

Interested in teaching literacy, numeracy or English (ESOL) to adults?

The work

Skills for Life is the government strategy to help adults improve their levels of literacy, language and numeracy.

Skills for Life teachers work with adults and young people (14+) who wish to improve their skills in reading and writing, maths (numeracy) and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL). They work in a variety of organisations, including further education colleges, community centres, adult learning centres, the prisons and the workplace.

The work of a Skills for Life teacher typically involves:

- discussing individual goals with learners
- designing learning programmes to suit the needs and abilities of the students
- preparing teaching materials
- using a range of resources including computer packages
- teaching groups and/or individuals
- carrying out assessments
- keeping records
- guiding and supporting learning support assistants and volunteers.

Most Skills for Life teachers specialise in literacy, numeracy or ESOL, although some teach more than one of these subjects.

Hours and Environment

As a Skills for Life teacher you could work in a full or part-time position. As a part-time teacher you may have a temporary contract. As a full-time teacher you are likely to work up to 37 hours a week, with up to 25 hours spent teaching, possibly including evenings.

You may be working alongside teachers of other subjects, developing learners' language, literacy or numeracy skills.

Skills and Interests

To be a Skills for Life teacher you need:

- excellent communication and listening skills
- the ability to get on well with people of all ages and backgrounds and understand their needs
- creativity to devise appropriate, interesting and meaningful learning activities
- enthusiasm and the ability to motivate and encourage students.
- the ability to reflect on "what works" in teaching and learning.

Training for new teachers

To qualify as a Skills for Life teacher from September 2007 you will need to do one of the following new qualifications:

- Level 5 Diploma in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector (English Literacy)
- Level 5 Diploma in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector (English ESOL)
- Level 5 Diploma in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector (Mathematics Numeracy).

These qualifications normally last one year (full-time) or two years (part-time).

Universities and colleges offer specialist PGCE and Certificate in Education qualifications, which meet the requirements of the Level 5 Diploma.

Qualifying as a Skills for Life teacher does not give you qualified teacher status (QTS) to teach in schools. Instead, you can apply for Qualified Teacher Learning and Skills (QTLS) status for teaching in the post-compulsory sector.

Already teaching?

If you already have a teaching qualification and want to train to teach literacy, ESOL or numeracy, or already teach one of these subjects and want to qualify in an additional specialist area, you can do one of the following qualifications:

- Level 5 Diploma in Teaching English (Literacy CPD) in the Lifelong Learning Sector
- Level 5 Diploma in Teaching English (ESOL CPD) in the Lifelong Learning Sector
- Level 5 Diploma in Teaching Mathematics (Numeracy CPD) in the Lifelong Learning Sector.

Find a course near you

Check the talent website: www.talent.ac.uk/courses.asp or the London Prospectus: Training to teach in the lifelong learning sector, for a comprehensive list of teacher training providers offering courses in the London area.

Opportunities

There are lots of jobs related to teaching in the lifelong learning sector - in colleges, in the community, in work-based learning, in prisons - in a whole range of settings. To get a feel for current vacancies and salaries we recommend you browse the Guardian on a Tuesday www.jobs.guardian.co.uk or the Times Educational Supplement on a Friday www.tesjobs.co.uk, and the jobs section of the talent website: www.talent.ac.uk/jobs.asp

What's the pay like?

Figures are intended as a guideline only.

Starting salary can depend on experience, qualifications, and whether the teacher is employed by a further education college, a charity or a training provider.

Part-time teachers can earn between £12 – £30 per hour, depending on where they work and their experience.

Qualified teachers can earn from £18,000 to around £25,000 a year; there are opportunities to progress to more senior roles and higher pay scales.

Further information

Department for Education and Skills (Read Write Plus)

The Skills for Life Strategy Unit is based in the Department for Education and Skills. The Unit is responsible for driving forward implementation of the national Skills for Life strategy and ensuring efforts to improve literacy, language and numeracy skills at national and local level are consistent and well co-ordinated. The website contains a number of useful publications.

Web: www.dfes.gov.uk/readwriteplus

Lifelong Learning UK (LLUK)

Sector Skills Council for the lifelong learning sector.

The LLUK helpline offers free professional advice for those working or intending to work in the sector. The helpline is staffed by experienced practitioners and can provide information on financing your training as well as offering specialist advice on all aspects of working in the lifelong learning sector

Helpline: 020 7936 5798

Email: helpline@lluk.org

www.lifelonglearninguk.org

National Reference Point for Skills for Life:

www.lifelonglearninguk.org/nrp/index.html

If you would like to discuss your training options with an adviser call the talent advice line:
020 7911 5372

or email: adviceandinfo@talent.ac.uk