



# Northumberland Basic Skills Audit 2004

Principal Authors: Bryan Latty  
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## Contacts

Philip Hanmer	– Information Network Manager
Ellie Bates	– Research Officer
David Carver	– Research Officer
Kate Hutchinson	– Research Officer
Shona Johnstone	– Research Officer
Bryan Latty	– Research Officer
Amy Rust	– Trainee Research Officer
Iain Rowe	– Technical Officer
Michael Ramm	– Trainee Technical Assistant
Alyson Forster	– Administrative & Support Assistant

Tel: (01670) 534755  
Fax: (01670) 534160  
E-mail: [alforster@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:alforster@northumberland.gov.uk)

Website: [www.northumberlandinfonet.org.uk](http://www.northumberlandinfonet.org.uk)

The Northumberland Information Network is a partnership between:

Northumberland Strategic Partnership, One North East, Northumberland County Council, Northumberland Learning and Skills Council, Business Link for Northumberland, SureStart Northumberland Early Years & Childcare, SENNTRI, Learning Northumberland, Connexions Northumberland, and Northumberland Care Trust.



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The results outlined in this report are based on two consultations conducted by the InfoNet during 2004: one with training providers to discuss the support and programmes they offer to basic skills clients; and one with tutors, to gain a better understanding of the practitioner base in the County in terms of qualifications, training and deliverable capacity. The headline results are outlined below.

### Basic Skills Training Providers

- There are 45 organisations that deliver basic skills programmes and support through 57 learning centres in Northumberland. This excludes the two prisons in the County and does not account for the fact that some providers deliver programmes in a range of community venues.
- 22 of the 57 centres (39%) are located in the South East of the County. The remaining centres are more or less evenly distributed between the four rural districts and Newcastle.
- Virtually all centres offer support for literacy (53) and numeracy (52); whilst only 22 centres deliver ESOL programmes. For all three disciplines, the majority of organisations offer programmes of support aimed at beneficiaries with abilities at Entry Level 1 and above.
- More than three-quarters of centres (48 or 84%) offer courses leading to Certificates in Adult Literacy; and slightly fewer to Certificates in Adult Numeracy (46 or 81%).
- 34 centres (60%) offer on-line testing.
- 30 of the 57 centres provide access to basic skills five days per week (Monday to Friday); whilst only four are open on a weekend
- 37 Centres (67%) offer access to basic skills on a morning; 35 (64%) on an afternoon; and only 13 (24%) on an evening. A further 13 are flexible when support is provided according to learner preference or availability.
- In a typical week, almost 1,100 of literacy support is delivered (or in some cases is accessible) in Northumberland; and a similar number of hours are dedicated to numeracy (1,088). In contrast, only 489 hours of ESOL support is available.
- Only seven basic skills centres offer crèche facilities.

### Basic Skills Practitioners

- There are 185 practitioners on the Basic Skills Tutor Database.
- 74 tutors have achieved one (or both) of the generic initial teacher training qualifications (Cert Ed or PGCE).

- More than two fifths (81 or 44%) hold the C&G 9281 Initial Certificate in Teaching Basic Skills to Adults; with slightly more having achieved the literacy standard (9282) than the numeracy (9283) and ESOL (9284). Of the 81, four have gone on to complete the C&G 9295; six have completed the Level 4 Literacy and eight, the Level 4 numeracy.
- 19 (10%) have achieved the C&G 9285 (Certificate in Teaching Basic Skills to Adults). Of the 18, only five have gone on to achieve a FENTO-approved Level 4 qualification.
- 14 practitioners in Northumberland (8%) have achieved the C&G 9295 (Level 2).
- 18 practitioners (10%) have achieved the new Level 4 Literacy Subject Specialist qualification; and slightly fewer, the Level 4 Numeracy qualification (16 or 9%).
- Overall, 113 of the 185 (61%) practitioners hold a teaching qualification that is specific to basic skills, 51 of whom only hold the C&G 9281 (82/83/84), which is obsolete and is essentially designed for individuals assisting in teaching basic skills.
- 15 practitioners were working towards a generic initial teacher training qualifications (Cert Ed or PGCE).
- 64 of the 185 practitioners were working towards additional or new basic skills teaching qualifications. Of these, 14 are working towards the C&G 9295 (level 2), 28 are working towards a Level 3 and 22, towards a Level 4.
- Of the 72 tutors that did not hold a basic skills teaching qualification at the time of the Audit, 37 (51%) were working towards one. Amongst these, 13 were working towards the C&G 9295 (Level 2); 17 were working towards a Level 3 qualification and eight towards a Level 4.
- Of the 185 practitioners on the database, almost half have completed the Literacy Core Curriculum training (87 or 47%) and slightly fewer, the Numeracy Core Curriculum (80 or 43%). Other well-attended courses include Access for All (69 or 37%), Diagnostic Assessment (69 or 37%) and the Pre-Entry Curriculum (56 or 30%). In contrast, 57 practitioners (31%) indicated that they had not undertaken any of the training courses listed in Figure 21 below.
- Of the 102 Teachers or Subject Specialists, almost two-fifths (41 or 38%) had achieved or were working towards a FENTO-approved Level 4 qualification. Slightly fewer had achieved the now obsolete C&G 9281 or C&G 9285 (36 or 34%); and one fifth had no basic skills qualifications and at the time of the audit were not working towards any (24 or 22%).
- Of the 32 Teaching Assistants on the database, 20 (63%) have achieved or are working towards an appropriate Level 3 and only two practitioners do not have and are not working towards a basic skills teaching qualification.
- Of the 21 Adult Learner Support Staff, nine (43%) hold the C&G 9281 and four have no basic skills teaching qualifications. However, eight have achieved or are working towards the Level 2 Certificate in Adult Learner Support (C&G 9295) or a higher qualification (Level 3/Level 4).

- Practitioners were asked to indicate how many hours of literacy, numeracy and ESOL support they deliver in a typical week. Almost half of the hours (903 or 48%) delivered are dedicated to Adult Literacy; slightly less are dedicated to Adult numeracy (582 or 31%) and Key Skills (215 or 11%); and only a small proportion to ESOL (81 hours or 4%). This is likely to be an underestimate, as many practitioners were unable to quantify the number of hours they deliver, either because it is integrated into other programmes or because provision is flexible.



## **1.0 Introduction**

In 2003, the InfoNet published Working Paper 19 Basic Skills Provision in Northumberland. The report sought to provide an insight into the nature and location of basic skills support in Northumberland; and to provide a greater understanding of the basic skills tutor base in the County, in terms of qualifications, training and deliverable capacity. The analysis was based on information included in the Learning Northumberland Basic Skills Directory and on a practitioner database co-developed by the Northumberland Learning & Skills Council and the Northumberland InfoNet.

This report represents an update and an extension of Working Paper 19, taking account of the recommendations made in the previous report. These include greater consideration of English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL); tutor and organisational teaching hours and deliverable capacity; and a better understanding of individual practitioner roles within the teaching process.

The InfoNet has collected information from training providers to be included in a new edition of the Learning Northumberland Basic Skills Directory; and has surveyed all practitioners delivering basic skills programmes for the same organisations to update the tutor database. The results of these two exercises form the basis of this report.



## **2.0 Basic Skills Provision in Northumberland**

### **2.1 Methodology**

It is widely acknowledged that provision of basic skills tuition and support in Northumberland is not fully understood, making decisions for future planning and allocation of resources a difficult task. In 2003, Northumberland Learning & Skills Council, in conjunction with Learning Northumberland, took steps to correct this with the publication of a Northumberland 'Directory of Basic Skills'. The directory briefly described the nature of support available around the County, covering both accredited learning opportunities and more general support for individuals seeking to brush up their skills. It was compiled as a reference document for individuals and organisations seeking to engage individuals in basic skills learning. The InfoNet has recently surveyed training providers and community and voluntary organisations that are either based in or deliver learning programmes in Northumberland, with a view to updating the directory. The survey was completed in the first quarter of 2004 and therefore does not reflect any changes in programmes implemented by providers over the Summer 2004 or in the new academic year.

In addition, the InfoNet has consulted with almost 200 basic skills practitioners working for organisations delivering basic skills support in the County, with a view to updating the Northumberland LSC Basic Skills Practitioner Database. This consultation was delivered between July and September 2004 in order to coincide with a feasibility study commissioned by Business Link for Northumberland and was delivered in conjunction with Qa Business Improvement (QaBI). The purpose of the consultation and the database was therefore twofold:

- To better understand the basic skills tutor base in the County, in terms of qualifications, training and deliverable capacity.
- To test the feasibility of establishing a Basic Skills Tutor Bank in Northumberland.

The results of the feasibility study are not included in this report, but are to be disseminated separately by BL4N.



### 3.0 Basic Skills Providers in Northumberland

#### 3.1 Type of Programmes

In total, 45 providers offering basic skills courses and support in 57 learning centres responded to the InfoNet survey. A number of other organisations are known to offer basic skills support in the County, but either did not respond to the survey or were not included in the directory due to their narrow client base (eg HMP Acklington, HMYOI Castington and the Probation Service). A list of organisations that responded to the survey is included in Appendix 1.

Figure 1 below shows the distribution of centres around the County by the type of programme provided, including five based outside of the County. The number of centres, however, is probably under-estimated, as a number of organisations are supporting basic skills development in the workplace; whilst other providers are flexible and venues are known to include "suitable community locations".

ProvisionType	Aln	BuT	BV	CM	Ty	Wa	Not in N'land	N'land	%
Youth Programmes (e.g. E2E)	3	6	6	6	3	5	0	29	50.9
Post-16 Support Tailored to the Individual	2	3	4	5	4	8	1	27	47.4
Workplace Learning	2	2	2	4	6	7	4	27	47.4
Jobcentre Plus Programmes	2	1	5	2	4	5	3	22	38.6
Family Learning	2	3	3	2	6	3	2	21	36.8
Learn Direct	2	0	2	2	2	2	1	11	19.3
Not Applicable	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1.8
District Total	7	7	12	7	9	10	5	57	
District %	12.3	12.3	21.1	12.3	15.8	17.5	8.8		100.0

The following points emerge from Figure 1 above:

- More than half of the centres deliver support for basic skills through youth programmes, such as Entry to Employment (E2E) and Apprenticeships (29 or 51%).
- Slightly fewer centres offer dedicated post-16 support for basic skills designed around the needs of individuals (27 or 47%). The same number of centres deliver support for basic skills in the workplace.

- In contrast, only 11 centres are offering basic skills programmes through Learn Direct.
- There are more learning centres offering basic skills programmes in Blyth Valley (12 or 21%) than in the other five districts. Blyth Valley is followed by Wansbeck (10 or 18%) and Tynedale (9 or 16%), with the remaining three districts each home to seven basic skills learning centres. Each of the districts has centres offering at least one of the six provision types identified in the table above. The only exception to this is Tynedale, which according to the database does not have any Learn Direct centres offering basic skills programmes.
- Tailored programmes of support are offered by 8 of the 10 providers located in the Wansbeck district (80%); and by 5 of the 7 centres based in Castle Morpeth (71%). This contrasts with just over one quarter of centres in Alnwick (2 or 29%).
- Youth programmes incorporating support for literacy and numeracy are run by six of the seven learning centres in Berwick upon Tweed; whilst seven of the 10 centres in Wansbeck and four of the five training providers based outside of Northumberland provide support for basic skills in the workplace.

### 3.2 Distinguishing Between Literacy, Numeracy and ESOL Provision

One of the recommendations for future research made by the InfoNet in Working Paper 19 was a better understanding of support for literacy, numeracy and ESOL in the County in terms of location of delivery, level of delivery and delivery hours.

**Figure 2: Number of Centres Offering Basic Skills Support by Level**

	Pre-Entry Level	Entry Level 1	Entry Level 2	Entry Level 3	Level 1	Level 2	Total
Literacy	36	49	49	48	48	45	53
Numeracy	35	48	48	46	46	44	52
ESOL	15	20	21	21	20	20	22
Total	36	49	49	48	48	45	57

Figure 2 above shows the number of centres offering basic skills support by discipline and level. Of the 57 learning centres based or active in Northumberland, almost all of them are providing programmes or offering support for literacy (53 or 93%) and numeracy (52 or 91%). In contrast, only 23 centres are delivering ESOL. For all three disciplines, the majority of organisations offer programmes of support aimed at beneficiaries with abilities at or above Entry Level 1, with slightly fewer dealing with learners at pre-entry level.

Figure 3 below shows the location of centres providing learning opportunities in literacy, numeracy and ESOL. From the figure, it can be seen that all of the centres in Alnwick, Berwick upon Tweed, Tynedale and Wansbeck, and the majority of centres in Blyth Valley and Castle Morpeth deliver support for literacy and numeracy. The number of centres in each district delivering ESOL is much lower and varies considerably, ranging from just one of the seven centres located in Berwick upon Tweed (14%) to five of the seven centres in Alnwick (71%).

<b>Figure 3: Number of Centres offering Basic Skills Support by District &amp; Type</b>				
	ESOL	Literacy	Numeracy	Total
Alnwick	5	7	7	7
Berwick-upon-Tweed	1	7	7	7
Blyth Valley	4	11	11	12
Castle Morpeth	3	6	6	7
Tynedale	5	9	9	9
Wansbeck	5	10	10	10
County Wide	0	3	2	5
Total	23	53	52	57

### 3.3 Accreditation

All of the centres that responded to the InfoNet survey were asked to indicate whether they offer certificated basic skills courses and the type of accreditation offered. Looking at Figure 4 below, more than three-quarters of centres (48 or 84%) offer courses leading to Certificates in Adult Literacy; and slightly fewer to Certificates in Adult Numeracy at Entry Level, Level 1 and Level 2 (46 or 81%). A lower (although still significant proportion) run courses leading to Open College Network Certificates (23 or 40%); and a further 20 (17%) offer Key Skills accreditation at Levels 1-3.

Furthermore, providers and individual centres also offer different combinations of accreditation in order to meet the requirements of a diverse range of learners. For example, of the 48 centres offering Certificates in Adult Literacy at Entry Level and above, 21 also offer Open College Network Certificates and 19 offer Key Skills qualifications.

At a district level:

- All of the identified centres in Tynedale and most of the centres in each of the other five districts offer courses leading to Certificates in Adult Literacy and Adult Numeracy.
- Six of the seven centres in Berwick upon Tweed offer courses accredited through the National Open College Network, compared with just one centre in Blyth Valley and two in Alnwick district.
- Almost half of the centres offering Key Skills are located in South East Northumberland (9 or 45%).

**Figure 4: Accreditation Available by District**

	Aln	Ber	BV	CM	Ty	Wa	County Wide	Total	%
Certificate in Adult Literacy (Entry Level 1-Level 2)	7	5	10	6	9	9	2	48	84.2
Certificate in Adult Numeracy (Entry Level 1-Level 2)	6	5	10	6	9	8	2	46	80.7
Open College Network Certificates	2	6	1	3	5	4	2	23	40.4
Key Skills Levels 1-3	1	3	4	3	2	5	2	20	35.1
Other (Please Specify)	0	1	3	0	2	4	0	10	17.5
Northumberland Units of Accreditation	0	1	2	1	2	1	0	7	12.3
Accreditation Not Available	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	3	5.3

The Certificates in Adult Literacy and Certificates in Adult Numeracy, (Entry Level 1 – Level 2) are based on the national standards and are accredited by the QCA. Level 1 and Level 2 Certificates are achieved by passing the National Adult Literacy and Numeracy Tests. On-line National Tests are now available and being rolled out around the County, with the added advantage over the paper-based test of an instant result for the learner. Overall, 34 of the 57 (60%) centres in Northumberland are offering on-line testing, although incidence varies considerably between districts, from just four of the nine centres in Tynedale (44%) to eight of the 10 centres in Wansbeck (80%).

<b>Figure 5: No. of Centres offering on-line testing</b>		
	No. of Centres	%
Alnwick	6	86
Berwick upon Tweed	4	57
Blyth Valley	5	42
Castle Morpeth	5	71
Tynedale	4	44
Wansbeck	8	80
Countywide	2	40
Total	34	60

### 3.4 Accessing Basic Skills Support

The survey was also used to collect details of times and days when basic skills support is accessible in each centre. In some cases, the information provided relates to specific times and dates when structured courses are run, whilst for others it refers to times during which support can be accessed.

Referring to Figure 6 below, 30 of the 57 centres (53%) centres have indicated that they are open 5 days a week (Monday to Friday); whilst only four (7%) offer courses or access to support on a weekend. All weekend provision is on a Saturday, whilst six of the seven organisations that fall under the 'Other' heading are either flexible in terms of when they are able to work with learners or arrange provision on an ad hoc basis only.

<b>Figure 6: Number of Days per Week Centres Offer Basic Skills Support</b>								
	Number of days							Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	Other	
Alnwick	0	2	1	1	3	0	0	7
Berwick-upon-Tweed	0	1	0	2	2	1	1	7
Blyth Valley	0	1	1	0	8	1	1	12
Castle Morpeth	0	0	1	1	3	1	1	7
Tynedale	0	3	0	1	4	0	1	9
Wansbeck	0	0	0	1	8	1	0	10
County Wide	0	0	0	0	2	0	3	5
Total	0	7	3	6	30	4	7	57
%	0	12.3	5.3	10.5	52.6	7.0	12.3	100.0

	Number of days							Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	Other	
Alnwick	2	0	2	0	1	0	2	7
Berwick-upon-Tweed	0	1	0	0	1	0	5	7
Blyth Valley	0	1	1	0	6	1	2	11
Castle Morpeth	0	0	1	1	2	1	1	6
Tynedale	0	3	0	1	2	0	3	9
Wansbeck	0	0	0	1	7	1	1	10
County Wide	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	4
Total	3	5	4	3	20	3	15	54
%	5.6	9.3	7.4	5.6	37.0	5.6	27.8	100.0

	Number of days							Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	Other	
Alnwick	2	0	2	0	1	0	2	7
Berwick-upon-Tweed	0	1	0	0	1	0	5	7
Blyth Valley	0	1	2	0	5	1	2	11
Castle Morpeth	0	0	1	1	2	1	1	6
Tynedale	1	2	0	1	2	0	3	9
Wansbeck	0	0	0	1	7	1	1	10
County Wide	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	3
Total	4	4	5	3	19	3	15	53
%	7.5	7.5	9.4	5.7	35.8	5.7	28.3	100.0

	Number of days							Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	Other	
Alnwick	1	0	1	0	1	0	2	5
Berwick-upon-Tweed	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Blyth Valley	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	4
Castle Morpeth	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	3
Tynedale	2	1	0	0	1	0	1	5
Wansbeck	0	0	0	0	3	1	1	5
County Wide	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	3	2	3	1	6	2	6	23
%	13.0	8.7	13.0	4.3	26.1	8.7	26.1	100.0

Looking at the three disciplines individually, access is seemingly more restricted than that of basic skills as a whole. In respect of literacy provision (Figure 7), just over one-third of active centres are open five days per week (20 or 37%) and three centres only provide literacy support one day per week. The number of centres falling under the 'Other' heading is substantially higher than for all basic skills provision. This does not, however, all relate to flexible provision as described above, but rather relates to literacy support that is integrated into wider programmes such as New Deal, E2E and Apprenticeships for which specific times and days cannot (or have not) be identified.

A similar pattern is reported in respect of numeracy (Figure 8), with 19 of the 52 centres offering support five days per week (36%); four centres offering support only one day per week (8%) and three providing access on a weekend (6%). The picture for ESOL is little different (Figure 8). Just over one quarter of the 23 centres that offer ESOL provide support five days per week (26%); three (13%) provide support one day per week and two are accessible on a weekend.

At a district level:

- The proportion of centres providing basic skills support five days per week Monday to Friday is highest in Wansbeck (80%) and Blyth Valley (67%); and lowest in Berwick upon Tweed district (29%). A similar pattern is seen for literacy and numeracy provision. The picture for ESOL is a little different, with four of the five ESOL providers in Wansbeck offering support over five days (one of which is also open on a Saturday); whilst three of the five providers in Tynedale provide support on two days a week or less.
- The four centres open on a Saturday are located in Berwick upon Tweed, Blyth Valley, Castle Morpeth and Wansbeck, three of which provide support for literacy and numeracy and two for ESOL.

Perhaps the most important factor in terms of accessibility is timing of courses and access to support. Indeed, for people with literacy and numeracy problems who are in employment, being able to contact a centre or to access courses on an evening is likely to be essential; whilst for parents with school children, their preference may be for mornings or afternoons.

Referring to Figures 10 to 13 below, of the 55 basic skills learning centres that were able to provide details of delivery times, almost equal numbers provide access to basic skills support in the mornings (37 or 67%) and afternoons (35 or 64%), in contrast to just 13 centres (24%) on an evening. A further 13 are flexible according to learner preference or availability and four provide support for basic skills that is integrated into wider programmes such as E2E, New Deal or Apprenticeships.

Whilst the picture for Literacy and Numeracy is not dissimilar, the proportion of centres offering ESOL programmes and support with access on an evening (10 or 44%) is substantially higher than for the other two disciplines.

At a district level:

- Berwick upon Tweed has the lowest number of centres offering morning access to basic skills support (2 centres or 29%), but has the highest proportion of providers able to provide a flexible service in terms of time (and in some cases location).
- The centres in Wansbeck seemingly have longer access times than centres in the other five districts, with 90% (9 out of 10) providing basic skills support in the mornings and afternoons; and 40% offering evening programmes.
- Whilst the picture for literacy and numeracy more or less mirrors that for all basic skills support; access times for ESOL contrast markedly. All learning centres in Wansbeck and Blyth Valley offer access to ESOL support in the mornings; and most of the centres in Alnwick and Tynedale and all centres in Wansbeck provide afternoon access.

	AM	PM	Evening	Flexible	Integrated	Total
Alnwick	6	6	1	2	0	7
Berwick-upon-Tweed	2	3	1	4	0	7
Blyth Valley	8	5	3	2	1	12
Castle Morpeth	5	5	2	1	0	6
Tynedale	6	6	2	2	1	9
Wansbeck	9	9	4	1	1	10
County Wide	1	1		1	1	4
Total	37	35	13	13	4	55
%	67.3	63.6	23.6	23.6	7.3	

	AM	PM	Evening	Flexible	Integrated	Total
Alnwick	5	5	1	2	0	7
Berwick-upon-Tweed	2	2	0	5	0	7
Blyth Valley	8	5	3	2	2	11
Castle Morpeth	4	5	2	1	0	6
Tynedale	6	6	2	2	1	9
Wansbeck	9	9	4	0	1	10
County Wide	1	1	0	2	1	4
Total	35	33	12	14	5	54
%	64.8	61.1	22.2	25.9	9.3	

	AM	PM	Evening	Flexible	Integrated	Total
Alnwick	5	5	1	2	0	7
Berwick-upon-Tweed	2	2	0	5	0	7
Blyth Valley	8	5	2	2	2	11
Castle Morpeth	4	5	2	1	0	6
Tynedale	6	5	2	2	1	9
Wansbeck	9	9	4	0	1	10
County Wide	1	1	0	1	1	3
Total	35	32	11	13	5	53
%	66.0	60.4	20.8	24.5	9.4	

	AM	PM	Evening	Flexible	Integrated	Total
Alnwick	3	4	1	2	0	5
Berwick-upon-Tweed	0	0	0	1	0	1
Blyth Valley	4	2	2	1	1	4
Castle Morpeth	2	2	2	1	0	3
Tynedale	2	4	2	1	0	5
Wansbeck	5	5	3	1	0	5
County Wide	0	0	0	1	0	
Total	16	17	10	8	1	23
%	69.6	73.9	43.5	34.8	4.3	

In order to provide a better understanding of deliverable basic skills capacity in Northumberland, the InfoNet has attempted to calculate the number of weekly deliverable hours. For some providers this relates to weekly durations of timetabled courses, whilst for others it relates to times during which support can be accessed. The figures are likely to be an underestimate, as the analysis does not take into account the hours delivered on a flexible basis, unless the providers have attempted to quantify these themselves.

Overall, almost 1,200 hours of basic skills support is delivered in Northumberland in a typical week. As some of this involves differentiated learning, with literacy, numeracy and ESOL support delivered concurrently, the sum of hours for the three disciplines does not equal the total. Of the 1,173 hours, almost one third (31%) are delivered in the Wansbeck district, followed by Blyth Valley with just over one quarter of the total (26%). In contrast, Berwick upon Tweed, with only 37 hours, accounts for just 3% of the total. Referring back to Figure 10, however, four of the seven learning centres in

Berwick upon Tweed offer flexible provision and these hours will not be counted in Figure 14.

The pattern of delivery between the three disciplines is more or less the same as for all basic skills, perhaps with the exception of Alnwick, which accounts for almost one quarter of ESOL delivery hours in the County (111 hours or 23%).

**Figure 14: Weekly Delivery Hours by District & Learning Type**

District	Literacy	Numeracy	ESOL	Total*
Alnwick	125.5	125.5	111	137.5
Berwick-upon-Tweed	37	37		37
Blyth Valley	240	232	109	300
Castle Morpeth	182	183.5	66.5	185
Tynedale	100	98	16	100
Wansbeck	361.5	363.5	186.5	365.5
County Wide	48	48		48
Total	1094	1087.5	489	1173

\*The sum of literacy, numeracy and ESOL hours does not add up to the Total hours, as in some cases courses and access for each are available concurrently.

Other access issues considered by the InfoNet include childcare provision and disabled access. It is well documented that childcare provision (and indeed cost) is one of the main barriers to learning in Northumberland<sup>1</sup>. One wonders therefore, the extent to which participation in basic skills courses in the County is being hindered by the fact that only seven of the 57 (12%) learning centres can provide childcare facilities for potential learners.

**Figure 15: Creche Facilities Available?**

District	Yes	%
Alnwick	1	14.3
Berwick-upon-Tweed	1	14.3
Blyth Valley	1	8.3
Castle Morpeth	0	0.0
Tynedale	3	33.3
Wansbeck	1	10.0
County Wide	0	0.0
Total	7	12.3

<sup>1</sup> Northumberland Household Survey (2002); Learner Forums (2002)

With regard to disabled access, more than three quarters of centres indicated that they have either full or partial disabled access.

District	Full Disabled Access	Partial Disabled Access	No Disabled Access
Alnwick	2	4	1
Berwick-upon-Tweed	5	1	0
Blyth Valley	7	4	1
Castle Morpeth	1	4	0
Tynedale	3	6	0
Wansbeck	3	3	3
County Wide	1	0	2
Total	22	22	7

### 3.5 Special Needs Support

	Aln	BuT	BV	CM	Ty	Wa	County Wide	Total
Dyslexia	1	3	3	2	5	5	4	23
No specialist support	3	3	5	2	3	3	1	20
Sight impairments	3	2	3	3	4	3	1	19
Hearing impairments	1	2	3	2	5	2	1	16
Other (please specify)		1	1	1	1	1	1	6
Not Applicable	1		2			1		4

Overall, 33 of the 57 basic skills learning centres in Northumberland are able to support learners with special needs. Amongst the 33:

- 23 (70%) provide support for people with dyslexia, including specialist equipment and software and in some cases specialist staff.
- 19 (58%) can provide support for people with sight impairments; and 16 (48%) learners with hearing difficulties.



## **4.0 Tutors in Northumberland**

In all, the Practitioner Database updated by the InfoNet holds details of 166 tutors working for 46 different organisations located or operating within the County. We are aware of a further 28 tutors working for organisations delivering basic skills programmes in Northumberland from whom we have not received a completed proforma.

### **4.1 Gender and Age**

Working Paper 19 reported that the basic skills teaching profession is pre-dominantly a female occupation, accounting for 72% of tutors in 2003. Based on the 2004 InfoNet Tutor Audit, this position has changed only slightly over the past 12 months. Overall, 131 of the 185 tutors (71%) are female, compared with just 54 males (29%).

Tutor age was not reported in Working Paper 19, but was included in the 2004 Tutor Audit as a matter of interest. Overall, 113 of the 185 tutors (61%) are aged between 41 and 64. In contrast, only 35 tutors are in the 25-40 band (19%) and only one tutor is under 25. In some respects, this could have implications for future deliverable capacity and be of immediate urgency if the majority of tutors in the 41-64 age band are closer to the upper range than the lower.

At a district level:

- Just over one quarter (52 or 28%) of the tutors work for organisations that deliver basic skills in the Castle Morpeth district. The Castle Morpeth figure is inflated to some extent by the number of tutors delivering programmes at HMP Acklington and HMYOI Castington, both of which are located within the Borough.
- Castle Morpeth is followed by Tynedale (50 or 27%) and Wansbeck (47 or 25%), although the former has been bolstered considerably during 2004 by the inclusion on the database of several tutors at Dilston College of Further Education in Corbridge. The College, which serves the needs of students with moderate to severe learning disabilities, is taking steps to provide tutors in other disciplines with basic skills training at Level 2, Level 3 or Level 4.
- In contrast, just 5% of practitioners work for providers in both Alnwick and Berwick upon Tweed.

- There are more male tutors as a proportion of the total working in Blyth Valley (48%) than in any other district. Blyth Valley is followed by Wansbeck (34%) and contrasts markedly with the proportion of male tutors in Alnwick and Berwick upon Tweed (both 10%).

<b>Figure 18: Northumberland Tutor Base by Gender and Employment Status</b>									
	Aln	BuT	BV	CM	Ty	Wans	Other*	N'land	%
<b>Gender</b>									
Male	1	1	10	16	14	16	7	54	29.2
Female	9	9	11	36	36	31	29	131	70.8
<b>Age</b>									
18-24	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0.5
25-40	0	4	3	8	7	5	10	35	18.9
41-64	10	5	17	27	30	28	25	113	61.1
65+	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	2	1.1
DK	0	1	0	15	13	13	1	34	18.4
N=	10	10	21	52	50	47	36	185	100.0
*Other represents organisations that deliver County-wide or are based outside of the County									
** The sum of the number of tutors in each district is 207, indicating that some tutors work for more than one organisation									

## 4.2 Qualifications held by Tutors

As part of the audit, tutors were asked to provide details of:

- Qualifications they currently hold.
- Qualifications they were working towards.
- Training courses attended as part of their continuous professional development.

With regard to qualifications held, tutors were invited to give details of all relevant teaching qualifications, including some that are general or generic teaching qualifications (B.Ed, PGCE, Cert.Ed, C&G 730) and others that are specific to Basic Skills tuition (C&G 9281, 9285, 9295, Level 4).

Skills for Life (2001) set out the Government's commitment to raise the quality of teaching in literacy, numeracy and ESOL. In order to achieve this commitment, the Adult Basic Skills Strategy Unit, in conjunction with the Further Education National Training Organisation (FENTO), the Qualifications & Curriculum Authority (QCA) and the Learning and Skills Council (LSC), has introduced a new framework of qualifications for basic skills teachers and support staff.

Since September 2002, all new entrants to the teaching profession seeking to specialise in adult literacy are required to enrol on FENTO-approved programmes that lead to the new Level 4 Certificate for Adult Literacy Subject Specialists, in addition to meeting the requirements for generic initial teacher training qualifications (Cert Ed, PGCE). Similarly, for numeracy and ESOL, new entrants must enrol on equivalent programmes that lead to the Level 4 Certificate for Adult Numeracy Subject Specialists and the Level 4 Certificate for ESOL Subject Specialists, respectively. Those who wish to support adult basic skills learning are required to work towards the Level 3 Certificate for Literacy Subject Support, or the Numeracy or ESOL equivalent, as appropriate.

Referring to Figure 19, of the 185 practitioners on the database:

- 77 tutors (42%) have achieved the generic initial teacher training qualifications (Cert Ed or PGCE). However, levels of achievement vary significantly between districts, from none of the tutors working in the Alnwick district to two thirds of tutors delivering County wide (24 or 67%).
- More than two fifths (81 or 44%) hold the C&G 9281 Initial Certificate in Teaching Basic Skills to Adults; with slightly more having achieved the literacy standard (9282) than the numeracy (9283) and ESOL (9284). Of the 81, four have gone on to complete the C&G 9295; six have completed the Level 4 Literacy and eight, the Level 4 numeracy.
- 19 (10%) have achieved the C&G 9285 (Certificate in Teaching Basic Skills to Adults). Of the 19, only five have gone on to achieve a FENTO-approved Level 4 qualification.
- 14 practitioners in Northumberland (8%) have achieved the C&G 9295 (Level 2).
- 18 practitioners (10%) have achieved the new Level 4 Literacy Subject Specialist qualification; and slightly fewer, the Level 4 Numeracy qualification (16 or 9%).

Overall, this means that 113 of the 185 (61%) practitioners hold a teaching qualification that is specific to basic skills, 51 of whom only hold the CG 9281 (82/83/84), which is essentially designed for individuals assisting in teaching basic skills.

At a district level, none of the practitioners on the database working for providers in Alnwick and Berwick upon Tweed have achieved either the Level 4 Literacy or Level 4

Numeracy qualifications. In contrast, almost one quarter of practitioners in Castle Morpeth (11 or 21%) and almost one-fifth in Wansbeck (8 or 17%) have achieved the Level 4 Literacy; and six of the 36 tutors that deliver basic skills in Northumberland for providers based outside of the County (17%) have achieved the Level 4 Numeracy.

**Figure 19: Qualifications Obtained by Tutors**

	Aln	BuT	BV	CM	Ty	Wans	Countywide	N'land	%
<b>Generic</b>									
CG730	3	4	10	24	34	26	25	102	55.1
B.Ed	1	0	2	12	3	7	3	22	11.9
PGCE	0	2	0	4	5	2	11	21	11.4
Cert.Ed	0	0	6	19	17	10	16	59	31.9
Other Degree	4	5	2	12	15	12	18	54	29.2
Other Qualifications	4	1	9	11	9	10	13	46	24.9
No Teaching Qualifications	2	2	3	11	2	11	0	26	14.1
n=	10	10	21	52	50	47	36	185	10
<b>Specialist Basic Skills</b>									
CG9282 (Literacy)	5	7	14	19	16	26	16	77	41.6
CG9283 (Numeracy)	3	7	13	13	15	21	8	59	31.9
CG9284 (ESOL)	1	0	3	1	1	4	1	7	3.8
CG9285/ Cert. Teaching Basic Skills to Adults	1	0	0	6	4	15	1	19	10.3
CG9295/ Adult Learner Support	2	0	1	8	1	7	2	14	7.6
CG9483/Level 3 Literacy	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0.5
CG9484/Level 3 Numeracy	0	0	0	2	0	2	0	2	1.1
CG9485/Level 4 Literacy	0	0	1	11	0	8	3	18	9.7
CG9486/Level 4 Numeracy	0	0	0	4	7	5	6	16	8.6
Other Specialist Qualifications	3	1	3	3	9	3	1	13	7.0
No Qualifications	0	2	6	15	29	4	14	67	36.2
N=	10	10	21	52	50	47	36	185	100.0

### 4.3 Qualification Aims

As part of the audit, tutors were asked to provide details of qualifications they are working towards. At the time of the Tutor Audit:

- 15 practitioners were working towards a generic initial teacher training qualifications (Cert Ed or PGCE).
- 64 of the 185 practitioners were working towards additional or new basic skills teaching qualifications. Of these, 14 are working towards the C&G9295 (level 2), 28 are working towards a Level 3 and 22, towards a Level 4.
- Of the 72 tutors that did not hold a basic skills teaching qualification at the time of the Audit, 37 (51%) were working towards one. Amongst these, 13 were working towards the C&G 9295 (Level 2); 17 were working towards a Level 3 qualification and eight towards a Level 4.

<b>Figure 20: Qualifications Tutors Working Towards</b>									
	Aln	BuT	BV	CM	Ty	Wans	Countywide	N'land	%
<b>Generic</b>									
CG730	1	0	1	0	3	1	0	6	15.8
B.Ed	0	0	0	0	4	1	1	6	15.8
PGCE	0	1	0	0	0	2	2	5	13.2
Cert.Ed	3	1	1	4	4	2	1	11	28.9
Other Degree	0	0	0	2	1	0	1	4	10.5
Other Qualifications	3	1	1	1	1	1	2	7	18.4
N=	7	3	3	7	13	7	6	38	100.0
<b>Specialist Basic Skills</b>									
CG9295/ Adult Learner Support	0	1	0	0	13	0	0	14	21.9
CG9483/Level 3 Literacy	3	2	1	3	14	3	0	23	35.9
CG9484/Level 3 Numeracy	1	0	0	1	7	0	0	9	14.1
CG9485/Level 4 Literacy	0	1	2	2	1	4	10	17	26.6
CG9486/Level 4 Numeracy	3	1	0	1	1	3	0	5	7.8
Other Specialist Qualifications	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1.6
N=	6	5	3	7	33	10	10	64	

At a district level:

- More than half (33 or 52%) of all practitioners studying for additional qualifications are working in Tynedale, the majority of which are working towards a Level 2 or Level 3.
- Only three practitioners working within Blyth Valley were studying for additional qualifications at the time of the Audit.

#### 4.4 Continuous Professional Development (CPD)

Of the 185 practitioners on the database, almost half have completed the Literacy Core Curriculum training (87 or 47%) and slightly fewer the Numeracy Core Curriculum (80 or 43%). Other well-attended courses include Access for All (69 or 37%), Diagnostic Assessment (69 or 37%) and the Pre-Entry Curriculum (56 or 30%). In contrast, 57 practitioners (31%) indicated that they had not undertaken any of the training courses listed in Figure 21 below.

	Aln	BuT	BV	CM	Ty	Wans	Other	N'land	%
Access for All	4	4	5	7	31	21	15	69	37.3
Breaking Down the Barriers 1 (Level 3)	2	1	0	2	0	11	3	13	7.0
Breaking Down the Barriers 1 (Level 4)	0	0	0	2	5	4	2	9	4.9
Breaking Down the Barriers 2	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	2	1.1
Core Curriculum Literacy	7	5	13	21	17	26	23	87	47.0
Core Curriculum Numeracy	6	3	11	22	16	26	19	80	43.2
Diagnostic Assessment	5	5	12	16	14	26	20	69	37.3
ESOL Curriculum	3	1	6	6	11	14	9	34	18.4
Pre-entry Curriculum	5	1	5	8	17	15	16	56	30.3
Vocational Programme	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	3	1.6
Other Training	0	0	1	10	3	8	1	16	8.6
No Training	0	3	7	21	17	9	6	57	30.8
N=	10	10	21	52	50	47	36	185	100.0

At a district level:

- Of the 87 people that have attended the Literacy Core Curriculum Training and the 80 that have attended Numeracy Core Curriculum, almost half work for organisations based in the South East of the County (Wansbeck and Blyth Valley)
- 38 of the 57 tutors (67%) that have undertaken no CPD training work for organisations based in Castle Morpeth (21) and Tynedale (17).

	Aln	BuT	BV	CM	Ty	Wans	Other	N'land	%
Access for All	0	0	0	0	0	2	4	5	31.3
Breaking Down the Barriers 1 (Level 3)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
Breaking Down the Barriers 1 (Level 4)	0	0	0	1	0	2	0	2	12.5
Breaking Down the Barriers 2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
Core Curriculum Literacy	0	0	0	1	0	2	2	4	25.0
Core Curriculum Numeracy	0	0	0	0	0	3	2	4	25.0
Diagnostic Assessment	0	0	0	2	0	0	2	4	25.0
ESOL Curriculum	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	2	12.5
Pre-entry Curriculum	0	0	0	1	0	2	1	4	25.0
Vocational Programme	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
Other Training	0	0	0	1	2	0	2	3	18.8
N=	0	0	0	5	1	8	6	16	100.0

Only 16 of the 185 (10%) tutors on the database have indicated their intentions to participate and complete any of the CPD courses outlined in Figure 21 above. Of these:

- Five would like to complete Access for All, four of which work for organisations based outside of Northumberland.
- Four would like to do the Literacy Core Curriculum training; four the numeracy core curriculum training and four the Pre-Entry Curriculum training.
- None of the practitioners in Alnwick, Berwick upon Tweed and Blyth Valley have indicated intentions to participate in CPD training over the coming 12 months.
- Of the 48 tutors that have not completed any of the courses listed in Figure 21, only five have indicated their intentions to complete any of the courses, most of which relate to the literacy, numeracy, ESOL and Pre-Entry Curriculums.

#### 4.5 Teaching Role

As mentioned in section 4.2, all new entrants to the teaching profession seeking to specialise in adult basic skills are required to enrol on FENTO-approved programmes that lead to the new Level 4 Certificates. Similarly, those who wish to support adult basic skills learning are required to work towards an appropriate Level 3 Certificate. The role of volunteers, who have traditionally been pivotal in supporting learners with literacy, numeracy and language needs, is now formally defined under the title of Adult Learner Support; and within the new qualifications framework as a Level 2 Certificate in Adult Learner Support (Literacy/Numeracy/ESOL). Figure 23 below outlines the new basic skills teaching qualifications, their position in the National Qualification Framework and the roles assigned to teaching staff at each level.

<b>Figure 23: Role titles within the new National Qualification Framework</b>		
<b>NQF Level</b>	<b>Role Title</b>	<b>Definition of Role</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Teacher/Subject Specialist</b>	<b>Leads the learning:</b> leads teaching; responsible for individual Learning Plans and diagnostic assessment; guides teaching assistants (subject support) and learner support.
<b>3</b>	<b>Subject Support/ Teaching Assistant</b>	<b>Supports the teaching process:</b> screening and contribution to initial assessment; contribution to individual learning plans and to teaching.
<b>2</b>	<b>Adult Learner Support</b>	<b>Supports the learner:</b> screening, signposting to teaching assistants/teachers
Source: The Skills for Life Teaching Qualifications Framework: A Users Guide (DfES, 2003)		

At present, the qualification requirements outlined above only apply to new entrants to the profession (from 1 September 2002), and do not apply retrospectively. However, it is expected that over time, existing literacy, numeracy and ESOL teachers will take up opportunities to obtain the new specialist qualifications as part of their continuous professional development, a position strongly advocated by Northumberland LSC.

**Figure 24: Teaching Role by Highest Qualification Achieved or Working Towards**

	Teacher/Subject Specialist	Teaching <sup>2</sup> assistant/Subject support	Adult Learner Support	Other	Total*
CG9281	23	1	9	1	30
CG9285	13	0	0	0	13
CG9295	0	10	2	6	18
Level 3 Literacy/Numeracy	6	20	4	2	30
Level 4 Literacy/Numeracy	41	0	2	1	42
No Qualifications	24	2	4	3	30
Total	107	33	21	13	162

\*Some tutors that work for more than one organisation reported different roles between employers. Hence, the sum of the role columns does not equal the total.

As part of the tutor audit, respondents were asked to indicate what they felt their role was within the basic skills teaching process, using the definitions set out in Figure 23. Of the 162 practitioners that answered this question, two thirds stated that they are Teachers or Subject Specialists (107 or 66%), one-fifth reported that they are teaching assistants (32 or 20%); and slightly fewer, Adult Learner Support staff (21 or 13%).

Figure 24 above illustrates the teaching role of practitioners and the highest qualification they had either achieved or were working towards at the time of the audit. Of the 102 Teachers or Subject Specialists, almost two-fifths (41 or 38%) had achieved or were working towards a FENTO-approved Level 4 qualification. Slightly fewer had achieved the now obsolete C&G 9281 or C&G 9285 (36 or 34%); and one fifth had no basic skills qualifications and at the time of the audit were not working towards any (24 or 22%). At a district level, only one fifth (3 or 20%) of Teachers or Subject Specialists working for providers in Blyth Valley have achieved or are working towards the new Level 4, compared with almost half of Teachers in Tynedale (8 or 47%).

<sup>2</sup> Many of the respondents of the respondents that fulfil the role of "teaching assistant" are qualified tutors in other subjects, but support Skills for Life/Basic Skills within their vocational area.

Of the 32 Teaching Assistants on the database, 20 (63%) have achieved or are working towards an appropriate Level 3 and only two practitioners do not have and are not working towards a basic skills teaching qualification. Almost two-thirds (17 or 63%) of Teaching Assistants on the database that work for providers in Tynedale have achieved or are working towards a Level 3 qualification, compared with just one out of four of those working in Blyth Valley.

Of the 21 Adult Learner Support Staff, nine (43%) hold the C&G 9281 and four have no basic skills teaching qualifications. However, eight have achieved or are working towards the Level 2 Certificate in Adult Learner Support (C&G 9295) or a higher qualification (Level 3/Level 4). At a district level, five of the eight Adult Learner Support staff working for organisations in Wansbeck have achieved or are working towards the C&G9295 or a higher qualification; whilst five of the six support staff in Castle Morpeth have only achieved the C&G9281 or have no basic skills qualifications.

#### 4.5 Deliverable Capacity

The analysis included in Working Paper 19 categorised practitioners according to whether they worked full-time or part-time. However, no distinction was made between, for example, part-time tutors working 2 hours and those working 16 hours per week. This year, the InfoNet has sought to determine: a) how many hours a week each practitioner teaches; b) how many hours a week they teach basic skills (some, we know, teach other disciplines as well); and c) how basic skills teaching is split between literacy, numeracy, ESOL and Key Skills.

<b>Figure 25: Basic Skills and Key Skills Delivery</b>							
	Hours Band					Total	Hours Delivered
	1-5	6-10	11-20	21-30	30+		
Alnwick	0	0	4	1	1	6	96
Berwick upon Tweed	1	2	3	1	1	8	124
Blyth Valley	3	2	6	2	3	16	217
Castle Morpeth	7	3	12	8	3	33	551
Tynedale	1	3	8	5	1	18	233
Wansbeck	2	8	9	9	5	33	559
Countywide	8	9	10	5	1	33	369
Northumberland	20	23	41	23	12	119	1,889
This analysis does not incorporate some double counting where practitioners work for more than one organisation. The questionnaire asked tutors to indicate how their teaching hours breaks down between disciplines, but did not ask to indicate how it breaks down between providers.							

Referring to Figure 25 above, the 119 practitioners that were able to provide a breakdown of their teaching week deliver a total of almost 1,900 teaching hours dedicated to basic skills and key skills in Northumberland. Almost one third of the hours are delivered in Wansbeck (559 hours or 30%), closely followed by Castle Morpeth (551 hours or 29%) and contrasting markedly with delivery in Alnwick (96 hours or 5%) and Berwick upon Tweed (124 or 7%).

Figure 25 also illustrates the number of hours practitioners deliver basic skills and key skills in Northumberland. Overall, almost two-fifths (44 or 36%) of practitioners deliver for less than 10 hours per week, whilst just one tenth (12 or 10%) deliver for more than 30 hours.

<b>Figure 26: Adult Literacy Delivery</b>							
	Hours Band					Total	Hours Delivered
	1-5	6-10	11-20	21-30	30+		
Alnwick	0	4	0	2	0	6	66
Berwick upon Tweed	2	2	2	1	0	7	78
Blyth Valley	4	7	3	0	0	14	99
Castle Morpeth	11	5	7	1	0	24	225
Tynedale	4	7	4	1	0	16	105
Wansbeck	12	6	10	3	0	31	283
Countywide	13	10	5	1	0	29	195
Northumberland	38	33	24	5	0	100	903

Some tutors were not able to indicate how their teaching hours breaks down Between literacy, numeracy, ESOL and Key Skills and were only able to provide a total for the week. As a result the sum of the hours in figures 26-29 is different to the total in Figure 25.

<b>Figure 27: Adult Numeracy Delivery</b>							
	Hours Band					Total	Hours Delivered
	1-5	6-10	11-20	21-30	30+		
Alnwick	0	4	0	0	0	4	17
Berwick upon Tweed	2	2	1	0	0	5	34
Blyth Valley	4	5	1	0	0	11	68
Castle Morpeth	6	4	8	0	0	18	166
Tynedale	3	11	0	0	0	14	73
Wansbeck	17	4	7	0	0	28	187
Countywide	11	7	3	0	0	21	114
Northumberland	37	24	19	0	0	80	582

<b>Figure 28: ESOL Delivery</b>							
	Hours Band					Total	Hours Delivered
	1-5	6-10	11-20	21-30	30+		
Alnwick	0	1	0	0	0	1	8
Berwick upon Tweed	1	0	0	0	0	1	2
Blyth Valley	2	3	0	0	0	5	20
Castle Morpeth	4	1	0	0	0	5	17
Tynedale	4	0	0	0	0	4	2
Wansbeck	5	3	0	0	0	8	28
Countywide	3	1	0	0	0	4	14
Northumberland	13	6	0	0	0	19	81

<b>Figure 29: Key Skills Delivery</b>							
	Hours Band					Total	Hours Delivered
	1-5	6-10	11-20	21-30	30+		
Alnwick	1	0	0	0	0	1	5
Berwick upon Tweed	2	0	0	0	0	2	10
Blyth Valley	4	2	0	0	0	6	30
Castle Morpeth	4	4	2	0	1	11	113
Tynedale	1	0	0	0	0	1	1
Wansbeck	9	1	1	0	0	11	61
Countywide	1	1	1	0	0	3	21
Northumberland	17	7	4	0	1	29	215

Referring to Figures 26 to 29 above, almost half of the hours (903 or 48%) delivered are dedicated to Adult Literacy; slightly less are dedicated to Adult numeracy (582 or 31%) and Key Skills (215 or 11%); and only a small proportion to ESOL (81 hours or 4%). The pattern of delivery between districts for literacy and numeracy is relatively consistent with that for all Basic Skills and Key Skills set out in Figure 25. This is not the case however, for ESOL and Key Skills. For ESOL, tutors working for organisations in Blyth Valley account for almost one quarter of teaching hours, compared with just 10% for literacy and numeracy. In contrast, tutors in Tynedale deliver just 2% of all ESOL teaching hours in the County, compared with 12-13% for literacy and numeracy. For Key Skills, meanwhile, tutors working in Castle Morpeth account for more than half of teaching hours (113 or 53%), whilst tutors in Tynedale account for less than 1%.



## 5.0 What Next?

This report represents the second attempt to quantify and document basic skills delivery in Northumberland. The report is more comprehensive than Working Paper 19 and considers a wider range of issues, not least deliverable capacity.

There are still a number of enhancements or improvements that need to be considered by the InfoNet, Northumberland LSC and the Basic Skills Quality Forum:

- This work has effectively become a Basic Skills Audit (and not merely a database and directory update) and therefore would merit some agreed targets against which performance can be assessed, not least in respect of the number of tutors obtaining a FENTO-approved Level 4 qualification.
- The provider survey attempted to quantify the number of learners in each discipline and level that a provider is able to assist at any one time with existing staff resources; and the number of learners assisted over the previous 12 months. The intention of this was twofold: a) to determine how many learners could participate per year and see how this relates to learning participation targets set by the Basic Skills Quality Forum; and b) determine how many learners actually participated and highlight whether there is any spare capacity at current levels of demand. However, this question was not very well answered and has therefore not been analysed within this report. An alternative approach needs to be developed that relates current and annual participation levels to existing capacity. This can then be used to determine how many additional teaching hours are required for literacy, numeracy and ESOL to meet participation and attainment targets; and therefore how many additional suitably qualified tutors are required. The InfoNet would welcome a discussion amongst members of the Basic Skills Quality Forum to develop ways in which this can be monitored.
- One purpose of the new qualifications framework for Basic Skills tutors was to add a degree of professionalism to and raise the profile of this area of teaching. All new entrants to the basic skills teaching profession are required to achieve a FENTO-approved Level 4 Subject Specialist Qualification, together with a generic teacher training qualification. There may therefore be some merit in

monitoring separately new entrants to the basic skills teaching profession in Northumberland to determine the impact that these individuals are having on raising deliverable capacity. This could include an analysis by subject area (literacy, numeracy, ESOL); location of delivery - are they adding to capacity in new or existing locations; and number of delivery hours. Similarly, given the investment by many providers in the qualifications and continuous professional development of practitioners (albeit supported financially by the LSC in many cases), it may also be interesting to see what impact upgrading of qualifications has had on the basic skills delivery hours of the organisations and the teaching hours of the tutors.

- As part of the tutor audit, practitioners were asked to indicate what qualifications they are currently working towards and when they expect to achieve them. The InfoNet proposes to contact these individuals on an ongoing basis in order to maintain the tutor database. In order to facilitate this process, all providers need to be encouraged to inform the InfoNet when any new basic skills practitioners are appointed and when others leave.

As with Working Paper 19, monitoring the delivery of basic skills in Northumberland is an evolving process and therefore the InfoNet would welcome any comments or suggestions as to how it can be improved. The next update is expected to commence in April 2005, although this will be confirmed once the InfoNet Work Programme for 2005/06 has been agreed.



**Northumberland InfoNet Publication Feedback Form**

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