

ADULT LEARNING GRANT ONE YEAR ON

Figures show the huge success of ALG on its first anniversary

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As the Adult Learning Grant (ALG) today celebrates its one year anniversary since national roll-out in 2007, figures show that the scheme has soared to success over the past 12 months, providing financial support to a massive 43,000 adult learners in England since the scheme began¹. Take-up in this first year of national roll-out has hugely exceeded expectations and has proved just how popular the scheme is.

Further research by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) has also revealed that adults make fantastic learners, with 77% of adults in LSC funded further education provisions being successful in their courses². This proves that although adults may face some of the biggest hurdles when it comes to going back to education, they make some of the best learners.

In fact, ALG, which offers adults up to £30 per week to go back to learning, was so successful when initially piloted across the UK in 2003-2006, that the national roll-out was brought forward a year.

¹ LSC Adult Learning Grant performance statistics at 21st May 2008

² 'Success Rates in LSC Funded FE Provisions' published on 25th May 2008

Just one example of this success is 48 year old Angela Nash from Rotherham, who turned a life-long passion into an exciting new career path thanks to support from ALG.

Although Angela had worked in various office based roles within the steel industry in Sheffield for 30 years since leaving school, she was lost when she was made redundant in 2006 and forced her to re-think her career.

It was her love of animals that eventually helped her to decide on a new direction and with help from a £30 per week ALG, Angela was able to gain a National Certificate in Animal Care after a year at Rotherham College of Arts and Technology. She's now preparing to carry on her studies at the college by completing a further two-year course for a national diploma in animal management.

Angela comments: "After so many years of working in the same industry it was a shock when I was made redundant. But I soon realised that even though I'd been forced into this situation, it was the perfect opportunity to try something completely different. So rather than having a negative impact on my life the redundancy has actually given me the chance to try something for myself that I really enjoy.

"When I enrolled at the college I was encouraged to apply for an Adult Learning Grant, but I never thought I'd be eligible for one. So when I found out I was to get £30 per week I was delighted and I've been able to put that money towards essentials, such as petrol and books.

"I've already had so many positive experiences during my first year and I've had lots of hands-on experience. The college has its own farm at the Rother Valley Campus in Dinnington and I recently delivered my first lamb. I've also had an

opportunity to handle birds of prey, which was another high point during my course.

“As a mature student I was apprehensive about going back to college but I’ve realised that age doesn’t matter and that I wasn’t the only mature student. I’m really looking forward to the next two years and I’d encourage any one who’s thinking about going back into education to go for it – it’s never too late.”

Trevor Fellowes, Director of Learner Support at the Learning and Skills Council, comments: “It’s fantastic to see what an impact the Adult Learning Grant is having for adults and that it has offered so many learners a helping hand in education. The grant can be used to help with anything from the cost of books and materials, through to childcare costs and really does give critical support to adults who might not otherwise have the opportunity to go back to learning.”

If you are thinking about going back to college it’s time to start looking at your options. ALG could help you – to find out if you are eligible visit www.direct.gov.uk/alg or call 0800 121 8989 today.

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Notes to Editors:

This press release applies to England only.

Learning and Skills Council

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 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.

ALG is available to low income adults in England aged 19 or over who are studying full time for their first full level 2 (5 GCSE's at grades A* to C or an NVQ2 or its equivalent) or a first full level 3 (2 A levels or an NVQ3 or its equivalent) qualification.