English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL): provision and demand in Cardiff

All Provision in Cardiff

It is difficult to gauge the overall clear picture of overall supply and demand in ESOL provision in Cardiff. However, recent research has indicated that:

- Currently all providers report extensive waiting lists for ESOL courses. The numbers on waiting lists varies from 10’s (voluntary sector providers) to several hundred in some cases (The Parade ESOL Service Cardiff Council).
- The total number of learners receiving provision is generally in excess of 3000.
- It appears that majority of ESOL providers in Cardiff are either compliant or in excess of recommended learner numbers.
- There is a shortage of fulltime/intensive ESOL courses in Cardiff.
- There is an identified shortage of qualified ESOL staff.
- There is need to improve progression rates of Entry level learners.
- Progression opportunities across providers are currently unclear to learners.
- Not all ESOL courses across Cardiff are delivered in the context of ‘citizenship’.

Cardiff Council Provision

- The Councils ESOL Service has up to 500 learners on the waiting list. Learners queue from 6.00am enrolments days.

Future developments

A centralised ESOL assessment centre has been put forward as a proposal in the Outcomes Funding Bid through Communities First, which would provide more accurate information about numbers of learners waiting for provision.

- Strategy for management of the demand needs to be developed.
- The service aims to secure additional resources through the Adult and Community Learning Strategy review process.
- The use of the Friary will be rationalised to reduce building costs.
- The Franchise arrangements with the college will be reviewed to negotiate cost effective terms to release funds.
- There are also a number of additional initiatives aimed at secure increased provision which are ongoing.

Actions in the Council’s Essential Skills Strategy

- Improvement in rates of retention
- Improvement in rates of attainment
- Recording learner progress and achievement
- Mapping Basic Skills Provision across Cardiff and indentify progression routes
- Responding to the training needs of teachers both within Essential Skills and across the CCLN partnership
- Recruitment Strategy for Skills for Life (Basic Skills)
- ESOL & FLT - increase provision to meet current demand
- Learner centred approach to accessing appropriate ESOL provision across Cardiff
- Engagement of employers on the Basic Skills in the Workplace Employer Pledge contract through the Coleg Morgannwg consortium.
- Improvement of employment opportunities for learners
- Improvement of Cardiff Council employees’ basic skills
- Increase opportunities for Learner Voice
- Support for learners with Additional Learning Needs
- ESOL and Numeracy – provide opportunities to learners
- Suitable staffing structure to enable improved quality of Service and effective delivery
- Support Youth Service and Neighbourhood Learning colleagues to identify and signpost learners with Basic Skills and ESOL needs
- Extend range of teaching and learning resources

ESOL Need by Local Authority 2005/2006

Cardiff

| Non-native English speakers (WRS + Asylum seekers + Refugees): 11,190 |
| Estimated ESOL Need (Learner Numbers): 8,151 |
| ESOL Needs Being Met (61%) |

Almost 40% deficit between supply and demand