

Equality and Diversity Case Studies
Directorate: Regeneration and Culture
Service: Adult Learning and Skills

Title: Introduction of ESOL into the Adult Learning Curriculum

Introduction: Last year, there was a national initiative for a new delivery model for ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) to be steered by the Local Authority. The Adult Learning Manager took the role of chair and pulled together a steering group of ESOL providers and other interested parties eg Libraries, Schools, Cheshire Asian and Ethnic Minorities Council to look at how and where ESOL was being delivered and shape the distribution according to need.

Challenges: Steering the pattern of ESOL provision to meet growing demand had to be achieved within falling funding levels for adult provision within FE colleges.

How the challenges were overcome: Through this partnership, we looked at all the funding streams available to us as well as potential delivery venues and modes of delivery to try and maintain levels of provision but target it specifically at point of need.

Outcomes: During 2010/11 academic year, we introduced ESOL provision into the council's funded Adult Learning provision to enable colleges to maintain their levels of delivery but through alternative funding streams. Examples of this new curriculum are:

- Family Learning ESOL being delivered for Victoria Children's Centre and surrounding schools held at the Wesley Methodist Church in Chester.
- CWaC commissioned Adult Learning ESOL being delivered by Cheshire Asian and Ethnic Minorities Council
- CWaC commissioned Adult Learning ESOL being delivered in community settings by Mid Cheshire College

- We are currently setting up a Family Learning ESOL class to be delivered at the Turkish Association base in Ellesmere Port for Turkish mums.
- We have put literature in 6 languages into all CWaC libraries for people to find out about learning and work opportunities in the area.
- ESOL conversation classes in libraries to give learners informal opportunities to practice speaking English.

As an offshoot to the above ESOL curriculum developments, we have now commissioned the Wah Lei Association to deliver Mandarin classes to their English speaking members of Chinese background to strengthen cultural heritage links and are looking to introduce the same for parents working with their children to learn Mandarin Chinese.

What we could have done better: Developments are limited by the level of funding available for ESOL provision so we have to manage expectation and rising demand against limited funding.

Further information: Clare Latham, Adult Learning Manager