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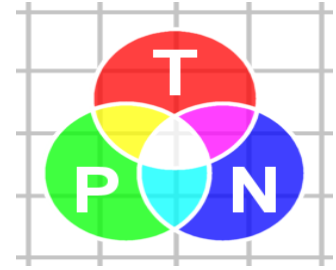
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Train to Gain

Chris Jeffery is the DCTPN representative on the national Train to Gain Special Interest Group.

December saw the first meeting of the Train to Gain Special Interest Group. The meeting was organised by the Association of Learning Providers (ALP), and has now met twice, with an additional meeting in February with the LSC in Coventry.

Train to Gain is becoming a major part of every providers funding allocation, and with increased targets and budget by Government it has the capacity to equal, or even surpass, the Apprenticeship funding. However, Train to Gain is still a comparatively new funding stream with many unresolved issues around the funding itself, along with the bureaucracy that is preventing many providers from planning their engagement with it as fully as they would like.

Since the inception of ETP, now T2G, providers have seen increased revenue but reduced profit. The old style 'value added' approach, whereby Train to Gain is sold into companies where training already exists, is not nearly as easy to complete successfully as many thought. Also to market one's organisation into new companies is costly, and all new employer relationships need intense nur-

ture.

The Special Interest Group has raised these concerns through ALP, and also with the LSC nationally on the 20th February. It was pointed out that the lower rate means working at a loss and proposed profile payments will cause some cash flow difficulties. The bureaucracy and lack of clarity in the guidance was also raised.

Not wanting to sound negative, the group was keen to offer several suggestions to help improve the situation and support the LSC to ensure Train to Gain is the success everyone wants it to be. These suggestions included; having one funding rate rather than the current two, (a precedent already exists with the level 3 trial), additional payments, perhaps from the 'brokerage pot' for the expensive sales activity required to hit the starts targets. Removal of the H&S visit as this seems to have become a requirement simply because it's been historically carried out with every programme since YTS, but is not appropriate under Train to Gain, where the responsibility lies firmly with the employer.

We asked for clarification of the 20 hrs rule; is it contact or guided learning hours? Clarification of the initial assessment for

Chris Jeffery

Skills for Life, as learner do not neatly package themselves at entry level 3, but have skills that fall across for example entry level 3 and level 1. With the change / addition of a few words in the next version of the guidance, the risk for providers would be reduced at audit.

The group received some positive comments after the meeting. The LSC seemed to feel the meeting was constructive and potentially of great value. There was some indication that the LSC were prepared to consider two or three of the suggestions and that these could be addressed immediately.

ALP and a large provider have for some time had a place at the Train to Gain Forum. The LSC have now asked specifically for a small provider to attend. My name has been put forward and accepted, with the next meeting taking place on 4th March.

If you have any concerns around Train to Gain please let me know and I will make sure they are raised appropriately.

chris.
jeffery@academyoftraining.co.uk

New Kid on the Block

Chris Jones

This is a brief article to introduce myself to the network – I am Chris Jones, the new Director of Development for Cornwall and Devon Connexions. Following in Shaun Newman's shoes is quite an act to follow. Strangely enough I knew Shaun back in the seventies when he was in the Careers Service Wirral and I was a Jobcentre Manager and then in the early nineties when I was Cornwall and Devon Area Manager for the Employment Service (predecessor to Jobcentre Plus!) and Shaun was Principal Careers Officer for Devon. Since those days I have had many years as Deputy and then latterly Regional Director for Jobcentre Plus in the South West and am now delighted to return to the West Country and to Connexions where I had previously had 5 happy years on the Board.

As you can imagine coming from a background of over 30 years in Jobcentre Plus and its predecessors I am highly committed to the employment and skills agenda. I really do believe the mantra that "work is the best way out of poverty" for the individual and in much wider terms than purely financial. We still have too many families where generational ingrained low aspiration remains a barrier to achievement and ambition and where too often government funding regimes have not encouraged the level and depth of engagement that is needed.

For me the recent Leitch report has been the most crucial piece of work in this arena for a long time. A great passion since youth has been travelling and recent trips to India and South East Asia plus consultancy work in former USSR states imprinted on me the sheer excitement, energy, will to succeed and pride in the progress of their nation that exists amongst all ages in these countries. Combined with globalisation and the continuing communi-

cations revolution I believe it presents that biggest challenge to Britain and its prosperity for over 50 years. It is something all of us in the education, training and employment industry have to face full square both in terms of reflecting why we haven't got it quite right over the last few years (is that unfair?) and how we respond to make Leitch a reality.

We approach this challenge at a time of real uncertainty throughout our industry – both in terms of adults and young people. In terms of the Connexions Service to young people the change in April 2008 from Central Government grant funding to being funded by Local Authorities as part of an Integrated Youth Support Service is a real challenge to maintaining a national and universal careers education and guidance service for young people at key stages of development.

We are very fortunate in the West Country that the four LAs have come together to transmute Connexions into a Local Authority Controlled Company (LACC) which means we are able to build on our achievements to date and make a real contribution to integrated youth work – other parts of the country have not been so fortunate. With the move to diplomas and the future raising of the leaving learning age to 17 good advice and guidance to young people has never been so important.

Whilst many of you automatically associate Connexions with young people we also run an increasingly successful Adult Information, Advice and Guidance service under the nextstep banner for Cornwall, Devon and Somerset and have recently made a foray into Dorset with a Skills for Jobs contract.

With the LSC in the process of contracting nextstep on a Regional basis for the next 2 years in advance of decisions around the shape and content of the intended Adult Advancement and Careers Service as

proposed by Leitch this is clearly a crucial time for us in Connexions. Adult guidance is an area I have spent much of my working life in and I have to say I have been extremely impressed to see the Connexions adult operation at close hand. We have many partners large and small, including a significant representation from the voluntary and community sector, who work with us locally. I believe it is a real example of partners working together to give excellent quality and coverage in our rural counties. For example no – one is more than 5 miles away from a site where guidance is available.

For those of you not so familiar with Connexions Cornwall and Devon it is worth saying that we also run the Education Business Partnership in Devon, created and run Investor in Careers (IiC) – the most popular award nationally for schools/colleges in the careers education and guidance field - and are also involved in a number of European Social Fund (ESF) projects.

Quality underpins the approach of the organisation and it holds Investors in People, Chartermark, Matrix (and this year won a national Matrix award for working with customers) and has been accepted as an entrant for the 2008 UK Quality Awards.

So as we go forward and look to expand our range and influence as a company I look forward to working with many members of the network as we seek to improve skill, employment and aspiration levels here in the South West with particular emphasis on those with the most barriers. The Leitch report gives us some cliff wall type challenges on which we cannot afford to fall short.

Chris will be giving a talk at the next Devon & Cornwall TPN meeting to be held at Ultra Training in Bodmin on Friday April 4th starting at 10.00 a.m.

Switch Teacher Training Support

SWitch is one of two Centres for Excellence in Teacher Training (CETTs) in the South West. Its role is to encourage and develop excellence in teacher training within the region. We have two *SWitch* Advisors, Hilary Read and Sally Garbett, who will provide you with the information, advice and support you need to meet the new requirements.

Contact us

- **Got a question or need help?**

Ring our Helpline on 07920 234 780 or email us at switchadvice@hotmail.co.uk. We will reply to your query within 24 hours.

- **Need to talk to a person?** We can meet you to discuss your organisation's specific situation. Ring the Helpline on 07920 234 780 **Please note:** The support we offer is funded through QIA so there is no charge to you.

The Reforms in Brief

The government has introduced reforms to initial teacher training (ITT) and continuing professional development (CPD) regulations that will have an impact on all those teaching within the lifelong learning sector and the organisations they work for. By 2010, every teacher will be qualified or working towards a recognised qualification – including those working within work based learning. This means that from now all new staff employed as teachers, trainers, lecturers and instructors in the lifelong learning sector must be professionally registered and licensed to practise by the Institute for Learning.

To be licensed, all teachers must be trained to a standard that allows them to achieve either Qualified Teacher Learning and Skills (QTLS) status or Associate Teacher Learning and Skills (ATLS) status. All teachers (new and existing) should undertake at least 30 hours of continuing professional development (CPD) per year and maintain a record of CPD activities they have undertaken. 'Teachers' means anyone responsible for planning, delivering and/or supporting learning including tutors, trainers, lecturers and instructors, including sub contractors and part-timers. The reforms don't just apply to teachers within FE: they also affect organisations that receive LSC funding, including work-based learning, adult and community learning and offender learning.

Provider Events

Hilary will be running two events for providers wishing to get to grips with the new reforms in Devon and Cornwall the first on March 13th at Focus Training in Plymouth the second at the Academy for Training in Exeter on March 20th

Please contact kerry@trainingprovider.com if you are interested in attending.

Q: In my team we're all qualified A1 assessors and some of us teach key skills. We also run inductions and one-to-one coaching. Do the reforms apply to us?

A: Yes. Everyone who engages in any teaching activity within the FE/Lifelong Learning Sector needs a recognised teaching qualification to gain licensed practitioner status. The details vary depending on when you started teaching/training and who you work for. In addition you should be looking to do a further qualification within your specialist key skill area.

Q: I work in an FE college and did my

PGCE fifteen years ago. I have been teaching ever since. Is this enough?

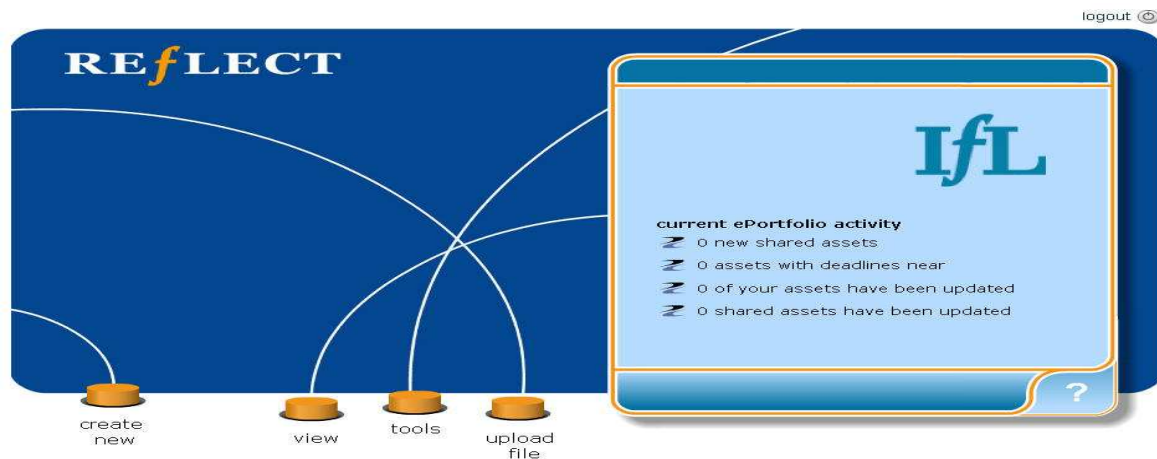
A: You don't need to do another qualification but you need to keep up-to-date and demonstrate you are undertaking appropriate development. This means registering with the Institute for Learning (IfL) and keeping a record of your CPD activities - at least 30 hours.

Q: What do you mean 'CPD activity'?

Do you mean courses? **A:** Going on courses is one example of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) activity - but there are many other ways of developing and updating yourself as a teacher. For instance, carrying out research using the internet or spending an hour on the 'phone to a more experienced colleague could both count towards your CPD, providing you record and reflect upon it. You need to think about what will be most useful and effective for you in your role and context.

Q: I've got my 7407 and have been teaching in college since 2006. What do I need to do? **A:** Register with the IfL and comply with the CPD regulations.

Q: I'm a qualified trainer but I'm not a member of the Institute for Learning. Do I need to join? **A:** Yes, if you teach within the FE sector you need to register with IfL before March 2008. If you work in another context within lifelong learning such as work-based learning, voluntary & community, or adult & community learning there is no statutory requirement to register, however, the LSC will have contracts which relate to this with which you must comply. Joining IfL is still a good idea as is keeping a formal record of your CPD activities. **Ring the Helpline on 07920 234 780 with your own particular queries.**



This is the interface for the Reflect version of the PebblePad system which is being made available by the IfL to its members. Colleagues can choose to use Reflect for recording their CPD and wider learning experiences.

From the main interface users can create new records; view existing records; change display and other settings and upload files (documents, image, video or sound files).

Items stored within Reflect remain private unless selectively shared with others such as peers; mentors or managers. CPD Activity records can be quickly linked to an annual CPD record which can be easily 'published' to the IfL.

CPD

For years training providers have been responsible for maintaining the currency of their staffs vocational competence. It has been a long held criticism of training delivered by both colleges and private training providers that too many of those actually training have been out of the industry for years and their practices are out of date. The counter argument is that the staff have had to learn to become trainers, assessors and lecturers and that this expertise has taken time to acquire. The CPD requirement has aimed to ensure that a degree of updating has taken place. The main group monitoring this CPD has been the awarding bodies, in some sector specific areas they have adopted very stringent standards in others the degree of laxity has been a cause for concern.

The advent of the new QTLS teacher and trainers standards has been linked to the introduction of a far more prescriptive approach towards CPD. No longer will be acceptable for the provider to produce a few internal records to prove updating, by the end of this year both the college FE sector and wbl providers will be required to have all their delivery staff registered with the Institute for Learning and have their updating recorded, monitored and approved. The amount of CPD required will vary according to their actual work and to whether or not they are a full time or a part time worker. All teachers/trainers will be required to

demonstrate evidence of continuing professional development and to comply with a Code of Professional Practice. The CPD will be most effective when teachers/trainers reflect on their professional practice, develop an action plan based on their individual needs and match this to the context of their employment organisational context and development plan. The CPD should link professional development relating to the subject specialism to the teaching, training and learning required of them in their job role.

The best CPD plans will take account of three different areas, firstly the individuals subject specialism, updating knowledge, work with awarding bodies, SSCs, membership of professional bodies, working with emerging technologies. Secondly the individuals teaching training and learning, again linking to professional knowledge, professional support, curriculum networks and organisational priorities. Thirdly the context in which the individual is working so linking into self assessment, external inspections, policy initiatives, peer reviews, external reviews and again organisational priorities. It is only by looking at CPD in this way that the staff of some training providers who wear a multitude of different hats will be able to see how the plans fit for them. Their bricklaying expertise lays in the subject specialism sector, their training skills in the teaching/training and learning sector, their Health & Safety checks in the context sector.

The planning will need to be thorough. Firstly with reflection on the individuals role, their specialism and known priorities, then moving on to the analysis of their goals and the identification of the development needs. This analysis will result in the creation of a structured professional development plan for the coming year which the individual will carry out, logging outcomes and reflections on progress. The result will be the creation of a professional development records and at the end of each year the individual will reflect on the impact of what has been achieved in relation to ones professional development. It is a process which will need to be closely tied in to all delivery staff's appraisals and should prove to be a valuable tool in ensuring that delivery standards are met.

For many years Training Providers have argued that one of their great strengths is that their staff have far closer links to industry and have more currency than many of their rivals. By placing of CPD at the heart of the licence to teach/train LLUK have given providers an opportunity to embed it into their development plans and thereby ensure that it is a strength which is built upon. As Leitch puts more emphasis on closer working with employers and the delivery of truly demand led programmes the skills levels and currency of staff abilities will be vital for the future.

Working with Marginalised Groups - Changing Outlooks and Challenging Perceptions

*** Promoting and Embracing Change; * Self Development (Self-efficacy); * Effective Communication; * Rapport; * Introduction to Motivational Interviewing and Coaching; * Introduction to Transactional Analysis**

Do you want your staff to be able to work more effectively with de-motivated, marginalised, disenfranchised and unemployed people, including ex-offenders?

If so, read on -

Based upon its depth of experience in working with offenders and following the successful delivery of its programmes in 2007, **Life Change UK** will deliver the following courses for staff working with marginalised groups and challenging behaviour – See www.lifechangeuk.com .

Wednesday 5 Mar and Wednesday 12 March – Two-day course in Okehampton

Wednesday 2 April to Wednesday 30 April - Five-day course - held each Wednesday in Exeter

Wednesdays 14 and Wednesday 21 May - Two-day course in Exeter

Wednesdays 4 June to Wednesday 2 July - Five-day course – held each Wednesday in Plymouth

Only 10 places are available for each course. Early bookings are recommended –

Costs - including comprehensive course notes: -

Private and Public Sector Organisations £150 per person

per day

Not for Profit and Charitable Organisations £100 per person per day

A 10% discount for two or more places booked. For every five places booked get another one free.

To discuss requirements please call Trevor Philpott or Theresa Owens on 01392 251 235 or 01409 255 344 or leave a message via our Contact page on www.lifechangeuk.com

Dynamic Training to Come - On-line Induction and Foundation Training - Launching 10 March 2008

Induction / Foundation Courses for Staff dealing with Challenging Behaviour

Life Change UK is pleased to announce its involvement in a groundbreaking partnership delivering Induction / Foundation training for children's and young people's services. The programme will combine accessible online courses with sophisticated assessment, custom-built learner management and easy-to-use practice workbooks, thus ensuring employers can equip their staff to the necessary standards.

With Life Change UK, programme partners include a group of established and well-regarded training organisations – AKAMAS, London Metropolitan University, The Mary Walsh Institute (saccs) and Net Mentor. The combined wealth of experience that we bring will make a major contribution to meeting the diverse training needs of the wider children's and young people's workforce.

From child and young people's development to challenging behaviour, the courses will deliver quality training when and where it is needed, and all with one simple annual licence fee.

The Outline of Available Courses and their costs can be seen on the AKAMAS web site - [click here](#)

The 10 Life Change UK courses primarily focus upon work involving 'challenging behaviour'. All are essential learning for everyone in the children's and young people's workforce during their first two years in practice. Each course is equivalent to a day's face-to-face training, making them ideal to fill gaps where traditional training is difficult to access or resource. All courses, including assessment and a reflective practice journal, provide a clear and easily understood insight into the associated issues, as well as a unique set of 'tools' that can be used to support and improve professional practice.

AKAMAS is an approved Edexcel [click here](#) Accredited Centre and is seeking accreditation for all courses in the Foundation/ Induction programme.

If you wish to discuss signing up for the various courses, please contact the Life Change UK team - see contacts [click here](#)

E mail
trevor.philpott@lifechangeuk.com

or

Stephencaddy@aol.com

or ring
01392 251235

Stop Press.....Woodskills Training...

As part of its move from the Topsham Road, St Loye's Foundation is going to have to stop offering trainees the various woodskills courses it runs from the site. Rather than see it close completely, St Loyes is anxious to discuss a possible partnership with organisations in this arena in order to secure and even expand the future of the woodskills training. St Loyes would hope to offer certain incentives to attract the right partner and would be keen to hear from anyone who might be interested in this opportunity. If you would like to know more please e-mail Jack Harland, Head of Programmes at St Loyes on jharland@stloyes.ac.uk .

What I do and why it needs to be done!

Paul Ebanks

I am employed by Achievement Training as the Skills and Social Development Coach.

This means that I support our learners on increasing/enhancing their personal and social self development alongside whatever formal qualification they are working towards. I provide a confidential service to learners to enable them to disclose any educational, personal or social difficulties they may be experiencing. I have also developed and deliver a series of workshops that are based on personal and social topics such as personal awareness, confidence and self esteem, behaviour management and drug and alcohol awareness etc. This enables me to discuss the difficulties that some people have in a pro-active way and not just as a reaction to anti social behaviour.

I believe that this is a very unique role amongst Training Providers and whilst I am aware that other providers do have staff who are delegated similar responsibilities alongside their other duties, I feel very fortunate that my employers listened to my ideas when I and some extremely supportive colleagues had the vision that this kind of dedicated service for our learners would be invaluable.

It is not a brand new idea - I have seen it in other guises in different types of work with children and young people; however in this sector it seems unique as this type of support was usually always done in the past by tutors or assessors alongside their other duties as reactive work instead of being the pro-active work I feel it should be.

Looking back now with the ever growing importance of the Every Child Matters agenda, the provision of pas-

toral support and guidance to all learners, especially young people, I do believe I was in the right place at the right time.

The way I work is based on my own personal experience of being educated and growing up in SE London, the work I have been doing in Plymouth in the last ten years, working in the Zone as a Youth Support worker, in a Community College in Devonport and in some of the more disaffected areas of Plymouth. Working in these different sectors enabled me to gain an increased awareness of how important personal support is, both in the formal and non-formal education system of working with people, and an insight in to why people have become socially excluded, disengaged or in danger of becoming disengaged from education.

It was working with a particular group of learners and starting to understand how the difficulties they were having in their education and finding employment was so closely intertwined to the difficulties in their personal lives, the environment they lived in outside of the time they were with us that I realised that by extending the provision to all learners we could prevent learners from becoming disengaged and assist them in achieving their goals.

There is a stigma attached to a number of the disengaged, hard to reach, socially excluded groups and it is easy to forget that they if not given more than one opportunity they are in danger of becoming the kind of negative news we read about in the paper or see on the television. There are a number of reasons why people become disengaged and we need to think about and find out from these individuals what these reasons are.

Schemes such as E2E (Entry to Employment) our own new Way2Work programme, the various Princes Trust programs, the new Train to Gain initiative for volunteers etc are all schemes designed

to try and re-engage people. There are many of these schemes in the country and they all have varying degrees of success, but is it enough? There are only limited places available on some schemes. In my opinion the most important thing is whatever the scheme is called or in whatever sector where there is an opportunity to work with these people, we have a duty to remember that there are valid reasons why people become excluded/disengaged, become vulnerable or socially excluded. In addition to providing them with the opportunity to participate in education and training we have to find the time to give them the extra holistic support to address their personal and social needs otherwise there is a good chance they will continue the same negative cycle they have been on in the past.

My personal experience is of rejoining the education system later in my life and I also have hands on experience of working with an extremely wide range of people all with different needs. Working at Achievement Training has given me the opportunity to support learners in a holistic and individual way and I am always privileged when learners share their difficulties with me to give me a greater understanding of why they are in danger of becoming disengaged or socially excluded.

All people have the potential to become socially excluded or disengaged from education; however they also have the potential to become re-engaged in some shape or form and providing a holistic service provision is vital if we are going to support the development of people's positive potential not as an add on to their other duties but as a role that is a complete job in itself.

What are the challenges for Devon?

Like it or not the Devon business base is somewhat different from the rest of the country. Almost 19% of our workforce is self employed, compared to a figure of 9% nationally. We don't tend to have small and medium size businesses we have small and micro businesses. Our gross value added is currently only 78% of the national GVA figure, though in some areas such as Exeter it comes in at a healthy 121%. Why is this, is our workforce simply not being used as efficiently as elsewhere or are there lifestyle choices getting in the way of the maximisation of our potential? Currently Devon has the fourth lowest average household income in the country, does this reflect our aging

population, the county has the highest percentage of over 40's in the country, or our low wage hospitality, tourism, agriculture and retail sectors?

If we are going to move the county forward it is essential that we develop training which is fit for purpose. In an area with such high self employment levels it is imperative that we see a greater focus placed on the development of entrepreneurial skills and business management. It is vital that we focus on the employability and motivational skills which are such a central part of the new diploma programme.

The new initiatives by Flybe, the work of the Tourism Skills Network, the focus of Productive Skills for Devon is all about delivering the skills which suit the county.

Major employers such as Devon County Council have committed to the apprenticeship programme and are using their learners as agents for change within their organisations, let us hope that other employers do the same and that providers are able to be flexible enough to deliver the skills they require. We have an opportunity, it is imperative that we don't miss it.

LIG 3

In response to the last round of funding available for developing e based delivery amongst wbl known as LIG 3 the DCTPN coordinated a bid of 20 Devon providers through the auspices of Accountancy Plus. The bid was successful in drawing down funding to start work on e based delivery.

The bid aims to establish 21 Virtual Learning Environments, linked through a Devon and Cornwall Training Provider Network central Hub VLE which will centrally guide and support the further 20 Provider VLE's, through a 'Single Sign On' feature. These 21 VLEs will provide the technology to support a teaching and learning infrastructure, providing quality resources to engage learners and employers, which in turn will support improved achievement and retention. The Network Hub VLE will also provide up to date information for prospective learners, their parents and the employers to better support learning choices.

There will be a Network of Single Sign On (SSO) Moodle sites, the DCTP Network Hub VLE and 20 Provider VLE's. The Server will be provided by, sited and managed by ByteMark. The Administration of the Network Hub VLE

by TDM, who will also provide the setting up of the entire 21 x VLE's onto the server.

Laptops will be provided, (with additional TFT for twin screen use), one for each VLE (Thinkpad T60w Linux Laptop, includes; Intel Core Duo T5500 1.66 GHz Processor, Intel 3945 Wireless 802.11 a/b/g, CD-RW/DVD-RW dual layer, Bluetooth) will be provided by the Linux Emporium. Each Laptop will come fully configured (by TDM) with access to individual and Hub Moodle VLE's and will have software installed (by TDM) to support effective e-teaching & learning. Much of this software will be 'Open Source'. The resources will include as a minimum: Ubuntu (An OS equivalent to Microsoft Vista or XP); The GIMP (equivalent to Adobe Photoshop); Scribus (equivalent to Microsoft Publisher); Planner (equivalent to Microsoft Project); Open Office (equivalent to Microsoft Office); Kino - a Video Editing suite; Audacity - an Audio Editing suite for producing Podcasts; VYM - Mind Mapping software.

To guide VLE development the Laptops will come installed with an example Moodle Course and a useful Quiz. Each provider will also specify what additional digital equipment will be required for their own development of e learning

resources, delivery mechanisms and learner support.

Further VLE development will be resourced by a Moodle Teaching Techniques book (Packet Publishing) and a Tutorial Folder of Guidelines, 21 copies of each (the book and the folder) will be issued alongside each Laptop and will be integral to its use. It will be each of the provider's responsibility to ensure that staff are appropriately trained. Suitable training offers will be sourced and publicised.

In order to move the programme Simon Deane has been working with CEL, NIACE and the LSN all of whom are offering different e delivery support programmes along with the offer of £2.5k, to be spent on e based capital, for each person up to three who attends their programmes. Simon has arranged for the programmes to be delivered locally rather than having providers having to send staff up country, which has made it far easier for the bid members to engage and draw down the additional funding. It is hoped that numbers attending will be large enough to persuade the deliverers to respond to local demand in this way again, as well as providing the consortia with crucial training free of cost.

Up-date on e-Learning in the Workplace – Opportunities and Challenges David Rowe

My thanks for the TPN allowing me this opportunity to up date WBL providers on my first six months as a JISC-RSC South West e-Learning Adviser for Workbased Learning. A lot has happened in the last 6 months: much of it planned and some of it unplanned. However, even the unplanned has turned out fortuitously. For example, supporting the DCTPN bid for a Learning Innovation Grant (Round 3). This leads me to congratulate Craig, Simon and the team on their recent success. However, nothing stands still, especially in the world of e-learning and I am informed that LIG 4 may be launched towards the end of April 08, with bids to be submitted sometime around September.

I have also been given the opportunity to attend a number of network meetings across the region and have met a large number of providers, both at the meetings and at subsequent visits to their organisations. I hope it is not too much of a generalisation to state that two main themes have emerged from these visits and discussions. The first, and in my view the major issue, revolves around the difficulties of upskilling and motivating teaching and assessing staff, not only to engage in the identification, creation and use of e-learning materials, but to develop them to the point where e-learning is regarded as being embedded within the teaching and learning offered by the organisation.

On this first point, I have listed below just some of the e-learning development opportunities to be facilitated by the RSC in the near future.

- Interactive workshops on the use of Adobe Flash - 28th March/25th April
- Staff development forum - 22nd May
- i-Skills Survive - Embedding i-Skills throughout your organisational strategic approach - 23rd April
- Mapping out your territory – creating your own information skills learning resource - 20th March
- Learning Technologists Forum - 12th March

- e-Guides - 13th March
- VLE/Intranet Developers Forum – 24th April

A full list of these opportunities and others can be accessed through the RSC website: www.rsc-south-west.ac.uk

Hopefully, these activities, and others facilitated by the RSC, provide a balance of opportunities for staff development and meet the needs of the majority of providers. However, if any WBL provider has a particular aspect of staff development they wish to explore and require support or advice then I am happy to do so, either as part of a site visit, or via electronic means as part of an on-going discussion.

The second theme revolves around the formulation, introduction and embedding of organisation specific e-learning strategies aimed at moving the organisations forward. This would be in terms of the amount of e-learning utilised and in the way it is regarded. Whilst a good many WBL providers are forging ahead and are fully engaged with the implementation of their e-learning strategy, some providers are still either working on the initial stages of their strategy or are not yet formulating it. To assist in this process, the RSC, the national coordinator for workbased e-learning and members of the adviser team for WBL are currently in the final stages of the development of an e-learning Positioning Statement toolkit. This looks at all aspects of e-learning, including staff development, teaching and learning and infrastructure and equipment. To ensure relevance and accuracy the toolkit was trialled with a number of WBL providers. I would like to thank Simon Deane of Accountancy+ and Dave Badcock of Academy for Training and Development for their generous assistance and support during the initial trialling of the toolkit.

Once this toolkit is formalised it will provide an invaluable opportunity to carry out an in depth assessment of a providers e-learning strategy. The outcomes of the toolkit can be used to indicate the way forward, in terms of embedding e-learning within an organisation and can also be used to feed information into a Self Assessment Report.

Further to the theme of the development of e-learning strategies you may be aware that CEL (Centre for Excellence in Leadership) have agreed to deliver a number of their strategic development courses e.g. Connect and Realise in Devon and Cornwall. These courses bring with them the potential to draw down capital funding to the tune of £2500/attendee. The RSC was happy to facilitate this agreement between CEL and DCTPN and I hope providers will ensure that they benefit fully from this one off opportunity. The agreement is a good example of the benefits and opportunities to be gained from close cooperation between the RSC and WBL providers.

I hope that all the providers I have visited in the last six months have found the visits useful and I look forward to visiting as many WBL providers as possible in the near future. As a Workbased training provider if you think the RSC team can be of benefit to your organisation please do not hesitate to use the contact details below.

I can be contacted at the RSC via e-mail: rsc-advice@rsc-south-west.ac.uk or via mobile on: 07809594850

David Rowe
e-Learning Adviser WBL
JISC – RSC South West

14-19 Diploma Update

DCSF have been in contact with Local Authorities in reference to Gateway 2 results. They now plan to make contact with the results on 19th March, this is an earlier date than originally planned. Applications were submitted from consortium & partnerships across Devon, Plymouth, Torbay & Cornwall.

The partnerships in Plymouth who were successful in Gateway 1 have been busy preparing for delivery in September 2008. At the end of 2007 a common timetable structure was agreed across the city and there has been a local & national marketing campaign aimed at learners & parents. Plymouth has begun the first stage meetings of Gateway 3 partnerships. Gateway 3 has a new dimension and will require submissions to be closely linked to local economic plans.

Work continues on the Operational Manual across Devon, Plymouth &

Torbay, it is envisaged that a draft will be out early in the summer term.

In December DCSF made three major announcements:

- UCAS tariff points were released for the Advanced Diploma (level 3), this will equate to 420 points.
- Performance points were awarded to Diplomas in the Achievement and Attainment Tables (GCSE & A-Level equivalents)
- The funding rates for Diplomas were published.

More information on all three announcements can be found at the following link:
<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/14-19/index.cfm?id=3&pid=365&ctype=TEXT&ptype=Single>
Functional Skills pilots are under-way

across the region and further training & support will follow. DCSF have released clarification about the equivalence of Functional Skills, this extract is taken directly from their guidance:

Does the equivalence of 7 GCSEs for the Higher Diploma include points for Functional Skills or not?

“No – the equivalence of 7 GCSEs includes points for the principal learning and project and Additional and Specialist Learning only. Functional skills will attract their own performance points as stand alone qualifications – at level 2 equivalent to 0.5 GCSE A* - C for each functional skill.”

So in the first 2 years they will get these points in addition to Maths/ English. By 2010 it is expected most students will achieve functional skills through their GCSE's and therefore the points would be recognised in achievement for those GCSE's.

Subject Learning Coaches Programme.

Di Fuller

There have been quite a lot of changes to the National Teaching and Learning Change Programme, (NTLCP) and the support that can be offered to you and your organisation. LSN continues to manage this programme on behalf of QIA but with a revised model of delivery. Support is available directly to you from two Regional Advisers: Chris West and Di Fuller.

The **revised programme** supports providers through a tailored approach that:

- Offers an advisory service led by the regional advisers.
- Provides a manager support programme designed to help you develop and promote a whole organisation approach to improving teaching and learning.
- Makes use of high quality training for greater impact on teaching, training and learning.
- Provides an opportunity to develop your own in-house SLC training programmes so you can embed coaching approaches across the whole

organisation.

- Provides Subject Coaching Networks which will continue to run in regional venues on a termly basis.

The regional advisers can offer:

- One to one support and advice at a senior manager level or a senior management team briefing on how to get the most from the NTLCP for your organisation.
- Help in designing a support programme to meet your organisation's needs for reaching and maintaining excellence in teaching and learning.
- Advice in exploring ways to embed the programme in your organisation and to support the new CPD legislation.

Each term you can expect:

- A Manager Support Programme event in the region. Next one **29th April** at Taunton.
- Information coming to your SLCs about the Subject Coaching Networks

- A new **Professional training Programme** for SLCs that is now a blended programme with face to face contact of 2 days. The next one is especially for **Devon and Cornwall and will be held in Truro College on the 22 April and 20 May.** Contact Di on di_fuller@hotmail.com if you would like to send coaches to this training.
- New additional modules on E-learning and to support Subject Coach Training in your own organisation.
- A regular news sheet that gives you specific information on dates for the South West. Look out for the current one dated 22 February.

The Subject Learning Coaches Programme is now known as the National Teaching and Learning Change Programme,

Please contact Di Fuller at the above email or on 07786 816 890 for more information or if you would like a visit to your organisation.

The Learner Voice

For a long time the training providers have been required to monitor learner satisfaction and increasingly to take note of 'the learner voice'. Such lines of communication are clearly very important for any provider of training; they seek to ensure that a check on the appropriateness of the training being provided is in place and it is monitored and acted upon. But is all going as it should be. On a semantic level it can be argued that we should be capturing the feedback of those whom we have trained, some of whom may not have actually learnt anything and so can't be termed a learner. Providers are now becoming uncomfortably aware that there is also another voice which they need to take note of, the employer voice. Next year it appears probable that the Common Inspection framework will include a focus on how providers respond to

employer's requirements, something the New Standard has already sharpened thinking on. However most providers are acutely aware that the learner's reasons for engaging on a programme of learning aren't necessarily the same as an employers, as several providers have found out to their cost in inspection.

So where does that leave us. The majority of providers make use of questionnaires and surveys to capture the student voice in a self-reporting style. But how much weight should they place on this one method, is it appropriate? Education is about making sense of ones identity in a changing world, which invariably means that our students are all complete individuals, many are fragile or even damaged and we need to be aware of this

There is a risk that an over concentration on a self reporting structure leaves one open to a bandwagon effect, linked to some recent input. We need to look at feedback far more closely in the context of what the student has been going through at that time. The student voice reflects that context. If we look historically it is not surprising that the miners wives pushed very strongly for access to political education during the last miners strike, the WEA was set up to make a range of humanitarian issues available for study by the working classes. The learner voice reflects the world it is coming from and consequently providers need to interrogate carefully when they seek to capture what it tells them about what learners really think and want.

Learning Agreements

The Learning Agreement (LA) project led by Connexions started in April 2006 and has been extended March 2009. It is designed to help the Government establish the level of financial support required to encourage 16 and 17 year-old young people into training where they are in jobs without accredited training. The LA builds on the statutory right to time off for 16-17 year olds without a Level 2 qualification and has the core aim of raising participation in education and training.

In the trial area of Cornwall and Devon, young people and employers receive bonus payments of £250 each on achievement of the qualifications within a Learning Agreement. Other variants of financial support are being tested across England. The deliverers of the training are paid at the standard F.E. rate for their qualification they deliver. The LA is a negotiated, personalised agreement which focuses primarily on the learning and support needs of the young person, with the engagement and support of their current employer, and which acts as a

tool for re-engaging young people into learning.

Eligible young people must be aged 16 or 17 at the start of the LA, in a Job Without Training i.e. not undertaking any form of accredited training in paid, contracted employment. The priority groups of young people within the LA project are young people who are not already qualified to NVQ Level 2 and young people who are in employment of 16 hours per week or more.

To date 4133 young people and 2625 employers have been contacted and offered the opportunity to take part in the Learning Agreement. Of the 4133 young people 1382 young people were found to be ineligible.

Of the remaining 2751 young people, 1230 young people have signed up to a Learning Agreement against a profile of 1074 giving a variance of +14.5%. This also means that the project achieved the 2 year target to the end of March by the end of

December 2007. The conversion rate of contacts to sign-ups is 29.8% against all young people contacted or 44.7% against those eligible young people contacted.

The most recent LSC figures (30th November 2007) indicate that 392 young people have achieved their qualification, and 125 young people have left early. Therefore currently 75.9% of leavers have achieved their qualifications. These achievement rates up to the end of last year were the highest in the country. Progression rates are currently running at just over 25%.

The response of training providers has varied across the two counties. The three companies with the highest numbers of learners are one small local provider, one regional provider and one College of F.E. with over 300 learners between them. At the other end of the scale a number of providers have virtually no engagement. New providers to deliver the programme are very welcome.

Plymouth Adult & Community Learning Service (PACLS)

To start at the beginning

Plymouth City Council, a large unitary authority, was created under local government re-organisation in 1998. An adult education service had existed, for many years prior to this and up until 2004, the City Council as the Local Authority, delivered programmes of non-accredited learning through Plymouth Adult and Community Learning Service (PACLS). Accredited provision was delivered through 'franchise' agreements with the Plymouth College of Further Education (now City College) and Cornwall College. In 2004, following a successful re-inspection of the service, PACLS entered into a 'single contract' with providers and the LSC. From September 2004, the Service also became responsible for all accredited programmes that had been delivered previously through franchise arrangements, an increase in provision of some 50%.

4 academic years on, PACLS continues in its remit of delivering Adult Education to the City of Plymouth through 9 Centres comprising of:

- Five Community Colleges (Eggbuckland, Estover, John Kitto, Lipson and Stoke Damerel).
- Two area teams, North West Plymouth Adult Learning Team and Plymouth Adult Learning Team (operating largely on other Community College, Secondary School and community sites).
- One specialist Adult and Community Learning Centre (The Swarthmore Adult Education Centre, Mutley Plain).
- One curriculum dedicated team, Family and Parent Learning Service.

As a department of the City Council, Plymouth Adult & Community Learning sits within the Children's Services Department / Lifelong Learning.

PACLS has continued to promote links with other providers in the City by continuing its initiative in producing a city-wide directory of courses delivered to every household in the

City and development of its website

www.plymouthoncourse.com 2007-08 sees the Service continuing its partnerships with Plymouth YMCA (which delivers the 16-19 provision with young people not in education, employment or training - NEETS), the Shekinah Mission (which works with homeless people with alcohol and drug abuse problems), the Mountbatten Centre (which offers programmes based on outdoor pursuits) and the Plymouth City Council NVQ Centre (which delivers in-house training to Plymouth City Council employees). It has also continued to develop links with local employers, trade unions and community and voluntary groups.

PACLS offers programmes/courses in 13 areas of learning with 6199 learner enrolments in 2006-07. The largest area of provision is Subject Specific Category 14 – Skills for Life and this work accounts for 39% of the total delivery. This is followed by Subject Specific Category 9 – Arts, Media and Publishing accounting for 16% of delivery, and Subject Specific Category 12 – Language, Literature and Culture accounting for 12% of delivery.

E-learning is an area we feel as a service we have grasped and PACLS appears to be leading the way in the South West for Adult Education providers. Although we deliver in the 9 centres as detailed above, the majority of our delivery is off site in satellite centres and venues all around Plymouth. We therefore have equipped ourselves to take technology out to this provision through:-

- Portable laptop suites, wirelessly connected both to the Internet and to each other – wireless printing.
- Mimios – Portable Interactive Whiteboards
- Geneeslates – handheld interactive 'tablets / writing pads'
- Digital cameras and digital video cameras
- MP3 voice recorders
- Quizdom – Voting technology like TV's 'Test the Nation'. An excellent way to quiz and test learners in a fun, yet informative way.

To name just some! This equipment also helps us and our team of 180 tutors

further embed RARPA – Recognising & Recording Progress and Achievement with our learners and feed into Individual Learning Plans to make these wider than just paper based recording mechanisms.

Through our vast programme of courses, of both non accredited and accredited, we offer a wide range of levels.

First Steps learning opportunities is an area we feel we are very pro-active in and engage with learners who have been disaffected at school, have never gained qualifications and have never engaged in any learning opportunities since leaving school. These courses are typically 5-10 wks duration, free to the learner and give the learner increased confidence, skills in the course undertaken and progression routes into both our adult learning opportunities and courses offered through other providers in the city. We have a team of Learning Advisors who provide 'impartial' advice and guidance to all learners within PACLS.

Skills for Life makes up a very large proportion of the FE funded work that PACLS engages in. This again is city wide and both stand alone Literacy and Numeracy courses with a small amount of ESOL, embedded provision within more substantial programmes and bespoke – an example of this being with local employers where we would typically first of all commence with a First Steps course and follow up with Literacy and Numeracy as appropriate.

GCSE's, Access to Higher Education, ECDL, CLAIT, NVQ's and Accounting are just some of the many, many accredited courses delivered by PACLS – however, with these and all those detailed above, our primary aim is to bring Plymouth's learners up to 'level 2' and progress them onto and into employment, university and further training with the many training providers and educational establishments located in Plymouth and beyond.

For further information contact Ian Fleming

ian.fleming@plymouth.gov.uk

New Head of Programmes for St Loye's....

St Loye's Foundation in Exeter has appointed Jack Harland as its new Head of Programmes. St Loye's, which has provided training, support and development for disabled individuals for over seventy years is due to move from its Topsham Road site in to the city later this year

This move reflects a change in approach to the delivery of training. Whereas historically training has been residentially based and limited to the on site courses, in future much more provision will be outsourced and provided in the trainees local area.

Commenting on the future Jack said

"This is a very exciting time to be joining St Loye's with a number of fundamental changes ahead on the way we operate. The greater provision of outsourced training allows our trainees far more choice and ownership of what and where they want to learn. This in turn helps our trainees into subsequent employment. We want to work with quality training providers in this.

The new model also allows St Loye's to provide its high quality service

across a far wider geographical area than before. I believe one of the reasons for the success of St Loye's in the past has been its ability to work closely with other providers and I look forward to continuing and building this approach of partnership working in the future"

Before joining St Loye's, Jack was a Director of Training within the Somerset Care Group.

nextstep an update

Our core nextstep service is to offer Information and advice to those who have yet to achieve a level 2 qualification. In our area we make every effort to develop the service to offer all adults aged 20 and above an interview with a qualified and certified nextstep advisor. An overview is set out below on part of our current offer.

The third stage of the national skills coaching pilot where we work with Jobcentre Plus to undertake up to seven interventions to break down clients barriers to re entering the job market. This has been extended until 31st July 2008.

A research project has been funded by the LSC into our registration process for all advisors delivering services through the nextstep sub contractor base (to date we have 407 staff across Cornwall, Devon and Somerset). We will investigate the effect this has had on the advisors professional practice and what effect it has had on the customer journey and the customers outcome. We will match this with the existing qualifications available to advisors including the NVQ in advice and guidance.

A further research project has been funded into our multi phase intervention model for IAG delivery designed to have a positive effect on the customer and encourage them to progress into learning or work. We anticipate the report will highlight that this model will improve the customer perception of the service and provide a more integrated and effective service.

A local initiative development funded project will promote 'IAG Champions in Life'.

The proposed activity will complement the current IAG core contract provision by focusing on, and developing, alternative routes to customer engagement by investigating recruitment of IAG Champions in the Community. There are four strands identified within this proposal to engage with:

- school governance
- local authority departments with responsibility for adults
- social services departments with responsibility for adults
- community groups e.g. tenants association

The project will link with and work alongside the Train to Gain Capacity Building Project in the retail sector.

Skills for Jobs is to manage the provision of the skills for jobs pilots in Devon, Somerset and Dorset. This will target five groups that have been identified as continuing to face difficulty in entering and staying in employment. We have developed strategies to offer the Skills for Jobs (S4J) provision to these groups. We aim to offer a multiple intervention model that ensures successful delivery of S4J in Devon, Somerset and Dorset. This will include an initial diagnostic interview, progress interviews and mentoring depending on need.

Other news, our GIS (Geographical Information System)

Lou Mason

mapping system is up and running and provides in depth post code analysis on customers accessing service provision. It currently highlights that during 2007/8 in Somerset 97% of customers were able to access provision within a 5 mile radius of their home address, 95% in Devon and 89% in Cornwall. The system has enabled us – by engaging with further subcontractors - to ensure that during the current contract period customers in Cornwall can access provision within the 5 mile radius.

We have a new addition to the nextstep line-up. Joan Lee is the new Skills for Jobs Manager and will be based at Partnership Office but will also have a desk in the new Bridgewater office to cover Somerset and Dorset contracts. We are moving office in Somerset from the Taunton base to the far more accessible Bridgewater site just off the M5 at Huntworth. We will have a suite of offices including a boardroom that we will use for meetings and training sessions. If you would like to use the Board Room facility there for a meeting please contact Sue Mason on 01566 771133

If you would like to get involved in the nextstep service or would like any further information on the projects we currently run please call me on 01566 771133.

Lou Mason, Head of Adult IAG

Devon & Cornwall Training Providers Network

Training Events for 2008

Days	Date	Course	Venue	Places	Availability
1 Day	7th March	Train to Gain Audits	St Mellions	40 People	Fully Booked
1 Day	10th March	CEL Connect Event	Acacia Taunton	20 People	Places available
1 Day	10th April	CEL Realise Event	A +	20 People	Places available
3 Day	18th March	CEL WBL explorer	A +	20 People	Places available
	25th April	CEL WBL employer	A +	20 People	Places available
	22nd May	CEL WBL explorer	ETS	20 People	Places available
0.5 Day	13 th March	TT & CPD Regs	Focus	14 People	Places available
0.5 Day	20 th March	TT & CPD Regs	Academy for Training	14 People	Places available
1 Day	25 th April	SWLLN IAG Hub	Enterprise South Devon Heathfield	8 People	Places allocated

Contact kerry@trainingprovider.com

The Pressures of Providing Skills for the Workforce

The changes within the modern business world are making it increasingly difficult for businesses to plan for the development of their workforces. With increasing international influences they now face ever more rapid changes in the market which can make it difficult to plan for the long term development of their staff. Whereas thirty years ago it was possible for most employers to predict with a reasonable degree of certainty, what skills their staff would need five or more years ahead, now that prediction may well be accurate for less than two years. Inevitably this pressure has significant ramifications both for the workforce and the training providers who service them. It is accepted that there will be a decline in the number of unskilled jobs available in the next eight years from a national figure of 3.5 million down to 0.5 million. That means that we have to train people to change.

In the South West such changes are already being felt. As a region we are more dependent than any other in Europe on our defence industry which has over 300,000 workers employed directly in defence or in related work, the sector has been subject to extremely rapid techno-

logical changes over the past decade and has seen significant staff losses in consequence. The rapid growth of the new creative industries has helped to fill the gap. Focused expansion around cutting edge technologies has driven the sector forward and new ideas and innovations transformed it on an ongoing basis thereby making planned staff development extremely hard to implement. The exciting development of the new environmental and renewable sector again brings state of the art challenges with the technology being developed as we go. The challenge to provide all the skills for these sectors is very real and will require considerable investment by providers, though good leadership and management training is clearly essential.

Yet we are still failing to deliver sufficient training for our existing key industries. The RDA estimates that currently only 40% of all chefs in the South West can prepare their meals from scratch, the rest will use bought in goods. 80% of the owners of all our bed and breakfast businesses have no business or hospitality background or qualifications, the consequences of the shortfall are obvious. Last year 50% of all business failures did no training at all. This is our hard

to reach market and they have to be shown the benefits of training both for themselves and their staff. The challenge is to build on the existing partnerships between the education sector (in the broadest sense) and business at a local level. The links need to be right across the age spectrum, not just in certain narrow age bands and need to deliver the skills the businesses need. Providers must make use of the new local Employment and Skills Boards as they are set up, to link in with existing strategic economic partnerships and ensure that the training-business relationships are established. The one size meets all approach simply won't work when it comes to meeting the full range of business needs, meaning providers need all of our traditional flexibility and ingenuity to provide what it is the employers want, working in partnership with others where necessary and developing bespoke training where required. We must work with employers to help them determine what it is that they do need or what they might need in the future and then strive to help them stay abreast of the changes in their markets.

DCTPN membership

Acacia Training	Hazel Lessiter	hazel.lessiter@acaciatrning.co.uk
Academy for Training & Dev	Dave Badcock	dave@academy4u.co.uk
Academy of Training	Chris Jeffrey	chris.jeffery@academyoftraining.co.uk
Accountancy +	Simon Deane	simon@aplustraining.co.uk
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HMS Raleigh Training	Phil Elkins	
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