

Press coverage for EDI's work with Sainsbury's

The following article appeared on the BBC website and in 169 online news articles on 6 November 2008.

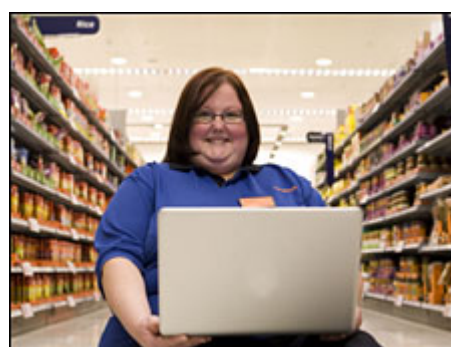
BBC NEWS

Sainsbury's offers in-store exams

Sainsbury's staff are to be offered formal qualifications in stock-taking and store working as well as basic maths and literacy skills.

The supermarket giant has teamed up with awarding body EDI to offer vocational courses on working at the store equivalent to five good GCSEs.

It will also offer web-based courses in basic maths and English, equivalent to a GCSE grade D, to staff who need them.



The government wants more employers to offer skills training courses.

In January McDonald's said it had won approval to offer courses which could form part of a qualification at the standard of A-levels or advanced Diplomas.

'Achieve potential'

The fast-food giant, along with airline Flybe and Network Rail, were the first firms to be approved to offer the in-house Level 3 courses.

It means students could combine units from these courses with others to obtain the new Diplomas, which combine practical and theoretical learning.

The Sainsbury's case is slightly different in that it has worked with an existing exam board, EDI which offers apprenticeships, to design a qualification in store-based skills such as stock control, health and safety and merchandising.

Sainsbury's chief executive Justin King said: "This launch demonstrates that learning never stops at Sainsbury's and every one of our colleagues can improve their skills, which not only benefits our customers but also supports our colleagues to achieve their full potential."

The basic skills courses are designed to let staff progress at their own pace and will use questions set in a retail context such as pricing and weights.



Supporting learning
and performance

The government wants to boost skills among the UK workforce. Its statistics suggest some 5.2 million adults have English language skills below the expected level of a 14-year-old.

Skills secretary John Denham said: "We know that those companies that invest in skills are best equipped to weather tough economic times, and are also best placed to capitalise on opportunities for growth.

"I hope other companies will follow their example, and make learning new skills and, where possible, gaining relevant qualifications, an integral part of work."

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