Integrating Work-Based Learning into Higher Education

A Guide to Good Practice

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Foreword

Although examples of excellence exist, a major historical weakness of higher education in England has been the lack of emphasis on supporting and accrediting work-based learning.

For employers, commerce in general and indeed individual learners, supporting the development of systems to recognise and accredit work-based learning would undoubtedly improve the value of higher education provision. For Foundation Degrees, vocational Honours Degrees and higher degree programmes, combining the delivery of academic and theoretical knowledge with work-based skills can deliver learning provision that is of substantial value to employers and learners alike. Furthermore, developing higher education provision that appropriately recognises and supports work-based learning will enable institutions to widen participation and attract learners following level 3 work-based qualifications and programmes, in particular NVQ level 3s and Advanced Apprenticeships.

This comprehensive guide has been produced for colleagues in higher education institutions and further education colleges (with higher education provision) to support and recognise work-based learning in the delivery and award of all types of higher education and related qualifications. UVAC, as a higher education representative body championing vocational learning and comprising over 100 higher education institutions, further education colleges and corporate bodies, fully supports this agenda.

We are very grateful to LCCI Commercial Education Trust for supporting the production of the guide and trust it will support colleagues in higher education in recognising the value of work-based learning for the benefit of commerce and individual learners.

Professor Simon Roodhouse
Chief Executive
University Vocational Awards Council

Introduction

The term 'work-based learning' is becoming ubiquitous, particularly in the context of discussions about vocational education at all levels. It is part of a cluster of concepts, including 'lifelong learning', 'employability' and 'flexibility', which are similarly ubiquitous, often employed rhetorically, and in consequence run the risk of being regarded as meaningless. One of the challenges in providing a *Good Practice Guide* to work-based learning in higher education must therefore be to attempt to introduce some clarity about what work-based learning at this level involves and the contexts in which it occurs.

One thing is clear – there can be no single or simple definition of what work-based learning entails beyond the notion that it is about learning (not teaching) and occurs in the workplace (rather than on campus).[1] As such, *work-based* learning can, and should be, distinguished from the notion of *work related* learning; the latter, in the form of vocational programmes designed to prepare people for employment, has a long history in higher education, but does not necessarily require significant areas of the curriculum to be completed in the work place itself. Neither should it be assumed that work-based learning in the higher education context is specifically about training; work-based learning may take many forms and be undertaken for a number of different purposes; it is not restricted to performance-related learning in a narrow sense. Instead, the emphasis is on identifying and demonstrating learning that has occurred through work-based activity, wherever and however this may have been achieved.

It is also clear that the map of work-based learning activity has become more densely populated in recent years, with many diverse partners, players and cultures now located on its territories.[2] The increase in density has not, though, become evenly distributed, with pockets of highly concentrated activity existing alongside more sparsely populated areas. The growing occurrence and demand for work-based learning, has been attributed to the changing nature of the economy, as globalisation and the deregulation of labour markets impact on patterns of employment and the organisation of work. In consequence, education and training at all levels are increasingly regarded as the key to developing and maintaining economic competitiveness. A discussion of the analysis of these patterns of employment and their impact on education policy is the subject of Part 1 of this guide.

One concept that is used frequently in discussions of the demand for work-based learning is 'flexibility'; all organisations, including higher education institutions (HEIs), are expected to respond flexibly and rapidly to market changes. Flexibility may require working in partnership or collaboratively with other organisations in order to achieve desired goals most effectively. With this drive to create flexible organisations has come a corresponding emphasis on flexible learning, within and across organisations.

As Garrick and Usher put it:
"Organizations are expected to respond flexibly and rapidly to market changes and a premium is now placed on the need for flexibility not only within workplaces but also between them. Within this context are located interlinking discourses of flexible organizations, flexible workers and a consequent perceived need amongst managers (at a range of levels) for flexible structures, modes and contents of learning to service these organisations and workers." [3]

In current documents emanating from government agencies, the terms flexible learning and work-based learning are used almost interchangeably; for example in the recent White Paper, Skills: Getting on in Business, Getting on at Work published in March 2005, there is reference to progression taking place through 'flexible, i.e. work-based learning routes'.[4] Along with online and distance learning, work-based learning has come to be regarded as making a crucial contribution to flexible learning processes. Thus, the notion of flexibility has become central to discussions of the need for further integration of work-based learning into higher education, as the drive for flexibility underpins many of the initiatives introduced in recent higher education policies.

To state that higher education has become increasingly policy driven, which it undoubtedly has, essentially means that higher education is increasingly regarded as having a key part to play in driving the economy forward. Funding strategies for the growth of higher education are driven by issues of relevance to the needs of employers and economic prosperity more generally. It is in this context that the continued expansion of work-based learning in the higher education curriculum needs to be understood. In Part 1 of this guide, there is a review of the drivers towards increasingly flexible provision, which begins to address the question of why higher education needs to engage more widely in work-based learning.

Part 2 explores the 'how' questions of the engagement of higher education in the light of the socio-economic analysis and resulting policy decisions which were the subject of Part 1. This is addressed through three main policy contexts:
  1. Employability and Lifelong Learning
  2. Development of higher level skills
  3. Knowledge creation and transfer.

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[1] For a fuller discussion of definitions and approaches to work-based learning see page 13 in Part 2.
[2] Examples of this diversity can be found in the case studies which make up Part 3 of this guide.
[3] Garrick, J. and Usher, R. (2000) *Flexible Learning, Contemporary Work and Enterprising Selves* in Electronic Journal of Sociology (2000). www.sociology.org/content/vol005.001/garrick-usher.html
[4] A full copy of the report can be obtained on the DfES website at www.dfes.gov.uk/publications/

Part 3 of the guide uses a number of case studies to illustrate the range and diversity of work-based learning activity that can currently be found within higher education. These include:

1. Work experience and work placement in the undergraduate curriculum
2. Dual accreditation programmes incorporating NVQs and National Occupational Standards
3. Foundation degree developments and a work-based Honours 'top-up'
4. Placements and sandwich degrees in professional training programmes
5. Learning contracts and online learning through the Learndirect *Learning through Work* initiative.
6. Accreditation of in-company programmes and their embedding within negotiated programmes to support workforce development
7. An overview of developments in the accreditation of prior experiential learning (APEL) and the recognition of experiential and work-based learning in the UK and Europe.

Part 4 offers a guide to resources available to support the development of work-based learning in higher education and offers suggestions for further development.

In summary, the guide is arranged in four parts:

1. Part 1 addresses the issue of why higher education should engage with work-based learning
2. Part 2 considers what is meant by work-based learning and how it can be implemented
3. Part 3 provides examples of current good practice in the form of a series of case studies
4. Part 4 identifies sources of further information and resources to support work-based learning.

Part 1: Why should higher education engage with work-based learning?

There are a number of reasons why higher education should engage with work-based learning. One is that if higher education is to continue to have relevance, it must address the economic imperatives for the supply of workers with appropriate skills and knowledge to equip them for the changing nature of work. Furthermore, economic analysis of the changing nature of work has formed a major platform of recent government policies for higher education, which, in turn, affects how funding for higher education is allocated and the areas that are prioritised. Linking to the policy agenda therefore offers higher education the potential to benefit from the funding streams associated with policy initiatives. Another reason is that employers of graduates have frequently indicated that they value the attributes and qualities that graduates bring to their organisations. It is essential therefore that these qualities continue to be relevant, especially in the context of the significant expansion of the higher education sector. Yet another reason for higher education to engage in work-based learning is that it allows higher education to play to its strengths, in assessing and accrediting learning outcomes. Accrediting in-company programmes and assessing outcomes from individual work-based learning is in some HEIs already proving to be a useful source of additional income.

Higher education and economic competitiveness

Three areas of economic analysis which link higher education to economic success are particularly relevant here: changing employment patterns and changes in the organisation of work, changing skills requirements, particularly in relation to higher level skills, and the rise of the so-called 'knowledge economy'.[5]

Changing employment patterns and changes in the organisation of work

Higher education has always been associated with preparation for work, particularly in relation to entry to the professions. Once entry was achieved, being a member of a profession was regarded as a 'job for life' and in consequence, preparation for work prior to entry into employment, usually followed by some kind of probationary period in employment, appeared to be an appropriate model. In addition, until recently, only a relatively small proportion of the population needed to have a university education to prepare them for work. However, employment patterns, and the ways in which work is organised, have changed considerably over the last thirty years; far more areas of employment are now considered to be areas of graduate employment, requiring a degree or equivalent for entry into the employment sector or to be achieved during employment. One answer to the question of why higher education should engage in work-based learning is therefore because it needs to respond to the growth in the scale of graduate employment, and in the range of work sectors to which the description applies.

Analysis of the structure of the labour market over the last fifteen to twenty years suggest that employment patterns in most industrial societies have undergone considerable upheaval; traditional career patterns are breaking down and full-time permanent employment is no longer the predominant pattern. Although this may not be true of all work sectors, this analysis has been widely adopted, with the result that recent government policies, such as the commitment to creating patterns of lifelong learning, are based on such premises.

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[5] A useful overview of the main trends in relation to employment patterns, organisational change, changes in the organisation of work and corresponding skills requirements can be found in *High Level Review of Training Packages: Phase 1 Report* (2003), Australian National Training Authority, which is available on the Australian National Training authority home page at www.anta.gov.au.

In a number of enterprises, full-time employment has been replaced by 'non-standard' work, particularly part-time, casual and contract work. Of particular relevance to the present context, is the rise in 'portfolio' or 'free-agent' contract workers who must take on the responsibility for managing their own careers and skills development in order to become, or remain, employable. Up-skilling and lifelong learning become the new buzz words associated with the move away from the 'job for life' and the need for individuals to develop new skills and to update existing skills throughout their working lives.

For individuals who are self-employed or managing their own businesses, lifelong learning becomes essential if they are to be successful; at the same time they face pressures to limit the amount of time spent away from work. For this reason, strategies to engage in programmes tailored to their specific needs and based in work become crucial. The facility for higher education to provide work-based programmes for the purpose of personal development, either leading to a qualification or to meet specific skills needs, offers a mechanism for addressing the needs of the portfolio worker, whether that person is self-employed or working within an organisation.

Work-based learning has also been identified as a means of responding to the needs of employers, particularly those in SMEs. It is suggested that the pressure to compete in increasingly global contexts, means that employers need their workers to engage in continuous skills development, in order to improve their productivity, and to enable organisations to meet the challenges posed by countries such as China and India. Recent analysis suggests that it is general attributes of workers that are particularly important, with an emphasis on entrepreneurship, problem-solving abilities and the development of intellectual capital. These skills and abilities have traditionally been associated with graduateness, and attempts to harness the demonstrable success of higher education to the changing economic climate, has been a feature of higher education policy in recent years. As such, various sources of funding, linked to specific policy initiatives and designed to enhance continuing employability, provide a further reason for higher education to engage in work-based learning.

The changing shape of the labour market is considered to be a direct consequence of changes to the ways that work is organised, shifting from bureaucratic patterns to more flexible modes of organising work through collaboration. Organisations are now required: *"to be more agile, to be able to respond quickly to changing market conditions and to develop new collaborative capabilities both within and between organisations."* [6]

For the purpose of better understanding the economic and policy context of work-based learning, it is worth spending a little more time to examine these organisational changes, and their implications for skills development.

The most significant of these structural changes in organisations can be summarised as follows:
- increased use of collaboration such as outsourcing to manage non-core functions, whereby a number of individual firms collaborate with each other to manage production of an end product or service
- flattening of traditional bureaucratic hierarchies, creating fewer layers of management, with the consequence that in many occupations workers are required to take on broader responsibilities and, in addition to technical tasks, to develop a wider range of skills in order to enable them to contribute to the strategic performance of the organisation by engaging in quality management, teamwork, and interpersonal and inter-organisational collaboration
- restructuring and downsizing as a strategy for maintaining flexibility in order to respond quickly to changing market requirements
- rise of non-standard work as a consequence of restructuring and downsizing, as organisations seek to adjust the size and composition of the workforce in response to market requirements
- breakdown of traditional occupational demarcations leading to multi-skilling across all major occupations.[7]

In summary, as reported by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in 1998, in a survey of the relevance of education to work, the workplace is now characterised by: further increases in job complexity; multi-tasking and multi-skilling; increased requirements for qualifications as evidence of skills; ongoing use of enterprise training for skill formation; further reduction in organisational hierarchy; increased distribution of responsibility to individuals and teams; increased use of performance-based pay.[8]

A further relevant factor is that restructuring, downsizing and outsourcing have resulted in a decline in the number of large companies and organisations and a growth in SME employment, often providing a specialised product or service. This had led to a demand from SME employers for workers with higher level skills and for support to help them train and develop their staff. Since SMEs have limited numbers of staff it is difficult for employers to 'release' them for education and training away from the workplace. For these enterprises, work-based learning may be the only way forward.

Changing skill requirements

If the nature and pattern of work is changing along the lines described above, the consequence must be that the context in which work-based learning occurs is now very different from that which prevailed twenty years ago. A further consequence is that responsibility for career-management and skill development is seen to reside more and more with individuals, rather than with organisations; workers are expected to be more flexible, to have a wider range of skills, and to be able to take on responsibilities previously undertaken by managers and supervisors.

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[6]   High Level Review of Training Packages – Phase 1 Report, p.3
[7]   High Level Review of Training Packages – Phase 1 Report, pp 3-5
[8]   OECD 1998, cited in Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC) 1998,
      The Relevance of Education to the World of Work, with a Focus on Youth Employment, Toronto: CMEC.

In this context, technical skills alone are not considered to be sufficient, as cognitive skills, together with an array of generic skills and dispositions, come to be regarded as the essential ingredients of successful performance in the workplace. Problem solving, continuous learning, communication and teamwork are singled out for particular attention, alongside qualities such as being enterprising, highly motivated and prepared to take risks. This suggests that the remit of vocational higher education must include strategies for developing not only a much wider range of technical skills than before, but must also address the development of cognitive abilities and personal attributes that are conducive to successful performance at work.

This collection of skills, attributes and abilities resonates strongly with the qualities that employers traditionally have looked for in the recruitment of graduates. Several studies of graduate recruitment have commented that employers who have traditionally recruited significant numbers of graduates have always emphasised generic attributes and qualities over technical or subject specific knowledge.[9] Indeed, historically, there has been relatively loose correlation between the field of study at undergraduate level and the employment area entered; "…around two-thirds of all graduates do not even enter fields which are related to their undergraduate studies."[10] Given that current wisdom also suggests that these attributes and qualities are best acquired in the workplace, there is a strong rationale for higher education to build on its existing strengths by engaging in work-based workforce development.

Alongside this increased focus on the generic skills necessary for workers to become and remain employable, there is at the same time an expectation that workers will need higher technical skills in order to work with the advanced technology that is a feature of contemporary workplaces. However, because of the increasing specialisation brought about by the collaborative nature of production of goods and services and the use of outsourcing, it is argued that the training of higher level technical skills can be more effectively achieved in the workplace itself, rather than in the classroom. This provides further leverage for the expansion of work-based learning and for increased collaboration between employers, employers' organisations and further and higher education.

The consequence of all this, as reflected in the policies of successive governments since the early 1980s, is the view that a country's economic performance is intimately connected to the level (and kind) of skill of its workforce. Indeed recent higher education policy has been premised on the assumption that contemporary societies must invest in raising the skills of their workforces.

However, the general picture of skills gaps leading to an overall requirement for up-skilling, should to be treated with some caution, as there are indications that this pattern may be true only of some industries or work sectors. There is some evidence that that there has been an increase in the numbers of workers who hold qualifications at a level higher than are required for the work they do, and that the number of jobs that require no qualification is greater than the number of people without qualifications. Notwithstanding these reservations, the predominant message from economic analysis, as reflected in successive policies for education and training at all levels, would seem to be the need to improve the overall skills of the workforce, with an emphasis on generic or transferable skills, in addition to more traditional technical skills. As workers are now required to bring more of themselves to work and invest more of themselves in work, the role of education and training has been redefined to support learners in developing skills and attributes such as personal discipline, responsibility, willingness to take risks, team spirit, curiosity, learning continuously and management of emotions.[11]

The rise of the knowledge economy

In the contemporary economic environment, learning is seen as an integral and ongoing feature of working. This is reflected in the Green Paper, *The Learning Age*, which highlighted the rise of the knowledge economy or the learning society.[12] In this version of human capital theory, intellectual capital has become critical to economic success. This approach focuses on the importance of knowledge creation and the application and manipulation of 'new' knowledge in the workplace.

The authors of a *Review of High Level Training Packages* in Australia, suggest that this new knowledge is different in that:
- the production of new knowledge within organisations and enterprises is different from the knowledge outlined in traditional subjects or disciplines and common in educational and training programmes
- this new knowledge is high in use-value for the enterprise or organisation. Its deployment has immediate value but, as it is context specific, its value within the enterprise or organisation may well be short-lived
- this new knowledge is not foundational and cannot be codified into written texts such as competency standard descriptions, procedural manuals or textbooks – rather it is constructed within the context and environment of the immediate workplace
- this knowledge is therefore rarely the product of individuals but is constructed through collaborations and networks that exist within specific sites and particular contexts.[13]

[9] See for example: Brennan, J., Lyon, E.S., McGeevor, P.A. and Murray, K. (1993) *Students Courses and Jobs: the relationship between higher education and the labour market*. London: Jessica Kingsley.

[10] Pearson, R. (1985) The Demands of the Labour Market, in D. Jacques and J. Richardson (eds.) The Future for Higher Education. Guildford: SRHE/Nelson.

[11] High Level Review of Training Packages: Phase 1 Report, op. cit.

[12] DfEE Green Paper 1998 *The Learning Age*, London: HMSO. Available at www.lifelonglearning.co.uk/greenpaper/index.htm

[13] High Level Review of Training Packages: Phase 1 Report, p.6

This new knowledge is conceptualised as practical, interdisciplinary, informal, applied, and contextual rather than theoretical, disciplinary, formal, foundational and generalisable, and suggests that relevance no longer equates with the 'application' of knowledge to the workplace, but instead, the workplace itself is seen as a site of learning, knowledge and knowledge production. When this view of the nature of knowledge in the workplace is linked with the preceding analysis of the skill requirements generated by changes to the way work is organised, it would appear that a higher proportion of workers are now expected to use their technical and generic knowledge and skills to contribute to the production of new knowledge within the workplace. The application of skills previously learned outside of the work context may no longer be sufficient.

In summary, the authors argue that current demands for work-based learning differ from those involved in formal award courses in that they:

- do not rely on the intervention of institutionally based teachers or organisationally based workplace trainers
- are not structured around pre-determined vocational outcomes
- are not determined by qualification frameworks and endorsed training packages
- are not guided by specific content
- are not organised around the enabling disciplines.

Instead the main characteristics of this learning are that it:

- is context bound, driven by specific and immediate work requirements
- emphasises learning over teaching or training as a defining characteristic
- depends on the responsibility for learning being spread between a number of people within the workplace
- is consistent with new learning concepts such as learning networks, learning organisation and communities of practice.

This detailed analysis of the changing nature of work is relevant to consideration of the integration of work-based learning into higher education in that it points to significant changes in the 'content' or curriculum of higher education programmes, as well as to where and how it should be delivered or achieved. It also suggests that the historic dominance of universities in knowledge production is being eroded, and that knowledge production increasingly becomes a collaborative activity based in and around the workplace. If higher education is to continue to make a contribution to the knowledge economy, it becomes imperative that higher education engages with work-based learning and recognises the workplace as a site of knowledge production.

In this context *partnership* and *collaboration* between employers, employers' organisations, workers and a range of further and higher education providers assume a particular significance. The concepts of *lifelong learning* and learning *for* work, *at* and *through* work, also highlight the importance of *continuing training*, individual *personal and professional development* and *workforce development*. In turn, the notion of continuous learning and its recognition, emphasise the need for vocational *progression routes* in and through higher education. These elements have become cornerstones of recent policy affecting higher and further education.

It should be noted, however, that a number of commentators have expressed scepticism about the extent and nature of changes in the work context and its implications for the development of knowledge and skill, regarding them as primarily aspirational, rather than descriptive of the current contexts of work. Nevertheless, as so many elements of these analyses have become incorporated into the policy agenda for education and training in the UK, they effectively become a reality for both learners and providers.

The policy agenda for higher education and its impact on funding

Successive governments in recent years have adopted the analysis that the UK needs to raise the levels of competence in the workforce if it is to maintain and enhance its effectiveness in global markets. Swailes and Roodhouse comment that:

"By the 1970s, both the British and US economies faced strong competition from nations using similar production technologies but with much lower manufacturing costs, particularly labour. Government concern about falling competitiveness stimulated reviews by the Manpower Service Commission (MSC 1981) which underlined the need for a flexible skilled workforce that could respond to global economic changes." [14]

(Swailes and Roodhouse 2003)

It has now become apparent that the UK cannot compete with nations such as India and China on the basis of low wage costs, hence the focus on other ways of adding value to products and services. These concerns underpin the agendas spelt out in most recent higher education policy, but are manifested around three main themes:

1. Widening access and participation
2. The skills strategy: an agenda for addressing skills shortages and skills gaps
3. Knowledge creation and the application and manipulation of new knowledge in the workplace.

Widening access and participation

Commitment to widening access and participation has been a feature of education policy at all levels in the last few years. It is part of the push to generate a culture of learning, especially lifelong learning, at all levels - within schools, through further and higher education, in the workplace and throughout life. At the heart of the various initiatives is a commitment to developing stronger progression routes and rates of progression into higher education, especially for students from less advantaged backgrounds.

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[14] *Structural barriers to the take-up of higher level NVQs,* Journal of Vocational Education and Training, volume 55 number 1, 2003, pp 85-110.
    Additional information can be found on www.simonroodhouse.com.

At last, it seems, with the publication of '*Skills: Getting on in business, getting on at work*' in March 2005, the final rung in the progression ladder has been put in place.[15]

The various policy documents repeat the same messages for 14-19 education, for further education and higher education and all forms of adult learning. The key feature is the establishment of vocational progression routes alongside more traditional academic routes. Opening up of vocational routes is seen as essential if the targets to increase participation in higher education to the required levels are to be achieved. The mechanisms for securing these outcomes are mainly concerned with enhancing collaboration and partnership across all education levels - so higher education is to build further on the links many institutions have already established with schools and with local further education colleges to encourage entry to higher education, through strategies such as compacting.

Another target stressed in all of the policy documents is to increase interaction with local employers, through the involvement of employers in the design and delivery of programmes and through provision of more opportunities for learners at all ages to gain work experience and placements, and to develop enterprise skills. For students wishing to progress through vocational routes, the aim is to encourage progression through further education, particularly into Apprenticeships and Advanced Apprenticeships through to higher education. The proposals also aim to enhance local and regional strategies for progression and skills development through Regional Skills Partnerships and Regional Development Agencies, working with Sector Skills Councils. The proposed Lifelong Learning Networks and regional AimHigher initiatives are seen as important means to achieving these goals.

One other feature of the local/regional emphasis for progression is the growth of higher education in further education, particularly through Foundation degree expansion. UVAC has recently established a national awarding and validation service, NVC, in recognition of the need to generate further progression routes from the new vocational diplomas into higher education. Details of the service can be obtained through their website.[16] Foundation Degree Forward now has an important part to play in supporting the expansion of Foundation degrees regionally as well as through its national role. Surveys have indicated that one impediment for many potential entrants to higher education is their unwillingness, for financial or other reasons, to move out of their local area to study and a preference for part-time rather than full-time study. These pressures therefore require local partnerships between further and higher education to increase the opportunities for higher education to be accessed locally through further education colleges or local study centres, with opportunities to progress to local HEIs in the later stages.

What all of these developments have in common is the recognition that the commitment to lifelong learning leads to the blurring of boundaries between previously separate organisations or sectors. In turn this implies that it becomes essential to work in partnership with employers, agencies, professional bodies and educational institutions in relation to the curriculum, pedagogy and assessment of learning, including crucially, work-based learning. For HEIs, the implication is that they must work with employers, trades unions, professional bodies and individual learners in association with educational alliances involving other HEIs, further education colleges (FECs) and other bodies such as business links, Sector Skills Councils, lifelong learning partnerships, advice and guidance groups and whole networks of related activity.

Although there are several references in the policy documents to work experience to support and facilitate progression, and to increasing opportunities for those already in employment to progress through demonstration of learning that has been achieved in the workplace, this aspect of the policies still remains somewhat underdeveloped in current policy statements. However, central to both the 14-19 policy and the skills strategy is a commitment to extending the progression opportunities offered within the Apprenticeships family, so that the Apprenticeship approach is available from Young Apprenticeships for 14-16 years olds, through Apprenticeships (Level 2) and Advanced Apprenticeships (Level 3), to Level 4 higher education qualifications. The 2005 Skills White Paper promises a review of the current funding boundaries between FE and HE which have been identified as potential obstacles for the engagement of employers, SSCs and others. It is hoped that the outcomes of this review will reduce the funding barriers that can make it difficult to create closely-linked progression routes - from Apprenticeship and Advanced Apprenticeship through to Level 4 programmes based on the Apprenticeship model, to Foundation degrees, full Honours degrees and postgraduate courses. When the outcomes of the review are published, it is hoped that alongside the funding opportunities currently available, there will be additional inducements for higher education to engage more widely with work-based learning.

Other opportunities for funded development are available through the various policy initiatives covered by developments such as Pathfinders, Aim Higher, regional skills initiatives, the Higher Education Innovation Fund (HEIF), Centres for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETLs) and so forth. Proposals for various initiatives permeate policy documents and can provide an important source of funding to support innovative approaches to promoting progression. Although work-based learning is not singled out for particular attention, it is clear that proposals through the various funding streams that propose such developments will be particularly welcomed.

Policies for the 14-19 age group are directed towards: increasing the proportion of students entering higher education; gaining increased recognition for vocational alongside traditional academic routes; enhancing opportunities for work experience and placement, together with relevant key skills, in order to improve employability. The Government's proposals for 14-19 education were first set out

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[15] www.dfes.gov.uk/publications/skillsgettingon
[16] www.uvac.ac.uk

in a series of Green Papers and White Papers, culminating in January 2003 in the document *'14-19: Opportunity and Excellence'*.[17] In order to consider more radical change, the Government appointed a Working Group for 14-19 Reform, chaired by Sir Mike Tomlinson. The subsequent White Paper, *14-19 Education and Skills,* building on the work of the Tomlinson Report, was published in October 2004. As we now know, the Tomlinson recommendations for a Diploma framework which would fully integrate academic and vocational qualifications have not been fully adopted in the White Paper; instead modified proposals have been put forward, leading primarily to academic and vocational routes being regarded as separate but parallel strands. There are also growing concerns about how to secure the levels of involvement of employers which were recommended in the Report, particularly given the additional demands for employer involvement in the Sector Skills Councils, Regional Skills Partnerships, and in the design and delivery of both further and higher education programmes such as Foundation degrees.

Some of the work undertaken through the *14-19 Pathfinder* initiatives is a useful source of what can be achieved; reports can be accessed through the DfES website. For example, the Norfolk Rural Pathfinder appointed two Pathfinder business link co-ordinators (both ex industry) who each work in 2 schools one day a week. These co-ordinators played an important part in setting up 'Make a Difference' employer workshops which have led to a Leadership and Management Key Stage 5 course which has been jointly planned and delivered by local business and industry. The Norfolk model also introduced e-mentoring in a number of local schools, by two Norwich based organisations: Norwich Union and Eversheds. The Norfolk rural Pathfinder has thus made considerable strides in getting broad support from a wide range of employer and business organisations, linked to pupils of all abilities.

Much of what has been said about 14-19 education applies as much to the further education sector as it does to schools. Just as the boundaries between further and higher education are becoming more blurred, so too are those between schools and further education. The commitment of schools and sixth form colleges to providing vocational as well as academic programmes means increasingly that the sectors are working in partnership to deliver vocational programmes. The various reforms to further education that have been proposed are designed to reduce the number and range of vocational qualifications available, and to integrate them more firmly into a clear progression framework. The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) Framework for Achievement published in the autumn of 2004, proposes the establishment of an integrated qualifications and credit framework.[18] This is the first time in England that a national credit framework has been proposed, although these have been in place for some time in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. The 2005 Skills Strategy White Paper promises that as the QCA develops the proposed Framework for Achievement, ensuring that it supports credit accumulation and progression through to higher education (HE) will be a priority.

The Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) has been asked to provide advice on how to move to a national credit framework by 2010, in a way that aligns with other credit systems in the UK and with European developments, and which will ensure that the QCA and HE partners will work together to achieve the necessary alignments.

For higher education, another area that will need to be addressed is the development of agreements for alternative modes of entry into its programmes, especially in established professional areas. Doing so will provide financial benefits to HEIs through the enhanced funding available to support such developments. Some progress is already underway; for example, in addition to the (very high) entry requirements based on A-level grades specified for admission to the University of Nottingham's new School of Veterinary Medicine, an agreement is in place to take significant numbers of entrants from relevant vocational programmes, including a work-based learning element, at the University of Lincoln. The conclusions to be drawn from this is that there are significant financial advantages associated with engaging in these initiatives and developments.

In conclusion, although recognition of learning achieved in the workplace is increasingly cited as a desirable means of progression in and through higher education, there are few specific funding opportunities associated with it. However, there are many opportunities to bid for additional funding through special initiatives and third stream funding which may make it worthwhile for higher education to pursue these agendas. More importantly, HEIs may find it increasingly difficult to recruit students to their programmes, and may risk being penalised financially, if they are unable to make a satisfactory justification to the Office for Fair Access for their intention to charge variable fees. An increased allocation of funding is also promised for third stream activity through the Higher Education Innovation Fund in the April 2005 update of the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) five year strategy.

The skills agenda
Strategies for redressing skills shortages and skills gaps, by means of further and higher education provision are outlined in most recent reports but are particularly a feature of the *Skills Strategy: 21st Century Skills* launched in July 2003, *Skills: Getting on in business, getting on at work* in March 2005, and the White Paper on *The Future of Higher Education* in 2003. One of the ambitions of the Skills Strategy is to *ensure that employers have the right skills to support the success of their businesses and organisations, and individuals have the skills they need to be both employable and personally fulfilled.*

The 2003 Skills Strategy paper proposed the creation of a National Skills Alliance, to be co-ordinated by the DfES, comprising key social, economic and delivery partners who will work with the Government to drive forward its skills strategy. Members include the DfES, the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), Department for Work and Pensions, Confederation of British Industry, the Small

[17] For an overview of these developments see 'The 14-19 Gateway' at www.dfes.gov.uk/14-19
[18] www.qca.org.uk

Business Council, the Trades Union Congress (TUC) and the Learning and Skills Council (LSC). The first meeting was held in October 2003. The Skills Strategy also highlighted that there is a strong regional dimension to skills issues, and that responses at regional and local levels would be required to deal with these. It also proposed establishment of Regional Skills Partnerships aimed at integrating the work of the key agencies in each region, including the Regional Development Agencies, Small Business Service, Local Learning and Skills Councils, Jobcentre Plus and Skills for Business Network.

A key outcome of the Skills Strategy was the establishment of Sector Skills Councils with a remit to develop Sector Skills Agreements, the first four of which were developed by the end of 2004. These were produced by *CITB-Construction Skills, e-skills UK, SEMTA and Skillset*. Sector Skills Agreements are seen as the crucial mechanism to deliver:
- a reduction of skills gaps and shortages and anticipation of future needs
- an improvement in productivity, business and public services performance
- increased opportunities to develop and improve the productivity of everyone in the sector's workforce, including action to address inequality
- an improvement in the quality and relevance of public learning supply.

Reaction from parts of the higher education sector to the 21st Century Skills paper was initially one of disappointment that the paper appeared to focus only on skills up to Level 3 and to have little to say about Level 4+ learning. For example, Adrian Anderson in an article in *t magazine* expressed disappointment that the Skills Strategy had little to say about the contribution higher education could make to realising the aims of the Skills Strategy.[19] He raises the questions concerning how the Sector Skills Agreements might relate to the work of HEIs and to the development and delivery of Foundation degrees in particular. He also pointed out that it was not clear how it was proposed that higher education might work with the Learning and Skills Council, Sector Skills Councils, Small Business Service and Regional Development Agencies in the implementation of the Skills Strategy; similarly it was unclear what role higher education might have in the National Skills Alliance that is designed to link the key delivery agencies in a concerted drive to raise skills. Particular concerns exist that in the so called 'knowledge economy', with the exception of the expansion of Foundation degrees, there were very few proposals alluding to the development of vocational skills at Levels 4 and 5. Similarly it was noted that the paper failed to spell out the potential contribution of Sector Skills Councils in supporting the use of National Occupational Standards and in acknowledging the value of Graduate Apprenticeships. The overall feeling was that although the Skills Strategy emphasises the importance of progression from Level 3 vocational programmes to higher educational vocational degree programmes, the absence of higher education from the partnerships would do little to overcome the Level 3 and 4 divide.

The Skills Strategy Progress Report, published by the DfES at the end of 2004, indicated that considerable progress had been made since publication of the initial report, but still little was said about the involvement of higher education.[20] However this was redressed with the publication of *Skills: Getting on in business, getting on at work* published in March 24 2005. The Report recommends (and provides some funding for) increased provision at Level 3 and promises:

"To work with employers and Sector Skills Councils to create new Skills Academies at the apex of the skills system. Skills Academies will be employer-led and form a strong network in each sector linking college Centres of Vocational Excellence with universities, training providers and specialist schools. They will raise standards across the system by fostering innovation, spreading best practice, shaping the curriculum, and improving the professional development of teachers, lecturers and trainers. Skills Academies underline our determination to transform the quality and status of vocational education and training".

It is envisaged that this will be realized through strong partnerships in every area between the key public agencies, employers of all sizes in the private, public and voluntary sectors, schools, colleges, universities and training providers, trade unions and individuals, whether in work or seeking employment.

The focus of the latest White Paper is on progression to and investment in skills at level 3 and above, following the report *Skills in England 2004,* which showed that this is where many skills gaps lie. Since it is known that both individuals and employers benefit directly from improvements in skills at this level, employers will be expected to make a fair contribution to the cost of this training. At HE levels, brokers will work with Foundation Degree Forward, professional bodies and regional associations of universities and colleges to make the most of what higher education has to offer. A budget of an additional £40 million pounds will be made available to support training at level 3 and above, in addition to the increased expenditure already set out in the preceding budget.

The White Paper also emphasizes the importance of work-based learning, and proposes the development of flexible training packages, sourced from high quality providers and often delivered in the workplace. Employers will be encouraged to get further involved in the design and delivery of training in the workplace. Linked to this is increased commitment to extending apprenticeships into a broader range of sectors and employers and to extend progression opportunities through the Apprenticeship 'family' to a range of higher education programmes. Additional support will be given to all those with Level 3 qualifications to progress to higher education, including in the workplace, as part of a programme to strengthen alignment of higher education skills with employer needs. The paper notes that there is virtually no public funded support for higher education training in the workplace. This contrasts with the position in further education where training is supported in colleges, through work-based training providers and individual employers.

[19] A. Anderson, *Response to the Skills Strategy White Paper*, t magazine Sept 2003, www.tmag.co.uk/articles/Sept03Pg20.html
[20] A full copy of the report can be obtained on the DfES website at www.dfes.gov.uk/publications/

Through a limited number of demonstration projects, it is proposed to examine how employer-delivered HE training could be better supported and to clarify the respective roles of the LSC and HEFCE. The White Paper carries with it the hope that a review of the boundaries between higher and further education, will help to remove some of the obstacles faced by employers, SSCs and others, in providing progression routes.

The latest Skills Strategy paper also points to the success of Foundation degrees and intends to make further places available to supplement the 38,000 students currently enrolled. The Government is asking HEFCE to look into how it can stimulate more joint funding for these programmes with employers. It is proposed to strengthen the role of higher education within Regional Skills Partnerships, so that HEIs can work with Regional Development Agencies, professional bodies and others in identifying and supplying higher education level skills that best support achievement of regional economic strategies. In consequence, HEFCE funding decisions on the allocation of student places, especially for Foundation degrees, will take account of regional priorities. This also highlights the importance for higher education of steering the development of Foundation degrees in partnership with colleges of further education. Increasingly, HEIs are themselves delivering Foundation degrees but often as one provider alongside a number of FEC partners.

At last it would seem that the agenda for the expansion of higher education set out in *The Future of Higher Education* and the agendas established by the two Skills Strategy papers may be beginning to coalesce.

Other initiatives described in the paper which have particular relevance to higher education and the funding of work-based learning in particular, are a further planned increase (of 24 by 2008) to the 74 Centres of Excellence in Teaching and Learning that were announced in January 2005. Again CETLs will be expected to work with individual SSCs to develop the HE curriculum to meet the needs of employers for higher level professional skills, including problem-solving, research and innovation. It is also noted that, as the QCA further develops the Framework for Achievement, it must ensure that it supports credit accumulation and progression through to higher education. The government is seeking advice on moving to a national credit framework by 2010 to align with other frameworks in the UK and in Europe.

The proposals to increase investment by employers in training, particularly at levels 4 and 5, provide a further incentive for higher education to become engaged with work-based learning and particularly workplace development.

Knowledge creation and the application and manipulation of new knowledge in the workplace
In its Strategic Plan for 2003-8 (Revised April 2005), HEFCE reaffirm their commitment that, in relation to the global knowledge economy,

higher education has an increasingly significant contribution to make.[21] They argue that as global competition increases, so does the importance of ensuring that the knowledge that HEIs create and accumulate is applied for the economic and social benefit of all, and especially within their surrounding communities. The document therefore proposes that there:

"Should be closer collaboration between HEIs and a growing range of new and dynamic partnerships between them and potential users of their knowledge, expertise and facilities. We recognise the importance of these relationships and will reflect this in our funding. In this section we set out our plans to consolidate our existing support for HEIs' activity in this field into a permanent targeted third stream of funding. We will help them develop their contribution to the economy and their interaction with communities, envisaged in chapter 3 of the HE White Paper, chapter 5 of the 'Science and innovation investment framework 2004-14 and in the framework's Annex C (Government response to the Lambert Review of business-university collaboration.)"

The Lambert Review had previously concluded that although investment in third stream funding to support collaborative activity had already been successful in generating culture change and increasing the capacity and effectiveness of knowledge transfer between higher education and business, continued funding was critical to embedding it at this stage.[22] The revised Strategic Plan therefore proposes to provide a stable basis for sustainable third stream activity through its funding policies. The aspiration is that by 2008, HEFCE will have secured funding to support these activities at an aggregate annual level across the sector greater than was announced in the 2004 spending review.

It is recognised that the nature and form of enhanced collaborative activity that is proposed cannot easily be formalised, since it is not a matter of making knowledge available in convenient simple packages ready for immediate application. Instead it is about supporting and generating interaction between the creators, developers and users of knowledge, and may take the form of the exchange of people rather than just knowledge. Although the emphasis in the revised strategic plan is around the areas of knowledge creation and transfer, there is also reference to other benefits of enhanced interaction between higher education and business, for example in relation to the enhancement of graduate employability, to the growth in understanding within higher education of the needs of business and to building demand within business for the resources of higher education.

Many HEIs that are already very active in accrediting in-company programmes, or developing negotiated programmes within businesses and organisations, are already well aware of the additional benefits that can result from the increased interaction that these developments entail. The case studies describing the experience of APU and Middlesex University in accrediting in-company programmes and of developing work-based learning

[21] Enhancing the contribution of HE to the economy and society, www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/hefce/2005/05
[22] The Lambert Review of Business-University Collaboration, Final Report - December 2003, www.lambertreview.org.uk

programmes in partnership with businesses and organisations illustrate how the interaction that these programmes require lead to a multitude of beneficial outcomes for both, which could not have been foreseen at the outcome.

The revised HEFCE Strategic Plan recognises that such activities rely on different capabilities within individual HEIs and expresses its intention to continue to support institutions in selecting and developing activities appropriate to the particular emphasis of their individual missions. The message though is unmistakable: this kind of activity will be encouraged and the commitment of HEIs to engage in these activities will be supported and rewarded.

In conclusion

Part 1 of this guide has attempted to address the question of why higher education should engage with work-based learning by

outlining both the economic drivers which impact on the relationship between business and higher education and by showing how, by embracing the change agendas set out in successive policy statements and initiatives, higher education can gain beneficial returns.

In these policy statements, reference is made on numerous occasions to the fact that many employers believe that relevant skills and knowledge are best acquired on the job. As this extends more and more to higher level skills, it becomes even more important for HEIs to become engaged with the various agencies that are involved, particularly at the regional level, in order to identify skills needs and to offer programmes and activities which address these needs.

Part 2: What is work-based learning and how can it be integrated into higher education?

What is work-based learning?

A number of concepts are particularly important in helping us to understand work-based learning in higher education. For Reeve and Gallacher four concepts are regarded as particularly important: [23]
1. Partnership
2. Flexibility
3. Relevance
4. Accreditation.

Partnership

It was noted in the discussion of the policy agenda, that partnership is increasingly regarded as key to the development of the notion of lifelong learning, in which boundaries between previously separate organisations or sectors become blurred. This emphasises the importance for higher education institutions (HEIs) of developing partnerships with employers and other organisations and recognising the growing number of partners who may be involved in negotiating the structure and content of higher education programmes. The 2005 Skills Strategy White Paper emphasises the importance of partnerships by increasing the involvement of the Sector Skills Councils and Regional Skills Partnerships in working with higher and further education to deliver the higher level skills needed to promote regional economic priorities. It is suggested that developments of this kind will involve an element of loss of control for HEIs, but is regarded as an important element of change with which they must come to terms.

The types of partnerships needed vary according to the context of work-based learning. The UVAC publication 'Fit for Purpose'

contains a useful section on forging successful partnerships in the context of incorporating National Occupational Standards and NVQs into higher education programmes.[24] As the Sector Skills Councils and Regional Skills Partnerships come to play an even greater part in determining the curriculum, pedagogy and assessment of higher education, and as funding is increasingly steered by regional priorities, a partnership approach to developing work-based learning programmes will assume even greater importance.

The need for partnerships has been further underscored by the consortium approach favoured for Foundation degree development. *Forward*, the Journal of Foundation Degree Forward (fdf) contains useful guidance on forging and building successful partnerships. The Journal can be accessed through the fdf website at: www.fdf.ac.uk.

Both of these publications provide signposts to additional resources that can provide support for partnership activity, including:
- The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education(QAA), Code of Practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education, Section 2: *Collaborative provision and flexible and distributed learning (including e-learning)*, September 2004. This is available on the QAA website at: www.qaa.ac.uk/public/cop/codesof practice.htm
- The Council of Validating Universities (CVU) has complemented the QAA code of practice with a handbook for practitioners which gives advice and guidance on creating robust procedures for good practice for organisations in partnerships. It is available on their website at: www.cvu.ac.uk/guidance/f.html

[23] Gallacher, J. and Reeve, F. (2002) *Work-based Learning: the implications for higher education and for supporting informal learning in the workplace*. Milton Keynes: Open University. Available at www.open.ac.uk/lifelong-learning. A review of this and other relevant research can be found in the CPD magazine 'Spotlight' published by PARN, The Professional Associations' Research Network, with funding from the DfES at www.parn.org.uk/cpd/spotlight/sp27.pdf. Since August 2004 the magazine has become available only to subscribers but back numbers are still available online.

[24] Roodhouse, S. and Hemsworth, D. (2004). *Fit for Purpose: The use of National Occupational Standards in higher education to meet the needs of employment*. Bolton: University Vocational Awards Council.

- The Higher Education Funding Council for England, (2000) Report 00/54, *Higher education in further education colleges: Indirectly funded partnerships; codes of practice for franchise and consortia arrangements*. This is available on the HEFCE website at:
www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/hefce/2000/0054/0054.doc.

Examples of documentation to support partnership agreements are available for consultation on the HEFCE website, including:
- agreement for the collaborative provision of academic courses
- sample contract: memorandum of co-operation - franchise model
- model memorandum of co-operation for a franchised course
- library and learning resources provision for franchised and other collaborative provision.

These documents can be found at:
www.hefce.ac.uk/learning/heinfe/indfund/.

Some established Foundation degree partnerships have published partnership packs and contractual documentation for their partnership agreements. One example is Foundation4success, co-ordinated through Leeds Metropolitan University, which can be accessed via their website at:
www.lmu.ac.uk/Foundation4success/institutions/institutions_key.htm.

Articles and reports in UVAC documents are also very useful here. For example, UVAC's 2002 conference proceedings include a presentation by Val Butcher of the (then) LTSN Generic Centre entitled *Workable Higher Education/Business Consortia - the Higher Education perspective*, available at: www.uvac.ac.uk.

Other links and examples of good practice can be found on the fdf website, www.fdf.ac.uk.

There is general agreement that forging and maintaining successful partnerships is not an easy matter. In a review of partnerships between employers and HEIs, Reeve and Gallacher look specifically at how the idea of 'partnership' has come to be seen as a central aspect of work-based learning and conclude that the emphasis on partnership has been highly problematic.[25] They focus on three areas of concern: firstly, the limited evidence that employers wish to engage in these sorts of relationships with universities; secondly, the problems arising from the different cultures of the potential partners, particularly different understandings of 'learning' and 'knowledge'; thirdly, the emergence of the quality assurance agenda within higher education, which may reducing the influence of employers. The authors express an overriding concern that the insistence on partnership working may well be hindering the more widespread development of work-based learning in higher education.

Reeve and Gallacher's work, however, was completed before the publication of the latest Skills White Paper which has given far more substance to partnerships, particularly in the regional context. Indications are that the heightened involvement of HEIs in regional partnerships, brokered by the Sector Skills Councils and Regional Skills Partnerships, might go some way to overcoming some of the difficulties encountered. For example, in January 2005, the Sector Skills Councils shared an agenda with Foundation Degree Forward explicitly for the purpose of exploring ways of developing new learning relationships. A significant number of action points emerged from the discussions at the seminar to be taken forward by employers, HE providers and SSCs respectively. The full list of action points can be obtained from *Forward*, the Journal of Foundation Degree Forward, in an article by Alan Hearsum, Associate Director, Employer Engagement at Foundation Degree Forward in Volume 4, March 2005. The Journal can be accessed through the fdf website at: www.fdf.ac.uk.

Both Foundation Degree Forward and UVAC have established services to support the validation and quality assurance of Foundation degrees, and offer useful guidance on successful partnership working. UVAC have recently launched a new validation body, NVC; details can be found on their website at: www.uvac.ac.uk. The official launch of NVC took place at the same time as the announcement that UVAC have signed a three-year contract with Edexcel to validate BTEC Foundation degrees. Professor David Melville, chair of UVAC, commented that:

"UVAC believes that quality higher vocational learning and training supplied by higher education institutions, professional bodies, training providers and, where appropriate, employers should enjoy the same status as higher academic study. Now at last, there is a flexible mechanism in place through NVC to validate such programmes and provide them with the recognition they deserve."

Flexibility
Some would argue that flexibility has become an overused concept, as it is applied variously to describe organisational structures, to support the demand for multi-skilling and up-skilling, and the development of flexible workers (who are to be self-motivating and self-regulating).[26] In this landscape of flexibility, flexible structures, modes and contents of learning come to be regarded as the mechanism for supporting organisations and workers.

Exactly what is meant by flexible learning can be difficult to pin down; it is more often described in terms of what it is not, rather than what it is. It is therefore differentiated from earlier approaches to training and 'competency-based' approaches, and similarly is distinguished from Foundational or discipline based learning. Flexible learning has come to be associated with the concept of 'capacity building', incorporating notions of investment in social and human capital, flexible and innovative problem solving and

[25] F Reeve and J Gallacher (2005), *Employer - university 'partnerships': a key problem for work-based learning programmes?,* Journal of Education and Work, Vol 18 (4) pp221-235 due to be published in June 2005.

[26] Garrick, J. and Usher, R. (2000) *Flexible Learning, Contemporary Work and Enterprising Selves* in Electronic Journal of Sociology (2000). www.sociology.org/content/vol005.001/garrick-usher.html

reciprocal transfer of knowledge between structures. Capacity building, in turn, is linked to individual 'capability' and with the belief that employees have to reconceptualise not only their tasks and roles, but also themselves - their identify and subjectivity. Capacity building is thus about developing a workforce of 'enterprising selves' with capabilities that enable them to successfully engage with the unpredictability of the market-place.

Work-based learning rather than more conventional 'formal' education driven by pre-set curricula, is regarded as essential to the drive towards greater flexibility. Work-based learning satisfies the criteria for flexible learning by being flexible in terms of time, place and mode of learning. It transforms the role of higher education into one of facilitating and supporting learning, rather than delivering pre-specified programmes of study. In order to effectively provide this support, when and where it is needed, flexible learning has come to be associated with e-learning and distance learning and with negotiated learning outcomes.

All of the developments described in the case studies in Part 3 illustrate approaches to flexible learning; however, the *Learndirect* Learning through Work (LtW) initiative described in case study 4, explicitly addresses the version of the flexibility agenda presented here, by using online learning support. Similarly, case study 6 illustrates flexible learning delivery in the form of distance learning support for work-based learners.

With respect to content, an important theme has been the development of core/transferable skills for flexible workers. The Support 4 Learning website, supported through HERO funding, contains an impressive range of materials to support adult and community learning. The Education section of its website has a higher education area with many learning resources for students and for staff supporting them. The site, which can be accessed at: www.support4learning.org.uk/education/adult.htm, also has links to many other organisations that support flexible and work-based learning. It is particularly useful with respect to reflective learning approaches, offering resources on keeping a journal, reflective writing, understanding learning styles and much more. The Learning and Teaching Support Network (LTSN) Generic Centre, now part of the Higher Education Academy, also covers similar ground through its support for the employability agenda, which is discussed in some detail later in this section.

Relevance

The need for relevance is frequently used to justify changes to the curriculum, pedagogy and relationships, and particularly to support the growth in work-based learning. It is not clear, however, how relevance is defined and determined. The 2005 Skills Strategy paper has attempted to refine the criteria for judging relevance by stressing the involvement of employers through Sector Skills Councils and Regional Skills Partnerships. The role of the Sector Skills Councils in incorporating relevant knowledge and skills by means of National Occupational Standards and Sector Agreements is discussed in some detail later in this section.

Relevant knowledge is also increasingly defined as knowledge which is characterised by being produced in the context of application, as distinct from traditional discipline based knowledge. As noted previously this challenges the monopoly of higher education in knowledge creation and introduces a number of other agencies into the process. Again, this will be discussed in more detail later in this section.

Accreditation

Accreditation refers to the process of recognising, and thus giving value to, a wide range of learning experiences, many of which have previously not been recognised or deemed worthy of credit within higher education. Within this context, it is argued that all forms and modes of learning may be regarded as having equal value to traditional academic learning, and should receive recognition in the form of equal credit.

Awarding credit for learning neatly combines the two different senses of accreditation: giving learning a credit value is a means of giving recognition to learning achievements. However, the ability to award credit for learning achieved in the workplace, rests on particular approaches to the curriculum in which learning is defined in terms of sets of learning outcomes, grouped in terms of units or modules, and at an identified level and volume. The credit consortia in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland have produced very useful materials to support credit practice in the UK and continue to provide workshops, seminars and conferences to spread and enhance good practice in this area.

Accreditation of in-company programmes is a growing area of activity in higher education and is likely to increase in volume and importance over the next few years. In addition to the income that HEIs can generate through this activity, accreditation plays to the traditional strengths of higher education in evaluating the outcomes of learning - something which employers appear to be less good at. Activities associated with the accreditation process also require continuing interaction between HEIs and other organisations, which as can be seen from case study 6 can expand into other areas of collaborative activity that may not have been anticipated at the outset.

HEIs have developed a number of devices to 'capture' work-based learning in order to integrate it into the curriculum. For example, as described in case study 1 one such device is to create 'shell' work experience modules, that have some generic outcomes but also require customisation, either by negotiation with individual learners or by academic staff.

Definitions of work-based learning

Having looked at some of the relevant concepts and discourses surrounding and underpinning work-based learning, it is possible to begin to pull this together to provide definitions of work-based learning and associated practices.

Most providers of programmes that include at least an element of work-based learning make a distinction between: [27]

- learning *at* work   – in the workplace
- learning *through* work   – learning while working
- learning *for* work   – doing new or existing things better
- learning *from* work   – using the experience of work

Some of the *characteristics* of work-based learning have been described by Learndirect for their *Learning through Work* programme as:

- **Task-related** - Learning frequently arises from the performance of tasks in the workplace
- **Problem-based** or **Issue-led** - Much work-based learning is associated with tackling problems of production, design or management. Some work-based problems are very complex, involving state-of-the-art techniques at the frontiers of knowledge
- **Innovative** - New techniques or approaches are constantly being devised to meet new situations, creating many opportunities for learning and providing experience of managing change
- **Both strategic and just in time** - Many people have to think and operate at both levels: strategic in terms of working towards medium to long term goals; just in time in terms of learning what is necessary for tomorrow
- **Autonomously-managed and self-regulated** - Learning often takes place without direct instruction or formal tuition. Learners are expected to take responsibility for ensuring that they learn from their work activities
- **Self-motivated** - Many people are motivated to achieve beyond basic expectations
- **Team-based** - Tackling problems in the workplace requires effective co-operation between people with different roles and expertise, leading to the development of a range of skills and personal qualities as well as a sharing of expertise
- **Concerned with enhancing personal performance** - Constant updating and upgrading of expertise is now a normal part of most peoples' work
- **Concerned with improving the performance of a business, enterprise or organisation**.

This list of characteristics echoes previous work undertaken, amongst others, by researchers at the University of Leeds.[28] It should be noted that lists such as this tend to be idealisations, creating a category which may never exist in the real world. The list tends to be a composite of characteristics rather than a description of what work-based learning actually is. As can be seen from the case studies in Part 3 of the guide, the work-based learning that occurs in specific higher education programmes may display some of these characteristics, but is unlikely to display them all.

Types of work-based learning programmes

The case studies provide an indication of the very wide range of programmes in higher education that include at least some work-based learning (WBL). These vary in the scope of the work-based learning element from a single module or unit to entire awards. The structure of the WBL curriculum is therefore affected significantly according to whether or not the WBL element is a major or minor part of the whole programme. Another factor that affects the approach to curriculum design is the extent to which the content primarily relates to an existing HEI subject area, is defined in terms of external standards, or relates primarily to work roles or organisational objectives. A third variable is whether or not work-based learning is primarily concerned with preparation for work or whether it is designed for people in employment.

Figure 1 demonstrates that by plotting these variables it becomes possible to locate programmes on a map of work-based learning. Although, the majority of WBL programmes do not fit neatly into one location, by plotting them in this way it is possible to identify some key requirements which need to be taken into account. Some Foundation degree programmes, for example, are completed primarily through WBL; others satisfy the minimum requirements of some work placement or work experience but this may amount to less than a quarter of the total programme credits. Yet other Foundation degrees incorporate demonstration of performance to National Occupational Standards largely in the workplace. Similarly 'Dual Accreditation' programmes, may be very tightly specified or provide a looser framework approach. The case studies provide examples of all manner of combinations; however, although the mapping process cannot be precise because of the range of variation within any one type of programme, it remains useful to have an overview of their position on the map of work-based learning.

[27] For example see the Ufi Learndirect *Learning through Work Handbook*.
[28] *Researching Work and learning: A first international conference* (1999). University of Leeds.

Work-based learning programmes in HE

WBL as major part		
NVQ Graduate Apprenticeships Professional Qualifying Programmes Dual Accreditation Programmes Sandwich Degrees Foundation Degrees		Knowledge Transfer Partnerships Accredited In-company programmes Cohort negotiated WBL Programmes Individually Negotiated WBL Programmes CPD Short courses
Employability skills, progress files, PDP APEL/AEL/Recognition of Experiential Learning Work Experience 'taster' modules Independent Study WBL modules		
Curriculum determined by HEI	Curriculum defined by external standards (NOS, Professional Bodies, SSCs)	Curriculum determined by workplace goals and objectives

WBL as minor part

Curriculum Prescribed   Curriculum Negotiated

How can work-based learning be integrated into different types of programme?

Figure 1 indicates that work-based learning activity in higher education programmes can be classified into three main categories:

1. **Employability**: the bottom section of the diagram indicates work-based learning that is primarily associated with taking forward the 'employability' agenda. Primarily, but not exclusively, this is directed at undergraduate learners and provides strategies for preparing people for work and lifelong learning

2. **Skills development**: the top left hand section of the diagram identifies work-based learning programmes designed to develop specific skills in relation to performance standards; these programmes focus on the development of performance in specific skills and competencies, usually in relation to externally prescribed standards or benchmarks

3. **Knowledge recognition, creation and development in the workplace**: the top right hand section of Figure 1 describes programmes in which the outcomes of work-based learning are primarily defined either by individual learners or by organisations for the purpose of workforce development.

Many of the features of a work-based learning curriculum may be found in any of the types of work-based learning identified here; for the purpose of identifying 'Good Practice' this guide has adopted the approach of featuring these elements in the category where it is particularly significant or pervasive.

Employability

Although the employability agenda is primarily directed towards preparing people for employment who are not yet in work, employability 'tools' can equally be deployed to support people who need to develop themselves in order to remain in employment and to engage in lifelong learning. Employability is therefore closely associated with personal development planning (PDP) and, for learners not yet in employment, with work experience. A holistic approach to employability therefore involves integrating knowledge from work experience, the development of technical and interactive skills, and engaging in personal development planning for lifelong learning.

Universities UK identify three key aspects of employability:
- development of employability attributes
- development of self-promotional and career management skills
- a willingness to learn and to reflect on learning.

Liverpool John Moores University has produced a Learning Support Guide to Employability which includes a 'check list' of employability requirements based on the work undertaken by Yorke and Knight on behalf of the Higher Education Academy. [29] [30] These are organised in three categories:
1. Personal qualities
2. Core skills
3. Process skills.

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[29] cwis.livjm.ac.uk/lid/leasupport/17.htm
[30] Yorke, M and Knight, P. (2004) *Embedding Employability into the Curriculum*. York: HE Academy.

A. Personal qualities

- **Malleable self-theory**: belief that attributes [eg. intelligence] are not fixed and can be developed
- **Self-awareness**: awareness of own strengths and weaknesses, aims and values
- **Self-confidence**: confidence in dealing with the challenges that employment and life throw up
- Independence: ability to work without supervision
- **Emotional intelligence**: sensitivity to others' emotions and the effects that they can have
- **Adaptability**: ability to respond positively to changing circumstances and new challenges
- **Stress tolerance**: ability to retain effectiveness under pressure
- **Initiative**: ability to take action unprompted
- **Willingness to learn**: commitment to ongoing learning to meet the needs of employment and life
- **Reflectiveness**: the disposition to reflect evaluatively on the performance of oneself and others

B. Core skills

- **Reading effectiveness**: the recognition and retention of key points
- **Numeracy**: ability to use numbers at an appropriate level of accuracy
- **Creativity**: ability to be original or inventive and to apply lateral thinking
- **Listening**: focused attention in which key points are recognised
- **Written communication**: clear reports, letters etc written specifically for the reader
- **Oral presentations**: clear and confident presentation of information to a group [also 21, 35]
- **Explaining**: orally and in writing [see also 20, 35]
- **Global awareness**: in terms of both cultures and economics

C. Process skills

- **Computer literacy**: ability to use a range of software
- **Commercial awareness**: operating with an understanding of business issues and priorities
- **Political sensitivity**: appreciates how organisations actually work and acts accordingly
- **Ability to work cross-culturally**: both within and beyond the UK
- **Ethical sensitivity**: appreciates ethical aspects of employment and acts accordingly
- **Prioritising**: ability to rank tasks according to importance
- **Planning**: setting of achievable goals and structuring action
- **Applying subject understanding**: use of disciplinary understanding from the HE programme
- **Acting morally**: has a moral code and acts accordingly
- **Coping with complexity**: ability to handle ambiguous and complex situations
- **Problem solving**: selection and use of appropriate methods to find solutions
- **Influencing**: convincing others of the validity of one's point of view

- **Arguing for and/or justifying a point of view or a course of action** [see also 20, 21, 34]
- **Resolving conflict**: both intra-personally and in relationships with others
- **Decision making**: choice of the best option from a range of alternatives
- **Negotiating**: discussion to achieve mutually satisfactory resolution of contentious issues
- **Team work**: can work constructively with others on a common task

Note: The acquisition of disciplinary understanding and skills is assumed: note that their *application* is listed above.

These are published in a booklet produced by the Learning Development Unit at Liverpool John Moores University, supported by HEFCE Teaching Quality Enhancement funding and Human Resource Strategy funding. Further details and information can be obtained from: learningdevelopment@livjm.ac.uk.

Another overview of employability that contains useful resources can be found in the report produced in 2002 by Universities UK and the National Council for Work Experience entitled *Enhancing Employability, Recognising Diversity*. The report can be downloaded from the Universities UK website or the Graduate Prospects website at: www.UniversitiesUK.ac.uk/employability or: www.prospects.csu.ac.uk respectively. There are many links from these web pages to other relevant organisations and sites.

There is now a considerable bank of resources available within specific institutions as they work towards delivering on the employability agenda. Although many of these resources have been designed primarily to support undergraduate students in preparation for work, a lot of the material is equally relevant to the continuing development needs of people in work. Most HEIs now have institutional strategies for enhancing the employability of their students, in many cases linked to preparation for the introduction of Progress Files in 2006.

Some HEIs address the employability agenda by providing free-standing modules or units, which are available to all students on either an optional or compulsory basis and are often supported by central Careers or Academic Guidance staff. These freestanding elements may take the form of credit-based modules, in which case they must be assessed, or they may simply provide support and resources, leaving it up to the student whether they wish to produce a portfolio, or similar device, to demonstrate their achievements. Other HEIs have adopted a distributed or embedded model, requiring academic staff to map the development of employability attributes into their programmes. Where this is the case, on completion of their award students will automatically have demonstrated that they have the skills and attributes they need for employment as these will have been assessed as part of the standard assessment of the module. In practice, many institutions have a hybrid approach: there may be generic guides to PDP, Reflective Learning, Graduate Skills, Key Skills and so forth, which can either be used directly by students themselves or be used and customised by academic staff to suit their programme areas.

Often online resources and even online tutorial support will be available; central guidance and careers staff may also be available to provide additional support to students or academic departments.

Generic resources for use by both students and staff are now widely available. The LTSN Generic Centre - now part of the HE Academy - has amassed a considerable volume of useful material which can be accessed through the HE Academy website.[31] The *Learning and Employability* series and materials developed by ESECT (Enhancing Student Employability Project Team) are particularly useful.[32] [33] Both teams have produced a range of resources that have been developed in partnership with academic colleagues and sector organisations. By following relevant links from the Academy website, which has an online directory of employability resources, it is possible to order hard copies or download electronic copies of tools and resources.

ESECT Papers available from the Higher Education Academy at: www.heacademy.ac.uk/1433.htm include the following guides, of which the first two are particularly relevant in the work-based learning context:

Guides available from February 2004 onwards:
- work-based learning and employability
- pedagogy for employability
- employability in higher education: what it is, what it is not
- employability: judging and communicating achievements
- embedding employability into the curriculum
- reflection and employability
- widening participation and employability
- entrepreneurship and higher education: an employability perspective.

Related sites which can be accessed from the Academy web pages provide useful resources for those delivering the employability agenda through work-based learning approaches. The sites dedicated to *problem based learning* and *enquiry based learning* are particularly useful.

The National Council for Work Experience (NCWE) also has useful resources; it can be accessed at: www.work-experience.org. The Council has produced a leaflet for students entitled *'Work Experience - Why Bother?'* which identifies the benefits of work experience, describes types of work experience, and suggests strategies for enhancing employability. The leaflet includes comments from students who have undertaken work experience and provides information about getting started. The Council also provides information and support for employers; the website has a link to the University of Nottingham's *'Red Hot Talent SME Toolkit'* which provides guidance to SMEs thinking about taking a student on work experience and highlights the benefits that can accrue to all parties. The NCWE website also has links to NASES - the National Association for Student Employment Services. The NASES national office is based in the Centre for Lifelong Learning at the University of

Liverpool and can be accessed online at: www.nases.org.uk. NASES is the national representative body for practitioners from all styles of job shops, including those in students' unions, careers services and personnel offices; the site provides a useful overview of student employment

A number of individual HEIs have produced materials which they have made available to others through their websites. For example, Glasgow Caledonian University has an employability website at: www.gla.ac.uk/ employability/staff/staff_index.htm. This website and many others can also be accessed through the Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services (AGCAS) discussion forum on employability issues at: www.agcas.org.uk/phpBB2. This provides some really useful material, including case studies from institutions that have embedded work experience, PDP and Key Skills across the curriculum. There is discussion on the website of the difficulties experienced by some students in managing the assessment load associated with work experience. These students reported that although they wanted to undertake work experience and have valued the experience, they found it difficult to manage the assessment load entailed in gaining credit for it - which is a serious problem if they then fall short of the total credit required for their award.

Liverpool John Moores Learning Development Unit has a *Learning and Teaching Web* which has sections on how to produce a *Learning Support Guide* for students undertaking work experience and which contains a useful list of resources and contacts. This is available at: cwis.livjm.ac.uk/lid/ltweb/ldu_13/0000.htm. The site contains sections on:
- understanding learning
- curriculum design
- learner support and employability
- approaches to learning
- technology in learning
- assessment.

There is also a link to their CETL website - the Centre for Leadership and Professional Learning.

The publication *Exchange Magazine* is available at the website address: www.exchange.ac.uk or alternatively through the HE Academy website, and can also be obtained in printed format. It provides a forum for the exchange of ideas about teaching and learning in higher education. Issue 2 of the magazine focused on employability and work-based/related learning. Other issues also carry relevant articles.

Issue 2 contents included:
- *What is employability and how can it be achieved?* A collection from Joanne Allison, Colin Chisolm and Joanne Bullock
- *Defining and addressing employability: a fresh approach* by Peter T Knight and Mantz Yorke

[31] www.heacademy.ac.uk
[32] www.heacademy.ac.uk/1433.htm
[33] www.heacademy.ac.uk/866.htm

- *The undergraduate and term-time work.* A collection from Dr John J Wilson, John O'Hara and Ronwen Emerson with John Joliffe
- *The undergraduate experience of university life now includes term-time employment* by Susan Curtis
- *Mentoring - an approach to supporting both staff and students.* A collection from Jill Allen and Dr Ann Morton
- *Think through the implications of work-based learning* by Margaret Noble, Barbara Paulucy and Mick Healey.

Personal development planning

Personal development planning is becoming a pivotal element of all work-based learning in higher education. In the context of Skills Development programmes, PDP is the mechanism whereby learners plan to develop and demonstrate achievement of National Occupational Standards or other learning outcomes usually against criteria derived from benchmark statements. In the context of negotiated programmes, PDP is used to identify progress towards achievement of agreed outcomes and to plan for further personal or professional development, and in the context of employability it is used to record achievement of knowledge, understanding and skills relevant to the workplace.

The Quality Assurance Agency describes personal development planning as 'a structured and supported process undertaken by an individual to reflect upon their own learning, performance and/or achievement and to plan for their personal, educational and career development.'[34] As such, PDP performs an important function in all types of work-based learning, but is particularly associated with the employability agenda and with lifelong learning.

The *QAA Guidelines for HE Progress Files* indicates that a Personal Development Plan should form part of every Progress file, alongside a Transcript and a Personal Development Record. The guidelines suggest that the primary objective for personal development planning is to improve the capacity of individuals to understand what and how they are learning and to review, plan and take responsibility for their own learning. As a result of the process, students are expected to become more effective, self-directed learners, to better understand their own learning and to be able to relate their learning to a wider context. It is also anticipated that they will be better able to articulate their personal goals, evaluate their progress towards their achievement, and develop a positive commitment to lifelong learning. Reflective and planning skills are considered to be the backbone of this approach and an essential basis for knowing how to learn in different contexts. For work-based learners, PDP is particularly relevant as it helps to develop their ability to identify learning achievements wherever and however these may have occurred.

Most institutional strategies for PDP are grounded in the forms of documentation, skills and capabilities that have been central to the assessment of prior and current experiential learning, particularly experiential learning in the work place. They are also rooted in the approaches of the Recording Achievement Movement. During the development phase of Progress Files (until 2005) institutions that have been involved in the Academic Review process have been required to signal in their self-evaluation documents the progress they are making towards creating opportunities for PDP. Thereafter, the requirement on institutions to demonstrate what strategies they have in place will become stronger.

The QAA Guidelines for Progress Files can be downloaded from: www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/progressFiles/guidelines/progfile2001.pdf. They include sections on developing institutional policies for PDP and developing frameworks to support practitioners. Appendix 2B to the guidelines describe a range of approaches to PDP as a tool for lifelong learning and employability. Appendix 4 identifies other sources of guidance and support for the development of Progress Files and PDP and is reproduced overleaf. The QAA have indicated that this information will be updated from time to time and it is worth looking out for these by checking the website from time to time.

Further useful resources are available from the Scottish QAA at: www.enhancementthemes.ac.uk. One of the themes for 2004-5 themes is employability and the website contains a link to the Personal Development Planning in Higher Education (Scotland) Network at: www.eds.napier.ac.uk/PDP. At the time of writing, this website was still under construction but already contains information for students, for staff, for decision makers and for employers. The Network takes the line that PDP complements the formal curriculum by offering a framework for:

- reflection
- independent learning
- motivation for learning
- self analysis, self perception, self knowledge
- recognition of transferable skills
- enhanced employability
- CV preparation
- learning from extra-curricular activities.

The Scottish QAA website also contains a number of other relevant sources and links to support work-based learning; for example the other current theme is flexible delivery.

Many of the recently announced CETLs also focus on employability and PDP and will over time provide further resources that will be openly available. A full list of the CETLs can be found at: www.hefce.ac.uk/learning/tinits/cetl/final. A brief description of CETLs that are particularly relevant to work-based learning developments can be found in Part 4 of this guide.

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[34] QAA (2001): *Guidelines for HE Progress Files*.
These are available at: www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/progressFiles/guidelines/progfile2001.pdf

QAA Guidelines for Progress Files - Appendix 4: important sources of guidance and support for the HE Progress File

Centre for Recording Achievement For nearly a decade the CRA has been involved in promoting good practice and researching practice in the activities, processes and recording systems that underlie PDP. The Centre organises regular seminars and conferences, supports a range of staff development work, provides specialist advice and services to HEIs, and produces a range of publications and research reports to inform institutional policies. *Contact - Rob Ward, Centre for Recording Achievement, 39 Bridgeman Terrace, Wigan, WN1 1TT. Tel: 01942-826761; Fax: 01942-8259222. Email: enquiries@recordingachievement.org. Website: www.recordingachievement.org*

Personal Development Planning in Higher Education (Scotland) Network. PDPHES is involved in promoting good practice in the activities, processes and recording systems that underlie PDP. It organises regular seminars and conferences, supports a range of staff development work, provides specialist advice and services to HEIs, and produces a range of publications and information to inform institutional policies. *Contact - Lorraine Stefani (Chair), University of Strathclyde. Tel: 0141 552 4400. Email: l.stefani@strath.ac.uk. Website: www.strath.ac.uk*

Personal and Academic Development for Students in Higher Education. The PADSHE project led by the University of Nottingham involves a consortium of seven institutions that have adopted Personal Academic Records (PARS). PADSHE has been at the leading edge in understanding how personal development planning can be linked to personal tutor systems to improve student learning. *Contact - Dr Angela Smallwood, Department of English Studies, University of Nottingham, University Park, Nottingham, NG7 2RD.Tel: 0115 951 5913. Email: angela.smallwoood@nottingham.ac.uk. Website: http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/padshe*

Integrated Personal and Academic Development Programmes within the Curriculum. PADPs. This DfEE funded project at the University of Manchester has also used the PADSHE concept to develop personal development planning. The particular focus of the project has been on helping staff to develop their practice. *Contact - Ms Catherine O'Connell Project Manager. Tel: 0161 275 3399. Email: catherine.oconnell@man.ac.uk*
Website to help students become more aware of the opportunities for personal development: www.umu.man.ac.uk
Website to help students make the most of their personal and academic skill development opportunities: www.man.ac.uk/EHE/Stud_Ent/keys.htm

Liverpool Universal Student Interactive Database. LUSID is a web-based personal development planner. The system has four areas of activity for recording and reflection; auditing skills; action planning and reporting. Contact - LUSID Project Coordinator, Centre for Careers and Academic Practice, University of Liverpool, Student Services Centre, 150 Mount Pleasant, Liverpool, L69 3GD. Email: lusidinfo@ liv.ac.uk. Tel: 0151 794 4629. Website: lusid.liv.ac.uk National Union of Students. Students have a key role to play in promoting PDP. The NUS through its representatives and focus groups contributed to the development of PDP policy. The NUS is itself promoting PDP through its National Student Learning Programme. This aims to develop and evidence key skills through Student Union Officer or student representative work. *Contact - NSLP Co-ordinator, National Union of Students, Nelson Mandela House, 461 Holloway Rd., London N7 6LJ.*

CETLs that are particularly relevant to the themes of PDP and employability include the following:
- **University of Luton**: BRIDGES - *Supporting Personal Career and Professional Development* across all areas of the undergraduate curriculum.
- **Sheffield Hallam University**: *Enhancing, Embedding and Integrating Employability*. E3I, www.shu.ac.uk. Embedding employability features in undergraduate programmes.
- **University of Westminster**: www.wmin.ac.uk.cetl. Centre for Professional Learning in the Workplace. Subject areas involved include Biosciences, Health and Media, Art and Design. The focus is on preparation for learning designed, supported and assessed with strong employer and professional body input for professional development. Staff will be supported by a PG Cert. in Work-based Tutoring and students will be supported to develop reflective practices. The aim is to incorporate approach across the university and extend it to the wider HE community.
- **University of Surrey**: portal.surrey.ac.uk/info services/sceptre. Development of a Centre for Excellence in Professional Training and Education to enhance learning experience of students on professional placement using an enquiry-based approach. The work will involve development of e-learning materials to support skills development and PDP.

Skills development programmes

The second category of work-based learning programmes are those designed primarily for the purpose of skills development and demonstration of workplace competence. Traditionally, these programmes have been those within higher education most firmly associated with work-based learning, since they typically include programmes with a required placement element, including professional qualifying programmes, sandwich degrees and more recently Graduate Apprenticeships and Foundation degrees. Many of these programmes already require demonstration of competence to National Occupational Standards or S/NVQs - a requirement set to increase further, in England at least, as the Skills Strategy shifts emphasis to the development of skills at Level 3 and above.

The 2005 White Paper, *Skills: getting on in business, getting on at work* aims to consolidate changes already underway and to introduce further changes by enhancing the role of the Sector Skills Councils in the development of higher level skills and by strengthening the role of regional agencies in the identification of regional skills priorities. In order to deliver the economic development targets defined by Regional Economic Strategies, the White Paper specifies that evidence of collaboration between higher education and other agencies involved in Regional Skills Partnerships will be required. The forms that collaborative working

might take are not prescribed in detail but are expected to be put in place locally to meet regional needs, strategies, and levels of provision. The Regional Development Agencies will also have greater involvement, through the Regional Skills Partnerships, in the funding of higher education, especially Foundation degrees.

A list of current Sector Skills Councils can be obtained from the Sector Skills Development Agency at: www.ssda.org.uk and is reproduced here in Part 4. The SSDA also carries details of work being undertaken to create Sector Skills Agreements; the first four, from CITB-Construction Skills, e-skills UK, SEMTA and Skillset were in place by the end of 2004 and others are currently under development. The DfES website carries details of the emerging Regional Skills Partnerships and provides links to details of how the RSPs are being defined in each region.[35]

Both nationally and regionally, some rationalisation of existing programmes is inevitable, particularly those at Level 3 delivered in FECs and through private providers. However, as the Regional Economic Strategies come to focus their attention on achieving the higher level skills required for local economic development, it is likely that changes to the funding of higher education programmes will also lead to rationalisation and targeting of delivery. Nationally, implementing the QCA Framework for Achievement will reduce the number and range of programmes available that may provide a basis for progression to higher education programmes. The Framework for Achievement is designed to rationalise and simplify the system so that qualifications and other achievements are:[36]
   • more responsive to employer and learner needs
   • inclusive of a wide range of achievements
   • clear and accessible to learners and providers
   • cost effective to use and to manage
   • valued by all users.

The consultation phase closed in February 2005 and a report of the consultation will be published by the end of May 2005; the QCA intends to take the work forward between May 2005 and early 2006, for full implementation by 2010.

A further development that will impact on skills development programmes in higher education is the creation of regional Lifelong Learning Networks. A number of proposals for Lifelong Learning Networks have already been accepted and several more bids will be considered during 2005. The joint letter from HEFCE and the Learning and Skills Council, HEFCE Circular letter number 12/2004, is available from the HEFCE website at: www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/circlets/2004/cl12_04. Further information can also be obtained through HEFCE regional consultants or LSC regional directors, listed in Annex B to the document. HEFCE suggest that Lifelong Learning Networks (LLNs) will bring HEIs and FECs together in a new form of collaboration to create new opportunities for vocational learners. LLNs will:
   • combine the strengths of a number of diverse institutions
   • provide support for learners on vocational pathways

• bring greater clarity, coherence and certainty to progression opportunities
• develop the curriculum as appropriate to facilitate progression
• value vocational learning outcomes and provide opportunities for vocational learners to build on earlier learning
• locate the progression strategy within a commitment to lifelong learning, ensuring that learners have access to a range of progression opportunities so that they can move between different kinds of vocational and academic programmes as their interests, needs and abilities develop.

FE and HE partnerships
The emphasis on enhanced collaboration between further education (FE) and HE in relation to vocational programmes is also a feature of the 2005 Skills White Paper and addressed in the consultation document, the *Review of the Future Role of FE Colleges*.[37] The Review is not only concerned with collaboration between further and higher education in the context of progression, but also addresses issues relating to the delivery of higher education within further education. The findings of the Review are scheduled to be reported in the autumn of 2005.

In its response to the consultation document, UVAC suggests that the relationship between further education colleges and higher education institutions should be a central feature of the review, since such relationships are complex and vary between localities and institutions.[38] Many further education colleges, especially those in the Mixed Economy Group (MEG), are active in delivering higher education; indeed some 10% of higher education provision is currently delivered by the FE sector and this is set for further expansion. UVAC believes that the nature of FEC and HEI partnerships should not be specified nationally but should be responsive to particular local circumstances, such as whether or not there is a local HEI, and, where there is, whether it has a track record of supporting progression, working with employers, and developing vocational provision. UVAC also notes the need to clarify the relationship between FE and HE funding, inspection and quality assurance systems (an agenda indicated in the 2005 Skills White paper as a necessary development). It is clear that colleges offering both further and higher education programmes find working with two funding regimes, quality assurance arrangements and awarding bodies to be burdensome. UVAC proposes that there should be a national Lifelong Learning Network combining the Mixed Economy Group of FECs and HEIs to resolve issues around the FE/HE interface.

Another function of partnerships between further and higher education, which has received little attention to date, is their role in relation to supporting, recognising and accrediting work-based learning. In programmes designed to develop and enhance skills, the development of occupational competence is primarily work-based. The further education sector has considerable experience of helping learners to develop occupational competence and recognising and assessing this achievement through the NVQ system at levels 1-3.

[35] www.dfes.co.uk/skillsstrategy
[36] Details of the Framework for Achievement can be obtained from: www.qca.org.uk/10710.html
[37] Details of the Review can be found at: www.dfes.gov.uk/furthereducation/fereview/index.shtml
[38] For UVAC's response to the FE Review, see: www.uvac.ac.uk/downloads/0202/FEC_Review_Response_140405.pdf

At higher levels this is far less commonplace. As the UVAC Response comments, *"With their experience of delivering NVQs and contact with employers, further education colleges offering higher education provision could be ideally placed to work with HEIs to develop effective approaches to the validation of work-based learning"*.[39]

Learning outcomes in skills development programmes
For staff involved in the design of these programmes, a crucial activity is 'mapping' learning outcomes statements against various benchmarks, such as qualification benchmarks, National Occupational Standards, Foundation degree benchmarks, and regulatory or professional body requirements. As meeting far more descriptors and benchmarks becomes a requirement, particularly those relating to occupational competence, it becomes increasingly necessary to find ways of helping students to demonstrate their achievements without duplicating their efforts and without separate assessments of similar competencies.

With dual accreditation programmes, or those including National Occupational Standards, key skills and professional standards, there is considerable skill required in drafting learning outcome statements that can address multiple criteria. Just how demanding this task is may vary according to how explicitly particular standards or competencies need to be demonstrated. It is important to ensure that staff complete most of the mapping activity at the design stage, and provide learners with appropriate guidance as to how to demonstrate achievement; it is not helpful for learners to receive several lists of standards and benchmarks that have not been related to each other. In case study 1, APU developed statements of Generic Learning Outcomes (GLOs) for both undergraduate and postgraduate programmes which were mapped against the QAA qualification benchmark statements and appropriate level descriptors, thus conflating a number of different requirements. This is particularly important in higher education programmes that combine academic study and work-based learning in order to strike an appropriate balance between the two.

This does not mean that the assessment of these programmes, and the assessment of the work-based learning element in particular, needs to become purely mechanistic. Even where frameworks are overlaid by regulatory requirements, there is considerable scope for HEIs to innovate and tailor curricula to their strengths and to the needs of learners and employers. Collaborative working is a positive way forward in this respect: bringing together those responsible for the various standards and requirements, including employers, professional bodies, Sector Skills Councils, Regional Skills Partnerships, FECs and HEIs, can ensure an integrated approach from the outset. The impact of the 2005 Skills White Paper is yet to be fully felt but it is likely that there will be a more joined up approach to curriculum design and development to meet the needs of regional employers and learners and to address the regional economic priorities.

Case study 2, at Lancaster Centre for Training And Development (CETAD), provides an example of a sector endorsed Foundation Degree in Working with Young People and Young People's Services. The Foundation degree curriculum has been designed to satisfy the requirements of the Foundation degree benchmark statement, the intermediate qualification descriptor, relevant subject benchmark statements, and is mapped against the units, elements and performance criteria of the Level 4 S/NVQ in Delivering Learning, Development and Support for Children, Young People and Those Who Care for Them. The programme provides a strong theoretical base for much of the knowledge and understanding required in the S/NVQ. Information about the sector endorsed Foundation Degree in Working with Young People and Young People's Services can be found on the DfES Foundation degree website and details of Lancaster's programme can be found on the CETAD section of the University's website.[40][41] The DfES has produced a Statement of Requirement, based on National Occupational Standards, setting out what is required for approval and endorsement of programmes within the framework.

The Statement of Requirement specifies the main structural and delivery features which must be included to satisfy the Foundation degree qualification benchmark as well as the professional/practical skills, knowledge and understanding, and key/transferable skills requirements that are specified in the occupational standards. The Statement also summarises features of good practice, including student and learning support and work-based learning. The Foundation degree is designed to provide core underpinning knowledge and some evidence of performance at level 4 for related N/SVQs. Universities and colleges are encouraged to help students make links between the Foundation degree and the N/SVQ and, where appropriate, to start compiling a portfolio of evidence. Following the Foundation degree, additional evidence of competent performance in the work situation will enable students to complete any required N/SVQ Level 4 units or the full award. As more sector endorsed Foundation degree frameworks come on stream, it is expected that this integrated approach to identifying academic learning outcomes and related occupational competencies will become a common feature of higher education programmes.

Key skills
Details of the support available in respect of the integration of key skills into higher education were given in the preceding section on *Employability*; the references provided there are equally applicable to this context. QCA defines key skills as: *"those generic skills which individuals need in order to be effective members of a flexible, adaptable and competitive workforce and for lifelong learning".* For the most part, explicit demonstration of achievement in key skills has not been a feature of higher education programmes hitherto. However, with the advent of Foundation degrees, which must integrate some key skills in order to meet the qualification benchmark statement, and with the growing involvement of Sector Skills Councils in higher education provision, it would appear that the picture may be about to change. The Sector Skills Development

[39] UVAC, www.uvac.ac.uk/downloads/0202/FEC_Review_Response_140405.pdf
[40] www.foundationdegree.org.uk
[41] www.cetad.lancs.ac.uk

Agency and individual Sector Skills Councils are required to signpost key skills to National Occupational Standards. All six key skills at levels 1-3: *Communication, Application of Number, IT, Problem Solving, Working with Others* and *Improving Own Learning and Performance* are well established in the national school curriculum and are embedded in most programmes of further education. Although some higher education programmes include demonstration of QCA key skills at levels 2 or 3, sometimes as a prerequisite for work placement, there has been little activity at the higher levels. However, key skills are defined at five levels and there may be a growing expectation that students entering higher education with skills at the lower levels might want to enhance their levels of competence within their higher education programmes. Given the experience of further education providers in supporting and assessing key skills achievement, this would appear to be another fruitful area for collaboration between the further and higher education sectors.

It is often argued that key skills are embedded in higher education learning outcomes and there is no need for these to be separately assessed. However, as the UVAC publication *Fit for Purpose* notes: *"Key skills are often embedded into higher education to the point where they have disappeared from view"*.[42] For this reason, the Graduate Apprenticeship framework uses the QCA version of key skills because these have national recognition and can lead to a recognised award.

In higher education, key skills are typically delivered via a combination of the following approaches:
- **Integrated** - so evidence of key skills competence is obtained as part of a student's normal degree programme
- **Bolt-on** - whereby key skills are delivered as a separate element of the programme, with special activities and assignments to generate the evidence
- **Drop-in workshops** - which are open to any student who may wish to brush up on a particular key skill.[43]

Key skills are often not assessed and accredited in HEIs, but is already a requirement in Graduate Apprenticeships, and in relation to Management Standards in Knowledge Transfer Partnerships (see next section 3 of Part 2), and less directly, in Foundation degrees.

Personal Development Planning
Personal Development Planning has already been discussed in some detail in the preceding section on *Employability*. In the context of Skills Development programmes, Personal Development Planning is often used as a tool whereby individuals identify how they will work through the programme, especially to meet the work-based elements of programmes required by professional bodies or to meet the requirements of demonstrating competence in relation to National Occupational Standards.

As benchmarks of competence, National Occupational Standards are rooted in the workplace. With the heightened involvement of the

Sector Skills Councils, there is likely to be a corresponding increase in demand for learners on higher education programmes to demonstrate achievement of National Occupational Standards. Those HEIs offering programmes that include working towards NOS/NVQs have indicated that this gives structure and direction to placements and enhances employer commitment to work-based learning and workforce development. Case study 3 describes the Foundation Degree in Addictions Counselling validated by the University of Bath, and delivered by the charitable organisation *Clouds*. For the part-time course, all of the taught units are delivered in 5-day residentials and the order in which the units are studied is very flexible; at the beginning of each academic year, students are asked to elect through a personal development plan how many residential units they intend to take in the coming year and which ones. Given that the majority of students on the part-time programme will already be employed as full-time counsellors, the personal development plan is particularly important as it establishes the activities in which they will need to engage in their normal place of work in order to be able to complete the assessment.

On the full-time programme, which normally lasts eighteen months, the first five months of the course involves 1 or 2 teaching days per week, followed by 12 months of one teaching day a week and four days in a work placement. The personal development plan is important here too in order to identify suitable placements with appropriate supervision. In both full-time and part-time programmes, during these periods of assessed clinical practice, students are required to produce a portfolio of evidence of their learning. Planning for this learning through the personal development plan is equally important for both modes of study.

Work-based learning
Work-based learning in the context of skills development programmes may take a variety of forms for a variety of purposes. In order to meet regulatory or professional requirements, particularly where these involve a 'license to practice', some programmes make rigorous demands with respect to work-based learning; others require block placements and yet others require work placement throughout the programme for one or two days each week.

In the *Clouds* Foundation Degree in Addictions Counselling, 5 Full-Units and 2 Half-Units are completed and assessed entirely within the workplace (no classroom teaching), and the placements are arranged to provide appropriate context through which to provide evidence to demonstrate learning achievement. In teacher education and in many health care programmes, the 'practice' element is normally designed to integrate both academic outcomes and vocational competencies. For both, the outcomes of the work-based element are becoming more tightly specified to external standards in addition to those identified by the HEI. Getting the 'mapping' of the programme outcomes right at the design stage is critical, so that learners are clear about what criteria apply to the different types of outcome and are not overwhelmed by an unnecessary volume of assessment tasks.

[42] Roodhouse, S. and Hemsworth, D. (2004) *Fit for Purpose: The use of National Occupational Standards in higher education to meet the needs of employment*, Bolton: UVAC. p.36.
[43] Ibid.

In some programmes, working towards an NVQ or assessment of competence to National Occupational Standards can provide more structured work experience and may be specified in a learning contract between the HEI, the employer and the learner. Learning contracts may also be used where the learner negotiates with an employer a programme of activity that will facilitate demonstration of competencies. At times, it may be necessary for employers to 'lend' their employees to another company or organisation and to 'borrow' other learners in their place, in order to ensure that appropriate work experiences are available to provide evidence of competence.

APEL

In the context of skills development, APEL is primarily concerned with demonstration of achievement of learning outcomes of the programme, which may include assessment against National Occupational Standards, NVQs or professional body and/or regulatory requirements. Learners can bring vocational experience and qualifications which can be recognised through an APEL process and, where appropriate, benchmarked against externally prescribed standards.

The flexible modes of study associated with work-based learning, particularly part-time courses, are bringing growing numbers of employees into higher education, often for the first time. Foundation degrees too are bringing an increasing number of recruits from work-based routes. Although, this does necessarily pose any new challenges for the use of APEL, it can create difficulties where the match between the learning outcomes of experience and external standards is not exact or complete. Some would argue that APEL may be less relevant here because the evidence-based mode of assessment that is typical of APEL is similar to the assessment of, say, an NVQ. In consequence it is argued that it does not matter whether the achievement of learning outcomes happened prior to or following enrolment on a programme of study, as long as the candidate is able to produce appropriate evidence of attainment.

What is important is that APEL applicants from a work-based route should be judged on their own merits, often through a guidance interview and, where appropriate, diagnostic tests. Some may need to complete a bridging programme, such as a study skills module, either before or in the early stage of their HE studies, in order to get them on track with learners recruited through more conventional routes.

Assessment

Assessment of work-based learning outcomes, including assessment against external standards and benchmarks may take many forms, but almost all include some use of evidence, often in the form of a Portfolio, and usually will require some form of reflective report or evaluation. The publication from the LTSN Generic Centre, Assessment Series No.6 *A Briefing on the Assessment of Portfolios* by David Baume, provides a useful guide to assessment by portfolio. It can be obtained through the Higher Education Academy website on: www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources. A briefing on the assessment of problem based learning can also be obtained through the same source.

Common forms of assessment of work-based learning may include:
1. Direct observation of the student at work
2. Assessment of student's logbook or work diary
3. Interviewing/interrogation at work
4. Surrogate assessment. i.e. the assessor obtains views of others (managers, peers etc.)
5. Student prepares a final report and this is assessed
6. Written or oral tests of the intended learning outcomes from the work-based learning.

The Brennan and Little Report (1996) identifies the advantages and disadvantages of different approaches in the following table.[44]

Methods for assessing work-based learning   (Source: Little and Nixon, 1995)[45]

Method	Useful for	Disadvantages	Comment
direct observation of the student at work	particularly used for assessing competence for VQs can provide evidence of team work, *etc*.	expensive disruptive to workplace	important to have 'checklist' of what to observe
assessment of student's log book or work diary	encourages self-reflection as a learner	some doubt about validity	needs to be combined with interview to establish validity
interviewing/ interrogation at work	obtaining evidence for knowledge and understanding needed for work place tasks	oral assessment can be subjective and less reliable	sometimes workplace might need to be simulated
surrogate assessment, ie. the assessor obtains views of others (managers, peers, etc.)	coverage of all work place tasks and performance	may be doubts about reliability	cheaper than trying to observe all tasks
student prepares a final report and this is assessed	encouraging reflection and communication skills	needs to be combined with other methods	report should contain reflection on what has been learnt
written or oral tests of the intended learning outcomes from the work-based learning	testing background knowledge and understanding	lacks validity of direct observation	some institutions will wish to include this method, if assessment leads to credit used for an academic award

[44] Brennan, J and Little, B. (1996) *A Review of Work-Based Learning in Higher Education.* London: Quality Support Centre, Open University
[45] Little, B. and Nixon, N. (1995) *Assessment Strategies for Work-Based Learning: QSC Briefing Papers.* London: Quality Support Centre.

Thompson, in Hevey 1993, quoted by Brennan and Little, suggests there are two sources of evidence available: specially elicited evidence and naturally occurring evidence in the work process.[46] These are then subdivided into four types - knowledge and understanding eg. A. written or oral assessment; B. performance, eg. traditional skills, college assessments; C. predetermined samples set in the workplace; and D. ongoing work. Types A and B are from source 1 and types C and D are from source 2. Thompson suggests assessors should seek evidence from type D first and move through C, B, A if evidence is not available from the earlier type.

Methods of assessment are listed from each type.

Type D - Ongoing work
* direct observation of normal performance in real work situations
* log books or diaries of day-to-day practice
* oral practice about ongoing work
* interrogation of rationale for work activities
* peer assessment and reports.

Type C - predetermined samples set in work place
* samples of relevant work products
* plans and evidence of preparation
* evaluations of work outcomes and personal effectiveness
* assignments and reflective accounts for work practices and procedures.

Type B - performance tests
* skills and proficiency tests
* direct observation of performance in simulated work situations
* examining performance on relevant tasks and multi-skill functions.

Type A - written and oral examinations
* evidence of relevant theory and underlying principles
* written simulations
* projects requiring independent planning and research.

Whatever form it takes, assessment must be appropriate to its purpose. If occupational competence is required, then work place supervisors and assessors may well be used in addition to academic assessors.

As the incidence of work-based learning increases in higher education, innovative approaches to the assessment of work-based learning are emerging all the time. The Higher Education Academy, (previously the Generic Centre for Learning and Teaching) has already produced resources to support the assessment of work-based learning, as described in the *Employability* section. Several of the CETLs are also engaged in development work in this area. Foundation Degree Forward also has some funding available to

support innovative approaches to assessing work-based learning and a growing body of case studies through which this is disseminated. The prospectus for bidding can be obtained from the Foundation Degree Forward website.

Types of vocational programme

Foundation degrees
Foundation degrees were introduced by the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) in 2000 to provide graduates who are needed within the labour market to address shortages in particular skills. Foundation degrees also aim to contribute to widening participation and lifelong learning by encouraging participation by learners who may not previously have considered studying for a higher level qualification.
The QAA define Foundation degrees as follows:
"Foundation degrees integrate academic and work-based learning through close collaboration between employers and programme providers. They build upon a long history of design and delivery of vocational qualifications in higher education, and are intended to equip learners with the skills and knowledge relevant to their employment, so satisfying the needs of employees and employers. Foundation degrees are designed to appeal to learners wishing to enter a profession as well as those seeking continuing professional development. They can also provide pathways for lifelong learning and the opportunity to progress to other qualifications. The qualification may be offered through flexible modes of learning, enabling learners to 'earn and learn' and accommodate the learning needs of different types of students."

Key features to bear in mind in the design of Foundation degree programmes include the need to:
* create a balance of intellectual and practical skills tied to opportunities to apply such learning within the workplace
* identify work-based learning appropriate to the needs of the relevant employment sector and ensure the programme provides knowledge and skills relevant to employment
* integrate academic knowledge and understanding with the development of vocational skills and competencies, using external reference points where appropriate
* include opportunities for authentic and innovative work-based learning which will support the development of higher-level learning within both the institution and the workplace whereby the learning applied in one environment may be applied in the other.

At the request of the DfES, *a Foundation degree qualification benchmark* was developed and published, by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education, in November 2002. A revised version (QAA 065 10/2004) has now been published which supersedes the previous statement. This is reproduced on the following page, and can also be accessed from the QAA website or the Foundation Degree Forward website.

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[46] Hevey, D. (1993) *Issues in the Design of Competence-based Assessment Strategies*. Milton Keynes: The Open University, Vocational Qualifications Centre.

Knowledge, understanding and skills

The benchmark statement specifies that the knowledge, understanding and skills associated with Foundation degrees may be delivered through a diverse and innovative range of methods that will reflect the diversity of learners' needs and should encourage lifelong learning by providing sufficient opportunity for self-directed learning and reflection. This may be achieved by supporting learners to develop action plans to assist the learning process, and demonstrate that their learning outcomes have been achieved.

Assessment

The assessment of each element of study within Foundation degree programmes, including the assessment of work-based learning, should be specified at the time of validation. An assessment strategy should reflect the type of learning/learner and the nature of each element of study within the qualification. Assessment may include a variety of formal and informal, and formative and summative techniques, provided that they are all capable of rigorous testing and independent verification. Through the combination of assessment of work-based learning and other more traditional means of assessment, Foundation degrees can integrate a variety of delivery modes and assessments undertaken by institutions and employers.

Employers should, where possible, be involved in the assessment of work-based learning. Arrangements between institutions and employers should be specified fully at the outset of any partnership, and should include any training for employers that may be required in, for example, assessment procedures. Such arrangements should be reviewed regularly as part of the ongoing monitoring and review of the programme. In cases where employers are involved in the support of the learner and in their assessment it may be necessary to provide support in the form of mentoring or other types of professional development.

Monitoring and Review

Employers should participate in the regular review of those Foundation degree programmes that they are involved in. Review procedures should ensure that evaluation of the provision of all work-based learning is undertaken as part of the review, and involves feedback from all work-based learning providers. There should also be opportunities for the learners to comment on their work-based learning experiences, and their comments should be considered in annual monitoring processes. Additional guidance may be found in the section of the QAA *Code* on *placement learning.*

Revised Foundation degree benchmark statement

The distinctiveness of Foundation degrees depends upon the integration of the following characteristics: employer involvement; accessibility; articulation and progression; flexibility; and partnership. While none of these attributes is unique to Foundation degrees, their clear and planned integration within a single award, underpinned by work-based learning, makes the award very distinctive.

1. Employer involvement

Foundation degrees are intended to provide students with the knowledge, understanding and skills that employers need. In order to achieve this it is important that employers are fully involved in the design and regular review of Foundation degree programmes. It is beneficial if employers are involved, where possible, in the delivery and assessment of the programme and the monitoring of students, particularly within the workplace.

2. Accessibility

Foundation degrees are intended to increase access and widen participation into higher education with programmes of study that are designed with work-based learning as an integral part of their programmes. The accessibility of Foundation degree programmes should increase opportunities for learning since they can enable learners to 'earn and learn'.

Further education colleges can play an important role in the recruitment into, and the delivery of, Foundation degree programmes. They can also provide valuable links with local communities, and the knowledge and skills needs of their employment markets.

3. Articulation and progression

Foundation degrees are intended to make a valuable contribution to lifelong learning by providing access to higher education for learners from different starting points and with different entry qualifications, eg. Apprenticeships, access programmes, and NVQs. They can provide opportunities for progression to other higher education, including bachelors degrees with honours, professional qualifications, and/or higher NVQs.

It is important that recognition is given to the knowledge, skills and understanding that an applicant for a Foundation degree has already developed. These may have come as a result of learning through work, that may have been paid or unpaid, and through other individual activities and interests. Such knowledge, skills and understanding can include certificated, non-certificated and experiential learning.

It is important that rigorous arrangements for the accreditation of prior experiential and/or certificated learning (APE/CL) are established and fully used to accredit the variety of learning and to assist learners in their entry to Foundation degree programmes. Further information on APE/CL is available in the *Guidelines on the accreditation of prior learning* (QAA 2004).

Clear routes that facilitate opportunities for successful progression from Foundation degrees towards another qualification are an important feature of Foundation degrees. Such routes should be established when Foundation degrees are validated, and identify the link(s) between the Foundation degree and other qualification(s). Such links may be to programmes validated by higher education institutions and/or by professional and other educational bodies.

Institutions awarding Foundation degrees normally guarantee progression to at least one bachelors degree with honours, with an expectation that this should not normally exceed 1.3 years for a full time equivalent student in England, and two years in Northern Ireland.

Progression from Foundation degrees to another qualification may require a bridging programme. Such arrangements, when established at validation, can ensure that learners progressing onto the next programme are adequately prepared.

The arrangements for progression, which are determined by the awarding bodies through their admissions policies and procedures, should be implemented consistently and fairly. The identification of explicit progression arrangements should be available to learners on Foundation degree programmes through course handbooks and prospectuses.

In cases where a learner could gain additional professional accreditation and/or qualifications in the course of studying for a Foundation degree, institutions should include the requirements of professional and vocational bodies as part of the validation process.

Foundation degrees are intended to provide the knowledge and skills that are necessary to enable employees to be versatile and adaptable in progressing to and within work. Employability is a key aspect in Foundation degree programmes and its inclusion should equip and assist learners to enhance their employment opportunities, and/or allow them to prepare for a career change.

Careers guidance is important in enabling learners to take responsibility for managing their own careers and lifelong learning. For more information on careers guidance see Section 8 of the code on *Career education, information and guidance*.

4. Flexibility

Flexibility on the part of the institution, the learner and the employer is central to many aspects of Foundation degrees. It facilitates responsiveness to, for example, the needs of learners from a variety of backgrounds and to the progressive and changing demands of employment.

It is important that institutions delivering Foundation degrees consider the range of requirements of the learners likely to enter their programmes. These requirements may include:

- flexible delivery modes and study patterns, including full time, part-time, distance, work-based, and web-based learning, with the flexibility to study, within reasonable limits, when and where it best suits the learner;
- flexible progression routes, including links with other professional awards and with at least one identified Honours degree programme; flexible admissions requirements, including the establishment of effective APE/CL procedures to assist applicants from diverse backgrounds who may be able to demonstrate their suitability for entry onto a Foundation degree in a variety of ways.

5. Partnership

Partnerships between employers, HEIs, further education colleges and Sector Skills Councils are central to the concept of Foundation degrees, and vital in providing programmes that are relevant, valid and responsive to the needs of learners and employers. Effective partnerships, which are strategic and sustainable, should foster broad acceptance of the Foundation degree, reinforce ownership of the qualification among all stakeholders and establish the currency of the award.

It is important that partnership agreements clearly identify the needs and expectations of all parties. Additional information on aspects of such partnerships is available through HEFCE (eg. *Indirectly funded partnerships: codes of practice for franchise and consortia arrangements HEFCE 00/54*) and the QAA (eg. the section of the code on *Collaborative provision*).

Each Foundation degree must be validated and awarded by an institution with degree-awarding powers. It is this institution that has the responsibility for assuring the standards of the award, and also for ensuring that the quality of the learning opportunities leading to its awards are managed effectively, even when this is delegated to a partner. The institution will need to be able to satisfy itself that the terms and conditions under which their Foundation degree was originally approved have been, and continue to be, met.

The successful delivery of Foundation degree programmes can depend upon a range of partnerships that may include higher and further education institutions, employers and employer bodies, professional bodies, Sector Skills Councils, Regional Development Agencies, Learning and Skills Councils, and others. It is important that all involved recognise the primary responsibilities of the awarding HEI for the standards and quality of the degree programmes offered under its powers.

Students can have an important part in negotiating programmes of study to meet their own learning needs in both the work and academic learning environments. These learning needs can be achieved, with guidance and agreement from the institution and employer, through learning contracts.

In addition to the case studies of Foundation degrees included in Part 3 of this guide, a recent SEEC publication contains chapters describing nine Foundation degree developments and contains some interesting examples of how HEIs have attempted to address the Foundation degree benchmark.[47] Foundation Degree Forward also provide examples and guidance on addressing the criteria. Local AimHigher groups are also a source of guidance and information on establishing progression routes into and through higher education by means of Foundation degrees. The developing Lifelong Learning Networks will address similar issues and will aim to establish compacting and other agreements to meet local needs. Foundation degrees may also offer an appropriate progression route from Apprenticeships into Higher Education because the Foundation degree approach is in line with an approach to learning and work with which learners are familiar. The collaboration between Nottinghamshire Aim Higher, *Learndirect* Learning through Work and the University of Derby described in the case study in Part 3 provide an example of this in operation.

UVAC provides both an accreditation and validation service for a range of work-based learning programmes, including Foundation degrees, Graduate Apprenticeships and professional development programmes. Accredited programmes are recognised by the UVAC quality mark, awarded by a consortium of higher and further

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[47] Brennan, L. and Gosling, D.(eds) (2004) *Making Foundation Degrees Work*. Brentwood: SEEC.

education institutions in association with the relevant Sector Skills Council/Sector Bodies. The quality mark adds weight and credibility to work-based/work related programmes. A list of programmes currently accredited can be found on the UVAC website at: www.uvac.ac.uk.[48]

UVAC also provides a validation service for Foundation degrees, which is particularly important where there is no appropriate HEI involvement. UVAC has recently launched a new validation body, NVC, which is described as a: *"flexible, national awarding service established to meet the needs of colleges, employers, public bodies and other higher vocational training providers without their own degree awarding powers."*[49] The service will include not only validation, but also in-company accreditation of work-based learning and a nationwide credit system. The service also includes advice and support for Foundation degree development.

Foundation Degree Forward offers access to a growing volume of expertise in Foundation degree development; they also offer funding to support the development of innovative approaches to teaching, learning and assessment, particularly in respect of the work-based learning element of Foundation degrees. The prospectus for bidding for funding can be found on the fdf website. There are already a number of Foundation degree sectoral frameworks, primarily developed with and through the Sector Skills Councils, and the number of these is expected to grow over the next few years. This trend towards the creation of frameworks has recently been further reinforced by the commitment expressed in the 2005 Skills White Paper.

Details can be found through their respective websites at: www.fdf.ac.uk and: www.uvac.ac.uk. Further information on the design and development of Foundation degrees, including additional case studies, can be obtained through the report: *Foundation Degrees: Meeting the need for higher level skills* (DfES 2003) and the subsequent Task Force Report. These are available at www.foundationdegree.org.uk.

Graduate Apprenticeships

UVAC published a review of Graduate Apprenticeships in 2003, based on a compilation of papers from the Graduate Apprenticeship National Network (GANN). The publication entitled *Review And Development Of Graduate Apprenticeship - A National Higher Education And Employment Bridging Programme* can be obtained from the UVAC website at: www.uvac.ac.uk. This provides a comprehensive overview of the development and outcomes of the Graduate Apprenticeship scheme. Graduate Apprenticeships offer:

- a nationally-recognised development route incorporating an Honours degree or postgraduate degree

- an integrated, modular plan for the development of vocational and employability skills
- practical training leading to the achievement of an NVQ (typically level 4) or approved training based on National Occupational Standards
- coaching in key skills such as *Communication, Application of Number* and *ICT*
- a motivational programme to attract the best graduates and make them effective more quickly.

More information on Graduate Apprenticeships can be found in another UVAC publication, *Fit for Purpose*, which includes examples of the use of National Occupational Standards within the scheme.[50] UVAC have also established Quality Mark accreditation criteria for Graduate Apprenticeship and this is also available on their website at: www.uvac.ac.uk. A consequence of the focus on Foundation degrees is that Graduate Apprenticeships are not currently benefiting from any specific funding or being promoted. It is possible, however, that this situation may be redressed with the new emphasis on the 'Apprenticeship family' heralded in the 2005 Skills White Paper.

Sandwich degrees and work placement programmes

Sandwich degrees represent one of the earliest approaches to incorporating work-based learning into higher education. Initially the most common pattern was for students to spend the third of four years in a work placement for which they were paid an agreed rate. This pattern still predominates, but other variations, such as two block placements, can also be found. The work placement year was often not formally assessed, although students were often required to complete a report on their return or to maintain a log book whilst in employment. Now, however, it is unusual for placements not to be formally assessed in some way, particularly as the work placement comes to be seen as the means of demonstrating attainment of National Occupational Standards, attaining an NVQ or satisfying the membership requirements of professional associations. Working towards NVQ or other external standards tends to give much more structure to the work experience and to lead to greater employer involvement.

At Sheffield Hallam, sandwich placements in the Built Environment area are linked to a structured training programme provided by the University, which in turn is linked to performance standards required by the accrediting bodies. A bonus for the employer is that they can adapt this programme for use with other employees. It does, however, place demands on the employer to provide appropriate opportunities for learning development and to provide effective supervision. University staff also need to provide appropriate support to students in the workplace and to ensure that they are aware of University resources that are available to them.

[48] Further information about accreditation services can be obtained from: Professor Robin Smith, Accreditation Consultant, University Vocational Awards Council, University of Bolton, Chadwick Street, Bolton. BL2 1JW.

[49] Press release, *NVC secures Edexcel contract to validate BTEC Foundation degrees*. The full statement can be found on the UVAC website at: www.uvac.ac.uk.

[50] Roodhouse, S. and Hemsworth, D (2004) *Fit for Purpose: the use of National Occupational standards in higher education to met the needs of employment*, Bolton: UVAC.

Students and university staff have both commented on the difficulty of striking the right balance between students being given too much responsibility, and therefore struggling to cope with tasks for which they are insufficiently prepared, or not having sufficient responsibility to enable them to demonstrate performance standards to the appropriate level. Line managers need to be closely involved to ensure that the placement addresses genuine workplace problems and challenges, and contributes to the real business of the employer. Workplace mentors are also important as exemplars of good workplace practice, providing support and guidance when needed and helping to strike the right balance between responsibility and supervision. Mentors discuss and comment on the student's progress and form an important link between their employment and the university.

Roles, responsibilities and relationships are often formalised in a learning contract. This is particularly important when the student needs to address specific skills gaps; here the employer needs to agree areas of work with the student and to agree to teach the student to perform particular tasks so that the skills developed can be assessed at an appropriate level. The more that these specific requirements are clearly understood and agreed by all parties, the more likely it is that there will be a successful outcome for the student.

Building good relationships with employers, and engaging them in course design, delivery and assessment, is essential. As at Sheffield Hallam, many universities now provide guidance packs for employers taking students on placement and hold regular meetings with them either on an individual or group basis.

- QAA has developed a Code of Practice for placement learning, available at: www.qaa.ac.uk/public/cop. The resources section in Part 4 includes a list of the key precepts.
- The National Council for Work Experience has useful material on organising placements; this is available at: www.work-experience.org.
- Secure your Success is an organisation for students seeking project management placements in SMEs. Details are available from: www.secureyoursuccess.co.uk.
- The Work-Based Learning Association website also has materials that may be helpful to institutions managing work placements and can be accessed at: www.asetonline.org.
- LEONET is an online resource to support student placement in Europe at: www.ai.tuwen.ac.at/danube/leonet

Professional qualifying programmes and dual (or multiple) accreditation programmes

As can be seen from the case study of the Built Environment area at Sheffield Hallam, some professional qualifying programmes are organised on a sandwich year basis. However, work placements which are a pre-requisite for professional accreditation may vary considerably in nature and length. In established programmes in medicine and health care and those leading to Qualified Teacher Status, work placement is likely to be organised in blocks and linked to particular areas of the curriculum. Work-based learning in Foundation degrees is particularly variable, since some programmes are full-time, some part-time and some require students to be in full-time relevant employment. Some full-time programmes divide the time each week between teaching at the institution and learning in the workplace, some organise blocks of work placement, often beginning after Easter and continuing through the summer period, and yet others organise it on a sandwich basis over three years. Part-time programmes are even more variable: where students are already in full-time employment, they may need to negotiate with their employer new skills and learning to undertake or projects to manage. They may also need to negotiate a 'swap', possibly with other students on the programme, so that they can work in an appropriate context to achieve learning outcomes that cannot easily be achieved in their own workplaces.

Programmes aligned to professional requirements may be particularly difficult to organise and manage, especially where a specified period of time in the workplace in required. Where the total number of hours of work experience required for qualifying purposes is high, students may find that they have to commit a significant amount of time to meet both the academic tuition and workplace requirements of their programmes. Where only a limited amount of time is available for work-based learning, there is a danger that the experience becomes restricted to satisfying the demands of the assessment process.

These difficulties indicate that institutions planning for professional qualifying programmes, or programmes leading to dual or multiple accreditations will need to spend a lot of time getting the curriculum and assessment right. As quality assurance processes in higher education become more geared to external standards in the form of codes of practice, subject benchmark statements and level and qualification descriptors, so professional body requirements are also becoming more complex. Professional requirements are increasingly geared towards the inclusion of National Occupational Standards, NVQs, sector skills agreements and Foundation degree frameworks, all of which require demonstration of achievement to the required standards.

Designing the curriculum so as to incorporate alignment with all of these standards requires skilful drafting of learning outcomes for modules to ensure 'coverage' of this battery of standards. Professional bodies themselves may provide a useful resource here; similarly the development by the DfES of the Statement of Requirement, based on National Occupational Standards, provides detailed guidance about what is required for the approval and endorsement of programmes.

Incorporating NVQ achievement into HE provision may be undertaken as an addition to the University award and as in the example from Lancaster CETAD, may be an optional extra for which students must pay. In cases where the NVQ is required for professional recognition purposes, it may be fully integrated into the credit rating process, with achievement of the NVQ leading to the award of HE credits as well. In other cases, candidates must achieve both academic credits and NVQ units through separate assessments. Yet others require students to complete NVQ units and then use additional techniques, such as reflective journals etc. to achieve academic credit.

Assessment of skills in higher education programmes

Undertaking assessment of both professional competence and academic learning outcomes can place heavy demands on students, and can lead to duplication unless the assessment process is carefully designed. There appears to be considerable consensus around the view that the assessment of work-based learning should relate to the nature of work-based learning itself, which is centred around reflection on work practices; it is not merely a question of acquiring knowledge and technical skills but a case of reviewing and learning from experience.

Secondly, work-based learning arises from action and problem-solving within a work environment, and is frequently centred on live projects and challenges to individual and organisations. Work-based learning also sees the creation of knowledge as a shared and collective activity in which people discuss ideas and share problems and solutions. Finally, work-based learning requires not only the acquisition of new knowledge but the acquisition of metacompetence - learning to learn.

There seems to be a consensus that a combination of methods is best for a holistic approach to the assessment of work-based learning. A recent development which has considerable scope for application in the assessment of work-based learning is the Patchwork text approach. Issue Number 2, volume 40 May 2003 of the Journal *Innovations in Education and Teaching International* is entirely about the Patchwork Text. The journal reports the outcomes and evaluations from a three-year multi-disciplinary research project integrating teaching, assessment and collaborative learning, involving Anglia Polytechnic University, Cambridge University and Nottingham Trent University. The Patchwork text is described as follows:

The Patchwork text assignment:
- is a cumulative, multi-voiced text
- results in a structurally unified reflective synthesis
- incorporates peer and formative feedback
- integrates learning tasks over the whole of the programme
- demands the student's critical and personal engagement
- demands reflexivity in both teachers and students
- is enjoyable and confidence-building.

The Patchwork text has radical implications for:
- the presentation of learning in writing
- the integration of group and developmental learning
- assessment of learning processes as well as the learning 'product'
- supporting a variety of learner styles
- the integration of academic and creative writing development
- facilitating autonomous learning
- widening access and building on prior experiential learning
- academic literacy for academic and professional practices.

The Journal provides eight case studies of modules or courses in which the Patchwork text approach has been adopted. These are not exclusively work-based or vocational programmes, and include:

1. A research methods module in an international Masters course in a Business School
2. Final year undergraduate programme for students preparing to specialise in teaching science education in primary schools
3. An undergraduate module in the sociology and politics of education
4. A module on applied epistemology for community nurses, health visitors and midwives taking a post-qualifying undergraduate degree course
5. A course on Greek Tragedy in the final year of an undergraduate degree programme
6. An alternative approach to the dissertation in a Masters degree in Social Work
7. A 'Family Therapy' module within a Social Work Diploma
8. A module in Intercultural Management on a Masters course in a Business School.

This approach would seem to offer some interesting possibilities for facilitating and assessing the outcomes of work-based learning - particularly in the context of workforce development programmes for multi-professional teams. It could also be adapted for use in an APEL context, particularly in the sense of Learning, Recognition and Development as advocated by Garnett, Portwood and Costley in a report commissioned by UVAC.[51] The authors argue that in the UK, attention is focussed almost exclusively on the individual learner; in consequence HEIs have no developed view of, or role in, learning developments for teams of workers or a whole organisation. They argue that in contexts such as accredited company schemes, APEL should be about making tacit knowledge explicit through reflective thinking and mutual learning; the Patchwork text approach to facilitating learning and assessment would appear to lend itself to this type of activity.

A partnership approach to quality assurance

It can be seen from the case studies that the validation, assessment and review of programmes developed with employers, regulatory bodies or external agencies need extensive collaboration from the original design stage through to monitoring and review of programmes. This means that all partners and parties involved must be in regular and effective communication with each other. Whilst professional bodies and agencies may be well aware of the demands of quality assurance procedures in the higher education context, employers and to some extent FEC partners, may find them to be confusing and burdensome.

HEIs have responded to these problems in various ways: at APU, the role of *Link tutor* has been established to act as the focal point for all liaison between the University and external partners.

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[51] Garnett, J. Portwood, D. and Costley, C. (2004) *Bridging Rhetoric and Reality: Accreditation of Prior experiential learning (APEL) in the UK.* Bolton: University Vocational Awards Council

The description of the roles and responsibilities of the Link tutor (in this case in the context of accreditation of external programmes) is included in Part 4 of this guide. What is essential is that someone is identified who will act as the point of liaison between the various partners and who can translate requirements from one discourse and context into another.

Some HEIs have established validation and review procedures and assessment boards specifically for the purpose of managing collaborative activity, particularly when this includes delivery through FECs. Lancaster CETAD has developed procedures which mirror the arrangements for standard validation undertaken by the Faculty Teaching Committees, and report to Senate in the same way. They have established a dedicated Validation Committee which is a subcommittee of the Continuing Education and Professional Development Committee for this purpose. Members of the Validation Committee are drawn from the various colleges and partnerships linked to CETAD, and tend to be people who are involved with work-based learning and CPD.

The University of Bath Centre for Learning Partnerships has established a Curriculum Quality Group and has drawn up a Quality Assurance Manual to provide guidance on what is expected for FECs and other parties. The Teaching and Quality Committee within the Division of Lifelong Learning at the University is responsible for the validation of all Foundation degrees awarded by the University, following standard university procedures and the common Foundation degree regulations. The relevant sector skills councils are involved in the validation process as well as local employers, professional body representatives where appropriate, and an external academic panel member. Members of the HEIs within the consortium also regularly sit on each other's validation panels. Similarly, one assessment board managed by the Division of Lifelong Learning deals with the assessment of all Foundation degrees, working to a set of common assessment regulations. Work is first assessed locally at the institution at which the student is registered and then sampled by an assessor at the awarding HEI, before being presented to the University Board of Studies. Since it is essential that there is common practice and common standards across all centres delivering Foundation degrees, discussions are taking place around the possibility of establishing meetings of pathway Subject Boards within the consortium to moderate the assessment process prior to the forwarding of marks to the University Board.

Rather than establishing separate boards and panels, some HEIs have fully integrated their quality assurance procedures for collaborative and work-based learning programmes into standard arrangements within their institutions. The advantages of this approach are that this type of activity is not singled out as being different from other types of programme, with the corresponding risk that being different is taken to mean less rigorous. The downside may be that members of panels and boards lack understanding and experience of this type of programme and may try to impose procedures that are not appropriate.

Knowledge recognition, creation and development in the workplace

The final type of work-based learning incorporates those areas of activity described by Brennan and Little in 1996 as the 'radical' end of work-based learning. It includes negotiated programmes within which the learning outcomes and content are primarily specified by individuals or organisations, and which are designed to promote individual professional development or to enhance organisational productivity and capability. This area also includes accreditation of in-company programmes and is based on ongoing interaction between organisations and higher education partners.

Knowledge Transfer Partnerships

One approach that has been well embedded in HEIs for some 30 years is 'Knowledge Transfer Partnerships', previously known as the Teaching Company Scheme. Details of Knowledge Transfer Partnerships (KTP) can be obtained at: www.ktponline.org.uk. Knowledge Transfer Partnerships are Government funded partnerships designed to enable UK businesses to benefit from the wide range of expertise available in the UK's 'Knowledge Base' - higher education institutions, further education colleges and private and public sector research organisations and institutes. A KTP is a relationship between a company and staff in a Knowledge Base organisation, applying their combined expertise to a project that is central to the development of the Company Partner. Benefits to the Knowledge Base organisation include the opportunity for staff to enhance the business relevance of their teaching and research. Each KTP is managed by a team involving senior staff from both the Knowledge Base and the Company Partners and a recently qualified graduate recruited as the KTP Associate when the KTP proposal has been approved. The website lists 886 KTPs currently in approval, descriptions of which can be accessed using the search criteria of the work sector and region.

The aims of each Knowledge Transfer Partnership are to:
- enhance the business relevance of the Knowledge Base partner's work
- improve the competitiveness of the Company Partner
- enhance the career prospects of a graduate.

The KTP Associate must have the opportunity to partly or fully achieve S/NVQ Level 4 in Management. Associates on a 12 month contract must demonstrate that they are able to:
- develop their own resources
- develop productive working relationships
- co-ordinate the running of projects
- contribute to project closure.

In addition, Associates on a 24 month contract must also demonstrate their ability to:
- manage activities to meet requirements
- contribute to improvements at work
- provide information to support decision making
- manage the use of physical resources
- facilitate meetings.

As part of the approval process, the work programme for each KTP Associate must provide opportunities to develop and demonstrate these skills. The Knowledge Base Supervisor guides the Associate's technical, academic and professional development and with the Company Supervisor gives mentoring support with respect to vocational development.

It is a requirement that Associates establish and develop a personal development plan which guides their actions and is aimed at improving their knowledge and skills. To support their personal and professional development, Associates are also encouraged to register for a higher degree and to progress towards professional recognition by registering with, or preparing for the examination of, appropriate professional bodies. As an alternative, or in addition to registering for a higher degree, HEIs may negotiate with the Associate agreed learning outcomes, normally at HE Level 4 or above, which can be assessed and awarded academic credit points in respect of learning accumulated by the Associate during the project and which may also contribute to a higher degree at a later date (although the option of registering for assessment by thesis is also available).

It is in this area that the curriculum tools of work-based learning become critical. Learning outcomes, level descriptors, accreditation, credit frameworks and pedagogical tools such as problem-based learning and evidence based learning and assessment are essential to the integration of 'non-standard' learning into higher education.

Accreditation of work-based learning

Accreditation of work-based learning has occurred in two main forms: accreditation of prior experiential learning and accreditation of in-company programmes.

Recent developments in APEL are the subject of case study 7, which includes reference to the recent report on APEL prepared for UVAC by Jonathan Garnett, Derek Portwood and Carol Costley.[52] The authors favour a process of 'rebranding' APEL in order to enable it to move beyond its established 'advanced standing' function to realise its full potential for developmental purposes at work.

The authors conclude that:

"Although APEL protocols, procedures and practices in the UK have been thoroughly worked out, they are narrowly focused. In practice education institutions in the UK mainly regard APEL as a marginal activity, primarily useful for admission to their courses, possibly providing for advanced standing by matching some elements of the prescribed curriculum. The emphasis is on 'you have done this already'. This focus is reinforced rather than challenged by the use of APEL within NVQs as matching against course outcomes is simply replaced by matching against the performance criteria of prescribed national occupational standards.

There are only isolated and occasional instances in the UK of APEL being regarded as promotional of socio-economic interests. That is, that individuals' existing knowledge and skills can be made explicit and used creatively for a range of innovative and developmental purposes at individual and corporate levels. The emphasis here is on 'you are opening up new possibilities.*"* [53]

The 'isolated and occasional instances' of the use of APEL to promote socio-economic interests describe the use of APEL within work-based learning programmes that are customised to meet the needs of employers or professional bodies. In this context, APEL can become a developmental tool, by making unrecognised, possibly tacit, knowledge and skills explicit, so that they can make a contribution to the productivity of the organisation.

The authors envisage a new approach to APEL in work-based learning contexts that would provide a useful, critical and reflective mechanism that can be used by individuals and organisations as part of a customised and flexible programme of study. Such a model would be able to include a more forward-looking perspective for the learners where previous experience is used to act as a starting point for new projects and work-related activity. Crucially, the model would enable APEL to be used as an essential tool to support workforce development. To deliver these objectives the model would:

- fully integrate issues of access and equity into the APEL system
- re-draw the role of academics away from teacher and marker towards assessor and learner/designer
- require HEIs to forge new partnerships
- incorporate all stakeholders within a well-funded and quality assured system
- require high level direction, careful consideration and significant time to achieve.

Even within the narrower parameters in which APEL has largely been deployed in higher education, its contribution to the development of the assessment of work-based learning programmes has been considerable, and has guided the processes of assessment and accreditation of current work-based learning. The 'protocols, procedures and practices' include:

- describing learning that has occurred in learning outcomes terms
- using level descriptors to establish the level(s) of learning that has occurred
- using benchmarks or standards to determine relevance and value of the learning
- using credit frameworks, including reference to existing credit rated units or modules and notional learning time, as a guide to establishing the volume of credit to be recognised
- creating a rigorous and transparent assessment process, usually, but not necessarily, requiring production of an APEL portfolio

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[52] Garnett, J. Portwood, D. & Costley, C. (2004) *Bridging Rhetoric and Reality: Accreditation of prior experiential learning (APEL) in the UK,* Bolton: UVAC.
[53] Op. cit., p.21.

- identifying assessment criteria as a basis for evaluating experiential learning achievements, including:
  - Validity: relating to the match between the evidence presented and the learning outcomes claimed
  - Sufficiency: relating to sufficient breadth of evidence, including reflection, to demonstrate the achievement of all the outcomes claimed
  - Currency: demonstrating that what is being assessed is current learning
  - Quality: relating to the evidence demonstrating the required level of learning achievement
- Embedding APEL into the normal institutional processes of assessment and quality assurance.

Wailey (2002)[54]

There is now considerable agreement about principles and commonality of practice and most institutions recognise that for APEL to be an effective admissions tool there needs to be considerable staff development in order to ensure that all staff involved in admissions understand the APEL process, and that there are effective APEL Advisers. The latter are necessary because most students are not fully aware of the demands posed; some institutions provide group sessions in addition to individual guidance. Both Johnson (2002) and Wailey (2002) consider the role of the APEL Adviser to be a key one: the role is to provide information and guidance in respect of institutional APEL procedures, the format, content and evidence requirements of the claim and other requirements, such as reflective writing, or the institutional specification of an APEL Portfolio.[55] [56] The APEL Adviser will facilitate reflection upon experience to identify and articulate learning achievement which is relevant to the proposed programme as a whole or to particular components of it. The Adviser will also advise on the nature, role and sufficiency of evidence, which may take a variety of forms.

Whilst the role of the APEL Adviser is generic, the assessment of the APEL claim is normally undertaken by departmental academic staff with relevant subject expertise. Again, staff development may well be needed here, since although many of the processes used in APEL are common to all assessment systems, the content of an APEL Portfolio is affected by the contexts in which the learning has been achieved and the purpose for which it is being assessed. The credit consortia, particularly SEEC, have provided APEL workshops for academic and professional staff for many years, in order to promote good practice in respect of both the guidance and assessment of APEL.[57] Other useful sources of information about good practice in APEL include:
- Merrifield, J. McIntyre D. & Osaigbovvo, R. (2000) *Mapping APEL: Accreditation of Prior and Experiential Leaning in English Higher Education*. London: Learning from Experience Trust.

- Garnett, J. Portwood, D. & Costley, C. (2004) *Bridging Rhetoric and Reality: Accreditation of prior experiential learning (APEL) in the UK*, Bolton: University Vocational Awards Council.
- QAA (2005), *Guidelines on APEL*, London: QAA.

Accrediting and assessing work-based learning programmes
Assessment and accreditation of work-based learning programmes employs similar processes to those established for APEL. Both require the identification of learning outcomes resulting from work experience, need recognition in the form of a level and volume of credit and need to be located within a credit and qualifications framework. Understanding and using the building blocks of a credit based modular framework is therefore essential.

1. Learning outcomes
Most HEIs, particularly the post-92 Universities and University Colleges, now use intended learning outcomes as the starting point of curriculum design. Their use is essential in designing work-based programmes, since it is important to identify learning that has been achieved. This is important as both learners and their employers may find it difficult to make the distinction between the outcomes of work-based projects or other planned activities, and relevant learning outcomes that may be achieved. Too often, students produce reports of a project and its outcomes without making explicit their own learning journeys and achievements.

Now that learning outcomes are frequently used in the process of curriculum design and its assessment, many HEIs have produced their own materials for the purpose of staff development and to meet the demands of institutional quality assurance processes. Less common is the production of similar materials for use by students, except in institutions or departments with high levels of APEL activity, or where learning contracts are used. Staff who are relatively new to designing programmes of work-based learning should explore what materials are available within their own institutions either for their own use or adapted for use with students.

External support is also available: SEEC has produced a guide entitled *'How to Use Learning Outcomes and Assessment Criteria'*.[58] The authors have already presented a number of workshops using these materials and will also run workshops in specific HEIs on request.

The authors describe the principles of a learning outcomes approach as follows:
1. All learning at whatever level can be expressed in terms of outcomes to be demonstrated
2. Modules of learning are described in terms of their learning outcomes and assessment criteria [59]

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[54] Wailey, T. (2002) *How to do AP(E)L* London: Southern England Consortium for Credit accumulation and transfer, London: SEEC.

[55] Johnson, B. (2002), *Models of APEL and Quality Assurance*, Brentwood: Southern England Consortium for Credit accumulation and transfer, London: SEEC.

[56] Wailey, T. (2002) *How to do AP(E)L*, London: Southern England Consortium for Credit Accumulation and Transfer, London: SEEC.

[57] The SEEC website identifies current workshops and conferences. The website address is: www.seec-office.org.uk

[58] Gosling D and Moon J (2001), *How to Use Learning Outcomes and Assessment Criteria*, London: SEEC.

[59] Module here is used to describe any element within a programme of study that constitutes a separately assessed block of learning, and which will normally earn credit when successfully completed.

3. These, rather than the mode of delivery, form the basis upon which they are assigned a specified number of credits at a given level

4. Learning outcomes must be placed within the hierarchy of the five levels of the NQF in Higher Education in England (six in Scotland)

5. Any given module can be assigned to only one level

6. Learning outcomes should be as clear and unambiguous as possible

7. Learning outcomes identify the essential learning to be achieved to merit the award of credit

8. Assessment criteria should specify how satisfactory performance of the module's learning outcomes are to be demonstrated

9. Assessment criteria should encourage learning at the appropriate level

10. Learning outcomes should enable employers, schools, parents, prospective students and others to understand the achievements and attributes of students who have successfully completed a given programme of study

11. An outcomes-based approach should facilitate comparability of standards to facilitate international mobility of students

12. An outcomes-based approach should facilitate student and graduate mobility and help identify potential progression routes, particularly in the context of lifelong learning

13. Identifying learning outcomes should assist higher education institutions, their external examiners, and QAA reviewers to assure quality and standards, by providing an important point of reference for setting and assessing standards.

The SEEC Guide is aimed primarily at staff in colleges and universities, but is simply written and could be used as a basis for developing materials for use by students. Indeed, Part Four specifically talks about using learning outcomes and assessment criteria with students. As the authors point out, a common justification for using learning outcomes is that they help students to focus their learning more effectively because:

"well written learning outcomes provide a means of mapping the content of the curriculum - for example to see how they reflect benchmark statements, which of the key skills are acquired, where the same skill or content is appearing more than once in a programme, the capabilities the students acquire as they progress through the levels in the programme of study." [60]

However, this will not happen unless students are fully aware of their purpose. It is essential therefore that students understand what learning outcomes and assessment criteria are and what functions they have; they should know where they can refer to them easily and understand the meanings of the words used. This is particularly the case when learning outcomes are to be negotiated, as in work-based and other experiential learning, where the students themselves are the authors of their own learning outcomes.

In many contexts, the required learning outcomes of work-based learning are already prescribed; National Occupational Standards are specified in learning outcomes terms, with a particular emphasis on the performance skills that must be demonstrated. The growth in importance of Sector Skills Councils in defining occupational standards, and the recent emphasis on skills outcomes at levels 3 and 4, means that this approach to defining the curriculum in terms of learning outcomes will be prioritised more in the future. Another source of expertise in the use of learning outcomes and assessment criteria resides with providers and assessors of work-based learning at levels 1 to 3, such as colleagues with experience of NVQs in FE colleges or private providers. It is also necessary to integrate and compare sets of learning outcomes and benchmarks, particularly in the context of dual or multiple accreditation programmes, in order to avoid undue repetition and to ensure relevance.

In addition to learning outcomes at the level of the module or programme, some HEIs have developed generic graduate learning outcomes which specify what a graduate in any subject may be expected to know, understand and be able to do on completion of their programme of study. Case study 1 at APU describes how in work experience modules, PDP modules and in their Progress Files, students are required to provide evidence of their achievement in relation to graduate or postgraduate generic learning outcomes. This approach is useful for both learners and staff supporting them in reaching a judgement about the nature and level of learning achieved in the programme.

2. Level descriptors
It is clear from the discussion of learning outcomes that another important concept in the context of work-based learning is that of level, since the learning outcomes of work-based learning must be located in a framework of levels and standards of achievement.

There are various sets of level descriptors in existence, primarily developed by the various credit consortia. These include:
- SEEC level descriptors
- NICATS level descriptors
- Level descriptors produced by the Joint Credit Consortia (comprising CQFW, NICATS, NUCCAT and SEEC) first published in 2001.[61]
- Scotcat guidelines

and link to:
- QCA descriptors for NVQ levels
- QAA qualifications descriptors, which outline the main qualifications at each level.

These sets of descriptors vary in terms of both the amount of detail they provide and in the number of dimensions used to define the level. The SEEC level descriptors are perhaps the most detailed and their use has been described in a SEEC Guide.[62]

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[60] Gosling and Moon, p11.

[61] *Credit and HE Qualifications Credit guidelines for HE qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland*. Guidelines jointly prepared by: CQFW, NICATS NUCCAT & SEEC. (First edition: 2001 Reprinted: 2002).

[62] Moon, J. (2002), *How to Use Level Descriptors*, London: SEEC.

Most level descriptors provide an indicator of relative demand, complexity, depth of study, and learner autonomy. They are generic statements describing the characteristics and context of learning expected at each level against which learning outcomes and assessment criteria can be reviewed, and to assign credit at the appropriate level.

Moon states that, most commonly, level descriptors describe learning in terms of:
- complexity of knowledge and understanding
- standard of cognitive skills
- key or transferable skills achieved
- the expected responsibility of the learner
- the autonomy or independence of the learner
- amount of guidance required by the learner.

Of particular value in a work-based learning context are the descriptors developed by the Ufi *Learning through Work* initiative; these are based on the SEEC descriptors and adapted by the LtW scheme to describe levels of learning in the workplace. These descriptors are reproduced in full in Part 4 of this guide.[63]

Level descriptors are particularly useful for the purposes of:
- designing new programmes of study
- writing learning outcomes
- writing assessment criteria
- assessing prior learning
- incorporating non-traditional learning (eg. work-based learning) into award-bearing courses
- relating modules or short courses from outside the HE system to HE programmes for accreditation purposes
- comparing learning at different levels.

Although traditionally these are activities that have been undertaken by staff in higher education institutions, in the work-based context, level descriptors will need to be applied and understood by individual learners who are negotiating programmes of work-based learning, preparing for assessment or seeking recognition of the outcomes of work-based learning through APEL.

Most HEIs will operate either with one of the sets of descriptors described above or will have adapted them for use within their institutions. Staff working with students or employers in developing negotiated programmes, or when supporting APEL, may however need to prepare Student Guides outlining the use of these descriptors to describe the level of learning achieved through work. Where external standards or benchmarks are being used, such as occupational standards, an interpretation of the level demands may be needed to help students ensure that they are meeting appropriate standards.

3. Credit frameworks

There is a growing requirement for work-based learning to be based on clear statements of its credit value and level. There was some disappointment from those engaged in work-based learning in higher education that the National Qualifications Framework did not incorporate a national credit framework for higher education. In part this was in recognition of the work undertaken at the request of QAA by the joint credit consortia in England, Wales and Northern Ireland in establishing credit guidelines.[64]

In this publication, a credit framework is defined as:
"... a set of specifications for valuing, measuring, describing and comparing learning achievement. The framework is concerned with the demonstration of learning achieved, how much learning and at what academic level, and is designed to include learning from a wide range of environments, both on and off campus. Credit and levels are merely useful tools to represent learning for the purpose of measuring equivalence; they do not, in themselves, affect the nature and content of what is being learned. Thus a credit framework simply provides a standardised means of representing learning achieved, enabling comparison of learning required in different programmes and qualifications, and facilitating the building up of credit by learners and/or the transfer of achieved learning outcomes between programmes and/or between institutions." [65]

The guidelines were produced as a response to the broadening of the learning environment for higher education resulting from current Government policy to encourage a culture of lifelong learning with closer links to the workplace. The document also refers to the increasingly diverse types of learning experience, including web-supported learning, that are making demands on higher education institutions for the provision and recognition of a wide range of learning that was, until recently, unfamiliar. In this context, a 'common language' of credit to describe learning enhances the ability of HEIs to make comparisons between programmes and to establish equivalence between learning outcomes achieved in a range of contexts.

In August 2004, a team from the same set of joint HE credit bodies in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (EWNI), published the results of a survey of credit practice in order to ascertain the extent to which institutions are using, or plan to use, a common credit framework.[66] The data show the following degrees of consensus:

90% or more of the responding institutions (100 in total)**:**
- use a credit system
- stipulate the number of credits required for each award
- accept the recommended EWNI Credit Bodies' credit guidelines for total credits for Masters degree, Postgraduate Diploma, Postgraduate Certificate, Honours degree, Foundation degree, Certificate of Higher Education
- recognise credit awarded by other institutions.

[63] Jackson, N. 1999 and Learndirect *Learning through Work* handbooks. .
For more detail of these descriptors and their application in the LtW scheme, see case study 5
[64] Credit and HE Qualifications: *The Credit Guidelines for HE qualifications for England, Wales and Northern Ireland* developed by the credit bodies CQFW, NICATS, NUCCAT and SEEC provide a comprehensive account of the recommended guidelines for credit including definitions, principles and guidance on credit values for qualifications in the National Qualifications Framework.
[65] Credit and HE Qualifications, p4.
[66] Johnson, R. (2004) *Higher Education Credit Practice in England, Wales and Northern Ireland*, Brentwood: EWNI Credit Forum.

80% or more of the responding institutions:
- award credit
- accept the recommended EWNI credit guidelines for total credit for non-honours degree, HND and Diploma in Higher Education
- have adopted the tariff of 1 credit based upon 10 hours of notional learning time (NLT)
- list credits on transcripts
- use credit level descriptors developed by the EWNI Credit Bodies.

70% or more of the responding institutions:
- have credit requirements matching the recommended EWNI credit guidelines for total credits for the Practitioner/Professional Doctor, Integrated Masters programmes
- have credit requirements matching the EWNI guidelines for Masters, Postgraduate Diploma, Postgraduate Certificate, non-honours degree and Foundation degree programmes
- recognise ECTS credit awarded by other institutions
- award credit to individuals for work-based learning.

These results indicate that there has been considerable progress in recent years towards a national credit system for higher education. Given that the existing credit guidelines are widely used, and with accord on credit principles already agreed in Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland, the authors suggest that it would make sense for England to formally adopt the same principles. In the light of these recommendations, and as the QCA develops the proposed Framework for Achievement, the DfES in the recent Skills Strategy paper announced its intention to ensure a coherent framework for credit accumulation and progression through to HE.[67] The DfES has sought the advice of the HEFCE on how to move to a national credit framework by 2010, in a way that aligns with other credit systems within the UK and with European developments. It has established that the QCA and HE partners will work together to ensure that this alignment is achieved.

This can only be good news for those engaged in work-based learning, since issues of equivalence and comparability between learning achieved in the workplace and that achieved through more conventional modes have proved to be a stumbling block for many institutions. A national credit framework would provide clear progression routes through schools, further education, and higher education, including work-based learning routes and would facilitate the wider recognition of all forms of learning from a range of environments, both on and off campus. The regional Lifelong Learning Networks currently being established also require the establishment of effective local credit frameworks to ensure opportunities for progression throughout the whole spectrum of levels.

A further benefit of working within a credit framework is to support the role of higher education in accrediting in-company training and work-based programmes from other providers. This area of activity is seen as a potential area of expansion for higher education and builds on its strengths in assessing learning at this level.

Accreditation of work-based learning
The 2004 survey of credit practice shows an impressive increase in the number of HEIs (over 70%) using the credit guidelines for the purpose of awarding credit in recognition of work-based learning. This figure covers a number of different types of work-based learning, including learning (both prior and current) resulting from experience in standard employment, learning achieved through in-company training courses and learning resulting from an arranged work placement. Some experiential learning will be accredited in the form of individual APEL or planned work-based learning as part of a programme of study; however, there has also been an increase to 54% of responding institutions awarding credits derived from organisation/in-company/in-house training and development programmes.

Accreditation by HEIs in the latter sense has the potential to expand exponentially, as using credit frameworks becomes the norm across higher and further education. It can be both a useful source of income for HEIs and also establishes the basis for partnerships and close working relationships with organisations. In case study 6, an example is presented of how an initial request to one HEI to give recognition, in the form of establishing the credit equivalence of an in-house training programme, resulted in a multi-faceted relationship between the parties, culminating in the development of a postgraduate certificate programme.

Initially, this type of activity tends to be demanding on the staff resources of the HEI, since an in-house programme rarely presents itself in a form where it can immediately be accredited. It is nearly always the case that the learning outcomes will need to be identified or enhanced, and assessment tools and criteria revised before the accreditation can proceed. There are also differences in culture, in priorities, and in some case problems relating to the demands of higher education quality assurance mechanisms, which may need to be overcome. HEIs engaged in this type of activity suggest that it is essential to identify one member of staff in the HEI as the link with the external organisation; the link person can act as translator and guide and thus smooth the passage of the accreditation, at the same time as establishing a basis of trust. Some HEIs have also indicated that they are much maligned, particularly in some government forums, when they are accused of being slow to respond to the needs and demands of companies and organisations and are insufficiently flexible; many have experienced difficulties in making the progress they desire because the company or organisation is sidetracked by other demands or issues, or because a change in management personnel or policies means that the goal posts have shifted.

Even with the use of established credit guidelines and a curriculum based on learning outcomes, assessment criteria and level descriptors, establishing the credit value of an in-company programme may not be a straightforward matter.

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[67] Department for Education and Skills (2005), *Skills: Getting on in business, getting on at work*, Part 2, paragraph 156.

In-house programmes are often not designed in terms of higher education benchmarks, learning may not be organised by level, and as a result the learning outcomes of a particular unit of learning may therefore range across a number of levels. Similarly it may be difficult to establish which activities generate new learning outcomes; in my own experience of accrediting a revalidation and updating programme for fire fighters employed by a private airport (where there had been no fires in recent memory), I had to ask fire fighters to keep diaries of what they did all day in order to identify the notional learning time associated with the programme. In this particular case, it would have been impossible to establish the credit volume and level of the programme without the help of level descriptors and guidelines relating volumes of credit to notional learning hours.

What is essential is to ensure that there are suitable mechanisms for the approval and quality assurance of the accreditation within institutional arrangements. Many institutions find it helpful to establish separate, but parallel, procedures for approving the accreditation of external programmes. This is in order to ensure that the panel or team involved understand the context and do not insist that the content of such programmes exactly mirrors that of an existing programme within the institution. In case study 6, the HEIs involved had adapted a variant of procedures for the approval and review of standard programmes to this context. In this way, the institution could ensure that the accreditation of external programmes satisfied the same criteria as those applied to internal programmes. It is essential that the procedures adopted 'make sense' in terms of the arrangements adopted by the HEI to ensure the quality of its programmes.

Awarding credit for work-based learning achieved through planned work experience, whether in the context of sandwich courses or other opportunities for work experience, has also been increasing in recent years. Prior to this, placement was frequently a requirement within a programme but not necessarily assessed for credit. Now, 49% of institutions responding to the Credit Practice survey reported that they awarded credit for the learning achieved on work placement. Some measure the volume of credit through assessment procedures in the same way as they do elsewhere in the curriculum and this is recorded on the student transcript and forms part of the total credit requirement for an award. Others specifically identify 'placement credits' as a total volume of credit achieved through satisfactory completion of a placement.

Assessment tools and criteria
The discussion of assessment in the preceding section noted that the assessment of work-based learning must be centred around reflection on work practices in order to identify and review the learning that has been achieved. In relation to programmes designed around the concepts of knowledge recognition, creation and development, it is particularly important to develop tools that can capture learning arising from activities and problem-solving within the work environment. This will be centred on shared and collective activity in which colleagues discuss ideas and share problems. This poses challenges to HEIs traditional approaches to assessment since it is normally individual rather than collective achievement that is assessed. As noted previously, Garnett,

Portwood and Costley have argued that this focus on the individual learner means that HEIs have little experience of assessment of team work and mutual learning.

Since it is imperative, when operating within a learning outcomes approach, to ensure that assessment tasks are directly linked to learning outcomes, it is a problem at the design stage to write learning outcomes that can be achieved collectively and to identify strategies for assessing that they have been achieved. A further problem here is that learning outcomes must be specified at the outset of a module or piece of work, and it is in the nature of problem based learning that the outcomes cannot always be identified in advance. However, carefully designed learning outcomes which focus on processes and skills that can be demonstrated can go some way towards addressing these problems.

Working with learning contracts
The process of designing and negotiating an individual programme of study is not easy for many learners who may be new to higher education and yet have to take on board the curriculum design skills and apparatus normally utilised by experienced academic staff. These programmes are usually defined in the context of a learning agreement or learning contract, negotiated between the learner, the HEI and, where appropriate, the employer. For many new learners developing a learning contract is an intellectually challenging and creative activity. The LtW scheme suggests that learners need to understand:

- the concept of a negotiated programme
- the meaning and use of the conceptual vocabulary of programme design - eg. aims, objectives, outcomes, level
- the use of design principles and level descriptors as reference materials
- the idea of academic credit and level, how these can be used to place values on the amount of learning within a programme and the level of intellectual demand of that learning
- the nature and types of evidence that might be provided to demonstrate new learning
- the way we learn.

Learners normally also need support in developing the skills and capability needed to enable them to:

- reflect on and evaluate past and current learning and achievements
- identify the new learning they would like to acquire and how they would like to acquire it
- identify opportunities for learning and professional development within the context of their work
- identify and secure the necessary resources and support in order to enable them to achieve their learning and development intentions
- discuss ideas with academic tutors
- negotiate appropriate material and people support at work
- negotiate a workable and achievable learning contract that meets the requirements of a LtW programme and the standards set by the university.

Many institutions have recognised that learners need help and support to plan their programmes effectively and that the process of negotiation is in itself an educational experience and learning process. For this reason, many HEIs award academic credit for successful completion of a learning agreement. However, in some cases, for example where a learner is awarded a significant volume of credit for prior learning, leaving one major work-based project to complete the programme, it is felt that the management of the learning process is reflected in the assessment of the project itself and credit is not therefore awarded separately for this process. The assessment of the process of negotiating a programme of study usually takes the form of a reflective account (often resulting from a PDP process) and a rationale for the programme structure and content. If credit is to be awarded then it is essential that:

1. learning outcomes are identified for the planning and learning management element, whether or not this takes the form of a module
2. the level and volume of credit relating to this component are clearly identified
3. guidance and support for learners is identified and publicised
4. assessment criteria are identified and applied.

At *Portsmouth* for example, 10 credits at undergraduate level and 15 credits at postgraduate level are awarded in respect of 'learning management' for the successful negotiation, management and delivery of the programme. At *APU*, at postgraduate level, the module 'Negotiating Mastery' results in the award of 30 credits at HE Level 4. Whilst not compulsory it is strongly recommended, especially for students who need to clarify their goals and to develop strategies for achieving them. The module covers the areas of personal and professional development planning, auditing learning achievements and programme planning. A draft Programme Proposal must be submitted alongside the assessment portfolio for the module, although the programme plan is not in itself formally assessed within the framework of the module. In *Ufi Learning through Work* programmes, the process of managing one's own learning is regarded as a core educational process and is normally recognised in the form of 15 or 20 credits in respect of the planning stage. Because *Learning through Work* is delivered through participating HEIs, each university's arrangements (and the credit it attracts)s may vary slightly, but all participating HEIs are expected to provide recognition in the form of credit for the learning achieved in respect of planning and design activity. *Learning through Work* provides an online resource which has a guide credit rating if incorporated into the learning contract.

It is regarded as good practice in most HEIs to have regular progress reviews against the targets set out in the learning agreement, and in some cases this will require the learner to provide a report or other form of review documentation. In some cases therefore, credit in respect of the learning management activities may only be achieved on completion of the whole programme or a specified stage within it, since learners are required to demonstrate their skills in managing their learning throughout the programme. In others, credit is awarded for the planning and design stages only. At *APU*, the module 'Negotiating Mastery' occurs as the first module in a programme of study, and assessment of the module (and the resulting award of credit) therefore normally

represents the end of the planning stage. At *UEL*, the learning contract is submitted for approval at the end of a series of activities including AP(E)L and may include a requirement to undertake new learning activities relating to this phase. The learning contract constitutes proposals for a work-based project of up to 80 credits and learning management activity is assessed within the project, so the credits awarded for the learning outcomes of the planning stage are incorporated in the stage leading up to the learning contract.

The *Learning through Work* scheme recommends the award of credit for the planning stage and uses the following criteria to assess the personal management of learning and development:

All learners need to show through developing and fulfilling their learning contract that they have:

- assessed their current position - their starting point in terms of knowledge, skills, resources and working context - sufficiently to define and describe their programme
- identified what they want to achieve through their programme, and how this contributes to their wider aims and capabilities - including in terms of their effectiveness, employability or business competitiveness
- identified how they have chosen to learn and related this to the opportunities available to them to support learning
- identified the intended learning
- identified how they have will demonstrate their intended learning in a way that can be assessed
- reviewed their progress towards achieving these intended learning outcomes, modifying them as necessary.

Those listed for the benefit of learners in the *Learning through Work* Handbook include:

- reflective analysis of past and current experience, learning and achievement that provides a platform for determining where you want to go and what you want to do
- demonstration of past learning that provides the basis for an APEL claim
- creation of a learning contract that provides you with a tool for managing your programme
- reflective account of the learning gained in designing a programme
- periodic progress reviews against targets set in your learning contract
- use of online guidance to explore the concept of Managing Your Learning
- incorporation into your programme of specific courses that will help you develop skills in aspects of self-management eg. time management, project management, research skills
- systematic self-reflection to draw out the learning you have gained through work-based projects or other work-based activity
- maintaining a professional diary or learning log that will help you maintain an overview of your activities and support your reflective learning
- participation in real or virtual action learning sets and gaining of new insights into ways of learning and problem working through such activities
- interaction with other participants, tutors and mentors.

Learners negotiating their own programmes of study are essentially curriculum designers; in order to create a successful design, learners (and in some cases academic staff involved in supporting students) will need to understand the vocabulary of programme design. They are unlikely to have acquired understanding of the conceptual apparatus of aims, objectives, learning outcomes and academic level in their working lives, or at least in the sense in which these are used in academic contexts. Most HEIs regard providing either face-to-face meetings or distance learning materials to be an essential element of good practice in supporting students during the planning phase. Most of the HEIs described in the case studies provide both, since students in full time employment, and possibly living some distance away from the HEI, may find it impossible to attend on any regular basis. The approach in the Ufi Learning through Work programmes is to provide a blend of guidance, combining LtW online and distance learning guidance with face-to-face, telephone and email support from within the participating HEI via identified LtW tutors, specialist tutors and administrators.

It is also essential that these learners have a designated tutor or adviser to support them through the process and the tutor may need to be proactive in keeping in touch with students during the process of programme development. Often one finds that an individual negotiating a programme has got daunted by the task - helpful intervention at the right time can be invaluable in getting them back on track. For many students, and especially those who are more mature, managing their own learning is a new experience and contrasts significantly with the teacher-led strategies that may have dominated their previous experiences.

In the purest form of negotiated WBL programmes, the entire programme may consist of individually negotiated work-based learning, but most HEIs will have some curriculum framework and design principles which set parameters to the programme. For example, many programmes require learners to progress through identified stages, or to include compulsory modules or elements in their programmes. The QAA *Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education* contains general principles that underpin the assurance of academic quality and standards in a range of HE activities and are therefore equally applicable to the types of experience-led programmes described here.[68] One of the key principles states that information available to applicants should be clear, explicit and accessible. Most HEIs that provide the facility for individually negotiated programmes of study have produced brochures in which the key features and structure of the programmes are explained. They find that this helps potential applicants to understand the broad parameters within which they can negotiate, and thus ensures that if they proceed with an application, they have a good idea of what to expect. For example:

- **Middlesex University** specifies that its undergraduate and postgraduate programmes are built around three stages:
  – Stage 1: Learning Review and Planning
  – Stage 2: Project Design
  – Stage 3: Project Implementation.

- **University of East London** describes four phases:
  – The Enquiry and Admission Phase in which potential applicants are required to complete a 'Statement of Intent' describing who they are, where they are coming from, the proposed focus of the area of study, and how this will contribute to their personal and professional development
  – The Planning Phase, the outcome of which is a Learning Agreement, and which is assessed for the award of 20 credits
  – The Study Phase, which must include a major work-based research project with a credit value of 80 credits for a Masters programme and 60 for a PG. Dip. or other units of study, with a variable amount of credit, depending on how much credit has been achieved by AP(E)L
  – Demonstration Phase in which learners must demonstrate that the learning outcomes of the programme have been achieved; this may take the form of a dissertation or project report, but other less conventional means may be acceptable. In addition, an oral presentation of the work is required.

- **Ufi Learning through Work** does not specify the shape and size of any of the programme components, perhaps because the programme is delivered through a number of participating HEIs. However in common with the approach of many HEIs, it does specify four stages: the exploration stage; the design stage; the implementation stage and the demonstration stage.

Another type of parameter may be the extent to which an HEI has a common curriculum framework with which this area of provision needs to fit. For example, some HEIs may require the components of a negotiated programme to fit with a standard modular size or multiples of it. Many require a major project/dissertation element to have the same generic learning outcomes as those for projects/dissertations in standard undergraduate or postgraduate programmes. If this is the case, there may be guidelines and schedules already available within the institution that should be made available to students who are negotiating their programmes. Another variable relates to whether or not this area of activity mainly takes place in discrete areas of the University, such as in the Centres for Work-based Learning at Middlesex, the University Centre for Accreditation and Negotiated Awards at APU and Centres for Lifelong Learning as at Bath, Lancaster and Derby. Where this is the case, academic teams attempt wherever possible to integrate the processes used for approval or validation of programmes with those used more widely in the institution.

Learners negotiating their own programmes of study often find it difficult to identify the proposed learning outcomes of work-based programmes. In the case of programmes which consist primarily of work-based projects, it can be particularly difficult to distinguish learning outcomes from the more general outcomes that may result from the planned activities. Students frequently describe what the result will be for their organisation without fully appreciating that the 'product' does not necessarily demonstrate learning.

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[68] Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (2001), *Code of Practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education*, Gloucester: QAA.

For example, a student produced a Quality Manual for use by small companies in Europe as a solution to the difficulties experienced by such companies who are unable to support full-time audit teams. The resulting project report was very accomplished but essentially descriptive of the process of compiling the manual with little discussion of the learning journey itself.

Many materials on the subject of using learning outcomes that have been produced by HEIs are for the purpose of developing their own staff within the institutional quality assurance processes. These materials are not produced primarily for students, and may therefore have to be adapted for use in this context. However, since a similar understanding of the tools of curriculum design is used in supporting AP(E)L candidates, it is worth checking whether suitable materials have already been prepared for that purpose.

APEL

APEL tends to play an important part in the planning phase of negotiated work-based programmes; the process nearly always starts with learners providing an evaluation of their knowledge and skills, resources available to support further development and their work context. The outcome of this process is often a decision to make an APEL claim in order to gain formal recognition of their learning achievements and for this to be reflected in credit that will contribute to the total credits required for their award. APEL is often promoted as having the advantage that it may shorten the time needed to complete a programme, a prospect attractive to both learners and their employers. However, it is certainly not an easy

option and many HEIs have reported that it can often take a long time for learners to produce a claim and for universities to process the assessment and accreditation. It is important that learners are made aware of this and also that some deadlines are set for completion of this phase. Many HEIs have reported that there is a tendency for learners to disappear into an APEL black hole. This is another reason for supporting learners actively - checking on their progress, encouraging them, and discussing strategies for getting over any blocks that may arise.

The case study specifically focusing on APEL provides further guidance and describes resources available to staff supporting students through an APEL process.

Types of learning/pedagogy

Problem-based learning, enquiry-based learning, and reflective learning are pedagogies most commonly associated with programmes of this type. The references given in the *Employability* section at the beginning of Part 2 of this guide are equally applicable to this context, especially the work of the former Generic Centre for Learning and Teaching (now part of the HE Academy) and work being undertaken in the CETLs.

Part 3: Case studies

Case study 1: Building work-based learning modules into the undergraduate curriculum

Example: Work experience modules at APU
Employability Co-ordinator: Pamela Calabro

Many HEIs have developed freestanding modules or units to support work-based learning that may be, and in some cases must be, included in standard programmes. These modules may be designed specifically to provide a framework for identification and assessment of the learning outcomes of work experience or may take the form of less tightly defined 'independent learning' modules which can be adapted for use in work-based contexts. The example given here has been selected because it reflects the emphasis of this guide as a whole on integrating work-based learning into academic awards by recognising learning achieved by the award of credit. Some HEIs offer similar opportunities to undertake work experience but prefer to regard these opportunities as an addition to an academic programme rather than an integral part of it. Where this is the case there is normally some form of recognition offered as an alternative to academic credit; Sheffield Hallam University, for example, has a Hallam Award which is open to students who undertake a range of voluntary activities, including placements.

Work experience modules have been integrated into the curriculum in various ways and there is no right or wrong way of doing this; what is important is to ensure that the modules fit in with the curriculum structures, assessment processes and quality assurance arrangements of the provider. The example provided here is from APU, but a number of HEIs have adopted a similar approach. What is particularly interesting about this example is:

1. the use of 'shell' modules which have generic learning outcomes and can therefore be used for any subject area
2. it can be customised so that requirements specific to a particular area can be addressed
3. it facilitates the use of university-wide guidance and support materials
4. it is subject to common quality assurance procedures
5. it uses the benchmarks of Graduate Learning Outcomes (GLOs) for demonstrating the outcomes of work experience.

Example - APU: a suite of 'work experience' modules

For several years, APU has offered work experience modules that provide structure for students seeking to gain recognition for learning achievements resulting from a period of work experience. The University has a common curriculum framework for all undergraduate and postgraduate programmes which has been

explicitly designed to create free space for students to gain credits outside of the specified requirements of the subject areas in which they are studying. There are a number of university-wide modules available for this purpose, including language modules and other broadening elements, as well as independent study modules, personal development planning modules and the work experience modules.

The suite of work experience modules available includes a choice between 10 and 20 credit modules at each of the three undergraduate levels, and 20 and 30 credit modules at postgraduate level. These modules were initially designed to support students who found and managed their own work experience, which did not necessarily need to be related to the specific subject areas being studied. It was not intended that the University should necessarily have any direct contact with the employer; the work experience did not have to be undertaken locally and could be completed outside of term time. In consequence, the learning outcomes of the modules are generic, and are not tied to any subject specific outcomes. However, as part of the assessment of the module, students are expected to identify the contribution made by their academic learning to the employment context and to relate learning from employment to their academic study.

At Level 1 in the undergraduate curriculum, the emphasis of the module is on work experience as a resource for learning. The outcomes have been specified by staff in accordance with the University's level descriptors for HE Level 1.

Work experience as a resource for learning, 10 credits at Level 1

Learning outcomes
On successful completion of this module, students will be able to:
1. Identify the core business of the work sector and establish how their own work role or function relates to this
2. Outline the selected work role or function in order to show how the experience of this role or function may contribute to personal learning
3. Consider how their learning at university makes a contribution to employment
4. With the aid of a diary of events or learning file, identify learning opportunities presented by the period of employment and how this learning will benefit current or future studies.

Work experience as a resource for learning, 20 credits at Level 1

Learning outcomes
On successful completion of this module, students will be able to:
1. Identify the core business of the work sector and establish how their own work role or function relates to this
2. Outline the selected work role or function in order to show how the experience of this role or function may contribute to personal learning
3. Consider how their learning at university makes a contribution to employment

4. With the aid of a diary of events or learning file, identify learning opportunities presented by the period of employment and how this learning will benefit current or future studies
5. Identify the transferable skills developed through the period of employment.

As can be seen from the comparison of the two sets of learning outcomes, the 20 credit version of the module has the additional requirement that students must identify the transferable skills they have developed through the period of employment. Although the two modules are distinguished from each other through the introduction of just one additional learning outcome, nevertheless the additional demand on students to demonstrate the acquisition of transferable skills is considerable. APU has identified a set of Graduate Learning Outcomes which reflect the generic outcomes that every graduate of the University is expected to achieve. It is these that are used to provide a benchmark against which students will demonstrate the development of transferable skills.

The nine generic learning outcomes are as follows:

Generic learning outcomes of APU's graduate awards (GLOs)

Knowledge, understanding and intellectual skills
- Demonstrate a capacity for systematic, conceptual and critical thinking
- Act in an ethical manner, demonstrating political, social and cultural awareness
- Identify a major area of discipline-based learning and demonstrate expertise within it, including evaluation of aspects of scholarship
- Demonstrate an awareness of the transferability of graduate learning to a future career or further study/training.

Transferable and practical skills
- Work with confidence both independently and as a member or leader of a group or team
- Show flexible and creative approaches to problem solving
- Communicate clearly and appropriately, demonstrating a sense of audience
- Produce output that is literate, numerate and coherent
- Manage information in a range of media.

Each of these outcomes is described in more detail: the example of learning outcome 5 is given here:

Work with confidence both independently and as a member or leader of a group or team
The learner can:
Work independently
- *make decisions / take responsibility for own actions*
- *feel confident in working alone*
- *act on own initiative and take responsibility for outcomes*
- *manage own time effectively*
- *work to deadlines*
- *manage a project through to completion, using a range of techniques of application and synthesis.*

Work in a group
- *interact effectively with others*
- *maintain co-operative working relationships*
- *play a useful role in group/ team activities*
- *feel confident in a group setting*
- *take a leadership role when asked to do so & carry it out effectively.*

Clearly, requiring students to make explicit the contribution of the learning experience to the development of transferable skills is a significant assessment task. It is also clear that supporting students through the planning and assessment of even relatively limited work-based learning elements as in these modules, may require a considerable amount of curriculum development activity on the part of academic staff in order to provide students with appropriate guidance. There is evidence from APU and elsewhere that students find it difficult to manage the assessment load associated with work experience. The Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services (AGCAS) discussion forum on employability issues includes feedback from students on the problems they face in managing the assessment load required in order to gain credit for it.[69] APU ensures that students are fully aware of the assessment requirements before they enrol on the module and requires them to develop strategies for maintaining diaries and accumulating the evidence they will need during the work experience. Students are made aware that if they are unable to complete the assessment for the module, they may experience a shortfall of credits which may prevent them from achieving their awards.

Work experience modules are by no means an easy option; the example of the learning outcomes given above are at Level 1 and the demands on students become progressively more demanding at higher levels, and are closely tied to personal development and career planning.

At Level 2 for example, the catalogue summary of the module, states:
"This module will enable the student to understand the foundations of successful employment and to consider how the work sector can be an environment for learning. The interrelationship between the worlds of work and education are explored to demonstrate how each can provide a learning environment for the other.

Students will prepare a portfolio to demonstrate achievement of the learning outcomes; the contents of the portfolio may be negotiated between the student, tutor and employer as appropriate. This will allow the student to include as evidence items which they may have produced during their placement. The size and contents of the portfolio will reflect the credit value of the module."

Work experience modules are also demanding in terms of staff time and resources. If students are to complete the module successfully, they will require as a minimum guidance and learning support in the following areas:

- how to produce a learning plan, including planning work-based activities and identifying the specific learning outcomes that are expected to result from these activities
- understanding the principles of learning from experience
- developing the skills of reflecting on experience, including the use of tools such as learning files and diaries and skills in reflective writing
- developing skills in completing evidence based assessment
- understanding of the requirements of producing a portfolio for the purpose of academic credit.

One advantage of maintaining a suite of related modules, one that can be used in programmes across the University as a whole, is that a bank of learning resources can be accumulated for use by both staff and students. These are made available in both written format in the form of handbooks, online and can be used as a basis for group activities in the classroom.

The work experience modules are described as generic university-wide modules, commonly described as 'shell' modules. Shell modules are a very useful device in the work-based learning settings, since although the generic learning outcomes of the module remain the same for every delivery in every context, they can be customised for use in different subject areas and in different settings. Consequently, although the APU modules were initially designed to support students undertaking optional and self-managed work experience, they have also been adapted to provide structure to compulsory work experience elements in specific programmes of study. One particular application, which had led to a substantial increase in the numbers of students taking these modules, has been their inclusion in the core compulsory modules undertaken by all Foundation degree students.

In Foundation degrees the modules may be used in their standard format whereby students develop individual plans to structure their work experience, or they may be customised by staff, and approved as part of the validation process. The latter option is particularly appropriate where professional or regulatory bodies require specific outcomes from the work experience to be achieved.

In all modes and contexts of delivery, the assessment requirements of the module are the same for all students. The assessment takes the form of a reflective report and a portfolio of evidence of achievement. This does not rule out the possibility of additional competence-based assessment where appropriate. The advantages of this common approach to assessment, particularly in Foundation degrees, is that second marking of scripts can be achieved by exchanging scripts for the same module across different delivery centres. APU's Employability Co-ordinator who is the overall module leader, completes the internal moderation of scripts, provides feedback to each individual module delivery leader, and also produces a generic report which is received by the External Assessor and the responsible Assessment Panel.

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[69] Available through www.agcas.org.uk/phpBB2/

This approach has proved to be a very effective means of identifying good practice as well as identifying areas where further staff development is needed or where adjustments to the type or amount of support provided to students may be required. Although the modules were originally intended to be self-managed by the students, where these modules are used to structure the work experience element of Foundation degrees or used in other vocational programmes, subject staff were more likely to be involved in supporting the students and visiting them whilst undertaking their work experience. The strength of these modules is their flexibility; they can be used in different contexts and with varying levels of direct support. Given that many Foundation degrees are delivered at a number of regional partner colleges as well as at core APU sites, these modules ensure that common practices and standards are applied. They help FECs to structure the work experience elements of the programmes they are delivering in a way that accords with University requirements. The University has also found that staff in FECs are often more familiar with the demands of supporting students on work experience and have made valuable contributions to the bank of learning materials and resources available to support students undertaking these modules.

Case study 2: Work-based learning programmes leading to dual accreditation

Sector-endorsed Foundation degree in Working with Young People and Young People's Services

Example: Lancaster University: Centre for Training and Development (CETAD)

Centre Director: Jane O'Brien

CETAD is the *Centre for Training and Development* at Lancaster University. It is a specialist centre providing work-based learning programmes, initially in Cumbria and Lancashire, but now working throughout the Northwest and across the UK. CETAD began life in Cumbria at Charlotte Mason College, which had been an established NVQ assessment centre, awarding NVQs at levels 3, 4 and 5. After it was brought into Lancaster University, it developed to become a centre for HE qualifications too.

Staff at CETAD work with a wide range of employers and individuals from different types of organisation: public, private, voluntary and community sectors. They are also engaged with a range of different partners, including local Learning and Skills Councils, the Northwest Regional Development Agency and Government Office Northwest, delivering programmes designed to meet regional needs and priorities. As an NVQ assessment centre, CETAD also works in partnership with several awarding bodies, including OCR and City and Guilds. Qualifications available include Foundation degrees, NVQs and Lancaster University Certificates across a number of subject areas, including organisational development, advice and guidance, mentoring, management development, training and development, and early years care and education.

NVQs and University Certificates

The centre delivers a number of programmes that are dual accredited, resulting in NVQ awards as well as a University Certificate; for example:
- NVQ Level 3 and a University Certificate at HE Level 1 (C)
- NVQ Level 4 and a University Certificate at HE Level 3 (H)
- NVQ Level 5 and a University Certificate at HE Level 4 (Postgraduate).

Most of the programmes are designed to meet the specific needs of those taking part, and are designed to link training and development for individuals with the objectives of their employers.

Programme structure, delivery and assessment
Each of these programmes consists of four modules of 15 credits, validated by the University, built around relevant areas of underpinning knowledge. Participants attend training workshops and complete an assessment portfolio for the purpose of achieving the University Certificate. This assessment portfolio can also be used as part of the evidence for the NVQ.

Several programmes have been developed with particular employers or organisations, for example, Lancaster City Council and Blackburn Social Services. These are usually delivered in-house, for a targeted group, at a venue arranged by the organisation.

Mentoring and learning support
CETAD have found it difficult to identify workplace mentors for individual students on 'open' programmes, and where it does happen, mentoring is usually set up by the participants themselves. It tends to be a bonus rather than a standard arrangement as employers are often not prepared to commit their staff to it. However, in order to ensure that all students receive appropriate support, the University has a team of advisers attached to each programme; the advisers are usually appointed as Associate lecturers, and drawn from relevant professional or industry backgrounds. They are therefore able to provide relevant vocational expertise in the form of both face-to-face support, often provided through group work at the module delivery events, and telephone/email communication.

Validation and quality assurance
University Certificates are validated by a Validation Committee which is a subcommittee of the Continuing Education and Professional Development Committee. The procedures used mirror the arrangements for standard validation undertaken by the Faculty Teaching Committees, and report to Senate in the same way. Members of the Validation Committee are drawn from the various colleges and partnerships linked to CETAD, and tend to be people who are involved with work-based learning and CPD.

Masters degree in developing professional practice

CETAD have recently initiated a Masters degree programme in developing professional practice. The programme was developed in response to a demand for progression routes from a number of the dual accreditation programmes, and has recruited students from a

mixture of professional backgrounds. It is a generic programme, designed to address a number of generic themes around work-based learning. The areas of work-based learning are agreed with employers and assessed through a reflective project report.

Validation and quality assurance

The Masters programme was validated through a two-stage process: the first stage is the same as described for dual accreditation programmes; in the case of postgraduate programmes it must also be endorsed by the Graduate School committee. Because members of this committee were not all familiar with the issues associated with work-based programmes and CPD programmes, it was found necessary to address many issues, such as non-standard entry requirements, before the second stage event. As a result, the approval of the programme progressed through the committee processes in a relatively uneventful manner.

Sector-endorsed Foundation degree in Working with Young People and Young People's Services

"The key issue is that successful Foundation degree students will have already demonstrated such a significant and sufficient breadth and depth of knowledge and understanding of working with young people and young people's services, that they should be regarded as having a substantial amount of the underpinning knowledge that can be directly contributed to the S/NVQ process. While the onus is on the S/NVQ candidate to demonstrate that they possess and can evidence this knowledge as they are being assessed, so there is the responsibility on the part of the S/NVQ assessor to ensure that the candidate does not have to repeat learning that has already been undertaken." [70]

From October 2004, CETAD became the first centre in the UK to offer the Sector-endorsed Foundation degree in Working with Young People and Young People's Services. The programme has been officially approved by the Children's Workforce Unit at the Department for Education and Skills, which manages the recognition process for all proposed programmes.

Curriculum

The Foundation degree curriculum, as evidenced by the learning outcomes of the Foundation degree, is mapped against the units, elements and performance criteria of the Level 4 S/NVQ in Delivering Learning, Development and Support for Children, Young People and Those Who Care for Them. The programme provides a strong theoretical base for much of the knowledge and understanding required in the S/NVQ. Information about the Sector-endorsed Foundation degree in Working with Young People and Young People's Services can be found on the DfES Foundation degree website and details of Lancaster's programme can be found on the CETAD section of the University's website.[71] [72] The DfES has

produced a Statement of Requirement, based on National Occupational Standards, setting out what is required for approval and endorsement of programmes.

The Statement of Requirement sets out the main structural and delivery features which must be present to satisfy the Foundation degree qualification benchmark and the main professional/practical skills, knowledge and understanding, and key/transferable skills requirements that are specified in the occupational standards. The statement also summarises features of good practice, including student and learning support and work-based learning. The Foundation degree is designed to provide core underpinning knowledge and some evidence of performance at Level 4 for related N/SVQs. Universities and colleges are encouraged to help students make links between the Foundation degree and the N/SVQ and, where appropriate, to start compiling a portfolio of evidence. Following the Foundation degree, additional evidence of competent performance in the work situation will enable students to complete any required N/SNQ Level 4 units or the full award.

The sector-endorsed Foundation degree may be completed either in work-based mode or through full-time study with work placements. At CETAD, the programme is being delivered in the first instance only in the work-based mode, with much of the learning taking place in the workplace, supported by CETAD approved and trained mentors.

The Statement of Requirement specifies fifteen learning outcomes to be achieved by the end of the Foundation degree.[73] These are grouped into clusters, namely: *Self and Others, Young People, Social and Economic Context and Community and Organisational Contexts*. At CETAD, these have been organised into twelve modules, plus 2 periods of work experience placements within a variety of agencies. The modules are:

1. Skills and practices in learning
2. The development of guidance theory and practice
3. Emergence of the guidance professions within a multi-agency setting
4. Working with young people's services: legal and ethical considerations
5. Communication skills in a support and guidance setting
6. Theories of guidance relationships - the integrative approach
7. Young people's personal and psychological development
8. Facilitating group guidance
9. Guidance practice: working for change with young people and the communities and agencies that serve them.
10. Guidance - working within a multi-agency setting
11. Guidance - ethical, legal considerations in practice
12. The process and practice of evaluation.

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[70] *DfES Sector-endorsed Foundation degree in Working with Young People and Young People's Services: Statement of Requirement*. Appendix A: Links between the learning outcomes and the National Occupational Standards, p.42.

[71] www.foundationdegree.org.uk

[72] www.cetad.lancs.ac.uk

[73] See Appendix A.

Progression

The Foundation degree can lead to:

- employment within the young people services sector, for example, a Trainee Connexions Personal Advisor, Learning Mentor or Education Welfare Officer
- via a bridging course to a variety of Honours degree courses, for example Youth and Community BA (Honours), Social Work BA (Honours), Social Science BA (Honours).

Validation and quality assurance

Internal validation of the programme took place through the usual CETAD processes as described previously for dual accreditation programmes.

Appendix A: Learning outcomes for the Sector-endorsed Foundation degree in working with Young People and Young People's Services

There are fifteen learning outcomes to be achieved by the end of the Foundation degree. They are grouped into clusters, namely: *Self and Others, Young People, Social and Economic Context and Community and Organisational Contexts*.

Self and Others

- Critically review and update own knowledge by accessing significant and emerging theory and practice
- Apply underpinning equal opportunities, anti-oppressive and anti-discriminatory values and principles to own work
- Develop strategies for managing own learning and capacity for change
- Communicate effectively with a range of individuals and groups using a variety of methods and media

- Work effectively with colleagues and others.

Young People

- Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of the development of young people and the psychological, personal, educational, social, legislative and community factors that influence their lives
- Establish, maintain and conclude effective relationships with young people with regard to professional purpose and environments
- Work with young people in groups to provide engagement, assessment, development, support and guidance in order to increase their resources, capacity and power to effect change in their lives
- Create a healthy, safe environment in which to work with young people
- Demonstrate a critical understanding of the learning processes that lead to change.

Social and economic context

- Demonstrate a critical understanding of the social, political, economic and historical factors affecting different professions working with young people
- Demonstrate a knowledge and understanding and application to practice of ethical, professional and legal considerations and values
- Demonstrate a critical understanding of a multi-agency approach to working with young people and its application to practice
- Evaluate the effectiveness of own practice and own organisation working with a multi-agency approach
- Create opportunities to take account of young people in the management and delivery of services to young people.

Each institution applying to have their Foundation degree approved within the framework must provide a rationale for the learning outcomes and good practice indicators. For example in relation to the first learning outcome, the guidance is as follows:

Critically review and update own knowledge by accessing significant and emerging theory and practice.

This learning outcome underpins the scheme and forms a model of best practice for the student. It reflects the need for continuous professional development of practitioners acknowledged by the professions and the National Occupational Standards. Students will be expected to identify and evaluate their strengths and areas for improvement and take appropriate opportunities to adjust their own knowledge and practice to meet current and future needs of service delivery. Personal development plans will be developed and reviewed.

Good practice indicators in the Sector-endorsed Foundation degree in Working with Young People and Young People's Services.

Institutions demonstrating good practice in this aspect of the Foundation degree will develop students' ability to:

- assess the limits of own knowledge, skills and practice and how this affects analysis and interpretation
- establish and implement procedures to review and update current knowledge and practice
- integrate outcomes from review into own practice.

Case study 3: Foundation degrees, work-based learning, and progression opportunities

Example: Bath University, Centre for Learning Partnerships:
- Foundation degrees within a consortium framework
- Work-based Honours programmes as progression routes
- Working outside the frame: independent Foundation degrees

Assistant Director (Access and Learning Partnerships):
Jenny Newlyn

The Division for Lifelong Learning (DLL) at Bath University is responsible for many of the University's outreach activities. It has three main centres:
- Centre for Lifelong Learning (with offices in Bath and Swindon)
- Learning Partnerships (responsible for the Foundation degree, Higher National Diploma, Foundation Year and Certificate in Education programmes)
- Business Skills Development.

The majority of work-based learning activity takes place within the Centre for Learning Partnerships. It manages a number of Foundation degrees, Higher National Diploma/Certificate courses, a Certificate in Education, and a Foundation Year. All the programmes lead to a University of Bath award but are delivered primarily through local further education colleges and partner organisations.

The Centre has a strong commitment to widening participation in, and improving access to, higher education and works with local colleges to provide vocationally oriented higher education programmes. It also has responsibility for the quality assurance of the programmes (including programme approval, annual monitoring, link tutors, external examiners and student feedback) as well as student administration (such as student record maintenance, confirmation of results, certificate and transcript production, and complaints and academic reviews).

Students on the courses are registered at both the college/partner organisation and at the University. This allows them access to the facilities at both institutions, including the University Library and Learning Centre and the facilities at the Oakfield campus in Swindon.

A consortium approach to Foundation degree development

The University is the lead member of a Foundation degree consortium which also comprises two other HEIs, namely Bath Spa University College and the Royal Agricultural College, and approximately 12 regional FECs. The Division for Lifelong Learning is moving to replace all of its HND/C provision with Foundation degrees over the next three years. Some of these will be in new subject areas, whilst others will build on existing expertise in the FECs and other partner organisations.

Developing a collaborative curriculum framework
The consortium has adopted a collaborative approach to the development of a curriculum framework, which includes 30 ECTS credits (60 CATS credits) of core learning outcomes designed to meet the key skills and work-based learning requirements prescribed in the QAA *Foundation Degree Qualification Benchmark*.[74]

The common core consists of three units:
1. Learning in the workplace 1 (20 CATS credits at Level C Certificate)
2. Learning in the workplace 2 (20 CATS credits at Level I Intermediate)
3. Managing your own learning in the workplace (20 CATS credits at Level I, Intermediate).

These three units of the core curriculum may be excluded from a programme of study only where a professional, statutory or regulatory body wholly specifies the curriculum to be covered. The remaining curriculum of 180 CATS credits is made up of the subject specific or negotiated learning parts of the Foundation degree programme. Of this, up to 50% must be work-based learning or via work placement. The consortium intends to develop the common units in the programme for online delivery to supplement the existing deliveries within the FECs.

In addition to the three compulsory modules, an optional common unit is available: 'Preparing and submitting an APL/APEL portfolio'. This unit must be completed by the student at the beginning of the programme. Other qualifications studied concurrently may be considered for APL during the course of the programme.

A range of Foundation degrees have been developed within this collaborative partnership: all can be studied on a full-time (2 year) or part-time (3 year) basis and integrate academic and work based learning.

The programmes are designed and developed collaboratively by Curriculum Working Groups made up of representatives from each partner, a link tutor from the appropriate academic area in the University, representatives / advisers from Sector Skills Councils, professional bodies and employers. The Division for Lifelong Learning is co-ordinating and managing this activity and preparing for implementation.

Quality assurance
The Foundation degree consortium has provided the vehicle for the:
- generation and approval in each HEI of general regulations governing all Foundation degrees developed within the consortium
- development and approval of the common curriculum
- production of a Quality Assurance Framework, which clearly outlines the consortium and individual HEI responsibilities
- sharing of experience and practice between HEIs and FECs
- co-operation between the three HEIs to work together on other developments.

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[74] QAA (2002) *Foundation Degree Qualification Benchmark*, London: QAA.

Future consortium activities will include:
- production of electronic guidance to applicants and students regarding the development of APL / APEL portfolios
- development of a consortium website, which will initially be used as a means of communication for members and practitioners across the consortium
- feedback on work-based learning methods, identifying how this can inform better practice
- development of information packs for employers about Foundation degrees and work-based mentoring
- a regional Foundation degree conference.

A Curriculum Quality Group has been established and has drawn up a Quality Assurance Manual, to guide FECs in what is expected of them.

Validation

The Teaching and Quality Committee within the Division of Lifelong Learning at Bath University is responsible for the validation of all Foundation degrees awarded by the University, following standard university procedures and the common Foundation degree regulations. The relevant sector skills councils are involved in the validation process as well as local employers, professional body representatives where appropriate, and an external academic panel member. Members of the HEIs within the consortium also regularly sit on each other's validation panels.

Assessment procedures

As part of these developments, a set of common assessment regulations have been produced. Work is first assessed locally at the institution at which the student is registered. It is then sampled by an assessor at the awarding HEI, before being presented to the University Board of Studies. At Bath, one assessment board, managed by the Division of Lifelong Learning, deals with the assessment of all Foundation degrees.

Issues are beginning to arise in relation to assessment arrangements in cases where the same Foundation degree pathway is being delivered at three or four centres. Since it is essential that there is common practice and common standards across all centres, discussions are taking place around the possibility of establishing meetings of pathway Subject Boards within the consortium to moderate the assessment process prior to the forwarding of marks to the University Board.

A work-based learning progression route to honours

On successful completion of the Foundation degree, students are given the opportunity to progress onto a vocational one-year top-up programme leading to an Honours degree. At present the consortium offers progression routes into one or more existing programmes delivered at one of the HEI partners.

An interesting development is the consortium's proposal to create an entirely work-based learning progression route that will be open to any Foundation degree graduate. The University is anxious to stress that this proposal is still under development; however, it is proposed to offer common units at level H (Honours) in three areas of the curriculum:

1. Personnel, management and supervision: this unit will focus on the common skills that graduates are expected to demonstrate
2. Work-based research project: this unit will have a higher credit value than a standard undergraduate dissertation
3. Optional units in the specialist area: these units will draw on the expertise of staff in the FECs and engage with local sector skills councils.

This development will be of particular interest to other consortia and institutions that are experiencing difficulties in identifying appropriate progression routes to Honours degrees. Many of the Honours degree programmes at Bath University recruit only full-time students and have little capacity for admitting additional students at this stage. Furthermore, the approaches to teaching and learning on these courses are different from those experienced by Foundation degree students and therefore require the students to find ways of coping with these additional demands at the same time as they have to adjust to Honours level work. These proposals will enable them to achieve an Honours degree in a mode that is more appropriate for students who are in work and provide continuity with the approaches to learning developed during the Foundation degree phase.

An innovative feature is the proposal to use the emerging Lifelong Learning Network hubs around the region as a base for delivering the common units. This will have the advantage that the colleges involved in delivery of the Foundation degrees will be able to extend their involvement to Honours level delivery through the Network. It is anticipated that eventually, students will be able to access materials from the work place and the assessment of the programme will be work-based.

Foundation degrees in commercial music and addictions counselling

Two Foundation degrees are running outside of the common framework, either because they had been validated prior to its development or because of professional requirements.

The *Foundation degree in Commercial Music* at Bath Spa University College has been running since 2002. Key features of this programme are described by Joe Bennett, the programme leader, in a recent SEEC Publication, *Making Foundation degrees work.*[75] This programme was developed before the consortium established a common curriculum framework, and before the existence of the QAA qualification benchmark. As such it is an example of how to build a programme from scratch - literally. Commenting on the initial

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[75] Bennett, J. (2004), *We can work it out: Foundation degree in Commercial Music.* In Brennan L. & Gosling D. (eds) *Making Foundation degrees work*, London: SEEC.

development period, Joe Bennett writes: *"at the time I was relatively new to higher education, had no team, limited experience of curriculum development, and had literally to build the rooms in which the programme was to be delivered."*

Of particular interest here is the approach to managing the work-based learning element in a context where it is difficult enough to define what the industry is, let alone identify and involve employers. Furthermore, the aspiring musicians recruited to the programme are likely to be at best self-employed and at worst not employed at all. Bath Spa's solution to the difficulties of securing industry involvement was to create a steering group composed of people with particular roles in the music industry - a music lawyer, a magazine editor, a board member of the Performing Rights Society, a tour manager, an artist/producer and contacts from record companies and local venues.

Their solution to the problem of finding opportunities for work experience and work-based learning was particularly innovative. The course team decided to identify the 'core business' of band-based professional music practice and concluded that it was about gigging, selling merchandise and marketing the band. Their approach then was to get the students to set up projects that would eventually go on tour and to make every activity that led up to this take the form of work-based learning. The students would record a product, market it, take it on the road and merchandise it. Each group was given a cheque of around £140 drawn from the course revenue budget, paid into individual business accounts set up by the students, which they had to use to hire vans, pay session musicians and various other activities associated with performing in real venues and selling merchandise. Joe Bennett writes, *"one of the assessment requirements was that each student supplied detailed financial records and that this money was a 'recoupable advance' - i.e. the students would repay the monies out of ticket sales and merchandising, giving them responsibility for a debt/budget and all the associated learning outcomes."*[76] Needless to say, not all the monies were recovered, but as a learning experience of what the real world was like, it proved to be invaluable.

There are clearly advantages to working to a common curriculum framework within a consortium, and to developing programmes in partnership with other colleges and employers. However, this example from Bath Spa also shows how good practice can emerge from 'stand alone' developments, where every feature of the programme is specifically tailored to the highly distinctive nature of a particular work sector. Indeed, the team at Bath Spa had very little choice but to go down this route since, as mentioned earlier, there are few opportunities to forge formal partnerships with relevant employers, and the FECs in the area were unable to take part because they did not have the substantial resources needed to fund the specialist equipment and facilities needed.

The *Foundation degree in Addictions Counselling*, delivered by the *Clouds* Department of Professional Education, Training and Research, is another example of a Foundation degree validated by the University of Bath that stands outside of the consortium model.

Clouds is a charitable organisation which provides comprehensive alcohol and drug related services. In 1986 it established a Department of Professional Education, Training and Research (PETR) for the purpose of providing training in addictions counselling. The department provides a number of programmes, including full-time and part-time courses, which offer progression routes from FE Level 2 through to postgraduate diploma, the latter being delivered at the Institute of Psychiatry in King's College, London. Details of all of their programmes, including the Foundation degree can be found on the Clouds PETR website.[77]

The Foundation degree in Addictions Counselling is offered in both full-time and part-time modes, with the first delivery of the full-time programme having commenced in November 2004. In both modes, the programme uses an evidence based approach to learning and is signposted to DANOS (Drug and Alcohol National Occupational Standards) for service delivery standards and is supported by the Federation of Drug and Alcohol Professionals (Fdap).[78] The programme learning outcomes and content are the same, whatever the mode of delivery, and are organised into 19 units of 12 CATS credits each and 2 half units of 6 credits each.

Of these units:
- **13 units** are taught units of which:
  – 4 have traditional study assignments (for example: essays, short papers)
  – 9 have both traditional assignments and work-based assignments (for example casework, resources reviews).
- **5 full-units and 2 half-units** are completed and assessed entirely within the workplace (no classroom teaching)
- **1 unit** is an extended case study project.

For the part-time course, all of the taught units are delivered in 5-day residentials and the order in which the units are studied is very flexible; at the beginning of each academic year, students are asked to elect through a personal development plan how many residential units they intend to take in the coming year and which ones. On the full-time programme, which normally lasts eighteen months, the first five months of the course will involve one or two teaching days per week, followed by 12 months of one teaching day a week and four days in a work placement. The majority of part-time students will already be employed as full-time counsellors, and except where there are specific requirements which cannot be met, will complete the activities and the assessment in their normal place of work. Full-time students will be allocated placements; work-based learning takes place in agencies in the statutory,

[76] Ibid, p.36.
[77] www.clouds.org.uk/research.htm
[78] www.danos.info . On their website, DANOS provide useful guidelines for organisations and partnerships on how to use the occupational standards to deliver strategic objectives. This section of the website is interactive and the general principles could be applied to very different contexts using other sets of occupational standards.

voluntary and independent sectors where students are supervised by qualified and experienced clinicians. In both cases, during these periods of assessed clinical practice, students are required to produce a portfolio of evidence of their learning.

Because the programme involves work with vulnerable adults, there are specific entry requirements. Applicants must be over 23 years of age, must have a recognised Certificate in Counselling at FE Level 2 or above or equivalent suitable work experience, or preferably both. Clouds PETR runs an Access course each year in order for applicants to obtain a suitable qualification prior to enrolment. All successful applicants will be required to apply to the Criminal Records Bureau for disclosure of any criminal record and those applicants who have had addiction problems themselves are expected to have a minimum of three years stable recovery before starting the course.

Although this programme does not conform to the common curriculum model established by the Foundation degree consortium, Clouds have worked very closely with the Centre for Learning Partnerships to satisfy all of the criteria for Foundation degree programmes and the University's quality assurance requirements, with the programme being validated using standard documentation, for example a programme specification. The programme provides an illustration of how specialist programmes, can meet both academic and professional goals by operating outside of standard conventions.

Case study 4: Work-based placements and sandwich degrees in Built Environment programmes

Example: Sheffield Hallam University Faculty of Development and Society:
- University Foundation Certificate in the Built Environment
- Honours degrees in Architecture and Environmental Design and Architectural Technology
- Honours degrees and HNDs in Built Environment and Building Engineering

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The Faculty of Development and Society at Sheffield Hallam University offers an extensive portfolio of courses in Architecture and the Built Environment, ranging from a University Foundation Certificate in the Built Environment, through to Masters degrees and CPD programmes. Most of the programmes lead to some level of professional accreditation and involve work-based placements; the majority of the Honours degree programmes include an optional or compulsory sandwich year.

The University Foundation Certificate in the Built Environment offers access into higher education without formal academic entry qualifications. The Certificate requires an extra year at the beginning of the degree course, and on successful completion provides entry to an HND or degree course in the Built Environment programme. Courses open to students who successfully complete the Foundation certificate include:
- BSc (Honours) Architectural Technology
- BSc (Honours) Construction Management
- BSc (Honours) Construction Commercial Management
- BSc (Honours) Environmental Management
- BSc (Honours) Property Studies
- BSc (Honours) Surveying Technology
- HND Building Studies
- HND Business Property Management.

Employer involvement

The University places great emphasis on involving local employers and members of professional bodies in course planning, with employer representatives attending validation events and exam boards. Some programmes provide a direct route to professional body membership, either as a consequence of graduating with Honours or by subsequent individual application. Links include:
- the Association of Building Engineers (ABE)
- the Chartered Institute of Building (CIOB)
- the Chartered Institute of Housing (CIOH)
- the Chartered Institute of Transport (CIT)
- the British Institute of Architectural Technologists (BIAT)
- the Chartered Institute of Water and Environmental Management (CIWEM)
- the Institute of Building Control (IBC)
- the Institute of Logistics and Transport (ILT)
- the National Association of Estate Agents (NAEA)
- the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA)
- the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS)
- the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI).[79]

Some employers have donated bursaries to support students during their programmes or provide prizes for students who achieve overall excellence on their courses. For example, one local employer, Bournston Developments, has donated bursaries amounting to £25,000 each year to selected students on Real Estate and Built Environment courses. Furthermore, some of the employers that provide placement opportunities also sponsor students for their final year of study, with the expectation that on graduation the students will return to employment with the company. The University also has funding to increase the number of women and other under-represented groups studying built environment courses.

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[79] Sheffield Hallam University's website at: www.shu.ac.uk has links to the websites of the relevant professional bodies.

Professional placements

The University places great store on the opportunities it provides for professional placements, particularly in the context of four year sandwich degrees in which the third year comprises an assessed placement which is an integral part of the course. Both students and employers have found these placements to be of considerable mutual benefit. As one student put it:

"My placement year enabled me to put into practice the skills that I had learned in my first two years. It helped me to develop my interpersonal skills and gave me a real taste for working life. I was given a lot of responsibility and work to really get my teeth into. I always felt that I had the support of my management when I needed it".

One firm of Chartered Surveyors in Sheffield commented:
"I can't and won't imagine life without them [placement students]. *We give them training, authority, confidence and independence. They dash in each morning firing up their computer, the fax machine, digital camera...They have ingenuity, enthusiasm and a hunger for knowledge. They have their own graduates' club, emailing, sharing experiences - they are our priceless next generation".*

Sheffield Hallam devotes considerable energies to identifying and supporting employers. The University has produced an information leaflet for employers who are considering taking students on placement, which spells out the potential benefits to receiving organisations:

- the energy and freshness of a new enthusiastic member of staff
- the opportunity to assess the student as a future potential permanent employee
- a placement training scheme that can be adapted for other employees as part of investors in people
- the introduction of up to date ideas and IT developments into the organisation
- the support of the University throughout the placement period.

Because so many of the programmes must meet the requirements of the relevant validating professional bodies, most students on placement are supported by a structured training programme. University staff work with the employers to ensure that the latter understand the requirements of the programme, especially the need for supervision by an appropriate professional within the organisation. This is particularly important where students are required to undertake the compulsory Assessed Professional Competencies training which leads to professional status. University staff also assist organisations with recruitment, by guiding them through the recruitment procedure and helping them to find a suitable candidate. Applications are sent to organisations for their consideration, and shortlisted candidates are then interviewed either at the employer's own offices or, if this is preferred, at the University.

Examples of professionally accredited programmes

1. BSc (Hons) Architectural Technology

This degree course has been designed in consultation with construction companies, architects and the British Institute of Architectural Technologists (BIAT). It is fully accredited by BIAT and is a Construction Industry Council designated course. BIAT have been particularly proactive in integrating National Occupational Standards into their requirements for accreditation so that HEIs can ensure that their provision is linked to industry requirements. Since 2000, when QAA developed its subject benchmark statement based on National Occupational Standards, BIAT has accepted relevant degrees as providing eligibility for full membership of BIAT (MBIAT).

The BSc (Hons) Architectural Technology course at Hallam was one of the first to gain full accreditation. As such the placement element of the programme is particularly important as this enables students to demonstrate achievement of performance standards required for BIAT membership.[80] Architectural technologists provide architectural design services and solutions and provide an important link between concept and construction. They provide a key role in developing architectural projects by:

- assessing the needs of clients and users and agreeing the project brief
- recognising the significance of the design stage and how it underpins the construction project
- evaluating and advising upon environmental, regulatory and legal requirements affecting the project and obtaining initial approvals
- producing and evaluating feasibility studies
- assessing and managing survey requirements and producing surveys
- developing project briefs and design programmes
- advising clients on methods of project procurement and forms of contract.[81]

They are also required to manage the architectural design process by:
- preparing and presenting design proposals using CAD and traditional methods
- leading the design process and co-ordinating detailed design information
- managing and co-ordinating the design team and associated professional consultants
- developing the project design, researching problems and producing, developing and advising upon innovative solutions
- producing, analysing and advising upon specification, materials selection, detailed design solutions in relation to performance and production criteria
- liaising with and producing documentation for statutory approval authorities
- producing, managing, controlling and integrating design and production information
- carrying out design stage risk assessments.

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80 Details of requirements for membership of the British Institute of Architectural Technologists can be found at: www.biat.org.uk.

81 Source: *The Architectural Technology Careers Handbook*, available from the British Institute of Architectural Technologists, 397 City Road, London. EC1V 1NH or at: www.biat.org.uk.

The structured training programme provided by the University and agreed with employers, is designed to provide opportunities for students on placement to develop their knowledge and skills in these areas.

Sheffield Hallam University has a dedicated Environmental Design Studio, to which students on this course and other related courses have open access. The Design Studio is seen as essential by students, staff and employers, as it provides opportunities for realistic hands-on project work. The Studio offers many specialist pieces of software, including computer aided design, project management, architectural design, geo-technical analysis, property management, development appraisal, building services design and statistical analysis. Dedicated resources are also available such as plan printing, large format printing, report binding and audio-visual equipment, as well as specialist magazines and publications, books, maps, online databases and stand-alone specialist software. Students often work together in the studio making use of the many facilities. As one student put it: *"Because you tend to work together in the studio... you tend to learn a lot more by working with other people rather than on your own. So you learn from other people's ideas."*

2. BSc (Honours) Building Engineering

This is a unique programme in that it is the only degree programme in this area. It has been developed and delivered jointly by Sheffield Hallam University and the Association of Building Engineers (ABE) and validated by Sheffield Hallam. The programme is only available part-time and is designed to provide professionally-experienced members of the ABE with a formal learning experience leading to an Honours degree. The aims of the course are:
- to develop the learners' academic and lifelong learning skills
- to enhance the learners' subject specific knowledge and skills through reflection on and case study consideration of professional practice.

The Award is available to both Associate and Corporate members of the Association of Building Engineers. It has been developed to meet the QAA's subject benchmark for graduates in Building and Surveying, and incorporates the learning outcomes for building engineers as defined by the Construction Industry Board (CIB) Educational Framework. ABE is also an assessment centre for a range of industry NVQs at Levels 3, 4 and 5, which may be taken alongside the degree if required.

Entry requirements for the programme are ABE membership at Associate or Corporate level and an HND or HNC. Mature students who do not hold these qualifications must hold full membership of the association and demonstrate the necessary learning from experience to enable them to achieve the award.

Lectures, tutorials and seminars are delivered at the ABE Headquarters in Northampton over one weekend each month for three semesters. The programme is offered on a rolling basis with intakes at the beginning of each semester, which means that students could complete the programme at a slower pace by picking up modules offered to a later cohort.

Case study 5: Ufi/Learndirect: Learning through Work (LtW) programme

Example: Negotiated work-based learning programmes for individuals or cohorts of learners
Providing a work-based learning progression route from Advanced Apprenticeship
Ufi Learning through Work Programme Manager: Judy Saxton
University of Derby LtW Director: David Young

The Ufi/Learndirect '*Learning through Work*' (LtW) initiative was developed collaboratively with eight HEIs that either already had in place established work-based learning programmes or wished to use to LtW approach as a platform for developing its capacity in this area. Not all of the HEIs involved in the development phases have continued to participate, but in their place a number of new HEIs are currently involved. Current partners include the University of Derby, City University, London, University College Chester, University of Central Lancashire, University College Northampton, Thames Valley University, University of Northumbria, and the University of the West of England.

LtW is a partnership between Ufi/Learndirect and universities that enables people at work to develop an online learning contract that addresses their developmental needs in the context of work. Ufi/Learndirect provides the online services and facilities, while the universities provide online support, quality assurance and the award of qualifications for successful completion. Qualifications currently available include:
- the award of freestanding credit
- Certificates and Diplomas of Higher Education
- Foundation Degrees
- BA/BSc Honours degrees
- Postgraduate Certificates and Diplomas
- MA/MSc degrees.

Currently, there are around 1500 learners distributed across individual learning contracts (40%) and in over fifty group-based programmes (60%). Of these, 58% are learning at undergraduate level and 42% at postgraduate level. The average duration of a LtW programme is two and a half years, with an attrition rate of around 14%. So far, more than 250 learners have achieved qualifications through the scheme. Each HEI sets its own fees which are determined by the kind and level of learning undertaken, with fees for cohort programmes being arranged between the university and the sponsoring organisation.

The LtW framework aims to provide learner centred programmes of blended learning. The original concept of LtW was to provide online support for individual learners to enable them to negotiate and plan a programme of learning through work. However, it became apparent that the scheme could effectively support cohorts of learners within organisations, by providing a programme framework within which there could be opportunities for individual negotiation. Currently more than 60% of learners are sponsored by their employers on cohort programmes, with 40% of these studying programmes at postgraduate level.

The LtW approach prioritises learning *through* work, and as such is distinguished from learning *about, for,* or *at* work. A learning programme that is explicitly based on learning through work is defined as aiming to help people articulate their learning from previous work experience and plan ways of learning from current and projected work activities, and to make it possible for such learners to secure formal recognition for the achievement of that learning.

Each individual learner's programme and resulting qualification is negotiated online with the HEI of their choice; in most cases the award title itself can be negotiated on an individual basis, or in the case of cohort programmes, with their employers or sponsors. By drawing on work-based projects, the awards are particularly relevant to individuals and companies, including small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs), for whom absence from the workplace for study purposes is inappropriate.

Essentially therefore, LtW provides a means of gaining HE level qualifications (or credit) using work as a major learning resource, supported through a sophisticated web-based environment.

There are three stages to the LtW process for individual learners:
1. **Exploration** - a free initial interactive online package designed to inform, provide diagnostic feedback and assist the learner in making a decision on the suitability of the scheme for them. Learners wishing to join the scheme submit an online application to their chosen university
2. **Design** - all learners must use this facility to negotiate a learning contract leading to a particular award. The learning contract must specify an individualised programme, its associated aims and components and the award sought. Learners negotiate their intended learning outcomes, the evidence they intend to produce and the assessment criteria to be used. The online Design Package contains many levels of help including downloadable expert advice on key processes and detailed help on the criteria relevant to different levels of award. Users have access to support from their university either via online dialogue facilities, private email or telephone
3. **Implementation and assessment** - learners undertake the programme supported by their tutor(s) and complete the agreed activities and present evidence for assessment.

The scheme's online infrastructure means that learners may choose whichever university best suits their needs, and need not visit the campus unless they wish to do so. Ufi/Learndirect provides each learner with a printed handbook on the full procedures plus a printed guide to using the web-based facilities.

Individual LtW learners have the following characteristics: they are in work wishing to gain a qualification, or to top up an existing qualification or gain credit; they may not have 'traditional' entry qualifications such as A levels, but must have the potential to work at HE level (undergraduate or postgraduate) and need to be working in a role that will generate learning opportunities.

Feedback from learners suggests that for most LtW learners this approach is perceived as having many advantages: for many it was the only option available for them to gain an HE qualification without taking time off work to attend university; learning plans could be tailored to suit their needs and aspirations (often leading to a negotiated award title); extra value was attached to workplace activities; credit could be gained for relevant prior learning (APCL and APEL); they could work at their own pace, at a distance from the HEI and, most importantly, with a great deal of support from the HEI, the website and LtW advisers.

For employers, the LtW approach has the advantages that: it enables staff to gain relevant (and quality assured) learning and qualifications without taking time off work; learning can be tailored specifically to the work related needs of the employer and the individual; specific needs of the organisation can be addressed within an appropriate timescale; existing relevant in-house training programmes can be incorporated; 'must haves' such as occupational standards, key skills etc. can be built in; needs not catered for elsewhere in the education and training system can be met.

The LtW website has the following features:
- an exploration stage and application process
- support for learning contract development with online help
- a printable version of the learning contract for the purpose of approval by the responsible HEI
- level indicators programmed in
- a dialogue facility to enable tutorial encounters
- extensive 'expert advice' resources (study support etc.)
- some online modules, for example in research methods
- the facility to support renegotiation of the learning contract
- an administration site to enable student management and cohort contract development.

Through the website there are also a number of advanced Adobe PDF files available to support learners. Although these have been developed specifically for the LtW scheme, most are relevant to any work-based learning programme and similar materials can be found, at least in printed form, in most HEIs offering work-based learning programmes. The LtW files include:
- using academic conventions
- learning from doing
- accreditation of prior learning
- producing a narrative argument
- learning with others
- writing programme components
- assembling and preparing evidence
- ethical issues
- the LtW Level Indicators
- making best use of online learning
- identifying work-based learning opportunities
- managing projects
- reflecting on your experience
- an introduction to research
- reviewing your progress.

Additional learning resources are continually being developed; recent developments include materials relating to leadership, law and employment, change management, project management and professional practice. The website address is: www.learndirect-ltw.co.uk

All individually negotiated LtW programmes are unique, but an example of the typical programme components can be seen in this sample postgraduate diploma programme.

An example of a LtW Postgraduate Diploma

Online module	Negotiated project		Work-based project
15 credits	15 credits		30 credits
In-house course	Taught module	Work-based project	Accreditation of prior experiential learning
5 credits	10 credits	15 credits	30 credits

Judy Saxton at Ufi and John Stevenson at Middlesex University undertook a survey of learners in the programme to establish the value and limitations of the blended learning approach adopted by LtW, and in particular the value of the website.[82] The following propositions emerged from the data collected which they stress should be the basis for further investigations:

- It is possible for people at work to put together, with appropriate support from expert tutors, unique programmes of study built around their everyday work, leading to university qualifications
- Attrition rates can be kept relatively low if people can shape the focus and direction of their programme to reflect their work situation and personal aspirations
- People with strong personal motivation who are aware of the nature and demands of the programme can make good progress
- Universities are able to integrate their own quality assurance procedures with those of the LtW website and recruit students to a wide variety of academic areas of study
- It is possible to design, build and sustain interactive websites, capable of helping individual people at work put together unique quality-assured personalised programmes at university level wholly online
- People from a wide variety of working backgrounds, varied educational experience and with familiarity of the internet are able to make productive use of such facilities
- Online learning through work programmes work effectively when personal support by process experts is readily available on a just-in-time basis by email or specialist dialogue box
- Learning through work websites are effective when they provide users with easy online access on a just-in-time basis to downloadable expert advice on key processes and case studies of how others have used the service

- Online learning through work attracts and caters effectively for people who would not otherwise be able to engage in higher education because of pressure of work and/or family commitments
- Online learning through work enables individuals and groups to advance themselves personally, improve their working practice and benefit their employers through the same process, without time off work
- A wide variety of people at work are capable of, and benefit from, managing their own learning at university level.

They argue that these propositions lend support to the conclusions previously identified from the reviews of research on e-learning and work-based learning, and reported by John Stevenson to the 2003 AERA meeting, that to be consistent with how learning occurs at work, online learning needs to be:
- personalised
- managed by the user
- relevant to the user's everyday work and aspirations
- supported by the employer
- linked to just-in-time specialist material
- fully supported within a healthy learning milieu.[83]

Conclusion
This report of the initial stages of a major evaluation of the Ufi Learning through Work programme, based on a systematic survey of more than 1000 participants followed by 16 in-depth interviews, gives sufficient confidence for further research to be undertaken to test the proposition that Learning through Work can be significantly enhanced for the benefit of learners and employers, and retention rates can be significantly improved, by a well-planned interactive website with personal support that:
- provides opportunity for potential users to explore the service's features and their readiness to take part
- helps people at work articulate their personal ambitions and needs
- directly responds to people's personal aspirations and circumstances at work
- offers a range of easily accessible online specialist advice, at different levels, on all key educational processes involved
- helps participants value and build on their previous experience and explore the learning potential in their working circumstances
- allows participants to exploit a wide range of learning resources from personal, professional and employer networks and from the work activity itself
- provides just-in-time specialist advice from their university partner by email, phone or dialogue facilities
- enables users to build their own programmes leading to quality assured university qualifications.

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82 John Stevenson and Judy Saxton (2004), AERA, at: www.iclml.com
83 Stephenson, J (2003), *A Review Of Research And Practice In E-Learning In The Workplace And Proposals For Its Effective Use*, American Education Research Association. Obtainable from: www.iclml.co.uk

University of Derby - using the LtW approach to provide progression opportunities from Apprenticeship programmes

One specific LtW programme worthy of further comment is a new development at the University of Derby. The University of Derby has been a key participant in both the initial development of the LtW framework and its subsequent implementation. It has since its inception managed more learners within the framework than any other participating HEI. Directed by Dr David Young, the LtW approach is comprehensively integrated into the full range of the University's provision, with LtW tutors covering all departments.

The LtW level descriptors, which have been derived from the QAA level descriptors and work by SEEC and NUCATT, have been adapted specifically for the context of experiential learning in work-based learning programmes and were agreed by the consortium of 8 HEIs which initially developed LtW in 2001. The University of Derby makes extensive use of these level indicators for the purpose of APEL, in the development of the learning contract and in the assessment of learning outcomes from work-based activity.

The level descriptors cover the following fields:
- scope
- complexity and responsibility
- thinking and understanding
- investigation and evaluation
- innovation and originality.

They are essentially written like benchmark statements for awards in work-based learning. The level descriptors can be found in Part 4 of this guide.

The University of Derby is currently using LtW as a platform for participation in the Nottinghamshire AimHigher developments. It is part of a Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC) funded project, for which the University of Nottingham, is the lead institution named *Interoperability Standards for Learner Information to Support Progression on a Regional Basis Between Episodes of Lifelong Learning*. Project partners are Nottingham Trent University, the City of Nottingham Education Department, Ufi/Learndirect and the Greater Nottingham 14-19 Strategy Group. The project will support progression to HE for widening participation by making all major existing electronic systems in use in the Nottingham area for study-based Progress Files interoperable, using the UK LeAP interoperability standards. A bank of use cases will be developed covering a wide range of types of learner and at least five transition routes between partners. This project is funded as part of the JISC regional e-learning pilot projects and runs from January 2005 to March 2006.

At the University of Derby, the LtW approach is being developed to establish progression routes from Advanced Apprenticeships into higher education, using LtW to provide a framework for 'taster' programmes. The programme is called *Beginning Professional Learning* and will result in a Certificate of Achievement with a value of 30 credits at HE Level 1 which will form part of a negotiated programme of study for those who decide to continue.

The main purpose of the programme is to help learners to write about their skills and knowledge and to develop these, through reading and study, in a way that will contribute in a positive way to their daily practice in the workplace and further their career prospects. The aims of the programme are to prepare for and to gain an initial experience of higher education, to build on existing skills and experience through a programme of structured reading and to undertake a short work-based investigation.

The programme components, all at HE Level 1, comprise:
- Development of a learning contract   – 5 credits
- Professional reading   – 10 credits
- Research methods   – 15 credits

An example of the online guidance notes is included here in order to give a flavour of how this approach works.

Examples of University of Derby online guidance notes

Development of a learning contract

Objective: This component is designed for you to introduce yourself and to present some of your current learning, ideas and experience.

Related Aims: To prepare for and have an initial experience of study in higher education

Activities: You will need to work systematically through the online contract, responding to the instructions which ask you to reflect on your own experience and work situation.

Milestones: None

Learning Outcomes: 1: Provide an appropriate response to all sections of the online learning contract;

2: Analyse and comment upon personal development and relevant prior experience to date;

Evidence: Completed Learning Contract

Level Indicators: 1: Recognising the implications of different issues and courses of action

Professional reading

Objective: This component is designed to get you to read a selection of articles to do with change in the workplace.

You will be guided through the process in the ACTIVITIES section.

Related Aims: To build on existing skills and experience through a programme of structured reading

Activities: In this component, you are asked to find, read and comment on a selection of electronic articles about change in the workplace.

First, you will need to access the University of Derby's Electronic Journals.

The University of Derby subscribes to a number of online journal collections, giving learners access to some 2.5 million full text articles.

You won't need them all!

[Students are then given detailed instructions concerning how to access the relevant materials needed, culminating in about 20 hits].

Look carefully at the titles and select one which interests you. (You will see that there is a choice of download options. The best one to go for is HTML full text. if this is not available, you will have to go for the PDF option.)

Now read the article! (Print it off if you must!)

Analyse it in the following ways:

a. Give details about the article itself. This is called REFERENCING. Referencing is an important part of study at higher education levels. There are two main reasons for this:

- To recognise the work of the writers whose work you are using;

- To enable those who read your work to find the articles themselves if they want to read them.

You should provide:
Name of author, full title and other details, using HARVARD referencing conventions.

(For help with HARVARD referencing, go to ALL ELECTRONIC RESOURCES on the Derby library site. Select "H" and then HARVARD CITATION METHOD. There are helpful details here.)

b. Summarise the article IN YOUR OWN WORDS. Don't quote anything, but just present an overview which explains the key points.

c. What, for you, are the most INTERESTING or SIGNIFICANT features of the article? Is there anything you agree or disagree with strongly?

d. Finally, reflect on how far the article is RELEVANT TO YOUR OWN WORKPLACE.

You need to do this for a MAXIMUM of 6 articles. We suggest that you do four short reviews of about 200 words each (not counting the REFERENCING details) and two longer ones of about 500 words.

You should aim for about 2000 words in total.

Milestones: None

Learning Outcomes: Provide evidence of critical reading in the area of workplace change.

Evidence: FOUR article reviews of between 200 and 250 words each;

TWO longer reviews of articles of around 500 words each.

Level Indicators: 1: Recognising the implications of different issues and courses of action

2: Acting on understandings of relationships and contradictions between principles and ideas

Research methods

Objective: This component explores research in the workplace.

Explaining concepts of research in work-based settings, it examines different approaches to research and provides tools to carry out a small work-based investigation.

The objective is to promote the development of informed insights into a range of methods of gathering first hand data and analysing it. It also covers issues of interpretation and presentation of research data for a professional audience.

Researchers need to be aware of the ethical issues involved and this is referred to in the course materials.

You can access an introduction to ethics and work-based learning as follows. [Students are then given detailed directions about how to access and use the materials]

Related Aims: To undertake a short work-based investigation

Activities: The activities for this component are provided within the LTW site. All you have to do to start work on this resource is click on the link in the section on Development and Qualification Opportunities. You'll be taken to the opening sections where you can find out how to work through the materials.

This component has been designed to support the development of self-directed learners. It provides ideas, signposts and choices rather than a strict schedule of topics to be studied.

Ideally, whilst working through the materials, you should be engaged in work activities, as the idea is to integrate work-based learning with private study. A range of approaches to research and research techniques is presented for your critical engagement. You will be guided and supported through the process of developing and reporting a small-scale study based on your own workplace.

Milestones: None

Learning Outcomes: 1: Compare a selected range of approaches to research in work-based settings;

2: Compare a selected range of research techniques used to gather data from work-based settings;

3: Identify and carry out a small work-based investigation of personal and professional relevance;

4: Analyse the data collected.

Evidence: Considering Research in my Workplace (500 words) (learning outcome 3)

Potential Approaches to Research (500 words) (learning outcome 1)

Analysis of Appropriate Techniques (1000 words) (learning outcomes 2&3)

Discussion of Data Collected and its Relevance (1000 words) (learning outcome 4)

Level Indicators: 1: Investigating, analysing and evaluating information to identify relationships and make informed judgements

2: Designing investigations to provide new information and affect practice, including through practical investigation

3: Evaluating the appropriateness of different approaches and their impacts

This application of the LtW framework is still at a relatively early stage of implementation and it is not yet possible to evaluate its success. However, the approach would appear to provide a learning environment familiar to those who have completed an Apprenticeship and at the same time to familiarise learners with the new demands and expectations of the higher education learning environment. It is an innovative and potentially highly effective way of introducing learners to an online learning environment at the same time as providing support from real university tutors at the University of Derby. As such it provides a useful model of how to manage the transition between Level 3 and Level 4 learning for work-based learners, without the requirement for them to spend any substantial time on campus.

Case study 6: Negotiated cohort programmes and the accreditation of in-company training programmes

The recent Skills White Paper commented favourably on the ways in which universities and colleges have responded flexibly to the changing skill needs of the economy by updating the design and delivery of programmes, and by working closely with employers.[84] The White Paper notes that this includes bespoke training programmes carried out for particular firms or sectors which do not lead to externally validated qualifications. The White Paper does not comment on those bespoke training programmes that do lead to externally recognized qualifications. Furthermore, although there is some acknowledgement of the contribution that higher education can make to accrediting and assessing work-based learning at higher levels, the White Paper does not make any explicit reference to the role that the accreditation of in-company training programmes or professional programmes that enable regional or national progression strategies for learners. However, this may be implicit in the expressed commitment to funding what the document refers to as 'some demonstration projects', designed to provide support to universities and colleges that are working with major employers to validate delivery of

Level 4+ training in the workplace, and to provide off-site training or specialist teaching facilities.

Although there is little acknowledgement of this area of activity in the White Paper, there does exist an established body of practice in the accreditation of in-company training programmes, and this case study provides some examples of the work that is ongoing. Recognising learning through the award of credit is certainly assuming a higher profile: the White Paper expresses its commitment to ensuring that as the QCA develops its proposed Framework for Achievement, it supports credit accumulation and progression through to higher education. The HEFCE has been asked for advice on how England can move to a national credit framework by 2010, in a way that aligns with other credit systems within the UK and with European developments. The QCA and HE partners will work together to ensure that this alignment is achieved.

Example one: APU: Accreditation of the trainer development programme delivered by the Eastern Region Deanery for Postgraduate Medical and Dental Education.

Programme Leader: Ray Godwin, Associate Dean at the Eastern Deanery

The Eastern Region Deanery for Postgraduate Medical Education delivers a number of short courses to senior doctors, mainly consultants and senior registrars, working in hospitals. The programme is designed to develop and enhance the capability of such staff in their roles as teachers and trainers of junior doctors.

APU operates two modes of accreditation; the first termed 'Credit Recognition' provides a statement of the general credit value of the programme, resulting in a statement on the certificate issued by the provider on completion of the programme to the effect that 'APU recognises the learning achieved through this programme as equivalent to xx credits at level(s) xx'. In this mode, credit is not actually awarded and the learners do not register as students of the University. However, for credit recognition to be achieved, it is essential that learning outcomes are identified and that there is a robust assessment process that is monitored and moderated by the University.

The second mode constitutes full accreditation, in which the programme is normally described in terms of individual credit-rated units or modules. In this case, whilst delivery of the programme remains the responsibility of the provider, the University plays a greater part in preparing learners for assessment and in marking and moderating their work. The results must be confirmed through the same assessment panel processes as those used for standard modules in the University. It is also common, but not essential, for university staff to provide input into the delivery of the programme itself. In this mode, learners are registered as students of the University and on successful completion of the programme receive a Certificate of Credit, confirmed through standard Awards Board procedures.

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[84] *Skills: Getting on in Business, Getting on at Work:* March 24th 2005. www.dfes.gov.uk/skillsstrategy

Originally the Deanery programme was accredited in Credit Recognition mode as being equivalent to 50 credits at HE Level 4 (postgraduate). The programme comprises five courses:
1. Teaching the Teachers to Teach (T5)
2. Training the Trainers (T3)
3. Appraisal and Assessment
4. Communications in Learning and Teaching
5. Using ICT in Medical Teaching.

Each course is facilitated by a two day residential programme which requires prior preparatory reading and activities. For those wishing to gain credit recognition, there is a further requirement to demonstrate the application of learning in the work context. Currently, although participants may join any one or more of the modules on an attendance only basis, in order to receive CME points from their Royal College, the statement of credit equivalence of 50 credits at Level 4 can be achieved only on completion of all five modules and a summative assessment which addresses the learning outcomes of all five modules. A copy of the assessment specification is attached as an appendix to this section. Since the assessment tasks relate to, and are undertaken only after completion of, all five modules, assessment is by means of a portfolio of evidence and is similar to an APEL assessment.

Even for the purpose of relatively straightforward credit recognition, programmes are rarely presented in a form that is 'accreditation-ready'. In the case of the Deanery programme, a considerable amount of discussion took place between staff at the Deanery and the University in order to translate the objectives of the programme into the language of learning outcomes and to reach agreement on appropriate modes of assessment. All accredited programmes, in whatever mode, are subject to a process of annual review by the University that mirrors the review processes used for standard University programmes. For the Deanery programme, the review process has been assisted by the decision of the Deanery to appoint an independent programme evaluator, who attends at least one delivery of each unit each year in order to provide feedback and to make recommendations for improvement. The programme is thus continually 'tweaked' and changes can be approved or implemented following consideration by a panel at the point of annual review. The review process is conducted in the form of a meeting between the programme management team and a review panel and is designed to facilitate constructive discussion. As with standard programmes, the review culminates in production of an agreed Action Plan for the coming year.

In order for an external programme to receive Credit Recognition, there must be an initial approval event that is akin to the validation procedure for an internal programme, an annual review and the development of an Action Plan for the coming year. For both the initial approval and each annual review, appropriate documentation and reports must be produced. This may appear to be a heavy-handed approach, but the University believes that the benefits of this approach are considerable. These procedures enable the University to be confident about the assuring the continued quality of the programme and to maintain an ongoing dialogue between the University and the external course provider. Without appropriate

partnership arrangements, it would be only too easy to engage in the process of credit rating of an external programme, without being sure that all of the safeguards are in place to ensure that the programme is being delivered and assessed in the form presented at the point of the initial accreditation.

At the last annual review, the Deanery indicated that it wished to move towards full accreditation. In consequence, the Deanery and the University have worked together to substantially redefine the courses. The Deanery has regular meetings of faculty members who deliver the Deanery's programmes. One of these days was devoted specifically to defining the learning outcomes and assessment criteria of the new modules, using the SEEC Publication *How to Use Learning Outcomes and Assessment Criteria* as a guide. This approach ensured that faculty members had ownerships of the new programmes and enabled them to become more familiar with a learning outcomes approach to curriculum design.
The revision of the programme was designed to facilitate the accreditation of each of the modules separately, at 10 credits each at Level 4. This change was necessary because the restrictions on how often a particular module could be offered, combined with the time constraints faced by busy hospital consultants, meant that for some participants it could take several years before all five modules could be completed. Since in the original programme the assessment for the purpose of Credit Recognition could only be undertaken on completion of all five modules, those who had not completed had nothing to show for their efforts. The revised programme supports a credit accumulation approach since the assessment is now integral to each module.
In addition, a Postgraduate Certificate programme has been developed which is composed of the accredited Deanery modules and new 20 credit APU module developed specifically for the programme. The Postgraduate Certificate programme has now been validated and most of the modules are now delivered with some input from APU.

Example two: APU M.Sc. Quality Management (Regulated Scientific Research and Development)
Programme Leader: John Wenn

The second programme in this example describes a partnership between APU and a professional body, the British Association of Research Quality Assurance (BARQA). Again, it provides an example of a collaboration or partnership that has evolved and changed over time.

For a number of years, BARQA has been delivering programmes relating to good practice in regulated scientific research and development. Most of its members are quality auditors, many employed in pharmaceutical companies that are engaged in developing and conducting trials of new drugs. The industry has undergone considerable change over the years, including mergers, globalisation and a trend towards outsourcing work by the larger companies to smaller specialist organisations. Quality Assurance requirements have increased in their range and demand and are subject to a range of harmonised international regulations.

About twelve years ago, in response to the demand for greater numbers of qualified quality auditors, BARQA approached APU to accredit and develop a joint diploma programme in Research Quality Assurance. As more people became qualified and were promoted to management positions in their companies, it was decided that a Masters programme in Quality Management was now needed. Initially, the programme was designed for senior and experienced BARQA members, with the learning up to the Postgraduate Diploma stage being completed by APEL. For the last two years, although a small number of modules are often completed by APEL, the programme is primarily delivered in a 'taught' distance learning mode. The student intake is very international, including currently students from Australia, South Africa, Europe and Scandinavia as well as the UK. Although the course can be complete entirely by distance learning, it is also supported by three-day residential meetings in Cambridge which take place twice a year and which a surprising number of students manage to attend.

Module guides are developed by a mixture of BARQA members and staff in the Faculty of Science and Technology and the Business School at APU. All of the assignments require students to draw on their learning in the workplace and to apply their new learning in the work context. The programme culminates in a major project (60 credits) which is entirely work-based.

Learning support is provided by both academic tutors from the University and industry based tutors identified by BARQA. Regular meetings take place between the two organisations, with APU staff regularly attending meetings of BARQA's Education and Training Committee. Assessments and the project are marked by both academic and industry staff; the University provides a general academic tutor who supports students by email and telephone, and BARQA had designated tutors for each cohort.

The programme is fully integrated into the standard quality assurance procedures of the University. As such it provides a good example of how a programme that has been tailor-made for a specific group of students, and is not open to students without sufficient experience and BARQA membership, can thrive in an university environment.

Appendix: Trainer development programme assessment specification, Eastern Region Deanery for Postgraduate Medical and Dental Education

The assessment of the programme will be by means of a portfolio in which evidence will be provided of achievement of the learning outcomes of each module.

The portfolio will be in three parts:

Part 1 (up to 4000 words)
An overview of personal learning achievements across the programme as a whole demonstrating learning achievement in relation to:

Learning and Teaching Activities
Demonstrating understanding of the key areas of learning and teaching activity:
- teaching and the support of learning
- design and planning of learning activities
- assessment and providing feedback to learners
- developing effective learning environments and learner support systems
- reflective practice and personal development.

Core Knowledge of Learning and Teaching
Demonstrating knowledge and understanding of:
- appropriate methods for teaching and learning in the subject area and at appropriate levels in the medical context
- models of how students learn, both generically and in their subject
- the use of learning technologies appropriate to the context in which they teach
- methods of monitoring and evaluating own teaching.

Professional Values in Learning and Teaching
Demonstrating commitment to the professional values of learning and teaching:
- commitment to scholarship in teaching, both generally and within own discipline
- respect for adult learners and their development and empowerment
- commitment to the development of learning communities, including students, teachers and those engaged in learning support
- commitment to encouraging participation in higher education and to equality of educational community
- commitment to continued reflection and evaluation and consequent improvement in their own practice.

Part 2
This part will be in 5 sections, one section for each module within the programme. Candidates must provide a commentary to demonstrate that they have achieved all specified learning outcomes for each module. (Up to 2000 words each)

Module One: Teaching the Teachers to Teach
Learning outcomes
- demonstrate a critical understanding of the role of consultant as a teacher
- demonstrate a critical understanding of learning theory, the roles of teacher and learner, and the nature of knowledge and understanding
- demonstrate achievement of detailed knowledge and appropriate skills in lesson planning and the structure of teaching and learning episodes
- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of a range of teaching skills and techniques
- demonstrate a critical understanding of the utilisation of a wide range of techniques and strategies, matched appropriately to the materials in question
- develop appropriate assessment and feedback strategies.

Module Two: Training the Trainers
Learning outcomes
- demonstrate a critical understanding of the similarities and differences between teaching and training
- demonstrate a clear understanding of the need for training to be planned, interactive, repeated, managed and assessed appropriately
- demonstrate competence in the planning and management of training events
- demonstrate the ability to exploit opportunities for work-based learning and teaching.

Module Three: ICT in Medical Teaching
Learning outcomes
- demonstrate a critical understanding of the value of appropriate use of ICT in teaching and learning
- demonstrate a critical understanding of the use of ICT as a tool for medical research, in particular the role of library systems and use of the internet
- demonstrate the application of appropriate knowledge and skills in the generation of an ICT based teaching aid for a particular speciality.

Module Four: Appraisal and Assessment
Learning outcomes
- demonstrate a critical understanding of the role of the record of in-house training assessments (RITA)
- demonstrate a critical understanding of the differences between appraisal and assessment and the circumstances that influence their selection
- demonstrate proficiency in planning and carrying out appraisal of junior staff
- demonstrate an ability to develop appropriate assessment and evaluation strategies for a range of specific clinical competencies.

Module Five: Communication Skills to Support Learning
Learning outcomes
- demonstrate a critical understanding of the structure of the medical consultation, in particular the Calgary-Cambridge medical interview
- demonstrate a critical understanding of the skills required for effective communication between doctors and trainees, and doctors and patients
- demonstrate a critical understanding of how these skills are developed and how they might be taught/facilitated to other staff
- demonstrate competence in the use of role play and video in the teaching and learning of communication skills
- demonstrate effective communication skills in providing feedback to staff and patients.

Part 3
In this part you will collect together the evidence needed to support your claims of learning achieved. You will need to make systematic reference to this evidence to support the claims made in Parts 1 and 2.

The same piece of evidence may be used to demonstrate achievement of several learning outcomes in the same or in different modules. These might include:
- video of a teaching episode
- teaching diary/reflective diary
- examples of visual aids used in a teaching episode
- evaluation by learners/trainees of teaching episodes
- development and use of evaluation tools
- training logs
- appraisal records of students
- developing IT based products for use in teaching/training
- production of CD Rom training materials
- video of a practical appraisal exercise
- a log of appraisals and assessments completed
- feedback on the assessment process from students
- video of patient trainee interview
- reflective diaries of efficacy of communications
- report on specific communications problem and how this was managed.

Case study 7: APEL, AEL, recognition of prior informal learning (RPL) and recognition of learning development

This discussion of APEL and related processes is not based on the practice of any single institution but draws on work underway in a number of contexts in order to provide an overview of the current state of APEL and related activities.

There is now a considerable body of material available to support good APEL practice and it is not intended to reproduce that here: instead the focus will be on current work that is being undertaken to move the APEL agenda forward. The Southern England Consortium for Credit accumulation and transfer (SEEC) has a number of publications relating to APEL and continues to run workshops for staff wishing to develop or enhance their APEL practice. Publications can be ordered from SEEC through the website on: www.seec-office.org.uk and include:
- *The SEEC Code of Practice for the Assessment of Prior (Experiential) Learning*. First edition (1995), revised edition (January 2003)
- *Models of APEL and Quality Assurance*, compiled by Professor Bob Johnson. The book contains a report on the findings of a survey of APEL systems used by SEEC member institutions. The author proposes a seven stage, 'all-through' model for APEL. The model is not intended to be prescriptive but rather a framework within which institutions can develop their own version based upon good practice. Particular emphasis is given to quality assurance and staff development aspects.
- *APEL: Beyond Graduateness*, edited by D Croker, D Ellis, Y Hill, J Storan & I Turner. A collection of papers on APEL in the postgraduate arena in which the authors engage with the debates and shared concerns raised at meetings of the APEL Network.

Other useful sources that introduce a European dimension include:
- Storan J (2003), *Transfine Project (Transfer between formal, informal and non-formal education): A UK Country Study*, University of East London
- Wailey T & Simpson R (2000), *Juggling between Learning and Work: AP(E)L in the UK*, Lifelong Learning in Europe, 5 (2), 83-89.

Other credit consortia, particularly the Northern Ireland Credit Accumulation & Transfer System (NICATS) and Scotcat in Scotland, have also published credit guidelines and guides to good practice in APEL.

In the context of higher education, APEL is primarily concerned with processes for assessing and accrediting learning resulting from life and work experiences for the purposes of admission with credit into a programme of higher education. It is therefore primarily a means to an end by being specifically tied to the programme of study the learner intends to pursue. In a sense the learner is engaging in an act of translation, by demonstrating how learning achieved in one context may be applicable to another.

APEL may also be advocated for another purpose, notably to facilitate personal and professional development. Most CPD programmes require learners to begin by taking stock of where they are now and where they have come from. An essential part of this process is to review learning that has already been achieved. Many learners have commented that by engaging in a process of personal stocktaking of the knowledge, understanding and skills they have achieved has enabled them to consolidate their learning, which in turn has enhanced their feelings of self worth and given them confidence to progress further. The outcome need not necessarily be submission of an APEL claim since some learners decide that they want to engage in significant new learning rather than gaining credit for learning already achieved.

Negotiated programmes of work-based learning tend to combine these two dimensions of APEL: the process is both an important foundation for planning new learning (by identifying 'gaps' which can be addressed through the programme of learning to be undertaken), and a means of consolidating and reinforcing learning already achieved. An APEL methodology thus contributes to the identification of further personal and professional learning needs as well as identifying learning already achieved. It has the further value that an APEL claim involves demonstration of the applicability of learning acquired in one context to another, thus enabling the learner to demonstrate academic knowledge and skills. This takes place as a result of what Fraser has described as 'the objectification of learning' - a process whereby through reflection, the raw material of subjective experience is transformed into objective statements of learning outcomes. However, some learners find this very difficult to do this and get 'lost in translation'; this may be an indicator that individually negotiated independent work-based learning is not an appropriate route for them to follow.

APEL is generally regarded as comprising 3 stages:
1. Reflection on experience
2. Identification of learning achieved
3. Demonstration/ provision of evidence of learning.

Many HEIs offer workshops on portfolio presentation and preparation, or incorporate these into module related activities where dedicated modules to support the development of an APEL claim are available. Modules are likely to include features such as: confidence building; guidance on the use of evidence, reflection skills, reflective writing, reviewing experience to identify learning achievements, synthesising and integrating learning outcomes resulting from experience.

Describing the APEL process as normally comprising three stages - reflection on experience, identification of learning achieved and demonstration or provision of evidence of learning - makes the process appear bureaucratic and unimaginative. This doesn't have to be the case; APEL can be an effective vehicle for enhancing self awareness and confidence building. Its particular value in the context of work-based learning is that it makes tacit learning explicit, is transdisciplinary, integrative, creative and developmental. It involves developing the skills of critical reflection and using these to create new syntheses of knowledge, skills and understanding.

Garnett *et al* in a report on the current state of APEL in the UK commissioned by UVAC, note that APEL has tended to remain something of a marginal activity within HE.[85] The authors suggest that the history of the development of APEL in the 1980s indicates two major sources and usages: as a tool for admission to higher education programmes (with or without credit), and as a means of demonstrating competency against National Occupational Standards for the purpose of a National Vocational Qualification. By and large these have developed as two parallel strands with relatively little interaction between them. Both have been characterised by 'substantial agreement about principles and commonality of practice, even between APEL for NVQ and APEL for higher education course entry'.[86]

The authors suggest that at its best APEL in the UK can be:
- a flexible response to recognise the learning achievement and future aspirations of the individual claimant
- open to all and thus able to contribute to widening participation
- supportive of students, often leading to enhanced confidence
- rigorous as part of a transparent assessment process
- robust as many different forms of learning can be considered in the same system
- embedded into the normal processes of assessment and quality assurance
- an important tool in the development of the intellectual capital of organisations (especially employers and universities).[87]

[85] Garnett, J. Portwood, D. and Costley, C. (2004), *Bridging Rhetoric and Reality: Accreditation of prior experiential learning (APEL) in the UK.* Bolton: UVAC.
[86] Garnett et al, p.13.
[87] Ibid.

However they also note that APEL often falls short of this potential because:

- information about the possibility of APEL is not always widely available or clearly written
- the APEL process can be overly bureaucratic and resource intensive
- APEL is perceived as difficult and overly time consuming by students
- APEL lacks credibility with some staff and students
- APEL can be circumscribed by close matching against prescribed learning outcomes and competency statements which do not fully cover the range of learning achievement held by the individual or valued by their employer.

The authors argue that the real value of APEL in the context of a customised programme of work-based learning, is that it can become a developmental tool. All approaches to APEL necessarily begin with a review of learning achievements and this can form a springboard for new projects and learning activities which can contribute to both individual and organisational development. Most practitioners agree that negotiated programmes of work-based learning are normally kick-started with a planning and review process. The review of learning already achieved may or may not lead to a formal claim for credit; in a sense it does not matter whether it does or not, since it is the processes that are associated with APEL rather than the credit outcomes that are important when APEL is used as a development tool.

The QAA have recently incorporated guidelines for APEL into the Code of Practice. Details can be found at:
www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/apl/APL.pdf.
The guidelines are based around a series of principles which are included below.

Example QAA Code of Practice guidelines for APEL

Principle 1: Decisions regarding the accreditation of prior learning are a matter of academic judgement. The decision-making process and outcomes should be transparent and demonstrably rigorous and fair.

Principle 2: Where limits are imposed on the proportion of learning that can be recognised through the accreditation process, these limits should be explicitly stated. The implications for progression, the award of any interim qualification and the classification or grading of a final qualification should be clear and transparent

Principle 3: Prior experiential and/or certificated learning that has been accredited by an HE provider should be clearly identified on students' transcripts.

Principle 4: Higher education providers should provide clear and accessible information for applicants, academic staff, examiners and stakeholders about its policies, procedures and practices for the accreditation of prior learning.

Principle 5: The terminology, scope and boundaries used by an HE provider in its policies, procedures and practices for the accreditation of prior learning should be explicitly defined in information and guidance materials.

Principle 6: Information and guidance materials outlining the process(es) for the assessment of claims for the accreditation of prior experiential and/or previously certificated learning should be clear, accurate and easily accessible.

Principle 7: Higher education providers should consider the range and form(s) of assessment appropriate to consider claims for the recognition of learning.

Principle 8: The criteria to be used in judging a claim for the accreditation of prior learning should be made explicit to applicants, academic staff, stakeholders and assessors and examiners.

Principle 9: Applicants should be fully informed of the nature and range of evidence considered appropriate to support a claim for the accreditation of prior learning.

Principle 10: The assessment of learning derived from experience should be open to internal and external scrutiny and monitoring within institutional quality assurance procedures.

Principle 11: The locus[AC12] of authority and responsibilities for making and verifying decisions about the accreditation of prior learning should be clearly specified.

Principle 12: All staff associated with the accreditation of prior learning should have their roles clearly and explicitly defined. Full details of all roles and responsibilities should be available to all associated staff and applicants.

Principle 13: Appropriate arrangements should be developed for the training and support of all staff associated with the support, guidance and assessment of claims for the accreditation of prior learning.

Principle 14: Clear guidance should be given to applicants about when a claim for the accreditation of prior learning may be submitted, the timescale for considering the claim and the outcome.

Principle 15: Appropriate arrangements should be in place to support applicants submitting claims for the accreditation of prior learning and to provide feedback on decisions.

Principle 16: Arrangements for the regular monitoring and review of policies and procedures for the accreditation of prior learning should be clearly established. These arrangements should be set within established institutional frameworks for quality assurance, management and enhancement.

APEL is often promoted to both learners and their employers as having the advantage that it may shorten the time needed to complete a programme. However, many staff supporting students through the APEL process report that it frequently takes a long time for learners to complete a portfolio and for universities to process the assessment and accreditation. It is important that learners are made aware of this and also that some deadlines are set for submission of the portfolio phase. There can be a tendency for learners to disappear into an APEL black hole, which is a reason for providing proactive support to learners - checking on their progress, encouraging them, and identifying strategies for getting over stumbling blocks.

Transfine is a European project concerned with developing strategies to facilitate transfer between formal, informal and non-formal education across the European union. The overarching aim of the project is to:

"Create, develop and propose the principles, methods and necessary conditions for the implementation of an experimental, integrated set of arrangements for the transfer and accumulation of credits based on different forms of knowledge and skills at all levels, whatever their source and whatever way they have been acquired."

In the first two stages, the UK, France, Norway, Estonia and Italy were selected to review and map 'interface developments' between formal and informal learning, which effectively means to map practices and 'tools' in use across the selected European nations. Headline findings from the UK country study (England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland) are:

- there is long established provision of services related to the Assessment/Accreditation of Prior and Experiential Learning (APEL) throughout the UK
- APEL provision can be found in both academic and vocational domains and linked to work-based learning, professional training and the voluntary sector
- there is no UK-wide system, but rather separate and occasionally overlapping systems operating in different sectors of education and training
- there are variable degrees of regulation and quality assurance of provision depending on who is providing it and where it is being provided
- strong support has been expressed for developments in Europe linked to credit transfer, which might have a beneficial effect on supply and demand in the UK.

The Transfine study was completed in 2003 and has now moved onto the *Refine* project, which has been designed to develop and test tools for use across Europe. An interim report was produced in Autumn 2004, with a final report due in Autumn 2005.

The aims of the Refine Project are:
- to test a range of tools eg. ECTS, the Euro CV, Europass, codes of practice for the recognition of formal and informal learning
- to test tools in a range of different institutional and organisational contexts.

There are parallel programmes running in 12 countries, led by EUCEN. In the UK, the specific aim is to develop and test a code of practice for APEL and to relate this to the existing European Credit Transfer System (ECTS).

The UK tool: general principles
1. Common definitions are needed to both safeguard and ensure the highest quality arrangements for AP(E)L services
2. A clear statement of the organisation's commitment to AP(E)L should be provided and included in all relevant literature
3. Organisations should seek to embed AP(E)L processes across their learning strategy and policy
4. AP(E)L procedures and practices should be properly documented and made available for all current developments
5. AP(E)L services should be fully integrated within an organisation's quality assurance processes
6. AP(E)L policies, procedures, documentation and outcomes should be monitored
7. Adequate preparation is required for all persons involved in the AP(E)L process
8. Organisations should promote the recognition of APEL as part of the developmental process for the learner
9. Formal recognition of AP(E)L should be available.

During 2005 the UK plan is to elicit the views of those involved in adult education, vocational training, Non-Government Organisations (NGOs), Youth Organisations and Voluntary Organisations and to test its applicability to other countries. So far the responses received have been positive, but difficulties are envisaged in providing a single set of tools for such a diverse range of organisations including employers/trade unions, professional bodies, awarding bodies, educational institutions and QA Agencies.

John Storan, Director of Continuum at UEL is the UK Co-ordinator and Professor Bob Johnson of Johnson Associates is the UK Project Officer. Details can be found on the *Continuum* website and an overview of the project can be found at: www.uel.ac.uk/continuum/publications/documents/Continuum Newsletter1.pdf.

Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework RPL project.
There is a dedicated website for the Scottish RPL project at: www.scqf.org.uk/rpl. This project ran from October 2003 to March 2005 over three phases, culminating in the production of working guidelines for use in all post-16 education and training sectors.

The purpose of guidelines is to provide guidance to learners on managing the process of RPL within the context of the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF), to produce a set of core principles and key features and to support the growth of more widespread practice in recognising prior learning as part of the Lifelong Learning agenda in Scotland.

RPL is to be used:
- for personal/career development: formative recognition
- for credit: summative recognition
- to establish links between the two forms of recognition
- to recognise equivalence between the outcomes of formal and informal learning.

Example guidelines for RPL within the context of the SCQF

RPL for Personal/Career development: purposes

This is recognition and confidence building within the contexts of educational guidance.

Possible outcomes:
- Recognition of value of strengths and skills gained through informal prior learning - by self and others
- Notional levelling of this learning within context of SCQF to help identify possible progression routes
- Planning of individual learning pathway or personal career/development plan
- Preparation of RPL claim for credit in order to gain entry to, or credit within, a formal programme of study.

RPL for Personal/Career development: context
- Access programmes
- Community learning provision
- Adult literacy and numeracy learning provision
- Workplace learning and training programmes
- CPD
- Educational and career guidance.

RPL for credit: purposes

This is the assessment and formal recognition of any non-assessed, non credit rated learning.

Possible outcomes:
- Entry to first level programme at college or HEI
- General SCQF credit
- Specific credit within formal programme.

RPL for credit: context
- Organisations which deliver SCQF credit-rated provision:
- Colleges through SQA
- Other SQA-approved centres
- Higher education institutions.

[All organisations which deliver SCQF credit-rated provision can award a *general credit-rating*. The receiving institution determines the amount of *specific credit* a learner can be awarded within a particular programme within that institution or organisation.]

RPL for Credit: key features
- Initial guidance
- Supporting learners
- Mechanisms for making RPL claims
- Assessment process
- Credit limits
- Fee process
- Monitoring process
- Support for staff
- Quality assurance.

Details can be found in the full report published January 2005: *Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework - consultation on guidelines for the recognition of prior informal learning (RPL).*

Part 4: Resource materials

Resource material 1: Centres for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETLs)

The creation of CETLs is a welcome development, as it represents a move away from the previous pattern of short-term initiatives which have received limited dissemination. The CETLs in related areas will link with each other; several already involve identified links and collaborative activity. Those listed below are particularly relevant to the work-based learning context. Many of those listed below also involve links with FE partners and local and regional employers.

For a full list of CETLs see:
www.hefce.ac.uk/learning/tinits/cetl/final.

General CETLs
Relevant general CETLs are listed below, but it is advised that you also consult the full list, because several others have relevant aspects but are tied to particular subject areas.

- University of Central England, Centre for Stakeholder Learning Partnerships (www.hcc.uce.ac.uk/cetl) - Developing a model of partnerships between the university and health and social care sector employers. It aims to build an organisation to create and test innovative methods of learning. It is intended that the centre will provide opportunities for both staff and students in both organisations to learn from the work of others.

- Middlesex University, Centre for Excellence in WBL - Developing new models of teaching and learning appropriate to knowledge recognition, creation and use at work. Use of e-learning and credit frameworks to support HE/employer partnerships.

- University of Luton, BRIDGES - Supporting personal career and professional development, focusing on all areas of undergraduate curriculum.

- Loughborough University, Centre for Excellence in Employer-linked Engineering Education (enqc4e.lboro.ac.uk) - Integration of employer input to produce graduates who are employable, entrepreneurial, productive and innovative.

- Leeds Metropolitan University, Institute for Enterprise (www.leeds.met.ac.uk/lbs/enterprise) - Aim to create an inclusive enterprise focus to act as an agent of change in the university, the region and beyond. Intend to enhance national understanding of enterprise education.

- University of Leeds, Assessment and Learning in Practice Settings (ALPS) -Aim is to develop work-based educators and practitioners to support student's learning, especially assessment, in the workplace and across professional boundaries

- University of Central Lancashire, Centre for Employability through the Humanities (www.uclan.ac.uk.ceth) - Developing new modules concerned with realistic work environments and an incubator unit for knowledge exchange in humanities and to support recent graduates starting out in business.

- Sheffield Hallam University, Enhancing, Embedding and Integrating Employability. E3I (www.shu.ac.uk) - Embedding employability features in programmes.

- University of Westminster, Centre for Professional Learning in the Workplace (www.wmin.ac.uk.cetl) - Involves Biosciences, Health and Media, Art and Design. Concerned with preparation for learning designed, supported and assessed with strong employer and professional body input for professional development. Staff will be supported by a PG Certificate in work-based tutoring. Students will develop reflective practices. Aims to incorporate approach across the university and extend it to the wider HE community.

- University of Surrey, Centre for Excellence in Professional Training and Education (portal.surrey.ac.uk/infoservices/sceptre) - To enhance learning experience of students on professional placement using an enquiry-based approach. Will involve e-learning materials for support for skills development and PDP.

- University of Sheffield, White Rose Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning of Enterprise (www.wrce.org.uk) - Joint facility with the Universities of Leeds and York. Concerned with the development of enterprise skills, preparing future social entrepreneurs, enterprising employees and successful business owners.

- Open University. Centre for Work-Based Learning for Professional Development - Links the Departments of Education and Languages, Health and Social Care, Business School, Institute of Educational Technology. Aims to enhance distance learning materials and e-learning modes of engaging work base learners.

Resource material 2: Learning through work indicators

Field	Description	Level 4 Certificate of Higher Education	Level 5 Diploma of Higher Education	Level 6 Degree
Complexity and responsibility	Concerns the level of complexity you are dealing with and what you are personally taking responsibility for (which can be different from the responsibility expected in your job).	• Responsibility for courses of action and their results, including wider impacts • Thinking through and choosing courses of action • Coping effectively with a range of unfamiliar situations and problems	• Responsibility across a broad area rather than for individual tasks, including for negotiating objectives and outcomes and for their wider impacts • Developing thought-through courses of action • Coping effectively with a range of unfamiliar situations and problems.	• Responsibility across a broad area including for planning, resourcing and quality as well as for outcomes and their immediate and wider impacts • Developing thought-through courses of action • Working effectively in complex and unpredictable contexts.
Scope	About whether you are for instance working within a closely-defined situation or considering wider implications and impact.	• Recognising the implications of different issues and courses of action • Identifying and evaluating the practical effects and impact of operating parameters.	• Understanding the implications of different issues and courses of action, • Identifying dilemmas and value-conflicts • Identifying and evaluating the effects and impact of operating parameters and principles.	• Understanding the implications of different issues and courses of action • Understanding and managing dilemmas and value-conflicts • Identifying interrelationships between wider systems in which the area of practice is located.
Thinking and understanding	Refers to the level of thinking and understanding you are using in analysing information, pulling information together and making decisions about what you are doing.	• Acting on understandings of relationships and contradictions between principles and ideas • Investigating, analysing and evaluating information to identify relationships and make informed judgements • Reinterpreting and combining information to develop ideas and choose courses of action or develop ways forward.	• Drawing on a broad personal or formal knowledge-base and set of mental models relating to the area of practice • Developing practical theories, ideas and models including to find ways forward when faced with contradictions and gaps in theories • Researching, analysing and evaluating information to identify relationships and patterns and make informed judgements.	• Drawing on a broad personal or formal knowledge-base and set of mental models relating to the area of practice • Developing and evaluating a range of practical theories, ideas and models, including to find ways forward in problematic situations • Researching, analysing and evaluating information to identify relationships and patterns and make informed judgements.
Investigation and evaluation	Concerns how you are investigating information and evaluating situations.	• Designing investigations to provide new information and affect practice, including through practical investigation • Evaluating the appropriateness of different approaches and their impacts.	• Designing practical research to provide new information and affect areas of practice • Evaluating the effects of options and actions, including impacts outside of the immediate context.	• Designing practical, methodologically sound research to provide new information and affect areas of practice • Evaluating the actual and potential effects of theories and actions, including impacts outside of the immediate context.
Innovation and originality	Refers to the level of originality and innovation brought to your work.	• Producing own ideas and developing innovative responses • Developing novel solutions to problems.	• Taking innovative approaches to address issues • Developing novel solutions to sets of problems.	• Taking innovative approaches in complex situations • Developing novel approaches to systems.

Resource material 2: Learning through work indicators

Field	Description	Level 7 Postgraduate	Level 8 Doctorate
Complexity and responsibility	Concerns the level of complexity you are dealing with and what you are personally taking responsibility for (which can be different from the responsibility expected in your job).	• Full responsibility for methods, actions and immediate and wider impacts which extend beyond the immediate area of practice • Developing thought-through courses of action which take into account issues beyond the immediate area of practice • Working effectively in problematic contexts containing value-conflicts & uncertainties extending beyond the immediate area.	• Responsibility as a leading practitioner in a community of practice and extending beyond the immediate area of practice • Developing thought-through courses of action which take into account issues beyond the immediate area of practice • Working innovatively in problematic contexts and engaging with value-conflicts and uncertainties which extend widely in and beyond the area of practice.
Scope	About whether you are for instance working within a closely-defined situation or considering wider implications and impact.	• Understanding alternative implications of different issues and courses of action • Understanding and managing dilemmas and value-conflicts between wider systems in which the area of practice is located.	• Understanding alternative implications of different issues and courses of action • Understanding and managing dilemmas and value-conflicts in a way which takes forward wider practice • Understanding and acting on interrelationships between wider systems in which the area of practice is located.
Thinking and understanding	Refers to the level of thinking and understanding you are using in analysing information, pulling information together and making decisions about what you are doing.	• Using mastery of knowledge relating to, and extending into the wider context of, the area of practice. • Developing and critically evaluating a range of practical theories, ideas and models, including to overcome dilemmas and find ways forward in problematic situations • Researching, analysing and evaluating information to identify inter-relationships between wider systems in which the area of practice is located.	• Using critical and creative mastery of a broad range of concepts, theories and practices and the assumptions underlying them from perspectives which transcend individual disciplines and contexts • Developing and critically evaluating a range of practical theories, ideas and models, including overcoming structural dilemmas and find ways forward in problematic situations • Researching, analysing and evaluating information to identify inter-relationships between wider systems • Generating new understandings and approaches which extend or redefine existing knowledge and practice.
Investigation and evaluation	Concerns how you are investigating information and evaluating situations.	• Undertaking substantial investigation to address significant areas of practice, using methodologies which are consistent with their purposes and contexts • Critically evaluating thinking, action and structural factors operating in the area of practice, including underlying assumptions and identifying wider implications.	• Undertaking original investigation to address significant areas of practice, using methodologies which are practically and philosophically consistent with their wider purposes and contexts • Critically evaluating thinking, action and structural factors operating in the area of practice, including underlying assumptions, and identifying implications for wider systems beyond the area of practice.
Innovation and originality	Refers to the level of originality and innovation brought to your work.	• Developing innovative ways forward in complex and unpredictable situations • Developing novel approaches to systems.	• Developing innovative approaches which redefine or extend the scope of practice • Developing novel approaches to complexes of systems.

Resource material 3: the QAA Code of Practice for placement learning - guidelines

Key features of the guidelines are that learning outcomes of the placement are clearly defined and understood by all parties and the responsibilities of the HEI, placement provider and student are made explicit. Responsibility for ensuring that a placement provides adequate opportunities for the intended learning outcomes to be achieved rests with the institution.

Precepts
Please note that the precepts are printed here without the guidance notes for ease of reference.

1. General principles
Where placement learning is an intended part of a programme of study, institutions should ensure that:
- their responsibilities for placement learning are clearly defined
- the intended learning outcomes contribute to the overall aims of the programme
- any assessment of placement learning is part of a coherent assessment strategy.

2. Institutional policies and procedures
Institutions should have policies and procedures in place to ensure that their responsibilities for placement learning are met and that learning opportunities during a placement are appropriate.

3. Placement providers
Institutions should be able to assure themselves that placement providers know what their responsibilities are during the period of placement learning.

4. Student responsibilities and rights
Prior to placements, institutions should ensure that students are made aware of their responsibilities and rights.

5. Student support and information
Institutions should ensure that students are provided with appropriate guidance and support in preparation for, during, and after their placements.

6. Staff development
Institutions should ensure that their staff who are involved in placement learning are competent to fulfil their role.

7. Dealing with complaints
Institutions should ensure that there are procedures in place for dealing with complaints and that all parties (higher education institutions, students and placement providers) are aware of, and can make use of them.

8. Monitoring and evaluation of placement learning opportunities
Institutions should monitor and review the effectiveness of their policies and procedures in securing effective placement learning opportunities.

Resource material 4: List of Sector Skills Councils

Sector Skills Council	Contact details
Asset Skills *Property, housing, cleaning and facilities management industries*	Asset Skills Second Floor 2 The Courtyard 48 New North Road EXETER. EX4 4EP Tel: 01392 423399 Email: enquiries@assetskills.org Internet: www.assetskills.org
Automotive Skills *Retail motor industry*	Automotive Skills Fourth Floor 93 Newman Street LONDON. W1T 3DT Tel: 020 7436 6373 Email: info@automotiveskills.org.uk Internet: www.automotiveskills.org.uk
Cogent *Chemicals, nuclear, oil and gas, petroleum and polymer industries*	Cogent SSC Minerva House Bruntland Road Portlethen ABERDEEN. AB12 4QL Tel: 01224 787800 Fax: 01224 787830 Email: info@cogent-ssc.com Internet: www.cogent-ssc.com
CITB Construction Skills *Construction industry*	Sheila Hoile Director of Training Strategy CITB Construction Skills Bircham Newton KINGS LYNN. PE31 6RH Tel: 01485 577577 Email: sheila.hoile@citb.co.uk Internet: www.constructionskills.net
Energy & Utility Skills *Electricity, gas, waste management and water industries*	Energy & Utility Skills Friars Gate Two 1011 Stratford Street Shirley SOLIHULL. B90 4BN Tel: 0845 077 9922 Fax: 0845 077 9933 Email: enquiries@euskills.co.uk Internet: www.euskills.co.uk
E-SKILLS UK *Information technology, telecommunications and contact centre industries*	E-SKILLS UK 1 Castle Lane LONDON. SW1E 6DR Tel: 020 7963 8920 Email: info@e-skills.com Internet: www.e-skills.com
Financial Services Skills Council *Financial services industry*	Financial Services Skills Council 51 Gresham Street LONDON. EC2V 7HQ Tel: 020 7216 7366 Email: info@fssc.org.uk Internet: www.fssc.org.uk

Sector Skills Council	Contact details
GoSkills *Passenger transport industry*	Peter Huntington Chief Executive GoSkills Concorde House, Trinity Park SOLIHULL. B37 7UQ Tel: 0121 635 5520 Fax: 0121 635 5521 Email: info@goskills.org Internet: www.goskills.org
Improve *Food and drink manufacturing and processing industries*	Improve Ground Floor Providence House 2 Innovation Close, Heslington YORK. YO10 5ZF Tel: 0845 644 0448 Fax: 0845 644 0449 Email: info@improveltd.co.uk Internet: www.improveltd.co.uk
Lantra *Environmental and land-based industries*	Lantra Lantra House Stoneleigh Park COVENTRY. CV8 2LG Tel: 024 7669 6996 Fax: 024 7669 6732 Email: connect@lantra.co.uk Internet: www.lantra.co.uk
Lifelong Learning UK *Community based learning furtherand development, education, higher education, library and information services, work-based learning*	Lifelong Learning UK Fifth Floor, St Andrew's House 18-20 St Andrew Street LONDON. EC4A 3AY Tel: 0870 757 7890 Fax: 0870 757 7891 Email: enquiries@lifelonglearninguk.org Internet: www.lifelonglearninguk.org
People 1st *Hospitality, leisure, travel and tourism industries*	Brian Wisdom Chief Executive People 1st, Second Floor Armstrong House, 38 Market Square UXBRIDGE. UB8 1LH Tel: 0870 060 2550 Email: info@people1st.co.uk Internet: www.people1st.co.uk
SEMTA *Science, engineering and manufacturing technology industries*	SEMTA 14 Upton Road WATFORD. WD18 0JT Tel: 01923 238441 Email: infodesk@semta.org.uk Internet: www.semta.org.uk
Skillfast UK *Clothing, footwear and textile industries*	Skillfast UK Richmond House Lawnswood Business Park Redvers Close LEEDS. LS16 6RD Tel: 0113 239 9600 Fax: 0113 239 9601 Email: enquiries@skillfast-uk.org Internet: www.skillfast-uk.org

Sector Skills Council	Contact details
Skills for Care and Development *Social care, including for children and families*	**England**: Andrea Rowe Tel: 0113 245 1716 Email: sscadmin@skillsforcare.org.uk **Wales**: Rhian Huws Williams Tel: 029 2078 0630 Email: info@ccwales.org.uk **Scotland**: Carole Wilkinson Tel: 01382 207101 Email: enquiries@sssc.uk.com **Northern Ireland**: Brendan Johnston Tel: 028 9041 7600 Email: info@niscc.n-i.nhs.uk
Skills for Health *NHS, independent and voluntary health organisations*	John Rogers Chief Executive Skills for Health First Floor Goldsmiths House Broad Plain BRISTOL. BS2 0JP Tel: 0117 922 1155 Fax: 0117 925 1800 Email: office@skillsforhealth.org.uk Internet: www.skillsforhealth.org.uk
Skills for Justice *Custodial care, community justice and police sectors*	Skills for Justice 9-10 Riverside Court Don Road SHEFFIELD. S9 2TJ Tel: 0114 261 1499 Email: info@skillsforjustice.com Internet: www.skillsforjustice.com
Skills for Logistics *Freight logistics industry*	Skills for Logistics 14 Warren Yard Warren Farm Office Village MILTON KEYNES. MK12 5NW Tel: 01908 313360 Email: info@skillsforlogistics.org Internet: www.skillsforlogistics.org
SkillsActive *Active leisure and learning industries*	SkillsActive Castlewood House 77-91 New Oxford Street LONDON. WC1A 1PX Tel: 020 7632 2000 Fax: 020 7632 2001 Email: skills@skillsactive.com Internet: www.skillsactive.com

Sector Skills Council	Contact details
Skillset *Broadcast, film, video, interactive media and photo imaging industries*	Skillset Prospect House 80-110 New Oxford Street LONDON. WC1A 1HB Tel: 020 7520 5757 Fax: 020 7520 5758 Email: info@skillset.org Internet: www.skillset.org
Skillsmart Retail *Retail industries*	Skillsmart Retail The Retail Sector Skills Council 40 Duke Street LONDON. W1A 1AB Tel: 020 7399 3450 Fax: 020 7399 3451 Email: contactus@skillsmartretail.com Internet: www.skillsmartretail.com
SummitSkills *Building services and engineering industries (electro-technical, heating, ventilation, air conditioning, refrigeration and plumbing)*	SummitSkills Fairbourne Drive Atterbury MILTON KEYNES. MK10 9RG Tel: 0870 351 4620 Fax: 0870 351 4621 Email: enquiries@summitskills.org.uk Internet: www.summitskills.org.uk

Resource material 5: Anglia Polytechnic University (APU) - accreditation of external programmes: terms of reference for link tutors

The role of the link tutor is to act as the main point of contact between APU and an external partner in relation to an external programme accredited by APU. The Link tutor plays a key role in relation to:

- developing a proposal for approval of the accreditation of an external programme
- maintaining academic standards established at the point of approval of the accreditation of the proposal, by monitoring the quality of the student experience and the quality of educational support provided
- ensuring the ongoing quality management and enhancement of the programme by supporting the external partners in preparing a report for annual review of the accreditation.

The link tutor must be a member of the academic staff of APU's Regional University Partnership and identified no later than the point at which the accreditation proposal is presented for approval by the Accreditation and Approvals Committee (AAC).

Development phase
The link tutor will:
- work with the Accreditation Advisor (the Executive Officer) and the external partner to establish the feasibility of the proposed Accreditation of the external programme
- work with the external partner to identify the learning outcomes of the proposal, and to establish the general credit

volume and level of the programme in accordance with APU's level and credit descriptors
- work with the Accreditation Adviser and the external partner to develop a formal proposal document for approval.

Normally, the link tutor will be identified in the Development Contract, which sets out an agreement to develop a proposal for accreditation of an external programme. However, in some circumstances, someone other than the link tutor may carry out the initial development work on behalf of an APU School, Department or Regional Faculty, provided that they have appropriate expertise in the area. Where this is the case, it should be noted that accreditation proposals cannot be approved by AAC unless the link tutor who will support the delivery and review phases has been identified.

Programme delivery phase
The link tutor will:
- agree with the external partner an assessment specification, schedule, and assessment criteria, in accordance with APU benchmarks and standards and any relevant professional body requirements
- monitor the assessment process and moderate a sample of assessed work
- provide appropriate advice and support to ensure the continued quality of the programme and to recommend strategies to enhance the quality of the programme.

Annual review
The link tutor will work with the external partner to provide a report for the annual review process.

Programme specific duties
Details of the duties agreed in the context of a specific proposal are normally established for the development phase in a Development Contract; this establishes the feasibility of the proposal and specifies the role and responsibilities of those involved in taking the proposal through to the approval by an AAC Panel.

Once a programme has been approved, an operational contract is drawn up which specifies in detail the roles and responsibilities of each partner to the proposal. The range of duties of the link tutor will normally be established at the point of approval and firmed up in the Operational Contract. The duties of the link tutor will, as a minimum, involve moderation of assessed work and making a contribution to the annual report; however a more extensive set of duties may be agreed, to include:
- working with programme delivery teams to further develop and agree assessment requirements, assessment criteria and assessment schedule
- agreeing scope and frequency of moderation of marked assessments
- monitoring practice based assessments
- observing programme delivery, training sessions etc
- providing or facilitating staff development activities
- providing active support for the completion of the annual review documentation.

Glossary of acronyms

AEL	Accreditation of experiential learning
AGCAS	Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services
APCL	Accreditation of prior certificated learning
APEL	Accreditation of prior experiential learning
APU	Anglia Polytechnic University
CATS	Credit Accumulation and Transfer Scheme
CETAD	Centre for Training and Development
CETL	Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning
CoVE	Centre of Vocational Excellence
CPD	Continuing professional development
CQFW	Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales
CVU	Council of Validating Universities
DANOS	Drug and Alcohol National Occupational Standards
DfES	Department for Education and Skills
DTI	Department of Trade and Industry
ECTS	European Credit Transfer System
ESECT	Enhancing Student Employability project team
EWNI	England, Wales and Northern Ireland credit forum
fdf	Foundation Degree Forward
FE	Further education
FEC	Further education college
GANN	Graduate Apprenticeships National Network
GLO	Generic Learning Outcome
HE	Higher education
HEFCE	Higher Education Funding Council for England
HEI	Higher education institution
HEIF	Higher Education Innovation Fund
HNC	Higher National Certificate
HND	Higher National Diploma
KTP	Knowledge Transfer Partnership
LLN	Lifelong Learning Network

LSC	Learning and Skills Council
LTSN	Learning and Teaching Support Network
LtW	Learning through work initiative
MEG	Mixed Economy Group of colleges
NASES	National Association for Student Employment Services
NCWE	National Council for Work Experience
NICATS	Northern Ireland Credit Accumulation & Transfer System
NOS	National Occupational Standards
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
NUCCAT	Northern Universities Consortium for Credit Accumulation and Transfer
NVQ	National Vocational Qualification
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PDP	Personal development planning
QAA	Quality Assurance Agency for higher education
QCA	Qualifications and Curriculum Authority
RITA	Record of in-house training assessments
RPL	Recognition of prior informal learning
SCQF	Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework
SEEC	Southern England Consortium for Credit accumulation and transfer
SEMTA	Science, Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies Alliance
SME	Small or medium-sized enterprise
SSC	Sector Skills Council
SSDA	Sector Skills Development Agency
TUC	Trades Union Congress
UVAC	University Vocational Awards Council
WBL	Work-based learning

For further information, please contact:

University Vocational Awards Council
University of Bolton
Chadwick Campus
Chadwick Street
BOLTON BL2 1JW

Tel: 01204 903351
Fax: 01204 903354
Email: uvac@uvac.ac.uk
Website: www.uvac.ac.uk