

Workers learn the lingo

By TANYA McLAREN

EMPLOYEES from a Forres vegetable packing factory have received special recognition for their language skills.

The foreign workers who are employed at TIO (This is Organics) on the Greshop industrial estate have been attending free language lessons provided by West of Moray ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Language) via Moray College and Moray Council.

Company boss William Rose said that the classes were part of TIO's commitment to its 'Investors in People' policy.

"We do a lot of different sorts of training for our staff here," he said. "We are delighted that they have been able to do this."

Moray College ESOL project officer, Anna Templeton, said that the chance to work with TIO was a great breakthrough for the project, ensuring that funding allocated by the European Social Fund reaches the people it is designed to help.

"The project aims to support people living in the west of Moray who are not native English speakers," she said. "This funding assists people who have a desire to learn English, and enables them to live and contribute in their new community."

She explained that the ESOL classes are not only designed to help people learn English, but to understand the concept of citizenship and provide the necessary knowledge to help people settle in the area.

TIO managing director, Steve Ryan, added: "TIO is committed to providing training to all our staff, as it helps to build workforce loyalty and, ultimately, makes the whole operation more efficient."

He said that workers would be more fluent, which would also help to improve communication between native and non-native English speakers.

"It also means that internal communications relating to training, health and safety and other matters will be properly understood and acted upon by all staff," he said.

TIO staff will be able to access a wide range of language skill levels from Foundation to Advanced.



Foreign students who have been improving their English language skills at work: from left, Rafal Sas; Malgorzata Sas; Christine Dexter, ESOL foreign language tutor with Moray College, and Sebastian Glowacki. Standing is Lyndsey McGregor from TIO.

ESOL Project staff will provide advice and assess potential students' current language skills, so that each student is put into the most appropriate class for their level.

The courses are tailored as much as possible to students' needs, and there is an opportunity to achieve qualifications awarded by outside bodies such as the Scottish Qualification Authority (SQA) and the University of Cambridge ESOL Examinations.

The ESOL English classes are part-financed by the European Union's European Social Fund: 'Europe and Scotland: Investing in Your Future', managed by the Highlands and Islands Partnership Programme.

If you live in the Forres area and English is not your native language, you may be eligible for free English classes. If you are interested, contact Penny Watt at Moray Council on 01343 559973 or e-mail Penny.Watt@moray.gov.uk