

## **Report from Professional Dialogue Seminar**

### **Held at University of Warwick on 3 February 2012**

The seminar was supported by the Institute for Learning (IfL), ACETT (Association of Centres for Excellence in Teacher Training) and the HEI Forum. The Forum is a partnership of the Higher Education Institutions offering initial teacher training (ITT) programmes (further and higher) in the West Midlands area. They are the Universities of Wolverhampton, Warwick, Staffordshire, Worcester and Birmingham City.

The Professional Dialogue seminar was targeted at Teacher Educators with the aim of sharing good practice across the West Midlands ITT teams and exchanging ideas on topics of educational interest.

The seminar was opened by Fergus McKay, Director of WMCETT and was followed by a discussion on 'Re-designing DTLLS'. This explored ideas for new ways of delivering DTLLS including observation, mentoring and ICT. A presentation by Paul Hambley, Senior Policy Adviser in the UK Qualifications and Skills Team at LSIS, on the revised Professional Qualifications for Teaching and Learning Professionals was warmly welcomed by participants and was followed by a seminar discussion of the issues.

The day was valued by teacher educators in both college and university ITT teams who commented: *'Thanks for an excellent day. It was useful and informative on changes to the qualifications and will inform curriculum design'*

This report is a collation of the ideas from the day and is by no means a complete picture of all the interesting and stimulating discussion which took place. It is written to share the key points across the Forum partnership.

### **Re-designing DTLLS – supporting providers to develop new models for ITE**

This topic for discussion comes from the BIS (Department for Business, Innovation and Skills) paper 'New Challenges, New Chances – Further Education and Skills System Reform Plan: Building a World Class Skills System' which highlighted the need for a professional workforce. The Workforce Development Group has been reviewing the way in which ITE is likely to be delivered in the future which led to this topic for discussion. In order to focus discussion, three areas were considered by seminar groups: observation, mentoring and ICT.

#### **Observation**



Observation was recognised as the most important part of the programme by TE and trainees. However, it is an expensive part of the ITE provision and groups were looking at ways to make this area more cost effective whilst keeping the quality of the provision.

One suggestion was for trainees to video their sessions. This would have the advantage that the

trainee would be able to see themselves in situ and feedback on performance would be more effective. It would also have a cost advantage especially where trainees were external or teaching in outreach centres. However the disadvantages around technical, safeguarding and cultural sensitivity issues were recognised as was the fact that the tutor is not able to speak to the trainee's learners.

## **Mentoring**

It was acknowledged by all the TEs that where trainees had an effective mentor it made a significant difference to their performance. However there are Issues around the recruitment, remuneration and status for mentors and the quality is variable particularly between trainees working in FE and those in workbased learning or the community and voluntary sectors. That external trainees have more difficulty in getting a mentor within their subject area raised issues of inclusivity. There were also differences in the criteria which colleges required of their mentors.

The lack of parity in funding with the school sector has a huge impact on mentoring in the further education sector where mentoring relies on the goodwill of the mentors. There were differences in the remuneration that mentors received and it was agreed that payment for mentors needs a standardised approach.

## **ICT**

It was important to take a fresh approach to delivery online rather than try to adapt the same methods to an online programme. It was recognised that there were issues which need addressing such as training for teacher educators and trainees; access especially in the Prison Service and in outreach centres; issues of safeguarding especially when filming and issues of connectivity in parts of the country. Distance and flexible learning give variety and new methods of collaboration and communication which were being explored by different colleges.

## **Update on the revised Professional Qualifications for Teaching and Learning Professionals**

Paul Hambley the Senior Policy Adviser from the UK Qualifications and Skills Team at LSIS opened the session with a presentation on the revised Professional Qualifications for Teaching and Learning Professionals – see slides on the WMCETT website.

Paul gave a brief background to the qualifications and how the revised qualifications fitted into the Workforce Reform agenda. The LLUK group working on qualifications are now part of LSIS and they are currently writing a 'Guide for Employers' on the revised qualifications to show routes into teaching and the differences between qualifications. The Professional Standards are still the same as are the teaching roles and LSIS will provide more guidance on these in 2012. An evaluation of the 2007 regulations has shown that more teachers are now qualified. However the qualification structure has proved more difficult for the Workbased learning and adult and community learning sectors and the need to be more inclusive of these areas was a drive for revision of the qualifications.



The revision of the qualifications looked at access, progression, how to get more diversity into the qualifications and the transition between PTLLS, CTLLS and DTLLS. There are still

issues around monitoring across the qualifications and consultation was being held with Ofsted around the New Inspection Framework.

The structure of the revised qualifications and the mandatory, restricted optional and open units was explained. Units from the Learning and Development (L&D) Qualification had been included, particularly for workbased learning providers. CTLLS criteria can be met with mainly L&D units and there is still a requirement for trainees to work only with individuals for P/CTLLS.



Entry requirements to different qualifications were explained and that the Tariff has a list of equivalent qualifications and trainees with these qualifications can go straight on to a CTLLS programme. Trainees with the 6 credit PTLLS will get Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) for this. There are no National entry requirements for literacy and numeracy but trainees need L2 for QTLS. ITE programmes only need to show that skills have been assessed which raises issues for trainees working to achieve a level 5 qualification. A level 3 subject qualification is not a National requirement as this is not an ITE decision but an employer decision.

HEIs however can have their own entry requirements as set out in the Guidance for HE Institutions. The HEI provision has to cover mandatory and restricted units but they don't have to assess against criteria just the learning outcomes. The delivery has to have the same structure with Parts 1 and 2 delivered in that order. The open units can be used to accredit subject specialisms but this is optional.

There is a joint Literacy/ESOL qualification being developed which would enable trainees to get a qualification across both specialisms where they have both types of learners in a group

The wider issues were around funding and the sustainability of ITE with the need for innovative marketing to get employers and trainees to pay for their training. LSIS offer support for teacher educators via an ITT Information and Advice Telephone help line.

The presentation was followed by discussion in the seminar groups focussed around entry requirements, reduction in teaching hours and funding.

There were several issues around entry requirements, particularly those of literacy, numeracy and ICT requirements; accrediting previous qualifications and differences in credit levels. The quality of different provision and who was responsible for monitoring provision was raised as providers have different requirements and expectations. The need for trainees to upgrade level 3 qualifications to meet the credit or HEI requirements was also discussed.

The quality of teaching rather than the quantity of hours was important and whether 100 hours was sufficient for the trainee to show development. The lower number of teaching hours would help widening participation for part time teachers. There was discussion around paid versus voluntary hours and whether the 100 hours could be used flexibly as there were problems with trainees losing teaching hours in the second year. Some colleges were moving to a more unitised provision offering a PTLLS, CTLLS, DTLLS route to help trainees achieve and also make funding easier. Teaching carried out across different types and sizes of groups in different context was also considered good practice by Ofsted whilst not a requirement for the revised qualifications.

There was disappointment that funding for ITE was not equivalent to that for schools ITT and it was strongly felt that there should be equity between sectors. Issues around funding and bursaries had been raised at the UCET meeting and the issue of the IfL £400 going to the employer and not the trainee or ITE provider was also raised. An article in the Times Educational Supplement 'Silence on promised bursaries leaves FE recruitment in limbo' can be read at: <http://www.tes.co.uk/article.aspx?storycode=6169472>

Marketing programmes would need more consideration and Huddersfield University advertised on U-Tube on <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z0utHo-TgbA> .