

Additional information text

Introduction

Learning and Work Institute (L&W) is undertaking research to identify features of effective practice in the delivery of basic skills (English, maths and digital) in the workplace. This project is being conducted on behalf of the Department for Education (DfE).

L&W is an independent policy and research organisation dedicated to lifelong learning, full employment and inclusion. We bring together over 90 years of combined history and heritage from the 'National Institute of Adult Continuing Education' and the 'Centre for Economic & Social Inclusion'.

Policy Context

In England, the adult literacy and numeracy national standards, and Functional Skills English and maths qualifications, are being reformed, to make them more relevant to employers' needs, and English and maths are well-established components of apprenticeships frameworks. However, within this enabling environment of wider policy on adult English and maths (including the Level 2 basic skills entitlement, and recently enhanced flexibilities under Adult Education Budget funding) there has been relatively little development of practice with regard to basic skills learning in the workplace since the end of the Skills for Life Strategy, especially practice in courses and programmes that are delivered outside of apprenticeships programmes, and/or which might take place as part of a progression pathway preparing employees to undertake an apprenticeship.

Evidence from recent L&W project work, such as the ERASMUS+ STRAIGHTEN Basic Skills project and the ET2020 Working Group on Adult Learning's recent Peer Learning Activity on basic skills in the workplace suggests there is scope – and a need – to reinvigorate the delivery of basic skills in the workplace, to ensure that more adults can participate in opportunities to learn at and in work, and to develop more effective partnerships between providers and employers. This has the potential to make an important contribution to addressing basic literacy and numeracy needs in England, in line with national skills priorities

This project aims to support more innovative practice in this space, and draw upon the evidence gathered to make recommendations which will help policymakers, providers and employers collaborate more effectively to address basic skills needs in the workplace.

Evidence Sought

We would like to invite you to take part in this online call for evidence through which we are seeking to identify different provider and employer practice in the delivery of basic skills training in the workplace including formal, accredited learning (e.g. Functional Skills or other qualifications) under the AEB, non-formal learning, delivered using non-regulated provision under AEB flexibilities, to provide tailored provision in response to locally identified skills needs and informal learning activities in the work place, such as reading groups and the use of coaching and mentoring approaches.

Specifically, the aim of this Call for Evidence is to:

- identify a range of delivery models used by employers and providers in workplace basic skills, identifying features of effective practice
- identify barriers to the provision of effective workplace basic skills delivery
- produce case studies to illustrate effective practice in the delivery of basic skills learning in the workplace.

Who might be interested in responding?

We are interested in hearing from employers (particularly in sectors with high turnover/short contract employees), providers and other sector stakeholders e.g. intermediaries, including union learning representatives, involved in either supporting or delivering English, maths and digital skills in the workplace (outside of apprenticeship programmes).

How will the information be used?

The evidence gathered will inform production of a set of effective practice case studies and a final report to DfE. These outputs will illuminate key characteristics of employer and provider delivery models and features of effective practice.

Our aim is to extract and share effective practice and make recommendations which help policymakers, providers and employers to collaborate more effectively to address basic skills needs in the workplace.

Individuals will not be named in any of these outputs and organisations will only be named if permission has been given for us to write a case study. The case studies and videos will be published on the L&W website, shared with the DfE and shared via our networks, sector events and social media channels.

Contact

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