

## Widening Participation in Rail

From April to June this year, FCT played a key role in delivering a pilot employability scheme for London Underground (LU). The scheme worked with unemployed learners aspiring to become customer service assistants (CSAs) within LU. FCT worked with LU, Jobcentreplus, Entrepreneurs in Action, Learning and Skills Council and GoSkills to design and deliver the scheme. The pilot included 14 learners recruited from the West London area.

The scheme ran for nine weeks with six weeks pre-employment training and three weeks LU CSA training.

The aim was to:

- support the return to work of people not in employment, education or training;
- develop the personal skills and employability of candidates on the scheme through the achievement of Level 1 Employability and Key Skills qualifications;
- produce job-ready recruits at the end of the scheme.



The six week pre-employment training consisted of an induction, interactive classroom-based teaching and learning, use of simulations, work-experience placements and LU CSA recruitment stages. During the six weeks learners completed three qualifications:

- City & Guilds Level 1 Certificate in Employability and Personal Development
- Key Skills Level 1 Communication
- Key Skills Level 1 Application of Number

The ethos of the teaching and learning were based on active learning approaches, where learners planned, carried out and reflected on learning activities. Where possible, learning was related to the practical world of work within LU.

The learners who successfully passed all the stages of LU's CSA recruitment process were offered a full-time job working as a CSA. This was followed by a three week customer service training programme.

City and Guilds allowed us to pilot their new employability qualification – Employability and Personal Development. Mya Miah and Joyce Dargie were invited to speak at the launch of this qualification. Participants at the launch events benefited from hearing how the scheme was delivered and were impressed that Mya had succeeded in producing an evidence package which covered all three qualifications!

FCT is happy to report that five learners were successful in gaining employment with LU and are working in central London stations; a further three learners have gained employment elsewhere. In addition, 10 out of the 14 learners successfully achieved the Employability and Personal Development certificate and the two Key Skills qualifications.

Alain Le Blanc, now a CSA in Earls Court station, commented on the programme “I feel very lucky to have been selected for this course. It has given me more confidence in my abilities and helped me to focus on my goals.”



A graduation ceremony was held on Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> July, at LU's head office in St James's Park, to celebrate the learner's success.

Iain Smith, Head of Skills at LU, said “This scheme is all about developing people to their fullest potential and it has been a great success. I welcome those who have now joined LU and I look forward to continuing this project in the future.”

Future pilots of this scheme are currently in development. For further information please contact Mya Miah on 020 8840 5450 or [mya@fct.uk.com](mailto:mya@fct.uk.com).