

++++++ **IT ALL ADDS UP** ++++++

++++++ **IT ALL ADDS UP** ++++++

++++++ **IT ALL ADDS UP** ++++++

A CELEBRATION OF 20 YEARS OF EUROPEAN FUNDS IN WESTERN SCOTLAND

PROJECT NAME	Care Sector Skills
PROJECT SPONSOR	Ayr College

PROJECT ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT

Care Sector Skills is an innovative training project which allowed 36 unemployed beneficiaries to build a portfolio of skills that will contribute to their sustainable employment within the growing Care Sector.

The project responds to the identified skills gaps and employer needs within the Care Industry. SLIMS predict an overall employment rise of 3.6% in the West of Scotland by 2008 that will be outpaced by the 4% growth in new jobs within the Care Sector which will provide 6,600 new jobs during this period. The introduction of Childcare Action Plan and free personal care for the elderly suggests that growth within the Sector will be greater than anticipated. Indeed, Prof McGregor, Director of Employment Research, University of Glasgow, stated in a recent presentation to the Scottish Executive that Caring Occupations will see the largest growth of any Sector during the 2000 to 2012 period.

In addition, the Care Standards Act covering training aimed to promote the modernisation of the Sector and encourage individuals to acquire recognised qualifications benefiting both employers and employees.

The project responded to the identified skills gap by providing extensive support for the development of core skills, ICT skills, internet research and the use of e-mail providing skills relevant to the local job market.

PROJECT AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Beneficiaries were from Objective 2 areas in Ayrshire including, but not specific to, the North Ayrshire Social Inclusion Partnership (SIP) area, North Ayr SIP and the East Ayrshire Coalfield SIP who were all consulted on the project's design.

The project was supported by a strong public/private partnership that included East and South Ayrshire Community Learning Partnerships, East and South Ayrshire Council, local SIPs, Scottish Enterprise Ayrshire, Business Gateway, the Employment Service and local employers, to develop a framework that moved beneficiaries from unemployment with low-grade skills to employment with higher-level skills.

It was anticipated that 80% of beneficiaries would complete and 80% would move into employment. In addition, 70% would achieve a full SGA Higher Care qualification with 30% gaining at least a part qualification.

PROJECT ACTIVITIES

The project provided an integrated package which incorporated the skills required within the expanding Care Sector including:

- engagement and recruitment of beneficiaries, including awareness raising events utilising community partnerships/learning centre networks
- initial guidance, assessment, individual learning plans including Accreditation for Prior Learning
- training in core skills/ICT and an Enterprise programme
- extensive training in Care
- on-going guidance, mentoring, support in progressing to employment
- work placement within South Ayrshire Council, Hansel Village and Seabank Nursing Home
- development of placement programmes and monitoring of progress ensured that employer needs were fully integrated into the project and were a feature of the evaluation process.

PROJECT STRUCTURE

The project was structured on the basis of portfolio building and as a result suitable candidates entered the programme at any time during the project lifetime. Training was delivered flexibly over four days per week providing up to 24 hours of College based learning. Work placements were offered on a day release basis or in longer blocks as determined in consultation with both the beneficiary and employer. Block placements were between five and seven weeks' duration.

Evaluation of past experience of similar projects highlighted the importance of training being provided to accommodate beneficiaries with family commitments. The training element of this programme was designed to be delivered between 9.30am and 3.00pm over four days a week during school term-time. This maximised the opportunity for parents with childcare commitments to participate in the project and also allowed beneficiaries to take advantage of seasonal employment opportunities during summer and Christmas vacations.

Training was carried out using a variety of delivery mechanisms including group-based learning, group work, individual tutoring and on-line learning.

Representatives from private sector companies were also invited to host seminars to the group and Business Gateway delivered a series of half-day sessions relating to business start-up options.

Industrial visits/talks were arranged to evaluate environmental issues within the industry to include waste management and energy efficiency.

PROJECT FINANCE

Funding Partners	Ayr College
Eligible Costs (£)	£207,082
ERDF/ESF Support (£)	£93,187
Priority/Measure	1.3 Develop a Competitive Workforce

PROJECT PERFORMANCE

Key Project Outputs/Results	Target	Achievement	% of target achieve
No. of beneficiaries who are from areas of most need	15	26	173.33%
No. participating in ESF training	30	36	120.00%
No. working towards a qualification	30	36	120.00%
Total no. of beneficiaries	30	36	120.00%
No. of beneficiaries completing their course	24	30	125.00%
No. of leavers/completers gaining full/part qualification	30	34	113.33%
No. of positive outcomes for leavers/completers (areas most in need)	12	26	216.67%
No. of positive outcomes for leavers/completers (women)	15	31	206.67%

PROJECT CONTACT

Patricia Wallace 01292 293454 p.wallace@ayrcoll.ac.uk
