

# Delivering Skills for Life:

The national strategy for improving adult literacy and numeracy skills

Raising  
Standards

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

Adult  
and Community  
Learning

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CONSULTATION DOCUMENT



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# Foreword

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

*Skills for Life (DfES, 2001)*

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

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

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

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

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

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

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Susan Pember". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent 'S' and 'P'.

**Susan Pember**  
**Director, Adult Basic Skills Strategy Unit**

# Introduction

*We need to be prepared to engage as individuals, parents, workers and citizens with economic, social and cultural change, including the continued globalisation of the economy and society, with new work and leisure patterns and with the rapid expansion of communication technologies.*

The School Curriculum and the National Curriculum (DfEE, 1999)

*I had to ask people to write things down for me, now I can write for myself. Community learning is not just important –it is part of my life!*

Salam Aslam, Learner from Bristol

## **CURRENT ISSUES IN ADULT AND COMMUNITY LEARNING PROVISION**

This Guide is intended for the wide range of providers involved in teaching literacy, numeracy and ESOL skills in settings that appeal to adults, especially adult learners who have commitments and concerns that mean that they cannot travel far from where they live.

We include in this dedicated adult education centres, community centres, community schools and other facilities with a neighbourhood focus. For many years, literacy, numeracy and ESOL work with adults was mainly the provenance of local authorities, but since incorporation, further education colleges have extended their activities in this area, and now play a major role in the widening participation agenda. The Government's commitment to community development has also led to an increase in the number of community and voluntary sector organisations that are helping adults to improve their literacy, numeracy and language skills. At the same time, its determination to raise the literacy and numeracy skill levels in schools has led to many initiatives that involve parents in the education of their children, thereby improving their own skills.

Many adult and community learning providers are new to the inspection process. This Guide is intended to help them, and others, take a realistic look at the strengths and weaknesses in their literacy, numeracy and ESOL provision, with a view to improving practice, securing continuous improvement and embedding quality in their *Skills for Life* provision.

The best teaching of literacy, numeracy and ESOL skills in the adult and community learning context is characterised by good teacher: learner ratios, strong sensitivity to learners' needs and circumstances, good personal support and encouragement for learners and a culture of mutual respect. Even so, some provision still leaves room for improvement. Individual or group learning plans of a very variable quality, unimaginative resources, few quality assurance mechanisms (especially in non-accredited learning), poor learning environments and a lack of coherent or reliable data about progress and achievement are examples of this. And while most staff have conscientiously familiarised themselves with the contents of the national curricula and have



diligently set about implementing it, in the process, the focus on the learner has sometimes lost its edge. Many learning plans are devoid of information about what it is the learner wants to be able to do. Many teaching materials, while they might be at the appropriate level, lack significant, challenging content that is relevant to the learner. Sometimes learners are expected to use the same generic materials whether they are studying on a vocational programme or learning in a community context.

Measuring achievement in adult learning remains a thorny issue. This is always a complex business, because of the diversity of adults' lives. Added to this is the fact that many adults have not thought about studying for qualifications. Yet the questions remain: are reasonable numbers of learners achieving, are they achieving at appropriate levels and are they using their skills to progress at work, at home and in their communities.

In this situation, it is clear that learning plans, whether individual or collective, are fundamental to teaching and learning, and to assessing progress and demonstrating achievement. The learning plan is the route map that enables learners to reach, without unnecessary digressions, the end of a journey (or a new beginning), which they have had a large role in defining. The literacy, numeracy and ESOL national curricula provide the co-ordinates for crucial reference points along the way. However, the route map will only serve the purpose if it is based on initial and diagnostic assessment which effectively establishes the learner's starting point. And the learner's progress along the route can be most effectively demonstrated through formative and summative assessment which has been mapped to the co-ordinates.

## **THE SCOPE OF THIS GUIDE**

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

It also offers help by setting out the characteristics of effective practice in literacy, numeracy and language provision for learners, again in relation to the seven questions of the Common Inspection Framework. It contains practical examples and from successful providers ideas of how to achieve effective practice. It also makes reference to *Skills for Life* documents that have been designed to help providers improve their practice.

We wanted this series of guides to offer practical help to providers and teachers – a 'How to' guide that would really focus on what works. For that reason, as well as providing materials that can be adapted for different learning environments, the guides illustrate what success might

look like. For example, how do we know when a learner has made an important new step in their learning? What might be the outcomes of a successful initial assessment? The short descriptions of the progress made by real learners in real situations help to answer such questions.

Finally, the guides all highlight the comments made about this area of work in inspection reports and other documents, to help readers understand how success is judged and reported upon by OFSTED and the ALI.

### **WHAT IS SUCCESS IN THE ADULT AND COMMUNITY LEARNING CONTEXT?**

Many learners can provide powerful testimony of how learning has had a dramatic impact upon their lives – as in the case of the learner who explained that she had just written her first cheque and no longer had to ask her neighbour to read her bank statements for her. She was describing a growth in dignity, not just the acquisition of new skills. Many learners are clear about their objectives – Bakary, who is learning literacy and numeracy, told us, ‘I am not doing this for a job, definitely not! I just want to do this for my own personal life.’ He wanted to be able to read to his children. Lisa, studying childcare, told us, ‘My greatest achievement on this course has been my self-confidence.’ These and the many other learners in the varied contexts that make up adult and community learning provision deserve the best that we can give them. It is hoped that this Guide will help us to reach that goal.

# ACHIEVEMENT AND STANDARDS

1. How well do learners achieve?

1

## 1. HOW WELL DO LEARNERS ACHIEVE?

Effective practice which secures continuous improvement is evidenced by:

- success in achieving challenging targets, including qualifications and learning goals, and results over time;
- the standards of learners' work in relation to their learning goals;
- learners' progress relative to their prior attainment and potential; and
- the development of personal and learning skills.

**IN THE COMMON INSPECTION FRAMEWORK ACHIEVEMENT IS JUDGED BY THE EXTENT TO WHICH...**

**SUCCESS IN ADULT LITERACY, NUMERACY AND ESOL PROVISION IN THE ADULT AND COMMUNITY LEARNING CONTEXT MEANS...**

**1.1** results and retention rates compare well with local and national averages.

**1.1.1** the proportion of learners who complete their learning programmes, achieve their personal learning goals and develop skills at the levels intended is comparable to rates for similar types of provision elsewhere.

**1.2** trends in performance over time show continuous improvement or the maintenance of very high standards.

**1.2.1** there is a steady year-on-year increase in the proportion of learners who are achieving their learning goals, whether accredited or not. Where these rates are already good, the provider is successful in maintaining them.

**1.3** the analysis of added value indicates that learners make at least the progress expected of them.

**1.3.1** learners are on course to accomplish what was agreed and set out in their individual or group learning plans.

**IN THE COMMON INSPECTION FRAMEWORK ACHIEVEMENT IS JUDGED BY THE EXTENT TO WHICH...**

**SUCCESS IN ADULT LITERACY, NUMERACY AND ESOL PROVISION IN THE ADULT AND COMMUNITY LEARNING CONTEXT MEANS...**

**1.4** standards are consistently high across the provider's work.

**1.4.1** learners are performing equally well, whatever kind of educational activity they are involved in; for example, whether they are attending classes in an adult education centre, or are involved in a community development project.

**1.4.2** learners are making good advances in literacy, numeracy and language, whether this is their primary aim, or a secondary one.

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**1.5** challenging learning goals and targets are achieved.

**1.5.1** the goals agreed with learners are achievable, but involve learning, not simply the rehearsal of what the learner already knows.

**1.5.2** the goals agreed with learners have a direct bearing on some aspect of their lives.

**1.5.3** there is evidence that achieving these goals has made some difference to the quality of the learner's life outside the learning environment.

**IN THE COMMON INSPECTION FRAMEWORK  
ACHIEVEMENT IS JUDGED BY THE EXTENT  
TO WHICH LEARNERS...**

**SUCCESS IN ADULT LITERACY, NUMERACY  
AND ESOL PROVISION IN THE ADULT AND  
COMMUNITY LEARNING CONTEXT MEANS...**

**1.6** make significant progress towards fulfilling their goals and potential.

**1.6.1** improve their skills at a good rate, taking into account:

- their starting point
- the goals in their individual or group learning plans
- the length of time they have been engaged in learning
- the amount of time they are able to spend studying
- any family or other commitments.

**1.6.2** show signs that they are beginning to apply their skills to further their longer-term ambitions.

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**1.7** are prepared for effective participation in the workplace and in the community.

**1.7.1** develop literacy, numeracy and language skills which will enable them to be useful members of the workforce and which will aid them should they wish to obtain paid or voluntary employment.

**1.7.2** acquire the necessary knowledge and skills to be able to participate, if they wish, in the work of their trade union.

**1.7.3** develop the knowledge and skills to be able to contribute to improving the quality of life in their local community by, for example, contributing to the work of a community centre management committee, helping in their child's school, sorting out an environmental problem or making use of local democratic processes.

**IN THE COMMON INSPECTION FRAMEWORK  
ACHIEVEMENT IS JUDGED BY THE EXTENT  
TO WHICH LEARNERS...**

**SUCCESS IN ADULT LITERACY, NUMERACY  
AND ESOL PROVISION IN THE ADULT AND  
COMMUNITY LEARNING CONTEXT MEANS...**

**1.8** progress to relevant further or higher education, training or employment.

**1.8.1** have their aspirations raised through the development of their literacy, numeracy and language skills.

**1.8.2** gain the confidence and competence to move into other types of learning, including community education, further education and access to higher education courses.

**1.8.3** improve their employability and earning power and move into paid or voluntary employment where this is relevant to them.

**1.8.4** improve their promotion prospects, where this is relevant and desirable for them.

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**1.9** reach appropriate levels in basic and/or key skills consistent with their main programmes of study or training.

**1.9.1** are aware of how their achievements in literacy, numeracy and language map to the framework for key skills within a vocational context, where this is relevant and appropriate for them.

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**1.10** develop the skills of critical evaluation, research and analysis.

**1.10.1** gain the confidence and know-how to be able to evaluate their own and each other's work, both spoken and written.

**1.10.2** are able to analyse the arguments of others and develop their own arguments.

**1.10.3** are familiar with tools of research such as dictionaries, the Internet, encyclopaedic CDs etc. and are able to use them in a purposeful way.

**IN THE COMMON INSPECTION FRAMEWORK ACHIEVEMENT IS JUDGED BY THE EXTENT TO WHICH LEARNERS...**

**SUCCESS IN ADULT LITERACY, NUMERACY AND ESOL PROVISION IN THE ADULT AND COMMUNITY LEARNING CONTEXT MEANS...**

**1.11** develop the attitudes and skills necessary to maintain lifelong learning, including the capacity to work independently and collaboratively.

**1.11.1** are able to organise their own work and keep it in an orderly fashion.

**1.11.2** can plan their study activities and set timescales and deadlines for themselves.

**1.11.3** know how and from whom to seek help when they need it.

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**1.12** attend regularly and are punctual.

**1.12.1** do their best to stick to the pattern of attendance they have agreed with the provider.

**1.12.2** let the provider know when they are unable to attend.

### **HOW TO ACHIEVE SUCCESS**

All learners need an individual or group learning plan based on the outcomes of initial assessment. The plan needs to reflect their aspirations as well as their previous learning experience and their current levels of competence. It needs to identify in what ways the learner aims to improve his or her life in the medium- to longer-term through the acquisition of the skills of literacy, numeracy and language. The conclusions arrived at through initial assessment, recorded on an individual or group learning plan, provide the springboard for further action and acts as the template against which all progress and achievement is measured. More will be said about the process of initial assessment and the development of individual and group learning plans under key question 4.

The task for providers is to capture information about progress and achievement, not just at the level of the individual, but across the whole organisation. This can then be used to arrive at a clear view of how good the organisation is at helping learners change their lives through the development of literacy, numeracy and language skills.

The introduction of the adult literacy and numeracy core curricula and the associated standards helps managers collect, more systematically than ever before, data about how well learners are doing and what they have accomplished. The core curricula overcome many of the difficulties associated with monitoring progress in relation to non-accredited learning. If all individual and group learning plans and progress reviews are referenced to the national curricula and



standards, the levels at which learners are achieving and their rates of progress at once become clear, even if they are not studying for qualifications.

### ***Retention and achievement data***

Data can be used to:

- compare your organisation's current performance with what has gone before
- compare and contrast performance in different parts of your own organisation
- compare the performance of your organisation with that of other providers.

There are a number of key points to bear in mind about the use of data:

- data need to be analysed, rather than just amassed to be of any use
- you need to be sure that you are using data to compare like with like
- data trigger the *start* of a conversation about performance, not its conclusion.

Keep track of how many learners start, continue and complete each year. Keep track of their level on starting, their level on completing and their rate of progress between these points. Keep track of how many learners who entered for qualifications gained them.

Analyse the data you gather. This means working out what proportion of learners completed programmes and achieved some measure of success. While examples of individual success can be powerful material both for you and for those outside your organisation, they don't give an overall view of how learners fared, and they don't direct your attention towards areas of provision that are particularly good or particularly weak.

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### ***Year-on-year comparisons***

Use the data you collect to compare your organisation's performance from one year to the next. Keeping track of performance over an extended period will alert you to situations in which something worked particularly well, or alternatively, where things went seriously adrift. Bear in mind that no two cohorts of adult learners are the same; each group will vary in motivation and life experience. Establishing trends is by no means an exact science.

### ***Performance comparisons***

You could use data to help you compare the performance at one centre with the performance at another. Or you could compare the effectiveness of centre-based work with that of neighbourhood-based work. But again, be aware of the fact that there are different factors at work. For example, it is relatively easy to calculate a retention rate for a group that enrolls at the start of each term, but not so easy to do it for a group that slowly evolves as a result of painstaking community intervention.

### ***Organisational comparisons***

You can also use the data you collect to compare your organisation's performance with that of other, similar organisations. National averages for achievement and retention rates will begin to emerge as the new qualifications come on stream, and more providers begin to reference learners' achievements to the national standards. But when you make comparisons, check that you are comparing like with like. Some providers enter learners for qualifications as soon as they enrol, others only when they judge that the learner will succeed. Even initiatives with the same name, for example 'family learning' may have different focuses, and this makes comparison difficult.

In the first instance, you may find it useful to form a network with other, similar, providers against whom you can benchmark your organisation's performance.

### ***Attainment and standards***

Pay careful attention to attainment – how well learners are doing given their starting point, the length of time they have been studying and their aspirations. Learners' work is the most obvious indication of how well a learner is progressing. However, teachers are naturally familiar with the work of their own learners. Consider asking a third party take a look, to gauge how the work measures up against the initial assessment and the goals expressed in the individual or group learning plan – in other words, develop an internal verification system. This will, in any case, be a necessary aspect of the arrangements operated by awarding bodies. If your organisation is small, you may be able to set up a reciprocal arrangement with another provider.

Learners' work belongs to them, but seek their permission to keep copies of their work in your files so that you can monitor progress and check standards more effectively.

### ***Ways of capturing progress and achievement***

Look for a variety of ways of capturing learners' progress and achievements. Learner diaries, photographs, video-recordings and audio tapes are all legitimate ways of substantiating statistics. Make sure you have examples of literacy and ESOL learners' development of oral communication skills.

The ultimate test of learning is the ability of learners to apply it. The core curricula aim to promote active citizenship as well as personal autonomy and employability. Encourage learners to provide you with evidence of how they are applying their learning outside lessons. Consider surveying learners regularly about what personal, social and economic gains learning has brought them at home, at work or in their community. Ask what contributions they have been able to make in these contexts as a result of learning. It is important to keep good qualitative data.

Find ways of keeping track of what learners plan to do once they leave you (destination data). Research how they are applying their learning after they leave, perhaps up to several years down the track. It may not be feasible to do this regularly for all aspects of your work, but you could consider having a phased research programme spanning a number of years and sharing the costs with another provider.

Another important point is to monitor attendance rates. Learners' patterns of attendance give some indication of their level of commitment. Sometimes rates are low on centre-based courses after public holidays, and erratic on neighbourhood-based projects where people are dealing with a range of difficult personal circumstances. Determine what you consider to be acceptable in different types of provision and use this as a factor in gauging whether or not the provision is effective.

### ***Attainment and national qualification***

Before *Skills for Life* there was little clarity and consistency for qualifications in literacy and numeracy. The new qualification developed by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) in partnership with awarding bodies has brought credibility to these qualifications by making them part of the National Qualifications Framework. Now for the first time adult learners can see how they can use their achievements as a springboard for progress in to general qualifications such as GCSEs or work-related qualifications such as key skills or National Vocational Qualifications.

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

## WHAT IS SUCCESS?

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### Faizah

*Faizah works with her classmates to correct the errors in the sentences, so all contribute to learning. She told us, 'I am Faizah, and I come here to the Mary Ward Community Learning Centre three or four times a week. I have learned how to put sentences together, when to use commas and full stops and different ways of spelling. You know, I have learned a lot! I feel more comfortable when writing letters and filling in application forms and when I have to read out loud to people.*

*'I had an assessment when I came and they said I was slightly dyslexic. You see the reason I started to come here was because I have a baby and so I am not working and wanted to learn something so eventually I want to get an office job. I have never taken any exams but I hope to take a test in a couple of months' time.'*

### Shahnaz

*'I am Shahnaz Mnzoor. I have been coming here for five months because I needed to learn English and computers. This class does everything, speaking and learning, writing and computers. If I can learn English then I can go outside and then I can get a job but I need English. I am most proud that I can fill in the mistakes in the story. I have completed the story!'*

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## Koos

Koos Beggi is from Somalia. She speaks no English, and came here with her son Mahed to enquire about starting classes.

## Extracts of effective practice from OFSTED and ALI inspection reports

*'[One learner] commented that the mathematics class had helped him with his work as a scaffolder as he is now able to calculate angles and has gained a much better understanding of numbers.'*

*'Learners make good progress in their development of language skills. Most learners have the opportunity to enter for external examinations and about half of them do so. In 2001-02, 86 per cent who entered a nationally recognised externally accredited examination achieved the qualification. All learners entered for Open College Network accredited qualifications were successful. Teachers' assessments of other learners show that most have made substantial progress against the course objectives and against their individual learning plans.'*

*'[Learners] are able to give many examples of how learning has benefited them in their everyday lives and enabled them to achieve a greater degree of autonomy. For example, they explain how they can cope better with visiting the doctor, talking to neighbours and attending school meetings...some learners said that before they came to a class they needed an interpreter, but now they could go out on their own.'*

*'Learners make good progress in achieving their personal objectives. They report having increased self-confidence and regularly use the skills they are learning in their daily lives. For example, they are able to write cheques, read letters sent home from their children's schools and help their children with their homework. There are good rates of achievement in accredited ESOL qualifications. In 2001-02, 60 learners passed an examination for spoken English. Almost 70 per cent achieved results in the top grade.'*

*'[Learners] feel they benefit considerably and learn skills that they find very useful at home and work. One learner was very pleased to have one of her stories published. Another learner frequently lost jobs because of poor reading and writing, but since attending basic skills classes, has been doing well at work.'*

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# THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING

2. How effective are teaching, training and learning?

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2

## 2. HOW EFFECTIVE ARE TEACHING, TRAINING AND LEARNING?

Effective practice which secures continuous improvement is evidenced by:

- how well teaching and training meet individuals' needs and course or programme requirements;
- how well learners learn and make progress; and
- learners' progress relative to their prior attainment and potential.

### IN THE COMMON INSPECTION FRAMEWORK TEACHING AND LEARNING ARE JUDGED BY THE EXTENT TO WHICH TEACHERS...

### SUCCESS IN LITERACY, NUMERACY AND ESOL PROVISION IN THE ADULT AND COMMUNITY LEARNING CONTEXT MEANS TEACHERS...

2.1 show knowledge, technical competence and up-to-date expertise, at a level consistent with effective teaching, training and assessment of the course or programme.

2.1.1 have qualifications and recent experience that equip them to teach literacy, numeracy and ESOL skills in ways that are relevant to learners and their aims.

2.2 plan effectively with clear objectives that all learners understand.

2.2.1 base lesson plans and schemes of work on the aims and objectives they have agreed with learners and that are reflected in learners' individual or group learning plans.

2.3 use methods and styles of teaching and training that are consistent with the aims of their programmes and learners' personal objectives.

2.3.1 use a range of methods that enable learners to develop a wide range of skills, including oral skills.

2.3.2 devise interesting and realistic assignments that enable learners to understand the relevance of the skills they are learning.

2.3.3 explain methods that adult learners are not familiar with.

2.3.4 avoid methods that may have alienated adult learners in the past.



**IN THE COMMON INSPECTION FRAMEWORK  
TEACHING AND LEARNING ARE JUDGED BY  
THE EXTENT TO WHICH TEACHERS...**

**SUCCESS IN LITERACY, NUMERACY AND ESOL  
PROVISION IN THE ADULT AND COMMUNITY  
LEARNING CONTEXT MEANS TEACHERS...**

**2.4** challenge and inspire learners.

**2.4.1** devise learning activities that enable learners to use their developing skills in literacy, numeracy and ESOL to revisit and re-evaluate their own experiences, to gain a wider understanding of the world and to explore new avenues of interest.

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**2.5** set, use and mark assignments and other tasks in a way that helps learners to progress.

**2.5.1** acknowledge the strengths in learners' work.

**2.5.2** give learners constructive feedback on how they might improve their skills further.

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**2.6** with learners, develop individual learning plans informed by initial assessment that are reviewed and updated regularly.

**2.6.1** agree individual or group learning plans with learners, based on an understanding of their prior learning, their current levels of competence and their aspirations.

**2.6.2** refer to learners' individual or group learning plans regularly and, in discussion with learners, chart progress and revise goals in the light of experience.

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**2.7** promote good working relationships that foster learning.

**2.7.1** create a learning environment in which newcomers feel welcome, in which learners collaborate with each other and where they are not afraid to ask for help when they need it.

**IN THE COMMON INSPECTION FRAMEWORK  
TEACHING AND LEARNING ARE JUDGED BY  
THE EXTENT TO WHICH TEACHERS...**

**2.8** use materials and teaching methods that promote equality of opportunity.

**SUCCESS IN LITERACY, NUMERACY AND ESOL  
PROVISION IN THE ADULT AND COMMUNITY  
LEARNING CONTEXT MEANS TEACHERS...**

**2.8.1** use material that reflects the perspectives of:

- women as well as men
- people of minority ethnic origin as well as the majority community
- people with disabilities as well as the able-bodied.

**2.8.2** ensure that all learners have the opportunity to express their views and have them considered seriously.

**IN THE COMMON INSPECTION FRAMEWORK  
TEACHING AND LEARNING ARE JUDGED BY  
THE EXTENT TO WHICH LEARNERS...**

**2.9** acquire new knowledge and skills, develop ideas and increase their understanding.

**SUCCESS IN LITERACY, NUMERACY AND ESOL  
PROVISION IN THE ADULT AND COMMUNITY  
LEARNING CONTEXT MEANS LEARNERS...**

**2.9.1** show steady improvement in their ability to use the written and spoken word and/or a greater competence in the use of numbers.

**2.9.2** have folders of work that include evidence of how they have arrived at each finished item.

**2.9.3** are in the habit of evaluating what they do.

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**2.10** understand and are confident in what they are doing, how well they are progressing and what they need to do to improve.

**2.10.1** each have an ILP that they own and understand.

**2.10.2** know that teachers will measure progress against the ILP and that they will agree future learning needs and goals to enable further progress to be made.

**IN THE COMMON INSPECTION FRAMEWORK TEACHING AND LEARNING ARE JUDGED BY THE EXTENT TO WHICH LEARNERS...**

**SUCCESS IN LITERACY, NUMERACY AND ESOL PROVISION IN THE ADULT AND COMMUNITY LEARNING CONTEXT MEANS LEARNERS...**

**2.11** apply effort to succeed with their work, work productively and make effective use of their time.

**2.11.1** understand the importance and benefit of their application to learning.

**2.11.2** are given appropriate praise and encouragement by their teachers.

**2.12** are stimulated and show interest in their work.

**2.12.1** have an ILP and a programme of work that reflect their own preferred learning styles and pace.

## **HOW TO ACHIEVE SUCCESS**

### ***Teacher training***

Where the primary learning goal for learners is to develop their literacy, numeracy or ESOL skills, providers need to make sure that each lesson is planned to help progress through learners' individual or group learning plans. Each lesson should take account of the priorities identified through initial assessment. Where learners have something else in mind as their primary learning goal, for example, researching the history of their local community or the organisation of a transport service for disabled people, it may be more appropriate for them to have a group learning plan that focuses on the main task, with components that relate to each person's literacy, numeracy and language needs. Some ESOL practitioners find it helpful to develop group learning plans that focus on essential constructions that all the learners need to know in order to function as a group. They can supplement these with contextualised activities that are tailored to meet the needs and interests of individual learners.

Involve learners in the planning of schemes of work wherever possible. Share objectives for each lesson with learners and, wherever possible, involve them in evaluating whether or not they have been achieved. It may take a while before learners with little fluency in spoken English can contribute in this way. However, bilingual support might help learners overcome their inhibitions.

Make good use of a wide range of activities, for example, group discussion, pairwork and individual assignments, to enable learners to develop their oral communication skills and their problem-solving skills, and to expose them to new ideas and to enable them to learn from each other. Do this in such a way that individuals can meet their own learning goals. For example, a group discussion at Level 2 could lead to individual reading or writing assignments pitched at Entry Level 3 to Level 2.

Explain methods that adult learners may not have encountered before. For ESOL learners accustomed to more traditional teaching methods, this may mean all the informal methods used. Introduce resources that adult learners may not have used before, such as the Internet. Avoid situations in which learners carry out activities that are not relevant to their learning goals. Avoid methods which have alienated learners in the past. For literacy and numeracy learners, this might mean all the traditional methods!

Be mindful of the range and sophistication of adult learners' interests, the richness of their life experience and their potential for intellectual growth. All kinds of circumstances have conspired to bring people to reach adulthood without achieving fluency in written or spoken English or in numeracy. For example, these include a traumatic home environment, lack of early education, poor health or being forced to flee one's country of origin for political or economic reasons. The lack of these skills does not imply a lack of intellectual ability, ambition or thirst for knowledge.

The written and spoken word and the ability to decipher and manipulate numbers are tools, not just for daily survival, or for relating to popular culture, but for exploring and making sense of the wider world and one's place in it (that is, developing a sense of citizenship). A judiciously chosen quotation or simple statistic can provide the opportunity for learners to develop Entry Level skills while at the same time opening the door to wider areas of learning and action, and raising learners' aspirations. For example, the statistic '40 million people worldwide have Aids or HIV'<sup>1</sup> could lead to a health education project for young people, or a friendship link with an African village, as well as work on ratios. Similarly, the information that, 'in Iraq, you can fill a Mercedes for one US dollar'<sup>2</sup>, or that in the US, 'fuel costs \$2 a gallon'<sup>3</sup>, could be used to explore the significance, or otherwise, of oil in international conflict as well as providing an exercise on quantities.

Learners are attempting to develop new skills in a rapidly changing environment. Consider how to use the core curricula to prepare them to cope with change, to shape it and to challenge it. Consider developing learning activities, referenced to the national standards, that are thematically organised. This will enable learners to explore issues in some depth. Even though their literacy, numeracy and language skills may be low, their capacity for analysis, reasoning and reflection probably is not.

Lyn, Rob, Kathy and Edmund form a group of learners who have been brought together by a common interest: they are concerned about the state of their street because it has no road surfacing or drains. They have discovered that they live on an 'unadopted' road. This is a common feature of former mining communities, and one which their local authority is not keen to tackle. A sample assessment of the group's literacy skills appears below.

1 *Guardian*, 3 July 2002, quoting a UN Aids Report.

2 *Daily Mirror*, 20 March 2003.

3 *Daily Mirror*, 20 March 2003.

## Lyn, Rob, Kathy and Edmund

### Sample Learner Assessment

Learner	Speaking and listening	Reading	Writing
Lyn	Level 2	Level 2	Level 2
Rob	Level 2	Level 1	Entry Level 3
Kathy	Entry Level 3	Entry Level 3	Entry Level 3
Edmund	Entry Level 2	Entry Level 2	Entry Level 2

The group's primary goal is to persuade the council to adopt the road. This involves upgrading it and then maintaining it. The group's secondary learning goal is to develop the knowledge and skills, including the necessary literacy and numeracy skills, to be able to accomplish the task.

Some of the tasks the group has set itself over the medium- to longer-term are:

- visiting councillors' surgeries
- producing a residents' newsletter
- organising a public meeting
- finding out about how the new local authority cabinet system works
- producing a briefing paper for elected members
- finding out how much it would cost to upgrade 100 metres of road
- researching how other coalfield areas are dealing with this problem
- learning how to run meetings effectively
- developing a website
- applying for funding for the group from the Community Chest Fund.

Tonight, the group is focusing on writing a letter to key members of the council, urging them to take action, as shown in the lesson plan below.

## Sample lesson plan

### *Aims (short-term goals)*

To produce one or more letters to send to key members of the council, highlighting the state of the street and requesting action.

### *Objectives*

By the end of the lesson, the group will have:

- identified key members of the council to whom it is appropriate to write, for example, the elected member with portfolio for regeneration, the local ward councillor
- decided whether to write one or several letters
- been introduced to the layout for formal letters
- decided on the key points to include in the letter(s)
- produced one or more drafts
- been introduced to key vocabulary.

### *Activities*

- Kathy shows Lyn how to use the council's website, using a search engine. They print out a list of cabinet members for each member of the group.
- Edmund uses a ward newsletter to find the names and addresses of the appropriate ward members, and the times of their surgeries.
- Rob uses a council newspaper to find out what each council department does.

### *Curriculum reference*

Kathy SLc/E2.1, E2.3  
Lyn SLr/E3.1–4  
Edmund Rt/2.4, Rs/E2.2,  
Rw/E2.1  
Rob Rs/L1.1, Rw/L1.3,  
Rt/L1.3–5

- They draw upon the information they have gathered to debate which council member it would be most appropriate to write to.
- They discuss the meaning of the word 'regeneration'.
- Lyn looks it up.

Kathy SLd/E3.1–3  
Edmund SLc/E2.1, E2.2  
Lyn Rw/L2.2  
Lyn and Rob SLd/L2.1–4

- The teacher describes the layout and appropriate terminology for formal letters.

## Sample lesson plan – continued

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The group debates what are the most important points to include in the letter to the cabinet member and the ward councillor.</li> <li>• They draw up a plan.</li> </ul>	<p>Lyn and Rob SLd/L2.1–4 Kathy SLd/E3.1–3 Edmund SLc/E2.1, E2.2 All Wt/E3.1</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The teacher works with Edmund to help him practise setting out his own address and that of the ward councillor.</li> <li>• Kathy drafts a letter to the ward councillor.</li> <li>• Lyn and Rob each draft letters to the cabinet member.</li> <li>• Lyn, Rob and Kathy read out their letters.</li> <li>• All members of the group comment and make suggestions for improvements.</li> </ul>	<p>Edmund Ww/E2.1, Ww/E2.3, Ws/E2.3 Kathy Wt/E3.1–3 Lyn Wt/L2.1–6, Ws/L2.1–4, WwL/L2.1–2 Rob Wt/E3.1–3, Ws/E3.1–3, Ww/E3.1–3 Lyn and Rob SLd/L2.1–4 Kathy SLd/E3.1–3 Edmund SLc/E2.1, E2.2</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lyn and Rob prepare second drafts of their letters.</li> <li>• Kathy, Edmund and the teacher work together to help Edmund set out his own address and the ward councillor’s on-screen.</li> <li>• Kathy reads out her letter. The teacher types it in and they print it out.</li> </ul>	<p>Lyn Wt/L2.7, Rob Wt/E3.4 Edmund Ww/E2.1, Ww/E2.3 Kathy SLc/3.3 Kathy SLc/E3.1 Edmund SLr/E2.1</p>
<p>The teacher checks the spelling in all drafts. She shows how key words can be practised. Each learner enters key words in their personal glossary.</p>	<p>Lyn Ww/L2.1 Rob Ww/3.1–2 Kathy Ww/3.1–2 Edmund Ww/E2.1–2</p>
<p><b>Homework</b></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kathy to produce simple instructions for Lyn on how to open up the computer and use a search engine.</li> <li>• Edmund to practise writing his own address and to learn new spellings. Also to address a letter to the ward councillor and to post the letter.</li> <li>• Lyn and Rob to produce final versions of their letters and to post them. Also to learn new spellings.</li> </ul>	<p>Kathy Wt/Ws/Ww/3 All Ww/E2.1, Ww/E2.3, Ws/E2.3, Ws/E2.4 Lyn Wt/L2.7, Ww/L2.2, Ww/L2.1 Rob Wt/E3.4, WwE3.3, Ww/E3.2</p>

Acknowledge what learners have done well and give encouragement. At the same time, give considered and constructive advice about how learners might improve their performance. For example, where a learner has spelled a word incorrectly, show how this is part of a group of words that display the same pattern: once one has been learned, the same principle can be applied to all. This equips the learner with a valuable reading and writing strategy, as opposed to a short-term solution.

Create an environment in which learners welcome each other, work collaboratively, respect each other and are mindful of each other's interests.

In neighbourhood-based work, residents of different age groups may be at odds with each other. Similarly, ESOL groups may include learners from countries where there has been conflict, for example, Iran and Iraq or Pakistan and India. In these or similar situations, teachers need to find ways of tackling and resolving tension between rival or potentially opposed groups.

Use materials for teaching and learning that are socially inclusive. The visual imagery used in materials should represent all sections of society. The perspectives of these groups should also be represented. Encourage learners to draw upon their own life experiences and knowledge of their language, culture and community to further their own learning and to contribute to the learning of others.

Learners' work should show that they are developing confidence and competence in using language and numbers in a growing variety of situations or for increasingly complex purposes. It should show how they are beginning to take control of their own learning by, for example, developing spelling strategies or developing skills in estimation or the use of a calculator.

All the gains learners make should be reflected in the records of progress reviews that they have regularly with their teachers. In some cases, the gains may be unexpected, for example, the ability to interact more effectively with other members of the group. It is important to record these gains too. In some cases, new learning goals may emerge. These should be added to the individual or group learning plan.

Literacy and language teachers need an excellent grasp of how language works: they should understand how it operates in different contexts, and be able to identify what its characteristics are when used for different purposes. Numeracy teachers should have an excellent grasp of numerical concepts and operations. Teachers of all subjects should be able to make the link between learners' need to get to grips with the basic building blocks of language and numeracy and their interest in using these skills for specific purposes at home, at work or in their communities. Teachers need to be able to draw upon their knowledge to devise realistic learning activities that are relevant to the context in which learners are working. For example, a numeracy teacher working with young mothers who want to help their children learn maths



will need to develop different learning materials and activities from a teacher working with a nursing orderly who is seeking promotion in the health service. Teachers must be able to help learners develop their understanding of how the general principles of language and numeracy can be applied in different situations by providing clear explanations and introducing helpful illustrations.

Introduce or develop a lesson observation scheme to look at all these aspects of teaching and learning. Through structured feedback, this helps teachers to consider the experience from the learner's point of view.

**The *Skills for Life* professional development programme for staff across all sectors is to be announced shortly by the Learning and Skills Council. The programme will provide core curricula and specialist training for all staff engaged in teaching adult literacy, numeracy and ESOL, including those who work with learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Training at Level 3 for vocational specialists will also be provided. The programme leads staff to take relevant qualifications.**

## WHAT IS SUCCESS?

Effective lessons have collective goals as well as goals for individual learners. They are planned so that they operate at a number of different levels, for example, teaching learners a feature of language and how it works, while at the same time introducing them to a new concept. Learners benefit from the experience of being able to work together, as in the example below.

### Finding a voice

*In a community centre, a group of women learning ESOL were working on contemporary dramatic texts. They had sought out the teacher and asked him to run a course of this kind for them. They clearly saw it as a way of finding their own voice and broadening their horizons. They worked in pairs, offering each other support, for example, to complete sentences or by supplying adjectives. Once learners had grasped the role of adjectives as a part of speech, the teacher explained how adjectives might be used by a playwright to enhance the quality of his or her writing. The group then considered the difference between plays that are scripted and plays that are devised through improvisation. They went on to read from a script by the film-maker Mike Leigh. Although learners' skills in writing ranged from Entry Level 2 to Level 2, they gave a powerful reading of the text. They had each been allocated a part the week before, and had prepared for the lesson. Their concentration was total.*

*The learners were interested in the moral issues they had debated in a previous lesson after reading another text. Some pointed out that what they were learning made them feel connected with the rest*

of the world, and that it had an impact not just on them, but on their families, because they went home and discussed what they had been talking about in lessons.

### **Extracts of effective practice from OFSTED and ALI inspection reports**

*'Lessons have clearly set objectives and are matched both to the national curriculum and the needs of individual learners... Teachers plan their teaching carefully and make good use of lesson plans and course outlines. Many tutors make good use of ICT to enable learners to word-process their work. Learners work well in groups and pairs to develop good oral and listening skills. Teachers make good use of learning materials appropriate for adult learners [and] conduct particularly good reviews of learning at the beginning and end of group sessions.'*

*'In some [ESOL] lessons, learners carry out relevant role play activities. For example, in one session, learners progressed from talking about their own health to talking about their child's health with other learners.'*

*'Schemes of work in the ESOL programme are well planned and detailed, have a clear focus on the acquisition of specific language structures and skills, and are cross-referenced to the core curriculum. Plans also link structures to possible topics, situations and functions which may be used in the lessons to give a context to the language. These schemes of work show a detailed understanding by teachers of the technical aspects of the language and of the requirements of the new curriculum.'*

*'In many lessons, learners develop a good understanding of language structure which helps them develop their language competence. The variety of teaching methods and resources used retains learners' interest and provides good opportunities for learners to practise.'*

*'The most effective learning sessions use the interests of the learners as the context for learning. For example, in one class, the group is using crime prevention as a theme for the development of their basic skills.'*

*'A summer school linking art with basic skills led to a group painting a mural in a primary school where one of the group members is a caretaker. Members of the group then wrote about their experiences and used ICT to produce a booklet and scan in photographs of the mural. The tutor involved wrote standards for the activities and submitted them to an awarding body so that the learners could be accredited for their work.'*

*'[ESOL] students are constantly encouraged by the staff to build their confidence by applying their language skills in new situations. Skilful lesson-planning maximises the opportunities for students to help each other learn...Teachers demonstrate their commitment to equal opportunities by drawing upon students' differing experiences and backgrounds in lessons.'*

*'[ESOL] teachers often use real-life examples effectively. During one lesson, a recycling theme was used to help students gain oral practice in the use of 'some' and 'any' whilst describing the contents of their refuse bins. Reading and listening activities followed, using an article on recycling from a local newspaper.'*

*'[Volunteers] help learners to effectively develop their written work and encourage small group discussions. The work of the volunteers helps learners develop confidence and self-esteem. Volunteers and paid tutors work together well as teams. For example, in one lesson the tutor provided in-depth individual teaching to less confident learners while volunteers worked with those learners who were able to work more independently.'*

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# THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING

3. How are achievement and learning affected by resources?

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3

### 3. HOW ARE ACHIEVEMENT AND LEARNING AFFECTED BY RESOURCES?

Effective practice which secures continuous improvement is evidenced by:

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

#### IN THE COMMON INSPECTION FRAMEWORK ACHIEVEMENT AND LEARNING ARE JUDGED BY THE EXTENT TO WHICH...

**3.1** there are enough qualified and experienced teaching, training and support staff to match the demands of programmes and the range of learners.

**3.2** the professional development of staff contributes to their effectiveness.

#### SUCCESS IN ADULT LITERACY, NUMERACY AND ESOL PROVISION IN THE ADULT AND COMMUNITY LEARNING CONTEXT MEANS...

**3.1.1** there are enough teachers to be able give learners the level of individual attention they need.

**3.1.2** teachers have a good grounding in the teaching methodologies appropriate for different groups of learners and are familiar with the national curricula, levels and standards.

**3.1.3** support staff and bilingual workers are available where needed.

**3.2.1** teachers are aware of national developments in the teaching of literacy, numeracy and ESOL to adults.

**3.2.2** teachers have good opportunities to deepen their understanding of these specialist disciplines.

**3.2.3** teachers have good opportunities to develop their practice as teachers.

**3.2.4** part-time staff, volunteers and support workers are included in staff development plans and they too have good opportunities for professional development.

**IN THE COMMON INSPECTION FRAMEWORK  
ACHIEVEMENT AND LEARNING ARE JUDGED  
BY THE EXTENT TO WHICH...**

**SUCCESS IN ADULT LITERACY, NUMERACY  
AND ESOL PROVISION IN THE ADULT AND  
COMMUNITY LEARNING CONTEXT MEANS...**

**3.3** specialist equipment and materials are used, including facilities which are relevant to the workplace and meet current industrial standards.

**3.3.1** literacy, numeracy and ESOL learners have access to up-to-date resources and equipment, including information and communications technology (ICT) equipment.

**3.3.2** resources and equipment in neighbourhood-based centres are as good as those in dedicated adult learning centres.

**3.4** accommodation provides a suitable setting for good teaching, training and learning and support for learners.

**3.4.1** premises for literacy, numeracy and ESOL learners are easily accessible and are in a good state of repair.

**3.4.2** premises are properly heated, ventilated and lit.

**3.4.3** the furniture is appropriate for adult use.

**3.4.4** there is storage space for educational resources and equipment.

**3.4.5** there are social areas.

**3.4.6** there are facilities that can be used by learners with young children.

**3.5** learners have access to learning resources that are appropriate for effective independent study.

**3.5.1** where independent study facilities are not available on site, learners can use facilities offered by other providers.

**3.6** learners work in a safe and healthy environment.

**3.6.1** all buildings and equipment, including those used in community settings, are fit for purpose.

**3.6.2** health and safety regulations are observed.

**3.6.3** regular health and safety checks and risk assessments are carried out.

**IN THE COMMON INSPECTION FRAMEWORK ACHIEVEMENT AND LEARNING ARE JUDGED BY THE EXTENT TO WHICH...**

**SUCCESS IN ADULT LITERACY, NUMERACY AND ESOL PROVISION IN THE ADULT AND COMMUNITY LEARNING CONTEXT MEANS...**

**3.7** resources are used to best effect in promoting learning.

**3.7.1** literacy, numeracy and ESOL learners are not disturbed by learners pursuing other interests.

**3.7.2** learners can practise oral and aural communication skills within the classroom without disturbing each other.

**3.8** learning resources and accommodation allow all learners to participate fully.

**3.8.1** appropriate resources are available for learners with specific learning support needs.

**3.8.2** all teaching and learning accommodation, social areas and toilet facilities are accessible to people with mobility difficulties.

## **HOW TO ACHIEVE SUCCESS**

Providers meeting the standards in this area ensure that learners studying locally are not getting a poorer quality of service than those who study in large educational institutions. The quality of the learners' experience, and the standard of the work they are able to produce, should not be compromised by where they study or by the nature of the staff employed. Although there is a temptation to settle for whatever premises are available in some communities in the interests of widening participation, resist the urge to accept lower standards.

### ***People***

Check that your organisation has enough teachers for learners to receive the level of individual attention they need. Group size should not become a barrier to learning. Make sure that there are enough support staff, volunteers and bilingual workers to provide an appropriate level of support for learners throughout their educational experience.

Some parts of the country are experiencing shortages of appropriately qualified and experienced teachers, particularly in numeracy. Consider what special action you may need to take to tackle this. If you can't afford a recruitment and training drive alone, consider working jointly with other providers. In some parts of the country, local Learning and Skills Councils (LSCs) are supporting the development of centres of excellence in professional development for

teachers of literacy, numeracy and ESOL to adults. Bids are made by consortia of providers in partnership with a higher education establishment. The aim is to raise standards in teaching and learning by developing professional training referenced to the FENTO standards, and to help overcome the shortfall in staff numbers in some areas. If this development is happening in your area, make sure you are part of it.

In some areas, local learning partnerships have taken the lead in developing fast-track training programmes for graduates who are potential teachers of literacy, numeracy and ESOL for adults. Check whether your local learning partnership would be willing to adopt this model.

Aim to increase steadily the proportion of teachers with nationally recognised qualifications mapped to the FENTO standards. But take account of the prior learning and experience and existing qualifications of job applicants when recruiting and selecting staff. Higher level qualifications in linguistics or language development are relevant, for example, to the teaching of literacy and language skills to adults. Higher level qualifications in education or adult learning, or relating to specific learning difficulties are also relevant. Higher level qualifications in community education or youth and community work have a direct bearing on literacy, numeracy and ESOL teaching carried out in community contexts. Encourage teachers to gain further, appropriate qualifications while in post.

Ensure that your organisation has a staff development plan that is linked to its strategic plan for the development of literacy, numeracy and language work. Create opportunities for teachers to share effective practice and develop their expertise through in-house training and professional development, as well as through external training programmes and events, such as the training offered as part of the LSC's *Skills for Life Quality Initiative*.

Consider how best to support teachers working at a distance or who work on a part-time basis. Many local authorities, for example, are developing computer-based grids for learning across wide geographical areas. It may be possible to use these to support the training and development of teachers.

Ensure that voluntary staff and part-time paid staff have access to career routes that lead to qualified status. Ensure that volunteers undertake training that defines their role and its responsibilities clearly and enables them to implement it effectively.

### **Resources**

The standard of learners' work should not be compromised by poor resources. Think imaginatively about how to make sure that adult learners studying in community settings have access to the same standard of equipment and materials as others studying elsewhere. This includes ICT hardware and software. Consider using laptops where computer suites are not available. Consider distributing resources electronically to teachers. Where a local authority has



installed an wide-area networked ICT grid for learning, consider how you might use it to benefit your learners.

Work out how to provide the necessary level of technical support in the preparation of materials and the maintenance of audio-visual and ICT equipment. Audit the resources periodically to make sure that they are current, referenced to the national standards, in good condition and meet equal opportunities criteria.

### ***Premises***

Aim to achieve the situation where you are using premises that members of the public can reach easily, and that they recognise easily. For example, when beginning work in a community, check that the premises you are planning to use are on well-used public transport or pedestrian routes, and that they are clearly signposted. In multi-racial communities, signage should be multilingual. The signposting inside buildings should be clear, and where buildings have more than one user-group, the materials on display should clearly convey the message that learning literacy, numeracy and ESOL skills is a highly valued activity. Display learners' work to provide an insight for other users of the building into what learning in literacy, numeracy and ESOL involves, and to provide an incentive for them to take part if they so wish.

Check that rooms are spacious and that the furniture is suitable for adult learners. Teachers need rooms that are appropriately equipped for teaching and learning, and that have enough space to store resources. Rooms should be properly heated, lit and ventilated. They should not be unduly cluttered with resources belonging to other groups.

Wherever possible, make sure that there are good facilities for learners with young children. Examples include pushchair parks, crèches, playgroups homework clubs and junior youth clubs.

If your organisation manages the premises you are using, check all the above points regularly. Where the premises are under the management of another organisation or another part of your local authority, enter into a formal agreement that ensures that the managing agent takes responsibility for monitoring the state of the building, and deals promptly with any shortcomings.

Where it is impossible to find suitable premises in an area, consider a mobile facility.

If your organisation manages the premises you are using, make sure that health and safety checks and risk assessments are carried out regularly, and that the findings are acted upon. Where the premises are under the management of another organisation or another part of your local authority, make sure that these responsibilities are carried out by the managing agent and written into a formal agreement.

Where literacy, numeracy and ESOL tuition takes place alongside other community activities, make sure that timetabling avoids conflicts of interest or unhelpful disruptions. For example, avoid the situation where the acappella choir rehearses next door to the ESOL class, or beer barrels are trundled through the neighbouring hall to the bar while numeracy students are doing their initial assessment.

### ***Disability Discrimination Act 1995***

All providers should be working towards full compliance with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, as amended by the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 (the Act). Free staff training and explanatory leaflets are available from local Learning and Skills Councils.

Make sure that enlarging facilities, large print texts, coloured transparencies, induction loops and Sign interpreters are available for those who need them. Some learners will need an appropriately adapted study space.

All teaching and learning accommodation, social areas and toilet facilities should be accessible to people with mobility difficulties or visual impairment. This includes older learners with acquired mobility difficulties.

Where the premises are managed by another organisation, for example, a community centre management committee, or another part of your local authority, make sure that the managing agent understands its responsibilities in relation to the Act. All premises used by colleges and local education authorities are subject to Part IV of the Act.

### ***Independent study***

Many adult learners attend lessons for only a few hours a week, and may well appreciate the opportunity to study independently as their family and work commitments permit. Many local authorities and community organisations will have difficulty setting aside dedicated space for this purpose. However, there have been some developments in recent years that might be helpful. Many local learning partnerships have taken major steps to connect communities electronically. In some local authorities, community centres are now online. In others, the library service is at the centre of developments in interconnectivity. Find out what use you can make of these developments to enhance the opportunities for independent study by learners.

Some local authorities have grouped their services together in ways that have made it easier for adult education staff and library and museum staff to work more closely together. Literacy, numeracy and ESOL teachers sometimes work alongside library staff in the libraries' open learning suites to provide support for learners who study on a drop-in basis. See if this model would work in your area.

Check that local libraries hold printed resources that are suitable for literacy, numeracy and ESOL learners.

If your service is managed by a further education (FE) college, it might be possible for learners to use the facilities in the college's learning resource centre for independent study. Remember, a number of colleges have developed successful distance learning programmes, such as those of the National Extension College.

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

### Extracts of effective practice from OFSTED and ALI inspection reports

*'Staff are well qualified and there is an ongoing programme of staff development. Many staff are appropriately experienced and are working towards literacy and numeracy teaching qualifications....Approximately 50 per cent of tutors hold a dyslexia qualification.... Seventeen tutors have completed additional teacher training in assessing dyslexia in adults and providing appropriate support... Most [tutors] have done the national curriculum training.'*

*'Staff take part in a professional course for ESOL practitioners at the centre at weekends.'*

*'Recent staff development has focused on national training in the new basic skills curriculum. Tutors have been paid to attend this training.'*

*'The learning centres have a good range of materials, colour-coded by level to encourage students to learn on their own. There are useful materials available to staff and students on the college intranet.'*

*'At community centres, the resources are excellent...All major centres have their own basic skills and ESOL resources rooms and these are well stocked.'*

*'The family learning programme has successfully involved 245 adults at one of the centres between March 2000 and April 2001. Students have access to excellent resources. A ... driver takes laptop computers to different sites and provides technical support when required.'*

# THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING

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

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

Effective practice which secures continuous improvement is evidenced by:

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

**IN THE COMMON INSPECTION FRAMEWORK ACHIEVEMENT AND PROGRESS ARE JUDGED BY THE EXTENT TO WHICH...**

**SUCCESS IN ADULT LITERACY, NUMERACY AND ESOL PROVISION IN THE ADULT AND COMMUNITY LEARNING CONTEXT MEANS TEACHERS...**

**4.1** forms of assessment and recording are suitable for the courses and programmes being followed.

**4.1.1** design assessment activities for learners that check their progress against their agreed learning goals. This applies whether or not the learners are working towards a qualification.

**4.2** assessment is fair, accurate and carried out regularly.

**4.2.1** are consistent and rigorous in their approach to the assessment of learners' work.

**4.3** initial assessment provides an accurate basis on which to plan an appropriate programme of work.

**4.3.1** discuss learners' prior educational experience and achievements with them.

**4.3.2** ask learners to self-assess their present levels of competence.

**4.3.3** use standardised materials to gain a clearer understanding of the learner's profile in relation to the different aspects of literacy, numeracy and ESOL.

**4.3.4** arrange for specialist assessments to be carried out where there are indications that the learner has a specific learning difficulty.

**4.3.5** discuss learners' aspirations with them.

**4.3.6** use all of the above to arrive at an individual or group learning plan that is agreed with the learner(s).

**4.3.7** adopt an approach that is sensitive to the anxieties of learners who may have had little or no previous formal education, or who may be newcomers to education in the UK.

**IN THE COMMON INSPECTION FRAMEWORK ACHIEVEMENT AND PROGRESS ARE JUDGED BY THE EXTENT TO WHICH...**

**SUCCESS IN ADULT LITERACY, NUMERACY AND ESOL PROVISION IN THE ADULT AND COMMUNITY LEARNING CONTEXT MEANS TEACHERS...**

**4.4** assessment is used to monitor progress and inform individual learners about how they are performing and how they might develop further.

**4.4.1** carry out assessment as a means of helping learners gauge their progress against their learning goals and against national standards.

**4.4.2** provide constructive advice that will help the learner move forward.

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**4.5** achievements towards learning goals and qualifications are recorded and accredited.

**4.5.1** review learners' progress with them regularly.

**4.5.2** record learners' progress.

**4.5.3** set new learning goals and/or revise existing ones in discussion with the learner.

**4.5.4** agree with the learner how these will be tackled.

**4.5.5** enter learners as appropriate for nationally recognised qualifications in literacy, numeracy and/or language.

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**4.6** assessment information, including the analysis of the performance of different groups of learners, is used to guide course and programme development.

**4.6.1** use information about learners' progress to inform the development of new teaching and learning activities and resources.

**4.6.2** use information about learners' progress to consider the development of programmes specifically for those who share a common concern or interest.

**IN THE COMMON INSPECTION FRAMEWORK ACHIEVEMENT AND PROGRESS ARE JUDGED BY THE EXTENT TO WHICH...**

**4.7** assessment, verification and moderation procedures follow regulatory body requirements.

**4.8** those with legitimate interest, such as employers or parents, are clearly and regularly informed about learners' progress.

**SUCCESS IN ADULT LITERACY, NUMERACY AND ESOL PROVISION IN THE ADULT AND COMMUNITY LEARNING CONTEXT MEANS TEACHERS...**

**4.7.1** adhere to the requirements of awarding bodies where learners are entered for qualifications.

**4.7.2** set assignments, carry out assessments and judge the quality of all learners' work appropriately against the national standards for literacy, numeracy and ESOL, whether or not learners are entered for qualifications.

Not generally applicable.

**HOW TO ACHIEVE SUCCESS**

Much of the assessment carried out in literacy, numeracy and ESOL in adult and community learning has depended on a constant and constructive dialogue between teacher and learner. The introduction of the national curricula for literacy, numeracy and ESOL provides an opportunity to extend this process by introducing a greater degree of standardisation into initial, formative and summative assessment activities. This will enable learners to gauge their progress, not just against their own previous performance, but against that of their peers and against national standards.

***Initial assessment***

The challenge for providers is to arrive at individual or group learning plans for learners that take account of their previous experience, their current levels of attainment and their aspirations. Self-assessment is an important element in this complex process. At an initial interview, some adults will be able to say a lot about the type of educational experience they have had in the past, what they can do already and what they hope to be able to do in the future. This valuable information can serve as the basis for developing the individual or group learning plan.

Some learners will not be able to talk in such specific terms. Their view of what they have learned in the past may be coloured by a general sense of failure, or they may lack sufficient

fluency in English to provide the necessary information. On these occasions, it may be helpful to have on hand descriptions or illustrations of a number of situations involving the use of language and number to help guide the conversation with the learner about current competence and aspirations. Where potential learners have little or no spoken English, the presence of a bilingual worker will be invaluable.

The learner's self-assessment can be validated and expanded upon by administering the initial screening tests in literacy and numeracy developed by the Basic Skills Agency. The findings can be used to determine the learner's level in relation to the four aspects of the literacy and language curriculum, or the number, measurement and data handling aspects of the numeracy curriculum. A similar screening test for ESOL students is planned.

For many adult learners, returning to learning will be a stressful experience. Many providers prefer to allow learners to attend several lessons before administering a screening test.

More detailed diagnostic materials can be used subsequently, and their findings used to refine individual or group learning plans. However, it should be emphasised that the most effective form of assessment is the skilled teacher's analysis of work generated by the learner themselves. A teacher with a good understanding of language and/or number skills can discern whether errors in someone's work are due to a lack of understanding, misunderstanding or a specific learning difficulty.

Where there are anomalies in the work that learners produce during initial and diagnostic assessment (that is, errors that are not predictable or logical), those learners should have the opportunity to undertake more specific diagnostic assessment, for example, in relation to dyslexia, as soon as possible. If your organisation is not equipped to provide this kind of assessment, you may be able to make arrangements with the schools service, another provider or a private consultant to carry out this work on your behalf.

The individual or group learning plan for a learner may encompass literacy, numeracy and ESOL skills or only one of these. It may focus on some aspects of the national curricula and exclude others, for example, the emphasis may be on reading rather than writing, or on measurement rather than handling data. The learner may be working at different levels in relation to different aspects of the national curricula. The crucial factor in all of this is what the learner's situation demands.

There are some situations where a group learning plan may take precedence over an individual learning plan. In community development activities, groups may be motivated by a common interest, rather than by individual need. For example, a group may be interested in fund-raising to pay for the construction of a new community centre, or lobbying the local authority to make over a piece of land for community use. In these cases, the teacher may agree a proposed group



plan of learning and action with the learners that will help them achieve their overall goal. However, in pursuing the collective goal, it may become clear that some participants have difficulties with literacy, numeracy or language that prevent them contributing fully. In this case, supplementary individual learning plans are appropriate.

In ESOL groups, where learners are working at the same level, an effective way of planning is to identify some fundamental constructions that all learners need to work on and to work on them together, but to provide additional activities contextualised according to individuals' personal circumstances and learning goals.

Individual or group learning plans need to steer a course between the unhelpfully general and the tediously specific. In agreeing long- or medium-term goals with learners, teachers should not lose sight of the situations in which learners hope ultimately to be able to apply their skills, and the purposes for which they hope to be able to use them. Aims such as 'improve spelling' are too abstract to give the learner a sense that the goal will ever be within reach, and too unfocused to help the teacher with lesson-planning. It is important to carry out some sort of analysis of the contexts in which learners wish to be able to operate confidently, and to identify the literacy, numeracy and language components within those situations. Language operates differently in different situations. Teachers need to know what those differences are to be able to describe and explain them. It then becomes possible to help the learner work step-by-step towards competence.

Some examples of how learners' long- and medium-term goals might be linked to the national curricula follow.

Belle is an elderly woman who lives alone. She derives a great deal of sustenance from attending church every week. She has had very little formal education, and her reading skills have been assessed as Entry Level 2. She is very unconfident about expressing her views and speaking to people whom she doesn't know. However, like many adult learners, Belle has sophisticated ambitions. Her main aim is to be able to read the Bible independently.

Belle

### Sample individual learning plan

#### *Name of student*

Belle

#### *Primary (long-term) learning goals are to...*

- read the Bible independently at home.
- read from the hymn book in church.

Learner's current reading level: Entry Level 2.

Learner's current numeracy level: N/A.

#### *Medium-term learning goals (= for the next 10 weeks) are to...*

- identify key vocabulary from the New Testament and hymnal, for example, 'Jesus', 'Saviour', 'praise', 'bless'. Rw/E3.1
- draw upon own religious and life experience to decipher words and predict in two chosen hymns with straightforward text, *Jesus Bids me Shine* and *This is my Story, this is my Song*. Rs/E2.3
- recognise some common word patterns in chosen hymns and to generalise from them. Rw/E2.2, Rw/E2.3
- understand how the Bible is structured and be able to find specific verses in the Gospels. Rw/E2.5
- explain to one other person what a particular hymn means and why it is important. SLc/E1

#### *Short-term learning goals (= for the next 10 weeks) are to...*

- practise recognising the names of the apostles, and the key words that relate to Jesus using, 'Look, say, write and check'.
- begin a personal glossary where these proper nouns and other key words are recorded in alphabetical order.
- become familiar with the trigraphs '-ong' as in 'song', and '-ory' as in 'story'. Learn the word pattern '-ight' as in 'light'.
- do some sentence completion exercises using words with these patterns.
- introduce yourself to other members of the group. Find out a little bit about each of the other members.

## Kulwant

### Sample individual learning plan

#### *Name of student*

Kulwant

#### *Primary (long-term) learning goals are to:*

- run the household finances effectively.
- read aloud to his son, aged three.
- be able to apply for work.

Learner's current reading level: Entry Level 2.

Learner's current numeracy level: Entry Level 3.

#### *Medium-term learning goals (= for the next 10 weeks) are to:*

- |   |                      |
|---|----------------------|
| • calculate his household's income per month, and per year.   | MSS1/E3.1            |
| • work out how to save some money for an occasional day out with his son.                                 | MSS1/L1.1            |
| • read a simple story from one of his son's story books, for example, <i>Bear in the Big Blue House</i> . | Rt/E3.1              |
| • read job advertisements in the local paper.   | Rt/E2. Rs/E2, Rw/E2. |

#### *Short-term learning goals are to...*

- add using cash sums (income and expenditure each week).
- multiply cash sums by 4 (income and expenditure each month).
- multiply cash sums by 10 and 2 (income and expenditure each year).
- listen to a recorded version of a children's book while following text.
- find out which is the best day to buy the local newspaper.
- find out how the local newspaper organises its job advertisements page.

Short courses and projects for literacy, numeracy and ESOL learners present particular challenges in terms of screening, initial assessment and individual or group learning plans. Essentially, the aims of any short course or special event should be made clear to learners at the outset: they should know what they are letting themselves in for. For example, a stated aim might be, 'This is an opportunity for you to find out a little about how you can use a computer to send messages'. Learners should have the opportunity to disclose, without feeling

threatened, what experience they already have of this activity. The teacher can then move on to customise the overall aims of the course, developing a group learning plan that takes account of the prior knowledge and experience of each learner.

### ***Assessing progress***

As with teaching and learning materials, assessment activities need to reflect the interests and primary learning goals of learners. In adult and community learning, these are likely to be very varied. For example, a young man whose prime motivation is to read car manuals will need different assessment materials from a middle-aged woman whose aim is to re-enter the labour market. While the national tests cannot possibly reflect every learner's interests, you can do so in the assessment materials you use.

Consider including peers, family members and workmates in the assessment process with the consent of learners. Assessment practices should not be unduly stressful for learners, many of whom will have had negative experiences of tests and examinations in the past.

Verification and moderation procedures are important means of ensuring that learners receive the same quality of teaching and have the same quality of experience wherever they are learning. Even where learners are not working towards a nationally recognised qualification, it is worth considering developing internal verification and moderation procedures as a means of ensuring that learners studying in a neighbourhood setting are having the same quality of experience as those studying in a large educational establishment.

This means carrying out impartial checks to ensure that all the materials and activities used for formative and summative assessment are pitched at the appropriate level as set out in the national curricula. For example, at Level 2, the material for assessing one group's reading skills might be a council newsletter, while for another it is a feature from a tabloid newspaper. It also means checking examples of learners' marked work, including oral work, to ensure consistency of approach on the part of teachers.

Once awarding bodies have developed a full range of qualifications in literacy, numeracy and language, they will make their own stipulations in relation to internal and external verification.

### ***Carrying out progress reviews***

Teachers of literacy, numeracy and ESOL have a wealth of experience in analysing learners' work, identifying its strengths and weaknesses and in providing learners with constructive feedback on their work. However, in some cases, assessment activities have not been clearly distinguished from teaching and learning activities and have not been standardised. The introduction of the national standards provides the opportunity to create points in the learning programme where teachers and learners can take stock of the learner's progress through the

use of specific assignments. It also enables teachers to provide learners with feedback on how their performance relates to the national standards.

Progress reviews should be conducted at regular intervals, so that learners have a sense of the distance they have travelled and their intended future direction. Teachers should pay due attention to recording what has been learned, as opposed to activities completed.

Achievements, whether or not the learner is working towards a qualification, can be referenced to the national curricula and standards. Records of achievement should include the extent to which learners can apply what they have learned outside the learning environment. Records of progress should be as straightforward as possible, so that learners can understand what they contain, and where possible contribute to them.

Progress reviews provide the opportunity to set new goals and revise existing ones in the light of assessment activities and changing circumstances. For example, in the second case study given above, Kulwant may decide that finding a job becomes a more pressing issue once he has got the basic household finances sorted out and once his son has gone to nursery school. The learner and the teacher need to agree how each new goal will be tackled and over what period.

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

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## WHAT IS SUCCESS?

### Salam

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*'I am Salam. I come to The Old Co-op twice a week for English and three times a week for computers. Several years ago I lost my husband and I need to come to become more independent. I had nobody there to help me. I had to ask people to write things down for me, now I can write for myself. Community learning is not just important –it is part of my life!*

*'My first exam was English Speaking Board; I was very happy and wanted to do more. I do not want to waste my time here talking to people. I can read my doctor's letters but I am still weak on spelling. I want to learn to read and write to become more independent.'*

### **Sensitive and responsive assessment**

Some providers have given a great deal of thought to administering assessment tests sensitively and without creating an examination environment, as in the example below.

*At one provider, a pleasant room is dedicated to assessment purposes – flowers on the table, sweets to eat and so on. Groups of learners take the test together with a teacher on hand to give reassurance.*

*As there are no initial screening tests for ESOL learners yet, this provider has developed its own initial assessment materials, mapped to the national standards. These include oral activities and reading passages. The experience has been that learners like knowing their current skills level. It gives them a sense of what they have to work towards next.*

*The use of the initial screening tests has helped providers place learners more accurately by level, though in some cases, the geographical spread of provision means that this is not always feasible.*

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**Rita**

*'I will be working with children after I have finished this crèche worker course. This is the first time I have been on a course, before I learned English. I have my own children so I know how to work with children. I need more help with more English. I need more time to learn the language. I did not know any English when I came. I could not communicate with people very well. Children speak their own language so I can't learn from them. I learn best mixing with people. Now speaking is OK, writing is more difficult. My greatest achievement on this course has been my self-confidence. Children come to me because I am confident and they trust me.'*

**Jan**

*'I am Jan Pike, the class teacher. When the students come in at the beginning, we give them an assessment. There is no ESOL assessment available yet so we give them the literacy assessment. It's like a booklet of questions, from the Basic Skills Agency.*

*'Once the women have learned English, some want to use it to get a job. For the professional crèche workers course, learners need to achieve an NVQ at Level 2 and be able to write. There are at least two Somali speakers below that level on the course but why let them fail when they have the skills to do the job? Putting them on the course, as it was set up, was inviting them to fail. For example, they are required to write an essay on different types of play and to include points about setting up play activities and points about supervision. These students know all this and can put it into action but they cannot write an essay. You do not need high levels of written English to be a crèche worker. You do need to be able to accurately complete an accident form and when children come in to be able to register them. So to give these women a fair opportunity to succeed, I have taken the materials and resources and hugely simplified them for people whose first language is not English. To achieve the NVQ they still have to produce evidence, but I have changed the way the evidence is produced. So instead of writing an essay, they demonstrate their knowledge and skills by making lists of the play activities required and list how to set these up and bullet points to note on supervision. The same in ESOL, I change the worksheet on punctuation to make it subject specific to the crèche course workers. This is how to succeed in ESOL!'*



## Extracts of effective practice from OFSTED and ALI inspection reports

*'Initial assessment is good. All learners have an individual initial counselling interview where they discuss their learning needs and complete a short assessment. Learners are able to ask questions and are directed to an appropriate class. The learner then receives an initial assessment from the tutor. Initial assessment materials have been standardised.'*

*'The initial assessment of learners' needs is well planned and thorough. Following an initial interview with a member of the ESOL team, learners are placed on a programme at a suitable level. The course tutor then carries out a more detailed assessment of language learning needs and conducts a further interview to determine the learners' individual language learning goals which are recorded on the individual learning plan, and used to plan the teaching and review progress.'*

*'All [literacy and numeracy] learners have an individual learning plan. This is specific to the needs of each learner and linked to the national standards for basic skills.'*

*'Every new [literacy and numeracy] learner has an interview with the tutor organiser responsible for basic skills in the area in which they live. Tutors carry out a prompt initial assessment with learners to identify their prior learning and any additional support needs they may have. Learners are placed in appropriate groups based on this assessment.'*

*'Teachers set homework regularly and give good feedback on learners' work. This enables the more able students to correct their own mistakes.'*

*'There is good monitoring and recording of students' progress from the first contact to an individual assessment and subsequently through diagnostic assessment, attendance records, progress reviews and accreditation of work.'*

*'A database is kept of all learners who identify on their enrolment form that they have a physical disability or learning difficulty. Where appropriate, action is taken to ensure tutors have this information and can respond accordingly. There is an effective system for ensuring that learners are always provided with any specialist equipment they need in the classroom and care is taken to ensure that they are shown how to use it. Members of staff frequently offer considerable support to learners who find it difficult to resolve personal problems because of language problems or physical disabilities.'*

## THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING

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

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5

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

Effective practice which secures continuous improvement is evidenced by:

- the extent to which courses or programmes match learners' aspirations and potential, building on prior attainment and experience; and
- how far programmes or the curriculum meet external requirements and are responsive to local circumstances.

**IN THE COMMON INSPECTION FRAMEWORK HOW FAR LEARNERS' NEEDS ARE MET IS JUDGED BY THE EXTENT TO WHICH...**

**SUCCESS IN ADULT LITERACY, NUMERACY AND ESOL PROVISION IN THE ADULT AND COMMUNITY LEARNING CONTEXT MEANS...**

**5.1** learners have access to an appropriate range of courses or programmes and, where appropriate, achieve suitable qualifications.

**5.1.1** provision is available at times and in places that are convenient for learners who have a variety of domestic and employment responsibilities.

**5.1.2** learners can receive tuition at the level they need it, and on a scale that is appropriate to their needs.

**5.1.3** learners can study for a nationally recognised qualification where they feel this would be helpful.

**5.2** the curriculum or an individual programme of work is planned and managed effectively to provide coherence and progression.

**5.2.1** learners can pursue a personalised learning programme that enables them to progress from one level to the next of the national curricula.

**5.2.2** learners have good opportunities to move on to other learning

**IN THE COMMON INSPECTION FRAMEWORK  
HOW FAR LEARNERS' NEEDS ARE MET IS  
JUDGED BY THE EXTENT TO WHICH...**

**SUCCESS IN ADULT LITERACY, NUMERACY  
AND ESOL PROVISION IN THE PRISONS  
CONTEXT MEANS...**

**5.3** the curriculum or programmes of work are socially inclusive, ensuring equality of access and opportunities for learners.

**5.3.1** provision is clearly targeted at those sections of the community most likely to have low skill levels in literacy, numeracy and ESOL.

**5.3.2** learning programmes, both individual and collective, reflect learners' interests and perspectives.

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**5.4** learners have the opportunity to broaden their experience and enhance their personal development through a suitable variety of enrichment activities.

**5.4.1** there are opportunities for learners to develop their literacy, numeracy and ESOL skills by making use of resources and facilities that are available within the wider community and by participating in cultural activities and other events.

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**5.5** programmes of work take account of community and employer needs.

**5.5.1** providers have effective strategies for stimulating local interest in acquiring better literacy, numeracy and ESOL skills.

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**5.6** legal requirements in relation to religious education and collective worship are fulfilled where they apply.

**5.6.1** providers have arrived at a satisfactory balance between the need to ensure that there are progression routes for learners and learners' wishes to study close to home.

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**5.7** multi-site provision and resources are effectively integrated to give a coherent programme of learning.

Not generally applicable.

## HOW TO ACHIEVE SUCCESS

### *Use of the national standards*

The national standards in literacy and numeracy must form the basis of all literacy, numeracy and ESOL programmes. The context-free nature of the core curricula means that programme design, teaching and management must always be informed by the wider contexts of learners' needs, interests and motivations. Adults will learn better and gain confidence faster if they see the relevance and benefits of improved literacy, numeracy and language in their daily lives.

### *Engaging with learners*

Look at the rationale behind where you hold your literacy, numeracy and language tuition – the pattern of delivery, days, times, length of year and so on. How do you meet the needs of those who can fairly readily identify that they have some difficulty with literacy, numeracy or language and can be coaxed into doing something about it? Don't forget to look at how you respond to latent need, that is, how you engage with people who have not been involved in formal education for a long time and how you convince them that there is something to be gained from developing their literacy, numeracy and language skills.

Bear in mind that there is a close correlation between low levels of literacy, numeracy and language skills and low income. Use demographic data, and your organisation's knowledge of its communities, to target priority groups. Have a clear rationale for determining in which communities you aim to have a presence.

Be imaginative about how you attract new learners to community-based learning. Overcome the stigma associated with poor literacy, numeracy and language skills by developing programmes or short taster courses that have these skills as a component. Introductions to the use of computers, citizenship courses, community history courses, healthy lifestyle courses and 'dads and lads' and family learning programmes are all examples of initiatives that can work in this way.

Ensure that your organisation is close to the communities it aims to work with, and that it understands the issues affecting those communities. Employ staff who know how to convert those issues into agendas for learning and action. Tease out those aspects of learning that are to do with literacy, numeracy and ESOL. Make sure that any literacy, numeracy and ESOL learning that takes place helps the groups concerned achieve their primary learning goals. For example, in a women's centre on a run-down housing estate, it may be appropriate to devise a literacy and numeracy programme that helps learners examine how women in other countries deal with poverty or poor living conditions, as well as equipping them to deal on a daily basis with managing on a low income.

### ***Patterns of provision***

Make sure that provision is available when, where, and on a scale that best meets people's needs. Take account of the family, work and cultural commitments of potential learners, and how pressing their need to learn is in deciding whether provision needs to be sustained over a long period, short and intensive, or some combination of the two. Use distance learning where feasible and appropriate. Decisions about which days of the week and for how many weeks of the year groups run should be based on the needs of learners rather than on the preferences of teachers.

### ***Progression, coherence and responsiveness***

Ensure that learners can work at the level that matches their current need. Work with other providers to create progression routes where your organisation is unable to do this on its own. Refer learners to other agencies where your own organisation does not have the means to meet their needs. Make accreditation available where learners would find it valuable and where it makes progression easier.

If, as a provider, you operate from more than one site, you need to find a way of striking a balance between creating progression routes for learners and meeting the express need that many learners have to study close to home. If there are other providers in the area, joint planning, for example, through the local learning partnership, might be an effective way of ensuring that these two competing priorities are met.

### ***Furthering learners' personal development***

Some literacy, numeracy and ESOL learners have little or no first-hand experience of life outside their immediate neighbourhood. Other have a poor understanding of where they are in the UK and no understanding of maps or how they work. The best solution in this situation is to reinforce existing knowledge using trips out, residential and other exploratory activities. Don't forget to provide information on the additional resources and facilities available in the community so that learners can extend their neighbourhood and general geographic knowledge beyond the learning environment. Residential events in particular provide good opportunities for intensive learning and developing social skills, as well as widening learners' horizons in many other ways.

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

- carry out an analysis of their organisation's strengths, weaknesses and opportunities
- devise an action plan.

## WHAT IS SUCCESS?

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### Rima and Abdul

*Rima is from Beirut and her first language is Arabic. She says, 'I come here because I want to learn English so I can help my children. It is very good teaching here because she helps me with what I say and how I do for reading and writing. I can do words and sentences and speaking. I do better now understanding from listening to the teacher.'*

*Abdul is hearing impaired. He has been coming to the Mary Ward Centre for seven months. 'My name is Abdul. I came here to improve my pronunciation. This is difficult when you are learning a new language and you are Deaf. I have a problem with my hearing so I cannot pronounce things well. They try to help me with my writing but I have difficulty with my listening.'*

*'This is my first time in this centre and I have been learning for seven months. I do elementary literacy. I am enjoying this college. Mary Ward is very good!'*

### **Targeting courses**

Some providers have revisited the design of their courses in the light of the national curricula for literacy, numeracy and ESOL.

*One local authority has reduced the number of different levels of course offered, but now targets courses more clearly on specific learner groups. For example in ESOL, the authority offers three Entry Level 2 groups, one for those whose main concern is to improve their literacy skills, another which is a fast-track programme for refugees and asylum-seekers and a third for long-term residents of the UK who need to improve all aspects of their use of English. Summer programmes and groups are being developed to run on Saturdays and Sundays to meet the needs of particular sections of the community.*

### **Working in partnership**

One adult education college is developing an energy conservation course for ESOL learners in partnership with the local housing department. The aim is to train representatives who will be able to develop energy awareness within their communities using either their mother tongue or English.

### **Olivia**

*Olivia Low is a literacy teacher at the Mary Ward Centre. She says, 'I teach learners from Entry to Level 3. Students do not have to take the exam, and though its voluntary, most of them want to. Somehow here, they need more time before they are ready to contemplate a test or exam. They do eventually want a qualification as recognition of their achievement.'*

### **Extracts of effective practice from OFSTED and ALI inspection reports**

*'There is a wide range of provision. All courses are part-time, with day, evening and Saturday classes available. A two-week summer programme of courses is also provided. There is a literacy with computers course for those learners already on a literacy course... New groups are being established at venues in the community. The authority also supports a course programme for travellers.'*

*'The ESOL programme offers a good range of courses at different levels and times to suit learners' needs... Most courses take place at the centre two or three times a week for 12 weeks... All the courses are cross-referenced to the national ESOL curriculum and learners have the opportunity in the summer term to work towards oral and written ESOL qualifications... Learners are encouraged to progress to higher level language courses and on to other courses in the centre.'*



*'A home tuition scheme for Asian women who cannot attend classes in learning centres has been in operation since April 2000.'*

*'The [local education authority] is managing a project involving a number of other countries to encourage non-traditional approaches to engaging hard-to-reach learners. Somali learners from Denmark are visiting ESOL classes in Bristol to share their experiences of living and learning in a different culture.'*

*'Twenty-six per cent of learners on family learning courses come from minority ethnic backgrounds. An increasing number of fathers are participating in family learning. A number of courses are targeted specifically at male learners...The [local education authority] employs male development workers to encourage fathers into family learning who might otherwise be reluctant to join courses.'*

*'A number of courses have been set up following requests from local minority ethnic communities. These include classes for Somali and Pakistani women and Asian elders.'*

*'ESOL classes are available at 21 sites, including schools, community centres and health centres. Many ESOL courses are vocational, such as sewing and IT, using skills as the basis for learning....Provision ranges from Pre-entry to Level 2.'*

# THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING

6. How well are learners guided and supported?

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6

## 6. HOW WELL ARE LEARNERS GUIDED AND SUPPORTED?

Effective practice which secures continuous improvement is evidenced by:

- the quality and accessibility of information, advice and guidance to learners in relation to courses and programmes and career progression;
- the diagnosis of, and provision for, individual learning needs; and
- the access learners have to relevant, effective support on personal issues.

**IN THE COMMON INSPECTION FRAMEWORK THE QUALITY OF I.A.G. IS JUDGED BY THE EXTENT TO WHICH...**

**SUCCESS IN ADULT LITERACY, NUMERACY AND ESOL PROVISION IN THE ADULT AND COMMUNITY LEARNING CONTEXT MEANS...**

**6.1** support arrangements are planned and managed coherently.

**6.1.1** learners have good access to a range of support services even though the provider may not be able to provide them all in-house.

**6.2** impartial guidance enables learners to choose the course or programme which is right for them.

**6.2.1** information and advice is provided by someone who has a good knowledge of the range of provision available in the locality.

**6.2.2** enquirers are referred elsewhere if the provider cannot meet their needs.

**6.3** careers education and guidance are effective in guiding learners towards opportunities available to them when they have completed their studies or training.

**6.3.1** careers advice and guidance is available for those who would find it useful.

**6.4** procedures are in place for recognising poor punctuality, non-attendance and poor performance early and for taking appropriate action.

**6.4.1** attendance is carefully and accurately monitored.

**6.4.2** the provider has strategies for helping learners overcome the difficulties that are contributing to poor attendance.

**IN THE COMMON INSPECTION FRAMEWORK  
THE QUALITY OF I.A.G. IS JUDGED BY THE  
EXTENT TO WHICH...**

**SUCCESS IN ADULT LITERACY, NUMERACY  
AND ESOL PROVISION IN THE PRISONS  
CONTEXT MEANS...**

**6.5** induction programmes enable learners to settle into their programmes quickly, to understand their rights and responsibilities and the demands of the course or programme.

**6.5.1** learners are introduced to fellow learners.

**6.5.2** teachers explain how the individual or group learning plan and the programme of work will be developed.

**6.5.3** learners are introduced to the resources and facilities that are available.

**6.5.4** key policies and how they affect the learner are explained clearly.

**6.6** individual learning needs are accurately diagnosed and learners receive effective additional support throughout their studies or training.

**6.6.1** learners' additional support needs are identified promptly.

**6.6.2** the help of a learning support worker is provided where required.

**6.6.3** specialist resources are provided where required.

**6.7** learners have effective personal support to help them complete their course or programme, including access to specialist support services.

**6.7.1** learners receive the level and type of support that will enable them to pursue a programme of study.

**6.8** guidance and support are sensitive to equality of opportunity.

**6.8.1** information for learners is made available orally and visually wherever feasible.

**6.8.2** any printed materials used in the context of guidance and support takes account of the level of reading skills of the audience.

**6.8.3** where required, printed materials are available in languages other than English or in formats that are suitable for learners with visual impairments.

**6.8.4** the support of bilingual and/or Braille and Sign workers is provided where required.

**IN THE COMMON INSPECTION FRAMEWORK  
THE QUALITY OF I.A.G. IS JUDGED BY THE  
EXTENT TO WHICH...**

**SUCCESS IN ADULT LITERACY, NUMERACY  
AND ESOL PROVISION IN THE PRISONS  
CONTEXT MEANS...**

**6.9** partnerships with other providers and relevant agencies involved in advice and guidance are effective.

**6.9.1** the provider has developed good relationships with other providers and agencies to ensure that learners can gain access to the support services they need.

**HOW TO ACHIEVE SUCCESS**

Many literacy, numeracy and ESOL learners will require childcare and/or financial assistance, for example, for transport. The absence of these will effectively bar them from tuition. All will need advice and information initially about a suitable course of study, and guidance on progression through the literacy, numeracy and ESOL national curricula. Those who are interested in entering the labour market or pursuing a more advanced course of study will be interested in educational guidance and careers advice. Some will require a level of learning support. Some will need professional counselling to be able to sustain a commitment to learning. Many learners whose first language is not English will need language support to be able to benefit fully from the educational opportunities that are available.

It will not be feasible for some organisations, including local authorities, to provide a full range of support services in-house. In this case, it is important to establish referral arrangements with other agencies or individuals who can provide specialist services. For instance, the local authority's educational psychology service may be able to offer help with counselling and the diagnosis of specific learning difficulties. Where provision is managed by an FE college, it may be possible to call upon services based at the main college site.

For all support services provided:

- learners should be aware of what support services are available, and how to access them
- services should be available at times and in places that suit adult learners
- teachers should have a good grasp of this information, so that they can make referrals and seek assistance as appropriate
- all staff involved in advising, guiding and supporting adults who have low skills in written and/or spoken English or in the use of numbers, should be sensitive to the difficulties this presents
- bilingual and Braille and Sign support should be available wherever it is needed.

### ***Initial advice and guidance***

Deal promptly with enquiries from potential learners. Arrange for them to be interviewed, in confidence, by a trained and experienced literacy, numeracy or language practitioner who is knowledgeable about the range of provision available. The interviewer should be aware of the massive amount of courage it has taken for the learner to take this first step, and should be sensitive to the difficulties learners have faced over a prolonged period.

The aim should be for the learner and the interviewer to have agreed upon a suitable programme of study for the learner by the end of the meeting. They will have taken account of where the learner lives, the availability of tuition in that area, his or her approximate level of competence and his or her availability.

### ***Starting off***

New learners need the opportunity to find their feet. Introduce them to their fellow students, the centre and its social facilities. Describe the learning resources and support services available. Explain your equal opportunities policy and your code of conduct. Outline how you propose to develop a programme of work with the learner and what will be expected of them in lessons and outside them.

Once learners' additional support needs have been identified, arrange for them to have the appropriate form of support within each lesson. This may mean providing a support worker, specially prepared materials, special software packages, aids for people with sensory impairments or an adapted study space.

### ***Educational and career guidance***

Some learners will be interested in moving into voluntary or paid employment or on to further study once they are satisfied with their progress in literacy, numeracy or language. Teachers are likely to be able to provide some advice and information, but it is important that learners have access to a full range of information and professional guidance about the possibilities open to them. Where these cannot be provided in-house, links with external agencies become all-important. In some areas, the local careers partnership will have developed area-wide guidance services which any adult can use.

### ***Personal support***

For most learners, the first port of call when they are in difficulty is likely to be the teacher. It is helpful if there are opportunities for teachers to provide some form of structured tutorial support for learners. Where learners have more profound personal difficulties that are beyond the scope or experience of the teacher to resolve, refer the learner for specialist help either within your own organisation or elsewhere.

Adult learners have many commitments and responsibilities. Occasional absence or late arrival at lessons is inevitable and acceptable. But persistent poor attendance and punctuality can be a sign that the situation is becoming unmanageable. Monitor attendance carefully, and provide support, or referral to support agencies, where appropriate. Where learners are not adhering to the pattern of attendance they have agreed, the situation needs to be reviewed. The poor attendance of one learner can have a detrimental effect on the quality of the learning experience for others.

Consider ways of promoting your service that do not rely on the written word. Ensure that promotional literature and key documents about learners' rights and responsibilities and about support services are easy to read. Have them available in other languages for learners for whom English is an additional language. Some local authorities have translation and interpreting services to help residents access the different functions of local government. If yours is a local authority service, make full use of this resource. Community groups may also be able to use this facility.

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

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## WHAT IS SUCCESS?

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### Burbuqe

*'I am Burbuqe Betti, I came to this country from a very difficult situation in Kosovo. I would like to work with children and I would like to be a teacher. I like my teacher here at The Old Co-op very much. She speaks very slowly for us because we are all from different countries. She is a good teacher; oh my God I don't know how to say this except she gives us good lessons!*

*'I have been coming to lessons for three years for English. Now when I finish this next course I have been on for eight months, I will get a certificate. It is the Certificate for Professional Crèche Workers Course Level 2. I can do this because my English is now good. I have got English Speaking Board – Foundation Level 3.'*



## **Bakary**

*'My name is Bakary Camara. I come to this class because I need to recognise letters so that I can write. I am most proud of my spelling. I am not quite doing sentences. Teaching is 200% good here. What we need is more books with big letters, so we can read better.'*

*'I am not doing this for a job, definitely not! I am not doing a qualification but I would like to do an exam. I just want to do this for my own personal life. Before I could not read most of these letters, now I can read like cat, see, tea, book, fox, man, boy, pan, boxes.'*

*What made Bakary come here? He says, 'You see I have two daughters, seven and five years. I bring them up and my wife works. The one who is seven goes further than me in reading and writing, so I learn from her, but I can do maths better than her, but not reading. With 200% teaching here I soon will!'*

## **Extracts of effective practice from OFSTED and ALI inspection reports**

*'All main learning centres have crèche facilities to encourage learners to attend courses. The [council's] multilingual advice service has been recently reintroduced. The learners' agreement, and many of the signs in the learning centres, have been translated into the five main languages used in the borough. Advertising literature and posters promote non-stereotypical images.'*

*'Learners value having a learning centre near to their home with friendly staff, a café and a crèche facility.'*

*'Learners are aware of the support available to them and regularly take advantage of financial help for childcare and transport costs. Learners on basic skills courses...commented on the helpfulness of tutors in assisting them with applications for this support.'*

*'There is good guidance for learners on the range of family learning courses available and progression routes. Staff from this area of learning work with the local advisory service for minority ethnic groups to support learners with identified language needs.'*

*'[The college] has introduced tutorial support for all part-time students to help them meet their targets.'*

*'Crèche facilities have enabled many mothers with young children to participate in learning.'*

*'There are good crèche facilities in all of the college's main sites. These are used well, for example, by refugees and asylum-seekers who would not otherwise have been able to attend English lessons.'*

*'The college's main site has a bicycle and a pram park, which is also well used by learners. Course timetables are planned to take account of learners' childcare responsibilities and travel arrangements. A cafeteria operates at the college's main site. This facility and the adjoining social area are well used by learners.'*

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

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

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7

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

Effective practice which secures continuous improvement is evidenced by:

- how well leaders and managers set a clear direction leading to high-quality education and training;
- how effectively, through quality assurance and self-assessment, performance is monitored and evaluated and how effectively steps are taken to secure improvement;
- how well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled, so that all learners achieve their potential;
- where relevant, the extent to which governors or other supervisory boards meet their responsibilities; and
- how effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money.

**IN THE COMMON INSPECTION FRAMEWORK HOW FAR LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT ARE EFFECTIVE IS JUDGED BY THE EXTENT TO WHICH...**

**SUCCESS IN ADULT LITERACY, NUMERACY AND ESOL PROVISION IN THE ADULT AND COMMUNITY LEARNING CONTEXT MEANS...**

**7.1** clear direction is given through strategic objectives, targets and values that are fully understood by staff, including subcontractors and work placement providers.

**7.1.1** senior managers and staff involved in the delivery of the service know what the service is trying to achieve. They know how they are expected to help raise standards in literacy, numeracy and ESOL.

**7.1.2** the same standards apply where service delivery is contracted out from one organisation to another. In this case, managers and teachers understand how they contribute to the work of the managing agent.

**7.2** demanding targets for retention, achievement, progression and employment are set and met.

**7.2.1** managers keep a close eye on how well learners are achieving against the national standards.

**IN THE COMMON INSPECTION FRAMEWORK HOW FAR LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT ARE EFFECTIVE IS JUDGED BY THE EXTENT TO WHICH...**

**SUCCESS IN ADULT LITERACY, NUMERACY AND ESOL PROVISION IN THE ADULT AND COMMUNITY LEARNING CONTEXT MEANS...**

7.2

7.2.2 managers monitor retention rates and destination data where applicable and make use of all this information to review continually the effectiveness of the provision.

7.2.3 managers set new targets for increasing the number of learners in tuition and improving the quality of the service in the light of the above.

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7.3 the quality assurance arrangements are systematic and informed by the views of all interested parties.

7.3.1 quality assurance is an ongoing aspect of the contract holder's activities, with clear procedures.

7.3.2 learners and all staff, both voluntary and paid, have a voice in evaluating the effectiveness of the provision.

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7.4 rigorous self-assessment leads to identified priorities and challenging targets for improvement.

7.4.1 providers have a clear idea of what constitutes best practice in literacy, numeracy and ESOL provision in the types of setting in which they are working.

7.4.2 providers regularly and candidly evaluate the strengths and weaknesses in their own provision, making use of appropriate evidence.

7.4.3 providers make plans on the basis of their judgements and which lead to tangible gains for learners.

7.4.4 where services are contracted out, the managing agent ensures that self-assessment is carried out effectively by its subcontractors.

**IN THE COMMON INSPECTION FRAMEWORK HOW FAR LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT ARE EFFECTIVE IS JUDGED BY THE EXTENT TO WHICH...**

**SUCCESS IN ADULT LITERACY, NUMERACY AND ESOL PROVISION IN THE ADULT AND COMMUNITY LEARNING CONTEXT MEANS...**

**7.5** priorities are supported through responsible financial management.

**7.5.1** service managers have a good knowledge of the finances that the organisation has available to support the operation of literacy, numeracy and ESOL teaching.

**7.5.2** good use is made of external funding to further the development of this work.

**7.5.3** the importance of literacy, numeracy and ESOL provision is fully recognised in the organisation's business plan.

**7.5.4** income is used to further the strategic priorities relating to literacy, numeracy and ESOL teaching.

**7.5.5** financial decision-making, in which management committees, elected members, governing bodies etc. play a part, is based on sound information.

**7.5.6** procedures and responsibilities for day-to-day financial management are clear.

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**7.6** staff understand and are fully involved in the organisation's quality assurance arrangements.

**7.6.1** full-time and part-time teachers and voluntary and support staff recognise that they have a role to play in ensuring that the service learners receive is of good quality.

**7.6.2** teachers have a good understanding of the evidence needed to demonstrate the effectiveness of the organisation's literacy, numeracy and ESOL provision.

**IN THE COMMON INSPECTION FRAMEWORK HOW FAR LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT ARE EFFECTIVE IS JUDGED BY THE EXTENT TO WHICH...**

**SUCCESS IN ADULT LITERACY, NUMERACY AND ESOL PROVISION IN THE ADULT AND COMMUNITY LEARNING CONTEXT MEANS...**

**7.7** the information needs of managers and other staff are met and management information is used effectively to the benefit of learners.

**7.7.1** management information is used to gain an insight into a wide range of issues, including:

- the appropriateness of particular patterns of provision
- the effectiveness of centre-based and neighbourhood-based work
- whether or not the needs of priority groups are being met
- the cost-effectiveness of provision.

**7.8** performance management, staff appraisal and review are effective in improving the quality of provision.

**7.8.1** the provider operates a performance review scheme, which accommodates part-time teachers, volunteers and support staff as well as full-time staff.

**7.8.2** managers and staff use the scheme as a means of identifying how professional development might help staff improve the quality of the service for learners.

**7.9** there are explicit aims, values and strategies for promoting equality for all, and these are reflected in the provider's work.

**7.9.1** the organisation has an equal opportunities policy, which ensures that literacy, numeracy and ESOL learners can access provision that meets their needs, and reflects their interests and aspirations.

**7.9.2** the policy is supported by an action plan, and its effectiveness is regularly reviewed.

**7.9.3** all staff have a good understanding of equal opportunities issues.

**IN THE COMMON INSPECTION FRAMEWORK HOW FAR LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT ARE EFFECTIVE IS JUDGED BY THE EXTENT TO WHICH...**

**SUCCESS IN ADULT LITERACY, NUMERACY AND ESOL PROVISION IN THE ADULT AND COMMUNITY LEARNING CONTEXT MEANS...**

7.9

7.9.4 where provision is contracted out to another organisation, the managing agent has responsibility for ensuring that equal opportunities are effectively promoted.

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7.10 governors or other supervisory boards effectively oversee the provider's strategic direction, and regularly monitor the quality of provision and their own performance.

7.10.1 there is a clear code of conduct for dealing with harassment and oppressive behaviour, and learners and staff know what it is.

7.10.2 instances of harassment and bullying are dealt with promptly and effectively.

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7.11 there are effective procedures for dealing with appeals and complaints.

7.11.1 there is a straightforward procedure for learners to use if they wish to make a complaint.

7.11.2 learners understand the procedure and know how to use it.

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7.12 efficient and effective use is made of resources.

7.12.1 in a local authority, even where provision is contracted out or delegated to an external institution, elected members have responsibility for overseeing the strategic direction of the service and monitoring its effectiveness.

7.12.2 in a further education college, this responsibility falls to the governing body.

7.12.3 in a voluntary organisation, this responsibility falls to the management committee.

7.12.4 running costs are subjected to regular scrutiny to ensure that resources are being used in the best interests of learners.



**IN THE COMMON INSPECTION FRAMEWORK HOW FAR LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT ARE EFFECTIVE IS JUDGED BY THE EXTENT TO WHICH...**

**SUCCESS IN ADULT LITERACY, NUMERACY AND ESOL PROVISION IN THE ADULT AND COMMUNITY LEARNING CONTEXT MEANS...**

7.12

- 7.12.5 the provider is aware of the costs of running different types of provision, for example, centre-based, neighbourhood-based and mobile provision, and has a clear view of which are financially viable.
- 7.12.6 the organisation uses and disposes of resources in an environmentally friendly manner.

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7.13 the 'best value' principles of comparison, challenges, consultation and competition are applied in securing resources and services.

- 7.13.1 local authority services are subject to 'best value' scrutiny.
- 7.13.2 providers demonstrate that they achieve value for money in what they do.

## HOW TO ACHIEVE SUCCESS

### *Strategy*

Your organisation should have a clear view about how it plans to help achieve the targets for learner participation that have been set by the local LSC as part of the *Skills for Life* strategy. It should have a clear idea of how it plans to ensure that learners achieve appropriately against the national standards. If yours is a local authority service, these intentions should be written into a number of strategic plans. These include the council's adult learning plan, its education development plan and its community plan. A strategy for meeting the literacy, numeracy and language needs of priority communities should be written into the council's neighbourhood renewal plan as well as into its educational agenda. The council's intended contribution to raising achievement in literacy, numeracy and language development should also be evident in the work of the local learning partnership. The needs of learners studying in community settings should be reflected in the council's capital investment and buildings maintenance programme and in its ICT strategy. If yours is a service managed by an FE college, these considerations should be reflected in the college's strategic plan and in its action plan for literacy, numeracy, language and key skills development.

Where a local authority or an FE college contracts out literacy, numeracy and ESOL provision to one or more other providers, a clear contractual agreement should underpin the arrangement. It is the managing agent's responsibility to agree performance targets and service levels with its subcontractors.

Similarly, where a local authority makes provision through an external institution, it is the authority's responsibility to ensure that it has a service agreement with the external institution.

Staff should be aware of your organisation's aims and objectives for the development of literacy, numeracy and ESOL provision. If yours is a local authority service, it may be helpful to use some of the council's publications, for example, residents' newsletters, to raise awareness of your service's priorities.

### ***Evaluating performance***

Check how well your organisation is doing each year against the following performance indicators concerning learners':

- participation
- retention
- achievement (completion of individual or group learning plans and qualifications)
- progression.

Use the data and other information discussed in relation to key question 1 to help you do this. If you run more than one kind of provision, or operate at more than one centre, remember to distinguish between them. Form a view about where there is room for improvement, and set targets for the coming year.

In local authorities, it is the responsibility of senior officers and elected members to review how well the service is performing. Where provision is delegated to an external institution, the governing body should be aware of performance, but senior officers and elected members have overall responsibility. In FE colleges, the board of governors oversees performance. In voluntary organisations, this role falls to the management committee.

### ***Management information***

Management information is vital in helping you keep track of performance. If extracting data from current systems is a struggle, invest in new software and the expertise to be able to use it. Provider can obtain more information and guidance from the National Institute for Continuing Education (NIACE), or their local Learning and Skills Council.

### ***Quality assurance***

Internal and external verification arrangements are powerful mechanisms for assuring the quality of literacy, numeracy and ESOL provision. They have the potential to ensure that learners who choose to study in their local community are not disadvantaged in any way by their learning environment. Consider establishing your own internal verification system even if learners are not working towards a qualification.

Set out clear quality assurance procedures for teaching and learning. Identify and train a team of staff who can carry out the internal verification role across a range of provision. Include observations of teaching and learning in your quality assurance arrangements. Where your organisation is too small to do these things on its own, consider entering into a partnership with one or more other providers. Staff often find that carrying out the role of internal verifier or observer across a range of settings is a valuable staff development exercise in itself.

Managers have a responsibility for examining the issues thrown up by quality assurance mechanisms and for making sure that they are dealt with appropriately.

Where provision is contracted out, for example from a local authority to an FE college or vice versa, it is the responsibility of the managing agent to set out its expectations as far as quality assurance is concerned, and to ensure that quality assurance procedures are carried out. The roles and responsibilities of each party in relation to quality assurance should be clearly specified in a written contract.

### ***Self-assessment***

Self-assessment is a quality improvement mechanism. It is about change rather than compliance. It requires you to take a thorough look at all aspects of the service you provide and to work out where its strengths and weaknesses lie. Once you have done this, you can decide what steps to take to build on strengths and eradicate weaknesses. Approached in the right spirit, self-assessment can be a productive and liberating management tool, rather than a bureaucratic exercise of forest-felling proportions.

Where a local authority contracts out provision, or delegates it to an external institution, it has a responsibility for ensuring that self-assessment is carried out. Where services are contracted out or delegated to more than one provider, the local authority has a responsibility for ensuring that the self-assessment process is co-ordinated across all providers. Where subcontractors, for example voluntary organisations, have little experience of self-assessment, the local authority is responsible for supporting them in the process. The same arrangements apply where an FE college contracts out provision.

To begin the self-assessment process, take soundings from a variety of sources about what people think of various aspects of your service. The sources might include:

- people currently in learning, as well as people who are not
- full- and part-time teachers
- support workers and volunteers
- managers
- internal partners and outside agencies with whom you collaborate.

Subjects to probe with these informants include:

- the enrolment procedure
- initial information, advice and guidance
- the quality of teaching
- social areas and facilities
- staff development.

Put these views alongside the hard data you have about service performance. These are likely to include:

- retention and achievement data
- numbers of learners in priority groups
- numbers of potential learners on waiting lists
- outcomes of lesson observations
- staffing profile
- income and expenditure.

On the basis of the above, arrive at some key judgements about where the organisation's strengths and weaknesses lie.

Organise the strengths and weaknesses against the seven key questions of the Common Inspection Framework, and write them up as your self-assessment report. Make reference to the evidence you have drawn upon to arrive at your judgements. Now you can move on to produce a development plan.

### ***Producing a development plan***

The more fully you have involved staff in the self-assessment process, the more likely they are to be committed to thinking about how to make improvements, and the more ideas you will have available to draw on. Your development plan certainly needs to state how you plan to tackle weaknesses, but it can also indicate how you are going to build on strengths and improve satisfactory practice.

For each item, set clear, achievable targets. Work out appropriate strategies for achieving all the targets. Allocate the responsibility for carrying out the work to an individual or a group, and write in an agreed timescale. The development plan might look like the extract given below.

#### **Development plan extract**

<b>Key question 2 How effective are teaching, training and learning?</b>	
<b>Prompt</b>	<b>Action</b>
What's the issue?	Poor resources for women's groups.
Evidence?	Six observations of teaching and learning.
What are we going to do about it?	Produce two new packs, one at Entry Level for women with small babies, one at Level 1 for women interested in paid employment.
Who's going to do it?	Teachers: Amarjit (babies) and Tony (employment).
How?	Amarjit to work with community health nurses. Tony to research employment opportunities in the area and issues of women and low pay.
When by?	Both packs to be ready for start of September.
Cost?	2 x 15 days, plus cost of packs.

### ***Role of staff in assuring and improving quality***

All staff, including part-time teachers, volunteers and support workers, should understand the organisation's quality assurance process and be in a position to contribute to it. Increasing numbers of providers see the value of including lesson observations as a feature of their quality assurance arrangements. Many use key question 2 of the Common Inspection Framework as the basis for making judgements about the quality of teaching and learning and for awarding self-assessment grades in this area.

Your organisation should have a staff development policy and a staff development plan linked to its strategic priorities, which take account of the staff development and training needs of particular individuals and groups of staff. Your organisation should have effective arrangements

for helping staff review their performance. These should be tailored to take account of the circumstances of part-time teachers and volunteers as well as of full-time staff. (In other words, different groups of staff might have different performance review arrangements.) The review process provides a good opportunity to help staff consider how they might develop their professional practice and to identify what staff development and training they might find helpful. All staff should have the opportunity to undertake training and professional development related to the *Skills for Life* strategy and its implementation, and to develop and share their practice.

In local authorities, staff may well be able to take advantage of development opportunities available elsewhere within the council including, for example, training in interview skills and equal opportunities practice. Remember that work-shadowing, job-swap arrangements and mentoring are all forms of professional development, so don't feel you must stick to training courses alone when planning staff development activities.

### ***Financial management***

Your organisation's strategic plan should be supported by a business plan. Financial planning needs to take account of the fact that the organisation needs an appropriate number of staff to carry forward responsibilities for curriculum development, quality assurance and management information. It needs to take account of your responsibility for supporting part-time teachers and volunteers through professional development, the need for support services for learners and the importance of investing in appropriate resources for teaching and learning.

Increasingly, funding from external sources plays a part in supporting services for literacy, numeracy and ESOL learners. Budgets, in large organisations in particular, have become increasingly complex. Your organisation needs the capacity not only to secure this funding, but also to be able to monitor income and expenditure effectively. It also needs the financial know-how to ensure that resources are allocated in a way that means that strategic priorities will be achieved. In local authorities, senior managers and elected members need clear and accurate information to allow them to consider various financial options and make sound decisions.

Where a local authority contracts out literacy, numeracy and ESOL provision for adults to another provider, or delegates them to an external institution, the financial basis of this arrangement should be clearly specified in a written contract, or memorandum of agreement. The same applies where an FE college contracts out provision. Where funding has been secured on a partnership basis, the allocations to the various partners should be clearly specified.

Your organisation should subject its running costs to regular scrutiny to make sure that its various aspects are operating cost-effectively. Although there are no financial benchmarks for literacy, numeracy and ESOL provision at present, you need to have a view about what constitutes cost-effective provision. It may be possible to set up financial benchmarking groups

with providers who operate provision on a similar basis to your own. Within this, measures of cost-efficiency may vary for different types of provision. For example, are you clear about how much time and energy you are prepared to invest in the activities that must precede the development of provision in hard-to-reach communities? How low are you prepared to let learner numbers go before you decide that a group in a remote rural community isn't viable? What measures can you take to make sure that buildings are not standing empty for large parts of the year?

Using resources cost-efficiently and cost-effectively also means taking account of environmental issues such as waste disposal, recycling and energy conservation. You may wish to develop a policy and action plan that covers these issues.

Local authority finances and services are subject to external scrutiny through 'best value' reviews, but all organisations are expected to achieve value for money in the way that they provide services or commission them from others.

### ***Equality of opportunity***

Your organisation should have an equal opportunities policy. The activities of local authority service providers will be set within the context of the overall council policy. Similarly, community-based provision made by FE colleges will be governed by the college's policy. There may be scope to customise these policies to reflect the specific needs of literacy, numeracy and ESOL learners. Policy documents should be easy to read and readily available. Where appropriate, they should be available in languages other than English, and in Braille or in audio form.

Your equal opportunities policy should be accompanied by an equal opportunities strategy and action plan. This is likely to include targets for increasing participation by priority groups, and for improving the retention and achievement rates for these groups. It should also cover areas such as staff recruitment, equality of opportunity training for staff and plans to upgrade buildings to meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. Progress against these targets should be regularly monitored, evaluated and reported. It is not enough to make sure that minority groups participate in learning – you need to check that they are achieving at least as well as other learners. Teaching and learning resources and activities need to be regularly audited to ensure that they represent and recognise the perspectives of a diverse community. This should be an aspect of your quality assurance procedures. Staff may also be set equality of opportunity targets through the staff performance review process.

You need a clear code of practice for tackling all forms of harassment, for example, harassment on the grounds of gender, race or ethnicity, age, class, mental health, disability or sexual orientation. Staff and learners should know what this code of practice is and be confident about using it. Its implementation should be monitored and evaluated.

Where provision in literacy, numeracy and ESOL for adults is contracted out, the managing agent is responsible for ensuring that equal opportunities are effectively promoted and that subcontractors comply fully with equal opportunities policies.

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

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

- a professional training and development programme for leaders and managers
- management and further development of the quality initiative facilitator network
- staff and organisational development materials.

#### WHAT IS SUCCESS?

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## Patrick

*Patrick is the principal of the Mary Ward Centre. He says, 'It's all about values and a sense here of continuity of action. Success comes from leading with a clear sense of purpose. I manage with a real commitment to treat people well and for them to treat each other well. We have to manage a huge range of learners and languages spoken here. Our programme reflects the geographical community and the community's interests and aspirations. Success comes from working with staff that are experienced, they organise and support each other as well as through staff development. They meet the needs of the learners very well.'*

*Patrick recalls, 'In the early 1980s, there was one strategy for the literacy campaign. The Mary Ward Centre was involved in that first big national campaign. I can't remember the name now, Moving On or something! We played a lead role and had a two-year funded Adult Learning and Basic Skills Unit community outreach worker. Here at one time, literacy was run under a voluntary literacy scheme. A volunteer literacy organiser would co-train 30 or 40 volunteers. They would be matched to the learners with literacy needs. When the FEFC and then the LSC, came in we were able to match funding to priorities and so were able to respond. It's not that the voluntary schemes were unprofessional, but it was an unprofessional way to meet a national problem. We are now given appropriate resource levels so that we can have a professional, properly funded approach to the teaching of English.'*

## Extracts of effective practice from OFSTED and ALI inspection reports

*'The council has made social inclusion one of its 10 main objectives in the 2002-03 performance plan. There is a particularly well-written equal opportunities policy statement and a comprehensive range of associated policies....The community education service contributes to council strategies for regeneration, health and the promotion of social inclusion. The service plan for 2002-03 sets a clear direction for the service and identifies seven clear service objectives. These include...improving basic skills provision across the curriculum.'*

*'National data supplied by the Basic Skills Agency have been used to quantify the scale of local basic skills needs and targets have been set accordingly.'*

*'The [local education authority] has good internal working relationships with other departments of the council which lead to direct benefits for learners. Community education service staff often initiate new areas of work with cross-council departments. For example, a joint project with the social services department has led to training in basic skills for home-care assistants.'*

*'The basic skills curriculum is effectively managed. A basic skills action plan developed by the management team gives clear direction for the basic skills programme. The managers and tutors take a leading role in a number of local and regional strategic initiatives to promote the importance of basic skills. Staff have visited other European countries to learn how basic skills provision is managed and offered. Links are now being established for learners to take part in an exchange system with learners from other countries.'*

*'Managers use data from neighbourhood surveys, student satisfaction surveys and enrolment and achievement data to plan new provision.'*

*'Performance is reviewed regularly by senior managers in the directorate and by council members.'*

*'Retention rates [on literacy and numeracy courses] were low in 2001-02, but have significantly improved in 2002-03 following the introduction of a range of strategies...including more accurate definition of the levels of classes for learners, and the introduction of more short courses.'*

*'The centre reviews its performance each year against a set of standards which clearly define the level of service learners can expect, and a set of performance indicators covering many aspects of the centre's operations, including its financial performance and learners' achievements. The annual report on the centre's performance is reviewed by the centre's management committee and the quality assurance committee. Trends in performance are closely monitored. Analysis of data shows that, in many instances, high standards have been maintained, or that performance has improved.'*

*'In foundation programmes, all staff are observed annually and new staff have three teaching observations during their first year. This usually ensures that courses taught by new tutors are good...lesson observations form the basis of tutors' appraisal and a personal development plan.'*

*'The centre has carefully developed its quality assurance system over a number of years. The system is very effective in maintaining good standards of teaching...The aims of the quality assurance system focus on the individual learner's experience. Detailed quality assurance policies, procedures and guidelines cover each stage of the learner's involvement with the centre. The centre uses a wide range of formal and informal methods to obtain learners' views of the service provided by the centre.'*

*'The centre operates a well-designed lesson observation scheme. The vice-principal responsible for quality assurance monitors the process closely. Tutors are regularly observed in lessons by their department head. Following the lesson observation, the tutor and the department head have wide-ranging discussions. Lesson observations contribute to the evaluation of the course, the tutors' appraisals and the identification of staff development and support needs.'*

*'Staff have been fully involved in the development of self-assessment of this curriculum area. The review has led to changes in provision, such as the introduction of shorter courses, and spoken language classes.'*

*'Equality of opportunity is effectively promoted and monitored. The equality assurance committee meets every term to monitor targets set for the recruitment of learners, and to discuss a wide range of equal opportunities issues. It is also responsible for producing the centre's equal opportunities policy...The equality assurance committee reviews any breaches of the equal opportunities policy each term. [It] has arranged relevant equal opportunities training for the centre's staff.'*

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# THE ADULT AND COMMUNITY LEARNING CONTEXT

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## What *Skills for Life* provision in adult and community learning (ACL) should include

An adult learning in literacy, numeracy and ESOL in adult and community learning will be underpinned by:

- the national standards for literacy and numeracy at Entry Level, Level 1 and Level 2
- the core curricula for literacy, numeracy and ESOL, with a curriculum framework for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities
- a common screening tool
- a common approach to initial assessment
- diagnostic assessment
- appropriate learning materials.

## What an adult learner can expect

An adult learner receiving tuition in literacy, numeracy and ESOL in adult and community learning should expect:

- good advice on how to improve their skills
- a report resulting from their diagnostic assessment
- an individual learning plan
- a programme of learning relating to the national standards and matching their aims and aspirations
- full involvement in planning and reviewing their learning
- feedback and support on their progress
- flexible forms of learning which suit their needs and preferences
- a range of opportunities to acquire non-externally accredited achievements as a springboard to nationally recognised qualifications
- expert and impartial advice on progression routes to other education, training or employment opportunities.

# What a learning organisation in adult and community learning should provide

All providers of literacy, numeracy and ESOL in adult and community learning must:

- prepare and undertake an annual self-assessment that informs their plans to address weaknesses and secure continuous improvement
- monitor, recognise and record all learner progress through non-externally accredited achievement as well as through national qualifications
- raise the level of competence of all teachers of literacy, numeracy and ESOL by offering opportunities for continuing professional development and access to programmes of training that lead to nationally recognised qualifications.

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

## Help for providers preparing for inspection

Inspection is an essential part of ensuring that standards are maintained nationally and that learners are not disadvantaged by living in one part of the country as opposed to another. The process is intensive for all concerned, but the organisation that is aware of its own strengths and weaknesses and that is making a good job of tackling them has little to fear. Inspection is not meant to involve providers in the ritualistic development of systems and procedures that they would not normally use. It tests whether organisations are consciously working to improve their performance, using methods that are effective and fit for purpose. What is appropriate in a large organisation may not be appropriate in a small one, and vice versa.

- The most enlightened view a provider can take is to view inspection as a free consultancy. Here are some tips on how to get the best out of an inspection of literacy, numeracy and ESOL provision in the adult and community learning context.
- Encourage staff to take the whole thing in their stride. If they get anxious, then learners will too, and this will make it difficult to form a realistic view of what the learning experience is normally like.
- Assemble as much data as you can to give a clear picture of who your learners are, what they are achieving and what they go on to do when they leave you.
- Make sure there is plenty of learners' work available for evidence of attainment.
- Have individual or group learning plans and progress reviews to hand.

- If you celebrate achievement through photographs, videos or exhibitions, make this material available.
- Make sure that there are plenty of opportunities for learners to voice their views without their teachers being present, for example, following lesson observations. If appropriate, have an interpreter present at meetings with ESOL learners.
- Prepare brief learner histories for the members of each group observed.
- Create opportunities for support workers, volunteers and part-time teachers, to give their views, as well as full-time staff.

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### WRITER BIOGRAPHY

The guide was prepared by **Peter Lavender** of the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE), in consultation with **Janet Swinney**, who is an associate inspector for the Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI).

Dr Lavender co-ordinates the work of NIACE's Research and Development department. His portfolio includes overseeing NIACE's work on learning outcomes, on basic skills in the community, development work on learning difficulties and disabilities and exploring links between health and learning. He is seconded to the NHS University, where he takes the lead on *Skills for Life and Health*. Before joining NIACE, Peter spent five years working as a Further Education Funding Council (FEFC) inspector in the basic education programme area. He was an advisor to the Tomlinson Committee of enquiry into provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Janet has been involved in inspection for almost five years, working first with the FEFC and then the ALI. She has extensive experience of adult and community learning in general and of literacy, numeracy and language work with adults in particular. She has written widely on issues in the adult and community learning sector, and many of the learning materials she has produced for learners with low literacy and numeracy skills have been published.

### **THE RAISING STANDARDS SERIES**

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

*A Contextual Guide to Support Success in Literacy, Numeracy and ESOL Provision: E-learning*

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

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

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

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



## Resources

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## GLOSSARY

<b>Achievement</b>	This does not necessarily mean the achievement of qualifications. It includes measurable improvement and progression in literacy, numeracy and for language skills in vocational, academic, social and personal contexts.
<b>Adults</b>	In education, adults include all learners after the age of 16; outside education, 18 is often taken as the benchmark age for adulthood, since it is the legal age of majority.
<b>Appropriate</b>	Describes a text, word, utterance, style, method or choice that is suitable for its intended audience, form or purpose. 'Appropriate' incorporates the idea that different contexts require different treatments and is in this respect to be differentiated from 'correct', which is associated more with the right grammatical formulation of an expression, or the 'right' choice or response, etc.
<b>Assessment</b>	Means collecting information in order to make decisions. Assessment should provide the information required to build and maintain a profile of the learner. This will enable teachers and trainers to establish and review both the learner's requirements and the learning opportunities that can be provided for him or her. It will also provide feedback to the learner on his or her progress.
<b>Assistant</b>	An assistant is likely to be the person providing additional training or teaching in literacy, numeracy and/or ESOL support.
<b>Audience</b>	The people addressed by a message in any medium. The term includes listeners, readers of print, film/TV audiences, and users of information technology.
<b>Basic Skills</b>	A shorthand to describe the skills which are the focus of the <i>Skills for Life</i> strategy.
<b>Capacity</b>	Availability of opportunities for literacy and numeracy learning.
<b>Coherence</b>	The underlying logical connectedness of a text, whereby concepts and relationships are relevant to each other and it is possible to make plausible inferences about underlying meaning.
<b>Common Inspection Framework</b>	Sets out the principles applicable to the inspections of post-16 non-higher education and training that meet the requirements under Part III of the Learning and Skills Act 2000. Inspections are carried out by the Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED) and the Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI).

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

- the quality of education and training;
- the standards achieved by those receiving that education and training;
- whether financial resources made available to those providing that education and training are managed efficiently and used in a way that provides value for money.

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

**Common**

Used to describe words, signs and symbols, patterns of spelling and grammatical constructions that occur frequently in the learner's everyday experiences, and also units, measures, instruments, tools, etc. that are widely used in everyday life in non-specialist contexts.

**Context**

The non-linguistic situation in which spoken or written language is used, and in which the learner is operating.

**Curriculum**

A planned approach to learning made up of identified activities.

**Curriculum Framework**

A document that sets out the entitlement to learning against which clear and detailed steps can be planned to enable learners to progress in a structured way.

**Data**

Information of a quantitative nature consisting of counts or measurements.

**Discrete literacy, numeracy and ESOL provision**

Where literacy, numeracy and ESOL is the main learning programme, literacy, numeracy and ESOL provision is inspected under area of learning.

**Disability**

*The Disability Discrimination Act 1995* defines a disabled person as someone who has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

<b>English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)</b>	The ability to understand and employ English language in daily activities at home, at work and in the community to achieve one's goals, and to develop one's knowledge and potential.
<b>Feedback</b>	The ongoing reaction given by an audience to those communicating, which helps them evaluate the success of their communication. Feedback may be verbal or non-verbal (e.g. through facial expressions or action).
<b>Images</b>	Pictures, photographs, graphs, charts or graphical representations.
<b>Indicators</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● the specific learning outcomes towards which a learner will work.</li> <li>● the skills, knowledge and understanding that a learner will not only have acquired but also be capable of using and applying when he or she has been assessed to have achieved these outcomes.</li> </ul> <p>Indicators do not prescribe delivery or dictate the activities a learner will be doing.</p>
<b>Individual learning plan</b>	The output of initial assessment, setting out what the learner plans to learn, by when, the ways he or she will undertake the learning and the resources required to bring the plan into action.
<b>Initial assessment</b>	This may include initial screening to identify whether learners require additional support. It may also include diagnostic assessment to identify the specific areas of literacy, numeracy and ESOL learners need to work on to achieve their main learning goal.
<b>Key Skills</b>	Literacy, numeracy and/or language learning concentrates on developing skills, knowledge and understanding, whereas key skills concentrates on their application. The key skills are Communication, Application of Number, IT, Improving Own Learning and Performance, Working with Others, and Problem Solving.
<b>Learner</b>	In relation to the literacy, numeracy and ESOL curricula, a learner is anyone over 16 undergoing a programme of education or training in any context.
<b>Learning infrastructure</b>	<p>The term describes the new <i>Skills for Life</i> framework for delivering adult literacy, language and numeracy learning programmes.</p> <p>The key elements are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● National standards for adult literacy and numeracy, upon which all learning programmes are based.</li> <li>● The Adult Literacy Core Curriculum, Adult Numeracy Core Curriculum, Adult ESOL Core Curriculum and the Pre-Entry Curriculum Framework.</li> </ul>



- The *Access for All* guidance manual that supports teachers in meeting the needs of learners with learning difficulties and disabilities.
- Screening, initial and diagnostic assessment materials for adult literacy, language and numeracy.
- Systems for developing individual learning plans (ILPs).
- Systems for recording learner progress and reporting learner achievements.
- National qualifications for adult literacy, language and numeracy, including the national literacy and numeracy tests, and systems for making these qualifications more accessible.

**Learning objectives**

Literacy, numeracy and/or language qualifications and other learning objectives that enhance learners' employment and career prospects.

**Learning support**

In relation to the literacy, numeracy and ESOL curricula, is the support provided to anyone over 16 undergoing a programme of education or training in any context.

**Literacy, language and numeracy**

The ability to read, write and speak in English and to use mathematics at a level necessary to function at work and in society in general.

**Literacy**

The ability to understand and employ printed information in daily activities at home, at work and in the community to achieve one's goals, and to develop one's knowledge and potential.

**Literacy, numeracy and/or ESOL support**

Learning that forms part of the learner's main learning programme. This could be offered on an individual or group basis in separate sessions or as part of the mainstream learning. It may include additional support for learners with specific learning difficulties.

**Medium**

The way in which language is transmitted from one person, or an agency, to another. The three basic media of language are phonic (speech), graphic (writing) and signing (sign language for hearing impaired people). The term is also used to denote the means of communication (e.g. television, telephone, film, radio, computer, press).

**Mentor**

A person providing additional support and guidance.

**Milestones**

Significant points along the continuum in this curriculum framework that have relevance to assessing a learner's attainment: that help identify the learner's literacy and numeracy skills at the most appropriate of these points.

**National Qualifications Framework**

The list of qualifications that have been accredited by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Qualifications are organised into three categories – general, vocation-related/vocational and occupational – and assigned to one of six levels (according to degree of knowledge, skills and understanding, autonomy, analysis and creative thinking within the qualification).

**New Qualifications Framework for teachers of literacy, numeracy and ESOL**

New qualifications have been introduced for teachers (Subject Specialists) at Level 4 of the NQF, and Subject Support staff (Level 3) in Literacy and Numeracy, available from Autumn 2002. Equivalent ESOL qualifications will be available from Autumn 2003. A new qualification for Adult Learner Support (Literacy/Numeracy/ESOL) at Level 2 will also be available from Autumn 2002.

*Summary of new qualifications*

**Level 4** – Certificate for Adult Literacy/Numeracy/ESOL **Subject Specialists**

**Level 3** – Certificate for Adult Literacy/Numeracy/ESOL **Subject Support**

**Level 2** – Certificate for Adult Literacy/Numeracy/ESOL **Learner Support**

**Numeracy**

The ability to understand and employ numerical information in daily activities at home, at work and in the community to achieve one's goals, and to develop one's knowledge and potential.

**Personal development skills**

Key skills and skills that enhance learners' employment prospects.

**Progression**

The measurable improvement or development in learning or teaching that a learner or teacher has achieved.

**Provider**

Any organisation providing education and training.

**Range**

A measure of spread in statistics; the difference between the greatest and the least in a set of numerical data.

**Skills for Life**

In March 2001 the Government published *Skills for Life*, the national strategy for improving adult literacy and numeracy skills.

**Style**

A difficult term to define because of its many uses, but it can be defined as the selection of a set of linguistic features from all the possibilities in a language, in relation to context, purpose, audience.

**Subject Specifications**

Definitions of the knowledge, personal skills and understanding required by teachers and those who support teaching and learning in adult literacy and numeracy programmes. See *National Qualifications Framework, Teaching infrastructure*.



## Teaching infrastructure

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

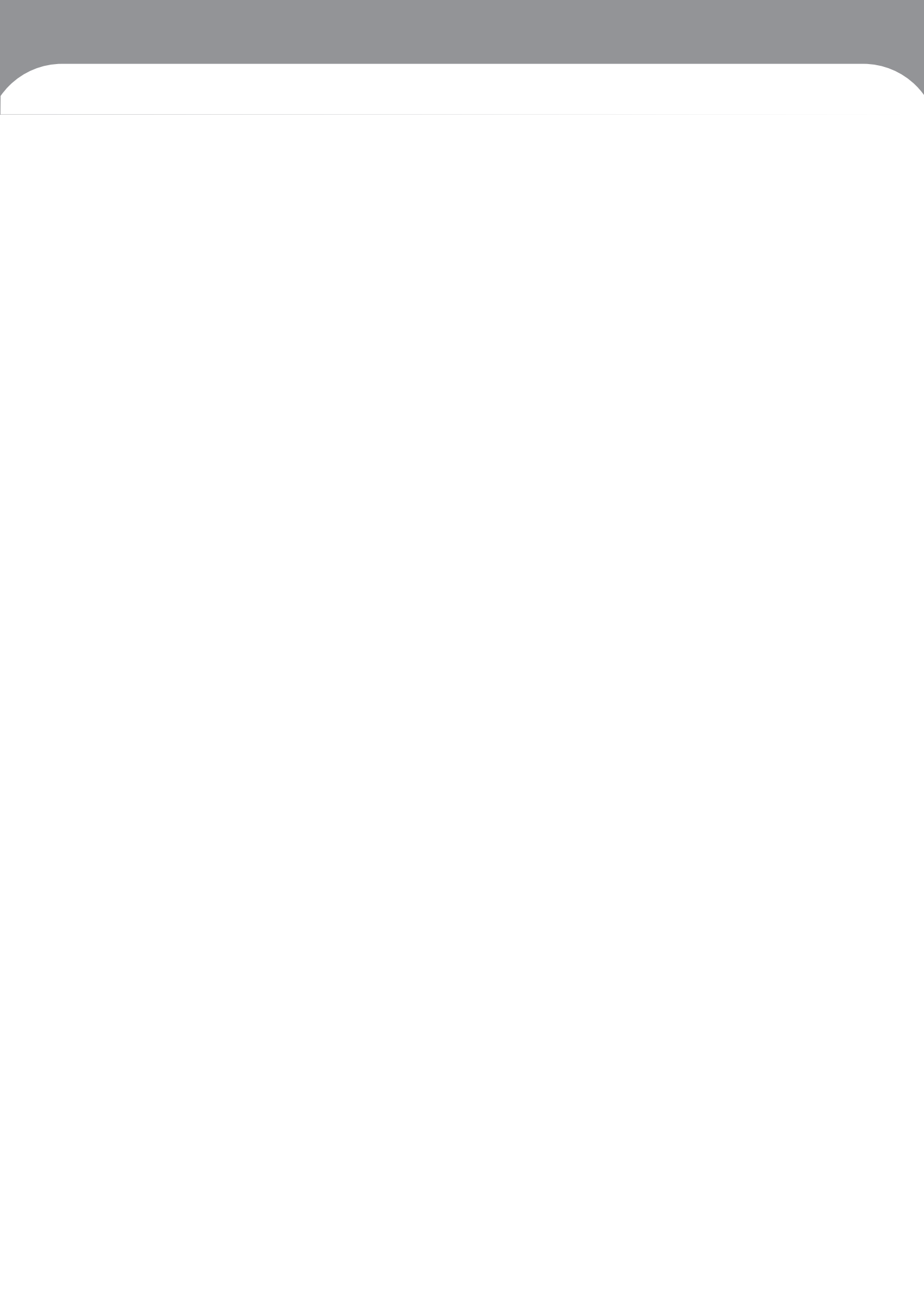
The key elements are:

- *New Subject Specifications for Teachers of Adult Literacy and Numeracy* (from 1 September 2002) and *English for Speakers of Other Languages* (from 1 September 2003) at Levels 3 and 4 of the National Qualifications Framework (from August 2002). These documents outline the essential skills and knowledge required of teachers and subject support staff involved in literacy, numeracy and ESOL provision.
- New qualifications for teachers and support staff involved with literacy, numeracy and ESOL provision, that recognise the subject specifications.
- New Level 2 Qualifications in Adult Learner Support to cater for a variety of support roles in literacy, numeracy and ESOL provision.
- Training programmes for teachers in the use of *Access for All* and the Core Curriculum and professional development programmes for existing staff.

## ACRONYMS

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

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