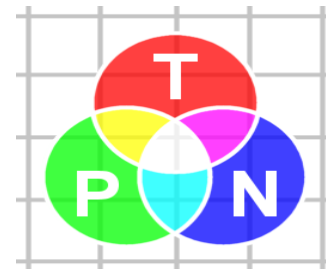


Training Provider News



DCTPN

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National Apprenticeship Vacancy Matching Service

Cathy Campbell

A year ago the Prime Minister announced that a national scheme would be rolled out this year to match potential apprentices with employer vacancies. This was followed in January this year with the publication of Apprenticeships in England – World Class Apprenticeships: Unlocking talent, building skills, the government’s strategy for the future of apprenticeships in England.

A big expansion of the apprenticeship programme is planned and you have probably seen the figures. The aim is that 1 in 5 young people will follow the apprenticeship route by 2020, compared to just 1 in 15 at present. This ambition is central to the Leitch skills agenda and the raising of the participation age, so that by 2013 all young people will have an entitlement to an apprenticeship.

This presents some major challenges for all of us who work in the skills and learning sector:

- How to boost employer take up and reposition apprenticeships with both business and public services?
- How to increase take up across the ability range?
- How to make both new and existing relationships work effectively, for example with local authorities, which will in future be responsible for commissioning provision at local level?

You may have heard that the South West is one of

three test bed regions for the new arrangements that government is putting in place to tackle these challenges – the National Apprenticeship Vacancy Matching Service (NAVMS) and the National Apprenticeship Service (NAS), a new organisation with “end to end” responsibility for NAVMS and all aspects of policy, funding and delivery of the programme. NAS should be established by April 2009, but the “go live” date for NAVMS is November this year, so we have an awful lot to do in a very short time!

Extensive development work on the NAVMS web based system is in progress by Cap Gemini at their offices in Birmingham. However, we anticipate that during September the SW region will establish its own “model office” to test the system (this is likely to be in Bristol) and that a major staff training programme, for LSC staff and for learning provider staff, will begin in October. We anticipate that there will be a dedicated training centre in Plymouth for this purpose, as well as in Bristol. Clearly this development will have major implications for all learning providers.

Mark Howard and I have been appointed to lead a temporary project team to oversee this work and we will all be busy over the next few weeks briefing

partners and learning providers. In addition, one of the team will be in touch with you soon, if they haven’t already contacted you, to brief you on progress and to discuss in detail the best way of engaging you and your staff in this exercise.

Clearly the introduction of new systems and processes will inevitably mean some teething problems and we are anxious to involve you at the earliest stage and work with you to minimise disruption and to make the new system work for all of us.

It is important that despite these immediate changes we do not lose sight of the overall objective – to expand the current apprenticeship programme substantially.

This is the other issue that we want to discuss with learning providers. You know better than anyone the barriers that prevent employers, in particular, from getting involved and the reasons why young people do not engage. We want to hear your ideas about what would make a difference and how we can begin to make a dent in the huge target that has been set for us.

I will be at the TPN meeting on 3 October but meanwhile if you have questions or wish to discuss this further please contact me at cathy.campbell@lsc.gov.uk.

Dyslexia an Issue for Training Providers?

Dyslexia affects one in ten of the working population. It is a seriously misunderstood disability which is often overlooked as an issue behind poor performance; it can prevent people from developing new skills and impede their progress. The Disability Discrimination Act (1995), which specifically mentions dyslexia, now requires all employers to take account of and address the needs of dyslexic people in their workforce. Therefore, failure to anticipate and adjust your training provision to include dyslexic learners could result in claims of discrimination and compensation. Computer based learning can provide some simple low cost ways to help individual learners combat their specific problems by supporting the multi-sensory teaching techniques that have proved most successful. Free or open source software and simple strategies can also help, some suggestions are listed below.

It is worth remembering that many dyslexics have developed coping strategies and have achieved considerable success by capitalising on some rare and useful strengths. However, for others the embarrassment of past educational experiences prevents them from disclosing their difficulties and presents a huge barrier to engaging with any new skills training. Training providers can play a vital role in identifying dyslexic learners as well as supporting their achievement, many of whom may not even have had a diagnosis. More information on developing learning strategies for dyslexia is available from:
<http://excellence.qia.org.uk/page.aspx?o=124860>

Key indicators

The most commonly experienced characteristic of Dyslexia is of course difficulty with reading and writing. But there are other common things to look out for:

- Making errors with numbers (telephone numbers, reversing bus number etc).
- Difficulty with organisational skills, including time management.
- Misplacing personal items such as keys.
- Remembering and processing auditory information
- Making mistakes copying things down (instructions, number etc).
- Confusing dates, and missing appointments.
- Difficulty with orientation, e.g. with maps or in strange towns.
- Confusing left and right.
- Problems with explaining ideas and concepts, particularly on paper.
- Word finding difficulties, and mispronunciation of long words.
- Transposing letters or parts of words like b's and d's.

For more information visit:
<http://www.techdis.ac.uk/resources/sites/staffpacks/Staff%20Packs/Dyslexia%20technology/Info%20-%20SPLDs.xml>

Encouraging disclosure and diagnosis

One of the key things is to normalise dyslexia; perhaps, by making a discrete initial diagnosis tool and key software available to all learners, or raising awareness of the key indicators of specific learning difficulties and how they affect learning. SIMDIS- is a website which simulates the effects of dyslexic conditions and can help teachers and support staff understand the problems.

<http://www.techdis.ac.uk/resources/sites/2/simdis/>
TechDis have produced Staff packs on a range of issues including dyslexia which are also available from their website.
<http://www.techdis.ac.uk/resources/sites/staffpacks/Staff%20Packs/Dyslexia%20technology/Activity%202.xml>

Word sequencing and recognition games can help identify dyslexia as found on the Bristol Dyslexia Centre website. <http://www.dyslexiacentre.co.uk/>. Various other websites offer initial screening free; however, proper diagnosis usually involving a fee is required to ensure that specific needs are met. The British Dyslexia Association will have more information <http://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/fullassessment.html#screening>

Supporting learning

Though each learner's needs will be different, ICT helps because Word-processing has built in spellchecking, dictionaries etc. Voice recognition and word prediction software further enhance word processing speed and accuracy. A widely used but expensive programme is TextHelp read and write; it provides text to speech and word prediction, other literacy aids and visual reading tools together in one package. Free and low cost alternatives of most of the features are available in different programmes. LetMeType is a free word prediction programme that assists with spelling and Word Banks provides a store of words to choose from. Just making the keys easier to find using coloured key stickers and making the text on screen easier to see will help because many dyslexics find black on white lines of text impossible to follow. Vu- Bar isolates a line of type making reading easier <http://www.fxc.btinternet.co.uk/assistive.htm> Screen tinter LITE makes it easy to change text and background colour, size and font to suit an individual. The TechDis Preferences toolbar can be installed to give the learner control over the way text looks on the screen.

WebWord 5 is a comprehensive dictionary that is freely available to download. Word Talk a free plug-in to Microsoft Word supports reading by highlighting and

JISC RSC

speaking the text, Dspeech will convert text to an MP3 file that can be listened to at any time and reviewed by the learner. Audacity enables the creation and editing of MP3 audio clips from a digital recorder, circumventing unnecessary written work and difficult reading tasks. A website called Readthewords allows users to convert Word files, webpage text, and PDFs to speech, which is then read back by an Avatar or simulated person with fairly normal speech; once registered learners can convert text to speech anywhere without the need for any specialist software on their own computers.

Open source Mind mapping/hierarchical outline tools such as FreeMind are useful in enhancing understanding, revision and planning skills as are electronic diaries. Software complete with 'How To' video clips is available from <http://www.techdis.ac.uk/getfreesoftware>

Creating resources for dyslexics:

Visual and audio resources can be created as alternatives to text based materials using the software above. Where text is unavoidable Word Files and PDFs can be customised by structuring the document using style sheets. Use of style sheets with documents allows them to be easily reformatted, skimmed through and converted to alternative formats. Accessible PDF helps users make the most of their PDF materials and is available free from Claro Software.

To further support learning visit the Aspire website - www.aspirestrategies.co.uk. This is a good example of how to avoid text based resources by offering video clips with voice over on study skills for people with dyslexia.

Example of existing provision

Training providers in the South West have already begun some valuable work on addressing these issues. Providing computers across the region with a basic screen reader, voice recognition / activation software, CD language dictionaries and mind-mapping software, plus funding for individuals to have access to a computer to assist their learning.

There are associated conditions that present further learning issues:

Ø Dyscalculia - is a specific learning difficulty relating to the skills of numeracy, arithmetic and mathematics.

Ø Dyspraxia - causes difficulty with fine movement control, hand-eye coordination and visual tracking; making it difficult to follow a line of text. Also larger physical actions like climbing and balancing.

Ø Dysgraphia - produces difficulty with physical aspects of writing such as poor pencil grip, and unclear handwriting. (Cont'd next page)

Training and further information on Dyslexia. Taster sessions for employers and providers - http://www.niace.org.uk/Conferences/TrainingCourses/dyslexia_taster.htm

British Dyslexia Society Encouraging Dyslexia Friendly Employment <http://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/downloads/Employers%20Courses%20Flyer%20Autumn%202008.pdf>

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Claro Training and Claro Learning — Disability Support

Jo Bourton

Claro Training was established in 2004 and since then has helped thousands of disabled people get the most out of technology. Most of our training is for students in Higher Education and is aimed at levelling the playing field, to enable them to achieve their full potential. Typical assistive software training, for example, includes dictation software, mindmapping programmes that help with organisation and planning, voice recognition packages and optical character recognition systems that enable users to scan text from books and journals and have them read aloud in real voices.

Claro Learning formed in 2005 focuses on Learning Support, helping people learn how to learn. Our objective is simple: "to assist students in higher education and others to overcome barriers to learning and achieve their full potential." Claro Learning clients are

intelligent and often highly motivated, but have an identifiable condition which puts them at a disadvantage compared with their colleagues. A student may, for example, be a wheelchair user, or have partial sight, have mental health difficulties, or have dyslexia. What they then need is a strategy (or set of strategies) for independent learning. Claro Learning consultants are all qualified teachers and help client form strategies which work for them, as individuals.

What makes the Claro model so special is that it is completely client focused – the training and learning support takes place when and where the client needs it; often in their own home or student accommodation and using their own equipment. Claro's head office is in Tavistock, Devon. We began operations in the South West and now have national

coverage with consultants in the South East, Wales, Midlands and the North.

For Claro clients who have completed their formal education, we are now developing a service aimed at supporting them into the work place. Claro also delivers Disability Awareness training sessions for public and private sector organisations; and we have a new partnership with Remploy through which we support our graduates through the transition between University and work, with a focus on CV writing, job searches and applications, interview practice and so on.

We are a growing company with a strong mission and a deep commitment to our clients that can best be summarized as a determination to help them gain the confidence and skill to pursue their ambitions and take charge of their careers and their future.

Devon Works ESF Programme

This programme is funded by ESF and co-financed by DWP and is a partnership arrangement between Shaw Trust and St Loyes College. St Loye's will be responsible for engaging people and getting people ready for work, the Shaw Trust will be responsible for the Job Outcomes and sustainability. The Contract is to help 1000 people over 3 years, and achieve 350 Job Outcomes

Aims of Devon Works

- To reduce benefit claim rates and improve employment rates by supporting people into sustainable work in certain priority areas across Devon
- To contribute to a reduction in child poverty in Devon through engaging and supporting workless parents into sustainable work.
- To Improve the employability and skills of unemployed and inactive people

Eligibility

For Workless parents/carers **only** - All Devon County Council area, **excluding** Torbay and Plymouth

For workless persons **and** workless parents/carers, the priority areas are: **North Devon** - Westward Ho, Ilfracombe,

Barnstaple Bideford Rural Torridge (i.e. Torridge District outside of Westward Ho and Bideford) **Exeter & East Devon** - Princetown, Exeter, Tiverton, Seaton **South Devon** - Dawlish, Teignmouth, Newton Abbot

In the priority areas we can work with the following groups:

Unemployed/ inactive (any Benefits),, Disabled/those with Health issues, Lone Parents, Over 50's,,Ethnic Minorities, those with no/low qualifications, Young People not in employment or training, Other disadvantaged groups, those with Multiple Barriers to work, those at risk of redundancy (Identified by Jobcentre plus)

Priority Groups in these areas are: –

- Long-term Incapacity Clients
- Workless Parents and Carers
- Multiple Barriers to progression (such as Offenders and Long-term Unemployed

Elements of the programme

- Engagement of clients at community level
- Assessment and Identification of Barriers to work
- Action Plan including Identification of local current mainstream DWP/LSC

Dawn Eastley

provision and other local/ alternatively funded provision. Devon Works must add value to existing programmes and not duplicate provision.

- Elements could include: Training, Better off in work calculations, Debt advice, Confidence and motivation, Voluntary work, Work Trials/Taster, CV's, interview techniques, Job-search skills
- Review
- Support
- Transition into work
- In work support
- In work Progression

If you are interested in joining Devon Works then please contact us on Freephone 0808 180 2005

Or the case worker for your area

N Devon

Tom Coomer - 07877187753
tcoomer@stloyes.ac.uk

Exeter and Mid Devon & South Devon

Carol Manley 07880 848781
cmanley@stloyes.ac.uk

For all other enquiries contact Dawn Eastley ESF Project Manager 07813 712798

Dawn.eastley@shaw-trust.org.uk

Those working in WBL are as familiar, as those in any other sector of industry with computer programmes like Microsoft Office. As we know each of these programmes needs a licence, which equals cost. This licence may need periodic renewal or upgrading, meaning more cost. Organisations employing additional employees may involve yet more costs. In both small and large organisations these programmes can represent a significant outlay. Well there is an alternative in the world of on-line applications, which can cost nothing and are maintained by someone else so that they are always ready to use. Some businesses have now taken the decision to go completely over to web applications; usually through a contract with the supplier of the chosen programmes. This is a major step and not one I am recommending at the moment; however, to prove there is a world outside Microsoft Office, here's a non-exhaustive list of online applications which are useful alternatives for the most popular desktop applications.

Programme	On-line Application	Description
Microsoft Office 2007	Google Docs	This application includes the same applications for creating word documents, spreadsheets and presentations as MS Office.
Adobe Photoshop CS3	Splashup	An online photo image editing application which has similar photo editing tools to Photoshop CS3.
Adobe Acrobat 8.1	iConv	Simply up-load your file to create a PDF version of a document, works with a wide variety of file formats.
Apple 1 Password Manager and Form Filler 2.5.7	Clipperz	This application creates direct log in links for all your online accounts. Just log into the application once to access them.
Apple Aperture 1.5	Flickr	A popular online photo management site with a free basic account accessed via email or the upload webpage.
Microsoft Office Outlook 2007	Gmail	This e-mail application has loads of space, allows instant messaging, has a built in search facility and is available in 40 languages
Vista	YouOS	A virtual operating system capable of being customised at low cost. It still looks and feels like a standard desktop.
Adobe Dreamweaver CS3 /Adobe Flash CS3 Professional	App2you	A neat solution to creating your own web pages without any coding or even any web design experience.
Desktop calculators	InstaCalc	An advanced web based calculator, capable of being embedded in your own website or linking you calculations to others
MS Outlook / HP fax machine	FaxZERO	An internet based faxing service, just upload the document and push go.
SharpReader/ NetNew Wire / Straw	Netvibes	A clever RSS reader and web home page enabling you to stay online at all times
MS PowerPoint	Preezo	An on-line alternative to PowerPoint which creates web enabled presentations.
USB storage devices/ drive storage space	DivShare	Upload media and document files online to Hard free-up storage space on your computer.
Microsoft OneNote 2007	Stikkit	A simple application that creates an on-screen yellow post-it note that 'thinks'. Use it for reminders, meeting alarms etc
Microsoft OneNote 2007	Webnote	A tool for taking notes at meetings or in classes, you then create an online workspace and share it with others.
MS Excel 2007	chartAll	A free online service which can create, store and publish charts from your own data sources. Not as capable as Excel but useful enough for the normal Excel user.
All desktop tools	Sosius	This has all the essential desktop tools online: calendar, file management, RSS feeds, projects, databases, collaboration and messaging tools.
All desktop tools	Linux	A suite of over 100 applications the majority of which are free and many are available on-line

All of the above have their disadvantages and advantages over existing programmes. The major advantage is of course lower costs. Some of these stem from there being no licensing cost, more come from the reduction in the need to employ skilled and highly paid IT technicians to maintain your IT system. The major disadvantage is the absolute necessity to maintain the organisations link to the net, without this of course the system will fall over. However, using web based applications can have significant benefits in many ways not explored here, so if you fancy breaking out of the Microsoft stranglehold have a go at some of the above and let me know what you think.

David Rowe. e-Learning Adviser WBL Mob: 07809 594850 e-Mail: psc-advice@rsc-south-west.ac.uk

Have you visited our website?

www.training-provider.com

Check the calendar of events

DCTPN Meetings 10.00 – 2.00

3rd October A+

9th January Cornwall

April 3rd North Devon

July 3rd Exeter

For H.E general information use

www.direct.gov.uk/uni

The South West's Functional Skills Regional co-ordinator is

Rosemary Brooke

Functional-Skills@fsmail.

LIG 3 Moving Ahead

INVITATION:DCTPN Providers are invited to send along ONE e-Learning champion to our first Blended Learning Programme: e-Moderation Skills. The programme is funded by the ALP Learning Innovation Grant and will be delivered by <http://tdm.info>. On request, a training provider may additionally send along a Director to accompany their champion to the Face-to-Face events ONLY. Dates, timings and event location details have been sent to Training Provider participants by email.

Consisting of a "sandwich" of two face-to-face meetings and four weeks on e-Moderated online activity (appx 3-5 hours per week), the e-Moderation Skills programme requires the attendance of "a sparky teacher or assessor who is not afraid of their computer". It is IMPORTANT to note that this session is aimed at people who have learning delivery skills - it is *not* pitched at your resident IT expert. What will the programme involve?

We will pitch our material at a typical Level 4 learner (i.e. first year of a University Course). It is important to point out once more that we will assume participants to have teaching / assessment skills - this programme is not pitched at IT technicians (!). Our aim is very much to "show" you how to e-moderate learning

by putting you on the receiving end of an e-Moderated learning process. The programme outline is as follows: Face-to-Face Workshop 1 (3 hours in Plymouth) - Introduction to your new software

- Four weeks of e-Moderated Learning (3-5 hours of online activity per week):
- Week 1 - Access & Climate Setting
- Week 2 - Problems & Motivation
- Week 3 - Course Content & Online Tutoring
- Week 4 - Development & Reflection
- Face-to-Face Workshop 2 - Continuation planning

Why Training Providers consider e-Moderation as a learning alternative?

There are obvious cost benefits.....The training provider can reduce expenditure on travel out to clients and on telephone bills. Providers can also reduce "repetitive presentation syndrome" where an assessor or trainer tells the same story in a one-on-one context to hundreds of trainees. Significant amounts of wasted time on cancelled visits can also be reduced. There are also some more hidden cost benefits..... There is a value in keeping hold of corporate knowledge so that you do

not need to reinvent a staff member from scratch when a "hole" is left by another staff member's departure. Significant time can be saved by using "global search" to find relevant company files and training materials which are stored in a communal space rather than spread across many separate staff machines. You can also reduce the need for expenditure on training space overheads. A sensible training provider can also engage revenue from "pay for" courses which offer value to their employer clients.

- Want the really Good News? By adopting e-Moderation practices, you can cut costs by adding value:
- environmentally friendly approach to learning delivery
- accessible activity records
- easier standardisation of learning delivery
- development of appropriate basic skills for the emerging knowledge economy

There ARE implementation issues to consider, such as IT reticence and the practicalities of IT access.... but, all in all, the adoption of e-Moderated Learning delivery clearly makes sense for modern Training Providers....

Derrin Kent

eNVQ - the total e-portfolio solution from EDI

Louise Lisseman

EDI has helped hundreds of businesses, delivering competence-based qualifications, to save time, money and improve staff motivation, through their eNVQ management system.

eNVQ was the first web-based e-portfolio system available and is used by over 300 organisations, such as QCA and awarding bodies; colleges of FE; private training providers; employers; police authorities, government departments and The Land Registry. Customers include BT, JHP training, Touchstone Learning and Skills and Accenture. Over 0.1m learners undertaking vocational qualifications are benefiting from our system.

Learners require the support of their employers in order to achieve competence-based qualifications. Because of work commitments and time pressures, employers may struggle to provide support during normal working hours. Managers are finding eNVQ has valuable advantages. Email contact between learner, supervisor and assessor makes for greater efficiency and productivity in the workplace, providing effective training without the need for purchasing expensive software. Also, the process is completely transparent, so managers can track their staff performance throughout the process.

Cost Effective Delivery

In addition, we offer straightforward pricing, charging on a 'per learner' basis. There are no hidden costs and no contract.

One of the biggest costs associated with competence-based qualifications is that of assessment, particularly in terms of the time required by the assessor, learner and employer. Using the traditional paper-based approach, progress is made only when an assessor visits a learner. During each visit, the assessor will give feedback on the last visit, conduct the assessment and plan the next visit. Much of this involves administration rather than actual assessment. With the eNVQ system, the assessor emails the feedback and the plan, allowing more time to assess evidence at each visit and thereby reducing the number of visits required. eNVQ enables the number of visits to be reduced further by the learner submitting evidence to the assessor electronically between visits to continually monitor progress.

Improvement in retention and achievement rates

eNVQ achieves improvements in retention and achievement rates through motivating the learners to generate evidence and compile their portfolios. Some learners work better where they are responsible for compiling their own portfolios, but others require the portfolio to be compiled automatically. eNVQ caters for both types of learner. Communication between assessor and learner is improved and increased with the eNVQ system because assessors can provide learners with valuable support, advice, guidance, and assess on an

ongoing basis. Each time the learner submits evidence, the assessor checks it online, scores the evidence and the system automatically works out how much of a particular unit or qualification the learner has achieved. The learner receives an email to say that the evidence has been assessed, and the learner can then enter the system to find out the result and see how much progress, in terms of a percentage, has been made. The learner is immediately clear how much of their qualification is left to achieve.

Improvement in quality and monitoring
The eNVQ system enables assessment and verification to take place at any time, regardless of where the assessor and internal verifier are based. The internal verifier can watch a learner's progress and review the assessor's decisions online. This means that any quality monitoring is ongoing and constant, and any quality issues can be handled immediately rather than having to wait for the internal verifier to receive the paperwork on an infrequent basis.

For more information please contact us or visit www.ediplc.com.
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As you will be aware, as of April 2008, Local Authorities have responsibility for commissioning information, advice and guidance (IAG) services for young people aged 11-19. Recognising the importance of high quality IAG services, a series of twelve Quality Standards have been drawn up nationally, defining DCSF expectations of the IAG services to be delivered. The standards provide a framework for planning, managing and reviewing IAG services in a locality, in a co-ordinated way. They are for use by all learning providers including schools, colleges and work based training providers as well as all external IAG providers such as Connexions services. Here in Plymouth, work has begun to ensure learning providers and users are aware of the standards and are equipped to measure themselves against them. Although the co-ordination of this falls under the leadership of the Local Authority, I believe we will only achieve quality and consistency of IAG by a collaborative approach across the whole partnership.

Since April 2008, I've been in a part time seconded post as the IAG lead on the 14-19 team within Plymouth Local Authority. My role is to provide consultancy support for providers around their IAG provision and to take forward the work that Jenny Clark had begun on developing and implementing an integrated city

wide IAG strategy.

The strategy has been developed and continues to be driven forward by a group of people forming the IAG strategy group. This group is made up of representatives across a wide range of sectors including education, Further Education, Higher Education, Local Authority, Training Providers, Connexions, Education Business Partnership, Youth Service and the Community and Voluntary sector.

Our priorities for the year ahead are:

- 1) to establish a city wide IAG Policy that is independent and impartial
- 2) to establish a quality improvement strategy for the delivery of IAG by key partners
- 3) to establish impartial IAG resources that can be used by a diverse range of partners in a variety of settings

The current IAG strategy has 6 key strands that focus on different areas:

Strand 1 – to develop and promote a city wide IAG Policy, to monitor its implementation and evaluate its impact to ensure that all young people and parents, including those in KS2 and vulnerable groups are aware of the IAG entitlement.

Strand 2 – to work with others to support further development and integration of the Plymouth e-ipl (i plymouth) and the 14-19 Plymouth Prospectus (www.findacourse4me.co.uk)

Strand 3 – promote IAG through city wide interactive industry/education events. (coming up this term are 2 events: Diploma Roadshow at TR2 9th October, 9 – 4.30pm and Inspire, a skills festival planned for November 19th)

Strand 4 – review and develop city wide IAG resources including the identification of appropriate high quality interactive packages.

Strand 5 – use Plymouth Parent Partnership as the key consultation and communication channel through which to ascertain and meet the information needs of parents and carers on 14-19 pathways, including HE progression.

Strand 6 – to support and engage with the evolving employer strategy in order to enhance opportunities for richer IAG. Each strand is co-ordinated by a relevant person/people from the strategy group membership with each strand having task and finish groups to oversee the work.

The aim of the strategy is ultimately to facilitate consistency of IAG provision across our city and to ensure we are delivering high quality, independent and impartial IAG for young people.

To find out more or contribute in any way contact me at Connexions on 01752 207700 or email sam.couch@connexions-cd.org.uk

Ensuring Foundation Degree Courses are Promoted

Supported by Aim Higher the TPN has been working with South Devon College and providers delivering hospitality apprenticeships and Train to Gain in the South Devon and Torbay area to try to encourage more progression from level three programmes onto Foundation Degrees. The issues are familiar ones. Many of the learners have low aspirations and do not relate to the possibility of doing a degree. Many of the training providers staff do not have any H.E experience themselves. The likelihood of a learner giving up a full time job to study on an HE programme full time are remote. The costs can be off putting. There is often a lack of Employer awareness and support for those who have heard of the possibility. Yet against this there are a number of very good reasons why the information must be available. As providers we must do our best for all learners and this does not simply apply to the programmes they do with us, but also the quality of the IAG which we provide them with. If we can simply be a rung on the ladder as they

move higher then we have done our part. All recent OfSted inspections have looked closely at both IAG and Progression, providers can't afford to ignore them. Recent work done through the AdVance project suggests that as high as 52% of level 3 completers in wbl are considering an H.E option, this indicates that good IAG is being delivered and is helping to raise aspirations, so we need to build on this. The growth of flexible part time Foundation Degree courses is providing the opportunity for learners with full time jobs to continue into H.E. in exactly the same way as they have done for years in wbl. Employers are becoming increasingly aware of the need to grow more of their own staff for managerial positions, but are often unaware of the options. What has been developed in an IAG link covering a wide range of options about both what progression there can be for Hospitality learners and how South Devon College can meet their needs. A simple website link www.southdevoncollege.trainingprovider.com

takes us to the work that has been done for the project. There are video clips with current Foundation Degree students, clips with employers saying why they are keen on staff doing H.E courses. Staff discuss the structure and delivery of Foundation Degree programmes, the facilities available for learners are shown and there are examples of actual assignments provided to let learners see what really is involved. Although it is still very early days the link has been used by hospitality training providers for their learners and their employers.

It has been welcomed by training provider staff as well as both employers and learners. One of the companies involved had an OfSted inspection last month and received favourable feedback on the contribution this made to their overall IAG and Learner Support. It is to be hoped that in the long run other Colleges develop specialist links for their Foundation degree programmes and together we can link up the information to those who need it and thereby raise both aspiration and progression.

The Contribution of the South West LifeLong Learning Network SWLLN Nick Wiseman

The Curriculum and Progression strands of the SWLLN have been heavily engaged with several key projects in the last few months: research into the learning and training needs of parish councillors and clerks in Devon and Cornwall (the latter entailed by a contract with the OneCornwall team moving towards unitary status in 2009); a new Foundation Degree (FD) development in Libraries, Museums and Archives; another FD in Information, Advice and Guidance; employer and provider engagement in Heritage Construction Skills in readiness for a new suite of FDs meeting learner needs across the counties of Cornwall, Devon, Somerset and Dorset; ongoing support for a suite of short courses in areas of Emergency Response and Management (with options to combine into 60 credit university awards); supporting the development of three FDs at Flybe as the company's academy begins to take shape; continuing work with providers and employers in seeking a work-based solution to the Honours stage for learners used to a part-time and work-related study mode; and continuing development of the Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning.

This summary includes much of the foci that the original Business Plan offered to the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE): new provision and progression opportunities for those seeking vocational Higher Education (HE) in Public Services, Heritage and Tourism. Of these, Tourism will be addressed more comprehensively in 2008-9. The SWLLN is also charged with providing more vocational HE Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG). This last activity has been led by the Open University under the strand leadership of Lois Thorn and, as can be seen below, plays a significant role in the whole enterprise. SWLLN is mainly interested in reaching learners who have not previously considered Higher Education, particularly adults in rural and coastal areas. The Training Provider Network together with nextstep-cds is one of these recipients and has embarked on a substantial training programme for network members. Training grants, small development

grants and collaboration funding have also been awarded to a further 15 organisations, and there will be more organisations taking part in 08-9. He-guidance, the free online HE and careers advice email service is now available across the region. (see www.gradsouthwest.com/heguidance). Readers may also be interested to take and use the range of free IAG and Learner Support resources available for advisers and learners on www.swlln.ac.uk/learners.

The SWLLN has provided monies to around ten current providers of IAG, spanning the sub-region, to enhance their HE sources and knowledge. Another article would be needed to reflect all their excellent work, but as can be seen in what follows, the IAG strand is as of equal importance to the other strands' activities reported herein.

Devon & Cornwall Parishes
SWLLN consultants, Ian Sherriff, Dr Gregory Borne and Helen May have been, in 2007-08, undertaking detailed research through questionnaires and face-to-face meetings with over 4000 Parish Counsellors and Clerks in Devon. The goal is to ascertain their learning needs as more and more government policy involves delivery at the parish level and through the voluntary sector. A significant data base was designed to accommodate the questionnaire data and this should yield rich insights when the analysis phase commences shortly. This background and experience led to the OneCornwall team approaching Ian Sherriff

and Gregory Borne with a proposal to replicate the work done in Devon. After several exploratory meetings, a Heads of Agreement has been signed by the SWLLN Director, Belinda Payne, and the team are engaging with the 209 Cornish Town and Parish Councils and the OneCornwall team itself. The agreed action plan entails detailed research of current skills, knowledge and attributes, and thus perceived training and education needs. The outcomes are being placed in a large scale database and analysis will take place in the next academic year. As a result, the SWLLN will be in position to broker the required training programmes

with educational institutions in the Duchy. This research and training needs analysis and will, of course, be available across the other counties contained within the SWLLN sub-region.

Work Based Learning and APEL
The SWLLN is involved in many projects that basically cover workforce development. The recurrent themes stemming from employers and employees, and the intelligence gathered from partners' educational institutions, comprise: CPD, bite-size (and flexible) delivery entailing much work-based or at least work-related academic activity. The corollary to these is APEL and as the SWLLN meets with more professionals around the sub-region, it is clear that they, the potential new students, expect their experiential learning to be recognised and accredited.

Similarly, part-time, in work or volunteering learners, will be likely to seek part-time and work-based or work-related Honours degree opportunities once they have qualified at HE Certificate and Intermediate levels. The SWLLN is currently working with 13 institutions to explore how this might be done constituting a cross-cutting project in its own right.

These features will underpin much of what the SWLLN's Curriculum and Progression strands will be doing in the next academic year. The third key SWLLN strand is Information, Advice, Guidance and Learner Support.

As can be seen from the above summaries, there is obvious integration via the new IAG FD and CPD offer upcoming. But even more, the IAG activity at Flybe and the fact that the strand's Hubs have already been engaging with hundreds of enquiries about vocational HE opportunities currently or planned to be available (including APEL protocols) suggests that as the SWLLN approaches its final year of HEFCE funded activity, all three strands are coming together to provide a coherent picture for those seeking vocational HE in Cornwall, Devon, Somerset and Dorset. Anyone interested in further information on the activities of the SWLLN should look at: www.swlln.ac.uk where upcoming events are also advertised!

Developing IAG for the Older Learner

The network is closely involved with a number of bodies in its determination to raise further the standard of IAG and Learner Support in the sub region. The article in this newsletter on increasing the numbers who progress to Foundation Degrees highlights the links with Aim Higher and the article on the South West Lifelong Learning Network shows another set on relationships. A recent meeting with ENTO has resulted in their looking closely at their CQI tool kit to see how it compliments with other initiatives. The clear aim is to weave all the strands into one body of good practice.

Currently the TPN hold a SWLLN IAG hub with nextstep which is focusing on providing training for identified company IAG champions to encourage the older learners to consider progressing to H.E. With the growth of Train to Gain level 3's and the surge in Adult Apprentice numbers it is evident that there will be a increasingly large cohort of mature learners who will be needing support in determining their next qualification.

To date we have held two one day long training sessions for nominated IAG staff from training providers and have another session fully booked in Exeter on September 11th. We now have further training sessions arranged in Taunton on October 14th, in Plymouth on October 21st and in Exeter on November 27th. Any companies who are interested should contact Craig

The Qualification Reform Support Programme

The DCTPN worked in partnership with the QIA and LSN to hold a training session at A+ training on July 18th on the V.Q.R.F programme. The session was very well attended and excellently delivered by Rob Martin from LSN.

Although there have been a number of articles and events about the changes there was a general feeling that such a major reform programme has somehow crept in under the radar without many providers appreciating just how significant many of the changes will be. The key change away from the National Qualifications Framework with its 6,000 + listed qualifications to the new Qualifications and Credit Framework is a major shift. While it is widely appreciated that the NQF was a list rather than a framework, with little logical naming or labelling of qualifications some providers had not appreciated the key architecture involved in the QCF where units are split into levels linked to the degree of challenge whilst the awards are made up by the accumulation of credits which reflect the scale of the amount of work which is being done. It is about recognising achievement that has taken place rather than focusing on aspects which may not have been achieved, something those attempting to deliver entire apprenticeship framework have long pressed for. By allowing credits to be accumulated and transferred between qualifications and awarding bodies it provides flexible routes to the gaining of full qualifications

as well as enabling qualifications to be built up gradually. Providers will be anxious to ensure that this does not mean that they have to be registered with a number of different awarding bodies, will be concerned if someone working towards a diploma (above 36 credits) wants to be certificated for their award (1-12 credits) and their certificate (13-36 credits) along the way. Such costs and administration would be a considerable issue. The time allowed for any learner to get through a qualification is also of interest, units will have a currency after which they would have to be re done. Particularly for those with any special needs this could be a potential pitfall. So what are the key points for the training providers to be aware of? This is not being introduced with a big bang, it is coming in gradually with the switch over occurring only when the appropriate qualifications have been developed and placed on the QCF. Providers do need to look at the QCF site to see whether qualifications from their sector are being developed in the first wave or are going to take longer. From 2009/10 the LSC will 'switch' funding from the NQF to QCF provision where available, providers do need to be ready to deliver the funded programmes when necessary or will risk losing income lines. Learners are going to have to register for a unique learner number. This will be done through the learning

registration Service (LRS) which will be provided by MIAP, and will result in the issuing of a Unique Learner Number. (ULN). The ULN will have a key role to play in the new process, the providers will register the learner with awarding bodies, and as they achieve the learner will have their credits placed on the Learner Achievement Record (LAR). Providers were aware of the need to register all their learners from August 1st and hopefully now understand where this piece of the jigsaw fits. The Diploma frameworks have been written to fit into the credit framework as will be the entire Foundation Learning Tier though as yet there are not yet that many units in place. That position is changing by the day and hopefully before long it will be possible for providers to be able to plot progression pathways through the maze. With the growing pressures to increase the numbers on apprentices the FLT is going to become increasingly important so providers do need to engage with it as soon as possible. The Sector Skills Councils are going to become key players in the accreditation of the new units. The intention is that they will be kept informed of local employer needs by the newly emerging Employment Skills Boards.

If the lines of communication are successfully established it is to be hoped that the units providers are able to offer and draw down funding for will be far closer to employer's skills demands than they have been in the past.

The first Diploma starts in Cornwall

Students and Staff in Penwith, the far South West region of Cornwall are excited about the prospect of the Creative and Media Diploma and the opportunities which it will bring to the region. The area is rich with Creativity, and students are tapping into this in order to extend the experiences in the area for all residents. It has been a challenge to overcome some of the problems which come with developing a model for such a rurally isolated area, but develop one we have, and it is generating a great deal of positivity from the area. The model which has been put together involves a series of "Events" which students will a series of "Events" which students will

participate in as "Project Teams." The projects are based around the requirements for the event, such as mask makers, production teams, and each pull in relevant Creative Practitioners from the area. The first Event is called MONTOL and is based around the ancient mid-winter solstice celebrations. Although in the early stages of planning, students will participate in Project Teams which plan, design, record and broadcast the story of the process. They are already working with Community Groups in order to set this in motion for the end of 2008. The team is seeking funding for a mobile film studio which can reduce some of the problems caused by the rurality of the

area. This ties into the proposed Broadband TV channel which will be launched in the New Year, linking up with other Diploma Students from both the area and the rest of the uk. It is envisaged that all students will have an input into the Channel, which is being developed with local film makers in the area. The mobile unit will enable students to travel around this extremely rural area gathering footage which will form both documentary and original film works for the channel. The 5 schools in Penwith are all involved in the delivery of the Diploma, and are using each of their unique strengths to facilitate the "Project Teams".

Getting to Grips with Self Regulation September 23rd 2008 at Dillington House, Ilminster

Learning South West and SWITCH in partnership with The Single Voice for Self Regulation in Further Education are holding a one day conference on 'Getting to Grips with Self Regulation'. This will be held on Tuesday September 23rd from 10.00-4.00 at Dillington House, near Ilminster. The keynote speakers are Sir George Sweeney, Chair of the Self Regulation Project team and Paul Eeles, National Development Manager for the Association of Learning Providers (ALP) and a member of the Self Regulation Project team.

The conference will provide an opportunity for senior managers to:

- receive an update on the progress of the Self Regulation Unit and the development of the Framework for self regulation
- explore the implications for organisations within the learning and skills sector
- take part in a choice of seminars held by colleagues in the South West who have been involved in pilot programmes or projects linked to self regulation.

The seminar choices include:

- Framework for Excellence
- Peer review and development
- The Training Quality Standard
- Guidance on the new self assessment requirements
- The Higher Quality manager programme
- Employer responsiveness
- Progress with the Workforce Reforms
- Learner responsiveness

Book online at www.learning-southwest.org.uk by September 5th or email events@learning-southwest.org.uk

English @ Work in Devon

John Willis

A new programme to improve the language skills of migrant workers is now being offered FREE to employers in Devon, Torbay and Plymouth, through a partnership of providers brokered under Productive Skills for Devon. If you can provide ESOL training and would like to offer this programme to employers you work with, you are welcome to join this partnership.

Its purpose is to ensure that migrant workers work safely and are able to communicate in basic English, boosting the impact migrant workers can make to the economy.

There is a basic 20-hour course which can be delivered in the workplace for groups of workers, or providers can provide access to a DVD-based independent learning project for smaller

numbers.

The course covers topics in basic language skills and communication at work. It has been designed by English language training professionals in Devon, is available from most local training providers, and can be adapted to the needs of different work-forces. It can also be a stepping stone for learners who would like to take further qualifications.

One company which participated in the English @ Work pilot programme is Tredinnick Fine Foods of Newton Abbot. Production manager Warren Hilton, says the training has been good for business.

"As a business we want our employees

to be more skilled because higher skills mean more benefits to the business.

There has been a definite improvement in several members of staff who previously needed an interpreter. Now they can understand much more and can have basic conversations."

The basic cost of the English @ Work course is £800 but Devon employers signing up in this year will now get it FREE.

For more information please contact John Willis or Wendy Head on 01647 441050 or email skills4lifeadmin@tiscali.co.uk. We can supply a disk of materials and documentation for providers, and a DVD film for employers: this is also available on www.devoneconomy.co.uk under Skills Provision / Productive Skills for Devon – What's New.

'Getting on Track': a Provider Development Programme on Skills for Life in Train to Gain

Learning South West was contracted to deliver an activity in the Provider Development Programme for providers of Train to Gain in the South West during June and July 2008. This was 'Understanding the role of Skills for life in Train to Gain' and to ensure that providers received support in delivering Skills for Life. Further indication of what support providers might need was established through a focus group held prior to planning.

As a result, it was decided to hold 12 workshops in total reflecting 6 sector areas, each delivered in Exeter and Bristol. The events, called, 'Getting on Track', were promoted to providers by the LSC and both brokers and LSC staff were also encouraged to attend. In total, 203 people attended 11 events representing 90 organisations.

The format of the programme was very interactive and drew upon the different experiences of participants within the groups. Indicating a sector focus for pairs of events helped to give a sector perspective to some issues in discussion and to involve sector skills representatives. Activities included: scene setting around policy changes; sector skills inputs; teaching and learning approaches; changes in funding; exploration of a range of resources and approaches to delivering Skills for Life; and action planning for development. Initial evaluations were very positive. Participants enjoyed meeting other providers with similar issues and having a shared experience with brokers. Of course some providers have developed a huge expertise in this area, but for others the guidance and sharing of resources and approaches was very wel-

come. A formal evaluation is being carried out by SLIM.

There were some providers who had no previous experience of delivering Skills for Life and many without specialist staff and lack of clarity about the requirement to deliver Skills for Life in the new contract, including requirements for screening or initial assessment. This indicated a continuing need for basic support in Skills for Life delivery, including awareness raising.

For organisations that do not have specialist staff, there will be a peripatetic Skills for Life register for Skills for Life within Train to Gain. This was proposed from the 'Getting on Track' events and will be managed by Learning South-west from October 2008.

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