



Dear colleagues

As we enter another year which will be full of challenges and changes, I looked back to what I wrote this time last year. We were anticipating the Green paper, in the middle of responding to the Wolf review and other consultations, and Ofsted was about to begin its survey of post-16 LLDD provision, having just published the SEN review.

A year on, we have submitted a substantial response to the Green paper, the Wolf report will impact significantly on vocational education and there is an insightful and comprehensive Ofsted survey report.

However, as another set of consultations piles up, we are still battling the same issues – in particular poor quality LDAs, and a long, drawn out placement process which leaves learners and families stressed and colleges unable to plan effectively. We are in detailed discussions about possible new approaches to funding but a long way from clarity about the system. It is some small crumb of comfort to know that we are not alone in feeling overwhelmed by current changes and proposals and concerned to ensure that when the dust finally settles, we have a system that is coherent and workable. In particular, we want to know that there will be fairness, equity and choice for learners, none of which are present as things stand.

We will soon learn more details about the Green paper responses and the pathfinders that will test out some of the proposals, which will provide another opportunity to inform and influence things to the benefit of learners. And along the way, we will need to get our heads round the new inspection framework – especially those of you are likely to be under scrutiny from September 2012!

Last year, we had just heard that we had been awarded the Enhancement of Learning Support bid. This year, the work has been done and a significant amount of materials, resources and reports are now available on the [Excellence Gateway](#). Do please take a look.

In spite of everything, I hope it will be a great year for you and your students – I know there is plenty of innovative and creative work going on that is making a very real difference to the lives of young people with learning difficulties and disabilities. And at least you can enjoy the sunshine for a few more days...

Best wishes

Alison

Report to July 2011 Board Meeting following my first year of visits

Key Factors which generate success in member colleges

The 14 member colleges visited have been diverse in many ways, making the drawing out of themes difficult. The range of colleges visited has included day through to national catchment, urban settings, remote rural locations, schools with colleges integrated, small (with as few as 8 students) to large (with 150 students). Fees ranging from under £40 per morning to over £180,000 per annum, with funding from YPLA, LA, Health, MoD. Curriculum ranging from therapy based to vocational, performing arts and independent living. Young people in the colleges have been diverse in their support needs, curriculum requirements and aspirations, united only in their ability to learn and the necessity for the individual programmes that specialist colleges can best deliver. All colleges have a high dependency on the public sector, none having achieved a significant level of independent revenue funding.

To summarise factors which generate success, both now and in the longer term, has been a challenge and one which will need to be explored further over my second year. Inevitably, each positive factor established has opposite or converse features which can create a weakness, or in some instances could also offer further opportunities. The most successful colleges will score on several, but not necessarily all of these criteria but clearly there is no formulaic solution to success in what will be a challenging public sector funding environment for many years to come. The key factors and converse features identified are:

Success Factors	Converse Factors
Specialism – Individual programmes and specialist support – true Inclusive Learning	Too specialist/wrong specialism
Reputation - Targeted marketing quality of programme, resources, outcome, positive Ofsted	Poor quality/inspection grades/marketing
Endowment – Fund raising capability, financial resources underpinning organisation and developments	Holding Co./charity/resource drain/social enterprise
Vision – Clear management and governance structure enabling decision making process from students to Chair/CEO, pro-active and highly responsive culture	Lack of clarity/succession/authority, overly reactive
Cost Control – tight structure with management and student services/teaching fully aligned and interwoven	Employee intensive, centred/management scale, imposed budget
Scale – Economies of scale but not at the expense of detached infrastructure or loss of focus through large organisation	Too small/part of a large organisation
Localism – a clear local/community dimension and presence but wider dependency	Dependency on one LA/National catchment
Curriculum – Real life settings for teaching living, working and developing emotional literacy skills	Conforming to general FE offer/not specialist

Further discussion is welcome!

David

Natspec Colleges provide highly specialist education and services for over 6500 people with disabilities, employing 8500 staff from a wide range of disciplines to deliver the quality of education and support required.

Poor grasp of Mental Capacity Act impeding outcomes

People with profound and multiple learning disabilities (PMLD) have too little say over their lives because professionals lack understanding of the Mental Capacity Act 2005, says Mencap.

The charity has called for more training in the act for health and social care staff as part of a toolkit published today on ensuring people with PMLD can have a greater role in decision-making.

[The Involve Me guidance](#) follows a three-year project examining how people with PMLD can be more involved, based on work with four services: Turning Point's Salisbury service, Hammersmith and Fulham Mencap, a local authority day centre in Ellesmere Port, Cheshire, and the Rix Centre, which develops multi-media ways to involve people with learning disabilities.

An evaluation of the project, run by Mencap and the British Institute of Learning Disabilities, found that tools such as talking photo albums or digital albums that carried recordings of messages or sounds alongside each photo enabled service users to express likes and dislikes and contribute to decision-making.

However, it also identified a lack of understanding of the Mental Capacity Act among some staff despite its importance in determining the involvement of people with PMLD.

<http://www.communitycare.co.uk/Articles/23/09/2011/117500/poor-grasp-of-mental-capacity-act-impeding-outcomes.htm>

Technology for Success – funding is available!

Reminder – A £6,000 grant will be available for providers that identify a particular improvement that can be tackled through the innovative use of technology.

Closing date: 5pm Monday 3 October 2011.

Enrol now by visiting [our website](#).

Leadership of Technology - Developing leadership skills in implementing technology.

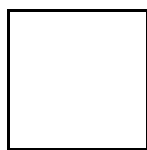
A two day programme for senior and middle leaders from across the further education and skills sector.

"Recognition of management style and how to influence staff with different views. Sharing ideas with other members of the group" Janice Eighteen – Regional Director, Key Training Limited.

E-learning: maximising impact - Planning, constructing and maximising the impact of a strategic organisation approach to using technology.

A one day interactive workshop for resource and curriculum leaders in senior and middle positions of the organisation in the further education and skills sector.

"All sessions were thought provoking and gave some great ideas for strategic thinking and planning with regard to technology" Gill Banks, Liverpool Community College.



Link to LSIS events page

Leadership of Technology

10 November 2011 and 25 January 2012, West Midlands

6 December 2011 and 1 March 2012, North West

8 February and 3 May 2012, London

E-learning: maximising impact

2 November 2011, North East

24 November 2011, West Midlands

6 March 2012, London

LSIS Safeguarding conferences in London and Manchester

In May 2011 Ofsted published their report **Best Practice in Safeguarding** outlining effective safeguarding practice in 15 providers. This year the LSIS safeguarding conferences ([London](#) 10.02.2012 and [Manchester](#) 21.02.2012) will focus on provider's safeguarding journeys. LSIS advocate a whole organisational approach to safeguarding encouraging providers to recognise the inter relationship between, for example, safeguarding and;

- safer recruitment
- health and safety
- whistle blowing
- equality and diversity
- the learner voice
- inclusive risk assessment.

These conferences will provide delegates with the opportunity to hear about what their colleagues are doing in the field. It will offer them the chance to compare and contrast processes and practices around safeguarding in the widest sense of the word. Workshops will focus heavily on giving providers an opportunity to showcase aspects of their safeguarding work whilst the audience will get ample time to ask questions of workshop leaders. Workshop leaders will spotlight the challenges and benefits associated with their way of working.

Book early to avoid disappointment.

Q4S web resource for disabled learners - update

For the latest news about our project that has produced a web resource for disabled learners in post 16 education, please download our latest e-newsletter from the following web address:

<http://q4s.eu/GB/index.php?p=9>

You can find out what students think about the resource in Greece, Turkey, Bulgaria as well as in the UK; you can also learn about what the project partners have been doing to promote the project in each country. Take a minute or two to check it out!

Dr Val Chapman
(National Teaching Fellow)
University of Worcester

Chris W. Berry

Available for consultancy and advisory work

I have recently completed an enjoyable, exciting and challenging eight months as Acting Principal at an Independent Specialist Colleges (ISC) covering a colleague's sabbatical leave. This was preceded by nine months' interesting part-time consultancy work at another ISC. Prior to that, I had six challenging and successful years as Principal at Homefield College. I have been an Additional Inspector (AI) since June 2006 in ISCs and GFE Colleges and was seconded to Ofsted for nine months from November 2007.

I am offering my experience for consultancy and advisory work in teaching and learning, curriculum development and management systems.

I have over 30 years' experience of work in specialist colleges in a variety of roles – teaching, training, managing and inspecting. During that time I was also the Natspec Honorary Secretary and organiser for over seven years which gave me many opportunities to work directly with a number of Natspec member colleges and to play an active part in the strategic development of Natspec. I have an MSc degree, and an ongoing interest, in Systems Thinking to inform organisational development.

I also have teaching and social work qualifications.

If you think I may be able to offer suitable and relevant support please contact me by email at

h4tchriswberry@yahoo.co.uk or by mobile phone **07702 403106**

Natspec endorsements - events, consultants or programmes advertised in this bulletin are not necessarily endorsed by Natspec.

Dr Rex [Tony] Collins (MA; MPhil; DPhil; PGCE)

Rex Collins [Consultancy] Limited

2 Oak Villas, North Woodchester, Stroud, GL5 5PQ

Tel: 01453 872890 Mobile: 079771 74705

E-mail: rexcollins@btinternet.com

Tony has over 35 years of teaching and research experience in secondary, further and higher education. His experience and expertise are in strategic and operational marketing and in the recruitment and initial assessment of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Formerly Head of Admissions at Ruskin Mill Educational Trust (RMET), he was responsible for managing all applications to its three colleges and for conducting the initial assessment of applicants. He designed and implemented a fully documented admissions procedure for the Trust's three colleges and trained staff in its use. He was also responsible for strategic marketing within the Trust.

Tony has held college lectureships at Oxford University and a research fellowship at The Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, USA. From 1998 to 2005 he was Head of Wycliffe College, an independent HMC boarding school with over 25% of its 800 pupils on its Special Needs Register. During that time he led Wycliffe's successful application for CreSTeD Accreditation. He was also an ISI [Ofsted accredited] independent boarding schools inspector.

He has a research interest in learning disabilities and has developed an on-line portal - *Learning Together* - that can be used in both mainstream and specialist settings for capturing and sharing best practice in working with LLDDs.

Natspec endorsements - events, consultants or programmes advertised in this bulletin are not necessarily endorsed by Natspec.

Employment resource

Are you working to help people with a learning disability find meaningful employment?

Disability Law Service has been working with Apasenth and Greenshoes Arts, running a series of workshops about fair treatment at work. They worked with a group of young people and produced a film showing what they learned about employment rights and discrimination

The project also produced an 'Easy Words and Pictures' guide - 'Your Rights at Work'. Check out the film, the guide and find out about how the film was made here:

<http://www.dls.org.uk/ple/>

If you are an advice agency please do make use of the factsheet which is available to download free of charge from the website

Film project funded by European Community Programme for Employment and Social Solidarity - Progress Towards Equality 2007-2013 and Equality and Human Rights Commission -facilitated and overseen by Advice Services Alliance

National Development funded by the Big Lottery Fund Advice Plus

Christine Goodall National Development Co-ordinator Disability Law Service 39-45 Cavell Street London E1 2BP christine@dls.org.uk

Tel: 0207 791 9828 Fax: 0207 791 9802 www.dls.org.uk

Niace Training Courses Bulletin

Please find below the latest information on our training courses including brand new courses and new dates for many of our popular courses.

Promoting positive mental health and wellbeing in the workplace

Research has shown that lack of mental health wellbeing impacts on the national economy and quality of life. The training aims to promote the positive mental health of people working within the post 16 education sector, and raise awareness and support employers to develop good practices in line with the Government's strategy 'No health without mental health.' The strategy states: '*...we have to build*

Association of National Specialist Colleges (NATSPEC), a company limited by guarantee.

Registered in England number 5908897.

Registered office: Derwen College, Oswestry, Shropshire, SY11 3JA

resilience, promote mental health and wellbeing, and challenge health inequalities.' (HMG 2011)

The training is based on the principle that we cannot support our learners effectively or be positive role models without looking after our own mental health. It is as much about maintaining the positive wellbeing of staff as well as supporting those staff who have mental health difficulties.

This one day training builds on previous successful wellbeing training offered in 2009-2010. Participants who attended "Working Well" training said:

"Excellent introduction to wellbeing and reducing stress in the work place. Covered all the areas that I need to think about improving staff wellbeing"

Patrick Molloy, Curriculum Manager, College of North West London

"Very practical advice"

Donna Wilson, Personnel Manager, Linkage Community Trust

"Did what it said! - An excellent training day"

"I have already been able to put some of the ideas to good use to put together a stress management workshop for staff"

Sue Martin, Mental Health Adviser, University of Winchester

Public Training Courses

Here is the current list of NIACE public course dates. Click on a course title to get more information and to book your place.

[Integrating Employment, Learning and Skills for people who have Experience of a Mental Health Condition](#)

Thursday 6 October 2011, London

[Engaging your learners using storytelling techniques](#) - a one day workshop

Tuesday 11 October 2011, Leicester

[Goal Setting and Action Planning with Individuals and Groups](#)

Wednesday 12 October 2011, Birmingham

[Principles and Practice of Family Learning Level 3](#)

Tuesday 18 October 2011, Leicester

[Evidencing Impact - establishing effective evaluation of Family Learning](#)

Tuesday 1 November 2011, Leicester

[Mental Health First Aid: a 2 day course](#)

Thursday 3 November 2011 to Friday 4 November 2011, Manchester

[Promoting positive mental health and wellbeing in the workplace](#)

Thursday 10 November 2011, Leicester

NIACE Events Team

Tel: 0116 285 9661

Fax: 0116 285 9670

E-mail: events@niace.org.uk

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) support for Independent Specialist Colleges (ISCs)

BACKGROUND

ISCs have a reputation for their excellence in advancing equality for disabled learners. Embedding inclusive practices are at the heart of what they do naturally. Recent inspection reports have highlighted the good work taking place within ISCs, the reports however, indicate there is room for further improvement, particularly around the creation and management of an inclusive workforce, and in narrowing the achievement gap.

WHO WE ARE

- We are a team of EDI practitioners with extensive working knowledge of the FE and skills sector, at the national and local levels, as well as the operational and strategic levels.
- Our team includes three experienced senior managers who have led on major strategic projects and learning and development activities in EDI, helping organizations to embed EDI and to meet national and inspection requirements.

See this leaflet for further information about what we offer



Leaflet - EDI
Specialist colleges.pdf

The Investors in Diversity (IiD) Award

The Investors in Diversity (IiD) Award is recognised as much more than just a highly prized and prestigious quality mark. It is an all-encompassing approach to managing Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) effectively. It enables organisations to take a structured and planned approach to embedding equality and diversity at the heart of what they do while providing a simple framework in which to do so.

Equality, diversity and inclusion are not easy concepts to come to terms with. They are very often misunderstood. The cost of not effectively managing equality and diversity in your organisation can be huge both in financial and human resource terms. Current legislation is really difficult to make sense of for many. We have a team of specially trained IiD Advisors and Assessors to help and guide you.

IiD is embedded with the Equality Act Compliance Framework and will make sure that you are compliant with the Equality act and general duty.

IiD provides a different approach based on recognising and valuing difference. As a result it would incorporate any difference based on the nine protected characteristics.

IiD helps you to align your strategies, business plans, policies, procedures, systems and process to achieve your organisations aims. It helps you to embed equality, diversity and inclusion in all that you do.

To find out more about becoming an Investor in Diversity please contact caroline@iiduk.org



Investors in Diversity
2011.pdf



NCFD Training
11.pdf

The Low Review - impact on young people in residential schools / colleges over the age of 16

You may be aware of the Low Review being led by Lord Low of Dalston into how the mobility needs of people living in residential care are met and funded. The Government is currently looking at removing the mobility component of Disability Living Allowance, soon to become Personal Independence Payment, from people living in residential care. Thousands of people have expressed their concern at this measure and as a result the Government announced an internal review into the removal of this benefit. However, this is an internal review and will not provide an opportunity for a public debate on how best to meet the mobility needs of people living in residential care. Therefore, charities have asked Lord Low of Dalston to conduct an independent review into personal mobility in state-funded residential care, providing everyone with the opportunity to have their say.

The Low Review steering group have recently released an addendum to the original call for evidence which is aimed at residential schools / colleges of post-16 education and disabled young people who are attending these.

You can find the call for evidence background and questions here:
<http://lowreview.org.uk/call-for-evidence/>

The Low Review: Personal Mobility in State-Funded Residential Care

E: info@lowreview.org.uk

T: 020 3242 0373

Employers see benefits of autistic employees

More than half of employers see specific benefits in employing a person with autism **Deepa Korea, Chief Executive of the charity Research Autism** told a recent conference.

Delivering her presentation - Supporting employers to deliver best practice in employing people with Autism – she told delegates at the [Adolescence to Adulthood with Autism conference](#) that 70 percent of employers had positive experience of employing autistic people and more than 50 percent believed there were specific advantages in doing so.

According to data from Research Autism nearly two thirds of employers surveyed, would recommend employing someone with autism to other businesses. Earlier in the day delegates heard from other leading autism specialists including Carol Povey, Director, Centre for Autism, National Autistic Society. She also dealt with employment while looking at the opportunities available to autistic adults.

CUREE (Centre for the Use of Research and Evidence in Education) support for Learning and skills

CUREE works at the leading edge of research and evidence-informed educational practice. Our aim is to help teachers make informed decisions about the most effective and efficient approaches to use in their own context. We search regularly and comprehensively to find the most useful research, and constantly use evidence about effective learning processes to create new, engaging and accessible tools for Continuing Professional Development (CPD), for teaching and learning and for organisational development.

Helping colleagues in the learning and skills sector (LSS) to reflect on and enhance their practice is an area of rapidly-developing expertise for CUREE. We select the best of LSS-based research and put it into the hands of leaders, policy makers and practitioners, for example, through LSIS's [Inside Evidence](#). Our extensive knowledge of education research means we can recontextualise evidence from the schools sector which is also relevant post-school. Our networks and focus groups help ensure that the resources we produce create an appetite for evidence-informed practice across the sector and meet practitioners CPD needs. Here are some examples of projects involving the learning and skills sector: <http://www.curee-paccts.com/learning-and-skills>

Digital learning conference

NIACE is holding a Digital Learning conference in London on 4 November 2011.

The conference will explore how adults are using technology to learn and, learning to use technology innovatively - this links closely to learners with learning difficulties and using technology to widen participation.

The conference includes the following workshops:

- skills for tutors: Digital Storytelling;
- technology aiding Equality;
- Open Educational Resources; and
- exchanging practice: Knowledge Café.

Further information is available below or by visiting the [NIACE website](#).

Quality of life in staffed homes

Many people with learning disabilities live in the family home, but few studies have focused on the issue of quality of life of such individuals. The researchers in this study set out to look at household and community activity for people living in the family home and compare this with those in out-of-family placements. They found that those people who lived independently had higher household participation. Those in staffed accommodation had both higher household participation and did more community activities more frequently than people in family homes. The analysis of the multiple regression found that place of residence was a significant factor in explaining levels of activity.

Despite the limited number of activity indicators that were studied, the researchers suggest that their results go some way to confirming results of other recent studies, which suggest that adults with learning disabilities who live in family homes may have fewer activity opportunities than those living in staffed accommodation:

<http://tinyurl.com/3ogw7av>

Going for Gold has been granted the Inspire mark by the London 2012 Inspire programme.

This Natspec Art competition, which was inspired by the cultural aspects of the 2012 Games, encourages and supports participating colleges to engage in the Get Set education programme <http://getset.london2012.com/en/home>. An element of this is Get Set Goes Global, which encourages young people to become a supporter of at least one Olympic or Paralympic team from elsewhere in the world. The **Going for Gold Art Competition** provides the opportunity to engage in the programme through exploring and representing cultural aspects of the 2012 Games. As you can see the deadline for entries is the 2nd December.

Good News... A representative of Natspec is accompanying a

member of the UK Skills team on a fact finding mission to the Abilympics in Seoul

<http://www.ia2011.org/english/enIndex.do>, with the view to developing a competition framework within the UK and possibly participating in future international competitions. Natspec is very grateful to Derwen College for releasing Louise Keevil to attend this event. This is a really good example of how our specialist knowledge and experience is valued by Departments such as Business, Innovation and Skills, who have sponsored this trip. Watch this space!

Learning Technologist of the Year Team Award 2011

Overview

JISC TechDis is part of the In-Folio implementation team which was awarded the Learning Technology Team of the Year Award at the 2011 Association of Learning Technology Annual Conference (ALT-C) dinner.

In-Folio is an e-portfolio system that enables learners, particularly those with disabilities or learning difficulties, to record and present their achievements and abilities. The open source, accessible, simple interface allows learners to store, arrange and organise multimedia content in simple online pages.

The team commissioned development of In-Folio on behalf of the Independent Specialist Colleges (ISCs) after lengthy sector consultations and trials of existing e-portfolios revealed that none were suitable for their learners. In-Folio has now been successfully implemented across the sector having been installed onto the servers of all 44 ISCs.

One of the reasons the judging panel selected In-Folio was ‘the exemplary way in which the distributed team, involving a university, a JISC service, and four independent specialist colleges, approached the project’. Indeed, the team has members from five different organisations: JISC TechDis, The Rix Centre, The National College for Young People with Epilepsy, Portland College and National Star College. In-Folio was also selected because of the impact and vision of In-Folio itself as well as its strong and beneficial impact on the ISC sector’s use of learning technology more generally.

Sal Cooke, Director of JISC TechDis, says “winning this award is a wonderful accolade for JISC TechDis and the In-Folio team as a whole. But the real measure of the success is the learners who are using In-Folio to demonstrate their abilities and achievements to parents, educators, friends and even potential employers”.

Lisa Featherstone, JISC TechDis Advisor, explains further, “There are a diverse range of learners with difficulties that affect their ability to communicate. In-Folio is a success because the learners we have worked with want to use it; they enjoy using it. They like making and sharing their videos, recordings and photographs to tell others what they have achieved and what they are capable of.”

JISC TechDis was recently contacted by a Social Services department who want to explore supporting the use of In-Folio after an ISC student took their In-Folio with them when they left college and returned to their home authority. They shared it with their new support workers showing their history of achievements and likes and dislikes.

More information about In-Folio, including the background to the project, can be found on the JISC TechDis website using the link below.

Ofsted - Changes to Inspection 2012- consultation process



Press release
proposed changes to



Common Inspection
Framework 2012 cons



Learners' guide to
the Common Inspecti

Ofsted Report on post 16 progression Calls for More Focus on Destinations and Outcomes

I am not sure why improving the life chances of thousands of disabled young people doesn't register as much on the nations psyche as bankers bonuses, celebrity big brother or the holiday fashion of senior politicians but it doesn't!!

So what with the riots, the hacking scandal and the banking crisis you may have missed the latest Ofsted report. Snuck out in late summer, **Progression post 16 for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities** is a rare Ofsted bird indeed; candid, clear, accurate and timely. Shame it was published in the late summer and generated little if any press coverage even from the media outlets that are usually interested - Guardian and TES take note!!

The main headlines are that whilst there is some good provision there are still issues with some basics: **What gets learnt and why, the systems and structures that fund it, and the performance measures that are applied - nothing very important then!**

Most notably the conclusion is there is an insufficient focus on outcomes and destinations for learners and this is hindering the ability of learning programmes to improve life chances. Some notable headlines are

- Providers had received a completed learning difficulty assessment in only a third of the case studies where one should have been made available to them.
- duplication of effort in assessment

One of the most significant findings was about **Foundation Learning** with a conclusion that "programmes reviewed by inspectors were too narrowly focused on accreditation and were not effective in enabling learners to progress to open or supported employment, independent living or community engagement"

In particular the conclusion was that Foundation learning programmes were successful for learners whose main goal was to progress to level 2 provision or higher. But for those learners for whom this was not a main goal, they were too narrowly focused on accreditation and did not offer meaningful opportunities for work experience and other practical learning situations in which to develop skills. Following on from the comments in the Wolf review this is further evidence that Foundation Learning is not working for those learners with more complex needs. They also highlight the inappropriate nature of some accreditation with the possibility of gaining an entry level qualification in "using a public convenience" being the best (or should I say worst) example!

If this is the case it begs the question what are they going to do about it? It is welcome to see Ofsted call for more focus on outcomes and destinations but until there is a fundamental review of the funding allocation system most providers will continue to be required to deliver foundation learning linked to accreditation.

What we really need is a more flexible funding system that allows providers and practitioners to develop the learning programmes that meet individual needs, in consultation with their learners and to blend accredited and non accredited learning where appropriate. The judgement of effectiveness should be the ultimate outcome for learners - where they go, what they can do the pathways into adult life that their learning programme has prepared them for - not simply a count up of how many units they have passed! Unfortunately that is difficult to do and much harder to count... but that is not a good reason for not trying!

Many effective providers are doing this already in spite of the constraints.

The Ofsted report is a recommended read for all programme managers and practitioners because it gets you thinking about the important question of why? - Why learn one skill rather than another, why teach this today not something else, what is the difference it makes to the future lives of learners and how can we be sure that it is making a difference.

You can get the whole report here <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/progression-post-16-for-learners-learning-difficulties-andor-disabilities>

What do you think should done from the Ofsted recommendations and what would make the biggest difference? you can add a comment here <http://kandaobrien.blogspot.com/>

We wait to see what happens!

We can support providers to address the challenges in the Ofsted report with curriculum development and guidance on adapting foundation learning and measuring outcomes and destinations. To find out more go to http://www.kandaassociates.co.uk/services/s_foundation.html

Natspec TechDis e-safety development day: enabling learners to be e-safe and e-savvy

This is a development day for senior managers with responsibility for the implementation of e-safety policies and practice in college, including in the residential setting and across the curriculum. The event will take place on Tuesday November 8th at Queen Alexandra College (QAC) in Birmingham, from 10.15 to 3.45pm.

In addition to short presentations on issues around the use of social media, preparing for independent living and knowing who your real friends are, we will also hear from learners about their experiences. Discussion groups and two workshops will focus on practical activities that will inform the production of policies and guidance in key areas. The third workshop will be an update on the work of the East Midlands e-safety group.

Booking will be on-line through TechDis from September 19th, link to follow. The cost for the day will be £25 per person, with places limited to 2 per member college. The on-line booking system will take one booking at a time and payment must be made by credit card – the system will accept either a college card or personal card. The closing date for applications is Monday 31st October. Joining instructions will be sent out from Friday October 21st.

NIACE Free resources available to support work with young adult carers

NIACE has produced some resources to support practitioners in their work with young adult carers, including those who have learning difficulties to help them make effective transitions and to engage, aspire and achieve in learning.

The free resources are available from NIACE in hard copy and also to download.

What do young adult carers say?

"The [Really Useful Book](#) is great for me as all the information that I need about websites & telephone numbers is in one place. I am looking for work and the hints and tips section was full of Really Useful stuff."

Young adult carer aged 18 who cares for her mother with MS and father with chronic pain (highly medicated).

"The [Really Useful Book](#) helps me to know when I will next see my support worker. The diary really helps me. I have learned new things about what I am good at and what I enjoy doing and things to tell myself when things get tough. I especially like the spider diagrams. When I see my support worker we work together on the exercises."

Young adult co-carer aged 17 who has Aspergers and cares for his mother who has alcoholism.

Research findings

Research conducted by NIACE and others has consistently shown that young adult carers aged 16-25 are a highly disadvantaged group.

This group commonly experiences poverty, social exclusion, isolation and lack of opportunity to engage in learning and other activities that most of their peers take for granted. NIACE has produced some resources to support practitioners in their work with young adult carers, including those who have learning difficulties to help them make effective transitions and to engage, aspire and achieve in learning.

The free resources are available from [NIACE](#) in hard copy and also to download. Act now as stocks are limited.

The following resources are available for FREE download

[We are carers and we want to learn](#)

An easyread book for young adult carers with a learning difficulty, about their rights as a carer and access to learning.

[We are carers and we want to learn](#)

A short briefing paper for staff who work with young adult carers with a learning difficulty - to accompany the easyread book.

[Really Useful Book of Learning and Earning for Young Adult Carers 2011 \(RUBLE\)](#)

This is a resource for direct use by young adult carers, to enable them to think about their learning and development, plan ahead and develop strategies for achieving their goals.

[Staff guidance paper](#)

For practitioners who have a role to play in supporting young adult carers - to accompany the RUBLE.

[Resource pack](#)

The Scenario Planning Instrument: Real planning for real futures

LSIS has developed a new futures planning initiative for the learning and skills sector, designed to gather ideas across sector about the future prospects for your own organisations and those of the skills and learning sector as a whole.

We are now all aware of the scale of current reductions in expenditure and the pressures this brings. These pressures need to be addressed realistically and also creatively by: using the situation to examine how we might work differently. Part of this will be thinking about your organisation; and designing an online process to gather creative, radical and innovative thoughts and ideas about longer term prospects.

Help us to gain a better understanding and identify issues that are presently far less obvious but may grow in importance and about needing to be more thoughtful and decisive.

How to sign up?

Join in and contribute to this unique exercise by sending us the following:
your name and email address to: Stephanie Birch at: ideasbank@lsis.org.uk

We very much look forward to your contributions.

Pinnacle Training Solutions

1. 6th October Providers' Strategic Equality Event

Ofsted CIF & Equality, Legal Update, The Equality Framework, Chaplaincy, provider best practice, much more (lunch included). Download invite and agenda [here](#). Places going fast, please use the network booking site to reserve your place http://www.equalitynetwork.co.uk/network_event_booking_form.php (Leeds City College, £50 inc.)

2. Learner Equality e-learning facility

Equality, diversity, safeguarding, learner voice, anti-bullying, respect and behaviour - all rolled into an interactive and contemporary package designed specifically for the learner. Full support and easy roll-out. Full guide [here](#) and we invite you to work through the demo at <http://www.mypinnacle.co.uk/>

3. Equality in the news...

We have pulled this together to offer a sample of the equality "news" we have been exposed to in the last few months. It certainly is not an exhaustive guide, so please read and browse the links with that in mind! Please click [here](#) to see the pdf.

The challenging behaviour roadshow

- Wednesday 2 November 2011 - Manchester Conference Centre, Manchester M1
- Tuesday 24 January 2012 - ORT House Conference Centre, London NW1
- Thursday 2 February 2012 - Queen's University, Belfast BT7
- Thursday 9 February 2012 - Radisson Blu Hotel, Bristol BS1

Taking place in Manchester, London, Belfast and Bristol, over winter 2011/12, the challenging behaviour roadshow aims to bring together the main stakeholders in services for adults with learning disabilities who exhibit challenging behaviour. Drawing from local and national experience, academic and practical expertise, we will examine and discuss what good practice looks like, for the service user and for service providers, locally, regionally and UK-wide, and consider how to embed this in everyday practice.

Benefits of attending

- Establish a solid footing for your organisation in the current policy landscape
- Learn how to develop and maintain an effective staff support framework
- Explore good practice in working with service commissioners
- Contribute to multi-stakeholder discussions around key issues and concerns
- Take away practical tools and learning to enhance your organisation's efficiency

For further information or to book your place, visit the links below. Alternatively call Pavilion on 0844 880 5061, email info@pavpub.com or visit www.pavpub.com

Manchester

<http://www.pavpub.com/p-412-the-challenging-behaviour-roadshow-manchester.aspx?s=1>

London

<http://www.pavpub.com/p-413-the-challenging-behaviour-roadshow-london.aspx?s=1>

Belfast

<http://www.pavpub.com/p-414-the-challenging-behaviour-roadshow-belfast.aspx?s=1>

Bristol

<http://www.pavpub.com/p-415-the-challenging-behaviour-roadshow-bristol.aspx?s=1>

IfL welcomes the minister's proposal for an independent review of professionalism in the further education and skills sector

The Institute for Learning (IfL) welcomes the recent announcement from John Hayes, the minister of state for further education, skills and lifelong learning:

"I am pleased to hear in regard to the issues arising on IfL membership that a basis has been proposed on which constructive discussions can be resumed and legal action suspended, and I want to do all that I can to help find a solution that is in the best, longer term interests of those who are served by the sector and those who work within it.

"For my part, I am happy to confirm my willingness to commission an independent review that would look broadly at the arrangements for achieving a professionalised workforce and how this is facilitated by the Institute for Learning and other partners in delivering the regulations and other policy initiatives aimed at supporting a professional workforce. I would want to ensure that all parties were able to support the terms of reference and have confidence in the appointment of the independent chair.

"My aim would be to commission this review as soon as possible. However, in order to go ahead, I am asking that all parties now refrain from further action. Once that is confirmed, my officials can facilitate a further discussion on the terms of reference for an independent review."

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

Minority ethnic communities and specialist learning disability services Report of the Faculty of the Psychiatry of Learning Disability Working Group

This faculty report summarises the knowledge that is available regarding the use of specialist learning disability services by people with learning disabilities and their carers from minority ethnic communities. It also provides guidance for improving access to services and, where available, good practice examples.

The content of the report is drawn partly from the literature and partly from discussions within a focus group that involved well-established researchers in this area as well as other people with expertise in service delivery.

<http://www.ldhealthnetwork.org.uk/docs/mec.pdf>

Coping with the cuts

<http://www.demos.co.uk/publications/copingwiththecuts>

Up until now, the impact of cuts to local authorities on provision for disabled people has not been measured or compared at a national level. Coping with the Cuts reveals, for the first time, the true nature of how cuts to social care budgets are affecting disabled people up and down the country and which local councils are best managing budgetary changes. Compiled using freedom of information (FOI) requests sent to all local

authorities in England and Wales, this research discovered a shocking dearth in local information on disabled people.

In conjunction with the interactive map that accompanies this research, available at <http://www.demos.co.uk/disability-cuts-map/> . (a very useful resource)

This pamphlet provides a localised picture of changes to services for disabled people. It did not set out to 'name and shame' individual councils or to suggest no cuts are necessary. But it does show that smaller budgets need not inevitably lead to front-line cuts, higher charges or poorer quality services. There are ways - some innovative, some everyday and common sense - to mitigate the impact of the cuts on the front line.

Pioneering easy read health resources launched for people with learning disabilities

www.learningdisabilities.org.uk/our-news/2011-09-07/

Today, PRODIGY has launched a new set of materials on a range of health topics that are particularly relevant to the health of people with learning disabilities. Topics include common conditions such as epilepsy, diabetes, obesity and thyroid problems.

We commissioned the leaflets which were written with easy words and pictures, making them suitable to give patients with learning disabilities or indeed anyone who struggles with written information.

Using the mental capacity act

This resource has been developed specifically for family and friends of people with learning disabilities, using knowledge gained through practical experience since 2007, so that they understand how the Act affects them and those they care about.

[http://www.hft.org.uk/Resources/Home%20Farm%20Trust/Family%20Carer%20Support/Documents/UsingMCA-3.8.11\(lo\).pdf](http://www.hft.org.uk/Resources/Home%20Farm%20Trust/Family%20Carer%20Support/Documents/UsingMCA-3.8.11(lo).pdf)

Sensory Processing and Autism Conference

The National Autistic Society will be hosting the Sensory Processing and Autism Conference, 2 November 2011 at the Holiday Inn Hotel, Birmingham.

This conference will help to develop a greater understanding of sensory processing and how difficulties with sensory integration can impact on a person with autism. The conference will also look at the main sensory integration approaches in practice how these can be applied in everyday environment, such as at school, in supported living and within the home.

It will look at the use sensory stimuli to encourage and support the development of language and interaction, plus look at tools and strategies that can be used to create programmes and make simple changes to the environment, so that people with sensory difficulties can live as independently as possible. Key speakers will include Steve McGuinness, NAS Trustee, Councillor and Autism Consultant and Nicci Paine, Occupational Therapist, Leap Children's Therapy.

To find out more about this event visit www.autism.org.uk/conferences/sensory2011

Accessible information

Three new titles in the **Books Beyond Words** series (which uses pictures to tell the stories to help people with learning disabilities understand better) are now out, two on depression and one on having safe sexual relationships:

Sonia's Feeling Sad - by Sheila Hollins and Roger Banks

(July 2011, 56 pages, ISBN 9781908020093, £10) Buy online at:

<http://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/publications/booksbeyondwords/bbw/9781908020093.aspx>

Ron's Feeling Blue (2nd edn) - by Sheila Hollins, Roger Banks and Jenny Curran

(July 2011, 54 pages, ISBN 9781908020086, £10) Buy online at:

<http://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/publications/booksbeyondwords/bbw/9781908020086.aspx>

Loving Each Other Safely - by Helen Bailey and Jason Upton

This book explains what you need to do to stay healthy and safe in a loving sexual relationship. (July 2011, 66 pages, ISBN 9781908020291, £10) Buy online at:

<http://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/publications/booksbeyondwords/bbw/9781908020291.aspx>

Housing advice

Housing Options is a national charity that provides a free advice and support service to people with learning disabilities, families, advocates and member organisations. We are now extending this service and making it available for 5 days a week.

http://www.housingoptions.org.uk/general_information/gi_news_docs/Advice_Line.pdf

Henshaws College Job Vacancy



Henshaws MD Text
14 September.doc

This advert is also available on the Natspec website

The matrix Standard

The **matrix** Standard has been revised following extensive consultation and trialling to ensure it remains fit for purpose for the wide range of organisations that use the Standard to quality assure their information, advice and/or guidance services (IAG).

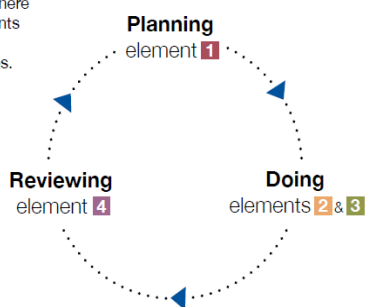
The **matrix** Standard (2011 version) has been developed following a review of the quality assurance arrangements for IAG commissioned by the Department for Business Innovation and Skills (BIS), which reported that the **matrix** Standard should continue to be the recognised standard for IAG services; but there were areas within the Standard that could be strengthened, in particular staff competence and use of technology.

The matrix Standard

The **matrix** Standard (2011 version) now has 4 elements focussing on:

- Element 1 - Leadership and management
- Element 2 - Resources
- Element 3 - Service delivery
- Element 4 - Continuous quality improvement

In the diagram below
you can see where
the four elements
relate to key
business cycles.



Key dates

The **matrix** Standard (2011 version) replaces the previous Standard (2005 version) in autumn this year, but this in no way devalues or invalidates current accreditations that you may hold. There are deadlines when the last assessments of the previous Standard can take place, the following key dates/activity may help;

- 30.09.11 - The last date emqc will accept bookings against the previous Standard
- 30.11.11 - The last assessment day, for any onsite assessments against the previous Standard
- 31.01.12 - The last assessment day for second stage assessment or retaining accreditation review against the previous Standard

Bookings against the **matrix** Standard (2011 version) are being taken now.

Support

emqc Ltd are responsible for the management of the **matrix** Standard and can be contacted at:

emqc Ltd

15, St Christopher Way,
Pride Park,
Derby, DE24 8JY.

T: 0845 304 8600

E: info@emqc.co.uk

Registered **matrix** Advisers are all trained and quality assured by emqc and can provide a range of support for organisations using the Standard. Contact details for Advisers can now be found on the **matrix** Standard website along with a range of other information about the Standard: www.matrixstandard.com

Counselling directory website

The purpose of the site is ultimately to provide the UK with a huge counselling support network, enabling those in distress to find a counsellor close to them and appropriate for their needs. This is a free, confidential service that will hopefully encourage those in distress to seek help. The website also contains a number of sections on emotional disorders (types of distress section) and provides some useful statistics. Every counsellor on the site who has submitted their profile has either sent a copy of their qualifications and insurance cover to us, or is registered with a professional body online with recognised codes of ethics and practice, this way we can be assured of their professionalism: www.counselling-directory.org.uk

Sample self-medication assessment checklist

<http://www.ldhealthnetwork.org.uk/docs/ssm.pdf>

Resource for vulnerable offenders

The Specialist Criminal Justice Collection contains images about being arrested, going to court, going to prison and coming out on licence. <http://snipurl.com/twuk1>

The CD contains hundreds of images that can make information more accessible for vulnerable adults, people with learning disabilities and people who don't read very well.

RCSLT: Coming soon...'The Box: What's it like to be inside?'

The Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists (RCSLT) is launching 'The Box - What's it like to be inside?', a free e-learning tool which brings together the expertise of speech and language therapists working across the country in the justice sector. Available for all professionals who come into contact with vulnerable people - both witnesses and offenders - it helps develop an understanding of communication difficulties. The online tool is designed to help spot warning signs, reduce aggressive behaviour and increase productivity by enabling professionals to make more of an impact. The e-learning is now available to trial, and the RCSLT are looking for services to pilot the course. Details for those services interested in participating or registering their interest for the face-to-face training are on the website.

<http://www.rcslt.org/thebox/open>

New safeguarding resources from SCIE

SCIE has recently launched some new resources that you may find of interested in:

[Report 41: Prevention in Adult Safeguarding](#) - advice on how to prevent abuse from happening.

[Safeguarding adults: a community case study](#) - a Social Care TV film about John, a man with Asperger's Syndrome, who is being financially exploited within his community.

[Safeguarding adults: a prevention project](#) - a Social Care TV film showing how training for people with learning disabilities can help them to protect themselves from abuse.

So that we can encourage as many people as possible to access these new resources, we would like to build up the number of web links to them. Would it be possible for you to have a link on your intranet and website please? We would also be grateful if you could publicise the resource through your networks, including through your e-newsletters.

Regards,

Kim Rutter
Marketing and Communications Manager (Press and Adults)
Social Care Institute for Excellence

Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) | T: 020 7089 6840 | F: 020 7089 6841 | W:
<http://www.scie.org.uk/> | Goldings House, 2 Hay's Lane, LONDON SE1 2HB

SCIE is a charity registered in England and Wales Reg. No. 1092778, Company Reg. No. 4289790.
Email Disclaimer: <http://www.scie.org.uk/email.htm>

Anti-bullying Week 2011

will be held from 14-18 November. With the slogan '**Stop and think – words can hurt**' this year's campaign is focused on tackling verbal bullying. We know that derogatory language – words and expressions that are homophobic, racist, sexist or disabilist, that seek to demean particular groups and individuals are far too common in our schools, colleges and communities.

Through this year's theme we aim to:

- challenge the casual use of derogatory language in our schools, colleges and communities
- raise awareness of the consequences of using demeaning and harassing language through technology
- encourage schools, colleges and other settings to create language charters that makes it clear what is and isn't acceptable
- give children and young people the tools to challenge others when they use derogatory language, to find new ways of expressing how they feel if they are angry or upset, and to make a conscious effort to speak positively and to compliment others
- encourage adults to consider how they model the use of language with children and young people (this includes all practitioners working with children and young people but also celebrities and people in positions of power)

Resources and briefing pack for FE available at this link: http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/anti-bullying_week-1.aspx

LSIS Governance in FE

Please see below a link to the LSIS newsletter for governors in FE. It includes a range of useful articles on issues such as improvement, succession management and audit, and details of events.

<http://www.lsis.org.uk/Services/Publications/Documents/LSIS-Gov-eNewsletter-17.pdf>

Shape Training

I wanted to let you know about our new BSL Course starting this Thursday 22nd September. We have extended this offer so that we are now accepting late enrolments until October 7th 2011 **so sign up today** to gain a qualification that you can really use!

Please do not hesitate to contact me directly.

Best wishes,
Bushra

Bushra Khanom
Service Coordinator - Training and Access
020 7424 7361 (voice)
bushra@shapearts.org.uk
www.shapearts.org.uk

Easy read information

See below links to two websites, one with health information, and the other with easy read info on mental health issues for people with learning difficulties.

<http://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/mentalhealthinfoforall/problems/learningdisabilities.aspx>

<http://www.easyhealth.org.uk/>

Natspec website

Please remember to make full use of the information available on the Natspec website. In the presentations section, you will find a wide range of presentations and supporting information from recent Natspec events, and there are recent publications in that section too.

Natspec endorsements

Events, consultants or programmes advertised in this bulletin are not necessarily endorsed by Natspec.

Individual colleges or staff who are asked to present on behalf of Natspec, please check with a member of the Board of Directors before committing yourself to an event.

Natspec website

Situations Vacant

If you wish to advertise posts on the Natspec sits vac web page, please send them to Andrew Harris - andrew.harris@derwen.ac.uk , the cost is a mere £25.00 to cover the admin. This service is only available to Natspec members.

Any problems accessing the Principal's forum contact Julian: webmaster@jewelion.com

Please let us have any news, events or job vacancies that you want placing on the website.

Natspec Directory

All member colleges/organisations should have received 25 copies of the Natspec Directory – if you have not yet received your copies please contact Dawn Williams at Derwen College – contact details below.

To request a Natspec directory please contact:

Queen Alexandra College
0121 428 5050
Derwen College
01691 661234

allformats@qac.ac.uk

dawn.williams@derwen.ac.uk

Contacts

email Alison Boulton

chiefexecutive@natspec.org.uk

Bulletin info:

andrew.harris@derwen.ac.uk

Andrew Harris

September 2011

