

March 2002

Bite Size – Get a Taste for Learning

The Learning and Skills Council's first Bite Size campaign to attract adults back into learning, many for the first time since leaving school, took place last year. In just one month, around 70,000 people took part in free short courses throughout the country.

Bite Size 2 will be launched this summer and promises to be even bigger and better.

The idea behind the campaign is to show people that learning can be rewarding and fun. Courses of between one, two or three hours are run at a variety of times and in a range of venues, from traditional educational establishments to pubs, clubs, supermarkets and hotels.

They also cover a wide range of subjects from the practical, such as information technology (IT), basic computing languages and writing a CV, to the purely enjoyable – belly dancing, juggling and pond dipping among many more.

The object of all the courses is entirely serious though. Bite Size is an important first step towards achieving our long-term goal of changing national attitudes towards learning new skills.

The formula certainly works if the results of our first campaign, the largest of its kind ever held in this country, are anything to go by.

Research showed that people taking part in the 18,500 courses organised throughout England in 2001 felt that Bite Size had made a real difference to them.

- **37%** of those taking part were new learners.
- **41%** subsequently went on to enrol for another course, of whom **61%** said Bite Size had encouraged them to keep learning.
- **95%** said their course had been worthwhile.
- **92%** had been encouraged to take further learning programmes.
- The most popular topic for future learning was computer and computer-related training.

Bite Size courses are designed so that anyone can take part. They are held in convenient venues, at

convenient times and are delivered by both public and private sector learning providers, including further education colleges, community organisations and independent companies.

They are particularly aimed though at attracting people who have been discouraged from learning and seeking new skills over the years for a variety of reasons.

By taking the fear out of learning, Bite Size can boost their self-confidence and reinforce the message that improving skills through learning can change people's lives – increasing their career prospects and earnings potential.

Learning is good for them and good for the country as a whole – increasing our skills base and competitiveness on the world stage.

For further information about the Learning and Skills Council, visit our web site (www.lsc.gov.uk) or call our help line on 0845 019 4170.