



Learner Feedback December 2009

March 2009: Improvements made and actions taken

You said:

...and we listened:

Enrolment:

Some people found the course too difficult

Since you told us this in December 2008, we have made these improvements:

- 1) We have brought in a new Initial Assessment for IT called ForSkills which aims to produce very accurate assessment details
- 2) We have reviewed our learning support systems to ensure that learners access the additional support they need both before and during the course
- 3) We are currently talking to teacher trainers to provide assistance to the tutor and learners in class
- 4) Continued an intensive period of observation of teaching and learning to ensure that our teachers are delivering learning in a way which is good for you

You need a course outline which details which units will be taught and assessed at each stage of the course.

We produce course outlines for each programme which details the learning planned. On some of our IT classes we give the learners the Scheme of Work which says exactly what learning will take place each week.

We will ask each tutor to provide this plan. Please do bear in mind however that the delivery plan will need to change depending on the needs of the group.

You feel that there are students in your class who cannot concentrate because they work nights, and that some people in your class don't have enough English to study.

Our programmes are designed to help local people achieve in life and work, and placement on a course is a personal decision on behalf of the individual with the support of our Advice and Guidance advisor.

If you feel someone is struggling with English, please encourage them to take up extra classes to help them! This will help reinforce the advice coming from the tutor.

Curriculum

Sometimes you need more time to complete your course

We extended several courses by 1 or 2 weeks of study thanks to your feedback, including a Technical L2 course and a Web level 2 course.

Please note that in the same feedback month, some learners said they prefer shorter courses as it means they can move on sooner. Please always talk to your tutor if you feel you need more time.

We have also put on two pre-course preparation classes to help you to better get ready for your course.

We should teach Adobe Flash on the L2 Web course to make sure you leave with the full range of professional skills.

We are currently exploring running a Flash course for employed people, and are balancing this with the extra time commitment from you that this module would require.

In the meantime we can inform you of websites which will help you learner Flash online.

We need to offer industry qualifications such as CompTIA A+ rather than the City and Guilds equivalent.

Thanks to your feedback we have now re-applied to become an accredited CompTIA A+ Approved Testing Centre. We are also applying to become a Microsoft Approved Testing Centre.

But please do remember that:

- 1) Employers will be looking at the skills you have gained, and not just the name on the certificate
- 2) Government funding does not often pay directly for industry IT qualifications, preferring equivalents by City and Guilds, OCR etc. We hope to fund the CompTIA certification through using our Learner Support Fund.

We need to start running CISCO CCNA at Level 3 again.

It was a great shame to us that in 2008-2009, in order to meet LSC requirements, (the funding body) we could no longer deliver CISCO CCNA at Level 3. We then offered to run the course on a private basis at £1000 each learner but unfortunately not enough of you wanted to take this offer up. We also bid to the London Development Agency for funding to deliver CISCO but we have not yet been successful.

We know that CISCO or Microsoft training at Level 3 can give our unemployed learners the edge in the employment market and will continue to make every effort to secure funding to offer this course for free again. Watch this space.

Support and classroom management

Sometimes classes start late. Some classes are not starting 'til 10 a.m., without prior agreement.

For classes to start late is not acceptable, and punctuality is a basic sign of respect to the group. Having heard your feedback we are currently monitoring the times that each class starts teaching activities and fully expect this situation to improve.

Please inform Anthony Harmer, the Chief Executive, if this is still not the case.

Clarify learner printing allowance

The printing allowance is arranged in consultation with your tutor depending on the needs of your course. Every class is different: Please talk to your tutor if you feel you need a higher allowance, and say why.

Please remember that we are committed to reducing paper use as part of our environmental strategy – so only print when you have to!

There are too many forms involved in the learning process

We recognise that there a lot of forms involved in getting onto one of our courses, and are currently reviewing our documentation to reduce paperwork to the minimum. For example, the Declaration of Previous Qualifications is now integrated into your Individual Learning Plan in line with funder requirements.

You want shorter hours of study each day

In September we had to schedule one class for 7 hours a day due to timetable pressures. We now deliver no more than 6 hours on any one day,

ESOL

Our entry-level ESOL learners asked for more opportunities to learn how to use computers

To make sure our ESOL learners have a better chance to learn IT and progress to a computer course, we now deliver an IT Basics class for ESOL learners, taught by an ESOL teacher and an IT teacher.

5 ESOL learners completed this course in February 2009 and started a Level 1 IT class in March 2009.

We will now offer this ESOL and Basic IT class regularly: thank you.

More opportunities to study for entry level ESOL

You said you wanted more time to learn ESOL – to help you do this we now offer you additional classes for a few months after your course ends to help you find a job or apply for another course.

This is taught by an ESOL teacher, so you also get more language classes!

Facilities

Some chairs are broken and uncomfortable

Since you brought this to our attention in December we have:

- 1) Identified our budget for replacements of classroom chairs, and secured the cash to purchase replacements
- 2) Consulted with you about your preferred type of chair within our budget limits
- 3) We are now identifying how many chairs need to be replaced in order to purchase the items for the new Easter term

Toilet facilities at Kingsland Road are inadequate

The plumbing system at our Kingsland Road site has been seriously damaged through incorrect use by builders – the external pipes and drains have been blocked by poor use by builders – cement has been poured down the drains.

In March 2009 this finally led to a serious flood – an incident which has now required the landlord to clear all the pipes and drains, and in April 2009 will require the learner kitchen area and room 1 to be completed re-furbished.

We thank you for your patience both during this incident and in the refurbishment period following it.

We need to improve ventilation in classrooms - the heat distribution is not even and air conditioning is noisy.

We recognise this difficulty in certain classrooms and are committed to improving it. Unfortunately we cannot completely solve the problem until the building works around us is completed. The dust and debris from the works regularly gets into our ventilation units.

In the meantime we are taking the following steps:

- 1) We are talking to the landlord's representatives to minimise disruption.
- 2) We are cleaning the air conditioning system every three months to minimise disruption.

A new microwave in the learner kitchen area at Kingsland Road

We now have a new microwave at Kingsland Road; a generous donation from one of our learners, gratefully received!

Room 1 at Kingsland Road is depressing

Room 1 lost all its light because of the building works above and next door to us. Following your feedback we have commissioned two of our design students to redecorate the back wall with murals, a process that will be completed during the refurbishment in April 2009.