

NORTH WEST ENGLAND Region Employer Clusters

SummitSkills is providing support for sole traders and SME's through the development of, a Learning and Skills Council supported, Employer Clusters project across the North West. Working with partners SummitSkills is enabling employers to ensure that they have appropriate skills to enable them to maximise their productivity and move out of the recession with a stronger competent workforce.

The Employer Clusters build on the requirements identified through industry input to the Sector Skills Agreement priorities and working with strategic partners enables employers to link with a range of support facilities and specific regional funded support. The project is already linking to the following North West Regional initiatives and funding.

Priority 3 Training Provision: Ensuring pro-active, high quality and relevant training

Technical and Craft based Apprenticeship Matching Service

A number of apprentices have in the current economic climate, been made redundant and are near completion of their Apprenticeship Framework. SummitSkills, working with strategic partners is supporting a network to enable these apprentices to complete their Apprenticeship Framework, by matching Apprentices with employers who may wish to add to their workforce on a temporary basis with or without longer term commitment.

Some employers who employ redundant apprentices, may be eligible for a "£1000-00 Golden Hello" to support the employment and ongoing training of the apprentice.

NW Group Training Associations

SummitSkills is also supporting sector employers to link to the three Group Training Associations, being funded throughout the region. This will enable employers who would be unable to commit to training a full time employed Apprentice or Trainee, participate in building a competent workforce to add to their workforce in the future.

It is envisaged that the three Group Training Associations will also in the longer term act as an employment body for Apprentices, for members, and to enhance the training provision for the region to ensure a competent workforce within the North West.

Priority 5 Management Leadership and Business Skills support

Employers are able to access a range of advice and provision including CPD short courses through the Open University and the NWDA funded LEAD programme. The cost of these to employers, are being supported by SummitSkills and partners, so that the cost is as low as 10% of the normal course fee.

Leading Enterprise & Development

Leading Enterprise & Development (LEAD) can help owner/managers to develop their leadership skills, find out how to expand their company, get support to develop new business processes, and gives them access to a peer support network to share advice and experience. Supported by SummitSkills and North West Development Agency the cost is subsidised, for a limited period, so that the cost for the programme normally costing £10,000-00 will cost no more than £1,000-00.

LEAD is available locally at 13 centres across the North West so is available on a local basis.

More details (link to <http://www.summitskills.org.uk/cgi-bin/go.pl/regions/article-details.html?uid=466>) are available at www.summitskills.org.uk/nw or from SummitSkills as below.

Open University CPD

The Open University has developed two new CPD modules which can support employers:

- Practical Leadership
- Effective collaboration

Developed and funded through support from the Higher Level Skills Pathfinder funding, managed by the North West Universities Association and led by the Management and Leadership priority, identified in the Sector Skills Agreement. SummitSkills and the Open University are providing funding to reduce the cost of these online CPD modules to 25% of the standard cost, for those enrolled by 31st October 2009.

Further detail and information on accessing support for each of the above, contact:

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