

Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector

LJMU colleagues within the Faculty of Education, Community and Leisure (ECL) have recently completed their first commercial delivery of a Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector (PTLLS) course.

Margaret Postance and Beverly Pau, lecturers in the Faculty of ECL, successfully delivered the course over a ten week period for Training Plus Merseyside, a local training provider specialising in providing top quality hairdressing, business administration and childcare training. Eleven of the company's staff and four 'guest staff' from two other training organisations completed the course.

The PTLLS course is the first step in a new progression route for teachers in the Lifelong Learning sector. This new progression route is the result of a request from the Government, made in 2004, to Lifelong Learning UK (LLUK) to develop new professional teaching standards for the whole Further Education (FE) system as described in the document "Equipping our Teachers for the Future".



Successful students on the Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector course

The standards have been developed to respond specifically to calls from OfSTED for clearer standards for new entrants to teaching and also to promote the professionalisation of those already teaching within the sector.

Since September 2007, all new entrants to teaching in the FE sector have been required to follow a programme of study leading to an appropriate new qualification for their role within 5 years of enrolling.

'Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector' (PTLLS) is a mandatory introductory programme for all new teachers in the sector and achievement of this award confers a threshold licence to teach.

Once candidates have successfully achieved the PTLLS course they can continue on to the Certificate in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector which is the qualification taken by teachers in an associate teacher role and which has optional units designed to represent the target audience, the environment in which teaching and learning takes place and elements relating to specific teaching roles.

Progression routes in teaching in the lifelong learning sector also include a Diploma, a Foundation Degree, a Post-graduate Diploma, a B.A. Honours, a Professional Doctorate and a MA in Education.

The PTLLS course was custom designed for Training Plus Merseyside. Great effort was made to understand the makeup of the cohort and target the course accordingly and it was delivered at the client's premises in central Liverpool and at times that enabled delegates to accommodate their work commitments.

The course came together through the joint working of Gill Smylie, Business Development Manager for ECL, Jayne Lancaster, SME Business Development Officer, both of the Business Development Centre and colleagues within ECL. They identified the company's requirements, developed the course and organised funding through the Mersey Skills Network to help with the costs of the training.

The course was a great success. Brian Quinn, Director of Human Resources at Training Plus, said: 'I am urged to highly recommend this course to other employers in the community. As an SME of 40 staff in the work-based learning (vocational) sector it is rare to encounter a university ready, willing and able to manage this method of bespoke delivery.'

He continued: 'I am engaged in designing flexible responses and business solutions from my business to employers every day and rarely do I come across a service that flexibly meets my business needs. May I say well done in this venture and long may this flexible approach to HE reign! Your staff have been consummate professionals in their off-site practice and have thoroughly inspired my teaching and assessment staff in their work; well done.'

Gill Smylie, ECL Business Development Manager, said: 'We intend to build on the success of this course by offering the package to other organisations with similar needs and developing the course portfolio/range with progression routes for trainers in the Life Long Learning sector.'