



# IfL supporting professionalism

Update for 2011–14



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## Acknowledgements

This update to IfL's strategy is led by IfL's elected non-executive board and is based on views from an in-depth sample of over 1,000 teachers and trainers, and the views of IfL's elected Advisory Council.

We would like to thank the IfL members, learners, IfL staff and sector providers whose photographs appear in this publication.

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# Foreword

As the independent professional body for teachers and trainers across further education and skills, formed in 2002 by further education teachers, trades union and employer bodies, the Institute for Learning (IfL) supports excellence in professional practice of teachers and trainers for the benefit of learners.

IfL is governed by members for the profession and for learners, and the Advisory Council has 45 places elected from the membership and up to 15 selected stakeholder organisations, and an elected president. The Council elects a non-executive board of 12 members and the board elects its chair.

We believe that in the future teaching and training across further education and skills needs to be truly excellent. Young and adult learners and employers, who invest their time and money, expect and deserve no less.

Teachers and trainers, members of IfL, confirm a very strong commitment to be the “very best that they can be for learners”.

We recognise that our sector is often working in times of great challenge and our members, at the front line of delivery to learners, feel impacts most deeply.

Our vision is quite simply that:

“IfL will support members to be known as brilliant dual professionals – both teachers and trainers and up-to-date subject experts for learners in further education and skills.”

IfL members have developed a strong values base for the profession of teaching and training in further education, and for IfL as your professional body, and these are:

We value:	We believe that our members – teachers and trainers:
<b>Professionalism</b>	Strive for the highest standards in teaching and learning, and high levels of subject or vocational expertise, placing the interests and progression of learners at the very heart of our practice. Members are dual professionals.
<b>Development and innovation</b>	Continually develop our expertise, individually and within communities of practice and are creative and innovative.
<b>Autonomy</b>	Should be trusted to exercise informed judgement in the interests of learners.
<b>Integrity</b>	Use our skills and knowledge and the resources at our disposal wisely to benefit all learners, the public and where we work, and are respected and trustworthy members of society.
<b>Equality</b>	Are celebrated for the diversity of our backgrounds and as positive role models for learners and colleagues, and should have fair opportunities for success in our careers, from whatever backgrounds.



Teachers and trainers have made it clear that IfL, as your professional body, should focus on three strategic priorities over the next few years. These are:

1. Promoting **benefits** that are supporting professional excellence, through continuing professional development
2. Increasing the **status** of teachers and trainers
3. Giving members an influential **voice** on policy.

The government has confirmed that it requires teachers to be professionally qualified<sup>1</sup> and to be members of their professional body, IfL.

Subscriptions will be used to deliver the strategic priorities, with the emphasis being on investing in services that members value. IfL will invest in reshaping our operations, including accommodation, finance and IT to continue to provide efficient and effective long-term services

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<sup>1</sup> In the House of Commons Hansard written answers for 2 November 2010, col 760W, John Hayes, minister of state for further education, skills and lifelong learning, stated, "The Government are committed to maintaining requirements for a professional qualified FE teaching workforce."

to members in a rapidly changing world. Our financial management processes will ensure value for money and efficiency, while reviewing risk and opportunities. Our staff's top priority is to work to serve members.

IfL will continue to support members with your quest to be brilliant practitioners, from wherever individual teachers or trainers are on the journey towards this.

IfL is committed to supporting you and your professional practice as challenges arise and to do all we can to ensure we respond to your priorities for the profession and our sector.

This update to IfL's Strategy builds on and replaces the current *Five-Year Strategy*. Members' views have informed fresh approaches for the coming three years, and confirmed the strong continuities in our vision, values and the three strategic priorities.

**Sue Crowley**  
Elected Chair, Institute for Learning (IfL)

# The three priorities



## Promoting benefits that are supporting professional excellence, through continuing professional development

The hallmark of a professional is their commitment to continuing professional development (CPD) for excellence, from their very first days of practising and at every stage of their career.

The impact we wish to make for learners is that more teaching and training becomes of the highest quality, meeting the needs of the economy and society.

IfL has a distinctive focus on supporting individuals, and will:

- encourage individual teachers and trainers to drive their own CPD
- provide a framework for CPD, using new technologies that help individuals in their planning, recording and reviewing of the difference CPD makes
- foster CPD that ensures teachers and trainers are experts in teaching methods and up to date in their vocational or subject area, as dual professionals
- build external and stakeholder relationships to bring a wider range of support to members, including with the Learning and Skills Improvement Service (LSIS)
- support members in priority curriculum areas
- promote the range of CPD that makes the biggest difference and supports excellent practice, including online CPD
- encourage greater use of new technologies in teaching and training
- review and share findings on the CPD that teachers and trainers undertake each year
- draw on research to support members' evidence-based and excellent practice, including in vocational and subject areas
- run events in the regions to support practice
- help teachers and trainers innovate and learn from each other, including through regional and local connections with IfL, and online communities
- support those new to the profession
- enable membership for teachers and trainers if they are unemployed for periods and give support to keep their expertise up to date
- keep members informed of developments in teaching, training, learning and policy
- offer regional and national support to members.





*Elected IfL president, John Chorley, and Baroness Sharp awarding QTLS and ATLS at IfL's ceremony at the House of Lords, September 2010*

## Increasing the status of teachers and trainers

Membership of a professional body, IfL, in itself accords status for teachers and trainers. Teachers and trainers pay fees for IfL membership, just as is the case in other highly regarded professions. In return, IfL will give benefits, status and influence that is valued, and continue to listen and respond to members' priorities.

IfL also awards the professional status of Qualified Teacher Learning and Skills (QTLS) and Associate Teacher Learning and Skills (ATLS). IfL has successfully influenced national policy and QTLS is now regarded as having parity with qualified status for teachers in schools, QTS. This helps boost your status and is better for young people.

IfL members agree to uphold the code of professional practice and IfL applies the code in a rigorous, supportive, professional and transparent manner.

The status of teachers and trainers is not dependent on whether they work full time or part time, or in a college, work-based environment or other settings. Teachers and trainers work in a wide range of contexts as professionals in helping young people or adults learn effectively, and they all need to be recognised for their professionalism.

The impact we wish to make is that teachers and trainers will be accorded proper status, on a par with other professions.

IfL will:

- offer professional formation leading to full professional status of QTLS or ATLS
- continue to raise the profile of teachers and trainers
- work to raise the status of members as professionals and help those with QTLS who wish to teach in schools
- cultivate greater trust of teachers and trainers and their professional skills and judgements
- address concerns if any member falls short of abiding by IfL's code
- promote and celebrate the valuable role that teachers and trainers have for millions of learners each year
- promote the impact excellent teaching and training has on learners, which in turn benefits employers, communities, wider civil society and the whole economy.



*Sir Mike Tomlinson awarding QTLS and ATLS at IfL's ceremony at Can Mezzanine, January 2010*



*Baroness Sharp awarding QTLS and ATLS at IfL's ceremony at the House of Lords, September 2010*



*IfL member speaking at IfL's QTLS and ATLS ceremony with the FE and skills minister, John Hayes MP, at the House of Commons, December 2010*

## Giving members an influential voice on policy

The vantage point of teachers and trainers as frontline professionals is distinctive and is needed to inform policy.

You bring extensive knowledge and insights about what works on the ground so that provision meets employers' and learners' expectations and needs, which is of high quality leading to success for learners. Teachers' and trainers' perspectives are valuable for both policy development and implementation. IfL, as your independent professional body will speak out, drawing on members' views.

The impact we wish to make is that policy will work better as it is informed by the frontline experience and perspective of teachers, trainers and learners.

IfL will:

- engage members with consultations on policy
- work with partner agencies to ensure IfL members' voice influences them
- develop policy positions that influence and progress excellence in teaching and learning and quality provision
- seek invitations to influence and give expert professional advice to the government
- engage with employers in the sector and promote their support for teachers' and trainers' qualifications, CPD and professionalism
- engage with employers and employer bodies, including sector skills councils, and listen to their needs and promote investment in teaching and training for business and social enterprise success
- listen to learners and work in partnership with learner associations, especially the National Union of Students (NUS), to help drive up the effectiveness of teaching and training
- raise the esteem of our members by encouraging teaching and training being valued as a longer-term personal investment.

# Reviewing progress

IfL will review progress in making a difference for teachers and trainers and the quality of their practice, and in turn the benefits that this brings for learners and employers. This progress in delivering the strategic priorities will be captured in our impact reviews.

This strategy will be supplemented by a listing of IfL services to members, and these will be reviewed periodically so that IfL as a progressive professional body gives the most up-to-date and modern services to members. The listing will include:

1. Professional recognition.
2. Support for developing teaching skills and knowledge, and CPD.
3. Listening to members' views and responding.
4. Career development, and progression through the grades of IfL membership.
5. Belonging to a professional body, made to feel welcome and exploring opportunities to become more active in the profession.
6. Professional formation and gaining QTLS or ATLS professional status.
7. Networking opportunities and events.
8. General membership benefits package.
9. Access to information and resources to support practice.
10. Engaging with IfL through many channels, including social media, to ensure members can quickly and easily share views relating to practice.
11. Encourage members to engage with Advisory Council members or stand for election to the Advisory Council.
12. The chance for your views to be heard.

See our website at [www.ifl.ac.uk](http://www.ifl.ac.uk) for details of the latest services and benefits.





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