



# English Language Strategy

for Migrant Workers in the East of England



east of england  
*space for ideas*



## The purpose of the strategy is to maximise the impact of efforts that address the needs of migrant workers and their employers in relation to English language. It aims to do this by:

1. ensuring that ESOL provision in the East of England is responsive to the needs of learners and employers
2. delivering high quality ESOL that contributes to the regional economy and social cohesion
3. maximising outcomes through the alignment and coordination of efforts / resources from partners across the region
4. encouraging employers to invest in the skills of migrant workers.

While the catch-all phrase often used is English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), we recognise that other English language training may be appropriate. ESOL is used in this document to cover any English language training for people who need to learn English, at whatever level.

### Background

Since the expansion of the European Union (EU) in May 2004, the number of migrants coming to the East of England has increased to a scale not previously experienced in many areas. The region has received the third highest number of workers, as measured by the workers registration scheme, after London and the South East.

Research carried out for the East of England Development Agency (EEDA) in 2005 by the Working Lives Research Institute at London Metropolitan University, estimated that there were between 50,000 – 80,000 migrant workers in the East of England. The report highlighted a number of issues relating to skills and employment, motivations and aspirations, well-being and economic impact. It set out a number of recommendations for action in the following areas:

- access to information
- access to services
- housing issues
- skills and qualifications
- further research.

The full report is available on the EEDA website, <http://www.eeda.org.uk> along with further information about EEDA's work in this area.

Following the publication of this report and a national conference to disseminate findings in May 2006, a regional migrant worker steering group (MWSG) was established "to provide strategic leadership for interagency cooperation in addressing issues facing migrant workers, existing communities and businesses and the region as a whole". In August an executive of this group was formed which agreed that skills and employment is still one of the top three issues for the region in relation to migrant workers. As part of this, English language training is recognised as a very important factor and a task and finish group has been formed to look at this area in particular. The task and finish group comprises representatives of the Learning and Skills Council (LSC), East of England Regional Assembly – Strategic Migration Partnership (EERA-SMP), EEDA, East of England Skills and Competitiveness Partnership (EESCP) and National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE) and they will oversee the development of this strategy on behalf of the wider MWSG.

“The regional migrant worker steering group provides strategic leadership for interagency cooperation in addressing issues facing migrant workers, existing communities and businesses and the region as a whole”



## Policy Context

The challenge of meeting high demand for ESOL continues and provision of English-language learning is widely acknowledged as crucial – for the individual, for the economy and for social cohesion.

### **The LSC’s Statement of Priorities<sup>1</sup> outlines the key messages and actions for ESOL for 2008/09 to 2010/11:**

- Given the high demand for ESOL provision over the last few years, funding policy for 2007/08 has been changed<sup>2</sup>. Automatic fee remission has been removed, and free tuition has been focused on priority groups (including people who are unemployed or in receipt of income-based benefits). The same policy will continue in 2008/09, with ESOL Skills for Life qualifications considered to be a subset of literacy qualifications, and counting towards the new Leitch literacy ambition at the appropriate levels.
- Government funding for ESOL remains substantial – 2008/09 funding will be based on projected spending in 2007/08 at £265 million, and will increase in real terms over the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) period. Eligibility for fully funded courses has changed in order to better target this funding on those with the greatest needs. Further work will be carried out with the LSC, Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS) and key stakeholders on criteria for funding following the Race Equality Impact Assessment (REIA) carried out in 2007.
- In 2007-08 £4.6 million (£330K for East of England) was added to the discretionary Learner Support for

Hardship and Childcare fund to help to support learners who have been identified in the REIA as being unintentionally disadvantaged by policy changes. DIUS and the LSC will be monitoring the impact of this additional funding in order to ascertain whether further support is required in 2008–09.

- A new suite of international ESOL qualifications called ESOL for Work has been introduced. These shorter, work-focused qualifications are available in 2007/08 at Entry Level 3 and Level 1 with DIUS and the QCA (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority) discussing the possibility of developing other levels. These qualifications are expected to extend learner choice and in particular to be suitable for people studying English language mainly for work purposes (including migrant workers).
- International English language qualifications are ineligible for public funding and providers are expected to charge the full cost. The one exception to this is the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) band 6/7; however, from 2008/09, this qualification will also become ineligible for public funding.
- The LSC expect employers that have recruited workers from outside the UK to bear the full cost of any necessary English-language training.
- The future of the Skills for Life (SfL) strategy is currently being reviewed, following publication of World Class Skills: Implementing the Leitch Review of Skills in England. ESOL will continue to be considered a sub-set of literacy qualifications, and is central to promoting social cohesion.

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.lsc.gov.uk/aboutus/lscstrategy/statementofpriorities/>

<sup>2</sup> For full details refer to Funding Guidance for Further Education in 2007/08 see (<http://www.lsc.gov.uk/publications/recommended/Funding-Guidance-for-Further-Education-in-200708.html>)



The LSC has produced “Learning and Skills Policy Summaries 2008/09”<sup>3</sup> which provides a single, authoritative source of information that effectively underpins the Statement of Priorities 2008/09 – 2010/11. It is important to recognise within this document that there are many different LSC funding routes into ESOL provision (rather than focusing only on discrete FE funding for SfL including ESOL). These include:

- Family Literacy, Language and Numeracy (FLLN) – based on Skills for Life provision and contributes to LSC priorities and Public Service Agreement (PSA) targets
- Neighbourhood Learning in Deprived Communities (NLDC) – up to 75 per cent of NLDC funding may be focused on Skills for Jobs activity within the target group
- First Steps Provision – as a progression route into more formal learning
- Offender Learning and Skills Service – disproportionately high number of offenders have limited basic skills or qualifications
- Skills for Jobs – focus on improving low skills and helping individuals to improve their employability, to secure jobs and to progress.

The above clearly highlights the broader LSC offer and we need to encourage partners and providers to looking more widely at the range of funding routes for ESOL (not just FE SfL).

**Skills for Life (including English ESOL) remains a priority area of provision as is reflected in other LSC policy areas.**

**An even more recent development has been the publication of a DIUS consultation on the future planning arrangements for ESOL. In this the Secretary**

**of State for Innovation, Universities and Skills states that:**

**“The government is committed to fostering cohesion in all our communities and I am working with colleagues to ensure this happens. One of DIUS’s key contributions to this agenda is our funding and management of ESOL provision.”**

### **Challenges for migrant workers**

The research for EEDA in 2005, and most other studies since then, indicated that there are a number of issues for new arrivals to the country when it comes to learning English. The need for them to learn English was highlighted as an issue in the ‘Our Shared Future’ report of the Commission on Integration and Cohesion.

Following two regional workshops on ESOL and migrant workers, held in Cambridge in March and June 2007, NIACE produced a short report<sup>4</sup> setting out the issues as shared by those attending the two meetings.

Those issues are:

- accessibility
- viability
- course content
- staffing
- funding
- employer commitment.

A number of mapping exercises have taken place in recent months, one coordinated by EERA specifically to inform the migrant worker steering group. The report of findings from this survey echoes the NIACE report both of which are available from the steering group website

<http://eastspace.net/migrantworkers/home.asp> under Useful Documents.

<sup>3</sup> <http://readingroom.lsc.gov.uk/lsc/National/nat-policysummaries0809-nov07.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> East of England – ESOL and migrant workers, NIACE Regional Achievement Dialogues, 2007

## Priority 1: To ensure that ESOL provision in the East of England is responsive to the needs of learners and employers

Action	Responsibility	Timeframe	Impact / Outcome
1.1 Provide and target funds on the highest priority provision (as indicated in policy and needs analysis documents)	Funding agencies including LSC	Ongoing	Higher percentage of learner achievements counting to PSA targets Better progression opportunities for ESOL learners
1.2 Promote knowledge of the different (LSC and other) funding routes to ESOL provision and promote SfL (inc. ESOL) through alternative funding routes to maximise provision – e.g. TtG, Employability Skills Programme, Skills for Jobs	Funding agencies – including LSC and MWSG	Ongoing	Increased participation and achievement More ESOL learning opportunities available – promoted through range of partners and intermediaries
1.3 Optimise take up and positive outcomes for learners and employers by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>developing new courses to address specific needs of learners or employers (e.g. technical language options for care homes, living in the UK etc) with accreditation where appropriate</li> <li>delivering courses in a flexible manner to meet learner and employer needs</li> <li>raising awareness of available courses in (local) area</li> </ul>	Employers, providers, sector skills councils and other agencies  Providers  Providers of information advice and guidance, and local networks	Ongoing	Increased participation, achievement and progression  Provision more responsive to needs of employers and learners
1.4 Support flexible ESOL provision additional to the core LSC offer, e.g. via ESF funding <sup>5</sup> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ESOL for BME Groups and Migrant Workers – to enhance access to and quality of ESOL provision and support resulting in better community cohesion and enhanced career progression opportunities for BME and migrant workers – £3.6M</li> <li>Workplace SfL – to increase flexibility and take up of SfL provision in the workplace (literacy, language and numeracy) – £4.09M</li> </ul>	Funding agencies including LSC  LSC  LSC	Contracts due to start April / May 2008 through to Dec 2010	Increased take up and achievement of approved ESOL provision  More flexible provision on offer – intensive courses, workplace, embedded, contextualised  Increased employer engagement

<sup>5</sup> The LSC has three projects within their new ESF adult specifications which specifically support ESOL/SfL. Two of those projects are included under this priority and one under priority two. NB: ESOL and SfL is also referenced within other specs e.g. TtG, SFJ, OLASS, etc.

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Action	Responsibility	Timeframe	Impact / Outcome
1.5 Train the Train to Gain brokers in relation to language and other needs of migrant workers to ensure they are directed to appropriate provision	LSC / EEDA		TtG brokers address issues with employers and raise awareness of funding streams
1.6 Build capacity of the VCS to address migrant worker's ESOL needs	LSC MENTER / COVER Regional SfL teacher training project and other agencies	As funds become available	More ESOL provision available More high quality information advice and guidance available
1.7 Prepare for the planning implications if ESOL and Community Cohesion proposals are implemented (as outlined in DIUS consultation)	MWSG / LSC / Local Authorities	Post consultation (April onwards)	Planning in place to target priority groups including low paid migrant workers
1.8 Providers encouraged to be more proactive in accessing wider parts of the community, and extending their offer to employers	LSC and providers	Ongoing	Engagement strategies Evidence in framework for excellence
1.9 Disseminate results of the regional English language survey and NIACE report on ESOL and migrant workers	EEDA / EERA / NIACE		Greater awareness of the issues in relation to English Language and migrant workers
1.10 Ongoing review of the needs of migrant workers including commissioning action research where appropriate	MWSG		More informed partnership working between stakeholders Additional evidence in place to inform policy and plans

## Priority 2: To deliver high quality ESOL that contributes to the regional economy and social cohesion

Action	Responsibility	Timeframe	Impact / Outcome
2.1 Ensure that tutor support programmes help tutors meet the needs of migrant workers requiring language support	RQIP, EECETT, and national improvement agency	Ongoing	Greater diversity and appropriateness of support
2.2 Train new tutors, mentors and support staff (with particular attention to recruiting from target communities), and up-skilling existing staff e.g.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Skills for Life Professional Development – to increase capacity of tutors and support staff in the region and to up-skill existing staff – Literacy, Language and Numeracy – £1.3M</li> <li>EEDA ESF programme</li> <li>influence providers to invest in workforce development to respond to needs of local communities</li> </ul>	LSC  EEDA  RQIP, EECETT	April 2008 to December 2010	Increased capacity to deliver and support ESOL – including wider workforce, VCS, support networks, etc.  Improved quality Delivery and support styles developed to meet the needs of particular groups  Increased involvement of VCS Percentage of trained tutors and support staff is increased  Number of ESOL staff from migrant communities increased Better opportunities for ESOL staff Improved staff retention
2.3 Ensure that ESOL is mainstreamed in other regional strategies	Regional Migrant Worker Steering Group	Ongoing	ESOL is considered from a variety of perspectives e.g. social, economic, health etc.
2.4 Ensure Framework for Excellence responsiveness dimension incorporates community needs	LSC / DIUS		Providers' responsiveness improves

### Priority 3: To maximise outcomes through the alignment and coordination of efforts / resources from partners across the region

Action	Responsibility	Timeframe	Impact / Outcome
3.1 Provide information on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• policy</li> <li>• language needs</li> <li>• teacher needs</li> <li>• ESOL projects / provision and IAG services tailored to those with ESOL needs</li> <li>• teaching resources</li> <li>• examples of good practice</li> </ul>	LSC MWSG / LSC Regional Skills for Life teacher training project MWSG and LSC  NIACE NIACE		Greater awareness of the context and issues of English language and migrant workers
3.2 Establish a regional information resource – possibly including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• website or electronic bulletin (new or existing)</li> <li>• regular networking events</li> </ul>	SMP newflash  MAFs and other stakeholders	Ongoing  Ongoing	Stakeholders continue to be better informed about ESOL and migrant worker issues
3.3 Review the effectiveness of regional and sub-regional networks to ensure linkages between those networks with a primary interest in ESOL and / or migrant workers	MWSG		Maximise usage at all levels and determine research and communication needs e.g. website / e-bulletin and network meetings, action learning
3.4 Maintain an overview of ESOL and migrant workers in order to influence national and regional policy using sub-regional evidence and plans	MWSG sub-group	From April / May 2008	National and regional policies reflect sub-regional need
3.5 Ensure that local (sub-regional) networks are in place to develop and implement local plans including those that address relevant LAA targets (including NI1 and NI13)	MWSG sub-group	From April / May 2008	Networks in place and local plans address need
3.6 Work with Sector Skills Councils (SSC) to unlock the skills of migrant workers by supporting appropriate ESOL provision	MWSG sub-group	Ongoing	SSC policies and plans address the language needs of employees

## Priority 4: To encourage employers to invest in the skills of migrant workers

Action	Responsibility	Timeframe	Impact / Outcome
4.1 Implement a campaign to increase the numbers of employers that sign up to the Skills Pledge	LSC	Ongoing	Increased numbers of employers sign up to Skills Pledge
4.2 Act as champions in promoting the strategy to employers	EESCP / EEDA		Greater investment by employers in supporting the language skills of migrant workers
4.3 Promote workplace learning through union learning reps / workplace learning champions	Unions and winner of LSC tender EE/E/S01	April 2008 – December 2010	Increased take-up of workplace language learning
4.4 To collate case studies that demonstrate business benefits of improved English language skills among migrant workforce	EEDA	Ongoing	Businesses are promoting ESOL to their peers as an investment

# Acronyms

ACER	Association of Colleges in the Eastern Region
ALP	Association of Learning Providers
BME	Black and minority ethnic
CSR	Comprehensive Spending Review
DIUS	Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills
EEDA	East of England Development Agency
EERA	East of England Regional Assembly
EESCP	East of England Skills and Competitiveness Partnership
EECETT	East of England Centre of Excellence for Teacher Training
ESF	European Social Fund
ESOL	English for Speakers of Other Languages
EU	European Union
FLLN	Family Literacy, Language and Numeracy
IELTS	International English Language Testing System
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
LSC	Learning and Skills Council
MWSG	Migrant worker steering group
NIACE	National Institute of Adult Continuing Education
NLDC	Neighbourhood Learning in Deprived Communities
OLASS	Offender Learning and Skills Service
PCDL	Personal and Community Development Learning
PSA	Public Sector Agreement
QCA	Qualifications and Curriculum Authority
QIA	Quality Improvement Agency
REIA	Race Equality Impact Assessment
RQIP	Regional Quality Improvement Partnership
SfJ	Skills for Justice
SfL	Skills for Life
SMP	Strategic Migration Partnership
TtG	Train to Gain
TUC	Trades Union Congress
VCS	Voluntary and community sector

# Useful documents / links

FACT SHEET 8 – Delivering Embedded literacy, language (ESOL) and numeracy in post-16 vocational programmes (LSC, September 2007)

[http://readingroom.lsc.gov.uk/lsc/National/nat-factsheet8-\\_embedded-learning250907.pdf](http://readingroom.lsc.gov.uk/lsc/National/nat-factsheet8-_embedded-learning250907.pdf)

FACT SHEET 9 – Recording Skills for Life provision (LSC, January 2008)

<http://readingroom.lsc.gov.uk/lsc/National/nat-factsheet9recordingskillsforlife-jan08.pdf>

FACTSHEET 10 – ESOL for Work (LSC, November 2007)

<http://readingroom.lsc.gov.uk/lsc/National/nat-factsheet10esol-for-work.pdf>

FACTSHEET 11 – Ensuring learners with literacy and language learning needs are placed on the most appropriate provision (LSC, October 2007)

<http://readingroom.lsc.gov.uk/lsc/National/nat-sflfactsheet11-dec07.pdf>

Funding Guidance for Further Education in 2007/08 (LSC, March 2007)

<http://www.lsc.gov.uk/publications/recommended/Funding-Guidance-for-Further-Education-in-200708.htm>

A Framework for Managing the Balance and Mix of Provision (2007/08) (LSC, February 2007)

[http://readingroom.lsc.gov.uk/lsc/National/A\\_Framework\\_for\\_Managing\\_the\\_Balance\\_and\\_Mix\\_of\\_Provision\\_200708\\_23Feb2007.pdf](http://readingroom.lsc.gov.uk/lsc/National/A_Framework_for_Managing_the_Balance_and_Mix_of_Provision_200708_23Feb2007.pdf)

Leitch Review of Skills – Prosperity for all in the global economy – world class skills – Final Report (LSC, December 2006)

[http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/independent\\_reviews/leitch\\_review/review\\_leitch\\_index.cfm/](http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/independent_reviews/leitch_review/review_leitch_index.cfm/)

Our Statement of Priorities Better Skills, Better Jobs, Better Lives The Learning and Skills Council's Priorities 2008/09 to 2010/11 (LSC, November 2007)

<http://www.lsc.gov.uk/aboutus/lscstrategy/statementofpriorities/>

The Skills for Life survey – A national needs and impact survey of literacy, numeracy and ICT skills (DFES, 2003)

<http://www.dfes.gov.uk/research/data/uploadfiles/RB490.pdf>

Single Equality Scheme (LSC, April 2007)

<http://readingroom.lsc.gov.uk/lsc/National/nat-singleequalityscheme-30apr07.pdf>

ESOL and migrant workers: views from the East of England (NIACE, 2007). Report from two NIACE regional achievement dialogues held in March and June 2007

[http://eastspace.net/migrantworkers/documents/ESOL\\_and\\_Migrant\\_workers\\_-\\_views\\_from\\_the\\_EoE.pdf](http://eastspace.net/migrantworkers/documents/ESOL_and_Migrant_workers_-_views_from_the_EoE.pdf)

Regional English Language Provision Mapping Exercise – summary of findings (EERA, 2007)

[http://eastspace.net/migrantworkers/documents/Regional\\_English\\_Language\\_Provision\\_Mapping\\_Summary.pdf](http://eastspace.net/migrantworkers/documents/Regional_English_Language_Provision_Mapping_Summary.pdf)

## Useful websites

Further details about some of the relevant Government programmes can be found on the following websites:

Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) key skills – [www.dfes.gov.uk/key](http://www.dfes.gov.uk/key)

read write plus – [www.dfes.gov.uk/readwriteplus](http://www.dfes.gov.uk/readwriteplus)

Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills – [www.dius.gov.uk](http://www.dius.gov.uk)

Jobcentre Plus – [www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk](http://www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk)

Learndirect – [www.learndirect.co.uk](http://www.learndirect.co.uk)

Learning and Skills Development Agency – [www.lsd.gov.uk](http://www.lsd.gov.uk)

LLUK – [www.lifelonglearninguk.org](http://www.lifelonglearninguk.org)

National Institute of Adult Continuing Education – [www.niace.org.uk](http://www.niace.org.uk)

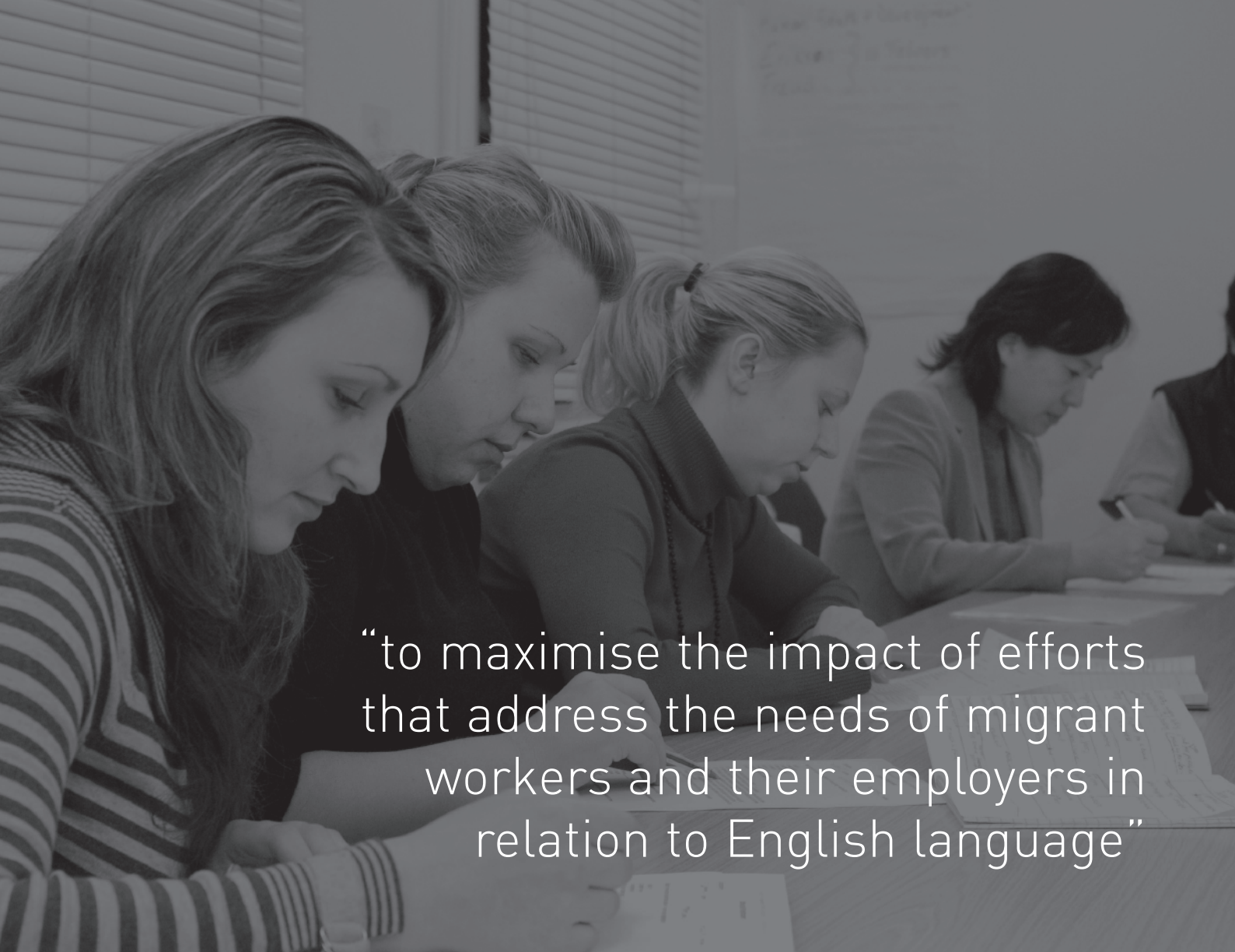
National Research and Development Centre – [www.nrdc.org.uk](http://www.nrdc.org.uk)

Qualifications and Curriculum Authority – [www.qca.org.uk](http://www.qca.org.uk)

Quality Improvement Agency – [www.qia.org.uk](http://www.qia.org.uk)

Alliance of Sector Skills Councils – <http://www.sscalliance.org>

University for Industry – [www.ufi.com](http://www.ufi.com)



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