



Lifelong Learning Networks

Realising Potential

A vision for the future of higher
level vocational learning

Progressing the vocational learner
www.lifelonglearningnetworks.org.uk



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Introduction

Since our inception, the Lifelong Learning Networks have worked hard to increase the numbers of vocational learners of all ages entering higher level vocational learning, something of which we are all very proud.

Over a very short period we have developed the range and quality of our services but there is still much to be done. Our commitment has brought us to a point in our development where we must stand back and consider our future – we can and should be ambitious.

We have supported thousands of vocational learners and now aspire to have an impact on the lives of many thousands more. We will improve and expand our existing range of services and find new ways of making a positive difference to the lives of vocational learners across England.

We face the challenge of realising our full potential, building on what has been achieved and creating a sustainable future for the unique service we provide – all in a very short period of time!



Graeme Hall
Chair of LLN Directors Group

Much to be proud of...

30 Lifelong Learning Networks have been in operation across England over the past three years. In this short period, the impact of our work has been substantial:

- Over 1,000 progression agreements have been signed to clarify entry requirements into HE, with many more in development
- Over 74,000 additional student places have been allocated
- Over 400 academic partners work in partnership with us
- Over 5,000 education professionals have undertaken our staff development activities
- Over 250 higher level courses have been developed or adapted.

We have achieved some fundamental milestones thanks to the commitment of our colleagues and partnerships with organisations such as HEFCE, Sector Skills Councils, employers, Regional Development Agencies, local authorities, Aimhigher, the Learning and Skills Council and Foundation Degree Forward.



...and much yet to do

While much has been achieved, there are many challenges that still lie ahead:

- Influencing government policy on higher level vocational learning
- Embedding our employer engagement work within partner institutions
- Increasing the perceived value of work-based learning
- Promoting HE engagement with 14-19 developments including the new Diplomas
- Widening participation through curriculum development.

We have the opportunity to build on our successes so we can continue to serve the needs of vocational learners, employers and academic institutions.



Our values

Our work has a positive impact and serves all stakeholders fairly and objectively.

Valuing the individual

- We place the vocational learner at the heart of our work
- We listen to what stakeholders want
- We deliver local solutions for learners.

Integrity

- We believe in openness, honesty and transparency in our work
- We respect and value all stakeholders
- We promote equality of opportunity.

Accountable

- We are accountable to our Boards and HEFCE for our actions and results
- We look for practical solutions to difficult challenges
- We contribute in partner discussions developing and supporting new ideas.

Pioneering

- We are the vocational learner's 'voice'
- We facilitate effective relationships between colleges, universities and employers
- We make HE accessible to non-traditional learners.

Drive

- We focus on local, regional and national priorities
- We confront and address higher level vocational education concerns
- We highlight and disseminate best practice.

Our strengths

We seek to combine the very best in proven ideas and new thinking, recognising that new types of learners are entering the education market, many already in employment.

Change

Lifelong Learning Networks make a positive difference to the lives of vocational learners and productivity of employers.

Access

Lifelong Learning Networks have specialist teams that draw on the expertise from hundreds of providers from our network partners.

Knowledgeable

Lifelong Learning Networks understand local needs, effectively analysing skills requirements in local communities and businesses.

Flexible

Lifelong Learning Networks tackle local HE concerns and can react to changing needs.

Partnerships

Lifelong Learning Networks act as platforms for coherent and coordinated activity at local, regional and national levels.



Imagine the difference we can make

Our vision and values represent our aspirations and essence. The Lifelong Learning Networks:

- Champion vocational learner progression into and through HE
- Help employers develop a more flexible and skilled workforce
- Create strong partnerships between FE and HE
- Fund additional student places
- Support new and innovative curriculum areas.



Big plans

Our core purpose

Increasing the number of vocational learners progressing into and through HE ensuring the UK remains competitive in the global economy.

Our goal for the future

Developing flexible HE delivery that responds to employers' higher level skills needs.

There is nothing modest in either our core purpose or ambition. We strive to make a real difference to individuals and organisations – better skills, better jobs, better futures.



Case studies

Vocational learner

John thought he had underachieved at school and had a burning desire to study. At 51, he thought he may be too old, but was supported and encouraged by his family and employer to undertake a Foundation Degree in Manufacturing Management (World Class Systems).

John found the exams difficult as he had only sat three since leaving school, but enjoyed writing assignments and researching subjects that helped increase his knowledge.

His confidence has grown, his management skills have improved and his job is conducted with greater ease. John's new-found skills and knowledge have also resulted in workplace efficiency savings of over £250,000 per annum.

John now trains new employees, mentors colleagues and is pursuing a career in management, deputising in his line

manager's absence. He has enrolled on an honours degree and is enjoying his latest challenge in life.

'Achieving the Foundation Degree has opened doors at work that would otherwise have been closed.'

John McNeill, FdSc - Supervisor/Deputy Manager, Corus

Employer engagement

The Foundation Degree in Retail Operations and People Management was developed to support the retail operations at Heathrow airport. It takes advantage of the excellent site facilities enabling employees to balance work and study commitments.

The BAA Academy and Dixons Tax Free helped develop the module content to suit their business needs. The Dixons employee has implemented a number of live work projects: he

designed a motivational training workshop and was part of the Terminal 5 recruitment campaign. The company has benefited from his improved initiative, confidence and performance.

His qualification will make him a stronger candidate for career progression as he has shown loyalty to the company, a commitment to developing, and the ambition to move forward.

‘The Foundation Degree offers a level of commitment to our training and development that we couldn’t previously offer – it’s a fantastic opportunity.’

***Tania Morgan, Learning and Development Manager,
Dixons Tax Free.***

Partnership

A Lifelong Learning Network has expanded their capacity to deliver Information, Advice, Guidance and Learner Support

(IAG&LS) to a diverse geographical area and ensure that a wide range of people in advice roles improve their knowledge and awareness of vocational HE.

To achieve this, they established a network of nine hubs, which are centres of development designed to pilot different methods of improving and delivering IAG services through partnership working.

They arranged training sessions and university visits for over 150 advisers and made training grants available to individuals to improve their existing IAG&LS skills by following an accredited course. The take up of the grants has been good and people are quickly progressing through their chosen programmes.

A modular Foundation Degree in IAG has been approved and a network training approach offering updating and training input to groups of about 25 advice staff has been adopted. They have also trained and supported 50 IAG champions.

Your regional Lifelong Learning Network



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Our challenge

Our vision reflects the strengths and unique qualities that exist within the Lifelong Learning Networks.

Reaching our goal will be a great challenge – not only for us but for all our network partners.

Our successes will continue to have a real and positive impact on the lives of work-based learners across England.

Our challenge is to realise the potential that Lifelong Learning Networks have.





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