

## **Delivering *Skills for Life***

### **FACT SHEET 7 – New regulations on the processes for confirming the English language ability of citizenship applicants: implications for LSC-funded providers**

**November 2005**

1 The purpose of this fact sheet is to clarify the new regulations that came into force from 1 November 2005 and their impact on provision funded by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC). It supersedes information in [Fact Sheet 5 - New language requirements for naturalisation/citizenship: impact on LSC-funded provision](#), issued in September 2004.

2 LSC-funded providers will be involved in delivering English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Skills for Life provision within a citizenship context, and confirming the delivery context, for potential applicants for citizenship with English language ability below Entry 3.

#### **Readership**

3 Local LSCs; colleges and other providers: Directors responsible for curriculum development, finance and funding; senior managers and managers responsible for ESOL; managers responsible for Management Information Systems (MIS); teachers and tutors of ESOL and English as a Foreign Language (EFL); staff responsible for student services/guidance; Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI) and Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) colleagues responsible for ESOL and EFL provision.

#### **Structure**

4 The fact sheet has two sections. Section One describes the new regulations and the impact on ESOL providers, including funding implications. Section Two presents a set of frequently asked questions and answers.

5 This fact sheet has been prepared by the Skills for Life team at the National LSC and will be posted on the LSC website ([www.lsc.gov.uk](http://www.lsc.gov.uk)). For further clarification providers should, in the first instance, contact their local LSC. Contact information can be found on the website.

## **SECTION ONE: The new regulations and the impact on LSC-funded ESOL providers**

### **Background**

6 On 19 July 2005 the Home Office announced that new regulations on the processes for naturalisation would come into force from 1 November 2005. These regulations supersede requirements, introduced in July 2004, for applicants for naturalisation to have confirmed English language ability (speaking and listening) at Entry 3. Other requirements, such as applicants having to be resident in the UK for five years, will not change.

7 The new regulations follow the recommendations of the Advisory Board on Life in the UK, chaired by Sir Bernard Crick. People who want to settle in the UK as citizens should be encouraged to share the common language and understanding of life in the UK, in order to play a full part in the wider community and to facilitate effective integration, good race relations and community cohesion. Two routes for would-be applicants for naturalisation are introduced to meet the criteria of both language proficiency **and** knowledge of life in the UK.

8 The introduction of the new routes means that the arrangements for initial assessment of speaking and listening skills at Entry 3 to meet citizenship requirements will become redundant for applications submitted on or after 1 November 2005.

### **Language and life in the UK criteria**

9 The two routes to meet both the language and life in the UK criteria are as follows:

(1) Potential applicants with English language skills **at or above Entry 3** will be expected to pass a test of knowledge of life in the UK. The test has been developed by Ufl for delivery through **learnirect** centres and will cost £34.

(2) Those with English language skills **below Entry 3** will need to successfully complete, at an appropriate level (Entry 1, 2 or 3), either a Certificate in ESOL Skills for Life (speaking and listening) qualification or the speaking and listening component of a Certificate in ESOL Skills for Life (all modes) qualification, that incorporates teaching materials derived from the *Citizenship materials for ESOL learners* pack developed by National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE) and London South Bank University (LLU+).

10 The introduction of the new routes means that the arrangements for confirmation of speaking and listening skills at Entry 3 to meet citizenship requirements, as described in Fact Sheet 5, will become redundant from 1 November 2005. However, potential applicants may still approach a college directly for advice on their level of language ability and existing screening arrangements should be able to determine the best route to citizenship.

## Life in the UK test

11 Ufl Ltd will administer the tests on behalf of the Home Office. The test will be taken on a computer at, currently, one of 90 Life in the UK Test centres based at Ufl **learn**direct e-learning centres close to centres of immigrant population. The test will consist of 24 questions chosen randomly from a large question bank based on the information in chapters 2, 3 and 4 of the handbook 'Life in the United Kingdom: A Journey to Citizenship'. The handbook costs £9.99 and is available online from [www.tso.co.uk/bookshop](http://www.tso.co.uk/bookshop) or from Stationery Office shops or major booksellers such as Waterstones. Forty-five minutes will be allowed for the test. The test language will be pitched at Entry 3 so that a candidate who passes will be deemed to have also met the language requirements for citizenship.

12 Everyone who takes the Life in the UK test will have to pay the £34 fee beforehand. There are no exemptions. There is no limit to the number of times an applicant can re-sit the test but the normal fee applies each time. Successful applicants will receive a pass notification letter that should be submitted to the Home office with a completed citizenship application. Ufl will also notify the Home Office of all test results electronically.

13 A Life in the UK test website ([www.uknationality.gov.uk](http://www.uknationality.gov.uk)) and a telephone helpline are being set up, from which addresses, contact details and opening times of test centres, test times, confirmation of identity and payment methods can be obtained. The website will include a short tutorial to help applicants to prepare for the test. Both the website and test centres will support learners who are new to computers, with mouse and keyboard training.

## ESOL in a citizenship context

14 Would-be citizenship applicants with English language ability below Entry 3, will be required to successfully achieve an ESOL Skills for Life qualification in speaking and listening, or the speaking and listening component of an all modes qualification, at Entry 1, 2 or 3 according to the learner's needs. In addition, to meet the citizenship element of the requirements, the course will need to use materials derived from the *Citizenship materials for ESOL learners* pack developed by NIACE and LLU+. There is no change to the ESOL Skills for Life learning aim or award and there will be **no change to existing LSC funding arrangements** for ESOL provision.

15 The citizenship support materials are based on a programme of studies for citizenship outlined in the Crick report, *The Old and the New*, and linked to the ESOL curriculum at Entry 1-3, for teachers delivering ESOL Skills for Life courses. The materials have been piloted with 18 ESOL providing institutions and some 900 ESOL tutors around the country have attended sessions on using these materials. More such workshops are planned from October to December 2005, when more copies of the pack, revised in the light of evaluation from the pilots, will also be

available.

16 There is no requirement for providers to run a specific course in citizenship. ESOL Skills for Life courses that incorporate citizenship materials as described above will be equally relevant to learners with no naturalisation intention, or who are already naturalised, as they are based on existing good practice in ESOL delivery that is contextualised to meet learner's interests and needs. However, providers who anticipate dealing with large volumes of learners who expressly require ESOL Skills for Life provision for citizenship purposes may wish to highlight ESOL Skills for Life with Citizenship courses on their course programme.

17 A copy of the ESOL Skills for Life Certificate gained from the Awarding Body will need to be submitted to the Home Office with the completed application for citizenship. In addition, the applicant will also need to enclose a letter from the institution where he/she took the qualification, confirming that the certificate was awarded following a course that used materials derived from the *Citizenship materials for ESOL learners* pack. A suggested text for a confirmation letter is provided at the annex to this document. Such applicants will not need to demonstrate any further knowledge of life in the UK, but providers may wish to encourage further learning progression.

18 For further information on funding and coding the Certificates in ESOL Skills for Life please refer to the [Funding Guidance for Further Education 2005/06](#) and [Fact Sheet 6 - Funding, recording and coding the Certificates in English for Speakers of Other Languages \(ESOL\) Skills for Life](#).

## SECTION TWO: Frequently Asked Questions

### **Q1 Do all ESOL learners who want to apply for citizenship have to take the life in the UK citizenship test?**

**A.** Not all learners will need to do the citizenship test.

Those whose English is considered to be *at or above* Entry 3 (i.e. who would be assessed as needing to work towards Level 1 or above that level) will need to do the test of knowledge of life in the UK (citizenship test). Passing the test will mean the candidate is deemed to have also met the language requirements for naturalisation and no other proof of language proficiency will be required.

But those learners whose English is considered to be *below* Entry 3 must undertake and achieve a Certificate in ESOL Skills for Life in speaking and listening, or the speaking and listening component of an all modes qualification, at Entry 1, 2 or 3 according to the learner's needs. They should have studied for this qualification on an ESOL course delivered in a citizenship context. They will not be required to sit the test of knowledge of life in the UK.

### **Q2 Can a learner who has achieved an all modes Certificate in ESOL Skills for Life qualification at Entry Level (1, 2 or 3) use this as evidence of English for naturalisation purposes?**

**A** Yes, where the all modes qualification has been delivered in a citizenship context. A learner who has achieved the all modes Certificate in ESOL Skills for Life at Entry Level (1, 2 or 3) will have passed the Speaking and Listening component (unit) as required for naturalisation purposes.

### **Q3 How will learners know whether to take the test or enrol on an ESOL course?**

**A** If learners approach naturalisation through the Immigration and Nationality Directorate (IND) and/or the UfI citizenship website there will be an opportunity for self-assessment to determine which route is more suitable. If they go directly to a **learnirect** centre they will be screened before they are enrolled to ensure that their language skills are sufficient to take the test plus there will be support packages to meet IT familiarisation requirements. If they directly approach a college or other provider, existing screening arrangements should generally be able to determine their best route to citizenship.

### **Q4 Do teachers have to cover everything in the Citizenship materials pack?**

**A** No. Teachers should choose subjects and materials based on the interests and needs of their learners, as fits with good practice in ESOL.

**Q5 How long must learners study ESOL in a citizenship context?**

**A** There is no fixed maximum or minimum time limit. The original report "The Old and the New" suggested a minimum of 20 hours but teachers should take into account the needs of their learners and build it into the time they require in order to achieve their qualification.

**Q6 Will there be any additional funding to cover the cost of increased demand for ESOL resulting from the new citizenship requirements?**

**A** There is no additional funding for ESOL provision, however it is not expected that there will be a huge increase in demand. It is thought that most would-be citizens are above Entry 3 and will pay to take the citizenship test through **learnirect** centres.

**Q7 Will providers receive extra funding for delivering ESOL Skills for Life qualifications in a citizenship context?**

**A** There is no additional funding. Many ESOL courses are already being delivered in a broad citizenship context: using some of the materials in the *Citizenship Materials for ESOL Learners* pack is simply formalising this for naturalisation purposes.

Although some providers may decide to run specific courses for would-be naturalisation applicants, in most cases it is envisaged that they will simply be part of existing ESOL Skills for Life courses. The *Citizenship Materials for ESOL Learners*, used appropriately, will be just as valuable and engaging for learners who are already UK citizens or for those with no interest in becoming naturalised, as they will for would be applicants.

**Suggested text of confirmation letter**

**To be written on headed paper which includes the confirming institution's name and address**

**Confirmation of achievement of a Certificate in English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Skills for Life delivered within a citizenship context**

The attached Certificate in ESOL Skills for Life awarded by (name of Awarding Body) .....is being submitted by (name of applicant)..... as part of his/her application for naturalisation, as set out in requirements by the Home Secretary.

This letter is to confirm that the certificate was gained after attendance at an ESOL course provided by this institution. This course was delivered in a citizenship context and used materials derived from 'The Citizenship materials for ESOL learners' pack produced for the Home Office by NIACE and LLU+.

Signed.....  
(Authorised representation  
of the college/institution)

Printed Name.....

Date.....

Tel .....

College/Institution Stamp

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This publication is available in electronic form on the Learning and Skills Council website: [www.lsc.gov.uk](http://www.lsc.gov.uk)

Publication enquiries: 0870 900 6800

Publication reference: LSC-P-NAT-050617