

## **NORTH EAST LEADS THE WAY**

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The North East is leading the way in helping employers train their workforce through the Learning and Skills Council's (LSC) Train to Gain service.

New figures published by the LSC show that the North East is the best performing region in the country in meeting its target for engaging with employers and is also best at penetrating the market – working with more of the region's total employers than any other region in the country. The North East is also excelling in other areas and is one of the most successful in the country in ensuring employers that are interested in getting involved with Train to Gain actually sign up to the service. The region is also working well in reaching hard to reach employers\* and the achievement rates of learners in the region is also among the highest in the country.

Chris Roberts, Regional Director, LSC North East, said: "Our Train to Gain service is already a real success story, helping many employers and individuals in the North East. Last week saw the publication of the Leitch review and Lord Leitch highlighted the Train to Gain service as an example of the initiatives already in place that are having an impact on skill shortages. These figures demonstrate that here in the North East, we are making real progress in implementing Train to Gain, which is good news for individuals, employers, local communities and the region's economy.

Since Train to Gain was introduced in April, some 1,457 employers in the North East have become involved with training their staff and more than 4,000 individual learners have been involved with training.

Launched in the North East by Coronation Street's Roy and Hayley Cropper (actors David Nielson and Julie Hesmondhalgh) Train to Gain aims to help organisations get the training they need to stay ahead in a competitive environment by improving the skills of the workforce.

Mr Roberts added: "Lord Leitch set down ambitious challenges to employers, learners and to those who work with them and the LSC is in full agreement that we need to seize this opportunity and ensure that the ambitions of being world-class in skills are met. It is a challenge to be world-class, but these figures demonstrate that we are making progress. There is still a great deal to be done, however, and our Train to Gain service is a major weapon in the skills battle."

For more information about Train to Gain, call 0800 0833 312 or visit [www.traintogain.gov.uk](http://www.traintogain.gov.uk)

## **ENDS**

### Editor's Note:

Train to Gain case study:

The future is clear for the entire production workforce at a Stockton-on-Tees window company who were awarded with qualifications to benefit themselves and the company. Some 90 employees from Budget Windows have gained Level 2 qualifications through the Learning and Skills Council's (LSC) Train to Gain service. Managing Director Graham Jenney presented a group of the men with their certificates today and congratulated them on their success.

The men, ranging from 19 to 60, received Glass Qualifications Authority NVQ Level 2 qualifications in Glass Processing (making the double glazed units), Production of Glass Supporting Fabrication (making the frames) and Fenestration Installation (fitting the frames). For some of the men, it was the first time they had gained formal qualifications

and Managing Director Mr Jenney said he has been very impressed with the co-operation of the workers.

He said: "All the staff involved in the manufacturing process have taken part in the training and they have all been very positive about it. I am firmly committed to training, ensuring my workers are equipped with the skills to enable to do the job to the best of their ability. Our company is also committed to first class customer care and ensuring our workers are skilled in what they do enables us to offer a quality service to our customers, which benefits everyone."

The qualifications will enable the men to gain the industry recognised CSCS (Construction Skills Certification Scheme) card which proves competency in their chosen trade and has become the construction industry standard.

Mike White, NVQ Assessor with Ucat/IVS, the training provider that provided the training, said when he approached the company, it was clear that this was going to be a challenge. "This has been a large scale project due to the large numbers of staff involved and it has taken a year to complete," he said. "We are delighted to have provided training and support to enhance the success of this established local company. When we started, we had a group of men who were a bit unsure about themselves and when we finished, the same group of people were positive about their future, armed with recognised qualifications."

More than 800 employers in the region have benefited from learning through the service since it was launched in April and some 4,084 individuals have benefited.

Chris Roberts, regional director, LSC North East, added: "The benefits of Train to Gain to the employer and to the employee make it such a fantastic service for organisations of all shapes and sizes. To see so many individuals from one company involved with Train to Gain is a real pleasure and proof that employers and individuals are increasingly seeing the benefit training brings, both for staff morale and company performance."

The figures have been published in the LSC's Autumn 2006 Performance Analysis report.

\* Hard to reach employers are defines an employers who have not accessed Training through the LSC's Employer Training Pilot in the last two years or who do not have the Investors in People standard.

Train to Gain aims to help organisations get the training they need to stay ahead in a competitive environment by improving the skills of the workforce and has been developed as part of a wider effort by the Regional Skills Partnership in the North East to increase the productivity and further regenerate the region. A skills brokerage service jointly funded by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) and the Regional Development Agency, One NorthEast, will offer impartial advice and match training needs to local providers of learning, to ensure that flexible, responsive training programmes are delivered to meet employers' needs. A core element of Train to Gain is the access to appropriate funding of Skills for Life, first Level 2 National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs), Level 3 NVQ's and Management and Leadership learning opportunities.

The LSC exists to make England better skilled and more competitive. We are responsible for planning and funding high-quality vocational 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 by 2010, 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. Established in 2001, we work nationally, regionally and locally from a network of offices across the country.

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