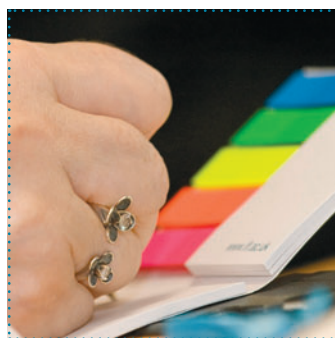
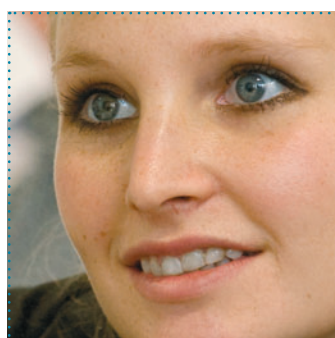


Brilliant teaching and training in FE and skills

A guide to effective CPD for teachers, trainers and leaders

More than 5,000 voices from the sector



Institute for Learning **Ifl**

Funded by



Acknowledgements

We acknowledge the valuable contribution of the many experts who contributed their enthusiasm and advice to this report and would especially like to mention:

- **The voices of 5,189 IfL members – teachers and trainers across further education and skills.**
- **Representative bodies:** 157 Group; Association of Colleges (AoC); Association of Learning Providers (ALP); Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL); Horex; Landex; Natspec; National Union of Students (NUS); Sixth Form Colleges' Forum (SFCF); and the University and College Union (UCU).
- **Experts** from the Association of Centres for Excellence in Teacher Training (ACETT); BDP; Becta; Campaign for Learning; the CETTs regional teams who offered advice; CfBT Education Trust; Curee; Edexcel; Institute of Chemical Engineers (ICE); Institute of Education (IoE); the Learning and Skills Council (LSC); Lifelong Learning UK (LLUK); the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER); National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE); National Learner Panel (NLP); the New Engineering Foundation (NEF); Ofsted; Training and Development Agency (TDA) and the UK Commission for Employment and Skills (UKCES).
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We would like to thank the IfL members, learners and sector leaders whose photographs and comments appear in this publication, and EAGIT Ltd, Birmingham Metropolitan College and West Nottinghamshire College for providing many of the photographs on the front and back covers.

Terminology

Throughout this document, we use the term 'teachers and trainers' or 'teachers' to cover all those who directly support learning in further education and skills, including lecturers, teachers, trainers, assessors, instructors, tutors and trainee teachers. We use the term 'FE and skills' to cover the range of publicly funded learning outside schools and higher education.

About the Institute for Learning (IfL)

The Institute for Learning (IfL) was formed in 2002 by further education teachers and others, and is the professional body for teachers, tutors, trainers and student teachers in the further education and skills sector, including adult and community learning, emergency and public services, FE colleges, the armed services, sixth-form colleges, the voluntary and community sector and work-based learning. An independent professional body, IfL is governed by an elected Advisory Council and works closely with learning and skills organisations, unions and employer bodies. www.ifl.ac.uk

About the Learning and Skills Improvement Service (LSIS)

The Learning and Skills Improvement Service is the sector-owned body supporting the development of excellent and sustainable FE provision across the learning and skills sector. Its aim is to accelerate the drive for excellence and, working in partnership with all parts of the sector, build on the sector's own capacity to design, commission and deliver improvement and strategic change. www.lsis.org.uk

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Sources of evidence

An appendix to this publication containing more of the background details and a comprehensive reference list is available to download separately in PDF format from the IfL website: www.ifl.ac.uk

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Foreword

Brilliant teaching and training does not happen by accident. It is created through careful thinking ahead and preparing teaching or training to meet the needs of each learner; the level and kind of course; and the range of outcomes and progression needed. Brilliant teachers and trainers can adjust their teaching approaches and mix of techniques, flexibly and rapidly, based on their professional judgements about what will work best.

This report about brilliant teaching in further education and skills is based on research that the Institute for Learning (IfL) undertook in early 2010 as part of a project supported by the Learning and Skills Improvement Service (LSIS) Flexibility and Innovation Fund. It reflects the views of more than 5,000 IfL members – teachers and trainers from across further education and skills – and of other experts and researchers on teaching and learning and effective continuing professional development (CPD). I believe that their thousands of years of collective wisdom make this report worth reading. See on page 12 how teachers and trainers rate CPD.

We have designed this document to be a practical and accessible guide, to support individual teachers and trainers to think about their own professional development. It is also intended to work as an essential guide for leaders and managers in colleges and providers. I hope that you find the guide interesting and useful and that, most importantly, it helps you to make a positive difference for all your learners.

Consistently brilliant teaching and training is our shared endeavour. Supporting our teachers and trainers as dual professionals – experts in teaching and training methods and up-to-date in their vocational or subject area – needs to be a top priority for the sector, in difficult and good times alike.

Every learner deserves to have professional teachers and trainers, who have the confidence, up-to-date knowledge, understanding and personalised approach to ensure the best outcomes for their learners. One jaded, out-of-date teacher or trainer is one too many.



Effective CPD is fundamental to the sustained, positive learning and continuous improvement of teachers and trainers, and their learners. Focused and wise investment in CPD for teachers and trainers will pay handsome dividends for their learners and for the well-being of our nation, economy and society.

I visit many colleges and providers in the course of my work, and am always pleased to hear feedback about IfL's impact. At City College Norwich, for example, I was told that IfL had sparked a fire for CPD, and that more and more creative and new ways of doing CPD that work and improve teaching were being generated.

In this fast-changing world, IfL intends to support and encourage teachers and trainers, many of whom are attracted to FE as a second or third career and want to give something back.

A key future priority for IfL is to develop and articulate a strategy and pedagogy for professional learning and CPD, based on the best possible evidence about teaching and learning and designed to be helpful to practitioners and their organisations alike.

Our research indicated strong agreement that CPD should be shared in some way; it was less effective if guarded as secret knowledge. We are already facilitating the sharing of CPD between our members – for example, 95,000 members use REfLECT – and we will build on this.

Another strong message was that the best CPD forms part of a teacher's or trainer's ongoing weekly activity, not a one-off special exercise or rush of activities.

“My CPD and reflective activities have a trickledown effect on my learners. As I learn more and become more confident in my teaching methods, techniques and tools, the better the learning experience for them becomes.”

Manjit Johal, ESOL team leader at Sandwell College and winner of the IfL-sponsored, peer-nominated LSIS STAR award in the teaching, training and learning practitioner category 2009



These and the other themes that emerged from this piece of research on CPD priorities will be reflected in the framework of IfL’s strategy for professional learning and CPD. Building on this, IfL intends to:

1. Develop and publish a series of guides to good CPD based on the stages of a teacher’s or trainer’s career journey and their subject specialism.
2. Offer practical CPD support services, locally and nationally, to organisations and individual teachers and trainers.
3. Continue working with other partner organisations to gather the latest research and disseminate the findings across the FE and skills sector.

The appendix to this report, *Brilliant teaching and training in FE and skills: Sources of evidence*, includes a full bibliographical listing and is published as a separate document, which you can download in PDF format from the IfL website.

I thank all those who have contributed so generously to this report – too many to name, but you know who you are. Commitment to CPD is the hallmark of a professional, and you, our members, tell us to continue giving priority to supporting your professional development as a benefit of membership. We will.

Toni Fazaeli
Chief Executive

Brilliant teaching in the 21st century

It is not easy to define brilliant teaching; there was broad agreement that we know brilliance when we see it, and we know only too well when it is missing.

We found a consensus that continuing professional development needs to support brilliant teaching and training, and its characteristics are:

- Teachers and trainers love what they are doing and the learners love it too
- There is the intellectual, physical space and time to innovate to meet learners’ needs
- When learning is the central organising principle of an organisation
- The environment fosters learning and develops the ability of all
- Learners consistently enjoy learning, are challenged and achieve high standards.

Those who participated in the research used a range of words: great; outstanding; excellent; the best; the most effective; teachers with sparkle. On balance, the majority of people we asked responded most positively to ‘brilliant’, so for the purposes of this guide, we are using it as a generic term.

Executive summary

Highly skilled and motivated teachers and trainers are crucial in taking forward a brilliant 21st century FE and skills sector and effective learning and success for students and trainees. They can do this only if they plan for their own professional learning to be continuous.

If continuing professional development (CPD) is to produce brilliant teachers and trainers, we need to be clear on what constitutes brilliant teaching and training and what practices help bring it about. We also need to recognise how teaching and learning are affected by context.

In this guide, we bring together for the first time evidence from research and advice from a diverse range of experts on:

- what people perceive to be brilliant teaching and training
- how learners themselves describe brilliant teaching and training
- priorities for teaching and learning in the future
- emerging policy priorities
- the teacher and trainer view of effective CPD
- what features successful providers share.

Our findings confirm the importance of the IfL model of dual professionalism, which means teachers and trainers needing to maintain and improve their subject knowledge at the same time as becoming more expert in teaching and learning. They also have to stay attuned to changing policy and local contexts.

We find that brilliant teachers and trainers have a **good repertoire of teaching methods**, experiment and reflect on what leads to excellent outcomes for learners, and that they:

1. Make time for reflective practice and critically analyse their own objectives. They build their confidence in their own professional judgement, tailoring learning activities to individual students' and trainees' needs and circumstances.
2. Learn from others and are willing to share practice and engage in peer support, mentoring and collaborative action research, sharing, networking with other teachers and trainers and learning from others in communities of practice.

3. Require the support of leaders who are experts in learning and can prioritise improving teaching and learning. The best leaders set the tone for brilliant teaching and develop a culture of self-improvement.
4. Are expert at how to design and match teaching and training methods to learners' needs, the subject and level of programme. They have a wide repertoire of methods on which to draw and know which are most effective in what circumstances.
5. Continually listen and respond to learners, bringing enthusiasm and creativity to learning, monitoring progress and acting upon feedback. They recognise the importance of being a professional with a full commitment to the learner.
6. Are confident in their use of technology, inventive with different and emerging technologies to enhance the learning experience and successful learning.
7. Maximise use of virtual learning environments (VLEs) and online learning to build knowledge and become more effective teachers and trainers.
8. Are actively involved in assessment for learning and target-setting for learners.
9. Work with newly qualified teachers and trainers, and peers, to build discussion and reflective practice.

Brilliant teachers and trainers are **real experts in their subject area**, and they:

1. Work hard to maintain their occupational, specialist or subject knowledge.
2. Are passionate about their subject and do not feel it is a chore to teach it.
3. Build their own links with their appropriate professional institutions to keep up to date.
4. Engage in sector vocational or subject networks.

5. Continually develop and build links with employers, experts and higher education in related fields.
6. Spend time out in industry with employers for their own development.
7. Actively engage employers in the student or trainee learning experience.
8. Plan for the coherence of on and off-the-job training in their vocational area.

Brilliant teachers and trainers **keep up with change in the wider context**, and they:

1. Recognise changes in the political, social and economic climate that impact on their learners' needs.
2. Continually consider the implications of these changes for their learners and their teaching practice.
3. Develop distinct capabilities and skills to teach different groups, such as 14 to 16-year-olds; those in offender learning; those not in education, employment, or training; adults within the workforce; and older adults.
4. Adopt a more work-based approach, emphasising employability with employer-focused training and apprenticeships.
5. Understand the requirements for safeguarding within the context of teaching and training, and in using technology.
6. Explore ways in which the greater flexibility of the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) can be exploited for the benefit of learners.
7. Keep in touch with emerging technology and social media developments that could help learners better.
8. Actively reflect on practice and CPD with other teachers and trainers across their organisation.

How to use this guide

This guide seeks to translate findings from research and advice from experts into real, practical and meaningful CPD opportunities for teachers and trainers, and for organisations.

For teachers and trainers

- Review on your own what makes brilliant teachers and trainers and consider to what extent you engage in any of these activities.
- Discuss different CPD approaches and activities that work with colleagues and peers.
- Discuss aspects of brilliant teaching and training; would this be a valuable addition to your CPD over the next year?
- Reflect on what CPD you have done and what experience of CPD you could share.
- What are your new CPD priorities, and what help and support do you need from others?
- How do you integrate this into your current CPD plan, and how can technology help you?

For organisations

- Review and discuss the range of brilliant teaching and training needed and, within your HR and quality teams, the CPD that will work.
- Link the identified CPD priorities to your organisation's own objectives, and ensure that they impact on teaching, training and learning.
- Plan and evaluate your organisation's performance against these CPD priorities:
 - Consider your strengths and weaknesses
 - Identify wasteful use of time and resources
 - Engage your curriculum teams
 - Create impact measures for your CPD priority areas, to assess improvements
 - Assess the support and resource allocation, including technology, required to deliver them
 - Write this up in a CPD strategy and plan for teaching, training and learning.

Linking brilliant teaching and training and CPD

Teachers and trainers are crucial to the development of a brilliant further education and skills sector for the 21st century, one where learners succeed whatever their background and starting point. Teachers and trainers throughout the whole sector, full-time and part-time alike, do this best where they focus continuously on their own professional development.

Research of ours shows that the key to success is when CPD mirrors the learning of others, including students and trainees; what is good practice for one is good practice for the other. Effective CPD is not an end in itself, but fundamental to the sustained, positive teaching and continuous improvement of teachers and trainers, sector organisations and brilliant success for learners.

In this guide for CPD leading to brilliant teaching and training, we bring together for the first time evidence from research and advice from stakeholders on:

- What professional teachers and trainers and other experts perceive to be brilliant teaching.
- How learners themselves describe brilliant teaching.
- What CPD is carried out by teachers and what they feel is most effective in improving their practice.
- Connections to the IfL model of dual professionalism.
- The policy landscape, the emerging priorities and impacts on teaching and training.
- The features that providers with excellent teaching and training share.
- Priorities for teaching and learning in the future, and the best ways to address these needs.
- The priorities for CPD for organisations committed to brilliant teaching and training.

We found that many common themes emerged, and these can be translated into useful and practical CPD advice for teachers and trainers, and for organisations.

“Excellence in teaching is the single most powerful influence on achievement.”

John Hattie, 2009.

“Most successful educational systems have an unwavering focus on improving the quality of teaching and that this is centred on developing the practice of individual teachers.”

Ofsted, 2009. *Annual Report 2008-2009*. London: Ofsted.

CPD is

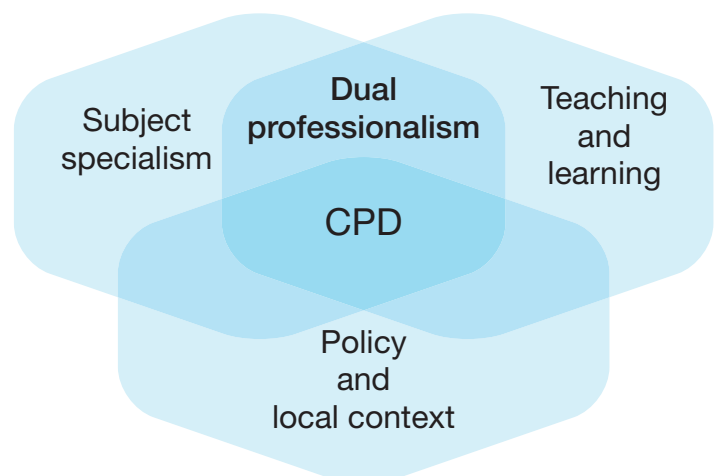
“a key driver in maintaining and raising the quality of teaching in our schools, colleges and universities.”

Skills Commission, 2010. *An Inquiry by the Skills*

Commission into Teacher Training in Vocational Education.

London: Edge.

IfL’s model of the teacher or trainer as a **dual professional**



“We aim to take teachers and trainers away from a tick-box approach or mere compliance with development opportunities. Professionals should drive their own CPD and develop their practice so that it really makes a difference to their learners.”

Dr Jean Kelly, Director of Professional Development, IfL.

About this research

This research brings together the latest intelligence on brilliant teaching and training across the FE and skills sector. As the professional body for teachers and trainers, IfL engages directly with more than 200,000 teachers, and has gained views directly from more than 5,000 individual teachers and trainers who gave their invaluable insights. IfL members' voice on CPD that works best is central to this guide. IfL also engaged and consulted with experts and representatives from across a broad range of organisations representing learners, leaders of providers, employers, researchers, CPD specialists and those organisations interested in teaching and learning.

We hope that teachers, trainers and other stakeholders will share our vision of what constitutes brilliant teaching and the CPD that best secures it.

Our research aims

- To identify the priorities for improving teaching and learning and the types of CPD most likely to achieve them and lead to brilliant teaching and training.
 - To help colleges and other providers develop an innovative and useful framework for CPD support for their teachers and trainers in relation to teaching and learning.
 - To help teachers and trainers, over 200,000 IfL members, and colleges and providers invest precious time and money in CPD that works, and avoid activities that are less likely to have a real impact on teaching and learning.
- A strategy for CPD to support brilliant teaching, training and learning that has relevance to every college and provider and every teacher and trainer.
 - An affordable and sustainable strategy for new local or national CPD services that will make a difference for achieving brilliant teaching, training and learning.
 - Confidence that the CPD strategy will be embedded, especially by the key constituency groups of teachers, trainers, leaders and managers in colleges and providers; and partner agencies with an interest in up-to-date, brilliant teaching and training.
 - The achievement of a raised profile of teaching and learning, created by enthusiastic and reflective teachers and trainers who have generously shared their wisdom and the discipline of persistent focus on what CPD works best for learners.

Research outcomes

This research project received expert input from:

Literature review	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Extensive review of existing research available, e.g. Ofsted, the Learning and Skills Improvement Service (LSIS), The Teaching and Learning Research Programme, Becta, government policy papers and IfL's own review of CPD 2009.
Teachers and trainers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ 5,189 IfL members responded to an online survey.¹■ Three focus groups held in partnership with Edexcel, attended by 40 teacher educators, CPD managers, and leaders of CPD from every part of the sector.■ Advice from the IfL CETTs regional team.■ Wider CETTs regional teams across England.
Partners and partner organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ 28 organisations contributed their input at an event on 4 March 2010.■ Additional in-depth interviews with sector leaders.
Learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Consultation and advice from the National Learner Panel (NLP) and National Union of Students (NUS) FE Zone committee.
Employers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Analysis of key reports, including those from UKCES, CBI and the government.

¹ 4,015 fully completed, 1,174 partially completed

Being a great teacher or trainer

Evidence from our research confirms that the IfL model of dual professionalism works; professional teachers and trainers need to maintain and improve their subject knowledge at the same time as becoming more expert in teaching and learning methods and attuned to changing policy contexts. Figure 1 on page 12 gives teachers' and trainers' views of the CPD activities that have the most impact. Our research found that the top positive contributors to great teaching and training are:

Reflecting on outcomes for learners

Brilliant teachers and trainers make time for reflective practice, critically analyse their own objectives and then take decisions about professional development for themselves.

Experts from Ofsted and LSIS confirm that brilliant teachers and trainers show an understanding of 'learning to learn'.

Members told us the kinds of CPD that make the most difference to practice, and thousands tell us that reflective practice, having the time and space to plan experimentation and to trial teaching and learning methods and review them, makes the most impact.

“My teacher is wonderful. She uses her life experiences to inspire us. I think that having that kind of teacher helps me be passionate about learning and having goals.”

National Learner Panel member

Learning from others, collaboration and networking

The vast majority of our respondents believe that there is still a lot to be discovered and developed for consistently brilliant teaching.

Our evidence shows that the CPD most likely to lead to the desired impact is based on learning from others – from shared resources, from peer support and working together and through formal and informal networks.

Organisations with a real interest in developing teaching and learning also identified working in teams, mentoring, and engaging in action research as most likely to lead to brilliant teaching and training.

Personalising learning

The need for teachers and trainers to personalise learning and provide differentiation in their approaches is supported by the Ofsted's annual report (2008/09). A lot of evidence about the importance of personalisation was gained from our research with learners themselves, who have high expectations of their teachers' and trainers' ability, flexibility and autonomy to personalise and tailor the learning experience.

Evidence from learners suggests that the best teachers and trainers:

- can completely transform a lesson plan (prepared a week before) to match the needs of the learners on that day
- personalise the planning process and bring understanding of the learner into their planning
- are fair and flexible, and communicate effectively with individuals as individuals.

There is broad agreement that brilliant teachers and trainers are expert at the personalisation of the curriculum. The effective use of technology and understanding learners' preferences for ICT can be a valuable means of personalising the learner experience.

“In my class, there are a variety of different learners. The teacher makes it possible for all of us to learn, so that age and ability aren't an issue. He passes on his knowledge and empowers us by simplifying the subject for those who need it and by encouraging those who want to push on faster.”

National Learner Panel member

Understanding and listening to learners

Brilliant teachers and trainers continually listen and respond to all different types of learners, respecting their opinions, aspirations and offer a range of learning styles. Learners value “the teacher’s willingness to engage with learners, bringing enthusiasm and creativity to learning, encouraging and acting upon feedback”.

Brilliant teachers and trainers also actively assess and measure the progress of their learners and the impact of their teaching practice. Responses from teachers suggest that many could move from good to brilliant by learning how to review learner progress more effectively.

Learners also have high expectations for the individual teacher’s professionalism as a leader and role model. They talk about brilliant teachers and trainers being professional with timekeeping, being a well-presented person of authority and with a full commitment to the learner, irrespective of what is going on behind the scenes in the organisation. They definitely expect their best teachers and trainers to engage in their own CPD and seek constant improvement.

Evidence from learner research has shown that brilliant teachers and trainers often work with learners to enable them to design their own assessments.

“The teacher needs to show they want to listen to us in the first place and that they are prepared to adapt their methods and styles to help each individual and the whole group.”

National Learner Panel member

Using technology effectively for learning

Our evidence from learners suggests they have high expectations of the teacher’s ability to use technology. The best teachers and trainers are inventive with technology to enhance the learning experience and to inspire. However, the evidence collected from learners suggested that only a very few teachers are using technology in the most effective way to “lift our sights” and that good teachers could become brilliant by increasing their use of Information and communication technology (ICT) and building their confidence and skill levels in new technologies.

Evidence from the survey of IfL members indicates that a small number have been able to use emerging technologies (such as social networking) for enhancing their teaching and learning, with great effect. Other members have reported that access to and use of appropriate online resources and an effective central virtual learning environment (VLE) resource is an essential part of improving teaching and learning practice.

There is a strong shared view that technological competence is a key indicator of brilliant teaching and that it should be built into initial teacher training so that it becomes an embedded skill for all teachers and trainers.

“For learners, there is a close and effective relationship between active participation in lessons and being prepared to engage and ask questions when learning materials are delivered and exploited through the use of IT.”

Adult Learning Inspectorate, 2007. *The National Teaching and Learning Change Programme: a review of teaching and learning frameworks*. Coventry: ALI.

Assessing learning

Research suggests that the best teachers and trainers are actively involved in assessment and target-setting for learners. Ofsted has identified that brilliant teachers enable learners to monitor their own progress and understand where and what they need to do to improve.

Contributors to our expert seminar agreed that brilliant teaching and training resulted from “consistency” and the improved use of formative assessment.

“Vocational and applied pedagogies should become a research priority and be embedded within school, FE and HE initial teacher training and CPD.”

“The improvement in standards of teaching and learning across the FE and skills sector over the past decade has been a remarkable success story, which owes much to the dedication and professionalism of lecturers and trainers.”

The profession always needs to update and develop further.

Leading CPD

Evidence from Ofsted shows that brilliant teaching and training is more likely to occur where organisations and leaders focus on continually improving teaching and learning. Several sources advocated a more consistent provision of leadership and workforce development, where leaders themselves become experts in learning.

Respondents also emphasised the role of leaders in setting the organisational tone, giving priority to improving teaching, training and learning amongst other conflicting demands and developing a culture of professionals' self-improvement as a vital element in realising brilliant teaching. Many stressed the importance of CPD being undertaken regularly, throughout the year, rather than as an end-of-year activity.

Leaders need to give a high priority to CPD for teachers and trainers. Colleges and providers need teachers and trainers to be up to date and expert. Employers expect high-quality and effective teaching and training, and say that broader employability skills, as well as literacy and numeracy, are central.

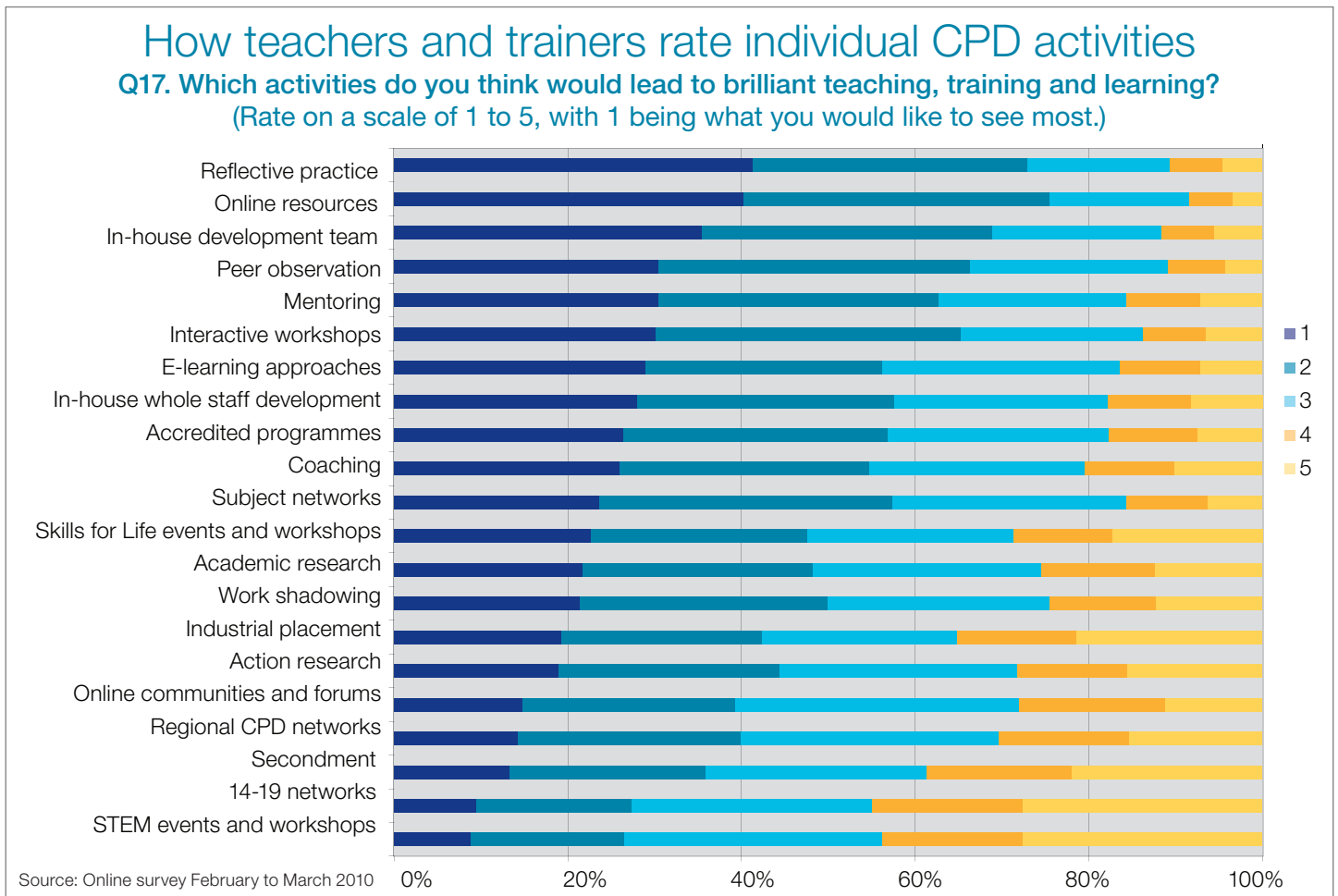
This was corroborated in the inspection of LSIS's Teaching and Learning Change Programme:

“The work of subject learning coaches, and the status that providers attach to this role, are crucial elements in promoting quality improvement. Most subject learning coaches, and those still being trained, speak with enthusiasm of how refreshed and empowered they feel as a result of their training, which improves teaching and learning and networking with colleagues. Where organisational priorities and structures do not include their work, their role is less effective.”

Adult Learning Inspectorate, 2007. *The National Teaching and Learning Change Programme: a review of teaching and learning frameworks*. Coventry: ALI.

Inspection showed that LSIS teaching and learning frameworks helped to improve teaching and learning, and most effectively where leaders and managers focused on raising success for learners. See the *2008–09 IfL review of CPD* for teachers' views on CPD that makes the most impact at www.ifl.ac.uk

Figure 1



Being a real subject or vocational expert

All our research sources identified that brilliant teachers and trainers work hard to maintain their occupational or subject knowledge and are real experts in their own area. Most importantly, our evidence from learners identified that they trust their teachers and trainers to have this up-to-date knowledge and that the very best “feel passionate about their subject and don’t feel it is a chore to teach it”. With the ever-increasing priority of meeting the needs of employers, the growth of new industries, raising skills in the workplace and preparing young people for work, the role of brilliant teachers and trainers in boosting the national skills and expertise for new industries has become crucial. In times of recession, enhancing skills for employment and enterprise is even more essential.

Evidence in relation to ‘brilliance’ from our research suggests three main ways in which brilliant teachers and trainers build and maintain specialist knowledge and skills.

1. Linking with professional bodies

Brilliant teachers and trainers recognise the important role of professional bodies and subject associations within vocational areas and build their own links with their appropriate professional institutions as an important source of up-to-date information.

LSIS identified that brilliant teachers and trainers often engaged in their sector subject networks.

2. Working with employers

There was common agreement amongst all respondents, including members, that brilliant teachers continually develop and build links with employers and utilise these links for themselves and for their learners.

Ofsted notes that brilliant teachers and trainers and their organisations have closer links with the workplace, and the majority of respondents to our questions were emphatic about the need for recent and relevant vocational experience.

“I always felt that my tutor was up to date with her own subject and with changes in education, and I trusted what she told me.”

National Learner Panel member

Our respondents gave us examples of how brilliant teachers and trainers engage with employers:

- Work shadow placements
- Fellowships for teachers to spend time in industry
- Structured visits
- Employers coming in to talk to learners
- Observation of peers and experts
- Subject or employer-specific mentors
- Employer partnerships
- Keeping abreast through television and the internet.

Brilliant teachers and trainers maximise the benefits and value of their links with industry through cascading learning and reflecting on implications for teaching and training practice and measuring impact.

3. Teaching vocational subjects

Brilliant teachers and brilliant teaching and learning organisations combine the teaching of knowledge off the job with the acquisition of skills through workforce experience and practically based assessment. Brilliant teaching and training comes from the combination of a deep understanding of learning and the use of ‘learning to learn’ strategies applied within the context of a vocational subject and workplace setting.

Our research highlighted the inherent challenge of achieving this, since teachers and trainers involved in workplace supervision and training need to combine their vocational skills with a knowledge of effective teaching. The workplace supervisors need to be dual professionals for teaching to be most effective in the workplace.

The wider context and keeping up with change

The FE and skills sector works in an environment characterised by political, social and economic change. Our evidence confirms that brilliant teachers and trainers recognise these changes and the wider context, and are continually considering the implications for their learners and their teaching practice. Similarly the best FE colleges and other providers are alert to change and consider how best to improve their support for brilliant teachers, trainers, learners and learning.

Understanding new priorities

Evidence collected in our research supported the need for brilliant teaching and training professionals to help supply new recruits to priority sectors as the UK emerges from recession. It identifies in particular the science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) related subjects, alongside priority sectors – life sciences, low carbon, digital media, advanced manufacturing and engineering construction – as well as generic enterprise.

Brilliant teachers and trainers will be able to combine expertise in these new sectors with excellent teaching and training to equip young people and adults with the necessary skills for employment.

Our research also identified other priorities where brilliant teachers and trainers are already responding to changing requirements. These include:

- Developing the distinct capabilities and skills to teach 14 to 16-year-olds.
- Adopting a more work-based approach and emphasising employability with employer-focused training and apprenticeships.
- Working in networks to enhance the teaching of STEM subjects.
- A focus on understanding the requirements for safeguarding within the context of teaching and training practice, and technology.
- More emphasis on the emotional or behavioural barriers to learning.

- Exploring ways in which the greater flexibility of the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) can be exploited for the benefit of learners.

Recognising employability skills

Many respondents noted that brilliant teachers and trainers are responding to the increased emphasis on employment. Several sources mentioned the ability of brilliant teachers to recognise and respond to the specific and differing employability and progression needs of learners in, for example, offender learning, those not in education or employment, and adults already in the workforce.

LSIS has mapped the materials on the Teaching and Learning Programme to employability skills identified by the UK Commission for Employment and Skills (UKCES).

Demonstrating professionalism outside the classroom

Learners have an expectation that brilliant teachers and trainers engage widely across the organisation with their colleagues and peers, resulting in a feeling of their teachers having a connection with, and the mutual support of, senior management. When teachers or trainers enter the classroom or workplace, however, learners expect them to be fully committed and able to focus their attention on teaching and learning.

Learners expect their teachers and trainers to behave as ambassadors for their organisation, upholding its reputation.

“Staff should be able to talk positively about their college or provider.”

National Learner Panel member



Harnessing emerging technologies

Learners in particular anticipate that their teachers and trainers will adopt and integrate the most appropriate technologies to enhance the quality of their teaching and training practice. Evidence from our survey identified that brilliant teachers use technology with their learners to engage them in learning, using opportunities to co-deliver with learners and using digital media, for example, for assessment.

“I went on a course on Moodle, which meant I could upload my schemes of work and assignment schedules. As the students have 24-hour access to Moodle, communications have improved 100 per cent.”

Teacher at West Kent College

One message from our evidence was that brilliant teachers and trainers should be supported by their peers and by their organisation to develop their capability and capacity to respond to the potential opportunities of emerging technologies.

“I have used the iPad™ for teaching adults and I’ve already found that it has benefits for small syndicate work – I can set off a group looking at one particular task while asking another to do something else. I really believe it could revolutionise teaching – light, portable, learn anywhere and indeed link home to class to internet to e-learning to distance learning.”

Teacher

Connecting initial teacher training and CPD

A common message to come from much of our evidence and advice was that brilliant teachers and trainers continue to look at research and new ideas about teaching when they leave initial teacher training. To maximise, formalise and sustain this connection, our respondents recommended:

- The recruitment of outstanding people into initial teacher training – these are the triple professionals – experts in teaching teachers; in teaching methods that work with learners; and up-to-date in their subject or vocational area
- A clear vision of the ‘brilliant teacher’ and teaching and training
- Optional models within initial teacher training tailored to area of expertise and specialism
- Ensuring that the Lifelong Learning UK (LLUK) professional standards, IfL processes and Professional Formation are embedded in initial teacher training and taken forward into CPD
- Greater clarity of career stages for all teachers and trainers, and priorities for the early career stage
- A professional journey, recognised by teachers, trainers and organisations.

CPD priorities for teachers and trainers

A menu of ideas that you might like to use in developing your own CPD plans.

Teaching and learning

On being a great teacher or trainer

- Take responsibility and drive your development and build confidence in your professional judgement.
- Using the LLUK professional standards as a prompt, develop a plan and vision for how you want your teaching career to develop and what CPD will be most effective for you at each stage.
- Set aside regular time for reflection and learning and to critically analyse your own objectives.
- Develop your understanding and experience of 'learning to learn', self-assessment and active learning approaches.
- Extend the breadth of your CPD activities by exploring opportunities for peer observation, coaching and mentoring.
- Identify opportunities for curriculum development and tailoring the student learning experience.
- Identify opportunities to experiment, trial and review teaching and learning methods.
- Identify your naturally occurring CPD activities, e.g. a television programme, consider how they can be enriched and utilised as a learning experience and capture them as part of your CPD record.
- Exploit the wider environment, YouTube, social networks and your professional body, IfL.
- Consider engaging in a formal programme of CPD, for example, through the LSIS Teaching and Learning Programme.

Learning from others, internal collaboration and peer networking

- Set aside regular time to share practice with colleagues and find new ways of working together.
- Find ways to disseminate learning from small projects to ensure larger-scale learning.
- Identify opportunities to collaborate in action research.
- Focus on assessing the impact of your teaching and training approaches on learners.
- Keep up with research findings on teaching, training and learning.
- Develop opportunities for peer support and professional dialogue:
 - working in teams
 - cascading CPD and sharing mechanisms with peer review and feedback
 - mentoring for both mentee and mentor
 - keep up with research on CPD
 - engaging in action research.
- Find opportunities to share with others in wider networks and identify new learning.

Understanding learning and learners

- Build your understanding of your different learners, their needs, interests, ambitions and priorities.
- Consider ways to personalise delivery of the learning experience for them in groups and as individuals.
- Find ways to engage with learners, to hear from them directly and act on what you learn.
- Look for ways for learners to design their own assessments.
- Be 100 per cent secure in your own functional skills.
- Recognise the significant impact you have on your learners through:
 - your style and enthusiasm in teaching
 - the extent to which they feel they are heard
 - your degree of professionalism
 - your level of commitment to their progress.
- Actively look at effective ways to capture and demonstrate improvements in your own learning practice.
- Enable learners to monitor their own progress and understand where and what they need to do to improve.

Subject specialism and dual professionalism

Being an expert

- Actively work to ensure the currency of your vocational or subject area.
- Establish an internal network of expertise to share learning and knowledge.
- Establish links with your professional body and other sources of expertise through:
 - Joining subject networks
 - Attending events
 - Reading papers and research.

Teaching your vocational area or subject

- Identify new ways to assess learner progress in a vocational context.
- Involve learners in designing their own assessments.
- Use a multi-disciplinary skill set in designing the learning experience, drawing on science, business and technical expertise
- Ensure that functional skills are part of vocational learning.
- Identify how your experience of learning to learn can be transferred creatively into a vocational subject.

Linking with employers, subject networks and higher education

- Develop and build links with employers.
- Work with colleagues to share ideas and employer contacts.
- Work with colleagues and peers to cascade the learning from linking with employers; consider implications for teaching and training practice and measuring impact.
- Consider opportunities for:
 - Work shadow placements
 - Fellowships for you to spend time in industry
 - Structured visits
 - Employers coming in to talk to learners
 - Observation of peers and experts
 - Subject-specific mentors
 - Employer partnerships
 - Subject networks, including those in HE.

Context and policy

Keeping up with change

- Be alert to changes in the political, social and economic landscape; consider the implications of this for your teaching and learning.
- Consider how these changes may also affect your learners and their approach to learning.
- As new growth sectors emerge, consider how these might impact on your own area of expertise and your teaching and training.
- Recognise the requirements for safeguarding in the context of your own teaching and training practice, and in using technology.
- Build your understanding of the needs of different groups of learners, including:
 - hard-to-reach learners
 - those in offender learning
 - 14 to 19-year-olds, older adults
 - apprentices.

Technology

- Actively plan to build your confidence in using IT.
- Identify and work with colleagues who have experience of using technology to improve teaching and learning practice to support you.
- Consider the most appropriate use of technology for your teaching and training, and engaging your learners.
- Identify opportunities to test new technologies.
- Consider using or maximising your use of REfLECT, the online personal learning space that IfL provides for you as a member to record, reflect on and share your CPD activities.
- Utilise existing IT resources such as VLEs for access to online learning.

CPD priorities for organisations

Are you helping your teachers and trainers to be consistently brilliant?

Teaching and learning

On helping teachers and trainers to be brilliant

- Provide opportunities for informal and formal CPD for teachers and trainers, individually and in teams.
- Encourage managers to support CPD opportunities through timetabling, reviews and team meetings.
- Develop opportunities for structured peer support, lesson observations as a basis for discussion, and coaching and mentoring, in the organisation and outside (high-impact CPD).
- Develop a culture where teachers and trainers are empowered to take responsibility for their own development.
- Provide processes and opportunities where teachers and trainers throughout the organisation can share their teaching experience, practice and effective learning.
- Work with teachers and trainers to identify new opportunities to collaborate with others.
- Offer opportunities for teachers and trainers to assess and update their functional skills in both a teaching and vocational context.
- Encourage teachers and trainers to develop and share their use of learning to learn strategies applied within the context of a vocational subject.

Leadership

- Establish an organisation-wide vision and strategy for brilliant teaching and training.
- Set the organisational tone and priority for exceptional teaching, training and learning amongst all other conflicting demands.
- Identify ways to build organisational focus, culture and understanding of self-improvement as a vital element in realising brilliant teaching.
- Integrate teacher and trainer support into organisational priorities through a whole-organisation approach.
- Encourage leaders and managers to engage with teaching and learning, to recognise the leader impact on learner outcomes.
- Develop a more consistent provision of leadership and management for teacher and workforce development.
- Consider in-house development with individual teams and across the wider workforce to build a common understanding of brilliant teaching.
- Encourage and support registration and active engagement with IfL, and the use of REfLECT, the online tool that IfL provides for members to record, reflect on and share their CPD activities.

Personalisation

- Actively engage teachers and trainers in your wider learner involvement strategy.
- Ensure that teachers and trainers are given the freedom to personalise and tailor the learning experience.
- Bring teachers and trainers together with learners to share learner involvement experiences.
- Encourage teachers and trainers to involve learners in determining CPD priorities and impact.

Building on excellent teacher training

- Work with newly qualified teachers and trainers to develop a career path and identify how best to continue their professional journey.
- Consider establishing teacher teams to develop and extend opportunities for development beyond initial teacher training.
- Identify common expertise gaps across the teachers and trainers to develop structured support.
- Ensure that the LLUK professional standards, IfL processes and IfL's Professional Formation are embedded within teacher development.

Dual professionalism

Being an expert

- Encourage teachers and trainers to maintain their occupational or subject knowledge and be real experts in their own area.
- Encourage teachers and trainers to engage with their professional industry bodies to build and share up-to-date subject expertise.
- Provide formal and informal opportunities for teachers and trainers to collaborate in the organisation and externally, in wider subject networks.

Links with industry

- Develop and manage a network of industry contacts who can provide opportunities for teachers, trainers and learners to attain workplace experience through:
 - Work shadow placements
 - Fellowships to enable teachers and trainers to spend time in industry
 - Structured visits
 - Employers coming in to talk to learners
 - Observation of peers and experts
- Subject-specific mentors
- Employer partnerships
- Provide opportunities for teachers and trainers to record, share, learn and reflect on workplace experience for implications for teaching practice and measuring impact.
- Take advantage of television and the internet for up-to-date information about their vocational or subject area.

Context and policy

Responding to change

- Ensure that your organisation is alert to the implications of social, political and economic changes to your teaching and learning strategy.
- Consider the impact of these changes on your teachers and trainers and what this might mean for them and their learners' experience.
- Provide opportunities for open discussion and debate about the teaching, training and learning implications of any changes.
- Identify and develop your teaching strengths in the science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) subjects and priority sectors as the UK emerges from the recession.
- Develop and build the organisation's understanding and teaching expertise around specific target groups of learners, for example:
 - hard-to-reach learners
 - offender learning
 - 14 to 19-year-olds, older adults
 - apprentices.
- Ensure that all teachers are up to date on the requirements for safeguarding in the context of teaching and practice and technology.
- Provide opportunities for teachers and trainers to share, learn and discuss the implications of change.

Technology

- Establish an organisation-wide strategy to enhance teachers' and trainers' access to and use of technology.
- Identify how existing student Information and communication technology (ICT) facilities such as virtual learning environments (VLEs) can be extended and enhanced for the use of teachers and trainers.
- Identify advocates in using ICT and encourage them to develop their skills and share practice.
- Encourage a group of ICT teacher champions to develop with learners new ways of using technology for brilliant teaching and share this learning with colleagues.
- Establish strong links between ICT and teaching and training teams to investigate use of emerging technologies and understand appropriate support needs.
- Provide opportunities for a structured programme of eCPD professional development.

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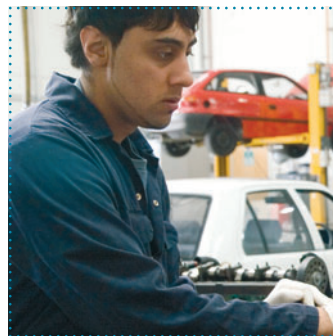
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