

InTuition

Issue 6
Autumn 2011

The journal for professional teachers and trainers in the further education and skills sector



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Editorial

Over the summer we have been working on further improvements to *InTuition* based on your feedback through our survey and focus groups. We were overwhelmed with the response to our summer edition, including a number of contributions, many supportive comments and helpful and constructive feedback.

With this edition we are launching a new supplement to *InTuition*, titled *CPD Matters*. We have heard your feedback that you would like more support with CPD from your professional body and we hope that this supplement proves a useful addition to your continuing professional development.

As September represents the start of the year for so many - both *InTuition* and *CPD Matters* include articles focusing on how teachers and trainers can make a difference to learners in the year ahead.

Our main feature focuses on WorldSkills which IfL is proud to be supporting. Over 100,000 visitors are expected to WorldSkills from 5 – 8 October. We are excited to be able to be part of this event to celebrate the value of skilled professional and qualified teachers and trainers, IfL members, who are key to helping millions of young people and adult learners across FE and skills. We hope that you will be able to be part of this event either in your places of work,

or by visiting WorldSkills in October with your learners.

As with previous editions we are continuing to seek your thoughts in *InTuition*, and the new *CPD Matters*. Previous feedback showed that many of you prefer a paper copy of *InTuition* and we have responded to this. You can complete the new online survey at www.ifl.ac.uk/intuitionsurvey. You can also contact us with your thoughts, letters and suggestions for articles at editor@ifl.ac.uk

Marie Ashton

Head of Marketing and Communications

IfL Calendar 2011



September

- 1 Declaration of intent for professional formation opens
- 28 IfL and CPD for the Future – East of England, Shuttleworth College
- 26/9-2/10 Colleges Week

October

- Black History Month
- 5 World Teachers' Day
- 5-8 WorldSkills 2011, London
- 17 IfL and CPD for the Future – South East, Chichester College
- 31 Declaration of intent for professional formation closes

November

- 10 IfL and CPD for the Future – West Midlands, University of Warwick

For more information and updates on events, visit: www.ifl.ac.uk/events

For professional formation dates visit: www.ifl.ac.uk/applyforpf

Keep a lookout for your monthly IfL e-newsletters *On the Agenda* and *Informed* in your inbox.

News Digest

IfL's newly elected president promises positive action on diversity

In October Bea Groves will take on the role of president of IfL's Advisory Council. She will take over from IfL's first elected president, John Chorley.

Ms Groves has over 31 years' experience of working and teaching in all areas of the post-compulsory education sector. She teaches a range of ICT subjects, history, philosophy, science, politics, music history, management and gender issues, and has considerable experience in teacher education.

She said, "My chosen themes for this year are continuing professional development (CPD) that enhances good practice, and positive action in diversity. I think I am the first transgender person to become national president of a professional body in the UK, and believe strongly that the post-compulsory sector should recognise diversity in all its forms. I want to show minority groups, including the trans community, that there need not be barriers. I want to celebrate how IfL embraces diversity."

IfL announces two new patrons

In June, IfL announced two new patrons

Professor Ann Hodgson and Geoff Petty, both teachers who have pledged their support for the professional body for teachers and trainers in further education and skills.

IfL welcomes independent review of professionalism in the further education and skills sector.

On Thursday 8 September 2011, John Hayes, minister of state for further education, skills and lifelong learning announced his proposal to commission an independent review of professionalism in the further education and skills sector.

IfL will engage positively with the proposed review and will continue working to promote the status and professional interests of teachers and trainers.

IfL has had a regulatory role since September 2007. The regulations required most teachers and trainers in the sector to register as members of IfL and remain in good professional standing through continuing professional development.

Read more on the latest news from IfL at www.ifl.ac.uk/news

The state we're in: adult literacy in England

Teachers need more training and support for continuing professional development if they are to help break the cycle of illiteracy in England, according to the adult learning body Niace.

The recommendations are part of a new report from Niace on adult literacy that looks at the progress made since the landmark Moser Report of 1999 and the subsequent Skills for Life strategy launched in 2001. Moser estimated that around 5.2 million adults lacked the literacy skills to function effectively.

Niace says that despite the significant investment in Skills for Life major challenges still exist including the issue of intergenerational illiteracy where parents who have difficulty reading and writing raise children likely to face the same barriers.

Alongside recommendations about joined-up thinking, policies and practices, the report makes some far-reaching recommendations about teacher training and CPD emphasising the need for 'a highly trained and qualified teaching workforce as a priority'.

It suggests:

- Increasing the number of qualified adult literacy teachers
- Offering priority training in sectors where the least teacher development has taken place (work-based learning, the voluntary and community sector)
- CPD for all teachers in the use of digital learning and resources
- The training of volunteers to act as mentors

The report says that while the challenges for adult literacy may be different in 10 years there remains a 'moral duty' for society to address those who 'can't read; can't vote; don't have choices'.

The report is based on an independent enquiry into the state of adult literacy in England 2011 led by Lord Boswell, former education minister and now one of IfL's six patrons.

IfL's response and a link to the report can be found at www.ifl.ac.uk/newsandevents/press-releases/professional-teachers-and-trainers-are-key-to-improving-literacy

Regional news

CPD for Future regional events

CPD for the Future regional events are going on throughout England. Each event focuses on CPD from a regional perspective.

Upcoming events include:

- **28 September 2011** – East of England, Shuttleworth College
- **17 October 2011** – South East, Chichester College
- **10 November 2011** – West Midlands, University of Warwick

If you are unable to attend the events, the presentations will be available to download from the website and **IfL's online communities**.

For further details and how to book a place, please visit the **IfL website**.

CPD focus groups

This year's CPD review process will be different as we hold nine focus groups during September across England in conjunction with regional advisers.

The aims of the review will be to evaluate the effectiveness of the CPD undertaken in 2010-2011 and to anticipate the current and anticipated future CPD needs of IfL members. Members selected as part of a random sample have been invited to take part in this professional dialogue, sharing good practice about the effectiveness of their CPD.

Information about the outcomes of these groups will be available on the IfL website and future editions of IfL's newsletter *On the Agenda*.

Publications and member news

Alan Tuckett MifL retired after serving 23 years as chief executive of the National Institute for Adult Continuing Education (NIACE) in August 2011. David Hughes took up the position as NIACE Chief Executive on 1 September. We wish Alan all the best in his retirement and look forward to working with David.

Richard Fisher MifL sadly passed away on 24 August 2011. Mr Fisher worked at Stanmore College. Mr Fisher also worked as one of IfL's CPD reviewers, a role in which he was a conscientious and a very able reviewer, with a good sense of humour. He was described by colleagues as an inspiration and will be sadly missed.

John Bowden MifL, former senior lecturer in communication at British Telecom and now a part-time English teacher at Bridgwater College, has recently published the 9th edition of *Writing a Report* (How To Books, Oxford). *Training Journal* has described the book as "By far the most informative text covering report writing I have seen".

Let us know about news, events and publications by emailing editor@ifl.ac.uk with the subject line 'Regional news'

Lorna Page

About me and my role: I have worked in the sector for around 15 years, initially as a signer supporting hearing-impaired students and a teacher of British Sign Language, then as a teacher of travel and tourism, and literacy and basic skills. I am now a teacher educator at Lincoln College, where my role is to coordinate courses for the college's Certificate to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector (CTLLS) and the Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector (PTLLS) programmes. I also work as an e-mentor to other teachers in the college, with whom I am jointly undertaking a blended learning project.



The first week of term is a special time. Lorna outlines her week preparing for the new year.

This is an incredibly busy time for me. I am working with colleagues to pull together, review and revise the resources – especially e-resources – that we have used over the past year, and to develop new ones. We use as many resources as we can on our teacher education programmes. There are so many wonderful new IT resources out there, and I offer continuing professional development (CPD) sessions to teachers throughout the college so they too can use the latest ideas to capture learners' enthusiasm.

Our Moodle-based virtual learning environment (VLE) is used widely. Last year, the teacher education team trialled an entirely paperless course, which proved very successful and will be continued.

This year I am keen to extend the use of whiteboards as an interactive, rather than just a presentation, tool. Using mobile technologies is particularly important for engaging with younger learners, who increasingly want to have this kind of thing embedded into their learning. Our NVQ assessors use the 'OneFile' e-portfolio app with students, who are encouraged to film themselves performing a skill and upload it for assessment.

Also, like many others, Lincoln College has banned students from using Facebook in college, but now we are preparing to look at it from an educational perspective, with trainee teachers, to see how we can use it in our teaching practice. The ideas discussed in our group will be disseminated to all staff via a good practice newsletter and they are encouraged to contribute too. The college was recently rated 'outstanding' by Ofsted, and the external assessor for the teacher training programmes praised our good practice in technology. This week we will also be interviewing candidates for the teacher education programmes, ensuring they meet required

standards and have teaching practice in place. Instead of the literacy tests we had previously used, we now send applicants a pack of diagnostic tests to complete before interview, which helps us identify those for whom numeracy, IT and academic writing might prove challenging.

I devote one day in my week to the blended learning project, where five curriculum areas are seeking new ways of delivering their curriculum using a blended approach. As this goes live at the start of term, this preparation period is being used to ensure everything is in place.

But overall the main focus of my own CPD is my PhD, for which I am looking at observation of teaching and learning in FE. We are trying to find ways of minimising the stress, focusing on observation as a developmental tool.

I have just completed an ECDL (European computer driving licence) course and an NVQ in management, and regularly attend short programmes, such as Dr Colin Bear's on experiential learning.

Read the full article at www.ifl.ac.uk/lornapage

Lorna's recommended resources and websites

- Beard, C & Wilson, J (2006) *Experiential Learning: A Best Practice Handbook for Trainers and Educators*. London: Kogan Page. <http://academic.shu.ac.uk/om/cb/Colin%20New/index.htm>
- Prezi: <http://prezi.com/>
- Glogster: www.glogster.com/
- Titanpad: <http://titanpad.com/>
- OneFile: <http://www1.onefile.co.uk/?returnurl=/default.asp>
- SMART Exchange - <http://exchange.smarttech.com/#tab=0>
- REfLECT: www.ifl.ac.uk/reflect

Professor Ann Hodgson

Ann Hodgson is professor of education; faculty director of research, consultancy and knowledge transfer; and co-director of the centre for post 14 research and innovation at the Institute of Education, University of London. She is also one of IfL's six patrons.

Ann loves teaching, but her teaching career almost came to an end soon after it began.

As a young graduate, she took up a post in an inner city secondary school teaching Russian, French and German. At that time, teachers did not have to have professional training or a teaching qualification. With no support, she says that the experience was dreadful, "a baptism of fire."

After just a year she moved into journalism. When she returned to teaching, it was as a volunteer tutor in the adult literacy movement, and then as a teacher in adult and further education, which she loved.

"Hold on to what brought you into teaching in the first place. Usually it is because you want to make a difference to learners."

New teachers might find it reassuring to know that someone so widely respected for her writing, research and teaching still experiences the same struggles, anxieties and sheer pleasure in her students' success as any other teacher.

"It never goes completely because you have to begin again whenever you embark on something new. You over-prepare and then feel bad that you didn't get through everything. You get that awful feeling: the students will know more than me; I haven't done enough background

reading. What you learn gradually is not to prepare too much, allow things to flow a bit, take things from them too.

"While changes in educational policy can make it difficult to learn from how you did things last time, they can also inject a stimulus that forces you out of a groove and back into creativity. Good continuing professional development (CPD) can do that too."

For Ann, successful CPD offers "a number of different ways of being able to view yourself: through reading the thoughts of others, being observed, talking with others, reflecting on your own practice individually. There are a number of different ways of coming at your own practice."

What distinguishes teaching in the FE sector, particularly to 14 to 19-year-olds, is the context. Learning on the job – as an apprentice, for example – is very different from learning in the classroom. Using a different pedagogy does not predicate an innate difference in the relationship between teacher and student.

Nor does making different types of provision for young people and for adults necessarily require different teaching and learning styles. "Good teaching is good teaching across the board," says Ann. She refers to the ESRC research project,¹ which identified the fundamental importance of relationship building;

bringing in the right stimuli at the right time; being prepared to change, be flexible and steered off course if necessary; reflecting on what you have done.

For Ann, successful CPD offers "a number of different ways of being able to view yourself: through reading the thoughts of others, being observed, talking with others, reflecting on your own practice individually."

Ann believes that collaboration leads to better outcomes. "In academia, we tend to have a cult of the individual and their body of knowledge," she says. "But teaching and learning is a collaborative process – we shouldn't be frightened of that."

Ann sees youth unemployment and lack of funding as being the key challenges for the FE and skills sector over the next few years. Raising the participation age is undoubtedly a good thing in its own right, but it will be challenging to motivate young people when you cannot offer them hope of progression.

Her message of hope for teachers at this difficult time is this: "Hold on to what brought you into teaching in the first place. Usually it is because you want to make a difference to learners."

"Teachers are doing a fantastic job. They are making a difference. We need people who can be positive and creative at a time when for young people, and many adults, it's going to be very hard."

Read the interview in full at www.ifl.ac.uk/annhodgson

¹ ESRC Teaching and Learning Research Programme, 2006. *The Impact of Policy on Learning and Inclusion in the New Learning and Skills Sector*. Reference RES 139-25-0105.

New to teaching: a “rookie’s” insight

Over 8,000 IfL members have been working in the sector for two years or less. Katie Little MfL has just completed her PGCE at the University of Sunderland, which included teaching sociology (A level and Access) at Derwentside College. In this CPD in action we look at the type of continuing professional development undertaken by those new to teaching and training.



Katie has devoted much of the summer break to preparing herself for September. She loves teaching younger students, and in 2010-11 was employed as a cover supervisor in secondary schools: not an easy role for a new teacher.

During her PGCE, Katie focused on behaviour management with younger learners, and cover supervision gave her ample opportunity to put the techniques she had learned to the test. Some of these techniques have been tried and tested over many years, while others are geared to making effective use of new technologies, such as mobile phones and YouTube.

She learned an array of techniques to help students to form relationships, develop trust in each other and work comfortably in different groups.

She cites Geoff Petty as being a source of inspiration, and says that his cognitive approaches to learning were a “real eye-opener”. One example of how Katie has adapted his ideas is that she uses eye-catching or amusing snippets on YouTube to help students learn and remember. During the summer break she has been looking through YouTube clips, magazines and television programmes to prepare a module on sociology of the media.

PGCE tutors Killian McCartney and Dr Andy Convery at Sunderland University have also been sources of ideas and inspiration. Katie used to struggle with timekeeping in lessons, until Killian showed PGCE students a countdown timer in a Microsoft PowerPoint presentation, which alerts the user to the amount of time left for each task. Katie uses this herself, and also as a class resource. When she gives tasks to students, especially when they have to work in

groups, she finds having the countdown timer in use on the whiteboard helps them focus on the task and complete it.

She learned an array of techniques to help students to form relationships, develop trust in each other and work comfortably in different groups. “They come in straight from school and tend to be quiet, wanting to sit with their old school friends,” says Katie. Killian showed her that one of the simplest techniques was to take control of seating arrangements at the outset. Using name labels and sticky coloured dots, she moved students regularly in the early weeks. She complemented this with a number of simple activities to help them get to know each other, such as each having a list with others’ names on, with the task of going round the class, locating the named individuals and writing down interesting bits of information about them. “It develops their confidence, their social skills and their trust in one another, so when it comes to working in groups and giving presentations, which usually scares them, they perform much better.”

Maintaining good behaviour in the classroom, especially with young people, can be achieved by establishing ground rules, as well as using engaging, interesting activities and materials. At times as a new teacher, Katie has been surprised by what students sometimes think is acceptable. Bringing food into classrooms is not acceptable, nor are racist and sexist comments, which are sometimes made with little or no awareness. Katie has found the use of reflective journals to be a powerful

tool as a new teacher. Discussions to achieve a consensus start the process, and then learners are asked to use their journals to reflect on their academic learning and skill development, as well as on their own behaviour and its impact on others. She takes in the journals regularly and adds her own reflections, which can result in a rapid change in behaviour.

One lesson on race and education was structured around the sort of comment a particular learner regularly made. This helped her and her peers realise how racism affects learning. As part of her own continuing development, Katie recently attended a conference on equality and diversity, and is now undertaking further CPD into this topic.

Despite an agreement with her learners that using mobile phones in class is not acceptable behaviour, the habit persists, so Katie decided

to experiment with ways of getting students to use their phones to learn. "Most learners had a smartphone, and I grouped them so at least one student had one, and set them a research task to look up on the internet. When I went around to check they were doing that, not using Facebook, they were all working on the task. Using the countdown timer to speed them up they got really enthusiastic about finding the information. I was quite surprised just how well it worked," she says.

In preparation for exams, the students worked in groups to create posters explaining key themes such as racism or sexism. When each group had explained their poster, Katie encouraged the students to take a photo of each poster, to supplement the notes they had taken. Her preparation for the coming year will involve more research into creative ways of using mobile phones for learning.

Katie believes in the power of active learning. To focus students' attention at the start of a lesson, she uses a toolkit of starter activities, which are usually subject-related, quick to do and enjoyable. One is a bit like Pictionary. "In sociology there are a lot of key terms that are new to them," Katie says. "They have to draw a picture to remind them."

When students needed to learn to develop and use questionnaires, she sent them out of the classroom

to ask others in the college to complete them. Though she could see potential problems in their designs, she refrained from offering advice. They quickly learned what worked; how difficult it is to get others to engage in surveys; and the consequent challenges of producing valid findings.

As she prepares for the new year, whatever it might bring, she will continue to research teaching methods as well as preparing schemes of work and lesson plans.

Katie thinks, plans and reflects a great deal, and actively engages her students in helping her develop effective techniques. At the end of lessons, she often asks what worked for them and why and how she could improve. This enhances their own learning and Katie says that they have contributed good ideas for her to try.

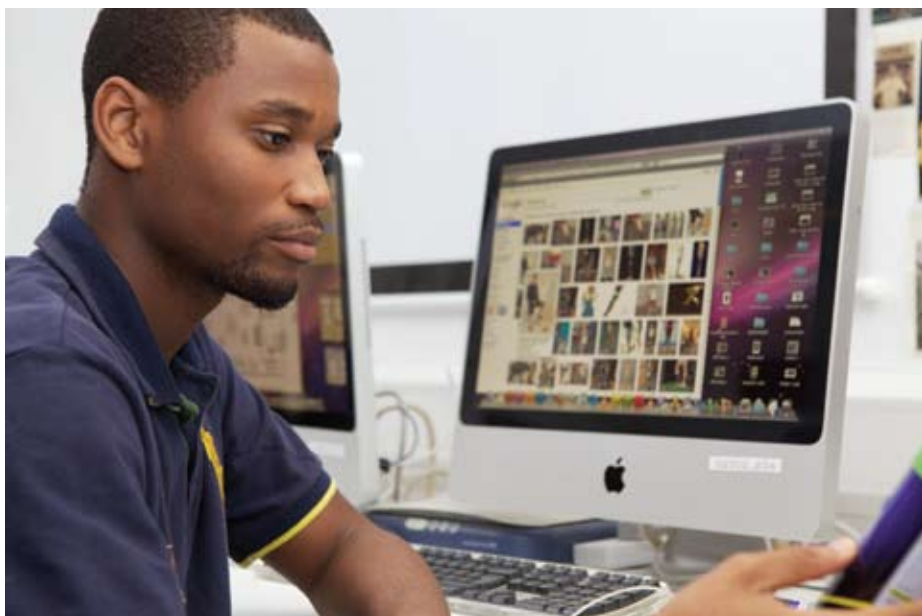
As she prepares for the new year, whatever it might bring, she will continue to research teaching methods as well as preparing schemes of work and lesson plans.

Find out more – visit www.ifl.ac.uk/cpd for a range of CPD resources.

You can also join the online community for those new to teaching and training at www.ifl.ac.uk/onlinecommunities

Katie's CPD Tips

- Look through YouTube clips, magazines and television programmes in preparation for your teaching module
- To help with timekeeping in lessons, use a countdown timer in Microsoft PowerPoint presentations created by Dave Foord at A6 Training
- A reflective journal is a powerful tool, especially for new teachers. Try IfL's online portal REFLECT www.ifl.ac.uk/reflect
- Katie recently attended a conference on equality and diversity as part of a focus on her CPD. Try finding conferences and events online or offline that focus on your areas of interest.
- Research creative ways of using technology, including mobile phones in learning
- Develop a toolkit of subject-related starter activities to focus students' attention at the start of a lesson



Teaching and training the best of the best for WorldSkills



The world's largest international skills competition is coming to London this year. Around 1,000 competitors from over 50 countries or regions will compete in 46 skill areas at ExCeL from 5-8 October 2011.

With a team of 43, the UK will be competing in 37 skills ranging from mobile robotics, electrical installations and graphic design to cooking, hairdressing and landscape gardening. The 150,000 or so visitors expected at WorldSkills London 2011 will be able to try their hand at dozens of skills and receive impartial advice and guidance on careers and apprenticeships plus, of course, cheer on Team UK.

The event is fiercely contested, with considerable personal and national pride at stake in the competitions. But WorldSkills is more than a one-off event: it is a part of an ongoing learning process. WorldSkills' impact is felt in classrooms and workshops across the UK – and the same holds true in overseas countries (in South Korea for example, competitors are welcomed back with a parade – as the enthusiasm and insights gained by teachers, trainers and students involved at all stages of the competition are shared.

IfL has been talking to some of the teachers and trainers who have worked with students who took part in the squad selection process and those who will compete as part of Team UK.

Kevin Calpin taught stonemasonry at York College from 1985 to 2009. He is now an independent consultant who devotes most of his time to training young people

for Team UK, and is one of the UK Skills training managers. Kevin explains how entering young people for competition impacts on the other students and on his own teaching.

Even though he has retired from teaching, Kevin's own continuing CPD is still important to him.

"If they are to win competitions, I've got to teach them to be very, very good stonemasons, so I've got to learn how to do that. Is it about technique, about drawing skills, about working faster, about understanding the job in hand?"

"As I explored all this for the two or three entering a competition, I incorporated it into all my teaching. Even something like arranging your tools in the right way. That saves precious minutes in a competition; it might give you the extra half point that gets the gold. But it's important for every tradesman to think about the tools too.

"When one or two students put themselves under that pressure, it encourages others to have a go. Some companies are especially keen to support their apprentices; it reflects well on them if their students win."

Even though he has retired from teaching, Kevin's own continuing CPD is still important to him.

WorldSkills facts

- The first WorldSkills was held in 1947 as a national competition to encourage young people to start apprenticeships in order to build skill levels in post-war Spain
- The Australian WorldSkills team are called the Skillaroos and have been cited as the team to watch in 2011, currently ranking sixth
- South Korea has topped the medal table for the past two competitions, coming second in 2005 – Japan, Brazil and Switzerland also rank consistently high
- Helsinki demonstrated an 8 per cent increase in vocational education and skills between 2002 and 2008 as a result of hosting WorldSkills in 2005
- WorldSkills 2011 will be the 41st competition and the biggest event to be held in the UK before the 2012 Olympics
- There are 57 countries/regional members of WorldSkills International, the most recent being Argentina, Barbados, Latvia and Namibia, who joined in 2011
- Team UK won three gold and six medals in WorldSkills 2009 in Calgary, Canada
- The next WorldSkills in 2013 in Leipzig, Germany



years, nine as a floristry teacher at South Staffordshire College. She enjoys competitive floristry and won a silver at the Chelsea Flower Show this year. She promotes participation to fellow florists and students, as a good way of advancing one's floristry career while being fully engaged with the most creative and challenging aspects of the skill.

She has been involved in training students to compete in the UK heats and finals of WorldSkills for five years. This year, two of her students made it through to the final three in the squad selection process, which culminated in a four-day competition, designed to simulate the conditions of the WorldSkills event. At the end of this, Victoria Richards was chosen to represent the UK at WorldSkills London 2011.

"Seeing Victoria compete for her country will be my proudest moment," Laura says. "I got involved in WorldSkills because I could see the huge benefits for all participants."

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"I still do what every good teacher does: always keeping up to date with industry standards, with any new syllabus coming up, with health and safety and so on," he says. "I must track any movement in education to make sure I'm doing the right thing".

As a deputy chief expert in the UK Skills team, he has to manage training events and support other trainers, so he attends a number of training sessions to develop these skills.

He learns most of all from his colleagues and peers, and says that his own learning never stops.

Kevin's former York College colleague Mike Burdett, also a WorldSkills trainer, began his career in bricklaying, and later became a part-time lecturer at the college where he had trained. He has been in a full-time post at York for the past 11 years.

"For me, teaching is more rewarding even than building things."

"When you work in industry," Mike says, "you are building products for people to see; whereas working with young people isn't a quick fix, it's more of a time process, seeing how they develop and change academically and socially. When you make a product, you are the one responsible for the finished article, but with teaching there are a lot of different elements that go together

to help the young person become the person they do, so they can go out and create the products of their vocation."

"For me, teaching is more rewarding even than building things."

Mike uses the techniques learned as a WorldSkills trainer in his own classroom, for motivating every single learner. A coaching course has helped him see how to get individuals to buy into their own development, identify their own strengths and weaknesses and develop their own motivation.

"Keeping them involved in their own learning journey, whether they are a Team UK competitor or a first year apprentice; identifying their own goals and objectives, pushing themselves, means they are much more likely to succeed than if it's just me trying to enthuse them."

He hopes that tutors will do their best to take students to WorldSkills London 2011. "This is a once in a lifetime opportunity to experience the intensity of competition; the pride, the drive; the motivation of all the competitors; the excitement, the tension, the buzz; a chance to see the best of the best. WorldSkills is not just for individual students: it raises the standards for the whole vocational area."

Just as passionate about WorldSkills is Laura Leong, who has been teaching fine art and floristry for 14

City&Guilds Rich list

In August, the City & Guilds Vocational Rich List 2011 was announced, featuring well-known individuals from multiple industries. The list ranks wealth among those who have built their fortunes following an apprenticeship or other practical qualification. This year's list valued those on the list a collective £17.6 billion – a billion pound increase since 2008.

Just some of the names on the list included:

- Dragon's Den judge and leisure industry magnate **Deborah Meadon** (position 63)
- **Linda Bennett**, founder of LK Bennett (position 41)
- Cook and food writer, **Delia Smith** (position 89)
- TV chefs including **Jamie Oliver** (position 33)

Letters

Continued from page 9

“The process of training and coaching encourages greater confidence and participants have a great chance to benefit from the extended training plan on offer if they are selected for the team. Participation accelerates their progress, boosts their confidence and expands their industrial network of contacts.

“By regularly competing, and by attending demonstrations, workshops, seminars and training days, you renew your enthusiasm and inspiration for your vocation, which keeps things interesting for you and for your learners.”

“As their confidence and experience grows, it becomes possible to widen their interests. A significant amount of time needs to be invested in technical practice, in refining ideas and in improving finish. It is important to expose learners to different ideas as they progress, showing them how these ideas can be adapted for different purposes, and leaving room for them to move off in their own direction, using the basic techniques they have learned. The most important thing you can do for a competitor is to encourage their self-belief, and to get them to take the lead in critiquing their own work.”

Being involved in WorldSkills and other competitions has helped Laura’s professional development and her own work as a private trainer in floristry. “Subject-related CPD is incredibly important – you have to be current and fully engaged at a high level in your skill area,” she says.

“By regularly competing, and by attending demonstrations, workshops, seminars and training days, you renew your enthusiasm and inspiration for your vocation, which keeps things interesting for you and for your learners.”

The importance of WorldSkills as a vehicle for promoting vocational education and training cannot be overstated. By showcasing vocational learning and skills it enriches the learning environment for not only the participants but their fellow students in the wider further education and skills system. It is at once a tribute to the teachers and trainers who produce such skilled students and a boost to all staff across the education and skills system who continually seek to improve and develop their own knowledge and skills.

Barely will the cheers have died from this year’s WorldSkills before teachers and trainers begin preparation for the next competition to be held in Leipzig, Germany, in 2013.

Come and visit IfL at WorldSkills 2011 at stand EX113 from 5 – 8 October where we will be celebrating teachers and trainers as dual professionals.

I have read previous editions of *InTuition* and I did use the journal mainly when I was doing a degree in PCET. Apart from that, it didn’t really interest me and was something I wasn’t that bothered about.

However the new-look *InTuition* is excellent; it is concise, short and sharp with excellent interesting features that FE practitioners can relate to. The Geoff Petty article on equality and diversity is extremely thought-provoking and many a debate and discussion will come from this piece.

This prompted me to look more closely at the IfL website, the resources and the “Ask Geoff” section. An interesting letter on page 10, again that practitioners who have moved from industry to teaching can all relate to and reflect on. This can only lead to more readers being motivated to contribute.

If this is the way forward for IfL, there will certainly be fewer members (including me) moaning about the IfL annual subscription fee; keep it up.

Rob Strachan

Lecturer in Hospitality

I can see some considerable effort had gone into changing the format and content of this new edition. It is certainly more easily accessible in terms of its visual appearance.

Sadly, this isn’t reflected in the content. Jean Kelly provides a wholly one-sided argument. Why not be more transparent and include (as we all have to in academic work) the ‘other side of the story’? There is an argument for having licence to practise, but there is also a very convincing argument against it. Now is exactly the time, to open the debate.

Ursula Edgington, BA (Hons) PGCCE, MA

Lecturer in Further Education

Just to say that I thought your article in Issue 5 of *InTuition* on CPD and licence to practise was brilliant. Making comparisons with other jobs and professions where a licence to practise is mandatory demonstrated the value and recognition conferred by IfL. The examples and comparisons you made were excellent and relevant ones.

I hope that many will agree that professional recognition confers a sort of quality mark and I am proud to have membership.

Dr Anne Brookes

Head of Scientific and Technical Training

Send us your comments, feedback and opinions on this issue of *InTuition* and the issues raised. Email editor@ifl.ac.uk including your name. Letters may be edited.

New learners: getting it right from the beginning



Have we got classroom differentiation right?

How do we ensure everyone in the class learns at their maximum rate, despite their differences? This is called “differentiation” of course. But differentiation does not require us to treat students differently.

Some argue that we should set different tasks for different students to suit their abilities, preferences, or learning styles. This is called “differentiation by task”, but it is only rarely effective or necessary.

There is an easier and more effective way to differentiate which works in most cases. For any given topic, this involves setting the same sequence of tasks for all students, ending in an open challenging task that every student can attempt, but which will stretch the most able.

This is called “differentiation by outcome”, because the outcome, or quality of work, will be different for different students, though the tasks are the same.

Let's look at an example. For any given topic Bess sets the same “ladder” of tasks for everyone. The first few tasks are answering simple recall questions on key points in the lesson. Then there are some simple reasoning questions which ask students to think about what they have learned. These are often “why?”, or “what would happen if.....?” questions. They go beyond simple recall, but don't require complex reasoning. Bess

correctly argues that students don't remember and understand what they are told or shown, only what they think about.

If weaker students are bored and don't understand their lessons there is a danger of a downward spiral where the weak students get worse and worse during the year.

The last task on Bess's ladder is an open challenging task, typically to analyse a scenario, evaluate what happened, and suggest improvements. She devises the scenario carefully so that some improvements will be fairly obvious, but others require more thought and creativity. So all students can attempt the task, but the most able will be stretched by it. It is not easy to devise such tasks, but gets easier with experience.

There are circumstances when Bess's strategy will not work: for example when the class includes students working towards different qualification aims, or towards different assessment levels. But this situation is rare for most teachers. Some students with unusual needs may still need to be catered for individually.

The problems with the strategy of setting different tasks for different students, are:

- Weaker students are not practising the important skills of analysis and evaluation and will fall further and further behind
- Students will resent being grouped, “why aren't I doing the same as my friend?”
- Low-level tasks that require students just to recall what they were told or shown, usually bore students
- Research has consistently shown that students need challenging tasks that make them think to ensure engagement, understanding, and recall

If weaker students are bored and don't understand their lessons there is a danger of a downward spiral where the weak students get worse and worse during the year.

For more information visit www.geoffpetty.com/differentiation.html for more detail especially ‘diff 2 task design’.

There is more to differentiation than setting tasks in class: see the appendix of *Teaching Today* for a more complete account.

IfL noticeboard

CPD resources

Take a look at our website for CPD resources. You will find members' teaching and training tips, and activities you can adapt for your learners and your context.

Visit www.ifl.ac.uk/CPDresources for further details

Support in your local area

There are ten Regional Advisers working across England to provide support, including the delivery of workshops and support seminars with continuing professional development (CPD), professional formation, reflective practice, impact assessment and the use of REFLECT. Login to www.ifl.ac.uk/regionaladvisers for further details.

Grants for Initial Teacher Training (ITT)

Undertaking Initial teacher Training on an in-service part time basis? You could receive up to £400 towards your course fees. In addition you could receive a top up bursary of up to £150 if undertaking a numeracy diploma. Your employer will need to apply on your behalf, please see <http://www.ifl.ac.uk/ittgrant> or email fitt@ifl.ac.uk for further details.

Join our online communities

Would you like to discuss strategies, share tips, resources and ideas about teaching, training and learning with other IfL members? IfL's online communities give you the chance to discuss issues in your subject or area of interest.

You can access the Online Community by logging into the IfL website. At the top of 'My Pages' is the 'Communities' tab. Simply click on the link, explore the different subject areas and decide which group you to join.

Member discounts and special offers

Software discounts with Teachers Expressware.

IfL members can save between 40 and 90 per cent on branded software from Microsoft, Adobe, Quark, Nuance, Mindjet and AVG and more.

Example Pricing:

- Office Professional Plus - £69.99
- Microsoft Office for Mac - £69.99
- Project Professional 2010 - £113.99
- Visio Professional 2010 - £70.99

Note: prices have increased slightly due to the recent VAT increase.

Go to the Teacher Expressware website to access your discount and find out more at

www.teacherexpressware.co.uk/ifl/

2011 IfL Advisory Council elections

The election process for IfL Advisory Council started in early September 2011. Held every two years, this year's elections will fill a minimum of 18 vacancies on the Advisory Council as current members' terms of office come to an end.

Voting in this year's elections opens on 19 October and will close on 16 November.

By voting you can have your say on the future of your professional body.

Visit www.ifl.ac.uk/elections2011 for further details including a podcast from current members of the Advisory Council on the importance of voting in this year's elections.

Apply for QTLS or ATLS

The window for IfL members to declare their intention to apply for professional formation to achieve Qualified Teacher Learning and Skills (QTLS) and Associate Teacher Learning and Skills (ATLS) is now open until 31 October 2011.

To complete your expression of intent, visit the members' only area of the website to complete the expression of intent form. This indicates to IfL that you wish to apply for professional formation and allows us prepare the appropriate resources to review and moderate your application.

Find out more about applying for QTLS or ATLS at www.ifl.ac.uk/professionalformation

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Published: September 2011

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