

# WM CETT Newsletter

July 2011

[www.warwick.ac.uk/go/wmcett/](http://www.warwick.ac.uk/go/wmcett/)

## Dear Colleagues

The end of this academic year has seen a busy few weeks for WMCETT. We have held another very successful Professional Dialogue seminar looking at the revised PTLLS, and you can read about that on Page 3. Our Skills for Life conferences have also been very popular, and there is information about them on the back page.

We have been working on the LSIS Regional Response Fund project, and there are more details of our progress so far below. In the autumn we are looking ahead to another Professional Dialogue

seminar, and to working with the Institute for Learning (IfL) to hold a regional CPD event.

This is to be our last printed newsletter, but we look forward to keeping you updated with WMCETT activities and events through regular e-newsletters.

**Fergus McKay**  
Director

## First Change Exchange network meetings take place

In our April newsletter we announced that WMCETT had been successful in our bid to the LSIS Regional Response Fund. Our plan was to set up knowledge transfer networks, called Change Exchanges, where different types of training providers would share plans, practices and priorities.

The first challenge was to identify people to take part in these networks, and the participants came from across the lifelong learning sector, including FE, work-based learning, the voluntary sector, and adult and community learning. Some of WMCETT's board members took part, and there were several representatives from relevant council departments.

Each network meeting was attended by representatives of Local Enterprise Partnerships who talked about what their individual LEP was prioritising, and each had an introduction on funding priorities and practices from a representative of the Skills Funding Agency.

The first round of meetings took place in June, with one at NEW College in Bromsgrove attended by representatives from Herefordshire, Worcestershire, Warwickshire and Coventry, one at the RAF Cosford Museum in Shropshire with participants from Shropshire and Staffordshire, and the third at Walsall College, attended by delegates from the Black Country, Birmingham and Wolverhampton.

WMCETT Director Fergus McKay said: "The network meetings have proved to be very informative and there is clearly a need for organisations working together in the lifelong learning sector in the region to discuss funding and training needs. The next round will provide opportunities to consolidate the model and we will be inviting other organisations to take part in this exciting venture."

*Delegates at the meetings at NEW College (bottom left), Cosford (middle) and Walsall (bottom right)*



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## Profile of Sue Blake, LSIS West Midlands Regional Development Manager

The nine LSIS regional development managers (RDMs) to support the Improvement Adviser Service (IAS) are now in place, including one covering the West Midlands.

The RDM role is partly to support the Improvement Adviser Service (IAS) and also to work with organisations seeking to develop a "whole organisation approach" to their quality improvement planning.

The IAS provides consultancy support for all types of provider, other than school sixth forms, helping them raise performance levels across the range of performance, from poor to excellent. The service originated with the 2005 White Paper on learning and skills which promoted the set up of a "rapid response unit" to deal with failing providers. Over time, the service was extended to providers who simply wished to improve performance.

The RDMs work to support learning and skills providers in each English region so that they obtain the best advice and support on quality improvement, promoting the whole menu of LSIS programmes and services. RDMs signpost providers to the best sources of help and support.

Sue Blake, LSIS's Regional Development Manager for the West Midlands, said: "LSIS enjoys a good working relationship with WMCETT and shares its interests in supporting professional development and opportunities to share effective practice across learning and skills providers in the West Midlands region."

Through meeting many providers across the region, Sue is also listening to interests and concerns of the sector, and updating LSIS with data and information on the state of the sector. She is raising the LSIS profile amongst providers, and facilitating links between providers and provider networks, plus helping the sharing of effective practice.

Sue produces a regular update on the latest sources of help and funding from LSIS. You can read her latest bulletin via a link on the front page of our website at

[www.warwick.ac.uk/go/wmcett](http://www.warwick.ac.uk/go/wmcett).

She can be contacted on [sue.blake@lsis.org.uk](mailto:sue.blake@lsis.org.uk) or 07920 710584.



## WMCETT raises issue of professional development in FE with MP

Mike Smith, WMCETT's Work-Based Learning Priority Area Co-ordinator, took the opportunity to raise the issue of professional development in further education, particularly the WBL and voluntary sectors, when he met Mark Garnier, MP for the Wyre Forest, at an event to launch the Wyre Academy ICT Higher Apprenticeship initiative.

Mark, a member of the Treasury Select committee and a governor of Kidderminster College, showed a keen interest in the issues coming out of the government overhaul of the apprenticeship scheme. In a short presentation welcoming the initiative and outlining the work of WMCETT, Mike stressed the need for government support for professional development in teacher/tutor training in order to meet the demands of delivering level 4/5 apprenticeships.



Following Mike's presentation, which was supported by City & Guilds local area director Edwina McQueen, Mark Garnier commented that as a governor of an FE College he understood the pressures institutions face to maintain a high level of achievement and agreed to bring up some of the issues raised with colleagues in the Department for Education and Skills. In the meantime, Mark gave a commitment to directly employ an apprentice in his constituency office.

*Mike Smith, WMCETT Work-Based Learning Priority Area Co-ordinator, meets Mark Garnier, MP for Wyre Forest (left), and (centre) Wyre Academy for Higher ICT Apprenticeships managing director Derrin Kent.*

## Professional Dialogue Seminar on new PTLLS attracts biggest attendance yet

The third in the 2010-11 series of Professional Dialogue seminars attracted the biggest turnout yet for one of these popular events.

The day focused on the subject of the new revised PTLLS qualifications for teaching and learning professionals. It began with an update from Dot Powell, consultant for LLUK, on the revised qualifications. The participants, who were teacher educators from FE colleges, HEIs across the West Midlands and JISC Advance Regional Support Centre West Midlands, then split into three groups for lively discussions focused around a comparison of learning outcomes between the current and revised PTLLS units.

They came back together to share points and compared findings, which led to more discussion. The afternoon session looked at the impact of the revised PTLLS standards on curriculum design, with points from the discussion groups shared at the end.

In their feedback, many delegates raised questions about how the new qualifications will bed in, whether there will be enough time available and whether the new PTLLS will work for people not currently in a teaching role. There were concerns about the value of the PTLLS qualification

people already have, about the status of CTLLS and its relationship to PTLLS, and future funding for courses.

Feedback from participants was that they had valued Dot's "very informative" input, and "enjoyed sharing ideas, practices and exploring how other centres operate", with one comment "thanks



for a well organised, informative day which will certainly support and influence the development of our programmes in September. Enjoyed the opportunity to review, share and problem solve with a wonderfully diverse range of colleagues".

Seminar organiser Vron Leslie, WMCETT's ITT Priority Area Co-ordinator, said: "It was good to see teacher educators from colleges that have not previously been able to attend who contributed to a stimulating and informative debate on the issues around introducing a revised PTLLS award."

A report from the seminar and powerpoint slides from Dot Powell's presentation will be available on the WMCETT website soon.





## Skills for Life conferences stimulate subject specialists

WMCETT and the Essential Skills Resource Centre at the University of Warwick held two more very successful Skills for Life conferences this spring.

The day-long events were held at the University of Warwick and at the RAF Cosford Museum, and more than 80 people attended, from 47 organisations from across the West Midlands.

The conferences were an opportunity for people to meet with Skills for Life colleagues to explore topics of interest and make a difference in the classroom. At the RAF Cosford event there were six workshops, and at Warwick seven, with slight differences between them which accounted for regional preferences.

One looking at functional maths and problem solving was described in the

feedback as “very engaging and interactive”, and a “good paced session that kept attention and discussed relevant concerns/issues re FS”. A workshop on gaining Qualified Teacher Learning and Skills (QTLS) was described as “very helpful and informative, professional and well delivered”, and one on person-centred planning was “stimulating”. One attendee was “invigorated” by the approach of the tutor in using authentic listening material to develop language as well as listening skills.

Sara Hattersley, who taught a collaborative e-learning workshop, said: “It is always enjoyable taking part in the regional conferences, but this year seemed particularly stimulating. It’s great seeing colleagues in the field come together, network and share practice. During

my workshops there was a real buzz and participants made the most of the opportunity to experience new technologies, collaborate and discuss classroom ideas. It’s good to meet so many people who are passionate about Skills for Life, and taking teaching and learning forward.”

WMCETT would like to hold more events like this, so if you have any suggestions for what you would like to see included contact Elaine Goodall on 024 7657 4558 or email [E.Goodall@warwick.ac.uk](mailto:E.Goodall@warwick.ac.uk)



## College visits find out grassroots views

WMCETT director Dr Fergus McKay and ITT Co-ordinator Vron Leslie have been visiting colleges to discover the progress of the teacher training qualifications, and new issues that may be arising. Their first visit was to Worcester College of Technology, followed by North Warwickshire and Hinckley College.

Fergus said: “The visits provide an opportunity to discuss with teacher educators the impact that the teacher training regulations have had upon their teams. They also raise issues we pass on to relevant government agencies.”

Carole Clark, senior lecturer at Worcester College of Technology, said the teacher educator team and a teacher who delivers numeracy on the college Skills for Life programme – adding another perspective – met up with Fergus and Vron.

Carole said: “With all the new changes that are coming into place, funding and the qualifications being looked at again, it’s good to sometimes discuss things in a non-judgemental position. Sometimes you can feel you are working in isolation and I think it’s always useful to get a chance to discuss things and feel you are not on your own.”