

TRAIN TO GAIN CELEBRATES SECOND ANNIVERSARY

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Train to Gain is today celebrating its second anniversary, with more than 13,000 companies in the South West having signed up to the service which helps businesses develop the skills of their employees and improve their productivity and competitiveness.

Across the region, Train to Gain – the Learning and Skills Council’s (LSC) skills brokerage service – has helped businesses and organisations from a wide-range of sectors since its launch in 2006, with those from the construction and health and social work sectors leading the way.

More than 1,200 manufacturing companies and 1,100 hotels and restaurants have also accessed Train to Gain, enabling employers of all sizes, in all locations and across all sectors to access high quality training advice and support.

Train to Gain is a key part of the government’s plans to build the nation’s skills and helps to identify and match workforce training needs to training providers within the county.

Chris Minett, Skills Development Director at LSC South West, said: “The take up of the service in the South West reflects business demand for better skills and training and recognition of the impact this can have on productivity, employee engagement and company reputation.

“Many of those who have signed up are small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) that do not have the luxury of an HR or training resource. Most appreciate the importance of a skilled workforce, but in many cases they don’t know where to start or are often too busy to take necessary action. Looking forward we aim to get more companies on board and encourage employers to take control of their future by investing in skills through Train to Gain.”

The Government recently announced a massive extension of the Train to Gain service as part of a wider drive to upskill the UK's workforce. Since its launch two years ago, Train to Gain has helped 52,000 employers and enabled 240,000 employees in England to undertake training. The doubling of funding in the Train to Gain service to over £900 million by 2010/11 is part of a larger investment programme which will see more than £11 billion a year invested in education, employment and training over the next three years.

It is expected that by the end of 2010, more than 500,000 learners will have gained a first full Level 2 qualification (equivalent to five GCSEs A-C equivalent) through Train to Gain. This achievement will significantly help to combat the cost of poor basic skills to UK businesses which stands at nearly £5 billion a year.

Chris added: "One size simply can't fit all when it comes to training with businesses. There's a need for flexibility to match the skills required for new, growing and established companies. That is why the Government is stepping up the Train to Gain service as the advice provided is impartial, flexible, responsive, and offered at a time and place to suit businesses. This marks a fundamental shift in how skills training has been historically delivered."

If you are an employer interested in improving the skills of your business and would like to talk to a Skills Broker, call Train to Gain on 08456 047 047 or visit www.traintogain.gov.uk.

Ends

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

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LSC

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.

Train to Gain

Train to Gain is a service from the Learning and Skills Council, helping businesses get the training they need to succeed. An important element of the Train to Gain service is skills brokerage that offers free impartial advice, and helps find the best training solution from high quality and responsive training providers to meet business needs. To find out more call 0800 015 5545 or visit www.traintogain.gov.uk Agencies in April 2009.