse using the little language skills she's acquired. She says in the past she felt intimidated to even open her mouth for fear of exposing her language inadequacies but seeing other learners who are in a similar situation and others with even much less competence than herself, has given her motivation and confidence. Ms A says to maximise the opportunities for developing and improving her language skills outside the classes at DGMA, she always tunes in to children's educational programs on television, for the benefit of both herself and her children.

Ms A's goal is to improve her English language skills to a point where she can engage more with her children's school community in particular, the wider community and ultimately to either get a job or set up an enterprise as she is brilliant at baking sweets and savouries. When she is not attending English language class at DGMA, Ms A volunteers for other services and activities hosted at the centre. She says she cannot underestimate the benefits that she has gained from accessing facilities and opportunities offered at DGMA.

### **Case Study 2**

A learner from Spain joined one of the Council's beginner level community based ESOL classes. She wanted to develop her English to improve her employability and employment prospects. The ESOL tutor recommended she also access the ESOL for Employability Work Club provided by the Council Adult Learning Team.

In the Work Club, she worked on writing a CV tailored to British employers, wrote covering letters and got support to complete application forms. The ESOL tutor helped her with interview technique, building her confidence and ability to communicate with potential employers. As a result of the support given in the ESOL Work Club, the learner gained employment. She has sustained her employment and still accesses the community based ESOL provision. She has now joined the Pre-Intermediate class and is continuing to develop her English to help her communicate more effectively with colleagues and customers.



### **Case Study 3**

East Ayrshire Vibrant Communities is responsible for planning and delivering the community based ESOL provision which is co-ordinated by the ESOL Development Worker.

East Ayrshire Council welcomed three refugee families this year. Settling and supporting them involved the Refugee Resettlement Officer and the ESOL Development Worker. Initial assessments of their English language level led them to community ESOL classes.

The 3 families also receive individual one to one support from the ESOL Development Worker and from volunteer tutors within Vibrant Communities. Other support the families were able to access include the Play@home scheme and Family Literacy Learning.

The services were also successful in working with other partners to offer support for those with additional support needs.

Four of the adults were successful in achieving SQA Access 2 Introduction to Beginner English in the Community. A refugee ESOL group has also been established through the partnership links with the Killie Browser and meets once a week with support from an ESOL volunteer tutor.

### **Case Study 4**

This class was created from partnership working between CLD and Minority Health Inclusion Service, having identified needs in the local area for Beginners' English for parents with crèche facilities. In the local area there is temporary accommodation which is used by new arrivals. Health Visitors have also been experiencing general increase in the numbers of parents with ESOL needs, with high levels of isolation, especially for women with new babies or more than one child under 5. The class was piloted with funding from Health and Literacies project work. This year it has been funded under Family ESOL. A total number of 22 learners have accessed the class since its start and 16 this year. They come from a wide range of backgrounds including Polish, Bangladeshi, Sudanese, Chinese, Syrian, Pakistani, Romanian and Italian. An important part of the settling in process is settling children into the crèche and care is taken to make this process as easy as possible. Often children are not socialising with others outwith the crèche and this is their first care environment.

The tutor makes the class very interactive and focuses on useful language for meeting others, introductions, describing family and the local area and also looks at language for talking to doctors and nursery/school. She also progressively introduces all relevant language elements for the level.

Learners have made positive reports on their learning at the class. They have made friends and begun to meet outside the class. They report their children gaining from attending the crèche including having social time with other children and responding to English instructions/language. Learners have said their child now looks forward to the crèche and they look forward to coming to class.

One parent has been able to request and access some support with literacy to help her child who is going into Primary 2. The class has also provided support for 3 refugees newly arrived in the country. Referrals have been made by Health Visitors, Women's Aid, MEHIS and Homelink and liaison is maintained during the settling in process with the referring agency if desired.

MEHIS: "I am very happy that we are now able to refer clients to a local service that can meet their needs. Travelling is much more difficult with small children, especially if there are other children to pick up from school or nursery. With limited money and ability to get to grips with routes and timetables bus transport can be also be too difficult. This class has been a lifeline to a number of clients who are now able to learn English and meet others in the community, relieving isolation".

Learners: "I am happy with the class" "The crèche is very good." "The teacher is very nice, she teach lesson very easy, I am happy so much". "The crèche it's nice and I want more hours". "The teacher was very nice". "I am happy join this class". The lesson was easy to understand'. "I met a lot of people".

## **Case Study 5**

X came to Scotland aged 16 when her mother found work in Scotland. She started high school in 4th year in April. She had very limited English language skills and found it very frustrating - "I felt like a small child again".

Through a Polish friend at school, X learned about ESOL courses at Edinburgh College. She was encouraged to apply by school and in 2013 started the National 3 ESOL English for Work and Training Course. At college she "saw many people who did not speak English" and she started to feel more confident. At this time she started volunteering with a Scout group for Polish young people.

X moved from the Access course to NC ESOL for Employability level 4 course, completing a work placement in a nursery. She was formally recognised by the College for her enthusiasm and progress on her course as well as her dedication to volunteering with Polish young people through the Scout movement. X is now studying NC ESOL for Employability level 5. She feels confident about her progress and about the continued development of her language skills. She is organising a placement this year as a classroom assistant and is planning to move to the NC Childcare course next year. She continues to volunteer with the Scouts, she feels settled in her life in Scotland and has a clear path for her future career

## Case Study 6

A 40 hour “Survival English” course modelled on the Holistic Integration Service (HIS) ESOL provision was provided. The course consisted of two sessions of two hours provided over a period of ten weeks. The ten learners were all refugees who had been assessed during the HIS programme at a literacies level. This model has been developed to be of maximum benefit and accessibility to students with this personal and educational profile. The small group means that maximum support can be provided by the tutor to the individuals and the group. The informal and friendly nature of the class means that learners who have been displaced and are still in a period of intense transition feel comfortable in a UK learning environment. It also provides a gentle introduction to ESOL teaching methods to those who come from areas where learning is formatted very differently. The short sessions mean that learners are not overwhelmed by the start of their momentous journey to proficient English language usage and maximises the ability of learners to attend when they may also have multiple statutory appointments with housing agencies, job centres etc. The two sessions per week format means that learning is re-enforced at frequent intervals and learners who often feel quite isolated have at least two encounters per week with a native English speaker and with peers.

The aims and objectives of the course were to improve ESOL across the four language skills and also vocabulary building, basic knowledge of grammar and pronunciation, to improve general study skills and to ease transition to college and other courses. Additionally the course aimed to improve integration into Scottish life and practise “real life” language encounters by participating in outside visits to the Gallery of Modern Art (GOMA) and to a library. During the library visit those who were not already a member were aided to do so to ensure they had access to ICT and learning resources in the future. The course tutor, through the use of learning plans, was able to illicit topics of relevance to the group to be included in class activities, such as health, shopping, telephoning and dealing with housing issues.

Feedback was very positive at the end of the course and many learners were able to produce longer pieces of writing without assistance or copying, although all will need more practice. Students are starting to recognise more words when they are reading. Many were also able to speak quite confidently without prompts, although some will need a bit more practice with speaking beyond the structured sentences practised in class. The students were motivated and co-operative with each other, participating well in class, asking relevant questions e.g. words that they had heard with a similar sound to those being introduced in class. All the students stated that the course had improved their confidence in their review forms.

The students were all signposted to college application processes if they had not already been aware. They were also added to the Glasgow ESOL Register to ensure they were kept informed of any relevant courses. Encouragingly students also shared information with each other about various courses with which they were involved.

## Case Study 7

Following student feedback in evaluation surveys, focus groups and guidance tutorials, ESOL students identified a need for opportunities to meet with local native speakers in order to improve their listening and speaking skills (both in standard English and in local dialect) and to make social contact with local people.

ESOL staff then worked with the Student Association and Learner Engagement Officers to organise and facilitate a monthly lunch-time social event which involves ESOL learners and students from across a range of courses aimed at enabling learners to get to know each other, appreciate different cultures and provide opportunities for mentoring as well as giving ESOL students face-to-face time with native speakers.

At the events, students work together in small, informal groups consisting of a mix of ESOL and non-ESOL students and a simple conversation task acts as a stimulus/ice-breaker allowing students to then proceed to more open dialogue. The emphasis is on the students having autonomy to interact with others.

To date the events have attracted students from ESOL (levels 4 and 5), Travel and Tourism, Hospitality, Gaelic, Music, Care, Beauty Therapy, Childcare and Early Education and a spin off event with Sport students TeaM@GKC – a team building event with Sport students.

These events highlight a number of positive aspects of the college's approach to improving the learners' experiences. Firstly in learner engagement, both within their courses and in the wider life of the college. It also exemplifies the "you said ... we did..." approach to learner feedback and evaluation and how both learners and staff can contribute to develop intervention to break down barriers and integrate learners.

The intervention also focuses on the Scottish Government Adult ESOL Strategy for Scotland/Adult ESOL Curriculum Framework Principles providing opportunities to build inclusion and participation in society; recognising and valuing the cultures of learners and enabling them to make a positive contribution to the life of the college; whilst supporting and encouraging successful learning.

The intervention highlights that Glasgow Kelvin College is an environment in which individuals are welcomed, respected, valued and supported; which actively celebrates diversity and mainstreams equality and diversity into all aspects of College life; and which seeks opportunities for the celebration of diversity within its learning community.

Finally, Tea @ GKC builds responsible and thoughtful participation in social and cultural life and breaks down perceived barriers between cultures/nationalities and develops the capacities of responsible citizens, effective contributors, confident individuals and successful learners.

## **Case Study 8**

A number of learners wished to further their education and improve their employability prospects by both improving their English language skills and gaining accreditation. CLD supported these learners in community sessions, working one to one initially and then encouraging peer learning, self-study, adult learning opportunities as well as signposting to local partners, training agencies, volunteer work experience etc. In the last year 5 learners have accessed further learning opportunities at West College Scotland both in ESOL & in vocational subjects.

One learner first approached CLD for support in 2013. She spoke very little English. She was quiet, lacked confidence and in initial meetings relied on her husband to speak for her. She was initially placed in a learning session for accreditation but it soon became clear that she needed more support with her speaking skills. A was also socially isolated and therefore was encouraged to attend multiple sessions where she quickly made friends which then led her to encourage other ESOL learners to pursue accreditation and further education opportunities. Her learning journey progressed to an SQA qualification - Core Skills Communication level 4. This allowed her access to college. Her SQA qualification combined with her European qualifications allowed her to gain a place on the Higher National Certificate (HNC) Business & Administration course. She has now exited CLD provision and is attending Further Education full time.

## **Case Study 9**

23 students enrolled on the full-time Upper-Intermediate ESOL Programme, with 18 successfully completing the course. The class contained a healthy mix of refugees, migrant workers and members of more settled immigrant communities, allowing learners from 9 different countries to work cooperatively together and develop positive relationships with each other. The course was delivered over 36 weeks in West College Scotland and included a broad range of accredited units, SCQF-rated at level 5. These units included the National 5 ESOL group award, which 95% of students passed with a C grade or above and 50% achieved an A grade. In addition to SQA-accredited ESOL units, the course included a number of essential skills units such as Working With Others and Event Organisation. For this unit, a project-based approach allowed learners to work in small groups, research and visit a place of interest in the local community and then give a presentation about that place to other college students. This allowed them to engage directly with members of the local community and to share their learning with the wider college community. The Event Organisation unit involved the whole class working together to plan, organise, deliver and review a fundraising event to raise money for Mary's Meals, a charity chosen by the students. The event was a celebration of cultural diversity and involved students preparing and serving food from their own countries. The event took place in a large open space in the college and the planning stage involved students working with other departments in the college to source a venue, do health and safety checks/risk assessments and publicise the event around the whole college. The event itself raised over £500 and also successfully promoted diversity across the whole college, raising awareness among Scottish-born students about diverse cultures and groups, thereby facilitating the integration process.

The course also included online units entitled Avoiding Plagiarism and Successful Job Hunting. These units provide important skills for students who plan to progress to further study or the jobs market, or both; it is important for learners of English at this level to be developing skills to facilitate this transition from ESOL mainstream/vocational activity.

The learners all benefitted from access to college funding, with many students receiving funding to pay for childcare, transport and living expenses, thereby removing barriers to learning that are often created by family, work or physical distance.

On completion of the course, more than half of the students progressed to further study in the college at either NC or HNC level, demonstrating the success of this programme in preparing students for articulation and progression from ESOL to programmes that prepare them directly for a specific area of employment.

## Case Study 10

X arrived in early 2016 with little English language skills and found it particularly difficult to understand the Scottish accent. X enrolled for an ESOL for Beginners course that was being delivered by Adult Learning and Literacies Service (ALLS) and began her learning journey with the service.

Through participating in the ESOL beginner class X started to build her confidence and started to familiarise herself with other ESOL learning opportunities that were being offered by ALLS service. As a result X went on to join the ESOL Culture and Conversation Group where she began to learn about different cultures and in particular Scottish Culture and Society. As time went on X became more confident and continued to improve her English language skills and through this decided to join our ESOL Parenting Group.

The parenting group helped to motivate X to build her knowledge; skills and confidence to further support her children with their homework. The group also helped X build new relationships with other parents and families in the local community therefore reducing feelings of isolation for her. X has also participated in Triple P courses for parents, delivered by NHS professionals.

X also came along with other ESOL families and families from the local community where they all took part in our ESOL family learning sessions that took place during the summer holidays. X reached a point in her learning where she started to consider applying for a full-time college course and was actively seeking work at the same time. Having successfully secured employment over the summer, the dream of college study is on hold for now.

This case study demonstrates that ESOL learners are supported to build their confidence in using the English language and this in turn enables learners to progress their learning through other adult learning opportunities and this can then lead on to work or further education. X is a fantastic example of what can be achieved by ESOL learners if given the space, time and support to learn the English language using a learner centred approach. The ESOL staff team provide a holistic social practice approach to the learning and this enables learners to remain motivated to achieve their dreams and aspirations.

## Case Study 11

As a result of links made by Adult Learning with local employers through an European Social Fund (ESF) funded ASPIRE Project, we were contacted by a local processing factory that had a significant number of non-native speakers involved in production and stated that staff had asked for information about ESOL classes. Due to varying shift patterns, employees were not able to attend a mainstream community ESOL class and so we discussed setting up a workplace ESOL opportunity. The company offered the use of a training room and promoted the classes to their staff.

Staff attended the classes in their own time and the classes were scheduled immediately before their shifts took place. Classes were held fortnightly to accommodate an alternating day/backshift work pattern. The eight participants were production line workers and staff in promoted posts, including supervisors and laboratory technicians. The tutor and learners negotiated group learning aims, including vocabulary and grammar to help with workplace tasks and instructions.

The classes ran for one year and all learners successfully completed the course. They reflected on their learning and felt that the classes had developed their confidence and speaking skills. They also said it helped them communicate with colleagues in their workplace. This was particularly highlighted by an employee who had recently taken on a promoted post. We also received positive feedback from the company and are planning on running a similar course with new participants next year.

## Links and Outputs

Dundee and Angus College – ESOL learners’ website:

<http://esoldundeevoices.wix.com/home>

East Lothian Council – ESOL learners’ website:

<http://www.esolwithus.org.uk/>

Highland ESOL Providers website:

<http://esolhighland.com/>

East Renfrewshire – Welcome to East Renfrewshire booklet

<http://www.eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk/article/1786/Learn-or-improve-my-English>

Perth and Kinross - Young ESOL learners’ website:

<http://www.me-mylife-myfuture.net/>

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