



Further Education reforms – impacts and issues in adult and community learning

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Skills for Learning Professionals

Table of Contents

1. Executive Summary	3
1.1 Introduction	3
1.2 Overview of findings.....	3
1.3 Recommendations	5
2. Adult and community learning and the Further Education workforce reforms – setting the scene	11
2.1 The role of Lifelong Learning UK.....	11
2.2 Activities undertaken by Lifelong Learning UK under the Further Education workforce reforms	12
2.3 Overview of adult and community learning.....	13
2.4 Overview of the Further Education workforce reforms.....	13
2.5 Professionalising the adult and community learning workforce – themes from previous research.....	14
2.6 Aim of the research.....	15
3. Research methodology	17
3.1 Defining the sample of providers delivering adult and community learning.....	17
3.2 Interviews with stakeholder organisations	18
4. Characteristics of adult and community learning	20
4.1 Numbers of teaching employees.....	20
4.2 Types of qualifications held.....	20
4.3 Distinguishing features of adult and community learning in England	22
5. Aligning the Further Education workforce reforms with adult and community learning	25
5.1 Awareness and understanding of the Further Education workforce reforms.....	25
5.2 Implementing the Further Education workforce reforms	27
5.3 Barriers to implementation	27
5.4 Distinguishing between Full Teacher and Associate Teacher roles.....	30
5.5 Recognition for existing teaching skills and legacy qualifications	32
6. Impact of Further Education workforce reforms issues within adult and community learning	34
6.1 Developing HR strategies	34
6.2 Requirement to join the Institute for Learning (IfL).....	35
6.3 Engagement with Continuing Professional Development (CPD) requirements.....	37
6.4 Accessing information, advice and guidance relating to the reforms	39
7. Conclusions and recommendations	42
7.1 Conclusions	42
7.2 Recommendations	43

1. Executive Summary

1.1 Introduction

In autumn 2009, Lifelong Learning UK commissioned Pye Tait Consulting to explore the impacts and issues associated with implementing the 2007 Further Education workforce reforms among Learning and Skills Council (LSC) funded adult and community learning deliverers in England. The research is intended to facilitate more effective teacher workforce development and support needs relating to the reforms for adult and community learning.

Running in parallel with this research is a piece of work exploring the impact of the Further Education workforce reforms among LSC funded work based learning deliverers in England. This report is available separately.

1.2 Overview of findings

In September 2007, the government introduced key changes to the training and development of the further education workforce. The reforms are part of the drive to professionalise the workforce and affect all types of providers delivering LSC-funded provision in England, with new statutory regulations for further education and LSC contracting requirements for adult and community learning and work based learning providers. These reforms are part of a wider strategy and this report looks at only one element – the issues for adult and community learning relating to the introduction of the reforms to teacher training and development.

The Government is committed to having a fully qualified further education workforce and expects each college and provider to ensure that all their teaching and training staff achieve, or are working towards, qualification by no later than 2009/10. For new Full Associate Teachers¹, this means achieving the Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector (PTLLS) award within one year of appointment. Full Teachers must then complete the Diploma (DTLLS) within five years, and Associate Teachers must complete the Certificate (CTLLS) within five years.

Adult and community learning is a generic term for post-16 education and training that aims to engage adults in the communities it serves. Learning takes place in a wide range of locations and at times to suit learners, including evenings and weekends. Many follow courses provided by local authority adult learning services. In addition to local authorities, various private, voluntary and public sector providers are involved.

Many teachers within adult and community learning have extensive roles as part of a wider support programme, rather than an intensive teaching role. Many teachers work part time, with some offering services on a casual basis, possibly for only 2-3 hours per week. The majority of providers surveyed as part of this research state that the reforms are too rigid to meet the needs of adult and community learning.

¹ 'Teacher' is a generic term that covers teachers, tutors, trainers, lecturers and instructors.

A significant minority of providers are critical of the reforms, describing them as over-complex, leading to confusion as to exactly what is required.

Communications around the reforms lack clarity, with insufficient guidance that is appropriately tailored to adult and community learning. A minority of providers are confused relating to what qualifications teachers are required to hold, and how to determine exactly what previous qualifications and experience are actually worth.

There is confusion among some providers regarding whether membership of the Institute for Learning (IfL) is or isn't mandatory, and there is unease among providers as well as stakeholder organisations surrounding the policing of the reforms – there appears to be no enforcement.

Providers delivering adult and community learning are generally committed to Preparing to teach in the lifelong learning sector (PTLLS) courses. There is some resistance to Certificate in teaching in the lifelong learning sector (CTLLS) courses due to lack of clarity over the Associate Teacher role, and the least amount of commitment appears to relate to Diploma in teaching in the lifelong learning sector (DTLLS). This qualification is generally perceived to be long and expensive, and not relevant to the adult and community learning workforce.

A significant minority of providers are worried about funding cuts and the potential implications of finite and overstretched resources. Where part time teachers need to be released to attend training, there is a risk that the courses they normally run will have to be cancelled. This in turn will result in a drop in income as cover for part time or sessional teachers is often extremely difficult.

Many providers cannot determine whether the Full Teacher or Associate Teacher route should be followed. This is largely borne out of the fact that teaching may only be a small part of a wider support role, yet with a full and wide range of responsibilities, including planning and developing of a programme/programmes of learning. Often, providers use their own methods and judgments to determine which route to follow.

A minority of providers report difficulties in gaining recognition for legacy qualifications. There is particular concern around language qualifications (particularly those gained overseas), as well as for courses where teachers may be highly skilled in a particular area but lack formal qualifications, such as flower arranging.

Most providers have Human Resources (HR) strategies in place that assist with the implementation of the reforms. Providers use a number of methods such as appraisals, seminars and training workshops to communicate and follow up on requirements as appropriate.

Most providers do their utmost to enforce membership of the Institute for Learning (IfL), with a small minority abstaining so as not to risk losing valued teachers who simply do not see the benefits of membership.

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) requirements under the reforms are important to providers delivering adult and community learning, and various methods are used to monitor and assist teachers through this process. Some providers admit to facing challenges from teachers, particularly those who are not seeking to further develop their careers.

Developing Information and Communication Technology (ICT) skills are high on providers' agendas, with the greatest challenges to using ICT faced by teachers who may not have had a great deal of previous practice or exposure to it. Literacy and numeracy are also cited as particular skills gaps.

The IfL's REfLECT system is an online personal learning space for members. It enables them to plan, record and assess the impact of CPD on their practice. REfLECT is used by many providers, with mixed views concerning its adequacy. Many providers offer additional, alternative methods of recording CPD.

Providers have made use of a wide network of sources for help with the reforms, but many require additional help across a range of areas. Ideally providers require more flexibility from the reforms. Providers want practical guidance that is tailored to the unique characteristics of adult and community learning and. Providers in the third sector want guidance that is sensitive to the fact that teaching is an important but often 'embedded' part of wider community support programmes. Those individuals delivering learning in the third sector particularly may not consider themselves to be teachers 'as such'. Substantial confusion remains around the difference between Full Teacher and Associate Teacher status, and which of the qualifications apply depending on the role being undertaken.

1.3 Recommendations

Recommendations have been developed with a view to ensuring that Lifelong Learning UK will be able to engage more effectively and productively with adult and community learning. *However it is emphasised here that it is not the responsibility of Lifelong Learning UK to ensure that the reforms are implemented.*

It should be taken into consideration that the findings and recommendations relate to the sample surveyed, not the whole of England.

Recommendation & Rationale	
Recommendations for Lifelong Learning UK	
1	<p>Recommendation:</p> <p>Lifelong Learning UK should review and, where feasible, incorporate an element of flexibility within the reforms. Another option would be to introduce bespoke units of qualifications that are better suited to meet the needs of teachers delivering adult and community learning</p> <p>As part of this review, Lifelong Learning UK should take into account the appropriateness of the new qualifications requirements (PTLLS/DTLLS/CTLLS) to adult and community learning teachers.</p> <p>Rationale:</p> <p>A large proportion of providers and stakeholder organisations are concerned that the reforms are currently not flexible enough to suit the size and composition of the adult and community learning workforce.</p> <p>There is a risk that some adult and community teachers with valuable knowledge, skills and experience will no longer wish to continue in their roles, because the benefits they will gain from the new qualifications are not necessarily worth the amount of investment required. (See section 5.3)</p> <p style="background-color: #f44336; color: white; padding: 2px;">Priority: High</p>
2	<p>Recommendation:</p> <p>Lifelong Learning UK should develop a toolkit that is specifically tailored to the requirements of the reforms, from the perspective of providers and teachers working within adult and community learning.</p> <p>The toolkit should help enable providers and teachers to implement the reforms appropriately, by giving guidance as outlined below, taking into account the characteristics of adult and community learning.</p> <p>The toolkit should include clear and accessible² information that includes case studies and examples of ways in which organisations have implemented changes to enable them to fulfil the requirements of the reforms.</p> <p>The case studies should cover a broad regional base and should relate to a variety of organisations by size, from small to large.</p> <p>The case studies should include examples of overcoming barriers to engagement – notably time, costs and reluctance on the part of teachers.</p> <p>The toolkit should build on previous guidance materials published by Lifelong</p>

² By 'clear and accessible' we are referring to documentation that is concise and to the point and avoids the use of jargon

Recommendation & Rationale	
	<p>Learning UK and focus on steps to implementation. Communications relating to the reforms have been circulated by Lifelong Learning UK as well as other agencies (see <i>section 2.2</i>).</p> <p>Rationale:</p> <p>There are a number of organisations that do not believe they have sufficient practical guidance to help them take appropriate action, within the unique environment of adult and community learning (see <i>section 5.1</i>).</p> <p>Smaller organisations as well as those in the third sector are struggling to understand how to make the reforms apply to them (see <i>section 4.3</i>).</p> <p style="background-color: #f44336; color: white; padding: 2px;">Priority: High</p>
3	<p>Recommendation:</p> <p>Lifelong Learning UK should maintain a regularly updated contact database of adult and community learning organisations, to ensure that information is tailored to their needs and that it reaches <i>all</i> relevant organisations at the same time.</p> <p>Rationale:</p> <p>Adult and community learning comprises organisations operating in a wide range of settings, and across the public, private and third sectors (see <i>section 4.3</i>).</p> <p style="background-color: #f44336; color: white; padding: 2px;">Priority: High</p>
4	<p>Recommendation:</p> <p>Lifelong Learning UK should revise information for distribution to providers, so that it details the practical steps for gaining recognition for existing qualifications and experience, particularly where qualifications and skills may be in a very specific area (such as yoga).</p> <p>The most appropriate format for revised information might be via an interactive online tool where information relating to previous qualifications and experience can be keyed in, to determine what further qualifications are required.</p> <p>Rationale:</p> <p>It is apparent that some organisations are still uncertain about the process for gaining recognition, especially for legacy qualifications (see <i>section 5.4</i>).</p> <p style="background-color: #ff9800; color: white; padding: 2px;">Priority: Medium</p>

Recommendation & Rationale	
<i>Recommendations for Lifelong Learning UK in conjunction with partners/stakeholders or to flag up to partners/stakeholders</i>	
5	<p>Recommendation:</p> <p>Lifelong Learning UK should – ideally working with provider networks and Centres for Excellence in Teacher Training (CETTs) – to hold information briefing events at a range of locations across the nine regions in England. The purpose is to promote the reforms and give guidance on how to embed them.</p> <p>These events should be specifically targeted at smaller adult and community learning organisations, and locations for the events selected so that they are accessible for these organisations.</p> <p>Rationale:</p> <p>It will be necessary to ensure that all adult and community learning organisations are committed to embedding the necessary changes.</p> <p>Smaller organisations and the third sector in particular require more help as they typically operate with smaller teams and have limited budgets in comparison with larger adult and community learning organisations (<i>see section 4.3</i>).</p> <p style="background-color: #ff8a65; padding: 5px;">Priority: High</p>
6	<p>Recommendation:</p> <p>Lifelong Learning UK should actively promote Continuing Professional Development (CPD) activities that offer development in new technology and e-learning.</p> <p>Rationale:</p> <p>Respondents identify skills gaps in technology, literacy & numeracy (<i>see section 6.3</i>).</p> <p>Meeting this need will help meet the FE Sector Workforce Strategy priority of retaining and developing a modern, professionalised workforce.</p> <p><i>It is acknowledged that this recommendation may be out of scope for Lifelong Learning UK to fulfil independently. Where this is the case, the recommendation should be worked on with the most appropriate organisation.</i></p> <p style="background-color: #ff8a65; padding: 5px;">Priority: High</p>

Recommendation & Rationale	
7	<p>Recommendation:</p> <p>Clear information should be developed and distributed concerning logging of CPD activities, and specifically in the correct use of REFLECT.</p> <p>This may be via an interactive online tutorial and/or via literature.</p> <p><i>It is acknowledged that this recommendation may be out of scope for Lifelong Learning UK to fulfil independently. Where this is the case, the recommendation should be worked on with the most appropriate organisation.</i></p> <p>Rationale:</p> <p>A number of respondents note that teachers can find the online tool REFLECT ‘clumsy and difficult’ as well as ‘time-consuming and complicated’ (see section 6.3).</p> <p>Priority: Medium</p>
8	<p>Recommendation:</p> <p>It is recommended that the Institute for Learning (IfL) develops clear and accessible information for navigating their website³.</p> <p><i>It is acknowledged that this recommendation is out of scope for Lifelong Learning UK to fulfil independently. Where this is the case, the recommendation should be worked on with the most appropriate organisation.</i></p> <p>Rationale:</p> <p>A small number of respondents suggest that it can be difficult to find their way around the IfL website, however this does not appear to be a major barrier (see section 6.2).</p> <p>Priority: Low</p>

³ This may be via an interactive online tutorial and/or via a visual step-by-step guide.

Recommendation & Rationale	
Recommendations for providers⁴	
9	<p>Recommendation:</p> <p>Providers should ensure that systems and resources are deployed effectively, to communicate to teachers their requirements under the reforms (such as CPD, qualifications requirements and membership of the IfL).</p> <p>Rationale:</p> <p>The extent, to which HR initiatives are used to assist with the implementation of the reforms, varies across providers (<i>see sections 6.1, 6.2 and 6.3</i>).</p> <p>Priority: High</p>
10	<p>Recommendation:</p> <p>Providers should make use of available local networks (such as provider networks) to discuss the reforms, seek information and advice relating to areas of uncertainty, and benefit from the sharing of best practice⁵.</p> <p>Rationale:</p> <p>Some providers are making use of available networks and these have helped with knowledge and understanding in relation to the reforms (<i>see section 6.4</i>).</p> <p>Priority: Medium</p>
11	<p>Recommendation:</p> <p>Providers should refer to national guidance organisations such as Lifelong Learning UK and the Learning and Skills Improvement Service in order to keep abreast of information, advice and non-financial support that is available in relation to the reforms.</p> <p>Rationale:</p> <p>Some providers are making use of non-financial support services and these have helped with knowledge and understanding in relation to the reforms (<i>see section 6.4</i>).</p> <p>Priority: Medium</p>

⁴ Lifelong Learning UK will need to proactively communicate recommendations 9-11 to providers who deliver adult and community learning

⁵ This recommendation links in with recommendations 2 and 5.

2. Adult and community learning and the Further Education workforce reforms – setting the scene

2.1 The role of Lifelong Learning UK

Since 2006, Lifelong Learning UK has worked with the further education sector to produce and then update the first *Workforce Strategy for the Further Education Sector in England, 2007-2012*. This strategy was designed to help shape the future workforce in the sector and sets out four priorities and ten themes to support the achievement of the vision.

The Further Education workforce reforms are part of priority three:

Priority One: Understanding the nature of the workforce

Priority Two: Attracting and recruiting the best people

Priority Three: Retaining and developing the modern, professionalised workforce

Priority Four: Ensuring equality and diversity is at the heart of strategy, policy-making planning and training

Priority three includes the following themes:

Theme Seven: Professionalising the workforce through relevant training and continuing professional development

Theme Eight: Identifying, planning and delivering the required skills needs of the workforce

Theme Nine: Ensuring appropriate leadership and management development exists at all levels throughout the organisation

Theme 10: Ensuring there is a flexible, fair and supportive working environment for the workforce⁶

⁶ Lifelong Learning UK (2009) *Implementing the Workforce Strategy for the Further Education Sector in England, 2007-2012 – A Guide for Learning Providers – Revised version: 2009-2010*

2.2 Activities undertaken by Lifelong Learning UK under the Further Education workforce reforms

Lifelong Learning UK has been involved in a range of activities under the Further Education workforce reforms. These include:

- developing standards for Initial Teacher Training (taking into account holistic assessment and safeguarding of young people), for providers to prepare courses starting September 2007;
- verifying that Awarding body and Higher Education Institution qualifications meet the new standards;
- monitoring and planning the volume of Initial Teacher Training on behalf of the range of providers in the sector, and in dialogue with the two funding bodies; the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) and Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE);
- discussing with the funding bodies the action that should be taken in the light of Ofsted reports on the quality of provision;
- setting a framework for the professional development of teacher trainers across the whole sector, including skills, qualifications and experience, by the end of 2006;
- setting the criteria for CETTs, and awarding this status to appropriate bodies or partnerships;
- launching the workforce strategy by carrying out a mailing in October 2007 to Heads and HR Managers across the further education sector whose contact details were held on file - as well as setting up a microsite and a ministerial launch event;
- re-writing the reforms guidance specifically for work based learning (June 2008), adult and community learning (October 2008) and the third sector (October 2008) and mailing this via HOLEX and partners;
- re-launching the guidance as the 'Changes' campaign in July 2009 via a direct mailing ;
- running two supplements in The Guardian (October 2007 and February 2009) as well as discussions relating to the reforms at a number of events;
- re-launching the Workforce Strategy in June 2009 – featuring the 'professionalisation' agenda.

2.3 Overview of adult and community learning

Adult and community learning aims to meet the needs and interests of communities, including adults who are often among those most in need of opportunities for learning to improve their life chances. Learning is often delivered in community based centres outside the framework of educational institutions, such as: neighbourhood learning centres organised by community and voluntary groups; health centres; leisure centres; libraries; museums; galleries & heritage centres; Local Education Authority (LEA) adult education centres; schools, and other centres such as those run by the Workers' Educational Association (WEA)⁷.

Adult and community learning is offered by a wide range of providers, including: local authorities, external institutions, colleges, WEAs and other voluntary sector providers. From 2008-2009, adult and community learning falls under the scope of Personal and Community Development Learning (PCDL) and is funded by the Adult Safeguarded Learning (ASL) system.

Elements of adult and community learning provision – particularly non-accredited leisure learning – have been reducing every year as funding for adult education migrates to the demand-led agenda, encompassing Train to Gain, Apprenticeships and further education provision. The LSC has safeguarded the adult and community learning budget for 6 years between 2005 and 2011 at £210m annually. Recent developments and expected changes with the winding down of the LSC and the establishment of the new Skills Funding Agency (SFA) in 2010 may have an impact on provision and the workforce.⁸

2.4 Overview of the Further Education workforce reforms

In September 2007, the government introduced key changes to the training and development of the further education workforce. The reforms are part of the drive to professionalise the workforce and affect all types of providers delivering LSC-funded provision in England, with new statutory regulations for further education colleges and LSC contracting requirements for adult and community learning and work based learning providers. These reforms are part of a wider strategy and this report looks at only one element, the issues relating to teacher development for adult and community learning providers.

The specific changes include:

- new Initial Teacher Training (ITT) pathways and qualifications leading to the award of Qualified Teacher Learning and Skills (QTLS) status including specialist Skills for Life routes, and Associate Teacher Learning and Skills (ATLS) status
- a requirement for all teachers, tutors, trainers and lecturers to fulfil at least 30 hours continuing professional development (CPD) each year, with reduced amounts for part time employees

⁷ WEA is the UK's largest voluntary sector provider of adult learning, and is committed to widening participation to enable people to realise their full potential. It operates at local, regional and national levels.

⁸ Definitions supplied by The Data Service [<http://www.thedataservice.org.uk>] and Lifelong Learning UK.

- a requirement for all teachers, trainers, tutors and lecturers to be registered with the Institute for Learning (IfL), their professional body; and
- a new leadership qualification (Principals' Qualifying Programme) for all new college principals.

The Government is committed to having a fully qualified further education workforce and expects each college and provider to ensure that all their teaching and training staff achieve, or are working towards a role appropriate qualification by no later than 2010. For new Full and Associate teachers⁹, this means achieving the Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector (PTLLS) award within one year of appointment. Full Teachers must then complete the Diploma (DTLLS) within five years, and Associate Teachers must complete the Certificate (CTLLS) within five years.

2.5 Professionalising the adult and community learning workforce – themes from previous research

There is a small body of existing research which has explored the impacts and issues associated with the reforms in the context of adult and community learning.

In 2009, **Diane Saxon** reported on a case study of employee experiences within a large adult and community learning provider in Manchester. The report drew attention to the diverse nature of adult and community learning organisations, highlighting “the danger of viewing the further education and skills sector as a homogenous group of education providers”, and that an understanding of “different priorities and ways of working” needed to be established.¹⁰

The report went on to describe how teachers joined adult and community learning for altruistic reasons, such as to make a difference to the community and to help learners who are disadvantaged in some way. Some had previously taught in schools or further education colleges, while some had fallen into adult and community learning through a chance meeting or through existing contacts. As such, the reforms have presented some issues:

“In the past, teachers in further education and adult and community learning did not need a teaching qualification or even a degree; experience and expertise in their particular trade or specialism were deemed sufficient to impart skills to trainees. This is no longer the case and comments from younger staff suggested this was a barrier to entering the FE and Skills sector”¹¹ (p.9).

Despite the challenges, Saxon's report states “there is no doubt that the many changes in initial teacher training and the qualifications required for entry into the profession have produced a better qualified workforce” (p.9).¹²

⁹ ‘Teacher’ is a generic term that covers teachers, tutors, trainers, lecturers and instructors.

¹⁰ Saxon, D (2009) Experiences of staff in Adult and Community Learning: p.2.

¹¹ Ibid. p.9.

¹² Ibid. p.9.

In 2009, the **London Centre for Excellence in Teacher Training** (LONCETT) published research on access issues and training needs within adult and community learning. The report highlighted the key challenges faced in relation to the reforms, particularly as a result of a largely part time workforce. These include the ability to differentiate between the Full Teacher and Associate Teacher roles, as well as being able to commit employees to the Diploma qualification. Many tutors are described as “lacking the required breadth of experience”.¹³

The report concluded that in the new context of reformed qualifications, organisations face new challenges in developing strategies to finance and resource appropriately and that they need help if they are to respond appropriately. Given these challenges, there needs to be “an improved partnership between adult and community learning providers and teacher training providers” and that, importantly, “there is a willingness to engage in such collaboration”.¹⁴

Finally, the **National Institute of Adult Learning Education** (NIACE) produced a report for the LSC in 2008 which addressed the implementation of the QTLS reforms in the third sector. The report recommended that communication relating to the reforms needed to be clear, accurate and third sector-specific, to address confusion, concern and misunderstanding among third sector providers.

The report also recommended that new qualifications under the reforms would better suit the third sector if they were offered with a more flexible delivery option, such as a modular scheme with the possibility of credit accumulation and transfer. Linked to this, the third sector would benefit from a pre-PTLLS progression route, as well as less rigidity on the five-year limit for achieving CTLLS and DTLLS qualifications. To support these recommendations, the report commented that third sector consortia, networks and the more ‘substantial’ third sector providers should explore collaborative ways of delivering PTLLS and CPD.¹⁵

2.6 Aim of the research

The Further Education Workforce reforms place requirements not only on individual teachers, but also on Principals¹⁶ and Chief Executive Officers, HR managers and providers of initial teacher training, as well as teacher trainers and educators¹⁷. Given that the reforms cover such a broad spectrum of roles and apply right across the further education sector – it is essential to understand how successfully providers across different funding streams are managing the new demands placed upon them.

More than two years have passed since the reforms were implemented, and this research set out to give an insightful summary of the experiences and attitudes within adult and community learning to date. The research includes recommendations for Lifelong Learning

¹³ LONCETT (2009) Access issues and training needs in the adult and community sector. London: LONCETT: p. 20.

¹⁴ Ibid. pp.35-36.

¹⁵ NIACE (2008) Implementing the QTLS reforms in the Third Sector. Coventry: LSC.

¹⁶ The specific requirements of the reforms that are placed on Principals, was not explored as part of this research.

¹⁷ DfES Standards Unit (2006) Initial Teacher Training – making the reforms happen.

UK, stakeholders and providers in response to the findings and in line with the workforce strategy priority of retaining and developing the modern professionalised workforce.

3. Research methodology

Lifelong Learning UK commissioned Pye Tait Consulting to undertake this work, which consisted of two related elements. The first element was to produce a detailed database of contract holders. The second element was to carry out qualitative telephone interviews with 50-60 adult and community learning providers and 10 representative and other organisations.

The term ‘provider’ within the context of this research encompasses Colleges of further education, independent providers, local authorities and third sector providers – through which adult and community learning is offered.

A literature review was undertaken first of all to assimilate key aspects of the reforms to be explored as part of the research. Sources for the literature review consisted of guidance documents (including those tailored to adult and community learning in particular), research into the general characteristics and issues associated with adult and community learning teaching as well as research into the impact of the reforms in the third sector.

The literature review informed the development of two questionnaires for both sets of respondents; providers and stakeholder organisations.

A total of 59 interviews were completed with providers delivering adult and community learning, as well as 10 interviews with stakeholder organisations. Individual interview times ranged from 20-45 minutes in length, depending on the level of knowledge and understanding held by the respondent.

3.1 Defining the sample of providers delivering adult and community learning

This research represents phase two of a wider research project into adult and community learning. The sample of providers delivering adult and community learning was derived based on work undertaken as part of phase one.

In the first phase, Pye Tait Consulting developed a complete database of providers delivering LSC funded adult and community learning in England. The database of providers was made up of Colleges of further education, independent providers, local authorities and voluntary organisations.

This database included the following information where available publically, either within the Ofsted reports or an alternative reliable online source:

- Contact details
- Funding source
- Ofsted scores for: effectiveness of provision; capacity to improve; achievement and standards; quality of provision; leadership and management; and equality of opportunity

- Qualifications offered
- Sector subject areas
- Status held (yes or no) in respect of Beacon Award; Training Quality Standard; and Skills Pledge

The phase one database was used to develop the sample frame of providers to be interviewed as part of phase two. The criteria for selecting providers for the sample included funding source, Ofsted grades and subject delivery areas.

The provider interview questionnaire was agreed with Lifelong Learning UK and telephone interviews were undertaken with providers over a three-week period in January 2010.

To ensure that interviews gave thorough and accurate information, we spoke to individuals occupying the following roles (or their equivalents) within providers delivering adult and community learning:

- Head of Learning
- Curriculum/Quality Coordinator
- Manager

Providers were contacted across all nine regions of England, gaining an even mix of responses from each region. Providers came from across the range of adult and community learning provision, including:

- Local authority direct provider (including colleges)
- Local authority contract based provider (including colleges)
- Specialist adult education college
- Voluntary organisation
- National provider

Of the 59 providers interviewed as part of the research, 29 are local authority direct providers, ten are local authority contract based providers, nine are specialist adult education colleges, five are national providers, two are voluntary organisations and four did not answer this question.

Due to the small scale and qualitative nature of the study – no attempt has been made to weight the findings to present a representative picture of England as a whole, nor has any attempt been made to derive regional patterns.

3.2 Interviews with stakeholder organisations

Stakeholder organisations were considered integral to the research due to being able to provide collective views of providers based on (for example) membership, academic research, a remit to act as a representative voice or to act in the interests of a particular cohort of providers.

A draft database of stakeholder organisations, with named contact details, was put together by Pye Tait Consulting and a suggested sample frame was agreed (Table One).

Table One – Sample frame of stakeholder organisations

Type of respondent	Organisation	Initial Quota	Achieved
National	Local Education Authority Forum for the Education of Adults (LEAFAEA)	1	-
National	National Network of Local Adult Learning Providers (HOLEX)	1	1
National	National Institute of Adult Learning Education (NIACE)	4	1
National	Workers' Educational Association (WEA)	1	1
National	National Association for Voluntary and Community Action (NAVCA)	-	1
National	Third Sector National Learning Alliance (TNSLA)	-	1
Regional	Workers' Educational Association (WEA)	4	3
Regional	Centres for Excellence in Teacher Training (CETTs)	-	2

4. Characteristics of adult and community learning

This section presents the findings from interviews with providers delivering adult and community learning, as well as stakeholder organisations, relating particularly to the types of qualifications held by teachers and the distinguishing features of the adult and community learning teaching role. As the study was small-scale, the findings are not intended to be representative, but to provide an insight into the main characteristics.

4.1 Numbers of teaching employees

From the total number of respondents to the provider interviews, the average number of individual teachers of adult and community learning across all 59 responding organisations is presented in Table Two.

Table Two – Numbers of teachers of adult and community learning

Total respondents	59
Total no. teachers reported in responding institutions	12,557
Average no. teachers per responding institution	213

Source: Pye Tait interviews on behalf of Lifelong Learning UK

NB: Due to the small scale nature of the study, these figures are not intended to be a representative sample.

4.2 Types of qualifications held

The provider interviews asked respondents to state the approximate proportion of teachers holding legacy teaching qualifications (attainment or commencement of study prior to the reforms); new teaching qualifications (in line with the reforms); and those enrolled on training for the new teaching qualifications.

Just over half of teachers across the responding organisations hold legacy qualifications, while a quarter hold new qualifications. One fifth of teachers are currently working towards new qualifications (Table Three).

Table Three – Types of qualifications held by teachers of adult and community learning

Teachers holding legacy qualifications (#1)	5,287	55.0 per cent
Teachers holding <u>new</u> qualifications (#2)	2,381	24.8 per cent
Teachers enrolled on training for new qualifications (#3)	1,947	20.2 per cent
Total (#4)	9,615	100 per cent

Source: Pye Tait interviews on behalf of Lifelong Learning UK

(#1) 42 respondents answered this question; (#2) 44 respondents answered this question; (#3) 47 respondents answered this question

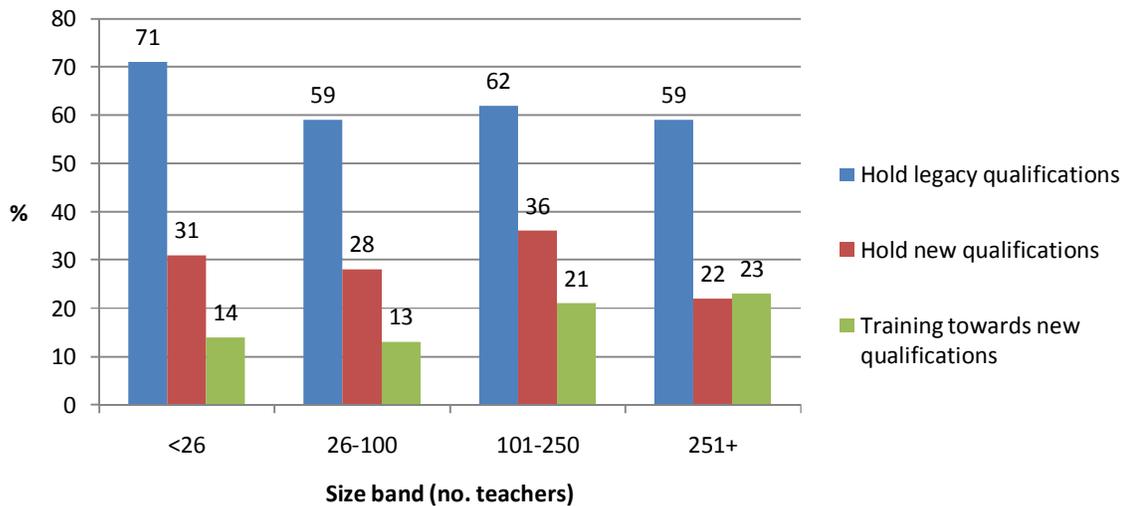
(#4) The total numbers of teachers in table three differs to the total number of teachers in table two. This is because not all organisations were able to account for all adult and community learning teachers in terms of the types of qualifications held, and there may be instances of double-counting where teachers hold (for example) legacy as well as new qualifications

NB: Due to the small scale nature of the study, these figures are not intended to be a representative sample

Based solely on the 59 respondents to the provider interviews, Figure One shows the proportion of teachers holding legacy or new qualifications, as well as training towards new qualifications – segmented by organisation size band.¹⁸

The findings indicate that while legacy qualifications dominate across all sizes of institution, larger organisations are made up of a slightly lower proportion of teachers holding legacy qualifications and a slightly higher proportion training towards new qualifications.

¹⁸ It should be noted that the base number of respondents within each size band and for each category varies from between a minimum of 8 to a maximum of 15 responses. On this basis, the data in the chart should be used only as an indicator and should not be relied upon as a representative sample.

Figure One – Types of qualifications held by teachers – by organisation size¹⁹

4.3 Distinguishing features of adult and community learning in England

“The regulations should ensure quality and that the teacher has teaching and communication abilities. Given courses are not compulsory, if people don’t like them they won’t come back, so the main focus for teaching delivery is quality. The adult and community learning sector is self-regulating in this respect”.

Stakeholder organisation

Many stakeholder organisations describe adult and community learning as not clear-cut in terms of the aims and objectives of learning. This is primarily because adult and community learning is oriented towards meeting the diverse needs of a wide range of learners, with different abilities, interests and backgrounds.

Adult and community learning is delivered within a wide range of ‘non-conventional’ settings, such as faith buildings, community centres, village halls and public houses, as well as within schools and colleges. The skills needed by the workforce to deliver in these different contexts are therefore considered to be quite different.

A number of heads of learning commented that teachers in adult and community learning require a diverse range of skills in light of having to respond to learners with varying ability levels.

¹⁹ The proportions within each size band may fall short of, or exceed, 100%. This is because not all organisations were able to confirm the qualification position of all teachers, and there may be instances of double-counting where teachers hold

“Adult and community learning involves more interpersonal attention to the learner and this often manifests in the form of mentoring, leadership and personal one to one guidance. Moreover, they deal with an increasingly diverse set of individuals, often from tough backgrounds, lacking confidence and endeavouring to re-enter education”

Human Resources Manager; Adult and community learning provider

Provision includes non-accredited work, described by one organisation as primarily ‘pastoral’, and designed to meet the needs of individual groups of learners rather than the full curriculum. Learning is often embedded within a wider programme, such as drug rehabilitation, homelessness support work, as well as helping individuals with learning difficulties, mental health or behavioural problems.

Given the embedded nature of much of the learning, adult and community learning teaching roles vary greatly depending on the objectives of the individual programme of learning and the target audience. Many teachers have extensive roles as part of a wider support programme, rather than an intensive teaching role. With this in mind, several stakeholder organisations commented that the reforms are too rigid to meet the needs of providers delivering adult and community learning.

“People come in saying they could run a course for adult groups but cannot fit into the new regulation structure very easily”

Stakeholder organisation

One stakeholder organisation commented that the embedded nature of adult and community learning is particularly prevalent in the third sector. Third sector employees often undertake work independently or in small teams, meaning they have to take on more responsibility than in a more structured, bespoke teaching environment.

“The regulations seem to be based on a professional full time teaching role. This does not reflect the third sector”

Stakeholder organisation

Adult and community learning is primarily made up of a part time workforce, many of whom work for more than one provider. One tutor may be on a limited contract and only teach for two hours per week and teachers are often mobile and deliver learning across a wide geographical area, including rural areas

“Adult and community learning staff don’t come into college on a full time basis and therefore it is harder to pin them down for training or discussions about CPD”

Quality and Curriculum Manager; Adult and community learning provider

The aims of adult and community learning teachers are often different to those of full time college teachers and lecturers. Reasons for working in adult and community learning are often varied, including supplementing a main income or retirement income, personal development or personal fulfillment through the imparting of learning to community groups. Teachers of adult and community learning value the flexibility available when it comes to organising, planning and delivering learning.

“In adult and community learning, teachers are generally pursuing a leisurely interest and are not driven by the aspiration to achieve qualifications”

Director of Curriculum; Adult and community learning provider

There appear to be three main groups of teachers within adult and community learning. The first group consists of a retired workforce, including ex-teachers, who are looking to impart their knowledge back to the community in subject areas where they have built up substantial knowledge and experience. With many in this group over the age of 50, this is the group that is most disengaged with the requirement under the reforms.

The second group includes individuals who tutor as part of portfolio work, for example artists, writers and researchers, who may only want to take on the teaching role from time to time.

The third group includes new entrants, who are looking to follow through adult and community learning as a career path. For this reason, this group is most likely to engage with the new qualifications requirements.

It is important to note that several heads of learning and stakeholder organisations commented that despite the uniqueness of adult and community learning and the challenges this creates for adapting to the reforms – high levels of professionalism and standards are of the utmost importance.

“We absolutely expect the same standards, professional adaptability and variety of personal and professional skills from all teaching staff across the board”

Head of Department for Community Learning; Adult and community learning provider

5. Aligning the Further Education workforce reforms with adult and community learning

5.1 Awareness and understanding of the Further Education workforce reforms

“Our current understanding is good. They are presented clearly and concisely but naturally require time and perseverance. The difficulty is ensuring all staff are qualified to teacher status. There are many qualifications detailed but my only criticism would be there being no clear definition of who needs what qualifications”

Assistant Principal; Adult and community learning provider

Not clear at all, it is an absolute minefield of information. It is designed much more for full time people in further education. The organisation employs about 150 tutors, most are sessional; (1 to 2 hours per week) and so it’s an administrative nightmare. The reforms did not think about community learning organisations, it is not at all tailored to us”

Assistant Principal for Community Services; Adult and community learning provider

Awareness and understanding of the reforms varies across providers that deliver adult and community learning. The majority of providers who took part in the interviews for this research understand the reforms fairly well or very well, referring to them as generally clear and coherent.

A large minority of providers are critical of the reforms, describing them as over-complex, leading to confusion as to exactly what is required. A small number of providers feel the reforms are complicated, hard to understand and lack pertinence.

Almost all providers cited specific issues and caveats where their level of understanding is concerned, and some organisations, particularly smaller providers and those in the third sector, remain confused around what aspects of the reforms are relevant to *them*. These issues associated with implementation are explored in greater detail in section 5.2.

5.1.1 Communications

Communications to providers relating to the reforms have been circulated by Lifelong Learning UK as well as a range of other agencies. A list of the main communications circulated by Lifelong Learning UK is presented in section 2.2.

A key emerging issue relating to previous communications appears to relate to lack of clarity, with insufficient guidance that is appropriately tailored to providers who deliver adult and

community learning. Although a small number of respondents feel that clarity and coherence of information has improved, there is particular criticism over information and guidance simply being produced and delivered online with no prior warning. One provider referred to misleading headline statements and another mentioned that they had heard rumours about further tweaks to the reforms.

A stakeholder organisation for third sector providers feels that there is no consistent communication strategy that is targeted to the needs of the third sector in particular. This is perceived to be because the third sector sits outside of the mainstream and is therefore excluded from financial and non-financial support, though capital or training opportunities.

“I find them very hard to understand and have to consult with other parties to interpret them”

Human Resources Manager; Adult and community learning provider

“There was some confusion initially among the three different bodies – IfL, Lifelong Learning UK and Standards Verification UK giving out conflicting information but this has improved”

Adult and Community Learning Manager; Adult and community learning provider

5.1.2 Clarity of the reforms

“It seems as though the goalposts have been moved a bit, so targets seems to have been changed. There is pressure to get everyone qualified whereas the original guidance didn’t say this. Consequently we are unsure on what the current position is and so still operate under initial guidance”.

Life Learning Manager; Adult and community learning provider

A minority of providers are confused relating to what qualifications teachers are required to hold, and how to determine exactly what previous qualifications and experience are actually worth. Several providers do not understand the extent to which the reforms apply to teachers whose native language is not English, as well as teachers who may themselves have limited literacy and numeracy skills.

Several stakeholder organisations believe that providers are generally clear about the purpose and requirements of PTLLS and DTLLS, but that CTLLS is largely “unknown”. This is put down to the challenge within adult and community learning of delineating between Full Teacher and Associate Teacher roles – given the wide variety of work undertaken, often by small teams. The same respondent commented that it would be particularly useful to identify from the IfL which parts of adult and community learning the ATLS achievers have come from.

One stakeholder organisation is of the view that many providers are misinterpreting the reforms in terms of the difference in requirements for pre-2007 and post-2007 staff. In this

sense, providers may be wholly enforcing the reforms to longer-standing employees, whereas certain requirements are not mandatory.

Finally, there is confusion among some providers regarding whether membership of the IfL is or is not mandatory. One stakeholder organisation believes that levels of engagement with the reforms are likely to be impacted by the extent to which providers are held to account. There is confusion among providers around who is enforcing the reforms and whether Ofsted assess compliance as part of the inspection process.

5.2 Implementing the Further Education workforce reforms

Generally speaking, providers are committed to meeting the requirements of the reforms within their resourcing capabilities, and have offered many examples of good practice in relation to particular areas and aspects of the reforms. These, along with corresponding issues, are explored in greater depth in section 6.

However, a number of general barriers have emerged relating to the implementation of the reforms. The demographic of the workforce is a particular barrier, along with confusion around the qualifications that should be achieved, the capabilities of providers at being able to assist teachers through the reforms, cost and time implications, as well as enforcement of the reforms.

5.3 Barriers to implementation

5.3.1 The nature of the workforce

The most significant challenge is the part time nature of the adult and community learning workforce. Many teachers offer their services on a casual basis, possibly for only 2-3 hours per week for a nominal fee, meaning that the financial and time demands placed upon them to comply with the reforms is a significant barrier to engagement. As a result, many providers are afraid that the reforms risk forcing highly experienced and valuable teachers out of adult and community learning.

“[We have] a local architect coming in to assist us and he is an industry specialist. However, it is unclear where his requirements lie under the reforms. In addition, he questions why he should qualify when he is so experienced in a professional sense. We open ourselves up to vulnerability when we are hounding people to train when they are clearly already making a hugely valuable contribution with little financial reward compared with what they earn in their main careers”

Chief Executive Officer; Adult and community learning provider

The reluctance of some teachers to train is a significant obstacle. Some providers commented that new entrants to adult and community learning, who may be looking to develop a career, may not want to make such a commitment towards qualifications at such

an early stage, which could lead to individuals leaving part way through their training and not being able to pay back the training costs to the provider.

5.3.2 Concern and confusion around the new qualifications

Some providers delivering community services remain confused about what is required of them under the reforms – wondering which aspects are applicable. There is also some dissatisfaction around the length of qualifications, the availability of qualifications, and the range of qualifications, with one provider stating that they need to be better tailored to sessional tutors.

“We are too small and our trainers are not education professionals and so they haven’t bothered to implement the reforms. The cost of training and the time taken to do it far outweighs the benefits of it”

Project Manager; Adult and community learning provider

Providers are generally committed to PTLLS, there is some resilience to CTLLS due to lack of clarity over the Associate Teacher role, yet the least amount of commitment appears to relate to DTLLS. This qualification is perceived to be long and expensive, and not relevant to the adult and community learning workforce. The level 4 and level 5 DTLLS qualifications are considered by some providers and stakeholder organisations to be way beyond the capabilities of some teachers with vocational (as opposed to academic) expertise.

“A teacher cannot build up credits towards the [DTLLS] award...DTLLS includes PTLLS, which means that there will be duplication as you cannot get recognised if you have already done PTLLS”

Stakeholder organisation

“The CTLLS qualification is designed for those that don’t do much planning, but 9 units are given for planning in this qualification. The focus should be more on assessing”

Head of Training

“The DTLLS course is very generic, where it addresses community learning is very tokenistic. It does not have much relevance to a community teacher”

Head of Skills; Adult and community learning provider

Several providers feel that the content of the new qualifications do not fully meet the needs of teachers, that they are too academically-oriented for a largely vocational area of learning, and are too rigid for the largely part time adult and community learning workforce in terms of timetabling and attendance requirements.

5.3.3 Costs

Cost is cited as a barrier in terms of the direct cost of training, as well as the cost implications of teachers not being present to deliver their courses due to the demands on their time to train.

A significant minority of providers are worried about funding cuts and the potential implications of finite and overstretched resources.

“Sessional tutors must be paid to attend meetings and no funding is provided for training, which is hampering our own development plans as a provider”

Life Learning Manager; Adult and community learning provider

Cost issues are particularly acute within the third sector.

“We are a registered charity and lack the money required to pay for unlimited training provision, so there is a huge cost implication on the business side of it”

Curriculum Director; Adult and community learning provider

5.3.4 Time

The risk of course closures to allow time for training is a particular issue where part time teachers are concerned. Training may be required at evenings and weekends, which does not always suit part time teachers. Furthermore, replacement practitioners with the specialist skills cannot always be found to provide cover when needed.

“We offer yoga, landscape painting and flower arranging. Teachers who are forced to take time out of their paid employment to train for, in their eyes, unnecessary qualifications, are at risk of being lost. Courses are scarce and this runs a risk to our future”

Learning Director of External Services; Adult and community learning provider

5.3.5 Employee assistance capabilities

Issues relating to providers' provision of assistance to teachers may not simply be due to a lack of time and resources – but that the individuals expected to deliver mentoring and assistance are not in themselves trained and qualified to do so:

“Because these sector organisations are small, they haven’t got people teacher qualified in the organisation to start with so how can they mentor people? And why should their staff then have the qualifications?”

Stakeholder organisation

5.3.6 Enforcement of the reforms

A small minority of providers are concerned about the apparent lack of enforcement of the reforms, potentially leading to a situation where providers do not feel supported in their messages, and undermining government’s commitments to the reforms.

“We are not aware of anybody being used as a sample by the IfL for reviewing what is posted by staff members in REFLECT – so there are questions over whether it is policed or not”

Principal; Adult and community learning provider

“National monitoring would be useful, and the teachers would see that it was not just the organisation pushing it...people are being told that they have to do it but nothing is really happening if they don’t”

Head of Teaching and Learning; Adult and community learning provider

5.4 Distinguishing between Full Teacher and Associate Teacher roles

Distinguishing between Full Teacher and Associate Teacher status, along with understanding whether the CTLLS qualification is an appropriate route over DTLLS, is a major challenge experienced by providers delivering adult and community learning.

Many providers are baffled around which route should be followed. This is largely borne out of the fact that teaching may only be a small part of a wider support role, yet with a full and wide range of responsibilities, including planning and developing a programme/programmes of learning.

“I see no function for the Associate Teacher role as defined by the regulations. It is ill-founded – defining a role that does not exist...Everyone in the adult and community learning workforce has responsibility for programme design”

Stakeholder organisation

“It is very concerning to see the vague description of the Associate Teacher. It is not described in adequate detail. This has caused some management problems for the learning and development facilitator”

Head of Learning Development; Adult and community learning provider

“The organisation relies on its tutors to plan, but they only run tasters so it is unclear whether they are Full Teachers or not ‘by the book’

Life Learning Manager; Adult and community learning provider

Those providers who have made the distinction show that a variety of different approaches and justifications are being used across adult and community learning. The most common reasons are presented below as direct quotations:

“We have the same professional expectations from all teaching staff. I cannot define differences in their professional approach, qualification portfolio or personalities”

Head of Department for Community Learning; Adult and community learning provider

“Teachers are responsible for the running and provision of the programme. Associate Teachers support this process in a subsidiary capacity”

Director of Curriculum; Adult and community learning provider

“Quite easy – the organisation employs a lot of sessional tutors and it is defined in their contracts – no real issues”

Head of Adult Education; Adult and community learning provider

“Because people’s roles change so quickly, people are expected to step in when needed, so everyone is a Full Teacher. The organisation decided that everyone responsible for learners must have the full teaching qualification”

Staff Development Manager; Adult and community learning provider

“We tend to be over cautious by making people Full Teachers when sometimes they’re not”

Head of Learning; Adult and community learning provider

A number of stakeholder organisations commented that the adult and community learning workforce are not clear on the definitions between Full and Associate Teachers, and do not understand the implications. One stakeholder organisation commented that further education colleges and awarding bodies have a vested interest in encouraging teachers to pursue the full qualifications and that this may be an influencing factor.

Another stakeholder organisation feels that the qualifications are too “heavy handed” for the Associate Teacher role as it is currently defined by the reforms.

5.5 Recognition for existing teaching skills and legacy qualifications

Almost all providers are strongly of the view that teachers must either work towards the new qualifications or gain recognition for legacy qualifications. In fact, only a small minority of providers actually report problems with the process of ‘gaining recognition.’

Several stakeholder organisations are concerned that the aspect of the reforms to do with gaining recognition may be lower down an provider’s priority list – with the majority likely to be focussing on the training and qualifications needs of entrants post-September 2007.

In their answers to this question, most providers focussed on the process they are following for managing teachers’ attainment of *new* qualifications, indicating that providers are, perhaps, more engaged with this aspect of the reforms.

“With existing staff it’s a case of keep on encouraging them to [get the new qualifications], but you have to be realistic, don’t encourage a teacher who evidently doesn’t need to do so”

Staff Development Manager; Adult and community learning provider

“Pay enhancements – the better the qualifications the better pay the teachers will receive. Most of them enjoy taking the new qualifications so it is fine”

Centre Manager; Adult and community learning provider

A number of stakeholder organisations commented that teachers of adult and community learning are likely to hold a wide range of highly specialised qualifications which, although highly valuable to adult and community learning – are not recognised under the new reforms.

Providers’ concerns primarily relate to language qualifications. Several providers commented that they employ the services of overseas teachers (such as foreign language teachers), and that difficulties are experienced gaining recognition for foreign (EU-based) qualifications. It was felt that the reforms and associated guidance materials could be much clearer in this respect.

A similar issue exists in relation to recognition for highly specialised qualifications or for experience and expertise. This is particularly relevant to adult and community learning, where a great deal of the learning is vocationally oriented and delivered by teachers who may be highly experienced but lacking in formal qualifications.

“A tutor may have a Yoga qualification that enables them to teach Yoga, for example, but this won’t be recognised in the new system”

Principal; Adult and community learning provider

“It is very difficult to get formal recognition for experience – especially in recreational classes such as flower arranging”

Assistant Principal for Community Services; Adult and community learning provider

Only two responding providers stated specifically that they have found it difficult to interpret the database of accepted qualifications.

6. Impact of Further Education workforce reforms issues within adult and community learning

6.1 Developing HR strategies

The majority of providers interviewed for this research have a human resource strategy in place, in some cases being formal and extensive and in other cases less so.

6.1.1 Best Practices – HR initiatives for implementing the reforms

Providers cited a range of HR initiatives used to help with the implementation of the reforms. The main responses are listed below.

- ✓ *Human resource managers work closely with staff to ensure they understand the reforms and their individual training requirements*
- ✓ *Annual appraisals which are reviewed every six months and used to evaluate the career priorities of each member of teaching staff*
- ✓ *HR strategy is defined using IfL guidance and, particularly, the 'REfLECT' system*
- ✓ *Seminars are held to encourage staff to adhere to CPD requirements*
- ✓ *Contact classes are used to monitor CPD and staff with training*
- ✓ *Annual training week encompassing first aid, mentoring, leadership and 'inspire' courses*
- ✓ *Individual development facilitators provide internal guidance on HR and CPD*
- ✓ *A succession plan takes staff from being new teachers to becoming leaders of the college if they so desire*
- ✓ *The individual career priorities of staff are discussed at their initial interview*
- ✓ *The college's operational plan is focussed around the requirements of CPD*
- ✓ *Employees are sent to a local further education establishment for training*
- ✓ *Feedback is obtained from the community and from learners*
- ✓ *The ISO9001 training matrix is used*

6.1.2 Challenges to implementing HR initiatives

Some providers highlighted challenges to, or reasons for not delivering, a human resource strategy. These are listed below.

- *No forward plan in place due to budgets*
- *Small organisations are used as stepping stones so spending a stretched budget on teacher training for staff who are likely to leave would not be cost effective*
- *Staff approaching retirement are reluctant to train*
- *The strategy in place is not substantial due to the large proportion of part time staff who come and go for three months at a time*
- *There are issues concerning whether you pay employees to attend or not – particularly if they are sessional staff and training is compulsory – which could be very expensive*
- *Training needs of the adult and community learning workforce tend to be job-specific rather than career-oriented*
- *Establishing the career priorities of staff is not required as the teaching staff are externally contracted*

Smaller providers tend to be less likely to have a human resources strategy in place, for one or more of the reasons encompassed above. Within adult and community learning particularly, providers may link in with the local authority's own strategy which is not specifically oriented towards teachers.

Another challenge raised by stakeholder organisations is how to manage employees who work for more than one provider, which is often the case within adult and community learning.

In the third sector in particular, there is a desire to home-grow teachers. Volunteers are recruited, trained up and then integrated into the workforce. In the third sector is important to encourage empathy with learners and committing to the values of the organisation.

6.2 Requirement to join the Institute for Learning (IfL)

The majority of providers enforce membership of the IfL and there appears to be a balance of 'carrot and stick'. Several providers state that they have made IfL membership a condition of contract and, with that in mind, the implications of being registered have become a major area of focus.

6.2.1 Best Practices – Securing and monitoring membership of the Institute for Learning

Many providers responding to the research provided examples of approaches taken to securing and monitoring membership. These are listed below.

- ✓ *Staff can expect to have their registration numbers and use of the REfLECT system checked at appraisal*
- ✓ *Staff are sent emails and electronic reminders about joining the IfL*
- ✓ *The organisation has offered encouragement and information relating to the benefits of membership*
- ✓ *Time and money is set aside for annual records to be kept, and the REfLECT database monitored by system experts*
- ✓ *Senior staff have helped with the registration process*
- ✓ *The organisation has taken responsibility for the registration process, on behalf of teachers*
- ✓ *The organisation will meet the costs if needs be*
- ✓ *The organisation has used the IfL to assist on staff training days*

Resilience is experienced to IfL membership, primarily where teachers do not understand the benefits of joining. The potential impact of this among what appears to be a small number of providers, is that membership is not enforced. In that sense, these providers are happy to leave the decision to the individual teacher.

“You can tell them to do it but essentially it is up to them”

Community Training Centre Manager; Adult and community learning provider

“Some staff have thought, ‘I’m a jewellery maker, I don’t need to do this’ – so unless something comes up where salaries are stopped unless they sign up, then they cannot be made to”

Head of Teaching and Learning; Adult and community learning provider

A minority of providers are uncertain whether membership of the IfL is mandatory, with several stakeholder organisations expressing concern that this is likely to be the case. One provider stated that they had not heard of the IfL.

A serious concern has been raised by a number of stakeholder organisations about the potential implications of IfL membership no longer being subsidised for members. There is concern that many teachers join the IfL simply because it is a requirement under the reforms, and that if teachers have to pay to become members then there is a risk that the numbers of

teachers working in adult and community learning will simply ‘drop off’. The main reason for this is that a large proportion of the workforce is made up of part time, retired, or volunteer staff, who are not seeking to enhance their careers in teaching.

“If members have to pay, we will lose a huge raft of very able tutors”

Stakeholder organisation

According to several stakeholder organisations, the lack of clarity over the benefits of IfL membership is exacerbated by a legacy of poor experiences among organisations trying to assist teachers through the IfL registration process. Reference was made to confusing information and technical glitches which have improved since the reforms came into force.

6.3 Engagement with Continuing Professional Development (CPD) requirements

“Teachers definitely appreciate having a recognisable CPD offer, however finding their way to a base because of travel is difficult for sessional tutors. We do offer some bursaries to help this process”

Stakeholder organisation

The vast majority of providers report that teachers have engaged well with CPD requirements. A handful of providers were keen to stress that they actively ensure that CPD exceeds the minimum requirement of 30 hours – in some cases up to 50 hours.

According to one stakeholder organisation, many providers welcome the power they now have to enforce crucial training and development whereas prior to the reforms they may have felt unable to.

“The staff like up-skilling themselves – apart from having to write it all down. They are encouraged through reminders, regular training, regular team meetings, and it is brought up in management meetings to make sure all staff keep up to date.”

Chief Executive; Adult and community learning provider

6.3.1 Management of CPD

There are variations among individual institutions as to how CPD is monitored and followed up. Most providers are keen to ensure that teachers take responsibility for their own CPD, but they will assist with this process by delivering training sessions on the CPD requirements, issuing reminders to employees to ensure they complete their CPD records, and make use of six monthly or annual performance reviews to check what progress has been made.

In some cases as part of the management process, employees are given a personal development plan to encourage them to keep individual records. Some organisations keep central records of CPD activity that employees undertake, but this is not always the case.

Some providers commented that members of the workforce in the final years of their career find it more difficult to engage with CPD, particularly those with substantial previous experience either in industry or in the teaching profession. The main reason is that teachers in this cohort do not feel that CPD is necessary or that it applies to them. More commonly however, they may be undertaking CPD but simply not recording it.

Only a small minority of providers believe that teachers complete CPD because it is simply a requirement for them to do so, although this is a greater concern among stakeholder organisations.

6.3.2 Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

The vast majority of providers feel that CPD should develop skills in relation to new technology. ICT is perceived by a wide cross-section of providers to be vital, not least because technology is now the norm in everyday life. In addition, ICT skills will make the CPD recording process itself much easier and encourage teachers to engage with, and be more confident using, flexible e-learning systems.

Stakeholder organisations generally agree that technology is vitally important as part of CPD. One organisation highlighted that fear among older teachers in particular, may result in providers spending time providing additional assistance, in turn leading to the risk that CPD is perceived as another ‘managerial burden.’

One stakeholder organisation described how teachers can use technology in innovative ways as part of their programmes of adult and community learning, which will in turn assist CPD. These might include preparing podcasts of local historic areas of a city as an audio guide, or making a video of ballroom dancing in order to provide feedback to learners on how well they are doing.

The majority of providers use the IfL’s REfLECT system and many offer an alternative electronic or paper-based system. Some providers reported difficulties using the system and described it as non-user friendly and complex; others felt comfortable with the process. Only a minority of providers make the REfLECT system mandatory, whereas the majority provide an optional alternative. Not all providers are aware what system the individual employee uses to record their CPD.

“Many have found [REfLECT] clumsy and difficult to use”

Post-19 Adult and Higher Education Programme manager; adult and community learning provider

“REfLECT is time-consuming and complicated”

Head of Projects and Participation; Adult and community learning provider

A small minority of providers commented that ICT is not always necessary depending on the programme of learning, and that it should be encouraged where it is most appropriate. A stakeholder organisation for the third sector stated that CPD relating to ICT is less of an

issue where their sector is concerned – given that many learners, particularly those with learning difficulties, tend to have a lower starting point themselves.

6.3.3 Skills gaps

Providers and stakeholder organisations highlighted a number of skills gaps where CPD can act an important development tool.

Skills Gaps

- *ICT, literacy and numeracy*
- *Adapting teaching skills for learners of different abilities*
- *Up to date vocational knowledge*
- *Social work*
- *Keeping teachers inspired*
- *Helping teachers to be creative and inspirational – especially as the reforms themselves are “quite draining”*

6.4 Accessing information, advice and guidance relating to the reforms

This section is divided into two parts. Firstly, a number of best practices are presented relating to how providers access non-financial support in relation to the reforms. These are followed by a breakdown of specific areas of additional support required by providers.

6.4.1 Best Practices – accessing information, advice and guidance

Providers have made use of various sources of guidance to enable them to get to grips with the reforms – in particular the process of professional formation.

A small number of providers made reference to using Lifelong Learning UK’s helpline and literature, although one provider commented that they find the literature to be too long-winded. Several providers are members of local provider networks which are used to assist with training and to share resources, and several mentioned being members of CETTS – which enables better sharing of information and the delivery of training sessions. In some cases, providers have sought advice from sixth form colleges and the Association of Colleges (AoC).

Internal workshops and training sessions related to various aspects of the reforms have been run independently by providers, with some providers making use of IfL regional advisers.

Many providers said that they make use of programmes delivered by the Learning and Skills Improvement Service (LSIS).

“We have used Lifelong Learning UK, Standards Verification UK, IfL, peer review partners, adult and community learning organisations, further education colleges, local universities and Student Finance England”

Adult and Community Learning Manager; Adult and community learning provider

Many providers feel that they have had sufficient assistance and that they are finally starting to get to grips with the reforms. Many others would like additional assistance across a number of areas, with additional funding for training and resources considered the most important objective.

A small number of providers referenced funding sources that have helped in relation to the reforms. These include the Learning and Skills Council, a Local Education Authority, the European Social Fund, Skills for Life funding, and bursaries. One provider commented that funded just “turned up” whereas many others are self-supporting and, as such, lack of funding is a real area of concern.

“If we can’t guarantee funding, we can’t pass this on to staff – this will affect how and if they train, and if they keep up with CPD”

Support Services Manager; Adult and community learning provider

The following list covers the areas of additional assistance needed by providers that are directly related to the reforms. In most cases, providers stated one particular area they identified as most important to them. These are listed below.

6.4.2 Additional assistance required

- General reforms training, including “getting to grips with the reforms” and, in the case of one provider – “everything”
- Professional formation, including which qualifications are most appropriate for which types of roles – “should assessors be doing CTLLS?”
- Clarification on the requirements of pre-2001 staff under the reforms
- What to do if teachers fail their qualification
- Endorsement and re-endorsement issues (the provider felt the link between providers and Lifelong Learning UK had been lost in this respect)
- Help with general jargon and articulation of literature that is time-consuming and confusing
- Information, presentation or workshops relating to the IfL’s REfLECT system for CPD

- A clearer definition of the 'Associate Teacher' – “it needs to fit the definition of the sessional tutor – not the sessional tutor must adapt to fit the new definition”
- Clarification on what can and cannot be recorded as CPD
- Better national policing of the reforms and a list of who has and who has not completed and submitted the necessary CPD requirements within their organisation
- Understanding the requirements and legislation within the context that community programmes operate
- How to manage time effectively – both in terms of managing the reforms process in-house, as well as how part time and sessional teachers can meet their qualifications and CPD requirements
- How to avoid losing staff from adult and community learning who do not see the cost and time benefits of complying with the reforms
- Linked to CPD - Developing the skills of teachers so that they can be focussed towards the labour market as well as hobbyists
- Linked to CPD – Guidance for protecting vulnerable people

“If there is more national publicity and it is taken out of the hands of organisations, then it might generate interest and so more [teachers] will get involved. Some specialists think that they are doing the organisation a favour and so think ‘why should I do all this when I’m helping them out’?”

Head of Teaching and Learning; Adult and community learning provider

7. Conclusions and recommendations

7.1 Conclusions

7.1.1 Overall progress on the Further Education workforce reforms

- 1 Based on this non-representative small scale study, it appears doubtful that all teachers of adult and community learning will be qualified in line with the requirements of the reforms by the end of 2010. This conclusion is based on the following factors:
 - while just under half of teachers either hold or are working towards the new qualifications – providers responding to the research are only able to report the current qualifications status of three quarters of their workforce (Tables Two and Three);
 - a fifth of the workforce is still reported as training towards new qualifications;
 - over half of the workforce hold legacy qualifications with some current issues concerning recognition for legacy qualifications and the appropriate direction providers should take regarding the new qualifications, and;
 - various barriers to implementation (see section 7.1.2);
- 2 the Further Education workforce reforms have been launched in a ‘one size fits all’ manner, with little or no flexibility available to tailor the requirements in line with the composition of teachers within organisations that deliver adult and community learning;
- 3 most organisations have an HR strategy in place, although the extent to which this exists as a formalised plan varies among institutions; some providers will be part of the local authority’s HR strategy, which is not geared specifically towards teachers;
- 4 providers and stakeholder organisations are concerned that the reforms are not being effectively enforced.

7.1.2 Barriers to implementation

- 5 The majority of providers are actively seeking to comply with the reforms but are finding it very difficult to do so in light of the characteristics of the adult and community learning workforce – i.e. many teachers are part time, retired and not seeking to further their careers;
- 6 adult and community learning is at risk of losing a significant proportion of its valued and experienced workforce due a general reluctance to buy-in to the reforms among part-time or semi-retired teachers – especially those with many years’ teaching experience;

- 7 there are issues gaining recognition for existing qualifications and experience – particularly in relation to language qualifications and among teachers from overseas; similarly a lot of adult and community learning courses are highly specialised and vocational, and getting recognition for skills is a challenge;
- 8 further barriers to implementation include the costs and time associated with training delivery.

7.1.3 Communications

- 9 There is still a significant amount of confusion concerning the different types of new qualifications, and to whom they apply. Similarly many teachers and organisations are uncertain about how to distinguish between Full and Associate Teacher roles;
- 10 to date, communications concerning the reforms have not effectively reached all providers, and have not provided clear guidance and examples of ways in which organisations should be implementing them. The third sector in particular feels as though it does not have sufficiently well tailored assistance and guidance.

7.1.4 Developing the skills of the workforce

- 11 Providers delivering adult and community learning are, on the whole, firmly committed to the development of ICT skills among teaching staff. ICT, numeracy and literacy are cited as particular skills gaps;
- 12 teachers have typically engaged well with the requirement to register with the IfL and the new CPD requirements, although providers find it challenging keeping track of the submission of CPD records, particularly in the case of sessional tutors (teaching only a few hours per week), as well as teachers who work for more than one organisation.

7.2 Recommendations

Recommendations have been developed with a view to ensuring that Lifelong Learning UK will be able to engage more effectively and productively with adult and community learning. *However it is emphasised here that it is not the responsibility of Lifelong Learning UK to ensure that the reforms are implemented.*

Recommendation & Rationale	
<i>Recommendations for Lifelong Learning UK</i>	
1	<p><i>Recommendation:</i></p> <p>Lifelong Learning UK should review and, where feasible, incorporate an element of flexibility within the reforms. Another option would be to introduce bespoke units of qualifications that are better suited to meet the needs of teachers delivering adult and community learning</p> <p>As part of this review, Lifelong Learning UK should take into account the appropriateness of the new qualifications requirements (PTLLS/DTLLS/CTLLS) to adult and community learning teachers.</p> <p><i>Rationale:</i></p> <p>A large proportion of providers and stakeholder organisations are concerned that the reforms are currently not flexible enough to suit the size and composition of the adult and community learning workforce.</p> <p>There is a risk that some adult and community teachers with valuable knowledge, skills and experience will no longer wish to continue in their roles, because the benefits they will gain from the new qualifications are not necessarily worth the amount of investment required. (See section 5.3)</p> <p><i>Priority: High</i></p>
2	<p><i>Recommendation:</i></p> <p>Lifelong Learning UK should develop a toolkit that is specifically tailored to the requirements of the reforms, from the perspective of providers and teachers working within adult and community learning.</p> <p>The toolkit should help enable providers and teachers to implement the reforms appropriately, by giving guidance as outlined below, taking into account the characteristics of adult and community learning.</p> <p>The toolkit should include clear and accessible²⁰ information that includes case studies and examples of ways in which organisations have implemented changes to enable them to fulfil the requirements of the reforms.</p> <p>The case studies should cover a broad regional base and should relate to a variety of organisations by size, from small to large.</p> <p>The case studies should include examples of overcoming barriers to engagement – notably time, costs and reluctance on the part of teachers.</p> <p>The toolkit should build on previous guidance materials published by Lifelong Learning UK and focus on steps to implementation. Communications relating to the</p>

²⁰ By 'clear and accessible' we are referring to documentation that is concise and to the point and avoids the use of jargon

Recommendation & Rationale	
	<p>reforms have been circulated by Lifelong Learning UK as well as other agencies (see <i>section 2.2</i>).</p> <p>Rationale: There are a number of organisations that do not believe they have sufficient practical guidance to help them take appropriate action, within the unique environment of adult and community learning (see <i>section 5.1</i>).</p> <p>Smaller organisations as well as those in the third sector are struggling to understand how to make the reforms apply to them (see <i>section 4.3</i>).</p> <p>Priority: High</p>
3	<p>Recommendation: Lifelong Learning UK should maintain a regularly updated contact database of adult and community learning organisations, to ensure that information is tailored to their needs and that it reaches <i>all</i> relevant organisations at the same time.</p> <p>Rationale: Adult and community learning comprises organisations operating in a wide range of settings, and across the public, private and third sectors (see <i>section 4.3</i>).</p> <p>Priority: High</p>
4	<p>Recommendation: Lifelong Learning UK should revise information for distribution to providers, so that it details the practical steps for gaining recognition for existing qualifications and experience, particularly where qualifications and skills may be in a very specific area (such as yoga).</p> <p>The most appropriate format for revised information might be via an interactive online tool where information relating to previous qualifications and experience can be keyed in, to determine what further qualifications are required.</p> <p>Rationale: It is apparent that some organisations are still uncertain about the process for gaining recognition, especially for legacy qualifications (see <i>section 5.4</i>).</p> <p>Priority: Medium</p>

Recommendation & Rationale	
<i>Recommendations for Lifelong Learning UK in conjunction with partners/stakeholders or to flag up to partners/stakeholders</i>	
5	<p>Recommendation:</p> <p>Lifelong Learning UK should – ideally working with provider networks and Centres for Excellence in Teacher Training (CETTs) – to hold information briefing events at a range of locations across the nine regions in England. The purpose is to promote the reforms and give guidance on how to embed them.</p> <p>These events should be specifically targeted at smaller adult and community learning organisations, and locations for the events selected so that they are accessible for these organisations.</p> <p>Rationale:</p> <p>It will be necessary to ensure that all adult and community learning organisations are committed to embedding the necessary changes.</p> <p>Smaller organisations and the third sector in particular require more help as they typically operate with smaller teams and have limited budgets in comparison with larger adult and community learning organisations (<i>see section 4.3</i>).</p> <p style="background-color: #ff8a65;">Priority: High</p>
6	<p>Recommendation:</p> <p>Lifelong Learning UK should actively promote Continuing Professional Development (CPD) activities that offer development in new technology and e-learning.</p> <p>Rationale:</p> <p>Respondents identify skills gaps in technology, literacy & numeracy (<i>see section 6.3</i>).</p> <p>Meeting this need will help meet the FE Sector Workforce Strategy priority of retaining and developing a modern, professionalised workforce.</p> <p><i>It is acknowledged that this recommendation may be out of scope for Lifelong Learning UK to fulfil independently. Where this is the case, the recommendation should be worked on with the most appropriate organisation.</i></p> <p style="background-color: #ff8a65;">Priority: High</p>

Recommendation & Rationale	
7	<p>Recommendation:</p> <p>Clear information should be developed and distributed concerning logging of CPD activities, and specifically in the correct use of REFLECT.</p> <p>This may be via an interactive online tutorial and/or via literature.</p> <p><i>It is acknowledged that this recommendation may be out of scope for Lifelong Learning UK to fulfil independently. Where this is the case, the recommendation should be worked on with the most appropriate organisation.</i></p> <p>Rationale:</p> <p>A number of respondents note that teachers can find the online tool REFLECT ‘clumsy and difficult’ as well as ‘time-consuming and complicated’ (see section 6.3).</p> <p>Priority: Medium</p>
8	<p>Recommendation:</p> <p>It is recommended that the Institute for Learning (IfL) develops clear and accessible information for navigating their website²¹.</p> <p><i>It is acknowledged that this recommendation is out of scope for Lifelong Learning UK to fulfil independently. Where this is the case, the recommendation should be worked on with the most appropriate organisation.</i></p> <p>Rationale:</p> <p>A small number of respondents suggest that it can be difficult to find their way around the IfL website, however this does not appear to be a major barrier (see section 6.2).</p> <p>Priority: Low</p>

²¹ This may be via an interactive online tutorial and/or via a visual step-by-step guide.

Recommendation & Rationale	
<i>Recommendations for providers</i> ²²	
9	<p><i>Recommendation:</i></p> <p>Providers should ensure that systems and resources are deployed effectively, to communicate to teachers their requirements under the reforms (such as CPD, qualifications requirements and membership of the IfL).</p> <p><i>Rationale:</i></p> <p>The extent, to which HR initiatives are used to assist with the implementation of the reforms, varies across providers (<i>see sections 6.1, 6.2 and 6.3</i>).</p> <p><i>Priority: High</i></p>
10	<p><i>Recommendation:</i></p> <p>Providers should make use of available local networks (such as provider networks) to discuss the reforms, seek information and advice relating to areas of uncertainty, and benefit from the sharing of best practice²³.</p> <p><i>Rationale:</i></p> <p>Some providers are making use of available networks and these have helped with knowledge and understanding in relation to the reforms (<i>see section 6.4</i>).</p> <p><i>Priority: Medium</i></p>
11	<p><i>Recommendation:</i></p> <p>Providers should refer to national guidance organisations such as Lifelong Learning UK and the Learning and Skills Improvement Service in order to keep abreast of information, advice and non-financial support that is available in relation to the reforms.</p> <p><i>Rationale:</i></p> <p>Some providers are making use of non-financial support services and these have helped with knowledge and understanding in relation to the reforms (<i>see section 6.4</i>).</p> <p><i>Priority: Medium</i></p>

²² Lifelong Learning UK will need to proactively communicate recommendations 9-11 to providers who deliver adult and community learning

²³ This recommendation links in with recommendations 2 and 5.