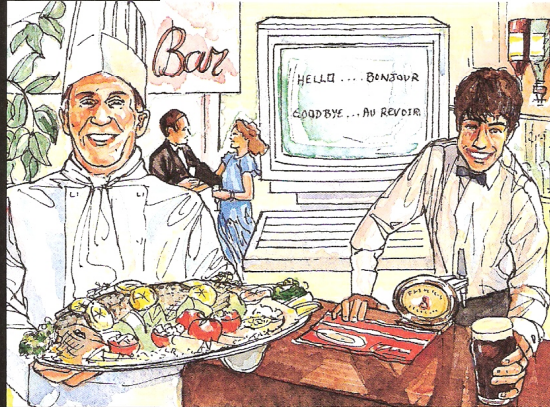


# OPEN LEARNING

*A Multi-Lingual Programme for Swansea*

## A WELSH WELCOME - IN FRENCH!



### **Project Background**

There was a time when the city of Swansea was synonymous with heavy industry and the glowering chimneys of Port Talbot. Times have changed. In 1989, Swansea and its environs (which are now designated an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) attracted over one million visitors. As a tourist destination, the area is now

worth around £60 million each year to the local economy and foreign investment is increasing too.

A report compiled in 1991 by Swansea Institute of Higher Education emphasised that training would be a crucial factor in the future growth of the area. It was essential for the city to improve the facilities available to tourists and business visitors and the skills of staff who often represent the first point of contact. Languages were immediately identified as a major area of skill shortage.

Swansea's Centre for Trade and Industry saw the report as a catalyst for change, believing that real progress could be made through an effective partnership between industry, education and training providers.

### **Participating Companies**

Local employers were aware of the commercial importance of language training. The Forte Crest Hotel, for example, had an expanding foreign customer base but only three members of staff proficient in a language other than Welsh or English. Providing first class service to overseas guests included being able to welcome and communicate with them in their own language.



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**CS35**

Printed in England MM/5/93

LEARNING METHODS CASE STUDY