



Foreword

■ Madeline Held, Director, LLU+

‘The training has affected my practice in that it has encouraged me to take more account of students’ own experience.’

From ‘Speaking from within’, 2007

The Skills for Life Improvement Programme is playing a key role in ensuring that the challenges set by Leitch are relevant and meaningful whatever the context, that they are empowering and enabling for learners, and relevant to the community and to the workforce.

LLU+ at London South Bank University is proud to be a partner in the Skills for Life Improvement Programme and to contribute to its excellent work in supporting achievement and progression of all learners through improvement of their literacy, numeracy and English language. The work of the programme represents a significant contribution to upskilling the workforce, and links directly with the economic imperative behind the government’s skills strategy.

Our key activities within the programme are essential for the development of a sustainable and coherent infrastructure for this aim. These include:

- leading on training the teacher trainers and supertrainers
- conducting research in policy and practice, including numeracy and teaching reading and writing
- contributing to the programme’s continuing professional development (CPD) offer.



Teacher training

A key workforce development challenge is to meet the target of a fully qualified workforce by 2010. In providing subject specialist ‘training the teacher trainer’ courses at Masters level, the Skills for Life Improvement Programme contributes to both the number and the quality of trainers of future teachers. This year we have a team of ‘supertrainers’ to teach the courses, including several trainers who have graduated from previous courses. They are running courses to train teacher trainers in numeracy, literacy and ESOL and also in teaching learners with learning difficulties. **Read Sally Enzer’s accounts of being both a participant and supertrainer on page 6.*

The Skills for Life Improvement Programme is also running short ‘training the teacher trainer’ courses to update teacher trainers on key areas of development;

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Sign up now for the Improvement Programme. Places are still available for:

- **Workforce development – mentoring**
- **Whole organisation approach to improving learner success rates**
- **Embedding literacy, language and numeracy**
- **Working with people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities**

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'ESOL access for all', 'Numeracy minimum core' and 'Developing embedded literacy, language and numeracy learning'. Working with partners CfBT and EPIC, we have also been involved in producing three films showing embedded and contextualised Skills for Life teaching and these will be useful for teacher trainers and managers responsible for professional development.

Skills for Life research and development projects

Against a background of national concern about the lack of adequate numeracy skills among the adult population in this country, the Skills for Life Improvement Programme is attempting to build up a picture of numeracy provision and development, the challenges and issues. LLU+ is working with consortium partners to consult as widely as possible and gather information and views from all levels of stakeholders, including learners, about the mismatch between identified need and demand for numeracy. The information we gather will be summarised and analysed to help develop strategy for the future and to contribute to the current governmental focus on numeracy. LLU+ is also conducting two other research and development projects. The first is to produce a briefing paper on what a possible policy document on the teaching of reading and writing might contain. This has involved us in discussions and observations with experts across the country and has shown, contrary to some of the press coverage of the issues, a considerable consensus on how reading and writing should be taught. We are also working on the development of exemplar assessment tasks to meet the new entry requirements for would-be teachers. These tasks are currently being piloted and will be amended as a result of feedback before being finalised later this summer.

Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

The programme of CPD has always proved popular in the Skills for Life Improvement Programme and this year the emphasis has changed from individual participation to an offer to organisations, in the push to effect organisational as well as individual change. This has proved to be a welcome development and a network organiser in Yorkshire and Humberside commented:

'The course was very well received and much appreciated by all the participants. I had some oral feedback from managers at the Humber-Net meeting last week and they felt that the opportunity for their whole teams to attend a training event together was invaluable.'

Numeracy courses such as 'Maths and dyslexia' and 'Maths and language' are in demand and support the government's push on numeracy. Workplace teachers and managers have found 'Integrating Skills for Life in the workplace' very useful. 'Teaching reading' and 'Speaking from within' disseminate research from partner organisation NRDC.

Moving from learner to trainer of teacher trainers represents a long chain of learning and professional development, but each stage is essential if learners are to improve their numeracy, literacy and English language, and essential for sustainability. LLU+ activities in the Skills for Life Improvement Programme are making an important contribution to the quality of provision at each stage.

Turn to page 7 for a diagram on the chain of learning and professional development.

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