

# Further Education workforce reforms – impacts and issues in work based learning

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Skills for Learning Professionals

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# 1. Executive Summary

## 1.1 Introduction

In Autumn 2009, Lifelong Learning UK commissioned Pye Tait Consulting to explore the impacts and issues associated with implementing the 2007 Further Education workforce reforms among Learning and Skills Council (LSC) funded work based learning providers in England. The research is intended to facilitate more effective teacher workforce development and support needs, relating to the reforms, for work based learning.

Running in parallel with this research is a piece of work exploring the impact of the Further Education reforms among LSC funded adult and community learning providers in England. This report is available separately.

## 1.2 Headline Findings

In September 2007, the government introduced key changes to the training and development of the Further Education workforce. These reforms are part of a drive to professionalise the Further Education teaching workforce, and affect all providers delivering learning within the Further Education sector. The reforms are statutory for further education colleges. Other providers in receipt of LSC funding are also contractually obliged to comply with the requirements, therefore the reforms also impact on work based learning and adult and community learning providers. These reforms are part of a wider strategy and this report looks at only one element, the issues for work based learning relating to the implementation of the reforms.

The Government is committed to having a fully qualified teaching workforce and expects each college and provider to ensure that all their teaching and training staff achieve, or are working towards, a role appropriate qualification by no later than 2010. For new Full and Associate Teachers<sup>1</sup>, this means achieving the Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector (PTLLS) award within one year of appointment. Full Teachers must then complete the Diploma (DTLLS) within five years, and Associate Teachers must complete the Certificate (CTLLS) within five years.

The work based learning teaching workforce is largely composed of industry based trainers and assessors/verifiers involved in the delivery of learning, recognising achievement and quality assurance. Although awareness of Further Education workforce reforms that were introduced in September 2007 is predominantly high among the work based learning providers surveyed, understanding the actual requirements under the reforms is subject to some confusion.

Respondents report that communications distributed when the reforms were first introduced were difficult to understand, due to lengthy documentation as well as over-use of jargon. These communications included written and online guidance documentation circulated from a range of organisations<sup>2</sup>, not just from Lifelong Learning UK – and it appears that mixed messages have been received as a result. Information has since improved, however it is acknowledged that there is still more work to be done to ensure that accessible materials are

<sup>1</sup> 'Teacher' is a generic term that covers teachers, tutors, trainers, lecturers and instructors.

<sup>2</sup> Including the LSC, Association of Learning Providers, and Provider Networks

produced that are user-friendly and contain specific guidance or examples of ways in which the reforms can be implemented by providers.

It is particularly important that such information reaches the smaller and more isolated<sup>3</sup> work based learning providers. Typically these are the last to hear about required changes, impacting heavily on their ability to make modifications to infrastructure or scheduling as a result.

Work based learning providers want to receive information about the reforms faster than they have done in the past; allowing time for planning to ensure implementation can be achieved within required deadlines.

Respondents to this research note confusion concerning the differences between the new qualifications, especially in identifying which would be the most applicable between DTLLS and CTLLS. Individuals in work based learning are keen to receive accessible guidance that clearly signposts the differences, so that teachers and organisations can determine which qualification they need to have.

Although providers, for the most part, recognise the necessity of implementing the reforms, there are a number of barriers that prevent many organisations from fulfilling the requirements. The time and costs incurred in getting employees through the relevant training is a major issue. This is exacerbated by the fact that numerous work based learning teachers with many years of experience are rigidly opposed to the suggestion that they need to gain a generic teaching qualification. Furthermore there is a strong sense among respondents that the Government adopted the stance of 'one size fits all' when introducing the reforms rather than taking the circumstances of the work based learning workforce into account, for instance through introducing bespoke qualification units.

The process for gaining recognition for previous experience and qualifications is not entirely straightforward among all work based learning providers; the majority state that their current knowledge of the processes is good, although it took some time to reach this level of understanding. However a minority report that it is difficult to gain recognition for legacy qualifications, as not all of them have yet been mapped against the new specifications.

Similarly, there is still uncertainty among some organisations when identifying the difference between Full and Associate Teacher roles, notably in circumstances when the remit of employed Associate Teachers is directly comparable with that of a Full Teacher.

Providers state a clear commitment towards training; many have developed coherent Human Resources (HR) strategies, with management teams of larger organisations in particular spending more time with employees to understand their career aspirations. However feedback from representative and other bodies indicates that while HR strategies are in place, only a limited number (predominantly larger organisations) are genuinely utilising them.

In light of the fact that not many work based learning providers are proactively seeking training for their employees, this indicates a general lack of training provision. Furthermore, teachers within certain sectors are resisting further training – notably in the engineering and construction sectors.

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<sup>3</sup> i.e. those based in rural locations

However there is greater engagement with the requirement to register with the Institute for Learning (IfL); providers are actively encouraging this and many provide financial support or help with the process of registration. Engagement with Continuous Professional Development (CPD) requirements is also positive; however a number of teachers are experiencing difficulties in recording their CPD hours, particularly using the online tool REfLECT. In relation to CPD requirements, respondents identify a clear skills gap in the use of new technology and e-learning. A further gap is literacy and numeracy at level three among all teachers (based on the sample of organisations surveyed).

Additional changes are on the horizon, in the form of the impact of the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF), and likely funding cuts. Providers are uncertain at the moment (January 2010), as to the full impact but a number have already experienced early effects. For example, commitment towards partnership working is declining due to increased competition between providers, and financial constraints.

It is clear that further support is needed for work based learning providers to help them adapt to and embed changes required under the reforms – notably for the smaller organisations. Respondents would like to see this in the form of: more training events; clearer and accessible information communicated well in advance of future changes; use of reliable contact databases to distribute information; clearer guidance on navigating the IfL website; help to develop teachers' skills to self-evaluate; and guidance including examples of best practice and overcoming common difficulties. In addition many organisations want financial support to help them to adapt in line with the reforms.

### 1.3 Recommendations

Recommendations have been developed with a view to ensuring that Lifelong Learning UK will be able to engage more effectively and productively with work based learning providers.

*However it is emphasised here that it is not the responsibility of Lifelong Learning UK to ensure that the reforms are implemented.* It should be taken into consideration that the findings and recommendations relate to the sample surveyed, not the whole provider base in England..

| Recommendation & Rationale               |  |
|--|--|
| Recommendations for Lifelong Learning UK |  |
| 1  | <p><b>Recommendation:</b><br/>Lifelong Learning UK should review the appropriateness of the new qualifications requirements (PTLLS/DTLLS/CTLLS) for work based learning teachers. Where feasible they should recommend the introduction of an element of flexibility or bespoke qualification units that are specifically applicable to meet the needs of the work based learning workforce.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b><br/>A large proportion of employers and stakeholder bodies are concerned that the reforms are currently not flexible enough to meet the needs of the work based learning workforce – and that ‘one size fits all’ is not an appropriate approach to embedding the reforms (see section 5.3.3).</p> |

| Recommendation & Rationale |   |
|----------------------------|---|
|                            | <p>There is a risk that some of the work based learning workforce with valuable knowledge, skills and experience will no longer wish to continue in their roles, because the benefits that they perceive they will gain from the new qualifications are not necessarily worth the amount of investment required.</p> <p style="background-color: #ff8a65; padding: 2px;"><b>Priority: High</b></p>  |
| 2                          | <p style="background-color: #e0e0e0; padding: 2px;"><b>Recommendation:</b></p> <p>Lifelong Learning UK should develop a toolkit that is specifically tailored to the requirements of the reforms from the perspective of employers and teachers working within work based learning.</p> <p>The toolkit should help enable providers and their teachers to implement the reforms appropriately by giving guidance as outlined below, taking into account the characteristics of work based learning.</p> <p>The toolkit should include clear and accessible<sup>4</sup> information with case studies and examples of ways in which similar providers have implemented changes to enable them to fulfil the requirements of the reforms.</p> <p>The case studies should cover a broad regional base and should relate to a variety of providers size, from small to large. They should where possible include examples of overcoming barriers to engagement – notably time, costs and reluctance on the part of teachers. <i>The toolkit should build on previous guidance materials published by Lifelong Learning UK<sup>5</sup> and focus on steps to implementation.</i></p> <p style="background-color: #e0e0e0; padding: 2px;"><b>Rationale:</b></p> <p>The feedback indicates that there are a number of providers that do not believe they have sufficient guidance to help them to implement changes in line with the reforms (see section 5.1.1). A toolkit will help to provide practical examples of embedding the reforms – although it is acknowledged again that it is <i>not</i> the responsibility of Lifelong Learning UK to ensure that the reforms are implemented, nor is it possible to bespoke guidance and information at individual organisation level.</p> <p style="background-color: #ff8a65; padding: 2px;"><b>Priority: High</b></p> |

<sup>4</sup> 'Clear and accessible' refers to documentation that is concise and to the point and avoids the use of jargon

<sup>5</sup> See section 5.1.1

| <b>Recommendation &amp; Rationale</b>  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>3</b>   | <p><b>Recommendation:</b></p> <p>Lifelong Learning UK should maintain a regularly updated contact database of work based learning providers, to ensure that information is tailored to their needs, and that it reaches <i>all</i> relevant organisations at the same time. It is acknowledged that there will be difficulties in keeping this constantly updated, in light of the high staff turnover amongst some providers.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b></p> <p>Feedback from providers, representative bodies and related organisations indicates that some providers miss out on the receipt of regular information; notably smaller ones and those situated in isolated rural locations (<i>see section 5.1</i>).</p> <p style="background-color: #f44336; color: white; padding: 2px;"><b>Priority: High</b></p>  |
| <b>4</b>   | <p><b>Recommendation:</b></p> <p>Lifelong Learning UK should circulate guidance that is to the point and free from jargon, on the process of gaining recognition for existing qualifications and experience.</p> <p>This should include clear mapping of all legacy qualifications in line with the new qualifications.</p> <p>This should clearly signpost the evidence that will be required to verify previous qualifications, as well as sources of further information such as online resources, for those that require additional guidance on this.</p> <p>Where possible it should include information about the expected impact of the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF), or signpost to sources of further information about this.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b></p> <p>It is apparent that some providers are uncertain about the process for gaining recognition, especially for legacy qualifications (<i>see section 5.4</i>).</p> <p>Respondents report that the impact of the QCF is unclear at present and more information about this would be welcomed (<i>see sections 6.4 and 7.1</i>).</p> <p style="background-color: #ff9800; color: white; padding: 2px;"><b>Priority: Medium</b></p> |
| <b>Recommendations for Lifelong Learning UK in conjunction with partners/stakeholders or to flag up to partners/stakeholders</b> |  |
| <b>5</b>   | <p><b>Recommendation:</b></p> <p>Lifelong Learning UK should – ideally working with provider networks and Centres for Excellence in Teacher Training (CETTs) – hold information briefing</p>   |



| <b>Recommendation &amp; Rationale</b> |   |
|---------------------------------------|---|
|                                       | <p>events at a range of locations across the nine regions in England, to reiterate information about the reforms, and as a means of promoting the recommendations for work based providers as outlined below (recommendations 10-12).</p> <p>These events should be specifically targeted at smaller work based learning providers, and locations for the events selected so that they are accessible for them.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b><br/>Smaller providers in particular require more support as they typically lack training managers, and have limited budgets in comparison with larger work based learning providers (see section 5.1).</p> <p><b>Priority: High</b></p>  |
| <b>6</b>                              | <p><b>Recommendation:</b><br/>Lifelong Learning UK should actively promote Continuous Professional Development (CPD) activities that offer development in literacy and numeracy at level three, new technology and e-learning, as well as guidance on providing effective Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG).</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b><br/>Respondents identify skills gaps in technology, e-learning, appropriate knowledge to provide IAG and literacy &amp; numeracy at level three (see section 6.3.2).</p> <p>Meeting this need will help meet the FE Sector Workforce Strategy priority of retaining and developing the modern, professionalised workforce.</p> <p><i>It is acknowledged that this recommendation may be out of scope for Lifelong Learning UK to fulfil independently. Where this is the case, the recommendation should be worked on with the most appropriate stakeholders or partners.</i></p> <p><b>Priority: High</b></p> |
| <b>7</b>                              | <p><b>Recommendation:</b><br/>Lifelong Learning UK should ensure that all future communications are circulated to all providers significantly in advance of deadlines.</p> <p>Any such documentation should clearly signpost where further support and guidance can be found.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b><br/>Feedback from the majority of respondents indicates that work based learning providers, and the smaller ones in particular, have experienced difficulties in</p>   |



| Recommendation & Rationale |   |
|----------------------------|---|
|                            | <p>reacting to information that was not circulated at the earliest possible point (see section 5.1.1).</p> <p><i>It is acknowledged that this recommendation may be out of scope for Lifelong Learning UK to fulfil independently. Where this is the case, the recommendation should be worked on with the most appropriate stakeholders or partners.</i></p> <p><b>Priority: Medium</b></p>  |
| <b>8</b>                   | <p><b>Recommendation:</b></p> <p>IfL should develop and distribute clear guidance concerning logging of CPD activities, and specifically in the correct use of REfLECT.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b></p> <p>A number of respondents note that teachers can find the online tool REfLECT ‘daunting and onerous’ (see section 6.3).</p> <p><i>It is acknowledged that this recommendation may be out of scope for Lifelong Learning UK to fulfil independently.</i></p> <p><b>Priority: Medium</b></p>  |
| <b>9</b>                   | <p><b>Recommendation:</b></p> <p>It is recommended that the Institute for Learning (IfL) develops clear and accessible guidance for navigating their website.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b></p> <p>A small number of respondents suggest that it can be difficult to find their way around the IfL website (see section 6.2); however this does not appear to be a major barrier.</p> <p><i>It is acknowledged that this recommendation is out of scope for Lifelong Learning UK to fulfil independently..</i></p> <p><b>Priority: Low</b></p> |

| Recommendation & Rationale                        |   |
|---|---|
| Recommendations for work based learning employers |   |
| 10  | <p><b>Recommendation:</b></p> <p>Work based learning providers should provide detailed clarification on the actual requirements for their teachers as a result of the reforms, including CPD requirements. Where possible CPD covering the use of new technology, e-learning and literacy and numeracy at level 3 should be encouraged.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b></p> <p>There is still a great deal of confusion about what is actually expected of teachers (with some misinterpretation of what is required of them) and clear guidance from their own employers would help to facilitate the process of understanding the requirements (see sections 5.1 and 5.2).</p> <p>Skills gaps have been identified concerning the use of new technology, e-learning and literacy and numeracy at level 3 (see section 6.3.2). <i>This is not an action for Lifelong Learning UK to progress, however they should consider ways of increasing the skill levels of the managers.</i></p> <p style="background-color: #f44336; color: white; padding: 5px;"><b>Priority: High</b></p> |
| 11  | <p><b>Recommendation:</b></p> <p>Work based learning providers should proactively seek to keep up-to-date with communications about the reforms, and make full use of the guidance available.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b></p> <p>It is reported that it is difficult for Lifelong Learning UK and other organisations such as provider networks and CETTs to keep in touch with all work based learning providers – and it is particularly difficult for smaller ones, or those that are situated in isolated areas of the country to attend relevant events. It is therefore essential that these should meet Lifelong Learning UK and other relevant bodies halfway, by adopting a more proactive stance in seeking out relevant information and attending briefing events – especially if such events are held at a time and place convenient for them in order to encourage attendance (see section 5.1).</p> <p style="background-color: #f44336; color: white; padding: 5px;"><b>Priority: High</b></p>  |

| Recommendation & Rationale |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| 12                         | <p><b>Recommendation:</b><br/>Work based learning providers should identify members of the workforce that can act as mentors for teachers taking the qualifications.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b><br/>It is reported that there are difficulties finding people to act as mentors and this is a barrier to engagement with meeting the requirements of the reforms. (see section 5.2).</p> <p><b>Priority: High</b></p> |

## 2. Work based learning and the Further Education workforce reforms – setting the scene

### 2.1 The role of Lifelong Learning UK

Since 2006 Lifelong Learning UK has worked with the Further Education sector to produce and then update the first *Workforce Strategy for the Further Education Sector in England, 2007-2012*. This strategy was designed to help shape the future workforce in the sector and sets out four priorities and ten themes to support the achievement of the vision.

The Further Education workforce reforms are part of priority three:

**Priority One:** Understanding the nature of the workforce

**Priority Two:** Attracting and recruiting the best people

**Priority Three:** Retaining and developing the modern, professionalised workforce

**Priority Four:** Ensuring equality and diversity is at the heart of strategy, policy-making planning and training

Priority three includes the following themes:

**Theme Seven:** Professionalising the workforce through relevant training and continuing professional development

**Theme Eight:** Identifying, planning and delivering the required skills needs of the workforce

**Theme Nine:** Ensuring appropriate leadership and management development exists at all levels throughout the organisation

**Theme 10:** Ensuring there is a flexible, fair and supportive working environment for the workforce<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Lifelong Learning UK (2009) *Implementing the Workforce Strategy for the Further Education Sector in England, 2007-2012*  
- A Guide for Learning Providers – Revised version: 2009-2010

## 2.2 Activities Undertaken by Lifelong Learning UK under the Further Education workforce reforms

Lifelong Learning UK has been involved in a range of activities under the Further Education workforce reforms. These include:

- developing standards for Initial Teacher Training (including taking into account holistic assessment and safeguarding of young people), for providers to prepare courses for a start from September 2007;
- verifying that Awarding Organisations and Higher Education Institution qualifications meet the new standards;
- monitoring and planning the volume of Initial Teacher Training, on behalf of the range of employers in the sector, in dialogue with the two funding bodies; the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) and Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE);
- discussing with the funding bodies the action that should be taken in the light of Ofsted reports on the quality of provision;
- setting a framework for the professional development of teacher trainers across the whole sector, including skills, qualifications and experience, by the end of 2006;
- setting the criteria for Centres for Excellence in Teacher Training (CETTs), and awarding this status to appropriate bodies or partnerships;
- launching the workforce strategy by carrying out a mailing in October 2007 to Heads and HR Managers across the Further Education sector whose contact details were held on file - as well as setting up a microsite and a ministerial launch event;
- re-writing the reforms guidance specifically for work based learning (June 2008), adult community learning (October 2008) and the third sector (October 2008) and mailing this via HOLEX and partners;
- re-launching the guidance as the 'Changes' campaign in July 2009 via a direct mailing;
- running two supplements in The Guardian (October 2007 and February 2009) as well as discussions relating to the reforms at a number of events;
- re-launching the Workforce Strategy in June 2009 – featuring the 'professionalisation' agenda.

## 2.3 Overview of work based learning

Work based learning covers a broad range of activity including programmes undertaken by commercial and voluntary sector employers, funded under contract to government departments and agencies, as well as a significant amount of privately funded independent and in-company training. This project focuses on organisations delivering what is currently called the employer responsive stream of demand-led funding by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC). This provides learning programmes such as Train to Gain, Advanced Apprenticeships and Apprenticeships.

This research identifies particular issues in relation to the implementation of Further Education workforce reforms within work based learning providers.

## 2.4 Overview of the Further Education workforce reforms

In September 2007, the government introduced key changes to the training and development of the Further Education workforce. These reforms are part of a drive to professionalise the Further Education workforce, and affect all providers delivering learning within the Further Education sector. The reforms are statutory for Further Education colleges, however providers in receipt of LSC funding area are also contractually obliged to comply with the requirements, therefore the reforms also impact on work based learning and adult and community learning providers. These reforms are part of a wider strategy and this report looks at only one element, the issues relating to the implementation of the workforce reforms by work based learning providers.

The specific workforce reforms are as follows:

- new Initial Teacher Training (ITT) pathways and qualifications leading to the award of Qualified Teacher Learning and Skills (QTLS) status including specialist Skills for Life routes, and Associate Teacher Learning and Skills (ATLS) status;
- a requirement for all teachers, tutors, trainers and lecturers to fulfil at least 30 hours of CPD each year, with reduced amounts for part timers;
- a requirement for all teachers, trainers, tutors and lecturers to be registered with the Institute for Learning (IfL), their professional body;
- a new leadership qualification (Principals' Qualifying Programme) for all new college principals.

The Government is committed to having a fully qualified workforce and expects each college and provider to ensure that all their teaching and training staff achieve, or are working towards, a role appropriate qualification by no later than 2010. For new Full and Associate Teachers<sup>7</sup>, this means achieving the Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector (PTLLS) award within one year of appointment. Full Teachers must then complete the Diploma (DTLLS) within five years, and Associate Teachers must complete the Certificate (CTLLS) within five years.

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<sup>7</sup> 'Teacher' is a generic term that covers teachers, tutors, trainers, lecturers and instructors.

## 2.5 Aims of the research

The Further Education workforce reforms place requirements not only on individual teachers, but also on Principals, Chief Executive Officers, HR managers and providers of initial teacher training, as well as teacher trainers and educators<sup>8</sup>. However this research is only concerned with the impact on teachers. Given that the reforms cover such a broad spectrum of roles and apply right across the Further Education sector, it is essential to understand how successfully providers across different funding streams are managing the new demands placed upon them.

More than two years have passed since the reforms were implemented, and the aim of this research is to give an insightful summary of the experiences and attitudes in response to the reforms within work based providers learning to date. The research includes recommendations for Lifelong Learning UK, stakeholders and providers in response to the findings and in line with the workforce strategy priority of retaining and developing the modern professionalised workforce.

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<sup>8</sup> DfES Standards Unit (2006) Initial Teacher Training – making the reforms happen



## 3. Research methodology

Lifelong Learning UK commissioned Pye Tait Consulting to undertake this research project, which consists of two related elements. First: to produce a detailed database of LSC funded providers and subsequently to survey 50-60 work based learning providers and 10 representative and other organisations through qualitative telephone interviews.

A literature review was undertaken at the outset to assimilate key aspects of the Further Education workforce reforms to be explored as part of the research. Sources for the literature review consisted of guidance documents (including those tailored to work based learning in particular), as well as research into the general characteristics and issues associated with teaching in work based learning, including, notably, research by HOST for Lifelong Learning UK in 2009<sup>9</sup>.

The literature review informed the development of two questionnaires for both sets of respondents – providers and representative/other bodies.

62 interviews with work based learning providers were completed, as were 11 with representative bodies and other relevant stakeholder organisations, including an interview with a specialist work-related learning recruitment agency. Individual interview times ranged from 20-45 minutes in length, depending on the level of knowledge and understanding held by the respondent.

### 3.1 Defining the sample of work based learning employers

This research represents phase two of a wider research project into work based learning and adult and community learning. The sample of work based learning providers was based on the work undertaken as part of phase one.

In the first phase Pye Tait Consulting developed a complete database of providers delivering LSC funded work based learning in England.

This database included the following information where available publically, either within the Ofsted inspection reports or an alternative reliable online source (where providers were listed on the Ofsted website without this information):

- Contact details
- Funding source
- Ofsted inspection grades for: effectiveness of provision; capacity to improve; achievement and standards; quality of provision; leadership and management; and equality of opportunity
- Qualifications offered
- Sector subject areas
- Status held (yes or no) in respect of Beacon Award; Training Quality Standard; and Skills Pledge

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<sup>9</sup> Work based learning Strategy, Implementation Plan and Case Studies, Host Policy Research, June 2009

The phase one database was used to develop the sample frame of employers to be interviewed as part of phase two. The criteria for selecting employers for the sample included funding source, Ofsted grades and sector subject areas.

The provider interview questionnaire was agreed with Lifelong Learning UK and telephone interviews were undertaken with employers over a 3-week period in January 2010.

To ensure that interviews yielded thorough and accurate information, individuals were targeted that occupy the following roles (or their equivalents) within work based learning providers:

- Chief Executive Officer
- Managing Director
- Work based learning Manager
- HR Director or Manager

Providers across all nine regions of England were contacted, gaining an even mix of responses from each region, and came from across the range of work based learning providers including further education colleges and independent providers. Of the sample of 62 organisations, 19 were further education colleges, 33 private training organisations and 10 voluntary /other organisations..

No attempt has been made to weight the findings (including those of a quantitative nature) in order to illustrate a representative picture of England as a whole, nor have regional patterns been derived – this is due to the small scale and qualitative nature of the study.

### 3.2 Interviews with representative bodies

Representative and other related bodies were considered integral to the research, because of their ability to provide collective views of employers based on (for example) membership, academic research, a remit to act as a representative voice or to act in the interests of a particular cohort of employers.

A draft database of stakeholder organisations, with named contact details, was compiled by Pye Tait Consulting and a suggested sample frame was agreed (Table One).

**Table One – Sample frame of representative bodies and other relevant stakeholder organisations**

| Type of respondent | Organisation                                       | Initial Quota | Achieved |
|--------------------|--|---------------|----------|
| National           | Association of Learning Providers (ALP)            | 1             | 2        |
| Regional           | Centres for Excellence in Teacher Training (CETTs) | 4             | 4        |
| Regional           | Provider Networks                                  | 4             | 4        |
| National           | Recruitment Agencies                               | 2             | 1        |

## 4. Characteristics of work based learning

This section presents the findings from interviews with providers delivering work based learning, as well as representative and other bodies, relating particularly to the types of qualifications held by teachers and the distinguishing features of the work based learning teaching role. As the study was small-scale, the findings are not intended to be representative, but to provide an insight into the main characteristics.

### 4.1 Average number of teaching employees

From the total number of respondents to the provider interviews, the average number of individual work-based learning teachers (full and part-time) is presented in Table Two.

**Table Two – Numbers of teachers**

|  |        |
|--|--------|
| Total number of respondents                                      | 62     |
| Total number of teachers reported in all responding institutions | 11,841 |
| Average number of teachers per responding institution            | 191    |

Source: Pye Tait survey on behalf of Lifelong Learning UK

**NB: Due to the small scale nature of the study, these figures are not intended to be a representative sample.**

### 4.2 Types of qualification held

The provider interviews asked respondents to state the approximate proportion of teaching employees holding legacy teaching qualifications (attainment or commencement of study prior to the Further Education workforce reforms); new teaching qualifications (in line with the Further Education workforce reforms); and those enrolled on training for the new teaching qualifications.

40% of teachers across the responding organisations hold legacy qualifications, with slightly more holding new qualifications. 17% of teachers are currently working towards new qualifications (see Table Three).

**Table Three – Types of qualifications held by teachers**

|   |               |                     |
|---|---------------|---------------------|
| Teachers holding legacy qualifications (#1)               | 4,410         | 40.7 per cent       |
| Teachers holding <u>new</u> qualifications (#2)           | 4,528         | 41.7 per cent       |
| Teachers enrolled on training for new qualifications (#3) | 1,912         | 17.6 per cent       |
| <b>Total (#4)</b>   | <b>10,850</b> | <b>100 per cent</b> |

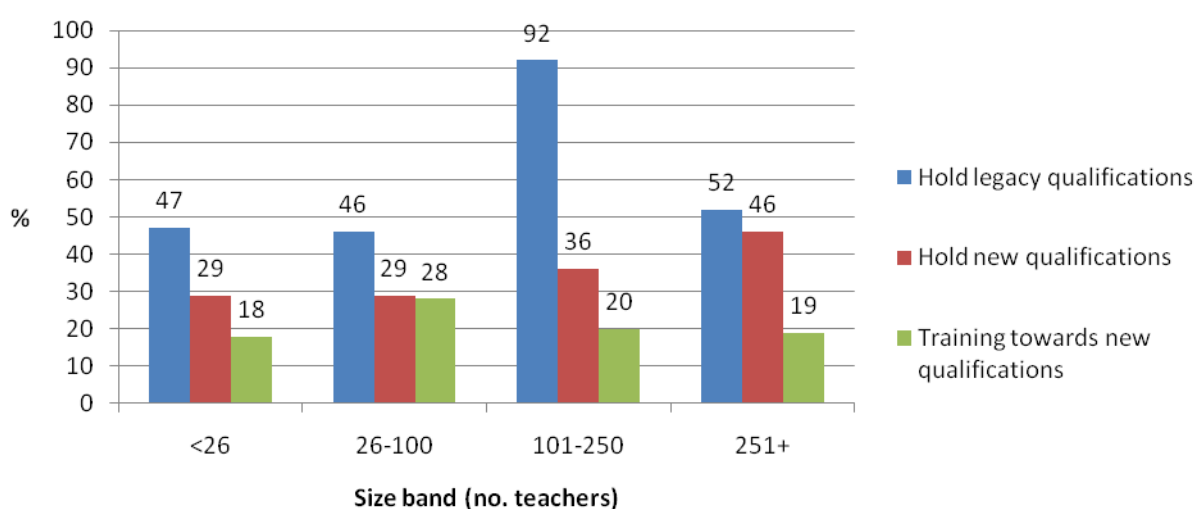
Source: Pye Tait survey on behalf of Lifelong Learning UK

(#1) 58 respondents answered this question; (#2) 58 respondents answered this question; (#3) 60 respondents answered this question

Based on the 62 respondents to the employer interviews, Figure one shows the proportion of teachers holding legacy or new qualifications, and the proportion training towards new qualifications – segmented by size band of teachers.<sup>10</sup>

The findings indicate that while legacy qualifications dominate across all sizes of provider; the gap between proportions of teachers holding legacy and new qualifications is narrowest within the largest providers. The small to medium-sized providers (21-100 teachers appear to hold the highest proportion of employees currently training towards new qualifications.

**Figure One – Types of qualifications held by teachers – by organisation size**



<sup>10</sup> It should be noted that the base number of respondents within each size band and for each category varies from between a minimum of 13 to a maximum of 27 responses. The exception is the medium to large bracket (101-250 staff) which is based on 3 responses. On this basis, the data in the chart should be used only as an indicator and should not be relied upon as a representative sample

### 4.3 Distinguishing features of work based learning in the UK

The bulk of the work based learning teaching workforce comprises industry-based trainers and assessors/verifiers. Those who started teaching after September 2007 may need to gain qualified teacher learning and skills (QTLS) status if their role includes additional responsibilities for learning delivery (for example the design, implementation and delivery of key skills or functional skills learning). Similarly those who started teaching after September 2007, with a remit involving an element of learning delivery, (for example coaching learners or delivering learning in the workplace), could be required to gain associate teacher learning and skills (ATLS) status.

The focus of the work based learning workforce is typically on coaching and mentoring, making use of techniques such as practical demonstrations and one-to-one training, rather than classroom-based lectures. They provide high levels of personal, tailored support and spend time developing a rapport with their learners.

This is considered to be a vital part of the role, as it typically involves working with learners from a wide range of backgrounds and age groups. The ability to mentor and motivate is essential. Coaching, rather than lecturing or teaching is the preferred approach as many learners – especially adults – can find the latter style patronising.

Work based learning is associated with outreach whereby many teachers go into the workplace to deliver what is required. The aim is to meet specific industry needs, which differ depending on sector – for instance courses in hairdressing involve a lot of ‘hands on’ activities.

Teachers therefore need the skillsets to deliver qualifications that are applicable for the workplace; the vast majority have personal experience of their vocational subject and have come directly from a relevant industry into teaching.

Teachers in work based learning do not generally design and follow structured lesson plans or manage large classes. However a number of representative bodies pointed out that this does not mean that they are not highly experienced teachers. For instance they need to be able to identify as well as respond to a variety of different learning styles.

Many of the teachers in work based learning are part-time and view themselves as assessors rather than teachers. Staff turnover in some providers can be high as a consequence of low salaries.

## 5. Aligning the Further Education workforce reforms within work based learning

### 5.1 Awareness and understanding of the Further Education workforce reforms

Awareness of the Further Education workforce reforms was high among all respondents. The actual understanding of the reforms however, varies significantly, depending on provider size. Larger providers typically have a clearer grasp of the requirements in comparison with smaller ones, because their teachers are more likely to have attended information dissemination events.

Almost half of respondents state that they understand the reforms very well, and are not experiencing any issues. A similar proportion acknowledge that their understanding is good *now*, however it took a long time to reach this level of understanding – either through careful study of the documentation or by attending briefing events to gain clarity.

CETTs have proactively promoted information concerning the reforms. However respondents noted that work based learning providers have fewer support networks, and many – especially the smaller ones – are isolated due to being based in rural locations, and are therefore slow to receive and act upon policy changes. This is partly because there is no member of the team with responsibility for accessing and circulating information, so it is missed.

***“Work based learning organisations are smaller and if there is no-one designated to keep up to date with changes and circulate the information, it tends to get overlooked.”***

Representative body, East Midlands

Feedback from the Eastern region indicates that work based learning providers in this region still require a great deal of support as the majority do not understand the requirements. However in the North-West it is acknowledged that there is a good understanding of the reforms across all organisations.

#### 5.1.1 Communications

Lifelong Learning UK has communicated information on the reforms in a number of ways, including:

- A launch event in October 2007 for providers across the Further Education sector;
- guidance specific to work based learning, distributed via the Association of Learning Providers (ALP) and other partners in June 2008;
- guidance relaunched in July 2009 to a wide range of contacts;
- information distributed in the form of supplements in the Guardian (October 2007 and February 2009);
- workforce strategy re-launched in June 2009;
- discussion of the reforms at a range of events; and

- through publicising its information and advice service.

The majority of respondents agree that communications concerning the reforms were difficult to understand when first circulated, as they were lengthy and contained a great deal of jargon. It should be noted that respondents referred to a variety of communications from a range of organisations, and were not only referring to communications from Lifelong Learning UK. The fact that a range of information was circulated from different sources appears to have resulted in mixed messages. It took providers and teachers a long time to read the material, and there was a lack of clarity concerning IfL registration deadlines and CPD requirements.

CETTs in particular report a lack of coherence in the documentation, with limited information available on the rationale of the reforms. Most respondents acknowledge that communications have significantly improved, and are now easier to interpret.

Although the communications have improved, a number of representative bodies consider that some work based learning providers still do not understand them. Future communications need to be more accessible and should be “written in plain English.”<sup>11</sup>

There is insufficient information about actually implementing the reforms but providers would like to have specific guidance and examples of ways in which they can be implemented.

Respondents report that documentation does not clarify what each of the qualifications actually entitles teachers to do, so that those reading the information can easily identify the most appropriate qualification for them. For example, there have been misunderstandings concerning DTLLS, and whether this is definitely required by assessors.

Work based learning providers are dissatisfied with the speed at which communications are distributed. Delays in receiving relevant information, particularly where this requires potential changes to infrastructure, impacts on organisations’ ability to implement the requirements within the set deadlines. It is clear that the smaller work based learning providers do not proactively seek out information, which exacerbates the problem.

***“Very late notification of information causes increased confusion.”***

HR Director, work based learning employer

This issue can also impact on learners where, for example, schedules need to be changed.

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<sup>11</sup> CETT



## 5.2 Implementing the Further Education workforce reforms

Although the reforms are widely viewed as a positive step forward for providers, there is a lot of bureaucracy associated with their implementation.

The main barriers to engagement with the reforms are the time and costs required to fully implement them. For some providers, this is coupled with a lack of understanding of what is actually required of their employees. Furthermore there is a widely held perception among respondents that the reforms should not apply to teachers delivering work based learning.

***“The main issue associated with implementing the reforms is trying to define who falls into which category: mentor, assessor or teacher. Trying to determine which qualifications they actually need can be a little cloudy.”***

HR Manager, work based learning employer

There is some concern that CPD will become a tick-box exercise – merely to ensure that the required hours are logged – rather than a tool that is used productively for workforce development.

A significant issue is that there is no guarantee that teachers will be able to find a relevant course in their local area, which is delivered at a time that fits in with their other commitments. .

More significantly, a number of providers highlighted that they cannot fully implement the changes required by the reforms; for example they do not have access to employees that would be able to act as mentors.

***“The huge problem is that a large proportion of work based learning organisations cannot fulfil the requirements of the reforms – they do not have the scope to carry out the team teaching elements, for instance, as much of their work is delivered on a one-to-one basis.”***

Representative body, East Midlands

## 5.3 Barriers to implementation

### 5.3.1 Costs

The cost of training is perceived to be a major barrier to the implementation of the reforms.

The issue is not just about the money required to pay for the training, but also the costs incurred when teachers are away from the workplace, attending courses.

Some organisations have been compelled to make employees redundant if there is insufficient money available to cover training costs. Government funding cuts are also making the provision of CPD difficult, as organisations can no longer afford to accommodate regular teacher absences to enable them to attend training events.

### 5.3.2 Time

***“Time has become an issue. When admin, office, management and teaching staff are spending a lot of time implementing changes enforced by the reforms, they are not spending time and effort earning money for the organisation and driving the business forward.”***

Career Development Manager, work based learning employer

It is particularly difficult for part-time teachers to find the time to undertake training, notably if they have commitments such as other jobs.

It is also problematic for providers to make time for their teachers to be away, in order to attend training. Their absence impacts on the management of courses – replacement teachers have to be sourced in order to maintain the delivery of provision. In some cases this also necessitates internal induction processes to be carried out, and all of these elements take up a lot of time.

### 5.3.3 Opposition from teachers

It is clear that the reforms require a significant cultural shift among industry specialists with many years of experience. It is a challenge to persuade such people that they need to complete a generic teaching course. There is a strong sense among respondents that the reforms were designed in a manner where ‘one size fits all’, without giving consideration to incorporating flexibility for the work based learning workforce, for instance by introducing bespoke qualification units designed to meet their requirements and the circumstances of many work based learning teachers.

Many experienced teachers working in work based learning are strongly opposed to the idea of training up to level five, particularly those that are part-time or semi-retired and as such are unlikely to be interested in long-term career progression. This issue is likely to result in the loss of a number of skilled employees.

***“It is a great ask to expect an already exceptionally qualified person to train up to level five, especially those who are approaching retirement.”***

Career Development Manager, work based learning employer

### 5.3.4 Best practices – overcoming barriers to engagement

Respondents provided a number of examples of methods used to overcome barriers to engagement and access support<sup>12</sup> in implementing the reforms, as outlined below:

- ✓ *Support gained from provider networks via informal meetings, seminars and events for providers;*
- ✓ *attendance of consultants at colleges;*

<sup>12</sup> The word support in this context refers to guidance and information, not financial assistance

- ✓ *attendance at seminars, events, internal and external lectures facilitated by the Learning Skills Improvement Service (LSIS) and the Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC);*
- ✓ *LSIS seminars that have taken place at colleges;*
- ✓ *promotion of external support available, via posters and other marketing materials distributed in staffrooms;*
- ✓ *e-guides produced by the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE);*
- ✓ *networking with other colleges to source help and support;*
- ✓ *use of external training providers to acquire knowledge of the reforms and how to conform to them;*
- ✓ *use of knowledge and support of Awarding organisations and the Association of Colleges (AoC); and*
- ✓ *accessing information from the Lifelong Learning UK website.*

## 5.4 Gaining recognition for existing teaching skills and legacy qualifications

Providers are confirming to teachers the clear need to seek recognition for existing qualifications and experience. Seventeen of the 62 work based learning providers interviewed have made this a mandatory requirement.

Respondents agree that, for the most part, transition arrangements appear to be clear. Employers supplement the guidance available by offering employee development seminars,, e-learning support and one-to-one meetings with HR or senior management to help their teachers through this process, and identify any further training requirements to enhance existing qualifications.

One problem is that many teachers cannot find evidence to back up their statements, with old certificates being frequently misplaced. However the majority acknowledge that it is in their own interests to do all they can to gain recognition, especially as it is generally perceived that it is easier to get qualifications, than previous experience, acknowledged.

***“If they do not update their qualifications they ‘glass ceiling’ themselves.”***

HR Manager, work based learning organisation

A minority of respondents state that it is still very difficult to gain recognition for legacy qualifications, as not all of them have been mapped to the new requirements and there is more work to be done.

The biggest issue relates – again – to the smaller work based learning providers. Feedback from CETTs suggests that many teachers are being deliberately shielded from the relevant information and guidance, as this is a means of keeping salaries low.

#### 5.4.1 Best practices – gaining recognition for existing experience and qualifications

Respondents provided examples of ways in which they encourage or enable their teachers to gain recognition for existing skills/experience and legacy qualifications, as follows:

- ✓ *Senior management appraise all staff and a career development officer identifies skills gaps;*
- ✓ *teachers have been required to find old A-Level and O-Level certificates, particularly in Science and Maths and re-sit where applicable;*
- ✓ *seminars have been held to educate teachers of the requirements;*
- ✓ *JISC have provided e-Learning seminars;*
- ✓ *DVDs have been developed to educate teachers of the requirements;*
- ✓ *a consortium of other training providers is used to share experiences;*
- ✓ *the experience, existing qualifications and any new qualifications required are discussed on an individual basis with each member of the teaching staff in their appraisals;*
- ✓ *a teacher mentor programme is in place whereby one member of staff helps another member of staff in gaining a particular qualification;*
- ✓ *introduction of bonus on completion of gaining recognition;*
- ✓ *presentation given by IfL representatives;*
- ✓ *one-to-one surgeries about the Standards Verification UK (SVUK) processes.*

### 5.5 Distinguishing between Full Teacher and Associate Teacher roles

Nearly half of the work based learning providers interviewed state that distinguishing between Full and Associate Teacher roles is straightforward, with associated communications perceived to be very clear.

It is acknowledged by many respondents, however, that it has taken a long time to reach this point. At the start, communications contained many confusing acronyms and it has “*taken a few years to sink in.*”<sup>13</sup> This is partly attributed to the culture within work based learning providers, whereby the majority of trainers and assessors/verifiers do not refer to themselves as teachers.

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<sup>13</sup> Work based learning Manager

***“There are no ‘teachers’ in work based learning. Our learners do not see us as teachers and nor do we.”***

Managing Director, work based learning employer

For the remainder of the respondents, the problem is that the role of an Associate Teacher is unclear. They are often considered to be indistinguishable from Full Teachers, as the work they do in supervising and assessing can be very similar to teaching. This overlap has been a barrier to understanding the differences.

***“(We are) not sure whether they should be treated as full teachers and if so, why - when they are not strictly teaching.”***

Work based learning manager

Representative bodies state that most providers understand the differences when this is clearly explained, but may use this to their own advantage by allocating job titles that do not attract as high a salary as those considered to be Full Teachers. In some cases this is encouraging the use of ‘instructor’ as a title as this is a means to keep the salaries low.

## 6. Impact of Further Education workforce reforms on work based learning

### 6.1 Workforce Development issues

#### 6.1.1 Developing appropriate HR strategies

Most providers interviewed stated that they had a formal human resources strategy or equivalent workforce development plan in place. One organisation described a structured CPD programme, which is used in place of a human resources strategy.

Typical approaches and strategies in support of career progression and documentation of CPD include meetings between employees and their managers to map out CPD requirements, when they are recruited..

A high proportion of providers use the IfL self-appraisal materials, to help teachers define their training needs typically via twice yearly appraisals. This system is utilised to identify career priorities.

***“In order to understand the career priorities of each member of teaching staff, regular individual reviews take place with staff members”.***

Managing Director, work based learning employer

Examples of best practice include monthly CPD reviews, tailored training plans and bespoke training strategies for each curriculum area. However such strategies are rare; a key issue is that self-employed teachers are often required to take responsibility for their own development, following the IfL guidance.

Difficulties are not associated with developing appropriate HR strategies, but with actually embedding and using them – particularly in light of the current economic downturn.

***“The main issue has been a lack of funding and time to act on the human resources strategy that the organisation has put in place.”***

HR Director, work based learning employer

Understanding and responding to the career priorities of their employees is more of a focus for larger providers than smaller ones. The development of an HR strategy also depends on the career aspirations of teachers – for example providers with semi-retired teachers are unlikely to make career development strategies a priority.

Pressure on budgets limits the amount of training that can be offered. Another problem that HR teams face is the difficulty associated with persuading teachers to record their CPD hours.

### 6.1.2 Training provision and gaps

Representative bodies agree that the vast majority of work based learning providers have developed some kind of HR framework or strategy, which on paper has a mechanism for identifying and acting upon the career progression aspirations of their employees. However they believe that in practice, many of these strategies only pay lip service to the requirements, and no tangible progress is made towards career development and progression.

This means that the key gap is in training provision per se. Smaller work based learning providers tend to embed a culture of mentoring rather than training where possible – subject to the constraints of actually identifying people available to act as mentors; identifying training provision and gaps is low on their agendas. Larger work based learning providers are more likely to have clearly defined CPD strategies. Part-time employees are far less likely to receive training in comparison with full-time employees.

Other gaps in training provision are typically associated with the engineering and construction sector work based learning teachers. It is extremely challenging for providers to persuade employees of the need to gain the new teaching qualifications, due to the culture of these industries. In consequence demand within these teaching areas to undertake new qualifications is very limited.

## 6.2 Requirement to join the Institute for Learning (IfL)

The requirement to join the IfL is obligatory or ‘nearly obligatory’ among nearly half of all work based learning providers that were interviewed. Providers and representative bodies agree that this requirement is being strongly promoted. *“Non-membership is frowned upon<sup>14</sup>”*.

Teachers are encouraged to join the IfL via briefing seminars, email newsletters and training sessions. The vast majority of work based learning providers interviewed also give support to their teachers to help with the registration process – either financially, or by supporting completion of paperwork. For example, some pay the first year subscription to the IfL on behalf of their teaching workforce.

***“Everybody is encouraged to join the IfL and they are told that if they want to be properly recognised then they need to. A lot of work goes into encouraging the staff to sign up – and so the majority has.”***

Apprenticeship Manager, work based learning employer

Providers have identified only minor issues, for example in getting the paperwork completed and in navigating the IfL website. There are very few barriers preventing teachers from joining the IfL.

<sup>14</sup> HR Manager, work based learning employer



### 6.2.1 Best practices – securing and monitoring membership of the Institute for Learning

Examples of best practice include supporting employees through the online registration process and regular promotion of IfL membership through emails and newsletters. However this approach could be further strengthened through direct contact with IfL team members – for example IfL could visit providers to sell the benefits of membership.

Other examples stated include:

- ✓ *Appraisals are based on IfL and therefore membership is obligatory;*
- ✓ *administrative team members help teachers to enrol by taking them through the online process;*
- ✓ *courses with the IfL scheduled, and time allocated for staff to attend;*
- ✓ *the need to join the IfL covered during training meetings;*
- ✓ *organisations paid IfL joining fees;*
- ✓ *use of IfL representatives to attend employee training days to support them in joining the IfL;*
- ✓ *deadline set by which time all teachers had to sign up;*
- ✓ *information about the IfL included in the employee newsletter;*
- ✓ *residential courses held purely on IfL;*
- ✓ *information sessions are held for every teacher; information packs distributed.*

### 6.3 Engagement with Continuing Professional Development (CPD) requirements

The HOST Research Strategy into work based learning (June 2009) reported high levels of concern among work based learning providers, particularly the smaller, independent ones, about their capacity to meet CPD requirements<sup>15</sup>.

Feedback from providers interviewed as part of this research identifies some level of confusion concerning the ways in which CPD evidence should be recorded. For example, a high proportion of small providers are uncertain of the best ways in which to use REfLECT to log the fulfilment of CPD requirements. This needs to be clearly explained and embedded. REfLECT can be daunting and perceived to be onerous, as many teachers associate it with “lots of paperwork.”<sup>16</sup> This comment is indicative of a lack of understanding, given that REfLECT is defined as “an online personal learning space that enables teachers to plan, record and assess the impact of CPD on their practice”.

<sup>15</sup> Research work based learning Strategy for Lifelong Learning UK p.14

<sup>16</sup> Managing Director, work based learning employer

Best practice is noted within larger organisations, which hold regular meetings to discuss CPD, or cover this off during annual or twice yearly appraisals. IfL self-appraisal forms are typically used to map out CPD requirements.

***“To encourage teachers to record their CPD activities, it is flagged up on their electronic calendars to remind staff to report any CPD activities to HR.”***

Managing Director, work based learning employer

### **6.3.1 Best practices – engaging with CPD requirements**

Many respondents provided examples of approaches taken to encourage their teachers to engage with CPD requirements. These are listed below.

- ✓ *Meetings between staff and senior management when they are recruited, during which time their CPD is mapped out;*
- ✓ *teachers fill in IfL self appraisal material and this is presented to management up to twice a year;*
- ✓ *regular meetings to monitor progression and development;*
- ✓ *regular individual reviews take place with staff members;*
- ✓ *team meetings take place every 3 months for staff to demonstrate their conformity to CPD;*
- ✓ *bespoke training strategies are developed for each curriculum area;*
- ✓ *training department holds a log which all teachers are required to update and submit to the IfL;*
- ✓ *employees’ progress is reviewed by development coaches;*
- ✓ *monthly one-to-one reviews and a monthly team meeting where best practices are shared;*
- ✓ *CPD surgeries and personal reviews with support;*
- ✓ *specific training matrix with biannual staff appraisals;*
- ✓ *CPD cards audited 3 times a year by HR.*

### **6.3.2 Skills gaps**

Respondents widely agree that the main skills gap among teachers in work based learning relates to new technology – and in particular the use of e-learning. Few teachers understand how and why to utilise e-learning in their lessons.

Representative bodies point to a shortage of knowledge of careers, making it difficult for teachers to provide appropriate information, advice and guidance (IAG). Literacy, numeracy and ESOL skills particularly numeracy and literacy at level three, are another gap among the teaching workforce within work based learning.

#### 6.4. Additional support needs

It is clear that additional support is required to enable all work based learning providers to respond to the reforms and embed the necessary requirements most effectively.

The most useful forms of support include training seminars, online resources and printed guides – for example seminars facilitated by LSIS and guidance produced by NIACE. Constructive information is also available via JISC and provider networks.

Providers would like future information to cover the implementation of the Qualification and Credit Framework (QCF)<sup>17</sup>.

Most importantly, all future communications should be clearly written, easy to understand with limited jargon, accessible by all providers, and signpost where additional support can be found, for instance via a website or telephone help line.

***“(We) would like to receive further support in understanding the reforms without having to read through reams of paper.”***

Chief Executive Officer, work based learning employer

Furthermore, information should be regularly updated, and circulated to *all* work based learning providers. Changes need to be communicated well in advance of any deadlines. It is essential to use a reliable, up-to-date contact database when distributing information.

A high proportion of respondents state that they need support with funding, for example by reimbursing costs incurred when teachers take time off to train.

Further requests for additional support include:

- Tailored support relevant to specific organisations;
- Lifelong Learning UK to hold more events at an accessible range of venues;
- clearer guidance on navigating the IfL website;
- help to develop teachers’ skills to self-evaluate;
- guidance including examples of best practice and overcoming common difficulties.

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<sup>17</sup> See section 7.1

## 7. Feedback on the workforce skills gaps previously identified

In 2009 HOST Policy Research<sup>18</sup> was commissioned by Lifelong Learning UK to review work based learning workforce research and information needs, current issues and concerns, and produce, as a result, a research strategy. This report acknowledged that there has been very little recent research undertaken since 2004-2005 that can provide a sufficient evidence base for systematically assessing current and emerging issues in the work based learning workforce.

The emerging issues identified within this report were as follows:

- The Qualifications Credit Framework (QCF) was expected to impact on work based learning providers, however the extent and type of consequences were unclear;
- a large proportion of the independent part of work based learning was perceived to lack the strategic management capability typically associated with colleges – this highlighted a concern that providers would not have the necessary leadership in place to respond and adapt to changes;
- partnership working was identified as a growing feature among work based learning providers, whereby collaborations with other work based learning providers as well as non-work based learning providers had become widespread. The HOST report questioned whether work based learning was able to accommodate wider partnership working; and
- it was acknowledged that skills needs in work based learning were changing. Critical skill areas that were emerging in relation to all providers focused on partnership working and the use of ICT to support work based learning delivery and assessment. A further concern was about the ability to anticipate and adapt to changes in funding and funding models.

This background data fed into the design of the interview questionnaire.

### 7.1 Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF)

The majority of respondents note that the QCF is not fully embedded yet, and therefore it is not possible, at this stage, to identify the extent of its implications.

Providers are typically affected because of the length of time it takes to implement QCF requirements, but none of the respondents have experienced any major issues so far. In fact one organisation pointed out that this is “seen as raising professionalism and interest in (the) job.”<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Work based learning Research work based learning Strategy, Implementation Plan and Case Studies, Host Policy Research, June 2009

<sup>19</sup> Work based learning Manager

## 7.2 Funding pressures

To some extent, this issue is ambiguous until the UK government announces more detail on education budgets. However, the majority of work based learning providers anticipate problems, particularly as the funding for Apprenticeships and Train to Gain changes. There is significant concern about the loss of LSC funding as a result of the Machinery of Government (MoG) changes.

The reforms themselves are not blamed for funding pressures, but they can intensify a difficult situation, as they cost money to implement.

***“There are always funding pressures; however this has increased because of the reforms.”***

HR Director, work based learning employer

## 7.3 Impact of recession

Respondents link the recession to a shortage in funding and likely further budget cuts. It has also resulted in greater competition between providers. For many, numbers on courses have increased because of the recession, however this cannot be capitalised upon as funding is also being reduced.

Many apprentices have been made redundant, especially in the sectors that have been hit the hardest, such as construction, hairdressing and engineering.

## 7.4 Strategic management

Senior management teams have to constantly adapt to change in order to be effective; their remit has altered so that more time is spent analysing the availability of funding.

Although smaller providers are usually the last ones to hear about the changes, they can often embed some modifications to infrastructure and react very quickly.

## 7.5 Capacity to support partnership working

***“Partnerships are no longer a priority any more, and capacity to support such arrangements is declining.”***

HR Director, work based learning employer

A small number of providers continue to operate in partnership with other colleges or training providers. However, most respondents state that this is no longer feasible – partly for financial reasons, and partly because of the competition between providers.

## 8. Conclusions and Recommendations

### 8.1 Conclusions

#### 8.1.1 Overall progress on the Further Education workforce reforms

- 1 Based on this non-representative small scale study, less than a fifth of the workforce (based on the sample surveyed is training towards new qualifications, while just over 40% hold the new qualifications. In light of this feedback, plus the barriers to implementation discussed in more detail in section 5.3, it appears unlikely that all teachers of work based learning will be qualified in line with the requirements of the reforms by target date of the end of 2010.
- 2 the perception is that the Further Education workforce reforms have been launched in a 'one size fits all' manner, with little or no flexibility available to tailor the requirements in line with the needs of teachers employed by work based learning providers;
- 3 as such, there has been an inconsistent response towards implementation of the requirements under the reforms – notably that smaller and/or more isolated work-based learning providers have been slow to access relevant information and instil changes;
- 4 larger work based learning providers are more likely to utilise a structured HR or CPD programme than smaller ones;
- 5 teachers have typically engaged well with the requirement to register with the IfL and the new CPD requirements, although some difficulty is experienced in logging CPD records.

#### 8.1.2 Barriers to implementation

- 6 Barriers to implementation include time, costs and a general reluctance to buy-in to the reforms among part-time or semi-retired teachers – especially those with many years' teaching experience;
- 7 the impact of changes resulting from the introduction of the QCF and likely funding cuts is not yet known.

#### 8.1.3 Communications

- 8 To date, communications concerning the reforms have not effectively reached all providers,, and have not provided clear guidance and examples of ways in which they should be implementing them;
- 9 it is difficult to ensure that communications relating to the reforms are consistently reaching smaller work based learning providers, partly because Lifelong Learning UK has not maintained a reliable LSC funded work based learning provider database;
- 10 there is still a significant amount of confusion concerning the different types of new qualifications, and to whom they apply. Similarly many teachers and providers are

uncertain about how to distinguish between Full and Associate Teacher roles or gain recognition for existing qualifications and experience;

- 11 the majority of work based learning providers and the smaller ones in particular require further support to help them to adapt in line with the reforms.

#### **8.1.4 Skills gaps**

- 12 Common skills gaps among teaching staff relate to the use of new technology, e-learning and numeracy and literacy at level three. Representative bodies point to a shortage of knowledge of careers, making it difficult for teachers to provide appropriate information, advice and guidance (IAG).

## 8.2 Recommendations

| Recommendation & Rationale               |  |
|--|--|
| Recommendations for Lifelong Learning UK |  |
| <b>1</b>                                 | <p><b>Recommendation:</b></p> <p>Lifelong Learning UK should review the appropriateness of the new qualifications requirements (PTLLS/DTLLS/CTLLS) for work based learning teachers. Where feasible they should recommend the introduction of an element of flexibility or bespoke qualification units that are specifically applicable to meet the needs of the work based learning workforce.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b></p> <p>A large proportion of employers and stakeholder bodies are concerned that the reforms are currently not flexible enough to meet the needs of the work based learning workforce – and that ‘one size fits all’ is not an appropriate approach to embedding the reforms (see section 5.3.3).</p> <p>There is a risk that some of the work based learning workforce with valuable knowledge, skills and experience will no longer wish to continue in their roles, because the benefits that they perceive they will gain from the new qualifications are not necessarily worth the amount of investment required.</p> <p><b>Priority: High</b></p>   |
| <b>2</b>                                 | <p><b>Recommendation:</b></p> <p>Lifelong Learning UK should develop a toolkit that is specifically tailored to the requirements of the reforms from the perspective of employers and teachers working within work based learning.</p> <p>The toolkit should help enable providers and their teachers to implement the reforms appropriately by giving guidance as outlined below, taking into account the characteristics of work based learning.</p> <p>The toolkit should include clear and accessible<sup>20</sup> information with case studies and examples of ways in which similar providers have implemented changes to enable them to fulfil the requirements of the reforms.</p> <p>The case studies should cover a broad regional base and should relate to a variety of providers by size, from small to large. They should where possible include examples of overcoming barriers to engagement – notably time, costs and reluctance on the part of teachers. <i>The toolkit should build on previous guidance materials published by Lifelong Learning UK<sup>21</sup> and focus on steps to implementation.</i></p> <p><b>Rationale:</b></p> |

<sup>20</sup> ‘Clear and accessible’ refers to documentation that is concise and to the point and avoids the use of jargon

<sup>21</sup> See section 5.1.1



| <b>Recommendation &amp; Rationale</b> |   |
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|                                       | <p>The feedback indicates that there are a number of providers that do not believe they have sufficient guidance to help them to implement changes in line with the reforms (see section 5.1.1). A toolkit will help to provide practical examples of embedding the reforms – although it is acknowledged again that it is <i>not</i> the responsibility of Lifelong Learning UK to ensure that the reforms are implemented, nor is it possible to bespoke guidance and information at individual organisation level.</p> <p style="background-color: #f44336; color: white; padding: 2px;"><b>Priority: High</b></p>   |
| <b>3</b>                              | <p><b>Recommendation:</b></p> <p>Lifelong Learning UK should maintain a regularly updated contact database of work based learning providers, to ensure that information is tailored to their needs, and that it reaches <i>all</i> relevant organisations at the same time. It is acknowledged that there will be difficulties in keeping this constantly updated, in light of the high staff turnover amongst some providers.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b></p> <p>Feedback from providers, representative bodies and related organisations indicates that some providers miss out on the receipt of regular information; notably smaller ones and those situated in isolated rural locations (see section 5.1).</p> <p style="background-color: #f44336; color: white; padding: 2px;"><b>Priority: High</b></p>  |
| <b>4</b>                              | <p><b>Recommendation:</b></p> <p>Lifelong Learning UK should circulate guidance that is to the point and free from jargon, on the process of gaining recognition for existing qualifications and experience.</p> <p>This should include clear mapping of all legacy qualifications in line with the new qualifications.</p> <p>This should clearly signpost the evidence that will be required to verify previous qualifications, as well as sources of further information such as online resources, for those that require additional guidance on this.</p> <p>Where possible it should include information about the expected impact of the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF), or signpost to sources of further information about this.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b></p> <p>It is apparent that some providers are uncertain about the process for gaining recognition, especially for legacy qualifications (see section 5.4).</p> |

| Recommendation & Rationale   |   |
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|  | <p>Respondents report that the impact of the QCF is unclear at present and more information about this would be welcomed (<i>see sections 6.4 and 7.1</i>).</p> <p style="background-color: #ffe0b2;"><b>Priority: Medium</b></p>   |
| <b>Recommendations for Lifelong Learning UK in conjunction with partners/stakeholders or to flag up to partners/stakeholders</b> |   |
| <b>5</b>   | <p style="background-color: #e0e0e0;"><b>Recommendation:</b></p> <p>Lifelong Learning UK should – ideally working with provider networks and Centres for Excellence in Teacher Training (CETTs) – hold information briefing events at a range of locations across the nine regions in England, to reiterate information about the reforms, and as a means of promoting the recommendations for work based providers as outlined below (recommendations 10-12).</p> <p>These events should be specifically targeted at smaller work based learning providers, and locations for the events selected so that they are accessible for them.</p> <p style="background-color: #e0e0e0;"><b>Rationale:</b></p> <p>Smaller providers in particular require more support as they typically lack training managers, and have limited budgets in comparison with larger work based learning providers (<i>see section 5.1</i>).</p> <p style="background-color: #f44336;"><b>Priority: High</b></p>   |
| <b>6</b>   | <p style="background-color: #e0e0e0;"><b>Recommendation:</b></p> <p>Lifelong Learning UK should actively promote Continuous Professional Development (CPD) activities that offer development in literacy and numeracy at level three, new technology and e-learning, as well as guidance on providing effective Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG).</p> <p style="background-color: #e0e0e0;"><b>Rationale:</b></p> <p>Respondents identify skills gaps in technology, e-learning, appropriate knowledge to provide IAG and literacy &amp; numeracy at level three (<i>see section 6.3.2</i>).</p> <p>Meeting this need will help meet the FE Sector Workforce Strategy priority of retaining and developing the modern, professionalised workforce.</p> <p><i>It is acknowledged that this recommendation may be out of scope for Lifelong Learning UK to fulfil independently. Where this is the case, the recommendation should be worked on with the most appropriate stakeholders or partners.</i></p> <p style="background-color: #f44336;"><b>Priority: High</b></p> |

| Recommendation & Rationale |   |
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| <b>7</b>                   | <p><b>Recommendation:</b><br/>Lifelong Learning UK should ensure that all future communications are circulated to all providers significantly in advance of deadlines.</p> <p>Any such documentation should clearly signpost where further support and guidance can be found.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b><br/>Feedback from the majority of respondents indicates that work based learning providers, and the smaller ones in particular, have experienced difficulties in reacting to information that was not circulated at the earliest possible point (see section 5.1.1).</p> <p><i>It is acknowledged that this recommendation may be out of scope for Lifelong Learning UK to fulfil independently. Where this is the case, the recommendation should be worked on with the most appropriate stakeholders or partners.</i></p> <p><b>Priority: Medium</b></p> |
| <b>8</b>                   | <p><b>Recommendation:</b><br/>IfL should develop and distribute clear guidance concerning logging of CPD activities, and specifically in the correct use of REfLECT.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b><br/>A number of respondents note that teachers can find the online tool REfLECT 'daunting and onerous' (see section 6.3).</p> <p><i>It is acknowledged that this recommendation may be out of scope for Lifelong Learning UK to fulfil independently...</i></p> <p><b>Priority: Medium</b></p>  |
| <b>9</b>                   | <p><b>Recommendation:</b><br/>It is recommended that the Institute for Learning (IfL) develops clear and accessible guidance for navigating their website.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b><br/>A small number of respondents suggest that it can be difficult to find their way around the IfL website (see section 6.2); however this does not appear to be a major barrier.</p> <p><i>It is acknowledged that this recommendation is out of scope for Lifelong Learning UK to fulfil independently..</i></p> <p><b>Priority: Low</b></p>   |

| Recommendation & Rationale                        |  |
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| Recommendations for work based learning employers |  |
| 10  | <p><b>Recommendation:</b></p> <p>Work based learning providers should provide detailed clarification on the actual requirements for their teachers as a result of the reforms, including CPD requirements. Where possible CPD covering the use of new technology, e-learning and literacy and numeracy at level 3 should be encouraged.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b></p> <p>There is still a great deal of confusion about what is actually expected of teachers (with some misinterpretation of what is required of them) and clear guidance from their own employers would help to facilitate the process of understanding the requirements (see sections 5.1 and 5.2).</p> <p>Skills gaps have been identified concerning the use of new technology, e-learning and literacy and numeracy at level 3 (see section 6.3.2). <i>This is not an action for Lifelong Learning UK to progress, however they should consider ways of increasing the skill levels of the managers.</i></p> <p><b>Priority: High</b></p> |
| 11  | <p><b>Recommendation:</b></p> <p>Work based learning providers should proactively seek to keep up-to-date with communications about the reforms, and make full use of the guidance available.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b></p> <p>It is reported that it is difficult for Lifelong Learning UK and other organisations such as provider networks and CETTs to keep in touch with all work based learning providers – and it is particularly difficult for smaller ones, or those that are situated in isolated areas of the country to attend relevant events. It is therefore essential that these should meet Lifelong Learning UK and other relevant bodies halfway, by adopting a more proactive stance in seeking out relevant information and attending briefing events – especially if such events are held at a time and place convenient for them in order to encourage attendance (see section 5.1).</p> <p><b>Priority: High</b></p>  |
| 12  | <p><b>Recommendation:</b></p> <p>Work based learning providers should identify members of the workforce that can act as mentors for teachers taking the qualifications.</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b></p> <p>It is reported that there are difficulties finding people to act as mentors and this is a barrier to engagement with meeting the requirements of the reforms. (see section 5.2).</p>   |

| Recommendation & Rationale |                       |
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|                            | <b>Priority: High</b> |