

Welcome to issue 4 of Business Focus, specifically written for OCVC's employer customers. In this issue we will look at how government funding has recently been affected by the current economic crisis and what this means for businesses looking to access training across the county. We'd also like to share our great news at achieving certification for the Training Quality Standard.

Training Quality Standard – Certification Successfully Achieved

We are very pleased to announce that after a very tough and stringent assessment process, OCVC has now achieved certification in the Training Quality Standard. This places the organisation as one of only 100 training providers across the country to have achieved certification and the only one currently in Oxfordshire. In addition to achieving certification for the organisation overall, we have also received two further certifications for excellence in Engineering and in Manufacturing & Processing Industries (specifically our Furniture provision), judged by the relevant Sector Skills Councils for both disciplines.

Sally Dicketts, OCVC Principal said that "this is great news for the college and is a testament to the high quality of our delivery, service and our internal processes". She added that "we will continue to work hard to improve our service further and will look to achieve sector excellence certification in other areas of our provision over the coming year."

We would like to thank all our customers who have supported us in the achievement of this national quality kite mark.

TRAINING
QUALITY
STANDARD

Say!

Have Your

We'd really like to provide you with the opportunity to raise any issues with the team here at OCVC, either specifically concerning your experience with OCVC or if you wish to raise any general comments concerning training. Simply email your comments directly to the Employer Services Hot Line (employer-enquiries@ocvc.ac.uk). We're happy to publish the general enquiries here in the next edition of Business Focus, with our reply.

Fork Lift Driving

Within the last issue of Business Focus, we highlighted our new partnership agreement with JLD to provide driving NVQs for Large Goods Vehicles (LGV) and Passenger Carrying Vehicles (PCV). We are now pleased to announce that JLD are also able to offer Fork Lift Driver training on behalf of the college. This can be delivered as a full cost course over 3 to 5 days depending on previous experience, or part of the Plant Machinery Operations NVQ at Level 2, which can be funded under Train to Gain.

Government Funding for 2009/10 – The Latest News

Within the last issue of Business Focus (February 2009), we advised everyone of the increased flexibility for employers wishing to gain funding for training via the Train to Gain programme. Such was the demand, OCVC and its consortium partners were on target to deliver one of the largest contracts in the South East of England. However the almost unlimited access to Train to Gain funding will be reined in for the contract year starting in August 2009. This is not just an issue affecting our own contract, but a nationwide situation as our investigations have shown.

Some government funding for skills training is being realigned to support the priority of those who are unemployed, especially those who have been so for more than 6 months. We have already seen £83 Million reallocated to colleges responding to this priority group.

For OCVC there has been a mixture of news concerning funding. After some hard negotiation, OCVC has been able to secure funding for apprenticeships at a similar level to that provided in the current year. This is excellent news for all those learners who have already applied for courses starting in September. So if you're an employer who has perhaps held back on the decision to recruit an

apprentice, please contact the Employer Services team (01865 551015) to discuss your requirements as soon as possible.

The outlook for funding for the delivery of NVQs or Skills for Life under the Train to Gain programme is not so encouraging as a result of the reallocation mentioned above. At OCVC we have less funding than we could use to meet customer needs, a theme represented across the region. Our guidance here is if you are considering NVQ programmes at Levels 2 and 3, you are advised to make a decision relatively quickly and contact a provider of your choice – even if you do not want training to start until early in 2010. At OCVC, where possible we will try to ring fence a funding allocation for organisations committed to starting training, and we will advise you when this funding can be made available. Unlike this year, we will be unable to guarantee funding for this training the later we are approached in the funding year. This is not a crude sales tactic, but it's important that employers are aware of potential funding restrictions whoever they choose to use to deliver their training under the Train to Gain programme.

New Employer Focused Web Site coming

They say that if you're more than 2 or 3 clicks away from exactly what you need on a website you'll go elsewhere. In line with most other college providers across the country, finding what you need as a business customer on our existing website is not particularly straightforward, especially for new customers surfing

the site for the first time. So with support from a KPMG sponsored World Class Skills project, we will shortly embark on creating a separate website for the work we do with employers. We'll invite a selection of our customers to test the site before formal release and let everyone else know when we're ready to launch.

Response to Redundancy

As the economy has deteriorated, additional government funding has been made available to organisations to deliver skills to help the unemployed get back into work, and those at risk of redundancy prepare for interviews and compile their CV's. OCVC has successfully bid as the leader of a consortium to deliver this training and a large number of our staff have worked within the Oxford and Banbury Job Centre Plus sites providing advice and guidance on skills training to claimants. A new range of skills courses have been developed, a selection which include welding, obtaining CSCS cards for the construction industry and training for those aiming to become security guards. So if you find yourself in the unfortunate position of having to make staff redundant, funding is currently

available to provide support for additional skills training through one of the consortium partners – although this funding is finite like all others! If you would like to make use of this service, please contact Ingrid Widdows on 01865 551015 for further information.



Brasenose College Cleans Up

A cohort of 14 scouts at Brasenose College Oxford, responsible for cleaning the college, has recently successfully achieved their NVQ Level 2 in Cleaning & Support Services. Certificates of achievement were presented by Director of Business Development Peter Reynolds, who commented "OCVC had a long history of delivering this qualification across numerous

university colleges and it was good to see Brasenose College support their staff training in this way."

Mel Parrot the Domestic Bursar at Brasenose College said "the whole team really enjoyed the training and learnt a great deal, even those with over 15 years experience of this work. I also think the training has developed an even better team spirit within this group of staff".



Moss Plastic Parts – Improvements All Round

The worst recession in automotive history wasn't stopping Moss Plastic Parts from supporting 38 of their staff to achieve their NVQ Level 2 in Business Improvement Techniques (BIT).

BIT is recognised as being one of the toughest Level 2 qualifications to achieve and it is a testament to the staff and management at Moss that all the staff successfully achieved this qualification. It is anticipated that the main improvement projects within the training, which focused on recycling and reducing accidents, will result in significant bottom line benefits for the company.

OCVC Principal, Sally Dicketts who was recently invited to present certificates to a group of successful learners said "it was good to be offered the opportunity to personally congratulate some of the successful learners" and she thanked the management team at Moss Plastic Parts for supporting the training especially during difficult trading conditions. Maurice Callan Production Director, Carrol Covey Personnel Manager and David Walker, Productivity Improvement Manager hosted the event at the company's factory in Kidlington Oxford.



OCVC assessor Malcolm Willis pictured with staff from the company.