

John Hayes MP

Minister of State for Further Education,
Skills and Lifelong Learning

Teresa Pearce MP
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

10 MAR 2011

Our ref: 2011/0015226POJH
Your ref: LRE/ESOL003

March 2011

Dear Teresa,

Thank you for your letter of 11 February, enclosing correspondence from a number of your constituents, regarding funding for English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) courses.

I understand the concerns that your constituents raise. I fully appreciate that English language skills are important in integrating into society and in finding and holding onto employment.

As part of the Spending Review, tough decisions about departmental budgets have been taken. This includes prioritising Government investment in training for unemployed people actively seeking work. This means that full funding for ESOL will be provided for adults in receipt of Jobseeker's Allowance or in the Employment and Support Allowance Work-Related Activity Group, where English language skills are identified as a barrier to entering employment.

Outside of this, the Government will continue to fund 50% of the costs of ESOL training, with individuals expected to meet the remainder of the costs. We will expect Further Education colleges and training organisations to identify and meet the learning needs of their local communities, and as part of this they can choose to offer further fee remission. However, we believe that it is fair to ask those who come to this country to work, or their employers, to pay for the cost of language courses and so will not fund ESOL in the workplace.

I hope this helps in replying to your constituents.

Yours sincerely,



JOHN HAYES

1 Victoria Street, London SW1H 0ET

www.bis.gov.uk