

DHL Launches Learning Centre for all employees

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Learning at Work Day sees DHL and Unite the Union launch a new Learning Centre at the Marsh Leys Argos warehouse site in Kempston with an Open Day on 22 May for colleagues to take a look at the learning opportunities on offer to them.

The Argos Home Delivery Service is run by DHL and the Learning Centre has been supported with funding from the Learning and Skills Council Bedfordshire and Luton (LSC) through Train to Gain and Argos. The centre will offer a varied programme of learning through Bedford College and Bedfordshire Spark Adult and Community Learning and includes NVQs in IT, warehousing, languages (ESOL) and recreational courses such as photography.

The plan is to develop the facility to meet the needs of the shift workers and offer learning opportunities before and after their shifts. As well as encouraging colleagues back into learning with recreational courses it will enable them to take up vocational courses to support them in their work. A major advantage in providing the learning centre on site is easy access and learning can be done before and after work. And the fact that smaller groups with tutors is more beneficial with learning tailored to individual needs.

Tom Renphrey - General Manager at DHL said: "The Open Day will be an opportunity to discuss the level and types of courses our colleagues are interested in and need so that DHL can work with the training providers to plan future learning activity. The Learning Centre allows us to bring learning to them and makes it easier for them to take part."

DHL has been on site for five years and has the contract with Argos to provide warehousing and logistics for their Two Person Home Delivery Service. The site, which is open 24 hours, is one of three sites with others planned and has more than 600 employees. DHL pride themselves on their training and continually train staff from induction through to relevant skills required for their job. As well as in-house training, they have the opportunity to develop through the Certificate in Professional Competencies (CPC) and Chartered Institute in Personnel and Development (CIPD).

Tom Renphrey adds : "We have always encouraged training of our staff and find that as well as good staff morale we benefit from their commitment to the company and improved performance. We have a diverse workforce with many not having English as their first language. We provide English for Speakers of other Languages (ESOL) support enabling them to communicate better in their work environment and in their lives outside of work. Bedford College has run a pilot with DHL where ESOL is offered as part of the NVQ in warehousing. The Centre now enables us to continue with this."

Welcoming the opening of the new Learning Centre, Jim Mowatt, Unite's Director of Education said: "These facilities locate union learning at the heart of the community. They are a clear demonstration of the value Unite places on continued adult learning and development, and they will contribute massively to the lives of our members and their families."

Other warehouse sites around the country have similar learning centres and have proved to be a success. Good practice and feedback along with the opportunity of funding from the LSC through Train to Gain and donations from Argos has enabled DHL to provide this new Learning Centre with Argos providing the on-site facility.

Graham Moores, LSC Director of Economic Development for the LSC Bedfordshire and Luton said at the launch: "The LSC is pleased to be able to support such a venture and celebrate the opening of the centre on Learning at Work Day in Adult Learners Week. One of the key goals of Train to Gain is to make sure that both the training and the skills advice are impartial, flexible, responsive, and offered at a time and place to suit businesses. Research shows that by supporting employees with their learning they are more motivated and stress-free benefiting both individuals and the company. The fact that learning is both, on-site and tailored to the employees needs can only help in ensuring more people take up this great learning opportunity. It will help enable them to reach their full potential and the business to become more economically successful."

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Notes to editors:

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LSC

The LSC exists to make England better skilled and more competitive. We are responsible for ensuring the availability of high-quality education and training for everyone. We have a single goal: to improve the skills of England's young people and adults to world class standards. Our vision is that young people and adults in England have the knowledge and skills matching the best in the world and are part of a truly competitive workforce. We work nationally, regionally and locally to deliver this ambition on behalf of learners and employers.

English speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)

For more information on ESOL go to:

<http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/EducationAndLearning/AdultLearning/ImprovingYourSkills/DG10037499>

Train to Gain

1. Train to Gain is a Government service from the Learning & Skills Council to help businesses to get the training they need to succeed.
2. Train to Gain has the vision that by 2010, young people and adults in England will have the knowledge and skills that match the best in the world and are part of a truly competitive workforce.
3. As part of the Train to Gain service, a Skills Broker reviews the training needs of your organisation and provides free and impartial skills advice before matching these needs with a suitable training provider. The Skills Broker will also look into any funding that may be available to you and will provide continual support throughout the process.
4. The service is delivered in the East of England by The East of England Brokerage Consortium and The Consultancy Home Counties Ltd.