

Teaching qualifications and CPD in the FE sector

In September 2007 teachers, lecturers, tutors and trainers in the further education and skills sector in England came under new regulations, which included the following:

- revised teaching qualifications, including the introduction of licensed practitioner status and the distinction between full and associate teachers
- remaining in good standing as a practitioner to include mandatory continuing professional development (CPD) for all teachers in order to retain Institute for Learning (IfL) membership.

This factsheet answers some of members' most common questions about the above.

What is the Institute for Learning?

The IfL is the professional body for teachers, lecturers, tutors and trainers employed in the further education and skills sector. This incorporates the range of providers funded by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC), which includes further education colleges, work-based learning providers, adult and community learning and the voluntary sector.

Is registration with the Institute for Learning mandatory?

Yes. If someone teaches in the further education and skills sector delivering LSC-funded provision, they are required to register with the IfL. The government has agreed to meet the full cost of registration for practitioners employed in LSC-funded institutions. Online standard membership and membership for new entrants to the sector is currently free. There is a fee attached to postal, late or retired membership and an extra fee to be a fellow of IfL. Fees are reviewed by IfL annually so check their website (www.ifl.ac.uk) for the latest figures.

What about staff working in sixth-form colleges?

Members employed in sixth-form colleges have the option of joining either the IfL or the General Teaching Council.

Does everyone need to become a licensed practitioner?

No. Licensed practitioner status is not mandatory for all. It is only mandatory for those entering the sector from September 2007, who will be required to work towards it.

However, existing practitioners are encouraged to become licensed practitioners as this will be a benchmark for the sector. The IfL expects colleges to support employees in achieving this.

What are the licensed practitioner requirements?

Under the regulations, new entrants to the sector are required to obtain the following.

- The award in Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector (PTLLS, known as 'petals'), which is the equivalent of an Introduction to Teaching course, and consists of 30 hours' delivery plus 30 hours of self-directed learning. This will be a level 3 or 4 qualification and must be completed within 12 months of taking up a teaching post.
- The Certificate in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector for associate teachers (CTLLS, known as 'kettles'). A level 3 or 4 qualification should also be undertaken upon completion of the PTLLS, and must be completed within five years of taking up a teaching post.
- A Diploma in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector for full teachers (DTLLS, known as 'detols'). A level 5 qualification should be undertaken upon completion of PTLLS and CTLLS, and must also be completed within five years of taking up a teaching post.
- Existing staff currently holding teaching qualifications will be able to undertake professional formation, which will involve a period of workplace assessment and evaluation.

The above qualifications will be available via the approved centre of an awarding body such as City and Guilds, Edexcel, OCR, etc (awarding body status is conferred by Lifelong Learning UK and the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority).

Alternatively, staff may undertake one of the higher education level 5 programmes, which combine the content of these qualifications into one package and may be called Cert Ed or PGCE within the FE sector (the status of such HE programmes is conferred by Standards Verification UK).

Completion of the above will confer licensed practitioner status corresponding to associate teacher learning and skills (associate teachers) or qualified teacher learning and skills status (full teachers).

What is the difference between full teacher and associate teacher?

A 'full teacher' carries the full range of teaching responsibilities, and requires the teacher to demonstrate an extensive range of subject knowledge, understanding and application of curriculum development, curriculum innovation or curriculum delivery strategies.

The role of associate teacher carries significantly less than the full range of teaching responsibilities ordinarily carried out in a full teaching role. It does not require the teacher to demonstrate an extensive range of knowledge, understanding and application of curriculum development, curriculum innovation or curriculum delivery strategies.

How much CPD is needed to retain IfL membership?

All full-time teachers, trainers and tutors in the further education and skills sector are required to undertake at least 30 hours of CPD per year and record their professional development.

Undertaking CPD is a condition of retaining IfL membership, and therefore being able to work in the further education and skills sector.

What about part-time teachers?

If you are employed part time, the number of required CPD hours is reduced on a pro-rata basis, falling to a minimum of six hours.

There was no requirement to complete CPD before. What's changed?

The reason for the introduction of mandatory CPD is to raise standards in the sector as a whole. It is also designed to bring practitioners in the further education and skills sector up to the standards of fellow professionals.

What kind of CPD activities will be expected?

The type and nature of potential activities are limitless and can be a mix of formal/accredited activities or more informal CPD. Examples of informal CPD might be work shadowing, peer observation, attendance at subject-specific conferences, reading journal articles, or gathering up-to-date information on new curricula and qualifications such as 14-19 diplomas.

Does an employer determine the CPD undertaken?

No. CPD undertaken to comply with the IfL's requirements is distinct from any CPD proposed by an employer. You can identify the employer's CPD as IfL CPD but that is not obligatory. The key point is that teachers have the professional autonomy to take CPD in the direction they want, providing it meets the broad requirements of the IfL's model.

What if CPD is identified by a line manager as part of an appraisal?

Any CPD identified during the appraisal process is required to meet organisational objectives and is therefore distinct from IfL CPD. Some colleges are developing an appraisal template, which fits with this. IfL CPD can be acknowledged by a line manager but it should not form part of any judgement on performance management, as it is not a performance indicator for the college.

Is there a requirement to record CPD?

Yes. CPD should be recorded and a portfolio of evidence prepared, in case it should be requested by the IfL. The portfolio needs to demonstrate that teachers have critically reflected on what has been learnt, provide evidence on how the CPD has been applied to their practice, and how this has improved teaching and learning.

The IfL has developed 'Reflect' (<http://reflect.ifl.ac.uk>), an online portal accessible via their website. Reflect provides a personalised learning space where teachers can reflect on their

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practice and record CPD. The record can be private or shared with colleagues and professionals working in other institutions. Reflect also enables teachers to quickly and easily submit CPD evidence to the IfL if requested.

Can ATL support me to meet the new CPD requirements?

Yes. Members can access ATL's training programme, which has various professional development opportunities to enable you to develop your classroom practice. For more information about the courses, please visit our website at www.atl.org.uk and go to the 'Training and events' section.

Can I gain academic accreditation for my CPD?

Yes. ATL members can take advantage of our partnership with Edge Hill University to achieve formal accreditation for CPD undertaken as part of the new requirements. Members can work towards a Masters degree, largely free of charge, by gaining academic credits through CPD. If you would like to find out more about how the Edge Hill Partnership can support you, please email: PD@edgehill.ac.uk.

Further information

More detailed information is available from the Institute for Learning's website at: www.ifl.ac.uk. For more on ATL and the FE sector, go to ATL's website at www.atl.org.uk. Use the MyATL panel to choose your sector, role and location, and click on 'activate my defaults', which will give you a series of quick links to the information most relevant to you.



Need advice?

Your local ATL branch is available to help with queries, or you can contact ATL's member advisers on **020 7930 6441**, email: info@atl.org.uk or write to 7 Northumberland Street London WC2N 5RD

Don't forget you can also get lots of help and advice, as well as download copies of other ATL advice sheets, on our website at www.atl.org.uk

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