



Skills for Learning Professionals

# SCOPING OF GOOD PRACTICE IN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AMONG STAFF IN FURTHER EDUCATION AND WORK BASED LEARNING



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## Executive Summary

- This project set out to identify good practice in professional and skills updating for teaching and training staff; in particular to ascertain the range of models currently in use.
- The methodology included 5 phases: desk research; consultations; production of good practice case studies; development of Models of Engagement; and reporting
- The key findings of the desk research included: a shortage of opportunities for industrial and professional updating; a predominance of generic professional development; a lack of finance allocated to staff development; lack of a coherent approach to updating vocational staff; training in developing teaching skills linked to the trainees' subject/vocational areas is underdeveloped
- Good Practice Case Studies have been used to evidence findings and draw conclusions: a College- Employer Partnership; an area consortium; College-Employer engagement (with professional body involvement); College-Employer engagement; College-Employer engagement (with professional body involvement)
- Three models of engagement have been developed from the case studies: Provider – Employer Partnership; Area Consortium; Professional Body Involvement
- The key conclusions drawn are:
  - There is still a lack of cohesion across the sector, resulting from the fact that teaching practitioners are often members of Professional Bodies operating within their own particular areas of specialism, which have their own, well developed, CPD requirements;
  - A clear entitlement to CPD ensures a greater take up by staff;
  - Recognition must be given to the need for varying lengths in CPD cycles;
  - Generic professional development is still more prevalent than vocational upskilling;
  - evidencing CPD can be difficult for staff, particularly where learning is informal;
  - Workforce development planning for the sector is difficult because information on CPD is not available;
  - Good practice is not readily available to the sector and there is much 'reinvention'
- A number of recommendations have been made linked to the conclusions:
  - A national scheme should be developed with a set of underpinning conditions. This would need to link to the current minimum requirement for teachers (5 days per year).

- There should be an entitlement to a minimum of 10 days per annum of dedicated CPD time for all full-time teachers with a proportionate entitlement for part-time staff.
- Programmes of CPD activities should be planned on the basis of 3/5-year cycles with an annual programme of activity.
- The CPD programmes should aim to maintain a balance of essential elements delivered over the agreed timescale including teaching skills; occupational updating; reflective practice; ICT skills; institutional requirements.
- All CPD activities should be planned and recorded in a personal log linked to individual objectives and the overall CPD plan.
- The registration of QTLS award holders should include a condition which requires the holder to carry out appropriate CPD activities
- A network of Centres of Professional Development should be developed.

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. Background to the project

- 1.1.1 Undertaken for the DfES, the main aim of this project was to identify examples of good practice in professional and industrial skills updating for teaching and training staff employed by further education (FE) institutions and work based learning (WBL) providers and a few newly formed skills academies within England.
- 1.1.2 In particular, the project sought to ascertain the range of models of skills updating currently in use. Such training models support teachers and trainers in maintaining and updating their specialist vocational skills and thus address the need to provide quality training provision which can tackle skills shortages within the economy.

## 1.2. Project Aim

- 1.2.1 The specific aim of the scoping exercise was to identify provider institutions that have established industry link programmes to continuously upskill their teaching staff according to the skills requirements evidenced in their areas of remit; as well as commenting on the models of engagement used to deliver skills updating.

## 1.3 Methodology

- 1.3.1 The project was undertaken using both primary and secondary research.

### Stage 1: Desk Research

- Secondary analysis of existing information from the websites of the Learning and Skills Council (LSC), LSDA (Learning and Skills Development Agency) and Ofsted, as well as from individual institutions.
- Literature review to identify examples of good practice (Please refer to Appendix A).

### Stage 2: Consultations

- Consultations were undertaken with key stakeholders in the Learning and Skills Development Agency (LSDA in England and in Northern Ireland); and Learning and Skills Council (LSC) and Association of Colleges (AoC) to request suggestions for case studies.
- Data was gathered via questionnaires that were sent to regional offices of LSC and AoC and to LSDA to be forwarded to Centre of Vocational Excellence (CoVE) contacts.
- The basic criteria<sup>1</sup> used to evaluate the examples were:
  - evidence of awards following independent reviews;
  - inclusion of work placements in the CPD programmes;
  - evidence of the potential diversity in the organisational approaches adopted
- 5 case studies were identified and agreement made to undertake consultations.

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<sup>1</sup> The study used 2 programmes of professional and industrial skills updating, coordinated by the LSDA, namely *Key Skills Support Programme Cymru* and *Lecturers into Industry* in Northern Ireland to provide guidance in the analysis of similar CPD programmes in England. Appendix B provides a summary of these.

### **Stage 3: Production of Good Practice Case Studies**

- Each case study was developed from a face to face consultation with relevant personnel.
- To ensure consistency of approach, a topic guide was sent out in advance for use during the consultation
- The case studies were written up as full reports of each consultation. However, for the purposes of this report these full reports were then précised to draw out key points.

### **Stage 4: Developing the Models of Engagement**

- After completion of the 5 consultations, the key findings were drawn together to produce the draft models of engagement.
- These were then applied to the 5 case studies to ensure that they were rigorous.

### **Stage 5: Reporting**

- After completion of the previous stages this draft report has been produced which:
  - pulls together the key issues;
  - summarises the case studies;
  - proposes the models of engagement;
  - draws conclusions;
  - makes recommendations

## 2. Key Findings

### 2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 The literature review revealed a range of past concerns about the quality and quantity of subject-specialist updating. The main themes were as follows:

- Work placements – a shortage of opportunities for industrial and professional updating
- Dedicated CPD time – a predominance of generic professional development
- Balance – lack of a coherent approach to updating vocational staff
- Costs and resources – a lack of finance allocated to staff development
- Training in developing teaching skills linked to the trainees' subject/vocational areas is underdeveloped

2.1.2 A key aspect of the case study consultation was to consider the currency of these issues. The following section updates them where appropriate.

### 2.2 Key Issues

#### 1. Work Placements

- Strong employer engagement was evidenced in all the schemes evaluated. The ways in which these links were utilised in the context of updating skills and knowledge were many and varied.
- Work placement of a particular designated length does not guarantee to provide the range of opportunities for skills updating that might be required.
- All institutions surveyed agreed on the value of work placements. However, it was also agreed upon that it was not always possible to release staff for work placement due to the significant amount of time that it involved. This was noted, for instance, by even the most successful construction departments consulted in the sector.

#### 2. Dedicated CPD Time

- This was a feature of each scheme but several interviewees felt that there is a need for flexibility in the length of the CPD cycle.
- By planning in general terms of say 3/5-year cycles, it was felt that there could be a better balance struck between the different development needs.
- There was a variance in the amount of dedicated CPD time. This variance in length could be for sectoral reasons, i.e.:
  - the hair and beauty industry is fashion-dependent and might require an annual programme updated and repeated each year;
  - the construction industry may require skills' refreshment every 3 years, with the two intervening years devoted to other aspects of industrial CPD;

- the role of Health Care Assistants has changed radically over the past 6 years, which justified a repeated annual cycle in this case
- Alternatively, individual colleges may choose varying lengths:
  - Hull College (Construction) operates on a cycle of 4 years while its counterpart in Accrington operates an annual programme containing an eclectic mix of opportunities, with work placements available over a much longer period;
  - the Management case study has seen a move from annual work placements to a 'fallow year' (admittedly because of a reorganisation) but the point was made that over the shorter period it was more difficult to match identified needs against a work placement that can satisfy staff. (This point re-enforces a similar finding in Maria Hughes' LSDA report)

### **3. Balance**

- One of the strengths of the Post Compulsory Education and Training (PCET) sector lies in the professionalism of its teachers and trainers. This scoping exercise has identified some good examples of updating subject specialisms. Evidence was also given that staff in the departments concerned also took part in the more generic college-wide professional development events.
- This raises the issue of balance. The range of roles in the profession means that the skills and knowledge of teachers and trainers are subject to constant updating. It may be easier to get the balance right if the earlier suggestion of longer cycles of CPD planning is accepted. This would allow an appropriate balance between the essential elements.

### **4. Costs and Resources**

- In four of the five case studies the costs associated with work placements, including teaching cover and other activities involving employer engagement have not been very significant. Incidental costs, such as travel expenses, have been covered by the institutions' central staff development budget.
- Sussex Sfl Consortium, the fifth case study, has drawn down £150,000 from FE Sussex and the LSC in the first instance. This was part of the national LSC funding from DfES.
- In some cases, local employers have provided resources.

## **2.3 Role of Professional Bodies**

2.3.1 The positive role that the professional bodies<sup>2</sup> can play has been highlighted in all of the case studies and in the comments of some individuals.

2.3.2 In particular, the changes under consideration by the Royal College of Nursing (RCN) suggest a model that other professional bodies might be persuaded to follow. These changes mean that Health Care Assistants and the status of former nurses who are

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<sup>2</sup> Appendix C has examples of Professional Bodies with CPD programmes for members



currently teaching and who may now be able to re-register on the strength of their college CPD.

- 2.3.3 The value of networking opportunities for 'communities' of subject specialists are particularly useful to part-timers who are not employed at a single institution and to the 'lone experts' employed in smaller institutions (as mentioned earlier).

## **2.4 Motivation**

2.4.1 In addition to the above findings linked to the issues raised in the literature review, a number of others have been identified:

- Quality requirements - The requirements of the new CoVE status in the Management case study became the trigger for the commitment to develop the system of regular work placements, which played a part in breaking down any resistance to undertaking regular CPD.
- Flexible working - At Hull College, the opportunity for staff to work at home for a number of days per year is an incentive for completing a programme of work placements.
- Leadership - Accrington College's construction department is led by an undoubtedly enthusiastic leader who has motivated a team to engage in CPD by amassing a range of employer contacts that are used to create a wide spectrum of learning opportunities.

## 3 Examples of good practice

### 3.1 Background

- 3.1.1 Case studies involving five curriculum areas were chosen, partly for the diversity of organisation and process they display, as well as for the undoubted quality of the output that is being achieved by the institutions concerned.
- 3.1.2 While the quality indicators are important and, in the cases chosen, appear to correlate well with good schemes of updating skills, there would be too many other factors associated with producing an excellent end-product to single out any one as pivotal.

### 3.2 Institutional Case Studies

#### Case Study 1

##### **College-Employer Partnership: Curriculum Area - Health and Social Care**

##### **South Birmingham College and the Good Hope Hospital (GHH) NHS Trust, Sutton Coldfield**

###### *Background*

This is a very well-organised partnership with outstanding results to show for it. This is not just indicated by the award of grade 1 by Ofsted to the College and LSC Exemplar status to the Trust but is recognised by many other independent measures.

South Birmingham College has played a central role in the CoVE Specialist Health Group involving nine other colleges to produce a Good Practice Guide<sup>3</sup>. The importance of the CPD programme can be seen in the light of major developments within the health care service with new responsibilities being given to Health Care Assistants' role.

The RCN is altering its nurses-only policy by accepting HCAs as members, which, in turn, may allow lecturers who are former nurses, to retain their membership through the CPD processes that the partnership are providing. *[The difficulties that former nurses have in maintaining their registration was referred to in the LSDA report at 2.2.1]*

According to Bev Edgar, the Good Hope Hospital Trust may be the only one in existence at the moment. *"NHS Trusts need college partnerships to deliver NVQs"*.

###### *The Partners*

South Birmingham College (SCB) is a large general further education college, which operates from five major sites and over one hundred smaller ones mainly in the south eastern area of Birmingham. Since the last inspection, the college has developed extensive new accommodation for many of its courses. The college has a particularly strong community focus and one third of its provision is delivered in community venues. The college has CoVE status for childcare.

Some 90% of the learners aged 16 to 18 and 60% of the adult learners are from Birmingham. Many are from inner city wards, which are ranked in the top one hundred in terms of indices of

multiple deprivation. Nearly 50% of the students are white with Indian (18%) and Pakistani (13%) being the main non-white student groups. Non-white groups represented 29.6% of the local population, compared with 9.1% for England. There are slightly more male learners overall with 63% of the learners aged 16 to 18 being male. The proportion of school leavers with five or more grades A\* to C in Birmingham is 51.2% which is lower than the national average for England of 53.7%.

Good Hope Hospital is a medium-sized acute district general hospital with 550 beds. The hospital serves North Birmingham, including Sutton Coldfield and a large part of south east Staffordshire, including Burntwood, Lichfield and Tamworth. The catchment population is about 450,000. Good Hope Hospital has been a self-governing Trust for 10 years and is a teaching hospital, which trains third year medical students. It has an excellent library and learning facilities, including a Partnership Learning Centre, which is part-funded by the Medical School of the University of Birmingham.

#### *CPD Activities*

The Trust provides SBC health care lecturers and assessors, as well as customer service staff, with **regular access to a range of workplace activities** that offer opportunities to update knowledge and skills. Whenever necessary more specialist elements can be included in the arrangement. Assessors who work with the NVQ students in the hospital are, therefore, able to update their skills and knowledge while in operational areas.

**Certificates of Achievement** are awarded in respect of formal CPD sessions, which satisfy the needs of the verification requirements in the Code of Practice of the awarding body for the NVQs. Staff from SBC are also welcome to attend any events from the Trust's extensive training programme, on an **informal basis**, and do so on the basis of in-filling. This provides opportunities for both personal and career development.

The Partnership is based on mutual benefits and trainers and tutors from the Trust attend SBC for teacher education and training courses and events.

The SBC works successfully in other organisations within the Health and Social Care sector but has rationalised its provision in terms of **preferred employers**, which has strengthened the building of a good relationship to support and underpin CPD.

In addition to the formal CPD activities that are described above, the resulting regular two-way interaction of staff enables the exchange of current experiences and practices by networking with fellow professionals, providing an additional and valuable bonus.

#### *Costs*

The programme operates at little additional cost to the Trust although a charge will be made to

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<sup>4</sup> Quality Improvement Programme: Pushing back the boundaries; Vikki Smith; It's the Business; Ashley MaCaul, Sally Johnston, Bill Taylor; Rethink the Process; Vikki Smith, Lesley Natrins.

other colleges outside the Partnership who wish to use the scheme. The SBC has a staffing policy that designates an annual 20 days of CPD, which must be undertaken and recorded. This clearly provides the staff with the time and support needed to maintain good professional standing.

#### *Conclusion*

There is a mutual benefit for both the Trust and the learning provider by having up to date teaching staff with relevant knowledge and skills.

#### *Quality Indicators*

The Partnership has drawn on the published guidance contained in the series LSDA/LSC Support for Success<sup>4</sup>.

- The NHS Trust is an accredited centre for the delivery of NVQs (LSC Exemplar)
- SBC Ofsted Report [Nov 2005]: Grade 1 for the Curriculum area inspection. One of the strengths highlighted in the inspection report was “highly effective and responsive partnerships” and no weaknesses were identified. As the Trust is a franchise within this area, the QA is an important feature of this arrangement.
- The SBC has been A-graded by the Awarding Body on the quality of its CPD programme and the EV reports for both centres are very good.
- Successful in an award of “Employer Engagement”
- Reference in the award of “Investors in People”

## **Case Study 2**

### **An area consortium: Curriculum Area: Skills for Life**

#### *Background*

In Sussex a number of organisations have collaborated to build up a sustainable model of continuing professional development (CPD) in skills for life (SfL). For a period of two-and-a-half years Sussex LSC, FE Sussex, Sussex providers and the Sussex Skills for Life Development Centre (SSfLDC) have worked together to develop a framework of accredited training, to train SfL teacher trainers and to provide CPD opportunities across the region.

In doing so, they have made as much use as possible of national initiatives such as the Skills for Life Quality Initiative (SfLQI) and to disseminate nationally-provided resources such as those produced by the Standards Unit, and the Embedded Skills for Life Vocational packs produced by the Council for British Teachers (CfBT) and published by Prolog.

#### *The Process*

- A county-wide survey of skills for life tutors was undertaken, which identified that most tutors were unsure of what training they needed and unaware of what courses were available.
- Training Needs Analysis was undertaken and a Pan-Sussex Staff Development Plan developed, based on the needs for training identified in the then current ALI report,<sup>5</sup> as well as local providers needs.
- FE Sussex<sup>6</sup> successfully bid to Sussex LSC and SEEDA to set up a SfL Development Centre for the county - SSfLDC.
- FE Sussex was made responsible for the development and delivery of accredited courses for the SfL CPD programme.
- Two existing Fora were used in the early development of the qualifications: the HEI Forum for the development of the L4 qualification; and the Human Resources Managers Forum to raise awareness of the new requirements.
- To ensure appropriateness and sustainability of the new courses three other fora were set up: the Leadership Forum, made up of basic skills / SfL managers in post-compulsory education (PCE); the ESOL Forum to develop the ESOL level 4 qualification; and the Teacher Trainers' Forum, to explore embedding the minimum core in PCE teacher training courses and the potential to use 'Move On' for students and staff. .

#### *CPD Activities*

Accredited courses were coordinated across the county to develop progression routes from level 2 to 3 and 4 for staff in a provider close to where they worked or lived. This was achieved in a

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<sup>5</sup> ALI national report on the Inspection of Basic Skills (2003)

<sup>6</sup> FE Sussex is funded by all the colleges in Sussex and by Sussex LSC to support the development of staff.

number of ways: direct contracts were given to some providers to develop new or existing courses; FE Sussex undertook the writing of some courses directly and in other cases, organisations that had already successfully developed their courses were funded to share that experience with others.

The resulting **programme of courses** at levels 2, 3 and 4 that are now available across Sussex can be seen on the SSfLDC website ([www.sussexsfl.org.uk](http://www.sussexsfl.org.uk)). Support is offered via 'Info-mail' from FE Sussex, which gives advice and guidance either on-line or on the telephone on what qualifications or other training individuals need and where they can find it.

There is a range of **other support programmes** including: CPD events on Writing Individual Learning Plans and Diagnostic Assessment; literacy, numeracy and ESOL core curriculum training; e-learning; embedding basic skills in vocational courses; learning and attainment in the classroom; basic skills/ key skills – preparing for convergence; and family learning for literacy, numeracy and ESOL.

There has also been the development of an **Entitlement Programme** which gives organisations the entitlement to a staff development workshop or bespoke inset session that is organised by FE Sussex. Providers who took advantage of this part of the CPD programme had workshops and inset days arranged to take place on their own premises. This training usually focused on the development of an aspect of practice that they wished to improve, such as behaviour management or writing individual learning plans.

One continuing problem for SfL providers is the lack of a sufficiently large pool of trainers who had been trained to teach the core curriculum programmes to other tutors. In order to develop more trainers in the south east, a 5-day **residential Training the Teacher Training** course (literacy, numeracy and ESOL) was planned by Sussex tutors and was taught in the Ramada Jarvis Hotel, Brighton in March 2005. The course was funded as part of the regional SfLQI. Eighteen tutors from across the south east took part and most of these tutors have gone on to disseminate this learning in their own areas.

A further outcome of SfLQI was the funding of a workshop to develop an OCNHIS regional framework programme of level 3 teacher training courses. The results of the work completed by this group are being considered for verification by SVUK at present.

The consortium also **utilise free resources** - Standard unit resources in E2E, Construction, Business Studies, Science, Mathematics, Health and Social Care, ICT and Land-based Studies all have an element of CPD materials as part of the packs. The CPD elements are usually generic and can be applied to most occupational and academic areas. For example, there are useful resources to improve the use of differentiation in teaching and learning in the Business Studies pack. These are free resources but are often left unexplored and therefore unused by providers. These and other resources have been used at CPD events, and their adaptability has been

highlighted. Attention has been drawn to the Continuing Professional Development modules and the on-line elements of the core curriculum training available on SfLQI website.

Utilising ESF funding, there has been a focus on working with organisations to improve the level of SfL **awareness of non-subject specialists**. In particular, It was also agreed that work-based learning providers have particular CPD needs of their own. After discussions with a training provider and a training needs analysis with the company a course was designed to meet the particular needs of WBL assessors in the assessment of key skills.

#### *Costs*

Until April 2004 the funding was provided by either Sussex LSC (i.e. for initial research, development plan, etc) or by FE Sussex from LSC core college funding (initial 3 events, running forums). When the SfL Development Centre started in April 2004, funded by Sussex LSC, CfBT contracted FE Sussex for the CPD part of the work (this included entitlement programme & other activities). The figure was about £90,000 for 18 months. From January to April 2004 9 events were delivered which were funded directly from the SfL Quality Initiative. The current accredited courses for WBL, CVS and other PCE practitioners are funded by ESF, at approximately £60,000.

#### *Quality Improvement with nine SfL providers*

Towards the end of 2005 Sussex LSC contracted with SSfLDC, who then contracted with FE Sussex, to develop a process of quality improvement and an accompanying toolkit and to use these when carrying out quality improvement visits to nine providers. Analysis of self-assessment reports, inspection reports, action plans and other documents were used as a basis for a visit to each of these providers. In all cases these visits resulted in agreed action plans, and offers of bespoke CPD and other interventions. For example, facilitated visits were made to similar providers with high inspection grades in order to address development needs. In addition, links were made with training that was offered through the SfLQI to make the most of what was available nationally and regionally.

#### *Conclusion*

Sussex LSC's original aim of developing a sustainable model for staff to take part in progressive accredited training has been met. A scaffold of courses across Sussex has been developed. However, HEIs and colleges will need to continue to offer these courses for the provision to be available in the future. The funding and availability of short CPD courses in the future has still to be determined.

### **Case Study 3**

#### **College – Employer engagement (with professional body involvement)**

#### **Curriculum Area – Hair and Beauty**

#### **South Downs College**

##### *Background*

The Hair and Beauty Department at Sussex Downs College offers a wide range of continuing professional development to its staff. It is also very successful in national and regional hair and beauty competitions. In the year 2004-05 students won 16 regional awards and four national awards. The Head of Department, Carol Thrower was awarded the President's Award for Excellence in Teaching by City & Guilds. She manages 25 staff at the Lewes and 25 at the Eastbourne sites. The college offers courses in Beauty Therapy, Hair & Beauty and Hairdressing at levels 1, 2 and 3.

The professional body, Hairdressing and Beauty Industry Authority (HABIA), sets requirements for the occupational expertise of external verifiers, internal verifiers and assessors. All staff are required to act as assessors.

It is expected that as part of awarding body internal quality assurance processes, the qualifications and occupational expertise requirements will be regularly monitored and recorded. HABIA states that it is essential for assessors and verifiers to keep their technical skills up-to-date and that they must be able to demonstrate that they engage in appropriate CPD activities to their awarding body.

The requirement is that assessors should engage in 30 hours CPD per 12 months and that experience of CPD has to be recorded in a reflective account and that attendance at an event such as an exhibition or display will only count for one hour's CPD activity.

##### *CPD Activities*

The use of **formal CPD logs** started formally in 2001. Staff develop a plan to show how they intend to complete their CPD over a twelve-month period. They then record the number of hours spent on technical CPD and as well as how much time on other CPD. They also write a brief description of the activity, record which aspect of their teaching it relates to and note what supporting evidence can be provided. The activities undertaken must be planned systematically to cover a range of the skills needed to teach the subject well. These are signed by the HoD and a sample of them is checked by the external verifier.

**European Placements** are offered to some students. In summer 2005 the Hair and Beauty Department staff and students spent a week in France attending courses equivalent to their own. They hosted a return visit from a group of French Hair & Beauty staff and students.

At the end of February 2006, 30 staff and students are to visit Paris to attend demonstrations at the Lancome and the Wella studios. Students pay the cost of their visits.



Opportunities for **industrial placements** are offered to staff through Employee Development. Costs covered include: travel, accommodation, meals, childcare and cover (max 4 hours per day). However, nobody from the college has requested an industrial placement this year.

There is also a range of **generic professional development**. All staff complete generic teacher training. New staff complete a 10 hour course called 'Teaching Tools' when they first start, and progress to the 7407 and Cert Ed, according to their roles. All staff attend lunch-time training on subjects such as Dyslexia and using Power Point in Teaching.

#### *Cost*

The college has developed an arrangement with hairdressing manufacturers, Wella at Lewes and Goldwell at Eastbourne to provide free CPD for Sussex Downs staff. The manager liaises with these manufacturers to set up a series of demonstrations and coaching sessions for staff and for students. Another company, Dermatologica, also provides free workshops. If the training takes place in London the cost of travel is borne by the college's employee development budget.

#### *Conclusion*

The Head of Department (HoD) believes that:

- creativity needs to be continually stimulated;
- new experiences and the opportunity to develop skills are stimulating and inspiring;
- Staff feel valued when time and energy are given to providing opportunities for development;
- there is a visible improvement in learning and teaching following CPD;
- Staff are able to re-affirm their interest in their occupational areas;
- up-to-date experience improves credibility with employers.

Finally, without sufficient CPD professional body membership would lapse and awarding bodies would not recognise the department as able to offer the qualifications.

#### **Case Study 4**

##### **College – Employer engagement**

##### **Curriculum Area – Construction**

##### **Accrington and Rossendale College and Hull College**

###### a) Accrington and Rossendale College

###### *Background*

The College is a general further education college of medium size, located in East Lancashire. It has as its principal catchment area the three boroughs of Hyndburn, Rossendale and the Ribble Valley.

Hyndburn contains areas of significant deprivation. It has low levels of young people continuing in full-time education and training, at 60%. Approximately 25% of young people progress to work-based learning. In Rossendale, the percentage of young people participating in full-time education and training is below the national average. Only 24% of the people who live and work in East Lancashire hold a qualification at national vocational qualification (NVQ) level 2 and 14% at level 3. Estimates of the local population aged 16 to 60 with poor literacy, numeracy and language needs are higher than the national average in both Hyndburn and Rossendale.

In 2003/04, 1,203 full-time students and 9,096 part-time students enrolled at the college. Over 173 students enrolled on apprenticeship programmes. In addition, over 650 year 10 and year 11 pupils from local schools attended the college for Key Stage 4 vocational courses and individual placements. The gender balance on full-time courses was 46% female and 54% male and, on part-time courses, 60% women and 40% men. Some 13% of students identified themselves as being of Asian origin, the vast majority of who were Pakistani. This is higher than the local population of just over 8%.

###### *CPD Activities*

The head of department, Clive Weston (who was Star Award winner last year for Outstanding Leadership) describes his approach to CPD as less structured than a formal scheme. Finding it difficult to release 'staff into industry' for any significant periods of time, he very effectively **engages 'staff with industry'**. This is achieved in a variety of ways as the college has working relationships with a very wide range of local employers, SMEs as well as large businesses like Unibond. He encourages members of his team to get involved in every way possible – judging skills awards; serving on CITB committees and seeing workplace assessment as an opportunity to gain insights. For instance, two construction lecturers spent time in Germany recently, studying flooring production, others did some research and development on wallpaper adhesive for Unibond, resulting in a new product on the market. Similar collaboration has taken place on paints as part of a commercial deal. New machines are frequently obtained on preferential terms,

which provide staff further opportunities to train on and consequently use the latest equipment. One manufacturer used the college facilities to test certain materials to destruction as part of its research and development process.

The departmental staff take part in the college's events for the more generic CPD activity.

#### *Conclusion*

This approach satisfies the requirements of the CoVE code of practice, the awarding bodies and clearly the Ofsted inspectors who have awarded the department, the first Construction CoVE, a Grade 1 on three successive occasions.

#### b) Hull College

##### *Background*

Hull College is a large general further education college, which provides education and training for the city of Hull and the East Riding of Yorkshire. The college operates on three main sites in Hull: Queen's Gardens and Park Street in the city centre and the Riley Centre in west Hull. A fourth site, Goole College, is located 30 miles to the west of the city and operates as a separate centre. Provision is also offered at the Kingston Communications Stadium. Over 75% of Hull's wards are ranked in the top 25% of most deprived wards in England and Wales. Hull is rated sixth in the country for local concentrations of multiple deprivation.

The proportion of school leavers with five or more general certificate of secondary education (GCSE) grades A\* to C is the smallest in the country at 34.8%. The college offers a wide range of full-time and part-time general and vocational programmes from entry level to degree level. Courses are also offered at around 300 community-based venues. The college has 25 franchise partners, mainly offering provision in health and care.

The college's mission is to deliver high quality vocational and academic education and training, raising the aspirations and prosperity of the local and global community in collaboration with partners. In 2003/04, the college enrolled 4,335 full-time students and around 20,000 part-time students. The college has a large entry to employment (E2E) programme, with 300 learners in 2003/04, and extensive apprenticeship programmes, totaling 771 work-based learners. There were approximately 1,700 enrolments of pupils aged 14 to 16 from Hull and East Riding schools on accredited qualifications or on sample taster programmes.

Close partnerships with a number of higher education (HE) institutions provide a broad range of programmes, including foundation degrees to help students to progress to HE in most areas of learning. The college currently has 845 HE students.

Employer links are excellent and the college holds a Beacon award for employer engagement and a regional national training award. The college has a CoVE in Construction, which received a Beacon award for its work with 14 – 19 year olds in Hull. The college also has a CoVE in Ports and Logistics, and is a partner in both a food manufacturing CoVE and motor vehicle engineering

CoVE.

*CPD Activities*

Central to the scheme is a **departmental arrangement** whereby staff have a target to undertake 4 days of work placement over a year, which are organised with co-operation of a number of local firms. A member of staff can opt to save up the days to be taken in one batch or any other combination as long as the target is met in the designated cycle. There is an 'incentive' for the staff to reach their target as they are allowed a concession of 8 days per year to work at home and away from the usual pressures of the workplace.

It is accepted that a degree of flexibility is needed in respect of the areas of skills and knowledge that might need to be updated by the individual. An example was given of a bricklayer whose skill level may not require constant updating but who will be expected to use the time to gain some experience of other aspects of the industry.

*Conclusion*

The scheme is seen as a key element in the quality improvement that has been fully recognised in the latest Ofsted report.

## **Case Study 5**

### **College - Employer engagement (with professional bodies involvement)**

#### **Curriculum Area - Management**

#### **The Goldsmith Management Centre (part of North Hertfordshire College)**

##### *Background*

The purpose built Goldsmith Management Centre of North Hertfordshire College, situated in Letchworth Garden City, was opened in 1999 and was awarded CoVE status in business and management in 2002. The Centre provides a range of professional and short courses that meet the workforce and community needs in Hertfordshire, as well as in some cases regionally and nationally. It also houses the Business Development Unit, which provides advice and assistance to large and small companies and organisations to meet their specific development needs.

##### *CPD Activities*

The formal part of the scheme in normal years (re-organisation this year has interrupted the pattern) centres on a **week that is available for work placements**, which most lecturers and support staff arrange for themselves with companies that offer particular elements. The college will fill in any gaps in the absence of personal contacts being made.

All proposals detailing the objectives to be pursued, business of the provider and plan of action, are submitted to the staff development unit for approval. If cover is needed for staff on work placements, it is treated as if for absence or holiday. The evaluation of the work placement is included as part of the Professional Development Record, which is a college-wide process.

The requirement for CoVEs to 'update systematically the subject specialist skills of the teaching staff' is seen as having provided the impetus for developing a more formal CPD process. The work placements have been successful, which has helped to win-over some of the more reluctant colleagues who, in the past, might have avoided taking part. There was some resistance at first but now staff are generally supportive of the system.

Employer engagement is good and has been formally achieved. However, the real dividend has been in the benefits to all staff in being exposed to the range of activities/events/contacts that flow from the two-way process of engagement. This informal CPD is seen as just as valuable as the work placements given the variety of experience can be greater over a longer period.

In addition to employer engagement, the Management Centre works closely with 7 professional management bodies to provide more opportunities for professional updating:

- Association of Accounting Technicians (AAT)
- Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (CIMA)
- Chartered Institute of Marketing (CIMA)
- Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD)

- Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply (CIPS)
- Institute of Legal Executives (ILEX)
- National Association of Estate Agents (NAEA)

#### *Partnership*

The formation of a partnership with the Hertfordshire Ambulance & Paramedic Service NHS Trust is a good example of the value that has been derived from contacts made through employer engagement. In a major change for the Trust<sup>7</sup> to seek external training, the Management Centre was awarded a contract to deliver the ILM national qualification in Coaching. To date, 84 work-based learners have reached level 3 and now the majority wish to progress to level 4.

#### *Conclusion*

The CPD programme has been integral in the Centre's Business Development Unit achieving the Customer First Award<sup>8</sup>. This award is a National Quality Assurance Framework for Business Support Providers.

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<sup>7</sup> A very interesting comment given that the NHS Trust in Sutton Coldfield made a similar point about possibly being the only Trust to enter into such an arrangement with South Birmingham College

<sup>8</sup> As the Ofsted report combines the work of the Centre with that of the main college programme in the curriculum area of business administration, there is no separate Grade given to the Management Centre. Also, as the last report was in 2003 just after the Centre was opened, there is no contemporary review by which to compare their current performance with other case study institutions.

### 3.3 Personal Motivation

- 3.3.1 One other type of CPD process has also been included, which is not related to a particular curriculum area but illustrates how an individual can be enabled to retain and improve their current occupational skills and knowledge.
- 3.3.2 This issue was referred to at some length in the 1999 FEFC report (Please see Appendix A) and Beryl Pratley, who was closely involved with its production, spoke specifically about the difficulties of the 'lone expert' when introducing the document at its launch event.
- 3.3.3 In the report, problems of specialists working in small institutions were coupled with weaknesses such as inadequate arrangements for training part-time staff (who are often working a number of different institutions) and a decline in opportunities to network with colleagues in other colleges.
- 3.3.4 In a climate where reports are still identifying a dominance of generic professional development activities being undertaken compared with updating subject-specialist and teaching skills, it may be significant that both individuals and colleges have recorded instances of professional body involvement.

**Case Study 6:** The following quotes are from members<sup>9</sup> of the Institute for Learning who have described their own subject-specialist updating process:

- *“Currently keeping a CPD file for my CIM course and have found this a useful record of reading and application of ideas”*
- *“All my CPD is rated through the British Computer Society using the Skills Framework for the Information Age (SFIA). Wherever possible, join the professional or learned societies such as BIM, IEEE, and BCS and match their well-used models. Professional bodies such as CIPD have very good learning log model, which the IfL should adopt.”*
- *“The IMA’s CPD process has worked well for me.”*
- *“IfL should follow IEE/IMechE/IIE and have an agreed CPD requirement.”*
- *“I have a CPD ‘management’ requirement, an IEE CPD requirement, so providing teaching one needs to be complementary.”*

<sup>9</sup> Contact details for these organisations are held at Appendix C

## 4 Models of Engagement

### 4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 The main aim of this work was to determine models of engagement from both the literature review and the case studies. The previous section outlined the case studies themselves. In this section, we provide details of 3 different models of engagement based on the findings.

### 4.2 Model 1: Provider – Employer Partnership

#### *Main Characteristics*

- Links with larger employers with own training centres (i.e. NHS)
- Key driver from the sector for the upskilling of college staff

#### *Model*

- Employer identifies areas of CPD for the provider staff in support of individual requirements
- CPD programme is well developed and promoted to staff, with an annual programme made available
- Provider staff are released to undertake the training
- Formal recognition of attendance i.e. logs or certificates
- Usually reciprocal, with employer staff undertaking training at the provider
- Underpinned with networking opportunities (formal/ informal)
- Minimum costs

### 4.3 Model 2: Area Consortium

#### *Main Characteristics*

- Linked to a regional/ national driver i.e. SfL, ITT
- Usually linked to development funding in the first instance

#### *Model*

- Collaboration between providers in drawing up an overview of provision
- Gaps in provision identified
- Negotiation between providers on the development and delivery of new provision
- Joint marketing using all sources, especially web based
- Costs from development sources and then mainstreamed



#### **4.4 Model 3: Professional Body Involvement**

##### *Main Characteristics*

- Sector with specific sectoral requirements
- Providers actively engaging (i.e. Hair and Beauty)

##### *Model*

- Sector Lead Body stipulates CPD requirements, which are a necessity for professional membership
- Provider takes the lead in linking with key employers (locally, regionally, nationally)
- Evidence is required for the Lead Body in order for the provider to maintain professional membership

## 5 Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1.1 In September 2007, the anticipated registration of newly qualified QTLS graduates will begin. It is now time to address some of the concerns that were expressed by the FEFC and Ofsted inspectors about the updating of vocational skills and knowledge within a system of CPD, which lacks coherence across the sector.

5.1.2 The following table draws together conclusions from the key findings outlined in Section 2 and the case studies in Section 3.

Conclusion	Recommendation
1) There is still a lack of cohesion across the sector, which does not recognise that Professional Bodies operating within the FE sectors vocational curricula have their own, well developed, CPD requirements.	A national scheme should be developed with a set of underpinning conditions. This would need to link to the current minimum requirement for teachers (5 days per year).
2) A clear entitlement to CPD ensures a greater take up by staff	There should be an entitlement to a minimum of 10 days per annum of dedicated CPD time for all full-time teachers with a proportionate entitlement for part-time staff.
3) Recognition must be given to the need for varying lengths in CPD cycles.	Programmes of CPD activities should be planned on the basis of 3/5-year cycles with an annual programme of activity.
4) Generic professional development is still more prevalent than vocational upskilling.	The CPD programmes should aim to maintain a balance of essential elements delivered over the agreed timescale including teaching skills; occupational updating; reflective practice; ICT skills; institutional requirements.
5) Evidencing CPD can be difficult for staff, particularly where learning is informal.	All CPD activities should be planned and recorded in a personal log linked to individual objectives and the overall CPD plan.
6) Workforce Development planning for the sector is difficult because information on CPD is not available.	The registration of QTLS award holders should include a condition which requires the holder to carry out appropriate CPD activities.
7) Good practice is not readily available to the sector and there is much 'reinvention'.	A network of Centres of Professional Development should be developed.

## Appendix A - Literature Review

There are a number of recently published reports, starting with the FEFC report on professional development in 1999, which contain references to the subject of this scoping exercise.

- The published national report of the FEFC Inspectorate, ***Professional Development in Further Education (1998-99)***

This listed a number of strengths and weaknesses in the then current practice. The following is a brief summary of some of them:

The **strengths** of professional development in further education include:

- A high proportion of staff with teaching qualifications of some kind
- Some good systems for managing and monitoring staff development activity
- Progress towards the acceptance of national standards for teachers
- Staff induction arrangements
- Quality systems which are used to identify, promote and share good practice
- Opportunities offered by membership of professional organisations, staff working groups and development projects.

The **weaknesses** include:

- The relatively low levels of finance allocated to staff development, in a sector which should believe in the benefits of training
- Insufficient analysis of the costs and benefits of staff development activities
- The shortage of significant opportunities for industrial and professional updating
- The low priority given to pedagogic skills, in comparison with assessor training
- Insufficient opportunities to prepare thoroughly for curriculum change.

The study was based on the inspection reports from 108 colleges. Clearly, the weakness that identifies the shortage of opportunities is the main concern of this scoping exercise. However the lack of resources has surfaced as an issue from time to time in this investigation. Of particular relevance, however, is the section in the FEFC report on the staff development of Subject Specialists.

The inspectors reported that subject-specific training had been in decline since incorporation as colleges identified and then responded to more generic training needs. Examples that were given included training in assessment and the use of ICT. They also said that there had been less preparation in ITT for the teaching of specific subjects or disciplines than in the past. *[This point has been repeated in the recent Ofsted report, The Initial Teacher Training of Further Education Teachers.]*

The report found evidence of the use to which individuals put their membership of a professional body to assist them in the process of updating their skills and knowledge. It will be seen later in this exercise, that the same influence of professional bodies is still apparent and, given the relatively small sample size, the impression gained is of a more significant involvement.

Other recent reports, which cover the issue of industrial updating, have made similar points.

▪ ***Developing leading-edge staff in vocational education and training; Dave Brooks and Maria Hughes; LSDA, 2001***

This research was carried by a questionnaire survey of 108 colleges (coincidentally the same number as the FEFC report) and a number of interviews. Some of these, which will be seen to have a particular resonance with the findings in this exercise, are repeated here:

- Nearly all respondents (97%) keep up to date through reading;
- three-quarters (75%) through personal research;
- placements or secondments to the workplace were used by less than a third (27%) of respondents, but preferred by most of them.

Staff clearly see the value of a period back in industry but have little opportunity to experience it. Some felt teaching a vocational skill enabled them to keep up to date, whereas others stressed the need to return to a 'real' work environment.

Respondents from particular subject areas preferred different forms and frequency of updating. IT practitioners, for example, need particularly frequent updating, because of the rapid changes in their discipline.

Those who felt up to date in knowledge were also reasonably confident of their skills, except for health/care practitioners. Regardless of their knowledge level, they were more likely to consider that their skills needed updating. Some staff in this area undertake part-time work through 'nurse banks' to retain their licence to practice. Staff commented that much of their updating was done outside timetabled hours, at weekends and during holidays. They asserted that time should be allocated to updating skills and knowledge in an appropriate setting.

[Please note: The health care case study in this report demonstrates a way forward to resolve this shortcoming but the NHS Trust involved in the college partnership is the only one known to be taking part in such a development at the moment].

Individual staff in FE colleges keep themselves up to date in a variety of ways but there is no coherent approach to updating vocational staff across the sector.

*Conclusions and Issues*

Opportunities for sharing staff training and updating with employers should be considered.

Organisations such as the Learning and Skills Development Agency, the Learning and Skills Council (LSC), national training organisations (NTOs), awarding bodies and the DfEE need to

offer guidance and support. Appropriate structures and, possibly, a central fund for staff updating and product development are needed to secure systematic updating across the sector.

▪ ***Development Programmes for Plumbing tutors in FE Colleges in the UK; BPEC (Training) Ltd and the Plumbing and Heating Industry Alliance; July 2005***

The industry alliance includes the professional body for qualified plumbers, which is the route through which the report was obtained. The first few are set out here as they have a more direct bearing on the scoping exercise than many of the others do.

- Current CPD provision in colleges/centres is reasonable in terms of developing teaching practice/pedagogy but is too generic
- CPD styled support for plumbing tutors on more technical aspects is more ad-hoc and tends not to be centrally driven by college/training centre management
- Plumbing tutors would welcome support provided by a plumbing orientated CPD programme, providing time taken up was not exhaustive (i.e. not more than 1 week per annum)
- A majority (over 70%) of both plumbing tutors and manufacturers would like to see a CPD programme for plumbing tutors officially awarded by an organisation such as City and Guilds

• ***Institute of Learning [IfL]: Survey of members' CPD activities (2006)***

The Institute has been asking all members on enrolment to complete a questionnaire about their recent CPD activities, including the last three events attended. The 12 most repeated topics (75% of the total) are largely generic in nature and headed by ICT and Assessment just as foretold in the FEFC survey 7 years ago.

Nearly one half of those interviewed have referred to a professional body in relation to their own CPD and almost as many have raised the issue of subject-specific updating. As a lack of resources was also mentioned, members are reporting most of the main concerns that have been highlighted in the other reports above.

The IfL sample is small when compared with the much larger samples that were used in the other reports but, if they represent the profile of the sector reasonably accurately, then a small sample (even at 0.5% of the full-time staff) can be expected to capture most of the main characteristics.

Given that membership of IfL implies support for the requirement to remain in 'good standing', this sample is probably skewed towards those who are concerned to organise in their own CPD programmes and those who see the value of work placements despite a lack of opportunities.

• ***Ofsted Report: The Initial Training of Further Education Teachers (Feb 2006)***

Some key findings relevant to this exercise are set out below:

- Trainees' achievement

- None of the trainees observed by inspectors demonstrated very good or outstanding standards of teaching. Their progress is constrained because their knowledge and expertise in teaching their specialist subject/vocational areas are not extended sufficiently.
- Most trainees do not have the opportunity to gain experience of teaching across the range of courses, and/or types of students, in their subject/vocational area.
- Quality of training
  - Training in developing teaching skills linked to the trainees' subject/vocational areas, is underdeveloped.
- Recommendations
  - Ensure that trainee teachers are given adequate mentoring and other forms of support to develop their specialist teaching skills during their initial training and subsequent professional development

## Appendix B - Existing schemes of professional and industrial skills updating

As suggested by the 1999 FEFC report on professional development, the role played by professional bodies should not be overlooked as a source of professional industrial upskilling. In fact, evidence collected for this study indicates that it is not just the support provided for their own members' CPD activities but also their influence on college CPD schemes.

This summary provides a background into two significant schemes of professional and industrial skills updating, coordinated by regional offices of the LSDA, that are currently in existence.

- **Key Skills Support Programme Cymru**

[www.dysg.org.uk/content/blogcategory/63/46/lang,en](http://www.dysg.org.uk/content/blogcategory/63/46/lang,en)

This scheme offers the Key Skills Professional Development Certificate. It encourages teachers to develop a more detailed and critical awareness of the national key skills standards by supporting the development of:

- Increased detailed knowledge of the national key skills standards
- Critical evaluation of methods for the initial, formative and summative assessment of key skills
- Enhanced ability to deliver key skills
- Strategies and approaches that will enable them to integrate key skills more effectively into their programme areas
- Skills of reflection, analysis, synthesis and evaluation

Eight colleges in Wales run these courses leading to the CPD qualification (up to level 5). DYSG (LSDA Wales) is managing the award and it is accredited by the University of Wales, Newport. DYSG is also offering a range of sector training events for WBL trainers this year, focusing particularly on Retail, Care and Construction.

- **Lecturers into Industry, Northern Ireland** ([www.lsdanorthernireland.org.uk/ni/curdev/lec.asp](http://www.lsdanorthernireland.org.uk/ni/curdev/lec.asp))

This initiative seeks to align the outputs of the further education sector with the needs of the Northern Ireland economy. By arranging structured work placements, it gives the lecturers the opportunity to update their knowledge/ skills and to embed new ideas into the curriculum. Lecturers spend a minimum of six weeks and up to twelve weeks, on placement with a suitable company developing and completing a mutually beneficial project.

The scheme is open to all lecturers and heads of department in the vocational areas of hospitality, construction, software engineering, engineering and health and social care throughout all FE colleges in Northern Ireland. In October 2004 the Department for Employment & Learning approved the piloting of four new strands: Business IT, Creative Technologies, Motor Vehicle and Bio-Science.

Technicians also have an opportunity for a 4-6 week placement to update their skills and to experience the latest equipment, technologies and software. This would provide a greater appreciation of how they can enhance student learning and support course teams and curriculum development. It would also provide an opportunity for the technician to further strengthen relationships with employers.

These schemes are outside the remit of this exercise to consider, but some of the elements in each have been useful guides in analysing similar CPD programmes in England.



## **Appendix C - Examples of Professional Bodies with CPD Programmes for Members**

The following are all organisations with good examples of CPD guidance and support for members that were identified during the Literature Review and/ or case study consultations.

- Chartered Institute of Marketing – [www.cim.co.uk](http://www.cim.co.uk)
- British Computer Society – [www.bcs.org.uk](http://www.bcs.org.uk)
- Institute of Mathematics and its Applications – [www.ima.org.uk](http://www.ima.org.uk)
- Institute of Electrical Engineering – [www.iee.org.uk](http://www.iee.org.uk)