

# Trainer pack

## **Mind the gap!** **Employers: Identifying skills gaps**

### Module 2

**Course information**      **Length of session:** 3 hours, depending on size of group and prior knowledge and experience of participants. Trainers can customise, shorten and lengthen the session to suit the audiences and settings. The session as it stands is intended to be 3.5 hours long, inclusive of 30 minutes for registration and breaks.

**Audience**      **Job roles:** Appropriate staff from employer organisations, such as Learning and Development Officers, Skills Leads, Skills Champions and ULRs; staff responsible for developing models for engaging and signposting employees to English, maths, ESOL or functional skills courses, or apprenticeship programmes.

**Sector / setting:** Employers, including public sector organisations.

## Notes to trainer

### Purpose of this module

The broad purpose of this and the other two modules in this suite (Module 3: Blended learning approaches and Module 4: Effective approaches for maths engagement) is to help employers (as intermediaries) to promote English and maths in the workplace and engage their employees in learning. This learning might include a general focus on improving English and maths but also might include functional skills (e.g. within apprenticeships), or GCSE.

### Audience

This module has been designed for delivery to organisations that have a commitment to learning and developing the skills of employees. The particular individuals attending may vary in role from organisation to organisation, but will all have a reasonable level of awareness of the importance of employees' English and maths to business efficiency, at all levels of operation. It is assumed that some kind of awareness-raising work has been conducted before this module and the other two in this series: Blended learning approaches and Effective approaches for maths engagement. However the warm-up activity in TN 1 will remind participants about the impact of skills on business performance.

### Terminology

Whilst this CPD focuses on functional skills (English, mathematics and ICT), participants will come from a range of backgrounds and with varying experience. You may need to spend a little time ensuring you have a shared vocabulary. In particular, several terms are in current use for describing adult literacy, language and numeracy. These include basic skills (a term still used in some settings); adult literacy, language and numeracy – variously abbreviated to LLN, ALN, ALAN; and Skills for Life. The term 'English, maths and ESOL' will replace these, but expect

participants to use terms with which they are familiar. Note that some sources of information used in this training employ previously current terminology.

English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) is not a specific focus of this CPD but the activities could be adjusted to make this more of a focus.

### **Handouts and resources**

All resources are included at the end of this document, for ease of printing. Handouts are also shown, for your information. A separate participant pack is also available containing handouts and PowerPoint notes.

### **Aim**

To explore ways to increase employee / worker engagement and referral to English, maths or ESOL provision (including functional skills and within apprenticeships)

### **Outcomes**

By the end of the session participants will have:

- an understanding of existing English and maths assessment and screening tools and approaches;
- explored ways of identifying English and maths skills gaps within their organisation; and
- shared good practice in developing effective referral systems in the workplace.

## Module overview

Activity		Content
1	<b>Starter: The impact of skills on business performance</b>	'Diamond nine' activity relating considering the impact of English and maths skills on business performance
2	<b>Introduction: Why and how?</b>	Flipchart activity assessing current understanding and practice.
3	<b>What do we mean? Purposes of assessment</b>	Clarifying the purpose of assessment within the learner journey.
4	<b>How? Evaluating the resources</b>	Resource carousel. Tables with resources for engagement / self-referral, skills checks and initial assessment tools and resources. Participants match resources to audience and opportunity.
5	<b>When and where are the opportunities?</b>	Brainstorm activity followed by three groups each working on one of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>organisational processes and procedures;</li> <li>embedding within the skills development offer; or</li> <li>creating a learning culture.</li> </ul>
6	<b>Who? What makes an effective learner champion?</b>	Explore issues in developing the 'perfect' learner champion. Use Burnley Council's example to identify key success factors.
7	<b>How do we keep doing it?</b>	Sharing final thoughts for promoting long-term sustainability. Identifying priority action points for implementation.

## Trainers

### Trainer experience or qualifications required

Functional skills / English, maths or ESOL specialist with extensive and current experience of skills development needs within a range of workplace settings and public sector organisations.

### Reference material for trainers

- Trainer notes
- CPD Module 8 (Initial and diagnostic assessment for functional skills) has a good list of assessment tools of various types. It may also be an interesting progression route for participants for this CPD.
- 'New Challenges, New Chances: Further Education and Skills System Reform Plan' (2011) BIS <http://www.bis.gov.uk/assets/biscore/further-education-skills/docs/f/11-1380-further-education-skills-system-reform-plan.pdf>
- Whole organisation approach starter kit <http://www.excellencegateway.org.uk/node/1151>
- Functional skills starter kit <http://www.excellencegateway.org.uk/node/20280>

## Resources

### Resources for reference during the session

Trainer notes

### Pre-course activity for participants

None, but it is assumed that participants will have a reasonable level of awareness of the English and maths skills required for jobs within their organisation.

### Useful websites

Links to suggested tools and resources used are included throughout the Trainer Notes where relevant. Websites used include:

General resources on the Excellence Gateway: [www.excellencegateway.org](http://www.excellencegateway.org)

Move On: <http://www.move-on.org.uk/>

Assessment tools:

<http://archive.excellencegateway.org.uk/page.aspx?o=toolslibrary>

The LSIS English, maths and ESOL hub:

<http://www.excellencegateway.org.uk/sfl>

**Before the session the trainer needs to:**

- Print copies of participant packs.
- Set up PowerPoint and online connection. Depending on which tools you use in TN 4, you may need more than one laptop with online connection.
- Set up flipchart to record feedback; sticky notes, highlighter pens.
- TN 1 – set out sets of cards on table made from **R 1** – one set per pair
- TN 2 – print copies of **R 2**, sufficient for one copy per pair.
- TN 4 – select a range of engagement and assessment resources for the carousel activity and set out on tables with table labels (see TN 4 for details of suggested resources and preparation). You should ascertain beforehand any tools used by participants' organisations, and ideally include free tools and at least one online tool. It would be sensible to ensure you provide a broad range, including some that may be outside participants' experience.
- TN 4 – log in laptop connected to projector to Move On website (registration may be required). Set up any other online tools used. Print copies of **R 3** (How? Evaluating the resources), one per participant.
- TN 5 – prepare the three envelopes with task information, using **R 4**: When and where are the opportunities: prompt cards.

## Session plan

### Aim

To explore ways to increase employee / worker engagement and referral to English, maths or ESOL provision (including functional skills and within apprenticeships)

### Outcomes

By the end of the session participants will have:

- an understanding of existing English and maths assessment and screening tools and approaches;
- explored ways of identifying English and maths skills gaps within their organisation; and
- shared good practice in developing effective referral systems in the workplace.

Suggested timings are for guidance purposes only. Trainers should adapt content to meet the needs and experience levels of the participants.

**TN – trainer notes    HO – handout    R – resources PPT – PowerPoint slides**

Time	Content	Resources		
		No.	Style	Title
20m	<p><b>TN 1. Starter: The impact of skills on business performance</b></p> <p>Show <b>PPT 2</b>. In twos and threes, discuss and prioritise business performance elements (cards made from <b>R 1</b>). Instructions are in <b>HO 1</b>.</p> <p>Outline aim and outcomes of the session, using <b>PPT 3 and 4</b>.</p> <p>Take feedback from card activity and use <b>PPT 5</b> to set the agenda for employee engagement.</p> <p>Allow time to consider the policy background current at the time of delivery.</p>	PPT 1-5	Slides	Introduction, aim, outcomes; the impact of skills on business performance
(Total 20m)		R 1	Resource	Business performance cards
		HO 1	Handout	English, maths and business





Time	Content	Resources		
		No.	Style	Title
40m)	and context for use, for each engagement / assessment type.  Take feedback on preferred resources and ask delegates to record any ideas they can use on <b>R 3</b> .  Action plan	R 3	Resource	How? Evaluating the resources
		HO 2	Handout	Action plan
40m	<b>TN 5. When and where are the opportunities?</b>  Refer back to the 'How?' flipchart and <b>R 2</b> . Have any additional opportunities for embedding checks of skills been mentioned since this was done in TN 3?  Show <b>PPT 9</b> and explain task. The three groups design an 'ideal' model on flipchart paper, and feedback to whole group.  Draw attention to <b>HO 4</b> as support material for the task.  Action plan.	PPT 9	Slide	When and where are the opportunities?
(Total 2h 20m)		R 4	Resource	Prompt cards for three themes
		HO 4	Handout	NW Skills Award mapping
		HO 2	Handout	Action plan
20m	<b>TN 6. Who? Using learning champions</b>  Define learning champion role; consider benefits, challenges, solutions – group discussion and pairs activity.  Show <b>PPT 10</b> – key elements of successful use of learning champions. Refer participants to <b>HO 5</b> : Burnley Council's Learning and Development Representatives model.  Take feedback about what will make the role of learning champions work.	PPT 10	Slide	Key elements for successful use of learning champions
(Total 2h 40m)		HO 5	Handout	Burnley Council's Learning and Development Representative model
20m	<b>TN 7. How do we keep it going?</b>	PPT 11	Slide	How do we keep it going?

Time	Content	Resources		
		No.	Style	Title
(Total 3h)	<p>Show <b>PPT 11</b>. In pairs, ask participants to build on any of the ideas, approaches or resources they have experienced today, come up with one or two ways in which you can use engagement activities and skills checks to promote long-term success in embedding English and maths across your whole organisation.</p> <p>Take feedback to flipcharts or whiteboard.</p> <p>Final summing up.</p>	<p>HO 2</p> <p>PPT 3 and 4</p>	<p>Handout</p> <p>Slides</p>	<p>Action plan</p> <p>Aim and outcomes</p>

## Trainer notes

These notes are to support trainers to facilitate the different activities in the module. They are not meant to be prescriptive, and trainers can adapt the activities as needed to suit the participants, the type of organisation and the locality. Some activities can be omitted, and others extended, according to the group.

PowerPoint slides, resources and handouts can be adapted or omitted as needed. The instructions for some of the activities are given on the PowerPoint slides. Trainers can decide to show the instructions on PowerPoint or to print off the slides giving instructions and lay copies on tables instead, or in addition.

## TN 1

### Trainer notes

Time	Content	Resources		
		No.	Style	Title
20m	<b>TN 1. Starter: The impact of skills on business performance</b>			
<i>(Total 20m)</i>	Show <b>PPT 2</b> . In twos and threes, discuss and prioritise business performance elements (cards made from <b>R 1</b> ). Instructions are in <b>HO 1</b> .	PPT 1-5	Slides	Introduction, aim, outcomes; the impact of skills on business performance
	Outline aim and outcomes of the session, using <b>PPT 3 and 4</b> .	R 1	Resource	Business performance cards
	Take feedback from card activity and use <b>PPT 5</b> to set the agenda for employee engagement.	HO 1	Handout	English, maths and business
	Allow time to consider the policy background current at the time of delivery.			

**Purpose of this activity:** to introduce the session and to remind participants of the impact of skills on business performance.

#### Note

This starter activity does not replace the need for a thorough awareness-raising training session, where participants are introduced, for example, to levels, terminology, the statistical background and the impact on business performance. The starter activity in TN 1 is intended to serve as a reminder of this work and to ensure that there is a common starting point for participants.

The starter activity can be laid out on tables for participants to engage with as soon as they enter the room, as a warm-up or something to do while waiting for latecomers.

#### Alternative

You may wish to do the introductions, aims and objectives first, before the activity.

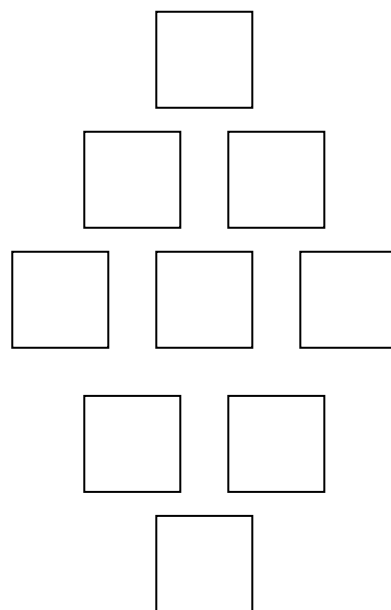
In small groups of two or three, the participants share their business perspective by discussing and prioritising ways in which skills gaps affect the success of their business. For this they use a set of cards to perform a 'diamond nine' exercise.

The cards are laid face up on the table. Each group discusses how they would like to see performance improved through better skills. Elements of performance are suggested on the set of 12 cards.

The participants choose (from the 12 elements shown) nine which they think would help their business most. They then discuss how they think better English and maths in their employees would help them improve these elements.

Finally they prioritise the nine cards: highest priority being the element which would most benefit from improved employee skills in English and / or maths. To prioritise the cards, the participants lay them out in the following diamond-shaped formation:

**HIGH PRIORITY** (would benefit most from improved English and maths)



**LOW PRIORITY** (would benefit least from improved English and maths)

After the exercise take feedback and compare priorities. There is no right answer and prioritisation will depend on the roles and perspectives of the individual group members. The purpose of this activity is not in the result but in the process.

However, expect participants to find that English and maths skills in employees can improve all elements of business performance. Make a flip chart list of some of the key aspects of English and maths that impact on success.

Then introduce yourself and the aims and intended outcomes of the day, using **PPT 3 and PPT 4**. Use the opportunity to clarify terminology with regards to English, maths and ESOL (current preferred term), LLN (literacy, language and numeracy) and Skills for Life. Note that many workplace settings may be more familiar with the term Skills for Life. Also mention functional skills and key skills. Ask whether anyone in the room uses other terms (such as Essential Skills or Core Skills) within their organisations.

Consider the current context for this CPD, the political background, drivers and funding. At the time of writing, New Challenges, New Chances (BIS, December 2011) had clarified the ending of key skills and National Tests in literacy and numeracy (last registrations in August and September of 2012). Functional skills and GCSE are now the preferred accreditation routes. The focus on numeracy / maths is confirmed.

You should explain functional skills and their critical role in apprenticeships; emphasise that functional skills reflect the same levels as literacy, language and numeracy and are based on the adult core curriculum. However, functionality requires learners to apply English, maths and ICT skills to solve problems. It may be appropriate to spend a little time at this point considering the impact of current changes to policy.

Use **PPT 5** to set the agenda in terms of scale of need. Note that this reflects the most recent research, so the scale of need is still high. Confirm also that there is an ever-increasing demand for higher levels of skills and that competence in English and maths is a pre-requisite for training in the workplace. Confirm also that good levels of English and maths are fundamental to business success.

Depending on the stage of development of the organisation, and the experience of participants, you may want to extend this section of the CPD and explore the implications of employees not having English and maths skills secure in the workplace. Health and safety is a good example, where the readability of most health and safety notices tends to be at or above Level 2. It may also be appropriate to discuss their organisation's commitments to training and developing staff and whether employees' English and maths skills may be acting as barriers to engagement and achievement. It may also be relevant to link this to the delivery of apprenticeships.

### **Extension**

You could also consider ICT skills. What ICT skills are needed in the workplace now? Is this demand likely to increase over the next 5 years?

## TN 2

### Trainer notes

Time	Content	Resources		
		No.	Style	Title
15m	<p><b>TN 2. Introduction: Why and how?</b></p> <p>People work in groups of three or four to share ideas on the purpose of engaging their organisations' staff in checking their English and maths skills, and their current practice. Stick their suggestions on the flipchart.</p> <p>Take feedback and reinforce current good practice.</p> <p>Introduce <b>HO 2: Action plan</b></p>	PPT 6	Slide	Why? And how?
(Total 35m)		HO 2	Handout	Action plan

**The purpose of this activity** is to assess people's present understanding of why it might be important to engage staff in checking their English and maths skills, and for them to share their current practice. The instructions are on **PPT 6**.

#### Note

Having confirmed that English and maths are critical in the workplace, now participants turn to considering next steps. It is important that organisations have a full understanding of the reality of the skills requirements (including English and maths) of the jobs, and tasks within jobs, throughout their workplace. It is assumed that participants in this CPD will have a good level of awareness of the skills required for jobs / tasks and are now ready to take the next step: to begin to plan specific training based on analysis of the match between skills required and actual level of skills of employees.

Ask people to work in groups of threes or fours, and share their ideas on why they would engage staff in checking their English and maths skills. Ask them to write some of their ideas down and stick them onto the prepared flipchart, headed '**Why?**' They should do the same for how they do this at the present time (if they do it), and add their notes to the '**How?**' flipchart.

When everyone has finished, summarise the responses, reinforcing any good practice relating to the methods currently used. Confirm that checking English and maths skills is an important step in identifying skills gaps. Emphasise the benefits of

checking skills, both for the organisation and the employee. Link this to business efficiency, training (e.g. apprenticeships) and personal gains for employees.

Introduce **HO 2: Action plan**. Explain that participants can use this resource throughout the session after each activity to record any key tasks that they have identified which they would like to carry out in their organisations.

### **Extension**

It might be appropriate to extend the discussion to include reflection on organisations' current recruitment processes, including application forms, interviews and induction processes. Do these provide the right kind of information about potential employees' skills?

Considering current practice, how have existing employees' skills been assessed? How does referral for learning / training / support take place?

## TN 3

### Trainer notes

Time	Content	Resources		
		No.	Style	Title
15m	<p><b>TN 3. What do we mean? Purposes of assessment</b></p> <p>People work in pairs to identify the purpose of each 'layer' of assessment, as in <b>R 2</b>.</p> <p>Once they have finished, show <b>PPT 7</b> and agree terminology. Ask people to add some ideas to remaining columns (When? and By whom?) but explain that they can add to these as the session progresses.</p> <p>Refer delegates to <b>HO 3</b> for further information.</p> <p>Add to <b>HO 2</b>.</p>	PPT 7	Slide	Purposes of assessment
(Total 50m)		R 2	Resource	What do we mean? Purposes of assessment
		HO 3	Handout	The learner journey
		HO 2	Handout	Action plan

**Purpose of the activity:** to establish a shared vocabulary, and understanding of the stages of assessment; to begin to share any experience of tools or assessment strategies already used.

Explain that we have been using terminology without defining terms, and that it will be helpful to check that we all have the same understanding of the terminology surrounding assessment, as well as the purpose of each level of the assessment process, and where it sits within the learning journey.

Ask them, in pairs, to work with **R 2: What do we mean? Purposes of assessment**. Explain that each stage of assessment goes into greater depth and detail. Suggest that they start by identifying the purpose of each 'layer' (the **Why?** column).

Explain that signposting and self-referral do not strictly speaking fall within the assessment cycle. Learners may self-assess as potentially benefiting from literacy / English or numeracy / maths skills development after being introduced to suitable engagement material, such as promotional materials, quizzes and taster sessions at events such as a 'Learning at Work Day', or equivalent. The role of potential referrers such as union learning representatives and of word of mouth should also be acknowledged.



Once they have completed this first section of **R 2** (i.e. the ‘Why?’ column), show **PPT 7** and ask for a consensus on the use of the terminology during the session.

Ask for examples of how each type of assessment could be accomplished (what would serve the purpose?). Self-assessment of need may come from exposure to adult literacy and numeracy material, which may include anything from engagement material (such as quizzes, taster sessions), to children’s homework, or to a promotional flier. There may be a range of suggestions for skills checks, and what is appropriate will change depending upon context. For example, if Level 2 literacy skills are required for entry to a professional route or qualification, the question “*Do you have an up-to-date qualification in English at Level 2?*” may serve to identify a need.

Explore the difference between a positive approach to engagement (“*Would you like an opportunity to check if your English or maths skills are up to date?*”) and a deficit model (“*We are going to screen you for English or maths development needs*”). The impact of language can be significant, so stress the need to ensure that all staff use, and understand the need to use, positive language (for example, ‘skills checks’) rather than deficit language (such as ‘screening’). Refer participants to an adult literacy and numeracy awareness-raising training package, such as the interactive iRoute (link on **PPT 7**) if any key staff within their organisation need information about engaging positively with employees.

Then suggest that people start to add suggestions to the **When?** (at what point in the learners’ journey are the opportunities?) and the **By whom?** sections, using **HO 3: The Learning Journey** to help them. Explain that they will be adding to this throughout the session, so it is OK for them to have gaps at this stage.

Give participants time to add to **HO 2: Action plan**.

### **Extension**

It would be useful to explore, if this is an appropriate moment, the need for employers to understand the requirements of particular jobs or tasks within the workplace, in particular the specific English and maths requirements. Many employers have conducted ‘skills audits’ of jobs / tasks, where the level of English, maths and ICT skills is identified. This work enables employers to plan appropriate training and staff development work.

Some examples of generic job task analysis (e.g. for health and safety) are to be found in the adult core curriculum, employability section, on this link:

<http://www.excellencegateway.org.uk/node/2750>

## TN 4

### Trainer notes

Time	Content	Resources		
		No.	Style	Title
50m	<p><b>TN 4. How? Evaluating the resources</b></p> <p>Display instructions using <b>PPT 8</b> and set task. Split whole group into three and allocate a table to each group.</p> <p>Participants evaluate the resources displayed and make notes on <b>R 3</b> as to how they can use them in their organisations.</p>	PPT 8	Slide	How? Evaluating the resources
(Total 1h 40m)	<p>Groups choose a preferred resource, with target audience and context for use, for each engagement / assessment type.</p> <p>Take feedback on preferred resources and ask delegates to record any ideas they can use on <b>R 3</b>.</p>	n/a	Carousel	A range of prepared engagement and assessment resources, on three tables – see below for details
	<p>Action plan.</p>	R 3	Resource	How? Evaluating the resources
			HO 2	Handout

**Purpose of this activity:** to explore a range of assessment tools and strategies.

Three tables should be prepared with different materials and resources on each to reflect the range of material available for each type of assessment or purpose: *engagement / self-assessment*, *skills checks* and *initial assessment*, with each table clearly labelled. Note that this activity does not include diagnostic assessment tools, as this aspect of assessment is the province of specialist teachers.

As broad a range of engagement and assessment material as possible should be displayed, including ones used by employers / organisations within the region or locality. Some examples are included below. They do not necessarily need to reflect best practice approaches, but if not, their particular limitations should be identified during the feedback stage. Some of the tools below include interactive as well as paper-based versions, including the Smart Move (Tools Library) resources. If laptops are available, it is preferable for at least one interactive example of each type of resource to be available to view. Links to some of the example resources are provided below, although registration may be required.

## Examples of engagement and assessment materials

Engagement / self-assessment	Skills check	Initial assessment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• English and maths checklists</li> <li>• Quizzes</li> <li>• Campaign material</li> <li>• Promotional material</li> <li>• Maths Takeaways <a href="http://www.move-on.org.uk/numres.php?scid=179">http://www.move-on.org.uk/numres.php?scid=179</a></li> </ul> <p>A range of exemplar material can be found at <a href="http://www.move-on.org.uk/downloadsresults.asp?id=2">http://www.move-on.org.uk/downloadsresults.asp?id=2</a></p> <p>If appropriate, you could also include some examples of task analyses – see <a href="http://www.excellencegateway.org.uk/node/2750">http://www.excellencegateway.org.uk/node/2750</a> for examples. Alternatively you could use task analysis material from the organisations attending this training. These can be used to inform or supplement self-referral.</p>	<p>Move On quizzes on the Move On site: <a href="http://www.move-on.org.uk/">http://www.move-on.org.uk/</a></p> <p>Smart Move Skills Checks <a href="http://archive.excellencegateway.org.uk/page.aspx?o=162276">http://archive.excellencegateway.org.uk/page.aspx?o=162276</a></p> <p>Commercial skills check products such as: Target Skills <a href="http://www.targetskillsgold.com/">http://www.targetskillsgold.com/</a> BKSB <a href="http://www.bksb.co.uk/">http://www.bksb.co.uk/</a> Forskills <a href="http://www.forskills.co.uk/">http://www.forskills.co.uk/</a></p> <p>Functional Skills self-assessment card sort activity <a href="http://tlp.excellencegateway.org.uk/tlp/fs/fs-resources/cpd_act_1.php">http://tlp.excellencegateway.org.uk/tlp/fs/fs-resources/cpd_act_1.php</a></p>	<p>Smart Move Initial Assessments <a href="http://archive.excellencegateway.org.uk/page.aspx?o=162104">http://archive.excellencegateway.org.uk/page.aspx?o=162104</a></p> <p>Commercial skills check products such as Target Skills, BKSB, Forskills (see opposite)</p> <p>Skills for Health <a href="http://www.skillsforhealth.org.uk/developing-literacy-and-numeracy/literacy-and-numeracy-initial-assessment-tools/using-the-tools/">http://www.skillsforhealth.org.uk/developing-literacy-and-numeracy/literacy-and-numeracy-initial-assessment-tools/using-the-tools/</a></p> <p>KSSP Initial Assessment Toolkit <a href="http://archive.excellencegateway.org.uk/media/KSSP/ia_toolkit_lo_res.pdf">http://archive.excellencegateway.org.uk/media/KSSP/ia_toolkit_lo_res.pdf</a> (a range of alternative methods of initial assessment, on the Excellence Gateway)</p>

Split the whole group into three and allocate a table to each group.

Display and talk through the task instructions, using **PPT 8**. For each type of resource, ask participants to evaluate the sample materials displayed and make notes on **R 3** as to how they could use them in their organisations. Ask them in their groups to compare the resources supplied with any that they currently use, and share any ideas of what they have used successfully, with which target groups and in what context. They must choose their preferred idea (including use and context) for each of the three resource types, from either the table or their experience, to feed back to the group.

When they have finished the task at all three tables, take feedback on each group's preferred resource, the target audience and context in which it might be used, and remind participants to add to their record sheet, **R 3**.

You should aim to spend a little time discussing the different types of assessment that are needed to assess functionality. Confirm that many of the tools above assess learners' performance in particular aspects of skills (e.g. addition) but do not test the learners' ability to select and apply skills in real situations, e.g. the need to solve a problem that includes addition at work.

Give participants time to add to **HO 2**: Action plan.

## TN 5

### Trainer notes

Time	Content	Resources		
		No.	Style	Title
40m	<b>TN 5. When and where are the opportunities?</b>	PPT 9	Slide	When and where are the opportunities?
<i>(Total 2h 20m)</i>	Refer back to the 'How?' flipchart and <b>R 2</b> . Have any additional opportunities for embedding checks of skills been mentioned since this was done in TN 3?	R 4	Resource	Prompt cards for three themes
	Show <b>PPT 9</b> and explain task. The three groups design an 'ideal' model on flipchart paper, and feedback to whole group.	HO 4	Handout	NW Skills Award mapping
	Draw attention to <b>HO 4</b> as support material for the task.			
	Action plan.	HO 2	Handout	Action plan

**The purpose of this activity:** this session focuses on the use of skills checks as one approach to engaging potential learners in English and maths provision.

Explain that in order to maximise employee / worker engagement through skills checks, we need to look at where the opportunities are for embedding engagement and skills checks across the organisation. Refer back to the '**How?**' flipchart and **R 2: What do we mean? Purpose of assessment** – in TN 3. Have any additional opportunities for embedding skills checks occurred to participants since looking at this?

Show **PPT 9** and explain the task. The three groups are each to design an 'ideal' model on flipchart paper, and feed back to the whole group. Distribute the envelopes (see **R 4** for text) to the groups and ask them to read out their 'theme'. If necessary, explain any terms used (e.g. 'learning culture'). There are prompts on each instruction card, but they should not feel limited by these – an opportunity for 'blue-sky' thinking! They might start by sharing current practice within their group and build from there. They should also be prepared to comment on the following:

- How does it help to know the English and maths levels of employees?
- What do we need to do with this information?

Confirm the following:

- the need to provide / signpost skills development opportunities for learners and staff, using model that suits their own workplace;
- the need to build English and maths development into all staff development and training; and
- the need to build English and maths development into all organisational planning, including recruitment of staff and learners, induction, appraisal, target setting, etc.

Signpost again to the whole organisation approach resources in the starter kit:  
<http://www.excellencegateway.org.uk/node/1151>

Draw attention to **HO 4** as support material for the task. These criteria are selected from the 40 that make up the North West Skills Award. \*

<http://www.nwemployers.org.uk/work-force-and-employment/work-force/skills.html>

They collectively form the assessment framework and local authorities have to demonstrate that they have met all 40 criteria before they can achieve the award. They represent proven success factors in embedding English, maths and ESOL across the whole organisation. Note that this document was developed as a result of the organisation taking a whole organisation approach to English and maths.

\* Note: in terms of the Skills Award, the national picture is different from the one in the North West, and trainers will need to be aware of the state of play in the region in which they are working.

Once the groups have completed the activity, the spokesperson for each group should present their model. Explore any key success factors for each model and any specific issues or challenges.

Give participants time to add to **HO 2**: Action plan.

## TN 6

### Trainer notes

20m	<p><b>TN 6. Who? Using learning champions</b></p> <p>Define learning champion role; consider benefits, challenges, solutions – group discussion and pairs activity.</p>	PPT 10	Slide	Key elements for successful use of learning champions
(Total 2h 40m)	<p>Show <b>PPT 10</b> – key elements of successful use of learning champions. Refer participants to <b>HO 5</b>: Burnley Council's Learning and Development Representatives model.</p>	HO 5	Handout	Burnley Council's Learning and Development Representative model
	<p>Take feedback about what will make the role of learning champions work.</p>			
	<p>Action plan.</p>	HO 2	Handout	Action plan

**The purpose of this activity:** to consider the use of learning champions (or equivalent) as a way of encouraging employees to consider checking skills and possible support for the development of their English and maths skills.

Firstly, ask participants whether there is someone in place in their organisation whose role it is to encourage employees to engage with training and skills development. This role is often undertaken in unionised workplaces by union learning reps (ULRs) but there may be different approaches in other organisations, e.g. a learning champion or skills champion.

Then ask participants, in pairs, to consider what might be the benefits of using someone in the role of 'learning champion'. How might this approach be used to encourage employees / workers to engage with consideration of their personal English and maths skills, and learning opportunities? They should also consider any possible challenges that learning champions might encounter. How might these be resolved? Take feedback under each of the following headings: benefits; challenges; solutions.

If ULRs are present in this session, ask them to indicate briefly what they do and how they encourage colleagues to engage with learning. Broadly ULRs engage with colleagues, acting as a referral point and explaining the learning opportunities on offer and the benefits of undertaking learning. With regards to English and maths, they are able to talk with colleagues about the need to improve these skills and how important it is to have good skills.

Explain that learning champions can and do occur across the organisation, from Chief Executive to 'learner turned advocate'. This latter includes many ULRs – check with ULRs in audience. Remind people of criterion 4.2) from the Skills Award: *Learning representatives are working effectively across strategic and operational levels* (see **HO 4**), and how key this role is to embedding English and maths. This role is also key in providing peer support for employee engagement and skills checks. Many learning champions (including ULRs) have been trained to conduct and feed back on initial assessments as well as skills checks and provide the main referral route to English and maths training programmes. Again, check ULRs and other participants with a learning and development role to share their experiences.

Explain that Burnley Council has developed a successful model of developing and sustaining a team of effective learner champions (which they call learning and development representatives). **HO 5** is the role description which they developed. Ask participants, in pairs, to look through the role description and identify up to four elements which are likely to lead to an effective, sustainable team of learning champions.

Take feedback, asking participants to briefly volunteer one or two contributions. Draw links between contributions and the four factors on **PPT 10**.

Explain that experience from the sector reveals that organisations who manage to maintain and sustain effective learner champion models tend to have in common the following four key elements (show **PPT 10**):

- Give learning champions a clearly defined role
- Give them something in return
- Give them something to do
- Give them a reason to keep going.

Give participants time to add to **HO 2**: Action plan.



## TN 7

### Trainer notes

Time	Content	Resources		
		No.	Style	Title
20m  <i>(Total 3h)</i>	<b>TN 7. How do we keep it going?</b>  Show <b>PPT 11</b> . In pairs, ask participants to build on any of the ideas, approaches or resources they have experienced today, come up with one or two ways in which you can use engagement activities and skills checks to promote long-term success in embedding English and maths across your whole organisation.  Take feedback to flipcharts or whiteboard.  Final summing up.	PPT 11  HO 2  PPT 3 and 4	Slide  Handout  Slides	How do we keep it going?  Action plan  Aim and outcomes

**Purpose of this activity:** to encourage participants to commit to actions which will allow them to embed strategies to engage and support employees to become involved in English and maths learning, leading to further learning.

Working in appropriate groupings (pairs or more, ideally containing participants from the same organisation / department), participants work to complete **HO 2**, ideally all columns. Show **PPT 12**. They should come up with one (or two) ideas in which they can use engagement activities and skills checks to promote long-term success in embedding English and maths across the whole organisation.

Refer participants to the Whole organisation approach starter kit (see <http://www.excellencegateway.org.uk/node/1151>), which may help with implementing plans.

Write up ideas from each group.

Sum up the session, using the aim and outcomes slides (**PPT 3 and 4**), and thank participants. Allow time to complete an evaluation form, if used. Give participants details of other LSIS CPD sessions, as appropriate.

# Mind the gap!

## Employers: Identifying skills gaps

### Module 2

Note that the **resources** need to be prepared by the trainer and the **handouts** are for your information.

#### Resources

- R 1: The impact of skills on business performance – card sort
- R 2: What do we mean? Purposes of assessment
- R 3: How? Evaluating the resources
- R 4: When and where are the opportunities: prompt cards

#### Handouts

- HO 1: English, maths and business
- HO 2: Action plan
- HO 3: The learning journey
- HO 4: North West Skills Award criteria mapping
- HO 5: Burnley Council's Learning and Development Representative model

## R 1: The impact of skills on business performance – card sort

*(Print out on A4 and cut into cards – 1 set per 2–3 participants)*

<b>Increased productivity</b>	<b>Reduced wastage</b>
<b>Cost savings</b>	<b>Health and safety</b>
<b>Absence management</b>	<b>Recruitment and retention</b>
<b>Increased staff morale</b>	<b>Reputation management</b>
<b>Organisational culture and change</b>	<b>Improved organisational relationships</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>Improved competitiveness</b>

## R 2: What do we mean? Purposes of assessment

Assessment type	Why?	When?	By whom?
<b>Learner engagement / self-referral</b>			
<b>Skills check</b>			
<b>Initial assessment</b>			
<b>Diagnostic assessment</b>			

### R 3: How? Evaluating the resources

<b>Resource</b>	<b>Purpose</b> <i>How will it help in my organisation?</i>	<b>With whom?</b> <i>Who would benefit?</i>	<b>Where? (opportunity)</b> <i>When and how would I use the resource/</i>

## **R 4: When and where are the opportunities: prompt cards**

(Cut up and put each one into a separate envelope.)

### **Embed English and maths engagement activities and skills checks within the skills development offer**

Your group has 20 minutes to design and sketch out an 'ideal' model for embedding English and maths engagement activities and skills checks within your organisation's skills development and training offer (including corporate, vocational and professional qualifications).

You may want to use the following as prompts. Do not feel limited by these ideas!

Tools and approaches?

Where are the opportunities?

Staff involved?

Any changes to policy required?

Training implications?

Changes to procedures?

Key issues and challenges?

## **Use English and maths engagement activities and skills checks to create a learning culture**

Your group has 20 minutes to design and sketch out an 'ideal' model for using English and maths engagement activities and skills checks as part of the development of an organisational learning culture (where learning is seen as an opportunity by learners and a good investment by management).

You may want to use the following as prompts. Do not feel limited by these ideas!

Tools and approaches?

Staff involved?

Opportunities?

Any changes to policy required?

Training implications?

Changes to procedures?

Key issues and challenges?

## **Embed English and maths engagement activities and skills checks within strategy, policy and procedure**

Your group has 20 minutes to design and sketch out an 'ideal' model for embedding English and maths engagement activities and skills checks within your organisation's strategy, policy and procedures. Include induction, appraisal, re-deployment, training and any others which you feel are relevant.

You may want to use the following as prompts. Do not feel limited by these ideas!

Tools and approaches?

Staff involved?

Opportunities?

Which key documents may need amendments (or developing)?

Training implications?

Changes to HR and performance management procedures?

Key issues and challenges?



## HO 1: English, maths and business

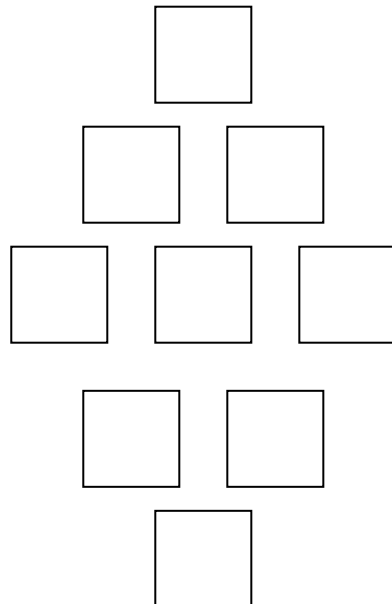
### Business performance, English and maths

Lay the 12 cards face up on the table; they describe elements of business performance. Discuss in your group how you would like to see performance improved through better skills.

Choose (from the 12 elements shown) nine which you think would help your business most. Then discuss how you think better employee / worker English and maths skills would help to improve these elements.

Finally prioritise the nine cards: highest priority being the element which would most benefit from improved employee skills in English and / or maths. To prioritise the cards, lay them out in the following diamond-shaped formation:

**HIGH PRIORITY** (would benefit most from improved English and maths)



**LOW PRIORITY** (would benefit least from improved English and maths)

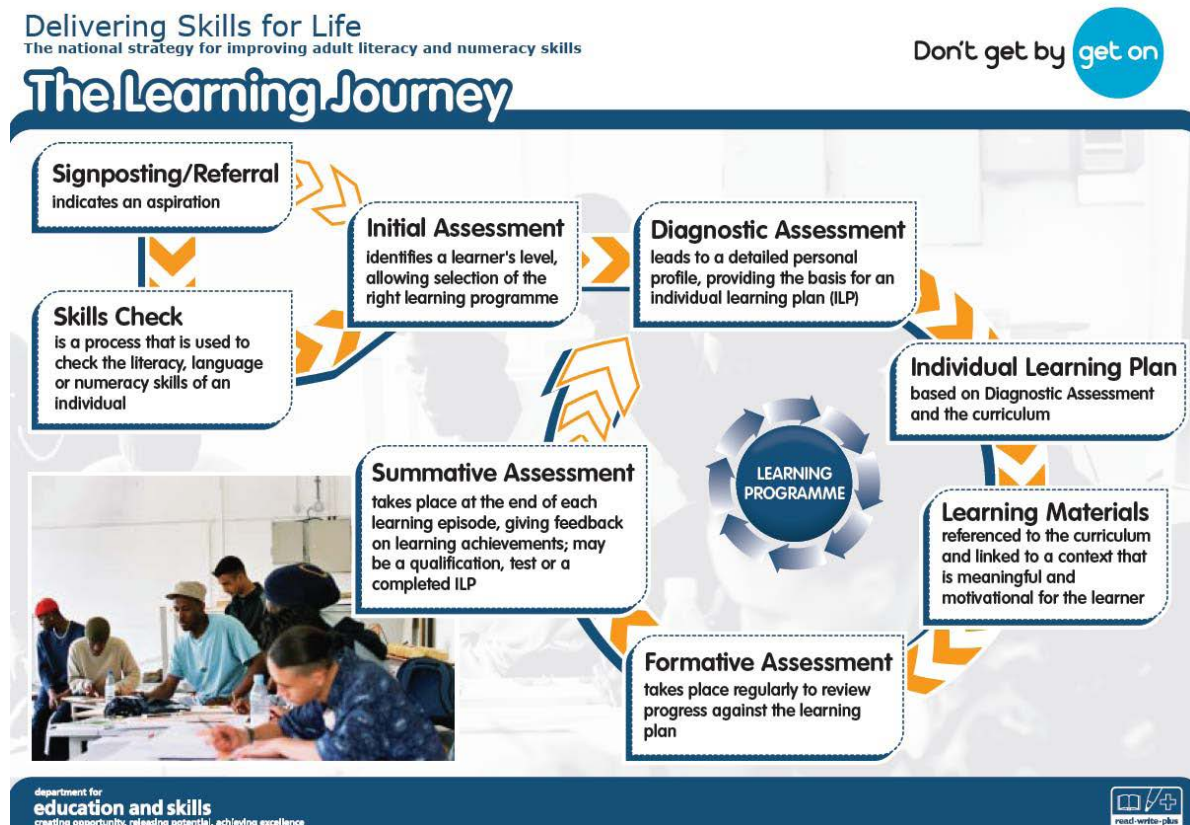
## HO 2: Action plan

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Key tasks</b>	<b>People to involve</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
<b>Introduction: Why and how?</b>			
<b>What do we mean? Purposes of assessment</b>			
<b>How? Evaluating the resources</b>			
<b>When and where are the opportunities?</b>			
<b>Who? What makes an effective learner champion?</b>			
<b>How do we keep doing it?</b>			

## HO 3

### The learning journey

These early stages of assessment form part of the fuller process of the learning journey, shown in the diagram below.



Source: Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS)

The first four stages of assessment are considered here.

#### 1. Signposting / referral (including self-referral)

***'Does the learner recognise that they may benefit from brushing up their English or maths skills?'***

This stage does not strictly speaking fall within the assessment cycle, but learners will often self-assess as potentially benefitting from English or maths skills development after being introduced to suitable engagement material, such as promotional materials, taster sessions at events such as a Learning at Work Day, and quizzes.

## **2. Skills check**

***‘Does the learner need to improve his/her English or maths skills?’***

A skills check is a short process that is used to find out whether someone would benefit from brushing up their literacy, language or numeracy. It is used to identify learners who might benefit from more in-depth assessment of their skills. The process usually takes about ten minutes. The person carrying out the skills check needs to be appropriately trained, but does not need to be a specialist English or maths teacher.

## **3. Initial assessment**

***‘At what level is the learner currently operating?’***

Initial assessment will help identify a learner’s level of skills against national standards. Many learners have different levels of each component part of reading, writing and numeracy skills, presenting with a ‘spiky profile’ – for example more confident with reading than with writing. Providers should use whichever initial assessment materials best suit their learners, and the initial assessment should be carried out by someone who is appropriately trained, but they do not need to be a specialist English or maths teacher.

## **4. Diagnostic assessment**

***‘What specific skills does the learner need to improve?’***

Diagnostic assessment takes place once a learner is on a learning programme. The diagnostic assessment will be carried out by a qualified\* English or maths specialist. The diagnostic assessment identifies a learner’s strengths and highlights any skills gaps and is used to plan their learning programme.

\*For information on appropriate qualifications, contact the UK Qualifications and Skills Team (UKQST) on <http://www.excellencegateway.org.uk/node/57> for information and guidance on training and professional qualifications.

## **HO 4: North West Skills Award criteria mapping**

You may find this information useful to support the activity in this session. The following are criteria taken from the North West Skills Award assessment framework. In order to achieve this award, authorities must demonstrate that they have met all criteria (40 in total). The criteria reflect proven successful approaches to embedding skills development, including provision for developing English and maths skills, across the whole organisation.

### **1. Whole organisation approach to workforce planning and skills development (including English, maths and ESOL)**

1.1) Is there evidence of a strategic approach to workforce planning and skills development?

1.2) Is there a commitment to workforce planning and skills development at all organisational levels?

1.3) Do key HR policies and procedures (e.g. relating to performance management, appraisal and training) address workforce planning and skills development issues (including English, maths and ESOL)?

1.4) Are processes relating to performance management, appraisal and training, incorporated within workforce plans and other strategic plans?

### **2. Developing a strategy for the Authority**

2.1) Is there a skills strategy which is agreed and promoted?

2.2) Is there a clear statement of intent in relation to skills development for all staff, which is agreed and published?

2.3) Are appropriate mechanisms in place which provide ownership of the skills strategy?

2.5) Is there a mechanism in place which supports the implementation of the skills strategy?

### **3. Developing appropriate staff within the organisation to support skills development (including English, maths and ESOL)**

3.1) Are processes in place, which ensure that managers across the organisation understand the link between developing the skills of the whole workforce (including English, maths and ESOL) and the success of the organisation?

3.2) Are learning champions active across the organisation?

3.3) Skills supporters (union learning reps, mentors, supervisors) are able to access and attend appropriate CPD events, specifically those related to English, maths and ESOL.

3.5) Have staff who support English, maths and ESOL learners achieved an appropriate Level 2 qualification or part thereof as appropriate to their job role (see also 5.3).

#### **4. Demonstrate that implementation involves working in partnership (e.g. with union learning representatives and providers**

4.2) Learning representatives are working effectively across strategic and operational levels.

#### **5. Appropriate identification and meeting of skills development needs (including English, maths and ESOL) as part of workforce planning**

5.1) Is the identification and meeting of skills development needs incorporated within all processes including eg redeployment and Induction procedures and linked to workforce planning?

5.2) Is skills development embedded within training and performance management systems e.g. appraisal and linked to workforce planning.

5.3) Identified key staff have achieved an appropriate Level 2 qualification or part thereof as appropriate to their job role.

5.5) Is a process in place across the organisation to identify skills development needs, with specific priority given to identifying English, maths and ESOL needs at the earliest possible stage?

5.4) Appropriate systems are in place across the organisation to follow up on skills check / review outcomes.

## HO 5

### **Burnley Council**

#### **Learning and Development Representative role description**

### **Role description and purpose**

To be the service unit contact for Learning and Development related activity, including liaison regarding the Service Learning and Development plan, advertising training course vacancies, recruitment and selection for ad hoc courses, evaluations and other council Learning and Development events.

#### ***Specific functions***

1. To attend Training Representative forums
2. To attend training related to the role
3. To design, develop and progress a work plan linked to Investors in People and Corporate Learning and Development activity and Team Burnley Performance
4. To be the main contact in own Service Unit for Learning and Development activity
5. To carry out questionnaires, update Learning and Development procedures, communicate Learning and Development opportunities to managers and staff in unit
6. To advertise and recruit delegates for ad hoc training
7. To be involved in and promote Learning and Development events
8. To be involved in any new staff induction for own Service Unit
9. To be involved in the new HR system developments related to Learning and Development.

### **Specific requirements of role holder**

- A keen interest in learning and development activity
- Ability to communicate with a range of staff in own service unit
- Time to devote to the task (up to 1 day per month)
- Positive attitude to change and development
- Ability to deliver key messages at staff meetings

### **Training and support available**

Role holders will be given support and guidance from the Organisational Development Officer and their Head of Service / manager

Role holders will be trained in learning styles; methodology; evaluation techniques and Corporate Learning and Development functions and practices and presentation skills where appropriate.

Role holders will be influential in shaping future Learning and Development activity and involvement and key players in moving towards a Learning Organisation.

For more information please contact xxxx.