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# ENGLISH LANGUAGE FOR ALL

August 2012

**MAYOR OF LONDON**

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this study is to look at models of English language learning and innovative financing for the delivery of ESOL<sup>1</sup> to learners not able to access provision funded by the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) as a result of SFA funding changes for 2011/12. The provision of English language learning opportunities for refugees and migrants is of strategic importance to the London economy. Recent changes in the national funding mechanisms from the Skills Funding Agency have had a proportionately greater impact on the capital where over half of the country's ESOL provision is located. The National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE) was asked to carry out this piece of work by the Greater London Authority<sup>2</sup>.

This report identifies the key groups excluded by recent changes: low-paid workers and those with very low levels of language and literacy. People affected include those who are recent arrivals in London as well as those who have been settled here for many years. This report identifies the key groups excluded by recent changes:

- Learners in low paid work who are now unable to afford course fees for SFA funded provision or for whom in-work ESOL is no longer publicly funded. Due to shift-work patterns and the long hours they often work to make ends meet, low paid workers may find it difficult to access ESOL delivered by colleges and other learning providers in the community. Even when they can access SFA funded ESOL provision, they and their dependants are now entitled to only 50% SFA funding of the course fees if claiming Working Tax Credit. This has made courses unaffordable in many cases. If an employer is reluctant to pick up the costs of in-work ESOL, these learners have lost their potential access to funded ESOL provision at work, though, in fact, this was not always made available.
- People with very low levels of language and literacy claiming inactive benefits. These learners have been affected by the reduction of SFA funding to 50% of course fees and the reshaping of SFA funded provision to prioritise those closer to the labour market. This group disengaged from learning in anticipation of the impact of the decision to make them ineligible for fully funded ESOL provision from August 2011. Because of their very low levels of language and literacy, these learners were difficult to re-engage when the subsequent decision was taken to allow providers to

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<sup>1</sup> English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)

<sup>2</sup> The National Institute of Adult and Continuing Education (NIACE) exist to encourage more and different adults to engage in learning of all kinds. The focus of NIACE's work is to represent the interests of, and improve opportunities for learning for adults who have benefited least from previous education and training, and through that focus, the extension and enrichment of opportunities for adults more generally, wherever and however they learn.

use their discretion to provide funded ESOL if the individual was willing to sign a declaration that they were seeking employment and wishing to gain skills to use in employment.

- People who claim inactive benefits as full time carers who therefore cannot sign a declaration that they are available for employment and wish to gain skills to use in employment.

On the basis of research with communities and learning providers across London, this report suggests three possible models of provision that could be used to fill some of the gaps left by changes in the national funding arrangements. It also makes suggestions as to potential ways in which these models might be resourced. Example case studies from small-scale activity around London are used to illustrate innovative examples of ways forward.

One of the proposed models suggests bringing together statutory services in a locality, for example in schools, to create mutual benefit through providing ESOL learning opportunities. For schools in particular there is robust evidence that working with parents to improve their language and literacy skills can have a beneficial impact on their children's learning and on family cohesion. By investing in parents' and carers' learning, schools may be able to create leverage to help bridge achievement gaps for low-achieving pupils, and give the parents the confidence to engage in the life of the school and better support their child's learning. Learning as a family helps to break the cycle of intergenerational poor skills.

A second model uses online learning to support the needs of those who are unable to attend face-to-face learning on a regular basis due to shift patterns and other time commitments.

The third model explores the use of volunteer friends to supplement the work of more formal ESOL learning classes by facilitating English language practice opportunities on a one-to-one basis.

The feasibility study aims to objectively highlight the strengths of a proposed development, with particular reference to value for money and scalability. The three models proposed here have been evaluated and a unit cost is provided. Brief reference is also made to scalability; some suggestions given for funding opportunities and a selection of case studies illustrate the application of the models and approaches.

# INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

## **GLA-commissioned feasibility study on ESOL in London**

The aim of this study was to assess the impact of recent national funding on, and the feasibility of a range of English language learning opportunities (ESOL) for, refugees and migrants in London. The objectives of the study were to:

1. assess the impact of recent changes in ESOL funding implemented by the Skills Funding Agency on refugee and migrant groups in London;
2. identify effective models of learning to meet the specific needs of refugee and migrant learners in London, particularly those who have been adversely affected by Skills Funding Agency changes for 2011/12; and
3. Identify and assess the feasibility of innovative funding options for the recommended provision/models.

The report makes recommendations for models of English language learning that could be used to offset the impact of the Skills Funding Agency changes on the London population and improve the language skills of adults with ESOL needs in London.

Details of the research methodology are included in Appendix A.

## **Context – why ESOL is important to London**

Over 50% of the country's ESOL provision takes place in the capital. Recent changes in the national patterns of funding for ESOL have therefore had a magnified effect there. London is a diverse and vibrant city with large migrant and refugee populations. These populations include both long term settled migrants and 'new' economic migrants plus a smaller proportion of refugees and asylum seekers. ESOL provision enables London to benefit from the wide range of skills brought by migrant and refugee populations.

Migrant workers make a positive contribution to the London economy<sup>3</sup>. ESOL is essential as it helps London benefit from the skills refugees and migrants bring with them as well, for example, as ensuring the language skills needed for safe working practices for the substantial teams of staff that service London's offices and workplaces for example. Being able to speak English not only enables people to get jobs, it also encourages integration and a cohesive society, develops family capital and improves health and well being. Supporting those furthest from the workplace and with the poorest skills is of paramount importance to make London a stable and integrated city.

London needs ESOL. It needs to enable people to acquire language skills to be able contribute positively to the London economy<sup>5</sup>. There is ongoing demand for ESOL learning, but the recent funding changes detailed below have left many unable to access language learning opportunities.

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3 Taken from London Enriched: the Mayor's refugee integration strategy, December 2009

4 Taken from London Enriched: the Mayor's refugee integration strategy, December 2009

5 London Enriched, the Mayor's Integration Strategy for Refugees (2009).

# IMPACT OF RECENT FUNDING CHANGES

## Summary of recent changes to funding

Over the last decade half the ESOL learners funded nationally by the Skills Funding Agency (and its predecessor the Learning and Skills Council) have been located in London; therefore recent changes to funding and provision have impacted disproportionately on London. Some of the areas with the highest numbers of speakers of other languages are also those with the highest rates of unemployment<sup>6</sup>.

In 2010 the newly formed Skills Funding Agency became responsible for ESOL funding, and in November 2010, the government announced changes to funding for ESOL provision, and further restrictions in fee remission for many ESOL learners as part of the Adult Skills Budget (BIS 2010).

A number of changes took effect from August 2011. These included:

- A 4.3% reduction in the National Funding Rate (the amount paid per learner for ESOL courses paid by the Skills Funding Agency) across the board and a reduction from a multiple of 1.2 to 1 of the 'programme weighting' factor for ESOL; together these mean that the amount of money paid to a college or provider for each learner has reduced by more than 20 percentage points. The 'programme weighting' previously provided 20% more money for an ESOL learner compared to others doing another course of the same duration. It was introduced for a variety of reasons, including the recognition of the additional costs of delivering ESOL, the need to incentivise ESOL delivery and the need to develop tutors and better provision
- The withdrawal of the discretionary Learner Support Fund of £4.6m – this national fund allowed providers to operate hardship funds, including help with childcare and transport costs, to help support those most in need to access learning
- Full fee remission to be restricted to learners in receipt of 'active benefits', such as Job Seekers' Allowance (JSA) or Employment and Support Allowance (ESA), that require people to be actively seeking work
- Learners on other 'inactive' benefits that do not require a person necessarily to be actively seeking work (e.g. Housing Benefit, Income Support, Working Tax Credit and Asylum Support) restricted to 50% funding. The remaining 50% should be met by the learner
- The cessation of public funding for ESOL in the workplace.

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<sup>6</sup> From the same source as above, 2010 data on highest unemployment rates in Newham, Tower Hamlets, Barking and Dagenham, Hackney, Haringey and Waltham Forest.



In August 2011, the Skills Funding Agency announced some flexibility in the funding arrangements for individual learners in receipt of 'inactive benefits'. SFA funded providers could use their discretion to cover the learner contribution of 50% (i.e. give full fee remission) but had to take this money from their existing SFA budget. If the provider decided to do so, only learners who were taking the training to help them enter employment would be eligible. This late change was welcomed by many SFA funded ESOL providers in London but as it was unexpected it was too late to reverse many of the plans in place for the autumn term. In many cases it was difficult to recall learners with low levels of language and literacy who had left at the end of the summer term with the impression that there were no classes for them in the autumn.

### **Overview of the impact of funding changes on the supply of ESOL**

In broad terms, the funding changes have created a reduction in the supply of Skills Funding Agency-funded ESOL provision, which has had varying impacts on different groups of potential learners.

The main groups affected by recent funding changes are:

- Those in low-paid work;
- People with low-level English language and literacy skills;
- Women - especially those with childcare responsibilities. Women make up a high proportion of those in ESOL provision according to the ESOL Equality Impact Assessment, July 2011.

The removal of Skills Funding Agency-funded **ESOL in the workplace** has resulted in a decrease in the availability of language learning opportunities for employees. For those working for larger employers, there may be learning opportunities on offer, though evidence for this is extremely limited, especially in the current climate. These learners will need to find college-based provision or similar that operates outside their working hours and to fit with shift patterns. For the most part, those in employment and on an 'inactive' benefit, who wish to learn English, now need to pay fees, amounting to 50% of the costs. The SFA funded provider cannot use its discretion to cover the learner's 50% contribution towards their fees as the learner is already in work.

This has had most impact on those in **low-paid work**. Many people with limited English language skills work in relatively low-paid occupations and are unable to afford the full fees to attend part time classes. Many are also shift workers who are not free to attend classes regularly, but would have to pay for a whole course even if work patterns would only allow them to attend perhaps half. The majority also work for small and medium-sized employers where learning opportunities within the workplace are not on offer.

The combined effect of the funding changes has been a **reduction in the overall volume** of ESOL provision on offer. In anticipation of the funding changes planned for August 2011, colleges and learning providers reduced the number of planned courses, expecting lower levels of recruitment. In many cases, these planned reductions were not reversed in response to the additional flexibility introduced in August 2011, as limited resources had already been deployed elsewhere. In some cases,

ESOL teachers and managers had already been made redundant, and many smaller voluntary organisations and charities offering ESOL support had closed.

The reductions were more pronounced for **those working with learners with the poorest skills** for a number of reasons. Providers were encouraged to focus on provision for those 'closest to work', and therefore classes for those with beginner-level English language skills were less of a priority. Providers were discouraged by Skills Funding Agency from running programmes over more than one academic year, as is needed by some low-skilled learners to reach the level needed for qualification success. In an environment with restricted resources, providers are also motivated to offer shorter programmes leading to the same qualifications, and to enrol larger groups of learners. All of which militate in favour of provision for learners with more intermediate or advanced levels of English, rather than those in need of beginner-level learning.

The changes in funding regulations also impacted more severely on **women** for a number of reasons including their over representation in low skilled, temporary and part time work; their role as carers; the impact of the 'inactive benefits' rule (see above) and cultural issues – needing single sex provision for example.

Many of those who are beginners in learning to speak English and who need a longer time to reach qualification levels have had little experience of education. They may have little or no literacy in their own language and have not had the opportunity to develop skills in how to learn (study skills). Robust research evidence<sup>7</sup> shows how the lives of those with the lowest levels of language, literacy and numeracy skills are characterised by multiple deprivation factors, with high levels of dependency on health and social support services.

The Skills Funding Agency's discretionary Learner Support Fund was specifically for ESOL learners and was used to ensure access to and continuation of learning for those most at risk of not being able to access learning. This included support with course fees, accreditation fees, travel expenses and childcare, on locally-based discretionary criteria.

## **Refugees and migrants affected by funding changes**

In summary, the main groups affected by the recent funding changes discussed above are:

- people with low-level English language and literacy skills;
- those with caring responsibilities who are economically inactive;
- those in low-paid work, who do not earn enough to afford course fees
- those on inactive benefits excluded from a provider's discretion to fully cover the course fees (e.g. Working Tax Credit, Asylum Support<sup>8</sup>)

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<sup>7</sup> Bynner et al, NRDC

<sup>8</sup> Most asylum seekers do not have permission to work in the UK

Others excluded from Skills Funding Agency-funded provision – but **not** as a result of recent changes:

- Asylum seekers in the first six months of residence<sup>9</sup>;
- Spouses of persons with settled status in first three years of residence or 1 year if married to EEA national.

The NIACE national research for the Skills Funding Agency identified a very similar set of excluded groups, as did an inquiry in Bristol (Bristol City Council 2011)<sup>10</sup>. In its recent paper, *Creating the Conditions for Integration* (DCLG 2012) the Department of Communities and Local Government also identified people *“who have little or no English, a high proportion of whom are women with children, as being in need of support”* (p.14).

Those in the main groups listed above may have recently arrived in London or may have been here for many years, but isolated within their own communities from access to learning opportunities.

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<sup>9</sup> Asylum seekers on Section 95 support after six months in the UK are eligible for SFA funding at 50%

<sup>10</sup> Bristol City Council Community Cohesion and Safety Scrutiny Committee: Inquiry Day on ESOL Services – Report and Recommendations, October 2011

# RECOMMENDED ENGLISH LANGUAGE MODELS

## **Introduction**

The three broad models outlined here offer ways of meeting the needs of groups of Londoners who may otherwise be inhibited in engaging productively with life and work in London. These models are focused on those learners who are not currently eligible for government funded ESOL or who are most at risk as a result of policy changes.

It should be noted that the costing are based on qualified tutors being valued at £50 per hour to include all on-costs. Accommodation costs could vary considerably. Childcare costs are not included, nor any resources such as paper, books etc.

## **Model 1: English language through existing services**

### *Target group and rationale*

One of the groups identified through this research as most likely to be excluded from current ESOL provision is those with very low level skills, who are beginners in speaking English and often also not literate, even in their first language, particularly women. This group includes many longer-term residents, as well as more recent arrivals in London. Many of these are parents with children of school and pre-school age. Younger and older women play a significant role in supporting children's education, providing a healthy environment, and encouraging integration. They need to be able to communicate with schools and other services that support families. In addition these women wanted to help and communicate with their neighbours and other members of their communities, and undertake volunteering roles.

The recent shifts in public funding for ESOL provision will adversely affect these services in a time of already tight resources. Higher levels of fluency in English within a locality will benefit statutory services across the area. Collaboration between services to support language learning provision in their midst have the potential for shared mutual benefits.

Improving and developing the skills of children in London is of paramount importance to the GLA, and to the people of London. The Evening Standard's Reading Campaign underlines this.

#### *Description of model*

This model would create accessible neighbourhood-based language learning opportunities, commissioned or hosted by local health/education/social services and serviced by accredited local learning providers. This will be of particular interest to primary schools and early years' settings, who can support family ESOL learning. In this model, ESOL sessions for parents are held at the school and are linked with learning on how best to support their children's development. Research has demonstrated the positive impact this approach can have on children's progress. It could be a major contributor for some schools in closing the achievement gaps for pupils. Investing in parents' learning can be an effective way to lever progress in pupils who are persistent low-achievers. Developing parents' spoken English also increases their confidence and ability to develop contact with the school. Low levels of English can be a barrier to a parent engaging with a school (for example, attending parents' evenings, getting involved in the work of a school).<sup>11</sup>

Learners with limited life experience of education, limited spoken English and low literacy levels need to engage in longer programmes of learning to allow time for substantial progress. Learning to read as an adult is never easy and is made more challenging in the context of a new language too. It takes time and an expert qualified teacher is essential.

Ideally programmes would be year-long, with sessions twice or three times a week to ensure the regular repetition needed to embed learning effectively. This could be broken down into shorter periods, ideally around school terms as many users in this category will have childcare responsibilities.

#### Research evidence

- Baynham et al Effective teaching and learning ESOL;
- Moon and Sunderland (2008) Reflect for ESOL evaluation;
- Phillimore (2011) Monitoring for equality: asylum seekers and refugees retention and achievement in ESOL
- De Coulon et al (2008) Impact of improved parents' literacy levels on children's cognitive performance

#### *Potential funding sources and business case*

There is potential for funding this model through locally collaborative bids to various sources of funding from the European Integration Fund (EIF) and the European Refugee Fund (ERF). There will also be funding available to support some community ESOL provision from the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG). It may be possible for this to provide match-funding for EIF grants.

Academy chains and schools could potentially be interested in using funds to support parental learning, if persuaded of the power of family learning interventions to counter persistent achievement

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<sup>11</sup> Doyle L (2008) Beyond the school gates: supporting refugees and asylum seekers in secondary schools (Refugee Council)

gaps children from families with low levels of English language and literacy. As such it could be relevant for aspects of pupil premium funding. A further motivation for schools lies in reducing pupil absence to interpret for family members with low-level skills.

BIS is currently reviewing their funding of informal adult education, through pilots of Community Learning Trusts, to develop new models to fund informal adult learning in response to community need. In London, priority groups will inevitably include people with English language needs.

A similar approach could be adopted by other services - GP practices, housing associations, local authority housing departments, social services. Though all would benefit from improved levels of English language and literacy skills in their local communities, none have traditionally seen this as their role. It would also be expected to lead to a reduction in the use of interpreters and translations over time.

Philanthropic and charitable trusts may also be interested in supporting this model, e.g. John Lyons, City Bridge Trust.

#### *Value for money, scalability and feasibility*

For a group of 10 learners to participate in a 60-hour course (10 weeks at 6 hours per week), the estimated cost would be **£420 per learner**, plus any childcare/crèche costs. This assumes location in a school or early years' setting. School teacher costs are not included. Crèche cover is difficult to cost as it depends on the number and age of children, so this has not been added to the unit cost.

This model is scalable, funds permitting, through a chain of academies or early years' settings. Value for money is offered by the savings to multiple local services as described above.

Imminent opportunities for funding applications should include any under spend from the current UKBA EIF funding round which concluded May 2012, although only a proportion of the total target group is covered by this fund.

#### *Example case studies*

##### [The Learning Trust](#)

*'The Learning Trust run **directly, 26 classes** and they're all four-hours a week. We run those out of the borough's **schools or children's centres**. Only one community centre, but apart from that the majority at children's centres, and two primary schools as well. At the Learning Trust, part of what we do is commission ESOL courses to specialist providers in the community, and we also run some ESOL courses as direct teaching at children's centres and schools.*

*The reason that that model was set up was to make sure that we could have **childcare**, so for most of our courses there's a crèche attached. Though that is becoming increasingly difficult to fund, it works on a partnership basis, in most cases with the children's centres, but the children's centres themselves are increasingly squeezed, they are less likely to be able to commit the funds to that. We also **commissioned 15 courses this year**, with three community providers, and the commissioned*

*provision is really to fill the gaps of what we're not able to provide directly.' (Evidence from the Learning Trust, by email)*

### **ESOL for the Roma Community, Hackney<sup>12</sup>**

*This project supports Eastern European Roma adults resident in the London borough of Hackney on low income/in receipt of benefits who have low levels of English language. The course builds on the family learning model as a third of the adults have children at a local school. The school provides the venue and the course content has been negotiated with the learners. The target group is people who have not previously accessed formal English classes.*

*This is a one-off project funded by a local Hackney partnership of the local Adult Learning Service, the Traveller Education Service and Hackney Homes with support from two local schools that hosted the initial assessment sessions and the classes. The Traveller Education service coordinates the provision working with Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children.*

*The course is 24 weeks (4 hours per week) taught by a fully qualified ESOL teacher. The aim is to provide a progression route for adults into formal further education classes.*

## **Model 2: Using technologies to support ESOL learning**

### *Target group and rationale*

This model offers flexible learning opportunities that maximise the use of e-learning. This enables learners to make their own timetable and to fit the learning around their own time constraints and shift patterns. It therefore offers more viable options to those who are in employment.

It assumes that learners have access to either smart phones or computers to facilitate access to the on-line element in their language learning. The Race Online campaign shows that there are approximately 8.3 million on the wrong side of the 'digital divide' i.e. have no access to IT, or are unable to use it. Research shows that using IT is an ineffective method of teaching and learning for those who are complete beginners in English or with low levels of literacy<sup>13</sup>.

### *Description of model*

This model proposes creating online learning materials that can be accessed remotely by learners, supported by a small amount of online e-tutoring. Alongside this, it assumes some face-to-face learning in a group of learners. It assumes a very simple way of giving access to the course materials, through uploading Word files to a web site/webpage. To ensure accessibility standards are met in the most cost effective way, e-learning content would have to be developed from the original Word documents through the, for example, the Xerte Open Source toolkit <http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/xerte/> and some limited off line mediated support. Another source would be the new British Council's ESOL Nexus website<sup>14</sup> <http://esol.britishcouncil.org/>. Other

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<sup>12</sup> This case study comes from Hackney LEA Adult Learning Services, Learning Trust

<sup>13</sup> Jane Ward (2007) ESOL: The context for the UK today. NIACE

<sup>14</sup> Part-funded through European Integration Fund and launched after completion of this research; it is too soon to give examples of its use.

approaches include using Web2 tools such as Wikis for collaborative writing, Twitter for communication practice and self uploading of talking videos, for example through YouTube, is extremely cost effective, and can be supported by intermediaries off and on line. Online tutors can, for example, set a monthly task to be completed in a social media platform, with learners self completion of the task, supported by face to face tutors/intermediaries/volunteers. Intermediaries will also be used to support the development of learners' digital skills. These approaches also assume that a suitable platform is available e.g. a VLE<sup>15</sup> or website.

Learning opportunities using technology can be targeted at specific groups e.g. people seeking work; people wanting to access health screening; low-paid migrant shift workers (health, transport, cleaning); carers who cannot attend classes regularly; people in temporary accommodation; people in work seeking to improve their English. These people may have difficulty attending regularly and require the flexibility afforded by using mobile smart phones and internet, with access to VLE software and other online learning resources such as the BBC Skills wise website.

This kind of teaching requires the engagement of fully qualified ESOL teachers who are well-versed in the use of technology, supported by those who have some knowledge of both ESOL needs and technology (who could be volunteers, support assistants or union learning reps, for example). Face-to-face teaching combines with on-line learning activities in individual learners' own time, through online support forums and web-based lessons.

### *Research evidence*<sup>16</sup>

- Moon et al, (2011) Work focused ESOL for parents;
- BIS (2011) Review of evidence on literacy and numeracy learning;
- Nance et al, (2007) Developing adult teaching and learning: Practitioner guides - Using ICT. This guide presents seven case studies to show how digital technologies can be used to enhance teaching and learning. The case studies cover a wide range of digital resources and include Mlearning, tablet PCs, online games and voting technologies;
- Boyden, L. Reflect Issue 12 (Oct 2008) ICT within and beyond the ESOL classroom;
- Crystal, D. (2008) Txtg: the gr8 db8
- Kimberly Johnson Cobb, (2002) Facilitating Second Language Acquisition through Computer Assisted Language Learning

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<sup>15</sup> VLE: Virtual Learning Environment. Many training providers and colleges now host blackboard and Moodle style resources on their websites for learners to access materials when it suits them and to participate in online chats/discussions.

<sup>16</sup> This report does not include a review of existing, commercially or freely available language learning resources. It is strongly recommended that such a review be undertaken before investing in the development of new online learning materials.

The BBC, for example, is understood to be currently discussing the possibility of extending the Skillswise website materials with a new range explicitly for ESOL. There may even be an opportunity for synergy here between GLA and the BBC, to avoid duplication of effort and resources. The BBC Skillswise website materials are freely available to all on the internet.

Similarly, the British Council has recently launched ESOL Nexus<sup>16</sup>, an online resource for learners, teachers and policy makers. Again there is scope for synergy with any new programmes and a full evaluation should be undertaken before commissioning new material.



*Value for money, scalability and feasibility*

**Blended learning** (face-to-face classroom methods with [computer-mediated activities](#) and use of learners' own time) has a number of advantages to maximise the benefits to learners; these include:

increased access to knowledge, social interaction (through social media, online tutorials etc), personal agency, cost effectiveness, and ease of revision. Online learning may be more attractive to some funding organisations such as philanthropic and charitable trusts or community groups. Where providers can be encouraged to develop such provision it may be possible to lever in JCP funding if employability is a required outcome.

In this model, greater costs might have to be incurred at the outset in preparing new online learning materials; however, there are several examples of the development of packages of materials which might be suitable and these would need to be quality assured. Once established, economies can be achieved over time with subsequent groups of learners.

For a group of 10 learners to participate in a 60-hour course: 6 hours of teacher time to develop and upload content; 4 hours per week of time for a support assistant or IT assistant to mediate/support; 2 hours teacher time per course, the estimated cost would be **£160 per learner**, dropping to around **£100** per learner. This cost would drop with the use of volunteers to provide additional learner support. Childcare/crèche costs or accommodation or IT hardware or software, or web costs not included. It assumes learners have access to smart phones or online computer terminals. Online learning materials to be produced are in straightforward Word/Excel type formats. No allowance has been made for building interactive software.

*Example case studies*

[ESOL on internet](#)<sup>17</sup>

*This project is facilitated by volunteers who support learners to use online resources. There are usually three volunteers facilitating the class: one who is a trained ESOL tutor and two volunteers who are not trained teachers but have relevant skills such as IT or different language skills and cultural understanding.*

*The classes are offered once a week for 2 hours: 1 hour on the computers and a 1 hour conversation with a volunteer. This class is very popular, particularly among men, and many learners attend regularly without external pressure to do so. It gives them the opportunity to develop both their IT and ESOL skills and to become independent in accessing internet based resources.*

*Many users who have accessed support at the centre become volunteers. They are often multilingual and are able to empathise with the learners and the specific difficulties they may experience (with grammar for example) and offer them the benefit of their experience of learning English and IT skills. At the same time they gain experience of volunteering which can help them to progress into education or jobs.*

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<sup>17</sup> This case study comes from the Migrants Resource Centre, Westminster.

*The project utilises existing resources, e.g. the computer room and equipment, which were obtained through a Big Lottery funding run a 3 year programme that ended in 2010. The Migrants Resource Centre board decided that this activity is the priority for social inclusion and to promote employment*

*so provision continued after 2010 despite the lack of funding. However, the sustainability of this provision depends on having a fully funded ESOL coordinator post. Fundraising is ongoing and a few very small grants have been received.*

### **Time Together Refugee Mentoring: use of mobiles<sup>18</sup>**

*An east London project used mobile phone technology and for this report a set of English language materials prepared for use on mobile phones was reviewed. They had been tested with a Bangladeshi community in the City of London for 12 weeks. They were successful in raising the learners' levels of confidence. Around 90% of learners found the technology engaging and said they would like to learn in this way again, and a third accessed the technology daily. All learners reported sharing the technology with their family and friends. As there was no pre- and post-testing, it was not possible to see what progress the learners had made in English.*

## **Model 3: Using trained volunteers to facilitate language practice**

### *Target group and rationale*

This model creates partnerships of trained volunteer-befrienders willing to work on a regular basis with refugees/migrants to support their social integration. Volunteers will facilitate access to ESOL provision and local services, and will work with learners in groups of two or three, which aids language development through interaction.

This model is particularly valuable for those who are unable to access other educational services, such as asylum seekers and those who are not eligible for fee remission and cannot afford to pay fees, and for women who wish to learn in their own homes.

It may also be possible in some contexts to secure the voluntary services of retired ESOL teachers, prepared to offer their expertise as qualified teachers to community projects. However, it has to be assumed that most volunteers will need to be trained for the befriending role and this has been included in the costing.

Full professional ESOL teacher training is unlikely to be feasible for new volunteers, as the return on investment would be too poor. In a similar way, for example the International Red Cross, would not undertake the initial professional training of new doctors or nurses, but needs to utilise the voluntary services of those prepared to give their time in different roles, according to their qualifications and skills.

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<sup>18</sup> This case study comes from Metropolitan Support Trust

### *Description of model*

A volunteer partnership focused on the integration of people with English language needs can be developed within existing public and corporate volunteering schemes. The model requires a framework for training volunteers in the basics of facilitating language practice and in the responsibilities of the befriended role. These are varied and will depend on local need but might include mentoring on finding work; presenting at interviews; accessing and evidencing prior learning, skills and experiences; living and working in London.

Although sourcing funding for volunteer schemes has been difficult in the past, London is now seeing a growth in volunteering organisations and opportunities (see the Mayor's Team London programme) and the overwhelming need for this learning and integration model will generate interest.

Similar projects, such as Get London Reading initiated by the Evening Standard and supported by the Mayor, demonstrate the city's capacity to respond. The model set out here assumes a three day training course for all new volunteers, who would then be mentored by an experienced professional tutor to support their ongoing sessions with individual learners.

There is a need with this model to ensure the quality of the intervention: there is a well-grounded pedagogy underpinning ESOL teaching. This is an issue that is identified in the research available in the use of volunteers with ESOL learners and was again an emerging issue from the recent NIACE report to the Skills Funding Agency on the impact of funding changes.

### *Research evidence and resources*

- NIACE, (2012, unpublished report for the Skills Funding Agency) '*The Impact of changes to the funding of ESOL*'
- NIACE have produced a detailed volunteer guide for recruiting and training volunteers '*Learning English – volunteers matter*'.

### *Potential funding sources and business case*

Charitable organisations such as City Year London may be interested in supporting integration at local level. Large employers have shown interest in their staff being involved in charitable activities, for example 40% of the Prudential's staff act as volunteers.

### *Value for money, scalability and feasibility*

The model is based on the cost for one learner to participate in 60 hours of one-to-one support (30 weeks at 2 hours per week face-to-face), the estimated cost would be **£381 per learner**. This costing assumes that volunteers are trained in a group of 10 for three days training. It assumes the volunteer works in a group of three learners, to aid development of communication skills. It also assumes a total of 5 hours per annum of mentor support for each volunteer.

Economies of scale will be achieved subsequently as training will not be needed, and mentoring hours could drop. This would then reduce the cost to **around £200 per learner**. Note this is for a 30 week course (other models are for 10 weeks only).

## Example case studies

### Welcome to the UK<sup>19</sup>

*This project, managed by Learning Unlimited, successfully makes use of volunteers as befrienders who support the beneficiaries with signposting and social integration activities. The volunteers are trained and matched with learners. A coordinator monitors their activity and is able to respond to queries and issues. The volunteers are from similar community backgrounds and share their knowledge of the host society. The volunteers also participate in the variety of activities organised by the project as a whole and are able to attend the ESOL classes.*

### Time Together Refugee Mentoring Scheme<sup>20</sup>

*This scheme matched volunteer mentors (UK citizens) with refugees to support their integration. Mentors and mentees worked together on activities such as CV writing, practising English, learning about job market and employment processes, visiting museums and similar. The key features of the model were:*

- *Mentors receive training on mentoring and how to help mentees with employment and other issues.*
- *Skills, the same or related professional background and interests are matched where possible.*
- *Procedures are in place to support the process.*

### Day centre offering complementary provision<sup>21</sup>

*This centre is staffed by volunteer ESOL teachers who are fully qualified and offers a variety of short courses:*

*Drop-in classes daily for regular learners and those who are more sporadic. There is a timetable for each class that learners can use to plan their attendance with no requirement to attend regularly.*

*One-to-one short course provision aimed at supporting learners to address specific learning needs such as IELTS preparation, passing a theory driving test or developing specific vocational vocabulary for example for law.*

*Short 10 week courses aimed at improving English and employability. Levels included beginners to intermediate.*

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<sup>19</sup> This case study comes from Learning Unlimited

<sup>20</sup> This case study comes from Metropolitan Support Trust

<sup>21</sup> This case study asked not to be identified

# APPENDICES

## **Appendix A: Methodology**

The methodology combined field and desk research and comprised questionnaires, focus groups, individual interviews and examination of key documents.

### *Desk research*

Desk research included a literature review and examination of key documents. We reviewed a range of reports, policy statements and other relevant documentation in order to provide background and contextualise the data we were receiving from respondents.

### *Data collection*

We used a mix of interviews, focus groups and a questionnaire to gain data on the groups of people unable to access Skills Funding Agency funded provision; examples of existing provision for these groups; information about alternative funding sources. Interviews were carried out both face-to-face and on the telephone and were recorded for analysis. Focus groups were held on the back of other events in Islington, Greenwich, Newham and Hackney chosen as having high incidence of ESOL need in London. These attracted participants from other London boroughs.

A questionnaire was devised to elicit information about alternative provision and was circulated to providers in all London boroughs using the NIACE LEAFA network (Local Education Authorities Forum for the Education of Adults), the National Family Learning network (NFLN) and to providers identified in the interviews and focus groups.

The data gained through all responses was analysed according to the three objectives of the GLA specification. Where we felt that provision was particularly relevant to this project in terms of efficient models, innovative use of funding, value for money, coverage, we developed case studies for further consideration. From these nine case studies we synthesised three models for GLA consideration that represented methods of improving access to ESOL provision in London for underrepresented groups.

### *Respondents*

We emailed invitations to take part in the feasibility study to Migrant and Refugee Community Organisations (MRCOs) in London on the Refugee Council's database, to the ESOL Research Forum and NIACE Skills for Life networks in London. Direct telephone contact was made with 23 organisations from a database of NIACE contacts,<sup>22</sup> and other relevant contacts identified by researchers and stakeholders. In total, we had responses from 65 individuals at 59 organisations: 10 Local Authority Adult and Community Learning services; 11 Further Education Colleges; 25 Voluntary Community Sector organisations; two private training providers; a funding organisation; a social enterprise; a government department; 3 not for profit organisations; union representatives; a social enterprise and an independent research centre.

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<sup>22</sup> An online directory of London agencies that provide learning activities for asylum seekers <http://www.niace.org.uk/sites/default/files/RTAV-Directory.pdf>

The feasibility study included representatives from organisations with borough specific activities, cross-borough and a pan-London remit. A full list of responding organisations and their mode of participation is given in **Table A1**.

#### *Interviews*

We carried out telephone and face to face semi-structured interviews with representatives from 27 organisations (see **Appendix B**). These included representatives from a number of key agencies, for example Jobcentre Plus (JCP) and Unionlearn, and with individuals who were not able to attend the focus groups. We incorporated these findings into the analysis.

#### *Focus groups and questionnaires*

We held four focus groups for providers/stakeholders. Two were joint events with two NIACE national ESOL research projects<sup>23</sup> based in Islington and Greenwich. They were attended by 19 participants, including delegates from other boroughs such as Westminster and Bromley. Two further borough based ESOL focus groups took place in Newham and Hackney and were attended by 16 participants. These boroughs were chosen as having high densities of speakers of other languages.

We held three learner focus groups with a total of 15 participants in Bromley and Kingston upon Thames.

We sent a further questionnaire focussing only on the models of English language learning provision to ESOL providers on the LEA<sup>24</sup> network and to providers identified in the interviews and focus groups. Overall 31 participants gave information on their models of provision and sources of funding. From these examples of feasible alternatives to Agency funded ESOL classes, we selected nine case studies which showed innovative features and evidence of effectiveness in meeting the needs of ESOL learners. These case studies are presented in full in **Appendix C**. As the provision in these case studies was in response to specific local circumstances, we adopted features of the local provision that respondents told us were particularly effective and have proposed generic models suitable for the whole of London. Note that many of the case studies did not want to be identified; for example one organisation seeking funding for their model quoted 'Commercial in confidence' in their correspondence.

See **Appendix B**: Research tools for the focus group questions and questionnaire.

The study also drew on a NIACE led national research focusing on the impact of the Skills Funding Agency funding changes that was taking place concurrently with this research and was funded by the Agency and the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills. As part of the national research a questionnaire was sent to all Agencies funded ESOL providers in October 2011. Out of a total of 53 completed questionnaires, 11 were completed by London based providers.

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23 Funded by SFA and BIS

24 Local Education Authorities Forum for the Education of Adults

**Table A1 Participating organisations**

No	Name of Organisation	Organisation Type	Borough	Type of Participation			
				Interview	Focus Group	Models of Provision Question	Stakeholders Group
1	An organisation that wished to remain anonymous	VCS organisation	Pan London	•			
2	Afghan Association, Paiwand	VCS organisation - MRCO	Pan London	•			
3	Arab Advice Centre	VCS organisation - MRCO	Islington	•			
4	Association of Colleges	Further Education	National	•			
5	Aston- Mansfield and Newham ESOL exchange	VCS organisation	Newham		•		
6	Blackfriars Settlement	VCS organisation	Southwark		•		
7	British Council	VCS organisation	National	•			
8	Bromley Adult Education College	Further Education	Bromley		•	•	
9	Bromley by Bow Centre	VCS organisation	Tower Hamlets	•			
10	Bromley College	Further Education	Bromley		•		
11	City and Islington College	Further Education	Islington		•		
12	Community Education Lewisham	Local Authority	Lewisham			•	
13	EFA (English for Action) London	VCS organisation	Greenwich		•	•	
14	ELS - East London Skills for Life	VCS organisation	Newham		•		

15	Faith in the Future	Private	Hackney		.		
16	Faith Regen	VCS organisation	Pan London	.			
17	Greenwich Community College	Further Education	Greenwich	.	.		
18	Hackney Community College	Further Education	Hackney		.		
19	Hackney ESOL Forum	VCS organisation	Hackney	.	.		
20	Hackney Refugee Forum	VCS organisation - MRCO	Hackney		.		
21	Harold Road Centre	VCS organisation	Newham	.	.	.	
22	Havering College	Further Education	Havering		.		
23	Hounslow LA	Local Authority	Hounslow			.	
24	International House	Private	Pan London	.		.	
25	Iranian Association	VCS organisation - MRCO	Hammersmith	.			
26	Jobcentre Plus - London Region	DWP	Pan London	.			
27	Inclusion	Not for profit	National				.
28	Islington Adult Community Learning	Local Authority	Islington		.		
29	Islington Council	Local Authority	Islington		.		
30	Jobcentre Plus - London Region	DWP	Pan London	.			
31	LEA Adult Learning Services Learning Trust	Local Authority	Hackney		.		
32	Learning Unlimited	Social Enterprise	Pan London	.		.	
33	London Borough of Tower Hamlets, Idea learning store	Local Authority	Tower Hamlets	.	.	.	
34	Mary Ward Centre	SDI	Camden	.			



35	Medway Community Learning Centre	Local Authority			.		
36	Migrant Resource Centre	VCS organisation - MRCO	Pan London	.		.	
37	MigrationWork CIC	VCS organisation	National				.
38	Morley College	SDI	Lambeth				
39	Metropolitan Support Trust	Not for profit	Pan London	.		.	
40	Muslim Welfare House	VCS organisation	Pan London		.		
41	NATECLA	Other	National				.
42	Newham Adult Learning Service	Local Authority	Newham		.		
43	NRDC	Other	National	.			
44	Oxford House College	Private	Pan London	.			
45	Planning, Regeneration and Enterprise, London Borough of Lambeth	Local Authority	Lambeth				.
46	Praxis	VCS organisation - MRCO	Pan London	.			
47	PWA - Progressive Women Association	VCS organisation	Newham		.		
48	Refugee Action Kingston	VCS organisation - MRCO	Kingston upon Thames	.			
49	Refugee Council	VCS organisation - MRCO	Pan London	.		.	.
50	Refugee Women's Association	VCS organisation - MRCO	Pan London		.		
51	Skills Funding Agency	Funder	National	.			
52	Skills Re-Think	VCS organisation	Newham		.		

53	South Thames College	Further Education	Wandsworth		.		
54	An organisation that wished to remain anonymous	VCS organisation	Lambeth	.			
55	SSFA Forces Help	VCS organisation	Greenwich	.			
56	The Learning Trust	Not for profit	Hackney		.		
57	Tower Hamlet College	Further Education	Tower Hamlets		.		
58	Union Learn	Union	National	.		.	
59	Union Learn Service	Union	National				.
60	Westminster Kingsway College	Further Education	Westminster		.		
<b>TOTAL 59 organisations</b>				<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>6</b>

25	VCO Organisations	1	Funder
2	Union	2	Private
11	Further Education	2	Government Dept
3	Not for profit	2	Other
10	LA	1	Social Enterprise

## Appendix B: Case Studies

In the course of the research we identified many different models and approaches that were tailored to meet the needs of ESOL learners which included programmes of different lengths and times of delivery; programmes customised to meet the needs of specific ethnic groups, ESOL family learning, and programmes linked to specific vocational sectors. Many of the models showed imaginative use of volunteers, befriended, learning mentors and other resources such as ICT or e-learning materials. We present nine case studies to illustrate the models of provision for the learners identified by this feasibility study as being the most disadvantaged in accessing Skills Funding Agency funded ESOL.

Note these case studies are as written by the organisations themselves, so the researchers were not able to check the validity of what has been written. We are not suggesting these represent best practice, and this is not an exhaustive list. Note also that some writers requested that they remain anonymous.

### 1. ESOL Family learning

**Aim/objectives of programme:** to provide entry and pre-entry ESOL classes for women with children who may be reluctant to engage with learning in a more formal setting such as the college.

**Target group:** women who are recent migrants (more than 1 year resident but less than 5) with young pre-school children.

**Staffing:** trained ESOL tutors.

**Main components:** Entry and pre-entry ESOL classes. Long course: 2.5 hours per week from November and running in line with school terms till early July.

**Innovative features:** curriculum designed around supporting learners with children. Qualification available to be taken for those that want it but not main focus of the provision. Communication skills and family based learning are key.

**Good practice:** outreach for recruitment, engage women who may be reluctant to engage with learning in a more formal setting such as the college, venues regarded as “safe” places for women to attend classes, access to childcare - an issue for recent migrants on Spousal visas as women often arrive in the UK to be married and have fallen pregnant within a year of arrival which can seriously undermine their attempts to integrate into their new community once they have small children. The programme facilitates the link and communication between the learner and the school/children’s centre. Progression: learners encouraged to progress into more formal learning settings such as Learning Centres once they have gained more confidence.

**Evidence of effectiveness:** progression of learners into mainstream ESOL provision, exam results.

**Source(s) of funding:**

- Family Learning Impact Funding (note funding since ceased); some courses commissioned by schools or children's centres.
- Adult safeguarded learning fund (which incorporates Family Learning, Literacy, Language and Numeracy and Wider Family Learning)

In the course of the research we identified many different models and approaches that were tailored to meet the needs of ESOL learners which included programmes of different lengths and times of delivery; programmes customised to meet the needs of specific ethnic groups, ESOL family learning, and programmes linked to specific vocational sectors. Many of the models showed imaginative use of volunteers, befriended, learning mentors and other resources such as ICT or e-learning materials. We have created nine case studies to illustrate the models of provision for the learners identified by this feasibility study as being the most disadvantaged in accessing Skills Funding Agency funded ESOL.

## 2. 'Welcome to the UK' Project – Learning Unlimited

*'Welcome to the UK' is a three year project funded by the UKBA's European Integration Fund (EIF) and works with learners across London. This project demonstrates elements of good practice in terms of partnership, use of 'befriended' from community groups, quality delivery, focus on integration' (authors' note).*

**Most likely beneficiaries:** third country nationals, spouses, women with low levels of English, Bangladeshi, Somali, South American, unemployed.

**Least likely beneficiaries:** men, employed, EU nationals; refugees & asylum-seekers; women whose partners do not satisfy the status criteria.

**Aim/objectives of programme:** To support the integration of migrant women through topic-based English language development and befriended support.

**Target group:** Women for third country nationals, particularly recent arrivals who are excluded from main stream provision because of residence requirements, joining family members who are settled here as British citizens or with indefinite leave to remain and those who have been in the country less than 10 years.

**Staffing:** Qualified ESOL tutors; befriended to support learners.

**Main components: Long course of** English language classes, 5hrs per week for 30 weeks; befriended training and matching with learners, partnership with participatory filmmakers; out of class activities such as visits; reasonable accreditation target; crèche provision and travel costs. Style of delivery:

topic based, interactive, addressing all 4 learning styles, structured but informal, *'Bringing the outside in'*.

**Innovative features:** training and deployment of volunteers as befrienders, partnership with participatory film company which allows learners to make a film about their learning and their experience of integration and use language in a meaningful and practical situation, links with Bangladesh.

**Evidence of effectiveness:** attendance & retention particularly high, achievement of accreditation, good progression rates to further training/ higher level language and literacy classes and vocational training, community involvement/career development of volunteer befrienders, feedback and evaluation of all aspects.

**Good practice:** befrienders are from similar community backgrounds who provide a range of support including signposting to relevant services, accompanying learners on visits and supporting the learners English language development and sharing their knowledge of the host society. Production of the participatory film gives learners an opportunity to use language in a meaningful and practical situation. It also introduces them to the skills of film-making and gives them an opportunity to share their learning and their experience of integration with others. Outside speakers from key essential services such as fire, ambulance were invited to attend group events.

Celebratory events and trips/visits including both parents and children, a programme of visits from police, education and housing departments, encouraging a greater understanding of, and integration into, British systems; provision of crèche and travel allowances for learners and befrienders; partnerships with both private organisation and mainstream provision.

**Source(s) of funding:** 75% EIF, 25% matched from non-Skills Funding Agency college budget/ NRDC and Adult Safeguarded Learning budget. The funding covers both travel allowances and crèche facilities, key barriers for many women from this group.

**Sustainability:** EIF funding likely to be available for next 2 years; however availability of 25% match will be an issue to be addressed.

### **3. ESOL for the Roma Community members (pilot project)**

*This project is run based in the London Borough of Hackney and is funded by the Skills Funding Agency. It was developed through a partnership between the Learning Trust (Adult Learning Services), the Traveller Education Service and Hackney Homes, and support from two local schools who hosted the initial assessment sessions and the class itself. (Authors' note)*

**Most likely beneficiaries:** members of a specific community group.

**Aim/objectives of programme:** To develop the language and literacy of ESOL learners from the Roma community who have not previously accessed an adult learning course.

**Target group:** Eastern European Roma adults (19+) resident in the London Borough of Hackney and in receipt of benefits/ on a low income (under £16,100). The course has been designed for learners who have not previously engaged in adult learning and are working at entry level one<sup>25</sup>.

**Staffing:** The course is co-ordinated and taught by the ESOL Curriculum Manager who is a fully qualified ESOL tutor (DTE (E)LLS) and has a qualification in Teaching Basic Literacy to ESOL Learners.

**Main components:** A twice-weekly ESOL course held at a local primary school. The course runs for 24 weeks (for four hours a week) and is RARPA accredited.

**Partnership working:** The course was set up as a result of close partnership working between Adult Learning Services, the Traveller Education Service and Hackney Homes, and support from two local schools who hosted initial assessment sessions and the class itself. The working group involved in setting up the project included: Traveller Education Service Co-ordinator at the Learning Trust (working with Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children), Roma Support Worker at Hackney Homes and the ESOL Curriculum Manager at the Learning Trust (Adult Learning Services). Three initial assessment sessions held at two Hackney schools.

**Programme design involving learners:** fourteen Roma adults were asked at a Focus group meeting about previous learning and barriers they experienced, what they wanted to get from a class, and find out any additional needs such as childcare. This informed the choice of venue (a primary school where a third of the learners have children) and the days and time of the class.

**Emerging scheme of work:** The scheme of work for the course is not pre-set, rather it is 'emerging', that is focusing on topics which arise in the course of classroom interaction, or in the real world, and on learner language as it emerges from lesson to lesson. This is based on the Reflect ESOL approach, a pedagogy for the ESOL classroom inspired by the Brazilian educator Paulo Freire. Freirean processes and techniques are all used on the course.

**Focus on progression:** The course is a first step into adult learning for this group of learners. The aim is then to identify the most suitable progression for the learners either on to a 'mainstream' community-based ESOL course or Family Learning course.

**Good practice:** Community developed and owned: the programme is based on the needs of this particular group of learners, particularly on knowledge of the state school system where they will be sending their children, and issues concerning the lack of status which their first language has in many contexts.

**Support:** There is ongoing support from Roma Support Worker at Hackney Homes who has strong relationships with many of the learners, and can communicate with them in Polish. The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator, our contact at the primary school where the class is held, also supports through her existing relationship with parents.

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<sup>25</sup> Entry level 1 is the lowest level of qualification in the National Qualifications Framework.

**Quality assured** by the Community Development Manager at the Learning Trust (Adult Learning Services) who has responsibility for pilot projects.

**Good recruitment and attendance higher than usual for this group of learners:** There are nine learners on the course, which is a healthy number for an E1 ESOL basic literacy course. Though attendance may not be 'high' compared to national benchmarks, learners attend consistently and notify the tutor when they are not able to attend. Encouraging regular attendance has been supported by the Roma Support Worker at Hackney Homes.

**Learner commitment:** Learners have ownership over the course, always arriving punctually, contributing well to the class and completing any homework set.

This helped with initial recruitment, as new learners joined towards the start of the programme having been told about the course by friends of family members who were attending.

**Learner progress:** learners have made good initial progress. Conversations with learners at the end of lessons have shown that they are building their confidence at using English orally and in reading and writing.

**Source(s) of funding:** Skills Funding Agency.

**Sustainability:** Based on the external evaluation, a plan will be made for how to take forward the work in 2012-13. If there are other learners from the Roma community identified who would benefit from another introductory course like this pilot, that option will also be considered. The current learners see themselves as 'role models for others learners lacking confidence to access adult learning.

#### **4. Alternative Education Model (AEM)**

*The United Migrant Workers Education Project (UMWEP) is a not-for-profit organisation sponsored by Unite the Union and based in Holborn, Central London. They run their AEM as an alternative proposal for migrant and vulnerable workers excluded from formal education. (Authors' note)*

**Target group:** Cleaners working in the City of London, Canary Wharf and other areas around London, who are migrant and vulnerable workers. The project developed from the Campaign for Justice for cleaners. From 2009 onwards, UMWEP is open to all vulnerable workers from any sector. An illustrative case could be the Justice for Domestic Workers (J4DW) who not only joined the Union but, in its majority are attending classes on Sundays.

**Staffing:** The Alternative Education Model is made of volunteers from different backgrounds. Tutors are committed to the AEM because of their social awareness and sense of solidarity with those who have been excluded from mainstream education. Some are volunteers who have a variety of teaching experience in their original country; others may be experienced ESOL and ICT Tutors/Assistant Tutors,

not necessarily with teaching qualifications but with a good standard of either ESOL or ICT or both. The volunteers may be university students or people with an interest in informal adult education and wanting to gain teaching experience in an informal setting.

**Main components:** 15 week courses of 2 hours per week plus additional learning undertaken by the learner on Saturdays with some tutors' meetings taking place on Sundays. Travel costs provided for volunteer tutors. (We deliver classes on Saturdays and Sundays). The programme concentrates on ESOL and ICT but also organises courses on English Pronunciation, Dance Therapy Movement, Art, Drama and workshops on health rights and grassroots activities on labour rights.

**Method/style of delivery:** Learner-centred, discussion groups based on topics chosen by learners, the Reflect model of informal ESOL teaching, use of e-learning, self-study.

**Innovative features:** Mentoring for volunteers to run discussion groups based on topics chosen by learners.

**Good practice:** mentoring & training for volunteers, workers with teaching qualifications from their own countries acting as volunteer tutors, training for volunteer tutors on the Reflect model of informal ESOL teaching.

**Evidence of effectiveness:** continuous growing learner's numbers (currently we have 120-150 learners. 80 per cent of them rotating the subjects on offer. The learners are progressing on to higher levels of learning and advancing in techniques. The Alternative Education Model and its successful outcomes are regularly being approached for consultancy on how to support and develop alternative education provision by both internal and external parties, including the British Council, Bristol City Council and Action Aid.

**Source(s) of funding:** Union Learning Fund (ULF) and Unite the Union National Education Department. Classes were originally funded through CONEL who provided LLN support for learners on Saturdays and Sundays but they withdrew after the changes in Skills Funding Agency funding ESOL in the work place were introduced. Union Learn provided funding for the project until 2010.

**Sustainability:** currently dependent on volunteers and union support.

## **5. ESOL and health for men**

This project is delivered by the Bromley by Bow Centre in Tower Hamlets. It is a one year project funded by NHS East London and the City and currently has 17 learners. (Authors' note)

**Aim/objectives of programme:** Aimed at people who have ESOL needs at entry level to understand a range of health issues, such as cancer and to improve their access to health services available to them in particular different health screening programmes.



**Target group:** learners at Entry level, but not pre- entry; many have good literacy skills. To engage men flexibility is the key and provision targeted at men as men sometimes prefer not to learn with women. Target 15 men but we have 17, mainly secondary' migrants from other EU countries with a majority of Bangladeshi origin, and some Somali learners who are secondary migrants. Mainly Muslim in their 30s and 40s. Most men are working as they rush in and out from classes to get to work. Unclear whether they are in formal or informal employment.

**Staffing:** Facilitated by trained tutors – no volunteer involvement at the moment; some were involved last year.

**Main components:** one year long; sessions held one morning 10-12 and one afternoon at 12-15 – this is suitable as majority are working in restaurants; some learners' only attend morning sessions and one learner only comes to the afternoon session. The course includes qualifications such as OCR literacy.

**Innovative features:** a men only course.

**Good practice:** learners encouraged to attend open access IT provision.

**Evidence of effectiveness:** Good recruitment and attendance; learners achieving qualifications on other courses; flexibility and timing allows participants to join class either in the morning or afternoon.

**Source(s) of funding:** funded by NHS East London and the City.

**Sustainability:** Dependant on co-funding or grants.

## **6. Drop-in centre using trainee teachers and other volunteers**

*This provision is run by the Migrant Resource Centre which mainly delivers services in Westminster, although its service users come from different boroughs London-wide. It also hosts formal Agency-funded provision on behalf of Westminster Council Adult Education Services. It has 10-12 learners on its formal courses, up to 10 learners on its 'ESOL on Internet' course and a fluctuating number of learners on its informal courses. (Authors' note)*

### **Aim/objectives of programme:**

- to provide informal English language learning opportunities for disadvantaged learners at different levels and one ESOL on the Internet.
- to support CELTA students/recent graduates to access practice opportunities.

- to support other volunteers to work alongside CELTA students/recent graduates.

**Target group:** Open to all, particularly for disadvantaged learners at different levels and people who cannot attend regularly; no specific criteria for this provision.

**Staffing:** Facilitated by volunteers CELTA students/graduates and some retired teachers. No need to proactively recruit as the centre has long term reputation of offering practice opportunities for CELTA tutors (currently 14). Other volunteers who provide support for learners using language skills, IT skills and their own experience of learning. Volunteer co-ordinator.

**Main components:** flexible drop in classes every day, morning, afternoon and evening for learners at different levels; currently six courses for learners with different levels of ESOL: starter class for people, who have no English, lower Intermediate, Intermediate and Upper Intermediate, IELTS preparation courses, ESOL on Internet. Community based venue that migrants also access for legal advice (main role), next step and other access to other support available at the centre. All potential learners undergo assessment of level and learning needs before being referred to appropriate course. Advice and support for progression routes, e.g. to vocational training, volunteering.

**Innovative features:** peer support offered by other volunteers based on own experience of learning. IT skills are developed alongside ESOL.

**Evidence of effectiveness:** attendance & retention of learners high, progression to higher level ESOL, vocational training, higher education and volunteering, increased confidence of learners to participate in other/more learning at the centre and elsewhere, retention and commitment of volunteers.

**Good practice:** offers flexibility for those who cannot attend regularly, and support in first language for many learners because of diverse staff/volunteer language skills; Inclusive of people regardless of gender, age, immigration status, employment or benefits status, able to support people with health and mental health needs, utilises existing ICT resources to offer learning, progression to higher level ESOL classes as students are ready.

**Source(s) of funding:** funding is required for a dedicated volunteer coordinator post, resources to support learning and technical support to maintain the suite of 14 computers.

## **7. Drop-in model for women: ESOL – Bridging the communities**

*This project is delivered by the Bromley by Bow Centre in Tower Hamlets. It started in September 2011 and will continue for 3 years with funding from the City Bridge Trust. (Authors' note)*

**Target group:** women only.

**Aim:** to increase integration, build confidence, support digital inclusion and reduce social isolation. The programme supports community cohesion: learners meet people from different backgrounds, organise events together and get a chance to volunteer.

**Staffing:** Volunteer co-ordinator, Volunteers, if possible CELTA trained, who have skills to work with people with ESOL needs.

**Main elements:** ESOL courses with IT skills and conversational classes with embedded financial literacy and health content. Not classes with set time table. Drop in 1.00-3.00 on Weds –to fit with volunteer tutor requirements. Volunteer led conversation class (target 20 per year), volunteer led IT class (target 20 per year), not accredited but supports people who are in other courses to prepare for exams.

**Innovative feature:** Volunteers recruited from own pool of learners who express an interest in volunteering. Plan to work with Lloyds TSB whose employees would support our learners – 10 hours per employee.

**Good practice:** IT suite with open access after 3pm and all learners are encouraged to access it; the centre is also a Life in the UK testing centre.

**Evidence of effectiveness:** classes are very popular and learners who are supported are helped to achieve accreditation on other courses; a number of learners have become volunteers in the centre.

**Funding:** 3 year funding from City Bridge Trust.

## **8. Day centre offering complementary models**

*This provision is run by the Refugee Council at their day centre in Brixton. It is available to all asylum seekers and refugees in London and includes group learning, one to one provision, family group and women only learn. (Authors' note)*

**Most likely beneficiaries:** full range of learners, asylum seekers and refugees especially those without refugee status or who do not have appropriate documents or National Insurance numbers to access benefits. There are also people who are eligible for mainstream benefits but are still establishing benefit status e.g. ESA or getting documents to access benefits. Asylum seekers seem to be mainly from Afghanistan. On the whole there is good mix of gender – possibly more men at the day centre; many women with children; people who are not able to make commitment to attend college regularly as they have too much going on already like problems with accommodation.

**Least likely beneficiaries:** more independent learners who would be referred to college if their circumstances allowed.

**Aim/objectives of programmes:** To provide a range of accessible models of ESOL learning including ESOL and employability.

**Staffing:** All learning is facilitated by volunteers who are qualified English teachers, they are very flexible. A paid member of staff is responsible for volunteer recruitment and support. Outreach volunteers.

### **Main components**

**Model 1:** Drop-in classes every day but not only for learning English: Maths, Science, Art also offered. Non-accredited courses that are delivered to people at different English level needs including pre-entry.

**Target group:** regular learners and those who are more sporadic.

**Innovative features:** there is a timetable for each class that learners can use to plan their attendance. There is no requirement to attend regularly.

**Model 2:** 1:1 provision that is aimed at supporting learners to address specific learning needs such as IELTS preparation, passing a theory driving test or developing specific vocational vocabulary for example for law.

**Target group:** same learners who access 1:1 also access drop-in group classes.

**Model 3:** short 10 week courses aimed at improving English and employability. Levels included beginners to intermediate. The course was aimed at improving English and employability.

**Target group:** women who have refugee status; travelling expenses were paid. Many women who struggled with travelling cost and those with lower level English needs and would have struggled to access college were able to take part in this programme.

**Model 4:** a Friday morning group at the day centre for young mums to attend with their children; the group organise trips and similar activities.

**Target group:** Majority are asylum seekers, some refugees.

**Good practice:** Teachers are flexible and responsive to accommodate a range of specific learning needs. If people attend the informal provision they can access other advice and free meals.

Engagement of outreach volunteers that provide different support and advice.

**Progression routes:** Whenever possible people referred to formal/college based learning to be able to progress to other courses, mix with different people just refugees and get qualifications.

**Flexibility:** the provision offered is informal and it does not count towards the allowed hours as they attend it alongside accessing free meals and other advice here. Sometimes women attend classes with their babies as there is no crèche at the centre which tutors are generally happy with.

**Evidence of effectiveness:** All classes are generally well attended. Although the classes have been borne out of necessity, the clients gave a lot of positive feedback about the support they received from teachers and in addition to learning English were improving their confidence, getting information about other courses they can access.

**Source(s) of funding:** various.

**Sustainability:** the volume of our provision depends on availability of volunteers not the demand from learners – **there is always demand.**

Plan to work in partnership with community based organisations to continue programmes.

## 9. Home Learning Project

**Most likely beneficiaries:** vulnerable and isolated refugees who are unable to access mainstream ESOL provision for a range of reasons: physical and mental ill health, caring responsibilities, lack of previous education (including not meeting minimum standards for English courses) and isolation and cultural issues.

**Least likely beneficiaries:** Learners who are able to access provision in group provision in mainstream or community.

**Aim/objectives of programme:** to help vulnerable refugees to feel less isolated and more integrated in their communities and to participate in community activities:

- to help vulnerable refugees develop practical English language skills and progress to further learning and/or employment;
- to provide support for vulnerable refugees, especially those with low literacy and English levels, to develop their confidence and to improve their basic life skills, employability and social skills; to access mainstream courses.

**Staffing:** Programme manager and assistant. Volunteers who are qualified ESOL teachers; learning resources development volunteer, etc.

**Target group:** Vulnerable refugees across Greater London.

**Main components:** 1-1 English teaching for one hour a week for 6 months with volunteers who are qualified ESOL tutors, subsequent mentoring by refugee learning mentors, lessons mainly delivered in the home but also in other venues such as cafes, community centres and libraries.

**Innovative features:**

- Training and deployment of refugee mentors to provide further support for refugees attending 1-1 ESOL support;
- Development of an easy-to-use, pictorial soft outcomes self-assessment form, and documents to monitor mentoring activities;
- Establishment of conversation opportunities held in local venues where volunteers accompany learners to build their confidence;
- Range of volunteer activities: as newsletter editor, risk assessment volunteers,
- Close liaison with employment team to encourage mentors and clients into work based volunteer placements.

**Good practice:** Flexible and tailor-made ESOL tuition, regular monthly training and support sessions for volunteer tutors, including training on teaching beginner literacy to ESOL learners;

Excellent partnerships with Refugee employment agencies such as: Transitions, an organisation developing opportunities for refugee professionals that provides advice and help in finding placements, Praxis, and referral agencies such as Camden Traumatic Stress Clinic, NHS Mental health services and Freedom from Torture.

**Evidence of effectiveness:** Numbers of learners progressing on to further learning, to employment, and taking part in community activities; feedback from evaluations.

**Source(s) of funding:** Big Lottery Fund

**Sustainability:** Dependent on obtaining future grants funding.

## Appendix C: References

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### Hindi

यदि आप इस दस्तावेज की प्रति अपनी  
भाषा में चाहते हैं, तो कृपया निम्नलिखित  
नंबर पर फोन करें अथवा नीचे दिये गये  
पते पर संपर्क करें

### Vietnamese

Nếu bạn muốn có văn bản tài liệu  
này bằng ngôn ngữ của mình, hãy  
liên hệ theo số điện thoại hoặc địa  
chỉ dưới đây.

### Bengali

আপনি যদি আপনার ভাষায় এই দলিলের প্রতিলিপি  
(কপি) চান, তা হলে নিচের ফোন নম্বরে  
বা ঠিকানায় অনুগ্রহ করে যোগাযোগ করুন।

### Greek

Αν θέλετε να αποκτήσετε αντίγραφο του παρόντος  
εγγράφου στη δική σας γλώσσα, παρακαλείστε να  
επικοινωνήσετε τηλεφωνικά στον αριθμό αυτό ή ταχυ-  
δρομικά στην παρακάτω διεύθυνση.

### Urdu

اگر آپ اس دستاویز کی نقل اپنی زبان میں  
چاہتے ہیں، تو براہ کرم نیچے دئے گئے نمبر  
پر فون کریں یا دیئے گئے پتے پر رابطہ کریں

### Turkish

Bu belgenin kendi dilinizde  
hazırlanmış bir nüshasını  
edinmek için, lütfen aşağıdaki  
telefon numarasını arayınız  
veya adrese başvurunuz.

### Arabic

إذا أردت نسخة من هذه الوثيقة بلغتك، يرجى  
الاتصال برقم الهاتف أو مراسلة العنوان  
أدناه

### Punjabi

ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇਸ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ ਦੀ ਕਾਪੀ ਤੁਹਾਡੀ ਆਪਣੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ  
ਵਿਚ ਚਾਹੀਦੀ ਹੈ, ਤਾਂ ਹੇਠ ਲਿਖੇ ਨੰਬਰ 'ਤੇ ਫ਼ੋਨ ਕਰੋ ਜਾਂ ਹੇਠ  
ਲਿਖੇ ਪਤੇ 'ਤੇ ਰਾਬਤਾ ਕਰੋ:

### Gujarati

જો તમને આ દસ્તાવેજની નકલ તમારી ભાષામાં  
જોઈતી હોય તો, કૃપા કરી આપેલ નંબર ઉપર  
ફોન કરો અથવા નીચેના સરનામે સંપર્ક સાધો.

