

skills for life

Whole Organisation Approach



A Draft Strategy for the Fire Brigade's Union
and the UK Fire and Rescue Service

Ulf Union
learning
fund





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Forewords



Skills for Life in the Fire Brigades Union and Fire and Rescue Service.

On behalf of the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) I welcome the partnership working within the Union Learning Fund (ULF) that has enabled this draft 'Skills for Life, Whole Organisation Approach' to be used as the basis to deal with Skills for Life (SfL) in the Fire and Rescue Service. Partnership working is a new concept for many of us – the ULF has successfully demonstrated how it can benefit both employers and FBU members.

The FBU believes that all individuals should have every opportunity to fully develop their true potential, both at work and in their personal lives. The FBU rule-book supports this in its aim: “to serve the community by encouraging its members to be skilled at their craft”.

Partnership working in Union Learning Fund (ULF) projects has contributed greatly to a better understanding of learning and development both within the Fire and Rescue Service and in the FBU itself.

During the life of the projects, SfL has been identified on a number of occasions, being recognised as an area of learning that has, perhaps, been overlooked. It is of course the underpinning foundation for all learning and development regardless of any final achievement.

The National Fire and Rescue Service Learning and Development Strategy and the Scottish Fire and Rescue Services Strategy have been agreed by all the main Fire and Rescue Service organisations.

Within both strategies is an acknowledgement of the role the ULF projects can play, particularly in improving numeracy, literacy and Information Communication Technology (ICT) skills. The FBU is a committed partner to achieving these aims, which can only enhance the skills and development of its members and all employees of the Fire and Rescue Service.

This draft strategy is a 'Whole Organisation Approach', it is and will be challenging to all eventual signatures on its completion and final agreement.

The FBU looks forward to working with the Fire and Rescue Community to ensure that we use it to realise the full potential of all UK Fire and Rescue employees.

Mick Shaw

President – Fire Brigades Union



Skills for Life and the Fire and Rescue Service: A comment from the Chief Fire Officers' Association.

A partnership approach toward learning and development within Fire and Rescue Services.

The Chief Fire Officers' Association (CFOA) support the principle encapsulated within the aims and objectives of the Fire Brigades Union's (FBU) Union Learning Fund (ULF) "Whole Organisation Approach" to life long learning and the development of skills for life (SfL) designed to benefit all our staff within our Fire and Rescue Services.

By working together, we believe that we can better contribute towards the development of Fire and Rescue Service staff, promoting safety and effectiveness in the performance of our duties whilst enhancing the quality and scope of service we provide to our communities.

The Workforce Development element of the National Framework challenges us all to think outside of our traditional training structures and fire and rescue institutions. This includes reconsidering our approach to further education, management colleges and other partners, and to e-learning.

In support of the Workforce Development agenda, CFOA is a co-signatory, along with CLG (formerly ODPM), the LGA, the Fire Service College and other stakeholders, including, the FBU, to the National Fire and Rescue Service Learning and Development Strategy. This provides us with the framework for FRS learning and development over the next ten years. It applies to all our employees and will ensure that the Service operates within the Government's wider skills development framework, particularly in recognising the value of partnership working to achieve joint aims.

Significantly, Key Element 04 of the Learning and Development Strategy acknowledges the contribution that the Union Learning Fund can make in supporting FRS's broader learning and development programmes, through the targeted improvement of basic skills, particularly in adult literacy, numeracy and ICT.

The Union Learning Fund has been created to support organisational learning and development strategies by providing a link between the development of such strategies and our staff, particularly through encouraging and supporting the attainment of those skills that underpin enhanced levels of staff competence, performance and future development.

CFOA believe that in a modernised Fire and Rescue Service, the Union Learning Fund Skills for Life initiative complements those strategies, policies and procedures which support the development of a diverse and high-performance workforce within our Fire and Rescue Services, and are pleased to continue our engagement with this National Strategy.

Des Williamson
CFOA Representative for ULF

1st May 2007



Introduction

The Fire Brigades Union (FBU) has been proactive over the last three years in promoting and delivering an ethos that Lifelong Learning should be an integral arm of the FBU and Fire and Rescue Services (FRS) training and development delivery for all staff.

Skills for Life.....?

Literacy and numeracy learning which caters for the literacy, language and numeracy needs of all post-16 learners, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities, from pre-entry level up to and including level 2. This includes all forms of provision, whether delivered as stand alone, or as part of a vocational programme or bolt on course, and whether delivered full time, part time or through self study or ICT.

Learning and Skills Council

This ethos has been led by the FBU's Union Learning Fund (ULF) projects with Skills for Life (SfL) – Numeracy, Literacy and Information Communication Technology (ICT), being recognised as underpinning all learning and development. This has resulted in the promotion and delivery of SfL leading to staff successfully gaining qualifications at level 1 and 2 in numeracy and literacy.

It is fair to say that a number of FRS employers and senior managers have not embraced the philosophy that there is a SfL need in the FRS, neither, it has to be said, has the FBU fully recognised its importance. There are, therefore, a number of barriers and challenges that exist in developing and implementing a Whole Organisation Approach (WOA) to Skills for Life.

This strategy is therefore, setting out a number of principles and ideals that will help recognise that SfL impinges on all aspects of FRS work and importantly touches all members of staff both uniformed and support. Just as important, in improving SfL in the workplace is the impact of helping individuals to achieve social justice, improving their lives not just as employees but at home and in their social lives.

This is a 'draft' strategy and the proposals contained within it are open for the FBU, managers and employers to discuss, develop and deliver them therefore, conveying an agreed united approach to the learning and development of all staff.

Executive Summary

The case for a Skills for Life Strategy

“In a Fire and Rescue Service context improved SfL are an essential element in delivering all aspects of the services objectives and for enhancing personal development. Learning opportunities should be made available to all staff and the organisational aspiration should be the attainment of numeracy, literacy and ICT skills at level 2 for all staff. From recruitment to retirement SfL improvement should be encouraged, supported and developed.”

FBU ULF Project Staff and Project Partners

- To meet and support the aims contained within the 2005 National Learning and Development Strategy in England as agreed by Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG), Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA), Fire Service College (FSC) and other stakeholders. (**Key Element 04 – Union Learning Fund**).
- To meet and support the aims contained within the 2007 Scottish Fire and Rescue Services Learning and Development Strategy as agreed by the Scottish Executive, CFOA, Scottish Fire Services College (SFSC) and other stakeholders. (**Section 2.6 Securing effective collaborative arrangements – Scottish Union Learning Fund**).
- The Government’s drive for a modern FRS to move away from being a reactive to a proactive service has placed further demands on learning and development increasing the SfL need across the service. Without addressing this need even the basic community fire safety messages will not be communicated correctly.
- Commitment to delivering a SfL and Lifelong Learning culture in the FRS will help meet the Diversity and Equality policies of individual brigades and those standards set by the CLG.
- The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 (DDA) makes it illegal to discriminate against people with dyslexia. The promotion of SfL can highlight learners who may suffer from dyslexic tendencies (dyspraxia / dyscalculia) and ensure that the proper support can be given to them.
- SfL funding is free for any learner who does not hold a level 2 qualification or for any learner who has a SfL need. Additional funding is also available to support learners gain their first ICT qualification and in some cases level 3 qualification. This partnership strategy will help brigades source and apply for funding that they are currently unaware of and not using.
- Engaging in SfL will help meet the aims and objectives of the Government’s strategies and endorse the FRS as a skilled and learning organisation.
- The Integrated Personal Development System (IPDS) involves all uniformed staff regardless of their shift pattern while supporting the safe person concept. The foundation stone for IPDS and National Occupation Standards NOS) are SfL. Ensuring staff have good SfL will ensure that they have the ability to learn at their current position while helping them to develop for the future.

- The introduction of Assessment Development Centres (ADCs) for promotion has challenged staff to prove they have the ability to work at higher and more demanding levels. SfL improves the ability of individuals to prove they have the skills needed to meet the ADC process in aspects such as; communication (oral and written), report writing and basic ICT.
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- There are still no academic qualifications required to join the FRS; pre SfL application testing, with appropriate support, will help applicants and meet equality and diversity aims in recruitment.
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- Understanding the application of Numeracy, Literacy and ICT skills underpins all aspects of learning and development in the FRS. Ensuring staff have the requisite SfL will enable them to carry out their roles safely and more effectively.
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- The FRS needs its staff to continually develop and improve their skills thereby providing an effective and valuable public service. Without effective SfL, staff will take longer to learn and develop their core skills in what can be a demanding and dangerous environment. SfL will contribute to enhancing the safety and performance of staff in all their duties.
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- ICT is becoming an increasingly essential key skill for Firefighters, Emergency Control Staff and Support Staff within the FRS, for example personal development records, reports and documents, spreadsheets holding statistical information and financial budgets. Good ICT skills are inherent within the correct application and use of hardware and software. New technology on the fireground, in emergency fire control rooms and on fire stations is on the increase. SfL are essential for ensuring that all these applications are correctly used, thereby reducing errors, hardware problems and pressure on the staff using them.
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- Support staff carry out a range of vital functions including administration, budgets, statistical information, catering and cleaning etc. Ensuring the staff have good literacy, numeracy and ICT skills will help to reduce errors, ensure staff can follow health and safety instructions, increase productivity and help them further their own potential.
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- SfL is now an integral part of the Investors in People (IIP) award. Employers aiming to maintain or those looking to attain the award for the first time will need to show evidence that they are supporting SfL with their staff.
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- Local Government has recognised that to provide excellence in providing its public services then it needs staff to have a good level of SfL. In many local authorities a lifelong learning committee is in place with representation from management and recognised trade unions.
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- The LGA through initiatives such as; 'Champions of Local Learning' and 'Community Well – Being' have recognised the importance of SfL and its links to the promotion of access and inclusion, social cohesion and social justice. Given the increasing work with communities, the FRS can advocate SfL with young adults through its many community based initiatives.
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- All individuals deserve the opportunity to learn and develop in the workplace, at home and in their social lives. Skills for Life are the foundation; good Employers and Managers recognise this and by supporting their staff will gain an improved and confident workforce.
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- Union Learning Representatives can help provide a valuable link between brigade's learning and development strategies and the staff who would benefit directly from support in the delivery of a SfL strategy; this would underpin the level of staff competence and support their future development.

 LearnDirect



Background

In 2001 the Government launched its Skills for Life strategy which set a number of challenging targets regarding SfL learners. This came on the back of some startling statistics that clearly indicated that there is a defined need to improve the SfL levels of adults. The statistics have pointed to 1 in 7 adults having literacy skills of an 11 year old and 1 in 5 adults having a basic numeracy need in order to lead a modern life style. The Governments aim was to have 750,000 adults improve their SfL by 2004.

...launch a new 'Pledge' for employers to voluntarily commit to train all eligible employees up to Level 2 in the workplace. In 2010, review progress of employer delivery. If the improvement rate is insufficient, introduce a statutory entitlement to workplace training at Level 2 in consultation with employers and unions.

Leitch Review – December 06

This led to Government policy embracing and increasing the budget for adult learning provision and access to the 'National Tests' at level 1 and 2 in numeracy and literacy. (Achievement at level 2 gives an equivalent qualification of an academic pass of GCSE grade 2 but is not the same as the GCSE qualification). Since their introduction, over 350,000 learners have achieved a pass in the national certificates.

In England the Government launched its Skills Strategy – '21st Century Skills; Realising our Potential' which offered further support to SfL learning and the recognition of ICT as the third basic skill. This put employers centre stage in creating a 'demand-led' system.

In Northern Ireland the Department for Employment and Learning (DELNI) has successfully promoted SfL through their Essential Skills Strategy which directly supports the Northern Ireland Skills Strategy.

The Scottish Executive published its Lifelong Learning Strategy for Scotland and following the 'Adult Literacy and Numeracy in Scotland' (ALNIS) report launched its major national initiative to improve SfL.

In Wales the assembly has launched its strategy; 'The Learning Country – Vision into Action' setting out its aims for Skills for Life learners and lifelong learning.

Background

The most recent skills report; **Prosperity for all in the Global Economy – world class skills (Lord Leitch)**, was published in December 2006. This report sets out the Government's strategy for ensuring that the country has the skills to compete in the global economy and recognises that we are still behind many countries in having and maintaining a workforce that is skilled to meet the requirements within it. Despite the number of learners improving their SfL need since 2001, recent statistics within the report still make a stark analysis:

Today, more than one third of adults do not hold the equivalent of a basic school-leaving qualification. Almost one half of adults (17million) have difficulty with numbers and one seventh (5 million) are not functionally literate.

Leitch Review – December 06

The report is also clear that the Government sees a skilled workforce increasing social justice and social standing for its citizens. The report goes further by addressing the fact that we lack the necessary vocational skills and lays out a number of key principles to overcome these issues.

'We have particular skill gaps in basic skills for employability, including literacy, numeracy and use of IT; intermediate skills at apprenticeship, technician, higher craft and associate professional level; mathematics; and management and leadership. Employers have long been concerned that they are not getting recruits with the skills they want'.

*21st Century Skills - Realising Our Potential
Government White Paper – July 03*

Many of the issues raised are aimed at the manufacturing sector however there is a clear need to ensure that the public sector is treated no differently in the learning and development of the skills of its staff.

Given that the public service sector has the largest and most diverse workforce in the country it could be argued that greater investment is needed.

Continued and additional investment in the skills of public sector workers is paramount to the delivery of public services whose excellence increases social justice issues.



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‘Ensuring we have the leaders, middle managers, and frontline workers with the skills to develop and provide high quality public services that put the interests of the user at the heart of their delivery’

‘Getting on in business, getting on at work’
Secretary of State for Education and Skills
March 2005

This was recognised by the introduction of the National Support Project for Basic Skills in Local Government. Over 50 local authorities engaged in the initiative and an estimated 20,000 public sector employees improved their SfL. However, the level of support directed towards the FRS often falls short of that given to other county council staff.



Role of the Union Learning Representative:

For many adults and workers, poor SfL still carries a type of ‘stigma’ leading to reluctance to admit to a learning need in this area. In order to overcome this there needs to be a sensitive, supportive and sympathetic method in place for staff.

The introduction of Union Learning Reps (ULRs) has provided a link between the learner and the learning provision where an employee does not have to raise directly with a manager their particular need; especially if a SfL need is recognised.

“Union Learning Reps are an extraordinary plus for the trade union movement”

‘...you can have all the managers and men and women in suits lecturing people and trying their best to enthuse people about picking up new skills, but the union learning rep – the person you trust, who’s got no angle in this, who gets no bonus out of it – is enormously powerful’

Alan Johnson MP - Secretary of State for Education and Skills 2006

The underpinning of SfL in all learning and development will ensure that FRS staff have the skills not only for their current role but in future roles while at the same time enhancing their social and family lives.

With this information, support and direction from the various Government Skills Strategies, there is an opportunity for all FRS stakeholders to engage in a Whole Organisation Approach to Skills for Life.

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Skills for Life Initiatives

– Government and Agencies

Since 2001 a number of agencies and initiatives were set up to help embed Skills for Life. There have also been a number of changes in the funding of Adult Learning with free access to the national tests for learners not holding a level 2 qualification.

Government policy however, is changing and the Leitch Report recommends a number of ways that funding is to be targeted. Many of these are allowing the employer to access free training for SfL learners. However, this policy is changing with more emphasis being placed on the employer to fund courses, e.g. the Employer Engagement Strategy out of which it is hoped to have 'Employer Champions' to promote SfL in business.

Three of the key initiatives in providing SfL support for employers and employees are detailed below; a number of other helpful references can be found at the rear of this document.

The FBU ULF project has been engaged with a number of these initiatives and use some of the material available to promote SfL.

Move on – Get on at Work:

The Move on - Get on at Work initiative is aimed at increasing SfL in the workplace and offers employers the opportunity to engage with their staff through a 'Test the Company' initiative.

NIACE (National Institute of Adult Continuing Education)

NIACE has worked closely with local Government authorities to promote SfL and has already provided guidance and advice to many local authorities. The FRS appears to be overlooked when such initiatives are introduced thereby preventing staff from taking part and therefore, denying equality of opportunity to a section of the workforce.

Train to Gain:

Train to Gain gives the employer the opportunity to secure **free** advice and **funding** for learners not holding a level 2 qualification. Using a Train to Gain broker and in consultation with trade unions, employers can source quality training from local providers for SfL and the fairly new Information Technology Qualification (ITQ).

Skills for Life Initiatives

Skills for Life - Employers and FRS Management

For any occupation that involves serving the public, good written and oral communication skills are fundamental in meeting the high quality of service standards that the public deserve and public services employers aim to provide.

Employers who are serious about staff retention and encouraging progression recognise the barriers that a lack of confidence in **literacy, numeracy, ICT or language** skills has on staff.

Many organisations and employers have taken the risk that they have no problems arising from gaps in their employees SfL. The simple fact is that whether it's being able to read and understand health and safety instructions or implementing change, it is vital to know that all staff have the SfL needed to perform their tasks.

A SfL strategy will significantly enhance and carry significant benefits for a modern FRS and will need support and direction from CLG, employers, senior managers, elected members and influential agencies.

For example; in Scotland, the FRS is a devolved responsibility and although COSLA sits on the National Joint Council for Local Authority FRS (NJC) there is self determination for the Scottish FRS. There are a number of specific initiatives taking place regarding SfL (core skills) undertaken by Scottish Local Authorities which the FRS could engage in.

Middle managers are likely to experience some difficulties in accommodating time off for learners which would create barriers in the way of preventing access to learning. A strong message is therefore, needed to ensure that any strategy is fully supported by those at the most senior levels.

Until the ULF projects started there was little support from employers and senior managers in engaging staff with lifelong learning – especially SfL. There is still some reluctance to recognise that a number of FRS staff may have a SfL need therefore, little action has been taken in promoting or supporting SfL learners.

While there are well defined training opportunities for uniformed staff, equivalent opportunities for support staff are not always so evident. Many of these workers are employed in catering, cleaning, clerical and administration work and are predominantly women.

A further issue is that these low paid jobs attract people whose first language is not necessarily English without any obvious mechanisms in place for providing them with language skills support.



Of course not all of these staff are employed directly by the FRS as more and more work is contracted out. This does not however, prevent FRS managers from ensuring that contractors have a commitment to their employees learning and development including SfL.

All Fire Authorities are committed to equality and diversity, engagement and support by engaging in SfL will enhance fairness at work.

Some local authorities have instigated a SfL strategy and provided opportunities for staff wishing to brush up their skills or gain level 1 or 2 qualifications. Unfortunately the FRS is often excluded from such initiatives resulting in its staff missing out.

Brigades have their own training and development departments with staff delivering core training in a variety of subjects. A significant number of brigades are themselves Vocational Qualification assessment centres with staff holding 'A' units and Internal Verification certification.

It is unclear if FRS training staff's own SfL are being assessed and they may therefore be assessing VQs and oblivious to the mapped standards in the core curriculum.

'Our research showed that there was an increased need for employees to develop skills in dealing with people, problem solving and work planning in particular to allow them to deal with changes in their jobs.'

Campaign for Learning, *Making Learning Work*
May 2005

The DDA prohibits discrimination against employees who may suffer from dyslexia. There is little (if any) screening for dyslexic tendencies or support mechanisms being introduced to help staff who may have some learning difficulties associated with dyslexia.

Through the ULF projects, a number of Learning Agreements have already been agreed with brigades and are supporting consultation on learning and development issues. These will offer the opportunity for both management and union to raise SfL issues and implement agreement on how best to support learners.

The introduction of the Government's 'Train to Gain' scheme gives the employer the opportunity to work with the unions to gain funding for the Information Technology Qualification (ITQ).

'route all public funding for adult vocational skills in England, apart from Community learning, through Train to Gain and Learner

Accounts by 2010'. Leitch Report – 2006

Learning at Work week / day gives the ideal opportunity for the FRS to promote lifelong learning and in particular SfL. Employers and senior managers have the opportunity to host SfL events and taster courses from a variety of learning providers.

Skills for Life Initiatives

Recommendations

- Whole Organisation Approach presentations should be made at the FRS NJC, COSLA, CFOA, Human Resource (HR) stream and individual FRS Senior Management Team meetings to promote and motivate debate of SfL
- Where local authorities and Fire Authorities are engaging staff in SfL initiatives, they should ensure that the recognised Trade Unions are involved.
- Employers to build SfL in HR strategies that support encouragement and entitlement to SfL learning opportunities for all staff.
- SfL mini-test to be available on intranets, etc.
- SfL should be included in local training and development plans.
- IRMPs should be evaluated to ensure that staff have the requisite skills to meet the needs of plan implementation.
- Where learning forums have been set up SfL to be standing agenda item.
- Brigades to review how SfL can be embedded in local training delivery.
- Members of training department staff should attain at least the level 2 qualification in adult learning support.
- SfL support for learners should be available via a learning provider who can deliver flexible SfL tutorials and is accredited to deliver the national tests.
- Brigades and Fire Authorities should ensure that they have a process in place to support learners with dyslexic tendencies.
- Management and the FBU to work together to secure Train to Gain funding
- Employers and managers should fully participate and support Learning at Workweek and in particular Learning at Work day.
- CFOA to promote the SfL advocates and learning champions.

Skills for Life and the Fire and Rescue Services

The FRS is a publicly funded service and plays a significant role in providing an emergency response in an increasing number of situations; it also offers fire safety advice to the public and business communities.

Continuous learning and training for all staff is paramount and the provision of core training has always played a major role in the FRS for operational and emergency control room personnel.

Learning and training opportunities for support staff (clerical, cooks, cleaners, etc) is harder to identify as there is no national training and development programme in place, leaving individual brigades to decide on appropriate training.

Across all sectors there is a need for staff to maintain a minimum level in SfL. There has however, been little direction in offering learning in this area or recognition of a need to offer 'brush-up' opportunities.

Indications from some managers appear to point to the fact that they do not think that there is a SfL need within the employees of the FRS. However it is considered that this may be either an assumption based on a lack of evidence or the lack of awareness of the scope of a SfL strategy.

If a strategy to embed SfL in a whole organisation approach is to be successful, then it needs the support of all FRS stakeholders.



Although changes have been made to rank/role posts in the FRS, there is still a hierarchical structure in place. Employees with a SfL need are often reluctant to raise such a need with their line manager or more senior manager. The ULR can play an important role in overcoming some of the obstacles and provide a non-management source of confidential advice.

On the following pages we have identified some of the areas where, as an organisation, the FRS needs to recognise the importance that SfL plays. This draft strategy also suggests a number of recommendations for discussion on how to embed SfL in all aspects of work in the FRS.

Skills for Life Initiatives

Fire and Rescue Service - Modernisation

The FRS has undergone (and is still undergoing) change in many of its facets under a modernisation process; this has included a significant change in the role of the FRS itself where responsibility for responses to certain 'new dimension' incidents, Road Traffic Collisions (RTC) and other emergencies is encompassed by statute.

This has led to new requirements in the delivery of training and development in the FRS of both technical and operational aspects.

ICT is playing a bigger part in dealing with incidents with many fire appliances carrying fixed or mobile computers to access data. In addition the government led ICT projects such as Firelink rely heavily on the introduction of new technology.

There has also been a significant change in the direction of the FRS from being a reactive to a more proactive service in the prevention of fires and incidents. FRS staff delivers home safety visits offering Information Advice and Guidance (IAG) to the public.

Community Fire Safety Managers, Operation Managers, Firefighters and Emergency Control Staff are at the forefront of this change which has led to the need of improved communication and presentational skills.

All of these issues are key to the implementation of the individual FRS Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMPs) which sets out the brigade's operational and community plans.

Without a proper training, learning and development plan for staff the implementation of the IRMP may not be as successful as anticipated.

Recommendations

- Provide access to qualifications in IAG for staff working with the community.
- Assess levels of numeracy, literacy and ICT skills against the National Occupational Standards (NOS).
- Ensure staff have the skills to implement the local IRMP.

Workforce Development

FRS Workforce Development (WD) has undergone a major change over recent years with the introduction of the Integrated Personal Development System (IPDS), Scottish/National Vocational Qualifications (S/NVQs) and Continuous Personal Development (CPD).

‘I need to get qualified so I can get a better job...’

Paul started to work on his English and Maths through group sessions, workshop sessions and Learndirect Skills for Life courses. He did an assessment to find out what his learning needs were and his programme was planned from there. He started by achieving a Level 1 certificate in both literacy and numeracy, and has recently passed his Level 2 in numeracy. Now he is working toward his literacy at Level 2.

‘I am now training to become a fulltime firefighter, but I realised that I need the evidence to prove my level of literacy and numeracy skills. The skills I learn will also support any future learning I might need in the service.’

RDS Firefighter

It has taken a number of years and some difficult challenges to develop and introduce the IPDS that supports the ‘safe person concept’ whereby individuals have to meet National Occupational Standards (NOS) thereby ensuring that they have the requisite skills to be competent in their role. While the majority of the FRS has introduced IPDS to staff working Wholetime Shift Systems and Emergency Fire Control staff there has been little support for its inclusion with Retained Duty System (RDS) staff.

Work is taking place to introduce an equivalent IPDS system for support staff of the FRS.

With the elimination of sector specific examinations for fire personnel, a new selection procedure for gaining promotion has been introduced. This encompasses the use of Assessment Development Centres (ADC) and associated evaluation techniques such as Personal Quality Attributes. This has been a complete change for staff seeking promotion and has led to applicants having to recognise and gain other skills to go through the assessment procedures.

There is already increasing evidence that a number of staff attending the ADCs are found to have difficulties in communication and report writing exercises.

Recommendations

- WD seminars take place covering all current aspects.
- SfL and its links to the NOS and IPDS should be raised with the appropriate committee.
- Support for staff going through the ADC to include access to SfL and ICT support.

Skills for Life Initiatives

Fire and Rescue Service Recruitment

A national recruitment and retention strategy has been developed for the FRS but has yet to be fully adopted by all individual FRS. There is no requirement for applicants to have any academic qualifications to join the FRS; instead they undergo a range of tests contained in the national strategy and include; ability range tests, psychometric testing and medical examination.

Many applicants to the FRS fail at the first sift where their completed application form is scrutinised for simple mistakes. Applicants from ethnic minority backgrounds

and migrant workers are particularly susceptible to this, resulting in their failure to progress to the later stages of the process.

A number of individual FRS hold recruitment open days for possible applicants to the service. This gives them the opportunity to understand the process they will have to go through and a look at the psychometric entry tests. This is an ideal opportunity for brigades to offer SfL assessments and support to learners who may wish to brush up on their skills prior to submitting an application.

Avon Fire and Rescue Service in partnership with the FBU ULF project and Filton College have devised a pre entry package. This consists of offering all prospective applicants the opportunity to acquire the skills needed to enter the fire and rescue service. This course includes:

- Taking the free national literacy and numeracy tests
- Having a diet and nutrition programme designed for each individual
- Being taught correct interview techniques, building confidence and helping the candidate be better prepared for the interview.

This course doesn't guarantee the candidate 100% success to enter the brigade but it does increase employment possibilities with any employer.

Recommendations

- Numeracy, Literacy and ICT to be clarified within the FRS Recruitment and Retention Strategy.
- FRS to provide applicants with the offer of pre-application SfL tests.
- FRS to provide links to support applicants with a SfL need.
- Assessments carried out with new trainees during their training period.
- ULRs should be utilised during recruitment days and initial training.

Learning and Development

A National FRS Learning and Development Strategy was launched in England and Wales at the end of 2005 with the Scottish FRS launching their Learning and Development Strategy in 2003, and the revised version in 2007. These strategies set out a number of goals that a modern UK FRS needs to achieve whilst leaving flexibility for Regional Boards and individual FRS's to deliver local training.

Both strategy documents have been endorsed by; CLG, Scottish Executive, LGA, FSC, SFSC, CFOA, CFOA(S) and the FBU.

The strategy includes the following:

- Equip the FRS to meet current and future challenges.
- Equip the FRS to make the shift from being primarily an emergency response service, to being both an emergency response and a community safety service.
- Delivers a better skilled and trained workforce.
- Improves performance.
- Supports cultural change and the development of an improvement culture within the FRS.
- Allows for best value from the investment in training and supports Comprehensive Performance Assessment improvement including efficient and effective targeting of expertise and resources.
- Encourages collaboration and partnership working.
- Supports equality and diversity across the FRS.
- Enable FRS people to maximise their personal and organisational potential.

Key element 4 of the National Learning and Development Strategy and section 2.6 of the Scottish FRS Strategy endorses the ULF and SULF projects as a means of accessing and supporting staff in learning opportunities.

‘The Fire and Rescue Service Core Values recognise the need for organisations and individuals to take responsibility for improving performance and using development to achieve full potential.’

Jim Fitzpatrick MP, Minister with responsibility for fire issues

A whole organisation approach to SfL would underpin these aims and also support local training and development issues that arise.

Recommendations

- Greater emphasis in the role that ULF projects can have in learning and development needs to be encouraged.
- Centre of Excellence (CoE) to promote the ULF projects.
- Communication with the CoE and the FBU ULF projects are improved.

Skills for Life Initiatives

Fire Service College (FSC) and Scottish Fire Services College (SFSC)

The FRS has two specific colleges that deliver training and development in operational and technical areas. In previous years the FSC delivered thousands of hours of 'in house' sector specific training for all operational and emergency control roles.

However, over recent years brigades have been delivering an ever increasing number of in-house courses using local education providers which has led to the FSC having to assess its functions and delivery methods.

The FSC also delivers a number of courses to overseas FRS where English is the second language.

The SFSC delivers similar core training for the Scottish FRS but also provides trainee courses for new firefighters across all the Scottish brigades. The SFSC and FSC have been involved in the development of a Managed Learning System (MLS) in the FRS known as a 'Virtual College'. This delivers a number of online courses including a firefighter development programme. The take up of e-learning is ever increasing and is seen as a method to overcome a number of problems in staff accessing learning and development opportunities.

The introduction of e-learning in the FRS has also led to a number of issues regarding ICT training for staff using the virtual college. It has also highlighted the poor ICT infrastructure that exists in many brigades especially in rural areas where the vast majority of retained stations are situated.

At present SfL is not included in any of the courses and staff attending the colleges do not receive any pre-training or assessment to ascertain that they can actually complete the course. The colleges do not provide any support for learners who may need to enhance their SfL skills in order to deliver quality course work; it is assumed that all attendees have the requisite skills.

Recommendations

- FBU to raise SfL with appropriate Learning and Development committees within the FSC.
- FSC to look at how SfL can be embedded in core training courses.
- SFSC virtual college to look at how to host SfL.
- FSC managed learning system to look at hosting SfL.
- Both colleges websites to have links with SfL sites.

Investors in People / Investors in Diversity and Customer First

Many individual FRS already hold the Investors in People (IiP) award indicating their commitment to and investment for staff with other FRS's currently striving to do so.

The standard itself is reviewed and updated every three years to ensure that it remains relevant, accessible and attractive to all types of organisations.

The IiP assessors and advisors are now taking SfL into account when carrying out their awarding assessment and consider it an implicit part of the standard.

Other similar awards such as Investors in Diversity and Customer First give the FRS the ideal platform to show their commitment to employee training and development while improving the service delivery to the public.

Employers and senior managers will need to take this into account when applying for the award or in the progress of re-application.

Recommendations

- Employers / Managers should contact IiP to ascertain SfL criteria.
- Procedures embedded to ensure IiP assessors are aware of the services commitment to staff in having access to SfL opportunities.
- Employers / Managers to ensure SfL is embedded when making application for other awards.



Skills for Life Initiatives

The UK FRS - a Leadership role within the Community

Junior Firefighters, Young Offenders, Children's Academies, Princes Trust and other Community Initiatives:

Through its community safety work and move towards a more proactive service a number of individual FRS work closely with an increasing number of children or young adult organisations. In some cases these are run as a multi-agency function alongside the police/social work/drug abuse organisations.

These initiatives can vary from helping scouts / guides achieve their fire badges to providing help and advice to young offenders and fireraisers. Other areas include those participating on the Princes Trust or Duke of Edinburgh award.

In some FRS there has been support from education departments in providing a qualified teacher to help overcome any particular learning difficulties.

The majority of FRS staff who work closely with these groups have no specific learning or development background in teaching or learning support. In many cases the young adults are from disadvantaged environments where they have missed school and have low levels of numeracy and literacy.

Firefighters have a community leadership role holding respect with children and young adults and trust plays an important part in this relationship.

An opportunity exists in this relationship and associated initiatives to promote the importance of SfL.

Recommendations

- Individual FRS should undertake a review of how SfL could be embedded into these projects.
- Staff working within such initiatives should receive appropriate training.
- Staff should be trained in how to notice learning difficulties such as dyslexia.
- Means of supporting young adults with a SfL need should be developed linked with local authority education departments and learning providers.

Overview

The areas identified on the previous pages only give a short synopsis of the importance that good literacy, numeracy and ICT skills can have in supporting excellence in the Fire and Rescue Service – something that all stakeholders are striving to achieve.

The justification for supporting and helping staff or the community with skills for life does not stop at the workplace or fire station doors. They help individuals in their everyday lives whether it's helping the children with their homework, communicating important letters or learning how to access the internet and buying something online for the first time.

Employees supported in this way are likely to be more productive and conducive to change, less likely to take time off work and more appreciative of the fact that their employer is actually recognising staff as their most valuable resource.

A Whole Organisation Approach to embed Skills for Life can ensure that the UK Fire and Rescue Service delivers a quality service to the public in all aspects and supports the learning and development opportunities for all its staff.





Skills for Life and FBU Officials

The FBU has been one of the most pro-active unions regarding the training and development of its officials. As well as supporting officials who access the Trades Union Congress (TUC) Education programme, the union has delivered bespoke courses such as; Health and Safety, Fairness at Work (Equality), Discipline, Disputes and Grievances.

A national education strategy has been at the heart of the FBU education programme and this has evolved over a number of years. Branch and Brigade officials' schools at a regional level were supported by a National School split into a year 1 and year 2. Access to the national school was dependant on students having attended at least one regional school and Fairness at Work school.

The most recent education policy was passed by the FBU Annual Conference in 2004 but due to the national dispute has never really been driven forward. Although SfL is embedded in TUC courses it is unsure how much work has been undertaken in the bespoke courses delivered regionally and nationally.

Course content has historically been subject matter only and SfL has not been considered as relevant in delivering the education programme or improving the skills of the union's officials.

As highlighted in the Leitch report there is a high percentage of the working population with a SfL need and this may apply to some union officials.

Due to the education programme FBU officials have a good understanding and knowledge of subjects such as; internal policies, regulations, law, politics, legal frameworks, etc. Having the knowledge and applying it correctly in a coherent manner is however, another skill.

Application is just as important and covers a multitude of tasks that require skills in; communication, presentations (including PowerPoint), report writing, document reading, ICT and budgets; all of this expertise is SfL pertinent.

A simple example of the importance of SfL can be contained in the submission of a written response to a proposal. Submitting a well constructed response to the actual contents of the proposal that contains the correct spelling and grammar is more likely to receive a serious response from the recipients.

ULRs are already recognised in the FBU rule-book as is the appointment of a Brigade Lifelong Learning Co-ordinator. The union will need to ensure that they are supported and offered appropriate learning and development to carry out their role. Attendance at SfL courses and the adult support certificate should be encouraged with FBU tutors attending similar courses.

As a result of the work carried out on behalf of the union by the Union Learning Project team and Unionlearn the following senior FBU officials are SfL Advocates: Matt Wrack – General Secretary, John McGhee – National Officer. Trevor Shanahan, the FBU ULF project manager is also an advocate.

Skills for Life Initiatives

Recommendations

- Discussion should take place with the National Officer and Executive Council education sub-committee on how to embed SfL in the FBU's own education programme.
- A Whole Organisation Approach to SfL presentation should be made to the FBU Executive Council.
- SfL should be on the agenda and tabled for national education officers meetings.
- National Officer should raise the issue of SfL in TUC education at Unionlearn Board/ Advisory group as appropriate.
- Any proposed changes to the FBU education policy should endorse and support the inclusion of SfL.
- FBU tutors should gain the adult learning support certificate.
- Discussion should take place with tutors used by the union as to the best methods of embedding SfL in courses.
- New officials should be offered and encouraged to voluntarily take the national numeracy and literacy assessment followed by the appropriate national test.
- Bespoke SfL learning opportunities/ courses should be offered to all officials with appropriate training for specific roles eg Regional Treasurers/Health and Safety reps.
- FBU Advocates should be more prominent in the promotion of SfL with officials / members and across the FRS in general.

Skills for Life and FBU Members

As outlined previously there have been a number of changes in the FRS that its staff and FBU members have faced. The FBU has been engaged in the introduction and support of a lifelong learning culture within its own organisation while working in partnership with key stakeholders to have a learning agenda across the UK FRS.

This work has been achievable due to the project funding received from the Union Learning Fund (ULF), Scottish Union Learning Fund (SULF), Northern Ireland Union Learning Fund (NIULF) and the recently accessed Wales Union Learning Fund (WULF).

Within the ULF projects, SfL recognition and support is an important role touching uniformed staff and support staff. The projects have an agreed number of learning outcomes that are to be achieved which includes SfL passes at level 1 and 2.

All of the FBU regions have a regional co-ordinator whose role is the promotion of lifelong learning, recruiting and supporting ULRs, engaging employers and meeting learner targets. Co-ordinators have been instructed to develop regional plans to deliver their allotted targets which include SfL.

A SfL tutor (FENTO level 4) is employed by the ULF project to deliver SfL learning opportunities and develop best practice that can be used across the FRS.

As indicated earlier in this strategy, there are a number of clear drivers that the FBU has been involved in that link to SfL. These include changes to learning and development due to the operational and WD modernisation programmes.

FBU members are actively involved in IPDS which has now embraced an electronic Personal Development Record (PDR) endorsing the need for all staff to have a level of ICT skill.

‘I have recently undertaken numbers direct courses in handling data and Measure, Shape and Space and found them challenging and interesting and have used the skills I have learned to help my daughters with their schoolwork.’

Learner – Tyne and Wear Fire Safety Dept

The union is represented on a number of national committees that deal with WD but the subject of SfL is currently not a specific discussion area.

The adoption of formal learning agreements and the setting up of learning forums in brigades gives ULRs the opportunity to raise the profile of SfL.

Skills for Life Initiatives

FBU Learning Centres

The FBU has three Learndirect workplace learning centres in the North East. These are supported in partnership with Northumberland FRS, Tyne and Wear FRS and Cleveland FRS and deliver a variety of courses to FRS staff including SfL.

Although the centres draw funding from Learndirect, all three brigades currently support the centres with financial and administrative assistance.

Born from ULF project funding in the North East, the centres deliver the National Tests in numeracy and literacy accredited by City and Guilds and ICT courses accredited by the British Computer Society (BCS).

The Northumberland FRS centre has supported applicants wishing to join the FRS by providing SfL tutorials leading to achievement passes at level 1 and 2.

All three centres are part of Unionlearn with funding allocated specifically to provide SfL learning opportunities.

Over the previous two years the centres have delivered SfL to over 300 learners who have undertaken a skills check prior to going on to learning. Around 80 learners have achieved passes at either level 1 or level 2 in numeracy and literacy. All funding for these courses has been drawn through Learndirect with no direct cost to the employer.

In the current academic year 73 learners have enrolled for courses at the learning centres with 52% having a recognised SfL need.

The majority of learners wish to take up ICT courses and in particular the European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL) and the new ITQ. There are clear links with SfL and ICT that can help learners achieve their goals, e.g. ECDL spreadsheet module and numeracy, word processing and literacy.

As identified earlier, a SfL tutor is employed using funding from the national ULF project and has been working out of the learning centre in NFRS. As well as delivering SfL tuition and the National Tests the tutor is being utilised in determining how SfL can be developed across the FRS.

The first year has mainly been a process of the tutor getting an understanding of the Learndirect courses and systems, an understanding of how the FRS operates and delivering SfL in the North East.

A SfL strategy has been developed within the NE learning centres that mirrors the self-assessment process that the centres must undertake. Due to changes in University for Industry (Ufi), a new assessment form and process has been introduced which will need the current strategy to be reviewed.

Recommendations

- The issue of SfL should be raised with all members of the FBU through appropriate mediums including Workforce Development, Assessment Development Centres and Continuous Personal Development.
- The learning centres to continue to deliver SfL and maintain its promotion through the North East FRS.
- The FBU website and the FB U-Learn website should be utilised to promote SfL.
- A link to the 'Move On' site and the mini-test should be made with appropriate support mechanisms for individuals who would like to brush up their SfL.
- A network of ULRs should be in place supported by learning committees and the union rule-book.
- ULRs should be encouraged and supported to attend the SfL additional course.
- At least one ULR in each brigade should gain the FENTO level 2 certificate in adult learning
- Where learning forums are in place, SfL should be a standing agenda item.
- The FBU to raise SfL with the appropriate WD national committees.
- The FBU to raise SfL with the FRS employers at the National Joint Council (NJC) to gain strategic support.

ULF Project Specific

- Project Manager to discuss strategy recommendations with national officer for ULF projects/education.
- ULF project staff to gain adult learning support certificate.
- Project Manager to deliver a draft strategy for discussion at FBU ULF Co-ordinators meeting and ULF Strategic Partners Meeting.
- A small working group to be set up to identify best practice in embedding SfL across the FRS.
- SfL tutor to provide cross-mapping information to the NOS and prepare bespoke material for use in the FRS.
- Regional co-ordinators to ensure a SfL regional plan is agreed and in place.
- Regional co-ordinators to link with the Move on Get on at Work project.
- Learning Centre SfL strategy to reflect national strategy.



Glossary of terms

ADC	Assessment Development Centre
ALNIS	Adult Literacy and Numeracy in Scotland
BCS	British Computer Society
CFOA	Chief Fire Officers Association
CFOA (S)	Chief Fire Officers Association Scotland
COSLA	Convention of Scottish Local Authorities
CPD	Continuous Personal Development
CLG	Department for Communities and Local Government
DDA	Disability Discrimination Act
DELNI	Department for Education and Learning Northern Ireland
ECDL	European Computer Driving Licence
FBU	Fire Brigades Union
FENTO	Further Education National Training Organisation
FRS	Fire and Rescue Service
FSC	Fire Service College
IAG	Information Advice and Guidance
ICT	Information Communication Technology
ITQ	Information Technology Qualification
IIP	Investors in People
IPDS	Integrated Personal Development System
IRMP	Integrated Risk Management Plan
LGA	Local Government Association
MLS	Managed Learning System
NIACE	National Institute of Adult Continuing Education
NIULF	Northern Ireland Union Learning Fund
NJC	National Joint Council For Local Authority FRS
NOS	National Occupational Standards
NVQ	National Vocational Qualification
PDR	Personal Development Record
RDS	Retained Duty System
SFL	Skills for Life
SFSC	Scottish Fire Services College
SNVQ	Scottish National Vocational Qualification
SULF	Scottish Union Learning Fund
TUC	Trades Union Congress
UFI	University for Industry
ULF	Union Learning Fund
ULR	Union Learning Representative
WD	Workforce Development
WOA	Whole Organisation Approach
WULF	Wales Union Learning Fund

Skills for Life – Initiatives & agencies

Basic Skills Agency
Adult Basic Skills Strategy Unit
Learning and Skills
Development Agency
Step into Learning
Sure Start and Skills for Families
Learndirect
Information, Advice and Guidance
Partnerships
Move On
NIACE
Adult and Community Learning Fund
Investors in People
Employer Training Pilots
Employer Engagement Strategy
Train to Gain
BBC Raw Campaign



High Priority Action Points

Recommendation	Responsibility	Support / Organisation	Links
The agreed National Learning & Development Strategies that encompass the ULF projects should be utilised further to promote a WOA to SfL	CFOA, FSC, SFSC, FBU General Secretary, FBU National Officer	ULF project manager, SULF regional project manager, NIULF regional project manager, WULF regional project manager	CLG, LGA, Local Government Organisations
Assess how a WOA SfL strategy meets the Governments modernisation agenda, Local Government SfL strategies & the Leitch Report	CFOA, NJC Employer Organisations, FRS Training & Development Managers, FBU National Officer	ULF project manager, ULF project co-ordinators, brigade joint learning forums, ULRs	CLG
Work with ULF projects to access external funding for SfL and ICT Learning and the Government's Train 2 Gain funding initiative	CFOA, Individual FRSS, FRS Training & Development Managers	ULF project manager, FBU learning centres, ULF co-ordinators, Brigade joint learning forums, ULRs	Unionlearn, DfES
Employers / Managers to build SfL in Equality & Diversity Policies and HR strategies that give encouragement and entitlement to learning opportunities for all staff	NJC Employer Organisations, CFOA, Individual FRSSs, HR Managers	ULF co-ordinators, SULF regional project manager, NIULF regional project manager. Brigade joint learning forums, ULRs,	CLG, Elected Member learning champions
IRMP's should be evaluated to ensure staff have the requisite skills to meet the needs of the plan	CFOA, Individual FRSSs	IRMP practitioner groups, FBU officials, brigade joint learning forums, brigade lifelong learning committees	
Support to be available for staff going through IPDS & ADC process with access to prior skills check	FSC, SFSC, IPDS Team, Individual FRSSs, FBU National Officer	ULF project manager, FBU learning centres, ULF co-ordinators, Brigade joint learning forums, ULRs	FE providers
Promote the link between SfL and access to a pre-enrolment skills check	FSC, SFSC, Individual FRSSs, FBU National Officer	ULF project manager, learning centre manager, VQ practioner, SfL tutor	Accreditation Bodies
Ensure that all FRS colleges & brigade training departments can support learners with Dyslexic Tendencies meeting the DDA 2005.	FSC, SFSC, CFOA, Individual FRSSs.	ULF co-ordinators, FRS training & development managers, brigade joint learning forums, FBU learning centre, SfL tutor	Supporting Dyslexic Learners in Different Contexts - CfBT Education Trust
FRS to undertake a review of how SfL can be embedded in Community Fire Safety work with young adults projects	CFOA, FBU, Individual FRS	ULF co-ordinators, brigade joint learning forums, FBU brigade lifelong learning committee, SfL tutor, FBU learning centres	All relevant organisations i.e. Princes Trust, Duke of Edinburgh, Young Offenders, etc
Carry out assessment of current ICT training in the FRS and confirm links to SfL	CFOA, FSC, SFSC, Individual FRSSs, FRS Training & Development Managers	ULF co-ordinators, brigade joint learning forums, FBU brigade lifelong learning committee, SfL tutor, FBU learning centres	FSC & SFSC e-learning group
FSC & SFSC to investigate methods for SfL to be embedded in core training courses	FSC, SFSC, IPDS Team	CFOA, IPDS, FBU, ULF project manager, ULF co-ordinators, SfL tutor	FE providers
Review and assess how SfL can be embedded in the delivery of local training	Individual FRSSs, FRS Training & Development Managers	ULF project co-ordinators, brigade joint learning forums, brigade lifelong learning committee, ULR	

Fire Brigades Union Long Learning and Development

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Medium Priority Action Points

Recommendation	Responsibility	Support / Organisation	Links
Whole Organisation Approach SfL presentations made to NJC / employer organisations	NJC Employer Organisations, CFOA, FBU GS, FBU National Officer.	ULF project manager, SULF regional project manager, NIULF regional project manager.	Department for Communities & Local Government Associations
WOA SfL presentations made to CFOA	CFOA	FBU National Officer, ULF project manager	
WOA SfL presentations made to individual FRS Senior Management Team	Individual FRSs, ULF project co-ordinators, SULF/NIULF/WULF regional project managers	Brigade lifelong learning committee	
COE engages with the ULF projects	FSC	FBU national officer, ULF project manager	
Where joint learning forums have been set-up SfL should be a standing agenda item	CFO's, FRS Training & Development Managers	ULF project co-ordinators, SULF/NIULF/WULF regional project managers, brigade joint learning forums, brigade lifelong learning committee, ULRs	
SfL provision to be accessible, with the flexible support and availability to take national tests during working hours	FRS Training & Development Managers	ULF co-ordinators, brigade joint learning forums, brigade lifelong learning committees, ULRs	NIACE, Get on at Work
Make the SfL mini-test available on intranets etc	NJC Employer Organisations, CFOA, CFO's	Local authority webmasters, individual FRS webmasters.	Get on at Work
At least one member of the training department staff to attain level 2 qualification in adult learning support	CFOA, Individual FRSs, FRS Training & Development Managers	ULF project co-ordinators, SULF/NIULF/WULF regional project managers	Unionlearn
Local authorities engaging staff in SfL initiatives should ensure FRS involvement.	NJC employer organisations, CFOA, CFO's	ULF co-ordinators, SULF regional project manager, NIULF regional project manager, Brigade joint learning forums	NIACE, Get on at Work
Employers and managers should fully participate and support Learning at Work week and in particular Learning at Work day	NJC Employer Organisations, CFOA, Individual FRSs	Brigade joint learning committees, ULF co-ordinators, SULF regional project manager, NIULF regional project manager, brigade training departments, brigade lifelong learning committees, FBU learning centres	Unionlearn, NIACE, Get on at Work.
WOA SfL presentation to Fire Conference	CFOA	FBU National Officer, ULF project manager	
CFOA to promote SfL advocates and learning champions.	CFOA	FBU National Officer, ULF project manager	Unionlearn

Action Points – Learning & Development

Recommendation	Responsibility	Support / Organisation	Links
FBU to raise SfL on appropriate L&D groups/ committees within the FRS community	FBU National Officer, FBU EC members, ULF Project Manager	FSC, SFSC, CFOA, IPDS, ULF co-ordinators	Recognised FRS TU's
FSC & SFSC to look at how SfL can be embedded in core training courses	FSC, SFSC	CFOA, IPDS, FBU, ULF project manager, ULF co-ordinators, SfL tutor	
Promote the link between SfL, WD and IPDS with access to a prior skills check	FSC, SFSC	ULF project manager, learning centre manager, SfL tutor	Recognised FRS TU's
Support to be available for staff going through ADC process with access to prior skills check	FSC, IPDS Team, Individual FRSs	FBU learning centres, ULF co-ordinators, Brigade joint learning forums, ULRs	FE providers
SFSC virtual college to host SfL support	SFSC	SULF regional project manager, ULF project manager	MDC
FSC MLS to host SfL support	FSC e-learning board, E-learning Project Manager	ULF project manager	Appropriate SfL sites
FSC / SFSC websites to host links with SfL websites	FSC & SFSC	ULF project manager, SULF project manager	
Stakeholder seminars to held covering Workforce Development aspects	FSC, SFSC	FBU National Officer, ULF EC members, SULF regional project manager, NIULF regional project manager	

Action Points - Investors in People/Investors in Diversity/Other Awarding bodies

Recommendation	Responsibility	Support / Organisation	Links
Employers / Managers should contact Investors in People to ascertain SfL criteria	Individual FRSs, Brigade joint learning forums, FSC, SFSC	Investors in People, FBU lifelong learning committee, ULRs	
Embed procedures to ensure liP assessors can ascertain SfL commitment to staff	Individual FRSs, Brigade training departments, FSC, SFSC	Investors in People, SfL assessors	
Embed SfL to meet other appropriate awards	Individual FRSs, Brigade training departments, FSC, SFSC	Investors in Diversity, Customer First, etc	

Action Points - Community Initiatives			
Recommendation	Responsibility	Support / Organisation	Links
FRS to undertake a review of how SfL can be embedded in young adults projects	CFOA, FBU, Individual FRS	ULF co-ordinators, brigade joint learning forums, FBU brigade lifelong learning committee, SfL tutor, FBU learning centres	All relevant organisations i.e. Princes Trust, Duke of Edinburgh, Young Offenders, etc
Staff working within such initiatives should receive appropriate training	CFOA, Individual FRS	ULF co-ordinators, brigade joint learning forums, FBU brigade lifelong learning committee, SfL tutor, FBU learning centre	
Means of supporting young adults with a SfL need should be developed	Individual FRS, FSC, SFSC	Brigade joint learning forums, FBU brigade lifelong learning committee, ULRs, brigade training departments, SfL tutor	Local Authority education departments, FE providers
Staff should be trained in how to notice learning difficulties such as dyslexia	Individual FRS	Brigade joint learning forums, FBU brigade lifelong learning committee, ULRs, brigade training departments, SfL tutor	Supporting Dyslexic Learners in Different Contexts - CfBT Education Trust
Provide qualifications in Information Advice & Guidance for staff	CFOA, Individual FRS	ULF project manager, learning centre manager, SULF regional project manager, NIULF regional project manager, ULF co-ordinators	FE providers, Open university, LSC

Action Points – Union Learning Fund			
Recommendation	Responsibility	Support / Organisation	Links
Discuss SfL strategy recommendations with national officer	ULF EC members, ULF Project Manager	ULF co-ordinators	FBU TU tutors
Deliver a draft strategy for discussion at FBU ULF Co-ordinators meeting and ULF Strategic Partners Meeting	ULF Project Manager	ULF EC members, ULF co-ordinators, FBU learning centre	Unionlearn
A working group to be set-up to identify best practice in embedding SfL across the UK FRS	ULF Project Manager, Strategic Partners	FBU national officer, ULF EC members, SfL tutor, learning centre manager, ULF co-ordinators, ULRs	Unionlearn
Provide information to cross-map the NOS and key skills, prepare bespoke material for use in the FRS	ULF Project Manager	ULF co-ordinators, SfL tutor, learning centre manager	
Regional co-ordinators to ensure SfL is in regional plans	ULF co-ordinators	ULF project manager, brigade lifelong learning committee, ULRs	
Regional co-ordinators to link with the Get on at Work project	ULF co-ordinators	ULF project manager, brigade lifelong learning committee, ULRs	Get on at Work
Learning Centre SfL strategy to reflect national strategy	Learning centre manager	SfL tutor, ULF project manager	Unionlearn
Project co-ordinators to gain the level 2 certificate in adult learning support	ULF co-ordinators	ULF project manager	

Action Points - FBU Members & Education

Recommendation	Responsibility	Support / Organisation	Links
The issue of SfL should be raised with all members of the FBU through appropriate mediums	General Secretary, FBU President, FBU National Officer, Education Committees	FBU national education officers, brigade lifelong learning committee, ULF co-ordinators, ULRs, FBU learning centre, FBU media	Unionlearn
The FBU website and FBU-Learn website should be utilised to promote SfL	FBU media department	ULF project manager, ULF co-ordinators, FBU webmasters, FB U-learn webmasters, SfL tutor	Unionlearn
A link to the SfL mini-test should be made with support mechanisms for individuals with learning needs	FBU media department, FBU National Officer	ULF project manager, webmasters, FBU learning centres	Get on at Work
A network of Union Learning Reps (ULRs) should be in place supported by learning committees and the union rule-book	General Secretary, FBU National Officer, ULF Project Manager	All FBU officials, education officers, ULF co-ordinators, brigade lifelong learning committees	
ULRs should be encouraged and supported to attend the SfL additional course	ULF project manager	ULF co-ordinators, education officers, ULRs, brigade lifelong learning committee	TU studies departments, Unionlearn
At least one ULR in each brigade should gain the level 2 certificate in adult learning support	FBU National Officer, ULF Project Manager	ULF co-ordinators, FBU learning centres, SfL tutor	Unionlearn, TU studies departments
Where joint learning forums are in place SfL should be a standing agenda item	FBU brigade lifelong learning committee	FBU brigade officials, ULRs	
The FBU to raise SfL at appropriate national Workforce Development committees	General Secretary, FBU National Officer, EC members	ULF project manager	
The FBU to raise SfL with the FRS employers at the National Joint Council (NJC) to gain strategic support	General Secretary	FBU national officer, FBU EC, CFOA, ULF project manager, LGA, COSLA, NI assembly, Wales assembly	
Embed SfL in the FBU education programme	General Secretary, FBU President, FBU National Officer, EC Education sub-committee	FBU EC, National education officers committee, ULF project manager, ULF co-ordinators, SfL tutor	FBU TU tutors, TU studies departments
A SfL Whole Organisation Approach presentation should be made to FBU Executive Council	General Secretary, FBU President, FBU National Officer, EC education sub-committee	EC education sub-committee, ULF project manager	
SfL should be tabled on agenda for national education officers meetings	FBU National Officer	EC education sub-committee, ULF project manager, ULF co-ordinators	
Issue of SfL in TUC education programme raised at general council / education officer level	General Secretary, National Officer	ULF project manager, ULF co-ordinators	FBU TU tutors, Unionlearn
Proposed changes to the FBU education policy should be inclusion of WOA SfL strategy	General Secretary, FBU National Officer, EC education sub-committee, national education committee	EC education sub-committee, national education officers committee, ULF project manager, ULF co-ordinators	FBU TU tutors
FBU tutors gain the adult learning support certificate	FBU National Officer	ULF co-ordinators, FBU learning centre	Unionlearn

Action Points - FBU Members & Education continued

Recommendation	Responsibility	Support / Organisation	Links
Discussion to take place with TU tutors of methods to embed SfL in courses	FBU National Officer, EC education sub-committee	National education officers committee, ULF project manager, ULF co-ordinators, SfL tutor	FBU TU tutors, Unionlearn
New officials should be offered and encouraged to voluntarily take the national numeracy & literacy assessment and national test	General Secretary, FBU President, FBU National Officer, EC education sub-committee	Regional, Sectional, Brigade & Branch officials, ULF co-ordinators, FBU brigade lifelong learning committee, ULRs, FBU learning centres	FBU TU tutors, TU hub learning centres, FE providers
Bespoke SfL learning opportunities / courses should be offered to officials with appropriate training for specific roles e.g. Regional Treasurers / H&S reps	General Secretary, FBU President, FBU National Officer, EC education sub-committee	Regional & Brigade officials, TU tutors, ULF co-ordinators, ULRs, FBU learning centre	FBU TU tutors, Unionlearn
Advocates should be more prominent in the promotion of SfL across the FBU and FRS	All FBU advocates	ULF project manager	Unionlearn

Action Points - Recruitment and Retention

Recommendation	Responsibility	Support / Organisation	Links
SfL to be incorporated within national FRS Recruitment & Retention strategy	FRS committee developing R&R strategy	NJC, FBU National Officer, CFOA	NIACE, Get on at Work
FRS to provide applicants with the offer of pre-application SfL tests	FRSs training departments, Joint recruitment boards	ULF co-ordinators, Brigade joint learning forums, FBU lifelong learning committees, FBU learning centres	Job centres, FE providers
FRS to provide links to support applicants with a SfL need	Individual FRSs training departments	ULF co-ordinators, Brigade joint learning forums, FBU lifelong learning committees, ULRs	NIACE, Move On, FE providers
ULRs to be utilised during recruitment days	Individual FRSs training departments, Brigade joint learning forums	FBU learning committees, ULRs	



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Whole Organisation Approach

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