



LSC Lancashire
ESF Co-Finance
PROJECT EVALUATION

PROJECT TITLE: Hot Water
PROJECT REF NO: ESF/0203/113
LEAD ORGANISATION: Accrington & Rossendale College
POLICY FIELD AND MEASURE: 4.1
LSC CONTRACT MANAGER: Ann Knight

EVALUATION REPORT DEADLINE
for LSC Lancashire ESF Co-Financing: 30th January 2004

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Overview of the Project Activity and Partners:

The aim of this project is to meet the identified skills gap 'essential electrical service fault finding in gas combination boilers' that has emerged in the plumbing and heating trade.

Specific objectives were to:

- a) Set up a dedicated workshop and training facility
- b) Develop an appropriate training programme
- c) Help micro-sized and SMEs to up-skill plumbing engineer/fitters at NVQ Level 3 equivalent
- d) Achieve self-sustainable activity by the end of the project period.

Although this project was not delivered on a partnership basis there was collaboration between the college and the industry's leading stakeholders.

This could have been better since CITB did not have the course sorted out.

Achievements of the Project:

The quantifiable measures identified as being appropriate to gauge the success of the project have achieved the agreed re-scoped targets:

50 Number of SMEs helped (OP1)

51 Number of trainees successfully completing training (OC1)

Summary of project OPs, OCs, and, MSs

OP1 Number of companies helped

OC1 Number of beneficiaries gaining a qualification

OC2 Number of jobs safeguarded

MS1 Project Coordinator appointed and in post

MS2 Design and validation of training programme

MS3 First trainees recruited, course commences

MS4 Assessment of trainees under test conditions

MS5 First quarterly report and evaluation by Focus Group

MS6 Final review, evaluation report produced and dissemination activity to the industry

Areas of Innovation:

College based specialist facilities established

Training course developed in combination gas boiler faultfinding

Flexible provision created to meet the needs of industry

Identification of Areas of Good Practices and Areas for Improvement:

Examples of Good Practice:

Targeted marketing, awareness raising and recruitment activity

High retention and achievement rates

Flexible and responsive provision

Examples of challenges faced:

Loss of Project Coordinator due to long-term sickness

Key staff requiring induction into college systems and procedures

Staff requiring induction into project systems and methods

New Construction Team support staff

Initial ill-defined LSC Lancashire eligible area of activity

Change of LSC Lancashire Contract Managers mid project

Long-term illness of key project monitoring staff (External Funding Assistant)

Weaknesses as identified by LSC monitoring section in auditing of project systems

Lessons Learnt:

Action points to be addressed:

Induction programme for delivery and support staff in project systems to be developed

Faster response required to address gaps left by sick or departed staff in key project roles

Project monitoring and verification systems to be improved cross college to the satisfaction of LSC
Contingency plans to be developed to prevent/minimise adverse knock on effects

Dissemination of Good Practice including Details of Dissemination Materials Produced:

It is intended to disseminate the good practice developed on the project via the InterNet by the end of March 2004.

Details of Publicity Undertaken (attach copies of any advertising / publicity materials produced):

A coordinated marketing campaign, comprising advertisements in the trade press and local press, and a direct mail shot to companies already on the college client database was conducted. An official opening event was staged for the centre and clients were invited to come and see the facility for themselves. Also, the NTOs, trade and professional organisations, and manufacturers with which we worked supported the campaign by raising awareness amongst their members. Refer to Appendix 1 for copies of publicity material.

Case Study:

Regrettably we do not have a case study to offer at this time.

Views of customers and / or partners:

Customers

The views of customers as related to the Coordinator are on the whole positive.

Partners / Supporters

Individual representatives of the organisations supporting the project have been positive.

Comparison of how the project dealt with Information and Communication Technologies, Equal Opportunities and Sustainability:

Beneficiaries used various metering and measuring devices, however, the use of ICT by was limited. ICT was extensively used by staff to effect all aspects of the project – for example; communication between individuals, the development of learning material both paper based and electronic format, tracking of beneficiary activity and achievement, financial monitoring, writing of project interim and final reports.

Equal Opportunities

The project failed to seek out and recruit any women working in this overwhelmingly white male dominated sector to participate in the project.

Sustainability

This project supported the regional approaches to sustainable development by:

i) protecting the environment

The project raised awareness of environmental issues to workers as part of the NVQ delivery. All beneficiaries as part of the training covered health and safety issues that included the proper and safe disposal of waste products.

ii) careful use of natural resources

Wherever possible, resources used in the delivery of training were energy efficient and recyclable. As a result of training workers are now aware of how to maximise resource productivity and to recover and recycle used materials.

iii) progress which recognises the needs of everyone

Since everyone in the community is subject to the effect of pollution, the action undertaken by the project to improve the proper use and disposal of material directly contributes to social progress, which recognises the needs of everyone.

iv) maintaining high and steady levels of economic growth and employment

The project has contributed to the competitiveness of the North West as set out in the North West Regional Competitiveness Strategy and the NWDA Regional Economic Strategy. It is accepted that resource productivity can quadruple the amount of wealth extracted from one unit of natural resources. In developing new skills/skills for growth areas for the installation of flooring systems, the project has helped maintain high and steady levels of economic growth and employment in communities that would otherwise face a loss of traditional jobs.

Details of tools used to evaluate the impact of the project:

A copy of the evaluation tool is attached in Appendix 3

Additional Information:

The loss of the Project Coordinator due to long-term ill health and the lack of a replacement for six months had a serious knock on effect. All outputs, outcomes, and milestones were affected. Several exercises were conducted to periodically re-scope the activity. The project was finally scoped down to approximately a third of the original training outcomes. Three trainers were employed to recoup as much as possible in the limited time remaining. Provision is assured to continue for the foreseeable future.

Appendix 1: Publicity material

Appendix 2: Schematic of Training Facility

Appendix 3: Course evaluation tool

Declaration:

Signature:

Position:

Date: