



Quality
Improvement
Agency

Skills for Life Improvement Programme



**Improving Learner Success by Embedding
Literacy, Language and Numeracy**

Acknowledgements

We wish to thank all organisations and individuals involved in the Skills for Life Improvement Programme 2006/07 for their valuable contribution to the development of this booklet, and would like to acknowledge the assistance of the learners, teachers and managers from the following centres and groups:

Blackpool and the Fylde College; B-Skill Ltd; BTCV Enterprises Ltd; HMP Durham; HMP Haverigg; HMP Leeds; HMP YO1 Lancaster Farms; Lifeskills Solutions; Loughborough College; Northampton College; North West Community Services; Pennine Camphill Community College; Ridgmond Training; Scientiam Ltd; Shipley College; Springfield Education and Training; Stoke on Trent College; Trinity Community Partnership; West Thames College; YMCA Training, Cambridge.

Our thanks also go to the Whole Organisation Approaches for Delivering Skills for Life project, for allowing us to draw on Stoke on Trent College's case study, 'Setting up an embedded programme: establishing firm foundations for success'.

To download this publication and for more information on issues discussed, please visit the Skills for Life Improvement Programme website: www.sflip.org.uk.

Published by the Quality Improvement Agency

www.qia.org.uk

Registered with the Charity Commissioners

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Foreword

Whatever type of education or training you offer, the drive for excellence has to be at the core of your operation.

Andrew Thomson, Chief Executive, Quality Improvement Agency

This publication is one of a series of four that aim to capture some of the experiences, learning and key messages of providers involved in the QIA Skills for Life Improvement Programme between 2006 and 2007. Over 800 providers have participated in different elements of the programme. Those involved come from a range of settings and have varied starting points. However, there is a shared commitment to improving the quality of their provision, thereby improving the learning experience for all learners and contributing to their greater achievement and success.

The role of the QIA, through activities such as the Skills for Life Improvement Programme, is to accelerate the capacity of the learning and skills sector to pursue excellence through self-improvement; better teaching, better learning and greater success for learners are at the heart of this. Our aim is to spark fresh enthusiasm for innovation and excellence, wherever learning is taking place and to challenge those of you involved in teaching, learning and training to lift your performance and implement the government's reforms for learning and skills.

Much has been achieved since the launch of Skills for Life in 2001: 4.7 million learners have taken up 10.5 million Skills for Life learning opportunities, with more than 1.75 million people gaining a first Skills for Life qualification – for many the first they have ever held. However, much still remains to be done; Skills for Life continues to be a key government priority that can make a major contribution to economic prosperity, social justice and community cohesion.

Ambitious targets to be achieved by 2020 were confirmed in the government's response to Lord Leitch's review, *World Class Skills: Implementing the Leitch Review of Skills in England*, published in late 2007. These were:

- 95 per cent of adults to have functional literacy and numeracy skills
- more than 90 per cent of adults to be qualified to at least Level 2
- 1.9 million more people achieving Level 3
- 40 per cent of adults to be qualified at Level 4 and above.

Acquiring and improving Skills for Life makes a real difference to the lives of learners. We know that more people need to have the opportunity to play their part in contributing to economic prosperity and social justice. The power to change things for the better lies in your hands. We aim to support you in creating a better learning and skills sector for learners, employers, communities, society and the economy; we trust that the experiences of providers and the learning encapsulated within these publications will help you in achieving your goals.

Jenny Burnette
Director, Strategic Reform and Development

Introduction



This booklet is about the practice of embedding literacy, language and numeracy skills into vocational or other subjects. It will be of interest to all educators, not simply those with a remit for developing these skills. It offers practical examples of embedding that draw on the work undertaken by the Quality Improvement Agency's Skills for Life Improvement Programme in 2006/07.

Research by the National Research and Development Centre (NRDC, 2006) provides compelling evidence of the success achieved by embedding literacy, language and numeracy into other areas of study and the Improvement Programme used this research as a basis for supported development with a wide range of organisations across the post-16 education sector.

Some providers developing embedded programmes were using key skills and others were using the Skills for Life curricula; many had a strategic approach encompassing both. This booklet covers both Skills for Life and key skills and uses the overarching term literacy, language and numeracy (LLN) skills.

Effective LLN skills are the gateways to finding employment and having the confidence to take up career development opportunities, as well as being essential in managing personal and community responsibilities. However, many people do not readily engage in literacy and numeracy programmes, preferring instead to sign up to clear vocational pathways which will lead to a job. Adult learners can be reticent about returning to study maths and English even if they are aware that their skills need brushing up. Equally, some young learners have not embraced key skills.

So the challenge is how to teach the vocational and Skills for Life knowledge and skills together, in a way that captures the learner's interest.

Over 200 organisations took part in the Improvement Programme's embedding projects. This booklet sets out to share the experiences of some of those organisations and provides early guidance for others who may wish to adopt an embedded approach.

This booklet is one of a series of four that aim to capture the experiences of the Quality Improvement Agency's Skills for Life Improvement Programme (SfLIP) 2006/07.

The other titles in the series are:

- *Improving Quality through a Whole Organisation Approach to Skills for Life*
- *Working in Partnership for Quality Improvement in Skills for Life*
- *Professional Development Planning for Building Staff Teams*



Key considerations for successful embedding

This diagram shows the key themes that need to be considered when setting out to embed LLN skills across an organisation. It also provides an overview of the sections of the booklet. It may not be necessary to read all sections consecutively but rather to choose those that are most relevant.



Getting started

For providers new to embedding, getting started can be a challenging task, especially when resources may be limited or where the practice of delivering literacy, language and numeracy separately is well established. Providers across the Skills for Life Improvement Programme projects used a range of approaches depending on the needs of their organisation and where staff could see a lever to bring about change. This section offers a variety of successful approaches that may support developments in other organisations and looks at:

- Taking the lead
- Building a business case
- Auditing current provision and action planning.

Taking the lead

Organisations bring about sustainable and lasting change when there is a whole organisation approach to the initiative or task in hand. This happens where change is led from the top and supported by effective strategic planning. This point was highlighted by many providers on the Improvement Programme, and in some cases senior staff were highly committed and took a strategic lead in innovation to embed. For other organisations innovative practice in embedding has been initiated by one person, or sometimes by a few committed staff at different levels within the organisation. Clearly, these staff have a key role in taking this work forward. However, for any embedded practice to be sustained and transferred across the organisation, it is essential to draw on the support of a range of staff, for example managers with responsibility for curriculum, quality assurance and staff development, who will have the authority to implement the necessary changes.

Putting together an influential team

One successful approach used by several providers on the Improvement Programme was to identify allies and senior managers with a responsibility for teaching and learning or quality, and bring them together in a formal structure, such as a steering group. This proved to be the first step to gaining the resources to sustain an embedded approach. Such a group can devise a strategic approach to embedding by drafting policies determining improvement actions, establishing milestones and monitoring progress.

Who are the key people in your organisation who could help develop an embedded approach to LLN skills development?



At **Blackpool and the Fylde College** a steering committee was established, chaired by the Vice Principal for Curriculum and Standards. This signalled the status of the work to all staff, especially to those less committed to delivering an embedded approach. The Principal also gave a clear steer through actions, such as sending a copy of the NRDC research document on embedding to all staff, in this way highlighting its importance.

Putting embedding on everyone's agenda

At the same time, it is also important to raise the profile of embedding literacy, language and numeracy with staff who will be affected by the changes. In order to explain the purpose, value and process of embedding LLN, awareness raising and training at all levels are essential and need to stay high on the agenda, with activity tailored to suit different needs. Formal training sessions proved an effective approach to reaching larger numbers of people, but informal one-to-one meetings with individual managers, where discussions were centred on specific action within curriculum areas, were also found valuable in shaping attitudes and changing priorities.



When **Pennine Camphill Community College**, a residential independent specialist college, set out to arrange some Skills for Life awareness training to support embedding in vocational areas, it was decided to include all staff. The training event was attended by vocational staff, volunteers, learning support staff and even the Principal and Vice Principal. By bringing together participants from such different areas of the college, staff were able to identify other opportunities for integrating literacy, language and numeracy in the learners' programmes, as well as in the residential aspect of life at Camphill. Staff also began to take ownership of Skills for Life through the realisation of the part they could play to help learners with their literacy and numeracy development.

Building a business case

Where there is not yet a strong commitment to improving literacy, language and numeracy, the challenge is how to persuade staff at any level, including managers, to recognise the value and importance of an embedded approach. All organisations work within financial constraints and demonstrating how improved success rates can contribute to the organisation's financial health is a powerful incentive. Using the information that is regularly collected in organisations can help to build the business case, as can the findings from an external evaluation.

What reports and information from your MIS system could you use to help build the case for embedding?



Using management information

A successful strategy used by several providers on the Improvement Programme has been to demonstrate the need for change by analysing hard evidence such as retention and achievement data and as in the example below, data on learners' qualifications at entry. Analysis of this information showed that if learners were going to be successful in their vocational studies, the organisation needed to focus on how it could help learners to improve their LLN skills.

At **Northampton College** the Skills for Life Manager spent some time analysing Management Information System (MIS) data to find out the level of GCSE grades that full-time learners had when they started at the college. This research revealed that high numbers of learners had grade D or below in maths (61%) and in English (51%). It was clear that if these learners were going to be successful in their studies and leave the college with improved LLN skills, managers needed to consider how they were going to approach the development of literacy, language and numeracy. The argument for embedding was very persuasive given that 'bolt-on' key skills sessions had proved to be successful only with limited numbers of learners.

Using an external evaluation

External evaluation also proved to be an important catalyst for change for some providers, for example where an inspection report identified a weakness in literacy, language and numeracy support or poor learner achievement. Many organisations were able to use such evidence as an opportunity for initiating and developing embedded practice and changing managers' and teachers' attitudes towards their responsibilities for developing learners' skills.

Auditing current provision and action planning

The Skills for Life Health Check is a valuable audit tool that can raise awareness and understanding, as well as provide evidence to support development work. It has also proved useful in engaging managers, particularly those with responsibility for quality. This systematic approach to auditing current practice provides a strategic overview and highlights specific areas for improvement. The outcomes of a thorough exploration of an organisation's systems and processes provide an objective and thoughtful perspective which can lend weight to the argument for an embedded approach and provide a robust framework for developing an action plan, as illustrated overleaf.

Action plan

Objective Skills for Life Health Check reference	Development action	Timescale	Responsibility	Evidence of progress against action	Outcome
(8 Curriculum design and delivery) Set up collaborative working between vocational and LLN teachers to plan and deliver embedded programmes.	Recruit vocational tutors who recognise the value of embedding LLN into vocational programmes. Allocate joint planning time for vocational and Sfl staff.	9.2.07	Skills for Life Manager	Buddy pairs recruited. Resources allocated to support joint planning time.	Vocational programmes have been identified to deliver an embedded approach for Sept 2007 start. Scheme of work and session plans are prepared. Staff have developed and agreed methods of partnership working to improve the embedded delivery of LLN skills.

'Skills for Life: A Health Check for providers of further education and training' is a simple tool designed to help you assess the quality of your LLN provision. It has a particular focus on the implementation of a whole organisation approach of which embedding is a key aspect. For a copy visit www.qia.org.uk.

Also see the companion Skills for Life Improvement Programme booklet: *Improving Quality through a Whole Organisation Approach to Skills for Life*.



Key messages

- Identify key people at all levels to work together as a team. Target quality and curriculum managers as improving learners' LLN skills is central to their roles.
- Spend time gathering achievement data to support your argument. All staff are keen to improve achievement outcomes so a well-prepared report that highlights areas where achievement can be improved will gain their interest.
- Use audit tools such as the Skills for Life Health Check to identify starting points and develop targeted action plans.

Implementing an embedded approach

Embedding is a widely used term which embraces the concept of bringing together the vocational or host subject with LLN teaching. Central to successful embedding practice is the concept of teamwork or partnership working, supported by organisational policies, structures, processes and plans. This section explores a range of approaches taken by organisations involved in the Improvement Programme and gives practical advice and guidance on:

- Approaches to embedding
- Using staff resources effectively
- Building collaborative partnerships
- Acknowledging concerns.

Approaches to embedding

Because organisations and their learners are so diverse no single strategy or approach will serve all. **What is important is the result.** Are learners acquiring sound LLN skills to help them achieve their vocational qualification, in a holistic, integrated way? Additionally, the staffing structures that providers put in place to support the embedding of literacy, language and numeracy vary significantly, reflecting the type of organisation and starting point of the provider.

Deciding on a staffing structure

A key question for managers is where to locate the LLN specialists within the organisation's structure and who has responsibility for delivery. Some organisations on the Improvement Programme choose to:

- locate all Skills for Life, key skills and learning support staff within the same faculty or business area that then services other areas across the organisation
- manage LLN staff as a discrete team, offering LLN learning which is contextualised to the vocational programmes
- place LLN specialists within vocational areas.

Whichever structure is adopted, embedding is most effective when partnerships are between sets of practitioners supported by managers or peers, and the agreed approach has been implemented across the whole organisation with the aim of changing practice, as shown in the example overleaf.

How could you develop a closer working relationship between key skills, Skills for Life and vocational staff?



Loughborough College has developed an integrated approach to delivering additional support, key skills and Skills for Life. Staff in the team are multi-skilled and qualified in these areas, removing potential confusion between key skills and Skills for Life and ensuring learners' additional support needs are quickly identified. Curriculum teams are accountable for LLN achievement, monitored by an internal performance and standards review system that challenges teams about their results. No one model is applied universally and teams are free to develop the approach which best suits their provision.

LLN teachers work with vocational teachers to plan and contextualise skills. On some courses they co-teach with vocational staff so that the links between vocational content and skills are made explicitly. The model has worked most effectively in Sport, Childcare and Electrical Installation where relationships have had time to develop. Results have been significantly improved, with the college reporting success rates for key skills in Childcare and Electrical Installation well above the college rate and those for the main qualifications higher than the national average.

Embedding and partnership teaching are seen as fundamental to this achievement so staff are moving into vocational teams to ensure progress is sustainable.

Using staff resources effectively

The issue of available resources, particularly staff time and expertise, has implications for the approach that a provider adopts. This means that managers need to consider timetabling arrangements to take account of planning and team teaching requirements. Organisations on the Improvement Programme developed a range of creative and flexible approaches to embedding that reflected the context in which they worked and were within the scope of their resources. The examples that follow show some approaches which have worked successfully.

Using embedding champions

A common approach has been to develop embedding champions. These are qualified and experienced staff who have the skills and confidence to work with curriculum teams to raise the importance of LLN skills development and demonstrate how the teaching of these critical skills can be embedded into vocational programmes. Often champions provide a lead role within a curriculum team, for example:

- offering advice on embedding
- sharing ideas about teaching approaches
- signposting relevant resources.

Setting up buddy pairs

Several of the providers focused their energies on establishing buddy pairs – an LLN teacher working closely with a vocational teacher. Buddy pairs have made good progress where they have had the support of managers and adequate time for planning. In this approach the pair form a strong working relationship where they share:

- responsibility for the planning and delivery of the programme
- concern for and commitment to learner success.

At **Northampton College**, the Skills for Life Manager identified five buddy pairs who would work together to develop embedded programmes. The buddy pairs have set up different approaches to embedding literacy, language and numeracy, based on what they perceive to be learners' needs, course requirements, preferred styles of working and of course, the resources available to support partnership working.

- One pair intends to deliver literacy, language and numeracy in a fully integrated way, where all key skills will be taught within the vocational programme and several sessions a week will be team-taught.
- Another pair has decided to front-load the team-teaching sessions, with the aim of covering the key skills early in the programme, as they believe that learners can consolidate the skills and use them to improve the quality of their written work in the rest of the programme.

Working in partnership to plan

Partnerships are equally effective where vocational and Skills for Life colleagues jointly plan how to embed literacy, language and numeracy into sessions, explore learning activities and develop embedded learning materials together, but teach independently.



Springfield Education and Training is a small work-based learning provider offering NVQs in Early Years and qualifications for teaching assistants. The Skills for Life teacher is part time and has responsibility for developing all learners' LLN skills.

- She and the vocational teacher have worked enthusiastically to collaborate and bring the two skills sets together. They started with the communications unit in the NVQ, mapping the communication skills to the core curriculum and looking for opportunities to teach these skills in the workshop sessions.
- The Skills for Life teacher has also attended the workshops so that she can improve her knowledge of the course content, as well as observing how skills development opportunities are managed and how they could be enhanced. She has also attended the standardisation meetings of both programmes as well as reviewing existing teaching materials.

Both partners have clearly been willing to change their ways of working for the benefit of the learners. Even though the two teachers do not teach together in the same learning space, each individual's work is informed by the other, and so the teaching of the LLN skills are integrated and relevant.

How could you build in essential planning time for staff to develop embedded programmes?



Building collaborative partnerships

Establishing good partnerships between colleagues is essential. Vocational and LLN staff need to think carefully about how they are going to work together both in and out of the learning environment. For example, when team teaching they need a clear idea of who will lead sessions and how they can interweave the various skills. Equally important is developing an understanding of each other's work, skills, and values. Where staff had positive attitudes to this approach and have been allocated time to work together, they described real benefits for learners and themselves.

“Having time to liaise and plan was a challenge. Tutors were used to working in their own way and had to alter this to fit in with each other. They made use of email to support this process – letting each other know their plans and coming to a consensus.”

Manager, Shipley College

Acknowledging concerns

Inevitably, some staff may be sceptical or anxious about working together. Creating opportunities for people to voice their worries and concerns and then supporting them to work collaboratively often result in a gradual increase in commitment. The following example demonstrates

how creating an opportunity for reluctant staff to air their misgivings served to move things forward.

At **HMP Leeds**, initial reluctance from curriculum staff to get involved in partnership working was tackled through two training sessions, which focused on team working and how to embed literacy, language and numeracy. The intention was to introduce a cross-curriculum programme using a thematic approach by embedding literacy, language and numeracy across subject specialisms.

During the training sessions staff were encouraged to voice reasons for their reluctance. This highlighted several concerns, such as they:

- could not see the relevance within their subject areas
- did not have time to plan sessions
- were not confident with the core curricula
- could not see how they could incorporate another area of learning to work alongside their specialism.

Offering staff this opportunity to air their misgivings helped them to move on.

“The general feeling is that we are growing as a united team and providing far more interesting and relevant lessons. Work from the initial theme is currently on display in a prominent area of the prison and has received a great deal of praise from both prisoners and staff.”

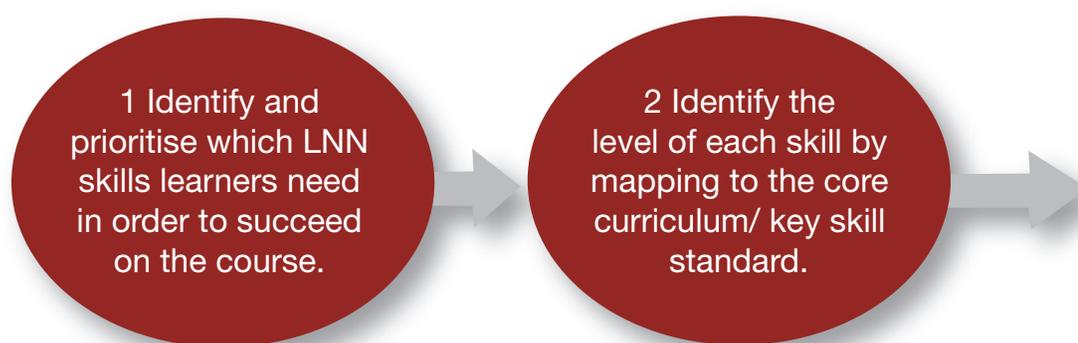
Skills for Life Co-ordinator, HMP Leeds

Key messages

- Review your staffing policies and timetabling arrangements to ensure that they prioritise the planning time that staff need to develop good embedding practice.
- Be flexible and creative when exploring embedding approaches for your organisation. Start by considering which approach best suits your provision and the availability of resources such as staff time and expertise.
- Provide opportunities and time for staff to develop a shared understanding and commitment to delivering an embedded approach. Effective teamwork requires careful planning, mutual trust and respect for one another's knowledge and skills.
- Look for ways to bring staff concerns and issues around embedding into the open so that creative ways forward can be found.

Planning to embed literacy, language and numeracy

Stages in embedding LLN



The process of planning to embed LLN teaching and learning opportunities into an existing programme is at the heart of embedding activity. Many providers recognise that this preparatory work underpins a successful embedded programme, as it supports and steers the teaching delivery. The process takes time and providers often found it a valuable learning experience in itself, as teachers working together begin to understand the reality of an embedded approach.

This section looks at some of the practical activities that providers have used effectively to plan embedded delivery and includes:

- Using flowcharting to help understand the process
- Identifying the LLN skills needed by learners
- Developing schemes of work and session plans
- Integrating LLN skills development and practical tasks.

Using flowcharting to help understand the process

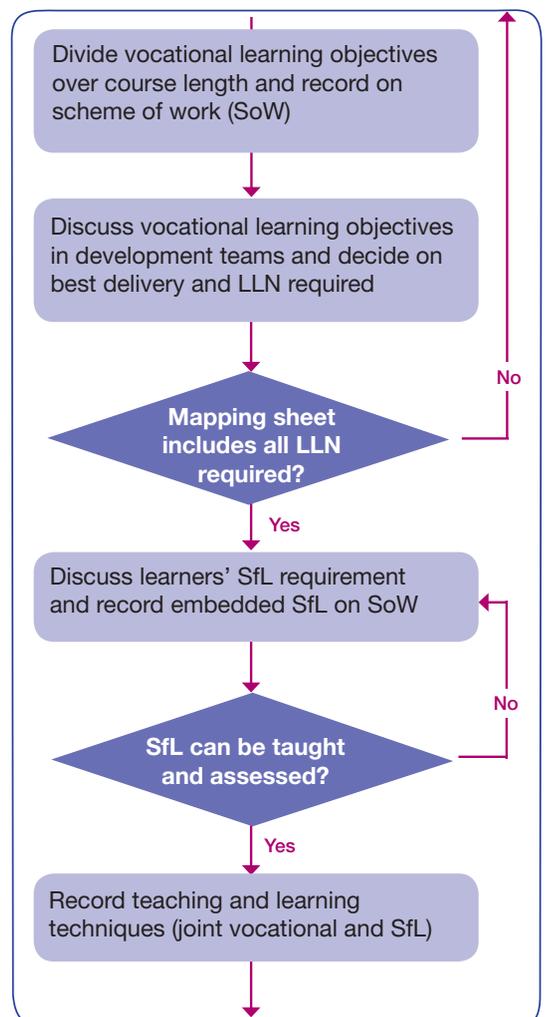
Sometimes it can be a challenge for teachers to get to grips with the steps that need to be taken to embed literacy, language and numeracy, and the sequencing of this process. Many providers on the Improvement Programme successfully used a flowcharting process to examine the relationship between learning processes and learning outcomes. Providers found that taking time to explore how they were going to work through embedding, and deciding who was going to be involved and the sequence of activities gave them confidence to achieve their objectives. The resulting flowchart was found to be most useful when it was used by cross-specialist teams as a working tool and revisited as work progressed.



When **Trinity Community Partnership** decided to develop embedded schemes of work for three of its programmes, the project team of seven Skills for Life and vocational specialists used the flowcharting process to agree how they were going to work. Once they had identified the tasks to be achieved, they set out to work independently on the identified activities to save time. However, some staff found this difficult without a cross-specialist input and the team decided to revisit their process.

In the end they found that working together was much more effective than trying to develop the schemes of work alone. By working collaboratively, members of the team were able to develop the new programmes with fully integrated LLN skills. They also found working this way a rewarding experience as they learned a great deal about one another's specialist areas.

Extract from Trinity Community Partnership's flowchart for developing an embedded scheme of work



Flowcharting is a simple but powerful visual tool that helps you to think through systems and procedures. You can use it to:

- review existing practice
- design new processes.

Also see the companion Skills for Life Improvement Programme booklet, *Improving Quality through a Whole Organisation Approach to Skills for Life*.



Identifying the LLN skills needed by learners

Identifying the skills development needs of learners is a fundamental aspect of planning any embedded programme. Which aspects of the programme do they often find difficult? Which LLN skills are often weak? The aim is not to ensure that all skills and sub-skills in the Adult Core Curricula are covered in the scheme of work and session plans, but rather to ensure that the skills required for the vocational programme are taught as an integrated element of the professional working practice.

- The first step is to identify which LLN skills learners need to develop in order to succeed on the programme, so that the teaching of those skills is integrated into the scheme of work and session plans.
- At the same time teachers also need to identify the level of skills required by the programme. This is critical, as some providers found there was a mismatch between the skills level required by the programme, and the level of the learners' skills on entry to the programme. These needs had to be addressed as a priority.

Particularly where staff are new to Skills of Life, identifying LLN needs can be a challenge, for example they may select texts that are too high in level or make incorrect assumptions about learners' ability to handle specialist terminology. In this situation some early Skills for Life awareness training can make all the difference to a teacher's understanding and confidence for taking on the task. This is illustrated in the example below.

BTCV Enterprises Ltd is a young company offering Job Search programmes (recently changed to Employability Skills) to clients on New Deal programmes. The Contracts Manager, keen to improve the service, identified embedding LLN into the employability programme as a priority. The team of staff were not qualified teachers and were new to the concept of Skills for Life. That said, they were keen to learn and following some awareness training, they started to consider where LLN skills featured in the Employability Skills programme. The impact of the training ensured that staff had a better understanding of learners' needs, for example they were more confident in analysing the LLN skills and levels required to carry out vocational tasks and activities.

Results of a Sfl awareness-raising activity at BTCV Enterprises' training event.

Team members were asked to identify the LLN skills required for Job Search programmes.

TOPIC(S)	SKILLS
Assessing Vacancies	Reading, finding information, matching information to needs
CVs, Application Forms, Letters, Action Plans	Plan and draft writing, spelling, appropriate words, punctuation, grammar, paragraphs, formats, content, language, proofreading
Interview Techniques	Speaking clearly and confidently, language, making a contribution, listening, responding

Initial assessment

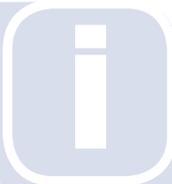
It is important that there is a robust initial assessment process, which provides accurate and relevant information on learners' entry skills and also a clear picture of other social and life factors that can adversely impact on learner success. This more holistic approach to assessment will help teachers and learners to determine relevant individual learning targets. It will also indicate where teachers should provide differentiated activities to support skills development.

At **Stoke on Trent College** a holistic approach to initial and diagnostic assessment processes has contributed to the success of their embedded Painting and Decorating courses. From the outset, learners were made aware that the purpose of initial assessment was to identify strengths as well as priority LLN areas for development.

- The LLN teacher first informally interviewed the learners, talking to them about their past experiences of learning, their aspirations for the future, their perception of their strengths and needs.
- Literacy and numeracy levels were then assessed using the Basic Skills Agency initial assessment and free writing.
- Diagnostic assessment followed – Basic KeySkillbuilder (West Nottinghamshire College) for those identified at Level 1, Skills for Life Diagnostic Assessment materials for those at Entry Level.

The LLN teacher commented that this process of assessment was more comprehensive than that typically used with vocational learners, and contributed to a closer relationship between herself and the learners who became 'more like individuals than a group'.

A set of tools for screening and initial assessment has been developed by DIUS, contextualised to different vocational areas. They are available on www.toolslibrary.co.uk.



Developing schemes of work and session plans

Schemes of work

Having identified the LLN skills, the next step is to focus attention on which skills to prioritise. This will be informed by the teacher's knowledge of the aspects of the programme that learners typically find difficult and the skills that are essential for learners to be successful on that programme. Teachers are then able to decide when and where LLN skills occur in the programme and include them in the schemes of work.

Session plans

Consideration also needs to be given as to how skills can be explicitly taught and again this should be detailed in session plans.

Session plan for CACHE Foundation in Childcare

Content/topic/objective/learning outcome (<i>what</i>)	Teacher activity/ Teaching & Learning methodology (<i>how</i>)	Learner activity (<i>consider needs of specific individuals as noted in class profile</i>)
1 Introduce unit and bring it into focus, explain preparation for working with children, develop personal skills.	Distribute handbook, text book.	Discussion. Q&A.
2 Specialist vocabulary - discuss words used for particular jobs.	Write up on W/B selected job roles; ask groups of learners to identify vocabulary used. Distribute cloud handout. Encourage all to consider Early Years vocabulary.	In small groups brainstorm ideas. Feed back to group. In small groups learners agree the key vocabulary and decide how each word is spelt. When there is a consensus, complete the clouds.
3 Vocabulary used in early years.	Distribute vocabulary card sets.	In pairs complete words and definitions cards. Each pair to check another pair's completed set.
4 Introduce glossary (spelling dictionaries) explain that over the sessions we will add specialist words to glossary.	Hand out books. List alphabet on separate pages.	Learners prepare their glossary by allocating pages to each letter of the alphabet.
5 Responsible citizen: what does this mean?	Using W/B encourage discussion and pose questions for magazine activity - looking at our ideas of responsible citizen.	Join in with discussion and add own thoughts and ideas.

Provide opportunities for learners to interact

Encourage learners to work collaboratively

Offer activities where learners have to make their own connections to find meaning

Empower learners to take responsibility

Actively develop learners' expressive language skills

Help learners to see the connection between specialist vocabulary and its relevance to the job

Provide challenging activities that require learners to develop higher order skills

By working in this way teachers recognised the need for careful work to ensure that LLN skills were covered. The session plan opposite shows how a buddy pair at Northampton College have started to integrate the teaching of relevant literacy skills into a CACHE (Council for Awards in Children's Care and Education) Foundation in Childcare programme.

Preparing learners for dual accreditation

If the learners' aim is to achieve a Skills for Life or key skills qualification as well as a vocational qualification, programmes may well need to include some discrete sessions to teach specific skills that are not covered in the embedded programme. Where possible the teaching should be contextualised to the vocational subject and LLN and vocational teachers need to work together to develop appropriate materials and activities.

Integrating LLN skills development and practical tasks

When devising session plans, several providers considered how they could integrate LLN skills where they occurred naturally as an inherent element of the task. A particularly successful strategy was to focus on the skills as they occur within practical tasks, as noted in research undertaken by NRDC (2006). Providers know from experience that many learners enjoy practical tasks because they are active and encourage them to work together. Putting the two skills sets together also reinforces the relevance and value of the LLN skill.

What opportunities are there for integrating practical activities and LLN skills development in your programmes?



Gym activities at **HMP Haverigg** are a popular option among prisoners, both as a leisure time activity and as a route to future employment or further qualifications. It had been recognised that many of the learners have a need for support with literacy, and embedding into the Focus on Healthy Living qualification seemed an ideal way to tackle this. For example, learners have to prepare a Personal Exercise Plan covering six weeks of training, based on their own assessment of fitness. This provides an opportunity for learners to be assessed on their understanding of basic principles of fitness and exercise. They also have to produce a written document, using correct grammar, spelling and punctuation and a relevant image. A key skills and a vocational teacher team-teach to enable learners to achieve the key skills standard and the vocational qualification.

“Learners really relate to practical tasks. We are constantly evaluating what we do because you’ve got to keep learners interested. The young people we deal with on our E2E programme do better when the learning is incorporated into life, for example preparing food in our kitchen area has led to useful work around measuring.”

Quality Manager, North West Community Services

Key messages

- Before you start, consider how you are going to work through the embedding process and who should be part of the team.
- Teams need to keep in mind the learners’ purpose, motivations and reasons for engaging in the ‘host’ subject. Any LLN skills development should support learners in achieving their priorities.
- If your team is new to Skills for Life, plan in some awareness-raising training.
- Evaluate your initial assessment process to make sure that it gives accurate and relevant information to inform the selection of the LLN skills to be embedded.
- Ensure initial assessment provides a complete picture of the learner’s LLN and personal needs so that relevant targets can be agreed.
- Bring together vocational and LLN staff to develop schemes of work and session plans. Their combined expertise and skills will contribute to more fully embedded programmes.
- Review your teaching strategies and approaches to ensure that learners can see that the LLN skills they are developing are relevant to the subject they wish to learn.

Engaging and motivating learners

Getting learners engaged with literacy, language and numeracy can be challenging. Many learners in the post-16 sector are demotivated when it comes to maths and English. The question is how to promote the value of these skills. Experience on the Improvement Programme confirmed that the most effective teaching and learning practices are those that encourage learners to make meaningful connections, require them to be active rather than passive, and above all are enjoyable. The challenge of motivating learners is one that many providers explored and this section looks at some of the successful approaches they used in the following areas:

- Getting learners to buy in
- Approaches to the curriculum
- Using quality resources to engage learners.

Getting learners to buy in

Some of the answers will be familiar: make the skills relevant; help learners to see where a literacy, language or numeracy skill is interwoven with a vocational skill; make learning active. Staff also need to promote the importance of acquiring sound LLN skills positively by highlighting them in all aspects of the learners' experience, including:

- marketing and course information
- advice and guidance activities
- induction for vocational programmes or jobs.

In this way learners will have a better understanding of LLN skills and their status within the programme.

Raising the profile of LLN in induction

By looking carefully at their induction programmes, providers on the Improvement Programme were able to identify opportunities for building interactive and engaging activities that would help learners to see how literacy, language and numeracy are an integral part of the course or job.

An ESOL teacher working with a colleague from the Health and Social Care team at **West Thames College** adapted an activity from the 'Speaking and Listening Toolkit – Learning for Work', developed by the Key Skills Support Programme. See www.ksspforwork.net. They devised a simple but effective 'jargon buster' activity to use in the induction process. Learners were given cards with the roles of the various staff they would meet during their programme. They had to match this to the correct description of that role by asking questions. The active learning nature of the 'jargon buster' made the task more enjoyable and the information more likely to be remembered!



“The session that the ESOL teacher gave totally supported the learners’ understanding of the course. The cue cards encouraged interaction, students worked well together and it helped the dynamic of the group. The vocational teacher started to appreciate the value of embedding ESOL learning and everyone recognised the value of team teaching by the end of the session.”

Head of Care, West Thames College

Making LLN skills explicit

Consideration also needs to be given to how to present LLN learning to the learners. Where skills are too well ‘hidden’, learners may be unaware that they have learned something and it is therefore unlikely that they will be able to transfer the skills to other applications or contexts. An approach that has been successful for some providers is to involve learners themselves in analysing the skills that a particular job requires, so they can see for themselves why such skills are important to them. Another approach that has worked well is to make the skills explicit, but at the same time making clear and immediate connections with the vocational skill, as illustrated below.



Staff at **B-Skill Ltd** produced training aids to further enhance the workshop sessions and to drive the LLN learning into the practical delivery. This involved producing and using boards in the workshop to include pictures of angles in the woodworking area, details on how to calculate mean, median and mode in the brickwork section and how to convert metric measurements across all areas. In tiling, the boards cover topics such as area, tessellation, shapes, 2D, 3D, and in painting and decorating, ratio.

The boards reinforce the practical learning element. For example, the SfL teacher shows learners how to work out volume, and then the vocational teacher will mix sand and lime to make the cement at about the same stage, demonstrating why the numeracy skills are important. The learners have used these new-found numeracy skills to help them when they are building doors and doorframes. These physical learning tools work at several levels and are at the centre of the practical learning environment. Teachers have used displays on doors to represent more abstract learning. For example, behind the Equality and Diversity door the learners put information relating to equality and diversity topics, such as newspaper cuttings which have to be read to obtain information.

What approaches could you adopt to ensure that LLN and vocational teachers are seen to be of equal status?



Giving status to LLN skills

An important feature of successful embedding is to find ways to change learners’ perceptions of the importance of LLN skills. Several providers found ways to ensure that both vocational and LLN teachers and the subjects they teach were given equal status in the eyes of the learners. For some providers this involved physically locating the LLN sessions in the vocational workshop.

At **HMP Durham**, LLN teachers were encouraged to relocate their sessions to the painting and decorating shop using embedded materials linked to the subject. The vocational teacher has a natural legitimacy in the eyes of the learner and bringing the two teachers together raises the status of the LLN teacher.

“It is a lot better now that it is all linked to painting and decorating. It is really good and we are all dead keen to be able to do NVQs and get a job when we get released. You can make good money painting and decorating but you need to be able to read and write as well.”

Learner at HMP Durham

Approaches to the curriculum

The curriculum offer and its delivery can play a key role in motivating learners. Learning that encourages active ownership and empowers learners to take responsibility is more likely to engage learners and support the development of LLN skills. Similarly, teaching staff will be more effective in delivering literacy, language and numeracy in a relevant and engaging way where they are supported in developing their skills and confidence and in trying out new ideas.

Making learning relevant

A relevant curriculum content is a key component in engaging learners, but equally important are the teaching and learning strategies. The example that follows shows how one provider has made learning relevant to its learners.

Resources for engaging and motivating learners

The Skills for Life Improvement Programme has developed CPD training packages that include:

- Engaging and motivating learners
- Using interactive approaches in teaching literacy, language and numeracy.

The materials can be downloaded at www.sflip.org.uk – go to Resources / CPD Resources.

The National Research and Development Council (NRDC) has co-published a series of good practice guides. Titles include:

- *Developing adult teaching and learning: Practitioner guides – Working with young adults*
- *Developing adult teaching and learning: Practitioner guides – Numeracy*

Go to the NRDC website to see other titles in the series and to order copies: www.nrdc.org.uk.



Young offenders at **HMP YOI Lancaster Farms** now run their own radio/information channel, which transmits directly into each cell. The course is accredited by the Open College Network (Levels 1 and 2), and the course teacher, in partnership with the SfL Manager, has embedded LLN teaching, enabling learners to achieve both vocational and key skills Communication (Levels 1 and 2) qualifications. The young men learn the technical skills involved in recording, editing and transmission of radio programmes. Information transmitted includes what education courses are available and when, Connexions details and a series of interviews with staff and young offenders, as well as edited musical features.

“The whole course aims to provide young people with vital skills to gain employment in the media industry, or continue with studies related to this area. Also it provides them with the underpinning knowledge necessary to achieve success in their literacy and numeracy.”

Skills for Life Manager, HMP YOI Lancaster Farms

“The course can help you when you get out, you can change and get a job in the music industry.”

Learner at HMP YOI Lancaster Farms

How would you involve Subject Learning Coaches and other expert practitioners in improving your embedded provision?



Using Subject Learning Coaches to support teaching skills

Some providers explored ways they could make the teaching of LLN skills more engaging and active by using Subject Learning Coaches (SLCs) from the National Teaching and Learning Change Programme (NTLCP) to support development work. They and other ‘expert practitioners’ have a central role in supporting embedded provision, and in supporting teachers to use the multimedia resources offered through the NTLCP. These resources, based on practical and interactive learning activities, are designed to support good teaching and learning practice and have been used successfully by many providers. The resources also provide continuing professional development (CPD) and training activities. See www.qia.org.uk.

The SLC for Early Years at **Northampton College** worked with the buddy pairs, introducing them to the resources by engaging them through an interactive word definitions activity she had devised using a template from the NTLCP maths materials. What became apparent was how much discussion, communication and collaborative working was involved in completing the activity, which was based on information from a booklet called ‘Finding the level’ which is produced by CACHE (Council for Awards in Children’s Care and Education) and identifies/explains terms used at Levels 1–4.





Using quality resources to engage learners

Given the importance of good teaching and learning resources, many providers have invested time in searching out and developing teaching and learning materials that will inspire their learners. In fact, a wealth of nationally developed and trialled resources already exists for embedding and promoting active learning. Some providers, however, were not aware of these resources. Others had the resources but their staff were not using them effectively or were not using them at all. Providers have had most success in developing appropriate teaching and learning resources where they have taken a systematic approach to their development as shown below.

Ridgemoor Training made good use of their SLC as they worked through a process to produce teaching and learning materials that would promote active learning approaches. Initially, the team identified LLN opportunities within generic units across the construction programmes and then explored appropriate resources, working through the following process.

- 1 Cataloguing of recent, relevant resources including the Skills for Life Embedded resources, materials from the Construction and Mathematics packs from the National Teaching and Learning Change Programme and the Learning for Work teaching and learning packs, particularly the Wood Trades pack.
- 2 'Unpacking' of the resources to identify those of most use within staff development sessions and those for developing learners' literacy, language and numeracy skills within generic construction units such as Trowel Trades, Wood Trades and other related contexts.
- 3 Identification of core units such as Health and Safety, delivered in vocational contexts which could provide a focus for LLN skills development.
- 4 Development of schemes of work and session plans linking resources and approaches for Skills for Life teaching within the vocational units.

Recognising that access to good materials is essential, they have established an in-house inventory and developed an online space and physical area for resources, as well as providing staff awareness training.

How can you provide opportunities for staff to become familiar with and use high quality resources?



Sources of resources

- The Skills for Life initiatives over the past few years have produced a wealth of materials which can be accessed on the Embedded Learning portal. Go to <http://rwp.qia.oxi.net/embeddedlearning>.
- The Whole Organisation Approaches Pathfinder produced a resource guide, and many providers have used this to develop embedded practice. See <http://excellence.qia.org.uk>.



Key messages

- Make the rationale and benefits of acquiring LLN skills explicit through all aspects of the learning experience so that learners understand the skills they need and how they can achieve them.
- Develop the role of the subject learning coach and other experts in teaching and learning and allocate time for them to coach and mentor colleagues.
- Audit your teaching strategies, learning activities and resources to ensure that they are engaging and motivating for your learners.



Keeping up the momentum

Wherever innovative practice is introduced it has a natural momentum as it impacts across an organisation. Inevitably, new ideas and initiatives arise to take our attention and energy. Real change takes time and different ways of working need evaluating if effective practice is going to be consolidated. Maintaining the impetus, monitoring and reviewing progress, and measuring the impact of partnership working are essential in refining and improving the quality of the teaching and learning in organisations.

This section looks at how providers have evaluated their work and built on successes to establish good practice by:

- Measuring the impact
- Sharing and transferring practice
- Peer review and development.

Measuring the impact

In order to assess the effectiveness of any embedding programmes, it is necessary to have a clear idea of what you want to achieve through the evaluation and what evidence you need to collect to support it. Both quantitative and qualitative data play their part. It is useful to collect baseline data on learners' skills so that their progress can be measured through summative assessment methods. Quantitative data can also be gathered through observation of teaching and learning as long as the process explicitly requires observers to record how the teaching of LLN skills has been integrated into the vocational subject. Qualitative data is equally important and can be collected through learner surveys and focus groups. This provides vital information for evaluating an embedded programme and steering any necessary changes and developments.

Planning how to evaluate a programme

As with the introduction of any new process or practice it is important to have a clear idea of the desired outcome before any start is made.

- What do we want to achieve?
- What will it look like?
- How will success be measured?

Considering these questions and agreeing the vision will help shape the process and monitor progress.

How can your organisation improve the way it measures the effectiveness of embedding LLN into its programmes?



The Skills for Life Manager at **Northampton College** and the Development Adviser looked at how to measure the impact of the embedded programmes pilot. The table below records some of the ideas. The intention was to discuss the ideas with the buddy pairs so that they agreed a vision of what the final programme would look like and the milestones along the way. It was envisaged that the final data would provide a valuable tool for developing a college-wide approach to embedding LLN into vocational programmes and that this practice could be transferred to other programme areas.

Impact Assessment – process and success criteria
Baseline data on learners' LLN skills/ GCSE profile
Schemes of work/session plans – details of learning activities and resources
Setting and monitoring of learner targets, both vocational and LLN
Attendance, retention and achievement data
SAR report – updated 3 times a year
Benchmarking data against same programmes that are not delivering an embedded approach
Buddy pairs produce a reflection log
SfL Manager undertakes observations both in class and preparation sessions
SfL Manager has 1:1 meetings with learners to gather their views on the learning experience
SfL Manager to produce an evaluation report looking at transferring and sustainability factors
Learner progression data

Deciding what data to collect

During a recent inspection at Springfield Education and Training an inspector was particularly interested in the company's embedding practice, and posed the question 'How will the impact be measured?'

Staff at **Springfield Education and Training** responded by collecting baseline data on retention, achievements and progression as well as the timescales for achievement. Along with the hard data, they are considering how they can gather learners' views on the learning experience, what support they valued within their programme, and what enabled them to achieve their aims. This was seen as an important consideration given the current priority on involving learners as outlined in the LSC Learner Involvement Strategy [2007].

How can you share and transfer effective practice with colleagues and more widely across the organisation?



Sharing and transferring practice

The process of transferring effective practice in embedding across an organisation is vital for consistent, high quality provision, which affords all learners the same opportunities. One of the key challenges for providers is to work out how they are going to spread practice from best-performing sections to all sections. This involves identifying what is meant by effective practice and how judgements can be validated. However, it is also the case that organisations are slow to transfer good internal practice. Some organisations have used intranet technology or newsletters to disseminate practice, but research suggests that non-interactive methods of dissemination have poor take-up [Cox and Smith, 2004]. Methods that offer opportunities to exchange ideas or try out new practice are more likely to be effective in bringing about sustainable change. Providers on the Improvement Programme therefore focused their attention on finding effective ways of transferring good practice in embedding across their organisations and two of these are described below.

Using embedding experts across projects

Where providers had already set up embedded provision in one area of the organisation, they found it valuable to use their most experienced staff to support the start-up of new initiatives in embedding. By doing this organisations were able to capitalise on their original investment in time and money in developing staff skills. Teams also benefited from the embedding champion's expertise and experience gained from previous work on embedding.

North West Community Services looked carefully at what had already been achieved in embedding literacy, language and numeracy in other areas of the organisation and how to build on it. In other words, they took time to reflect on their practice and learn from it. These observations prompted a decision to make the Entry to Employment (E2E) programme a priority for improvement using an embedded approach. In this case, the main action was to move a key member of staff – who had been recognised as a Greater Merseyside Work-based Learning and Embedding Champion and played a key role in the successful embedding of LLN in their Early Years Programme – over to the E2E programme so that she could support staff. Through a series of meetings, the E2E team was able to move quickly towards implementing an embedded approach.

Using teaching and learning observation processes

Information from the observation of teaching and learning practice can also prove effective as a way of ensuring quality and consistency in the teaching of embedded programmes across the whole organisation or even several organisations. Many providers on the Improvement Programme focused their attention on reviewing their current lesson observation practice to take account of embedded literacy, language and numeracy, as shown in the following example.

Lifeskills Solutions, a work-based learning provider, operates across four centres delivering Entry to Employment programmes. The Skills for Life Health Check helped them to concentrate their thoughts on curriculum design and quality assurance in particular. In order to monitor the quality across their six centres they developed an observation process to take account of Skills for Life and how it is embedded. To support this, they produced a lesson observation prompt sheet that they shared with the providers they were working with in a cluster group. In this way the observation sheet will be used across several organisations. Sharing the observation prompt sheet with colleagues working in a cluster group enabled Lifeskills Solutions to test out their thinking with a wider group, drawing on a rich vein of experience. Together they were able to identify the features of an effective embedded session. This systematic approach enabled them to agree on best practice for lesson observations.

Peer review and development



Peer review is another effective approach to sharing practice. Most providers on the Improvement Programme's embedding projects worked collaboratively in small groups with the aim of sharing and transferring effective practice between organisations. Many providers found peer review and development powerful and are keen to use this within their own organisations.

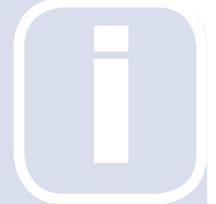
In some cases providers have successfully used peer review and development to compare their embedding models internally, bringing together groups of staff from different vocational areas to discuss developments. This has helped staff to define for themselves which approaches are most effective and discussion has often led to commitment to try out a different way of embedding to see how well practice transfers to different situations with different learners.

“Working with a colleague in a similar role has helped us both generate many ideas that we can implement. Co-observation of lessons helped us agree good practice and what I have learnt has informed how I coach the lesson observers in our college.”

Learning Improvement Adviser, Loughborough College

Peer review and development is an approach whereby providers can share collective responsibility for quality improvement by working together to benchmark performance, to validate self-assessment judgements, to identify and share good practice and to work collaboratively to address quality improvement needs.

Also see the companion Skills for Life Improvement Programme booklet *Working in Partnership for Quality Improvement in Skills for Life*.



Key messages

- Agree how you are going to measure the impact of embedding before you start. Be clear about what you want to achieve, and monitor progress to ensure you will meet your objectives.
- Devise strategies to share and transfer effective practice as a key aspect of the quality assurance procedures.
- Review your organisation's quality assurance procedures (e.g. initial assessment, induction, teaching and learning observation process) to ensure they monitor key aspects of an embedded approach.

Staff training and support

Professional development is essential in implementing and sustaining successful embedded programmes. There are several approaches to staff development – formal methods, such as training activities, both short and longer programmes and less formal, such as double staffing, co-mentoring and coaching. This section considers a range of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) activities that providers have used to improve learners' LLN skills through the embedding process. They include:

- Skills for Life training needs analysis
- Developing new skills and knowledge
- Learning through partnership working.

Skills for Life training needs analysis

In order to establish the needs of staff, it is valuable to undertake a training needs analysis such as that developed by the Improvement Programme. This provides a comprehensive analysis of staff qualifications in relation to Skills for Life and can be carried out with all staff, including those with a support or administrative role. This process responds to the Further Education reform agenda to ensure all teachers are qualified. Several providers made use of the training needs analysis (TNA) process to help them and their staff teams identify appropriate training options for embedding literacy, language and numeracy.

The Skills for Life training needs analysis (TNA)

is a process for analysing staff qualifications and giving advice on staff development planning for Skills for Life.

The TNA process is tailored for each organisation depending on its needs and goals. It is co-delivered by a TNA adviser with key staff from the organisation and includes some or all the following activities:

- Initial scoping meeting
- Information and awareness session with key staff
- Staff qualification survey and audit
- Individual staff development advice for up to 20 staff
- Analysis of audit data and report for programme area or team.

The outcome of this process informs the organisation's Skills for Life staff development plan.

Also see the companion Skills for Life Improvement Programme booklet *Professional Development Planning for Building Staff Teams*.



YMCA Training Cambridge took up the offer of a Skills for Life TNA. The initial scoping meeting identified two organisational aims:

- 1 To ensure that all Training Team staff are professionally qualified to the appropriate standard
- 2 To focus on the teaching skills of work-based learning staff and raise their confidence in the delivery of embedded LLN.

The process proved very successful for several reasons: all staff were involved and staff valued the personalised approach of a one-to-one discussion. Significantly the process and report were wholeheartedly embraced by the organisation and the recommendations have now been assimilated into the organisation's Professional Development Plan.

“The support of the Personnel Manager has enabled strategic decisions to be made with regard to staff development. There is now less resistance from staff who felt Skills for Life was irrelevant to them, and indeed, there is a positive attitude to Skills for Life amongst many of the departments outside work-based learning.”

Training Manager, YMCA Training Cambridge

What kind of support and training would benefit Skills for Life and vocational staff in your organisation or team?



Developing new skills and knowledge

Traditionally teachers have acquired expertise in one subject area and work alone in classrooms to pass on that knowledge to their learners. Developing an embedded approach and working in partnership requires both vocational and LLN staff to acquire new skills and knowledge. This requires careful planning and consultation to develop a programme of staff development activities that meet the needs of the organisation and those of the staff. Providers on the Improvement Programme used a number of different approaches. These included creating opportunities for:

- initial Skills for Life awareness-raising events, which proved most effective where they included staff from all levels and parts of the organisation
- attendance on CPD training courses, both external courses and in-house training events, mainly led by the provider's own embedding experts or by Improvement Programme consultants
- peer observation, for example allocating time for vocational and Skills for Life staff to shadow each other or observe each other's classes; several providers found this modelling of good practice hugely beneficial in increasing staff confidence and in using newly acquired skills
- supporting staff to improve their own literacy and numeracy skills, and in some cases to gain qualifications.

The two examples that follow illustrate how providers in different settings put together a well-planned programme of staff development activities that took account of their staff's needs and concerns as the organisation moved to an embedded approach.



Example 1 – a college provider

At **Blackpool and the Fylde College**, the key skills and Skills for Life managers worked collaboratively with the Staff Development Manager as they considered staff training to be vital if embedding was going to be successful. A range of activities were offered to all members of staff, tailored to suit their needs and preferences. Some training was targeted at heightening colleagues' understanding of embedding literacy, language and numeracy and developing their skills at working in this way. Other opportunities were aimed at improving their personal LLN skills.

The *Skills for Life Teaching Toolkit* (from OCNW – Open College North West) has been taken up by many staff. Unit 6 covers all aspects of embedding and provides a good starting point for staff who are new to the idea. It is a Level 3 programme and each unit consists of 15 taught hours and 15 individual study hours. See www.ocnw.co.uk.

In addition, there are opportunities for staff to access Move On literacy and numeracy classes to achieve Level 2 qualifications. The Skills for Life Manager has developed an online programme using the Move On approach so that staff can work individually whilst at college or at home. This process can be confidential if the member of staff so wishes. See www.move-on.org.uk.

All members of the Senior Management Team and Curriculum Heads have worked through Level 2 maths and English in test conditions, in order that they can identify with the learners and members of staff who are working towards the Level 2 qualifications, as well as brush up their own skills.

Example 2 – a work-based learning provider

Scientiam Ltd, a work-based learning company, found their staff (Training Development Advisers) were having difficulties identifying their role in embedding Skills for Life, partly because they are not directly involved in delivery. The Skills for Life steering group wanted to tackle this issue because there was concern that the additional support required to improve learners' skills meant vocational teachers were under too much pressure. Skills for Life staff were also concerned about the increasing demands on their time to be 'informal mentors' to vocational staff. The aim identified by the steering group was to develop a more positive culture within the organisation, with all staff taking responsibility for supporting literacy, language and numeracy needs.

The resulting action plan contained the following elements:

- staff attending a wide range of training workshops, including Exploring e-learning, using the WOA Pathfinder Skills for Life resource guides and the Numeracy Energiser
- in-house training, such as identifying learners' LLN needs from interviews, application forms and assessment results and setting joint LLN/vocational targets
- supporting staff to develop their personal maths, English and ICT skills
- Skills for Life teachers accompanying TDAs on assessment visits to develop embedded practice.

Learning through partnership working

Several providers have also described effective professional development simply through working as a buddy pair. Colleagues who are open to learning in this way have appreciated the skills of their partners and thrived on working together in the classroom.

Teachers at **ShIPLEY College** reflected on the experience of partnership teaching and reported that they like teaching together and now realise it is easy to embed. Moreover the 100% achievement on the NVQ Level 2 Care programme is testimony to the success of their partnership.

“As we were picking up and establishing a new way of doing things we were learning a great deal. So in terms of staff development it was very efficient. We believe that we will need less time in the classroom from the literacy specialist next year which will free up resources for another vocational tutor to work in this way.”

Teacher at Shipley College

Key messages

- Implement a training needs analysis to inform a professional development plan to support the embedding of LLN.
- Be creative and explore a range of approaches for professional development, not just training events.
- Establish procedures and activities to ensure that staff can identify their own development needs and strengths so that they own the process.

Where are you now with Embedding? Check it out

For each of the questions below, describe:

- a the good practice or vision**
- b your current practice**
- c how it can be developed.**

Questions to consider
1 What do you want to achieve and how will you know if you are successful?
2 Who are the key people in your organisation most likely to support the implementation of embedded programmes and what is the best way of getting them involved?
3 Does your organisation use MIS data to identify where embedded programmes should be developed as a priority?
4 Have you identified organisations similar to your own that have developed successful embedded programmes?
5 Do your organisational policies and processes support an embedded delivery of LLN?
6 What staff development activities will ensure staff at all levels appreciate the benefits of embedding LLN?
7 Looking carefully at the needs of the learners and the learning programmes, what embedded approaches would suit your organisation?
8 What strategies can be established to support staff to develop embedded programmes?
9 How can you adapt current learning processes to underpin embedding, e.g. induction, initial assessment, ILPs, formative assessment?
10 What do the results of the teaching and learning observation process tell you? Is teaching practice interactive and engaging?
11 Is there a robust professional development plan to drive improvement which impacts on the quality of the learning experience?

Useful contacts and bibliography

Useful websites

The National Research and Development Centre (NRDC)

www.nrdc.org.uk

Research reports on embedding LLN and other relevant aspects of teaching and learning

Quality Improvement Agency

www.qia.org.uk

Readwriteplus

www.dcsf.gov.uk/readwriteplus/

Information on all aspects of implementing Skills for Life

Skills for Life Improvement Programme

www.sflip.org.uk

Resources and tools

Adult Core Curricula for Literacy, Numeracy and ESOL

www.dcsf.gov.uk/curriculum_literacy

www.dcsf.gov.uk/curriculum_esol

www.dcsf.gov.uk/curriculum_numeracy

Interactive and CD-ROM versions

Embedded Learning portal

<http://rwp.qia.oxi.net/embeddedlearning>

Website for developments in embedded learning and links to embedded materials

Excellence Gateway

<http://excellence.qia.org.uk>

Links to a wide range of resources for teaching and learning materials

Skills for Life: Health Check for Further Education and Training

www.qia.org.uk

Skillswise

www.bbc.co.uk/skillswise

Interactive adult and numeracy resource from the BBC for tutors and learners. The workplace survival kit is useful for vocational learning.

National programmes

The National Teaching and Learning Change Programme (NTLCP)

<http://ntlcp.qia.org.uk>

Train to Gain Development Programme

www.qiaemployerled.org.uk

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The Skills for Life Improvement Programme is delivered on behalf of the Quality Improvement Agency by CfBT Education Trust and partners



CfBT Education Trust

Learning and Skills Network

LLU+ London South Bank University

The National Institute of Adult Continuing Education

National Research and Development Centre for Adult Literacy and Numeracy

Skill: National Bureau for Students with Disabilities

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