

# clear progression

Moving towards an Integrated Qualifications Framework

Newsletter: Fourth Edition

June 2007

**Over the last 12 months, the Children's Workforce Network (CWN) has been leading the way developing a new Integrated Qualifications Framework (IQF) for the children's workforce.**

Development of the IQF is now well underway with the project entering an exciting phase of piloting cross sector units of learning. We are engaging with stakeholder in the regions to make sure everyone remains up to date with progress and is able to contribute their expertise to inform this pioneering phase of development.

This is the fourth edition of the IQF Newsletter, developed to give you an update on activities and alerting you to key regional events taking place now.

## New guidance available for employers and workers in the children's sector

Two new information leaflets on the IQF have been developed for employers and for the people who work with children young people and families detailing the key features of the IQF and how it will impact on them.

We also take the opportunity to flag up the **'Statement of Inter-Professional Values'** developed jointly by the General Teaching Council, General Social Care Council and the Nursing and Midwifery Council and we look forward to reading the results of the feedback consultation that ended on the 18 May. For your interest the statement is hosted on the NMC website – <http://www.nmc-uk.org/>

To download a free copy visit  
[http://www.cwdcouncil.org.uk/projects/  
integratedqualificationsframework.htm](http://www.cwdcouncil.org.uk/projects/integratedqualificationsframework.htm)  
or telephone 0113 244 6311

## Book your place at an event near you!

The IQF team are holding a number of regional events across England in June and July 2007 to explore the key proposals and implications of the forthcoming IQF and to let employers and stakeholders have their say.

The first two events took place earlier in June in Taunton and Preston and three more events are scheduled over the next four weeks. Each interactive day has been designed to give delegates a chance to discuss inclusion criteria and trial units for the IQF and to learn more about how the new framework will fit with the existing QCA Qualifications and Credit Framework.

If you would like to book your place at an event near you and for all matters regarding registrations, travel and venue information please contact: **shirley@yarrington.co.uk** or telephone **08456 120 256**.

The following three events are still to take place – book now to secure a place:

- **28th June, York**
- **5th July, London (full)**
- **10th July, Birmingham**

Full findings from all five days and action reports will be available after these events.

## New Cross Sector and Early Years Units to be included on IQF

The IQF is being designed to link with both the emerging new Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) and with the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications.

Since the last newsletter a series of cross sector units and units to form a qualification for early years' practitioners have been developed.

These are due to be placed on the QCF very soon for awarding bodies to use within their qualifications. Consultation on a set of inclusion principles and processes for units and qualifications is due to take place at the regional events in June/July 2007.

## Higher Education provider work together to prepare for the IQF

Work is also progressing with Higher Education (HE) providers and the regional events will provide further opportunity for this group to feedback their thoughts on the IQF.

In the meantime, a new project has just been launched by five Higher Education Academy Subject Centres in partnership with CWDC and CWN, to bring together relevant subject disciplines and sector bodies to raise awareness of the children's workforce agenda and policy developments. The project will identify examples of emerging good practice for integrated provision in higher education, promote collaboration between disciplines and help facilitate dialogue between higher education and the CWDC and CWN.

Plans are also developing on a Gateways initiative aimed to explore how effective Foundation Degrees are in meeting the challenges of the children's workforce with a secondary focus on strengthening the evidence base of 'what works' to inform the IQF.





## Vocational Education and Training groups meet to discuss IQF

A new reference group has been set up to advise on the development of the IQF from a Vocational Education and Training (VET) perspective.

Members are drawn from national agencies with an interest in this work such as:

- the Association of Colleges,
- Centres of Vocational Excellence Networks,
- Sector Skills Councils,
- the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority,
- Ofsted,
- the Learning and Skills Council, and
- voluntary and charitable sector organisations such as the National Youth Agency and the National Children's Bureau.

A study (questionnaire) is currently being undertaken to identify the barriers and issues facing training providers, colleges, employers and learners wishing to access qualifications. We will be talking with training providers in the VET workshops as part of the five IQF regional events.

This piece of work will also inform the development of a communication strategy, so that information can be received from and sent to the appropriate people in the most accessible way.

## Involving the wider UK

The IQF team are keen to ensure UK interests are considered when developing the qualifications framework. Securing the support of the UK nations is a key platform of activity and we will shortly be publishing our first newsletter to be circulated specifically to our colleagues across the UK. This will be followed by meetings in each country. People working in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales who want to be put on the distribution list for UK activity please contact [mark.bennett@cwdcouncil.org.uk](mailto:mark.bennett@cwdcouncil.org.uk)

## Consultation and communication – understanding the IQF

Alongside the regional events the IQF Project Board is looking at other ways of engaging stakeholders including website improvements. These will help us to respond to the high level of interest shown in the IQF and will ensure a continuous flow and exchange of information is timed to support the associated initiatives.

We are also looking to make sure that all the bodies and agencies involved in promoting better outcomes for children and young people are engaged in the IQF and we will be analysing distribution lists to inform future targeted communications.

## Keep it smart, keep it simple!

Central to all communications, the IQF team are keen to promote the need for clear and simple language in all IQF communications. The IQF requires many stakeholders, structures and frameworks to work together as we develop and progress this project. We are constantly reminded of how difficult it can be to navigate around qualification systems and gain access to clear and accurate information at the right time.

The IQF vision is that we will make qualifications more accessible to suit a mobile and varied workforce.

From the beginning we are paying close attention to the language we use and will act to avoid creating a new spiral of terms that will need to be explained. We will try to reduce jargon and acronyms. Nonetheless a glossary is available on the CWDC website to help us all steer our way through the terminology used when dealing with the IQF and notably when looking at pre-existing qualifications frameworks –

<http://www.cwdcouncil.org.uk/projects/integratedqualificationsframework.htm>

## 2007 and beyond – a note from Frances Evesham, Project Manager

Over the next few months, the IQF team will be working and consulting with our delivery partners to continue to develop a highly relevant and accessible IQF. The regional events, for example, will play a fundamental role in the development of principles and processes for inclusion on the IQF. They will help ensure that all qualifications and their component parts included in the IQF will drive forward our aims to make sure that qualifications for the children's sector are fit for purpose, make movement easier from one post to another across England, make choosing the right qualifications easier and support integrated working.

We will be testing out these principles and processes as the new cross sector and early years' units are developed into qualifications. We will use the development and testing phase to add new qualification components over the next year to ensure that, when the IQF project finally completes in 2010, the IQF will be robust and work effectively.

Over the next year, we will also be carrying out a research programme to improve our knowledge of the size and constituent members of the children's workforce, and how best qualifications can be used to support movement across the workforce. We will also be building on research undertaken by CWN partners, for example looking into the current mobility patterns across the sector and into how people working with children and their families would like to develop their careers.

We are looking forward to meeting practitioners, managers and educators at the regional events over the next few weeks. If you have been unable to secure a place at your local event (there has been huge interest in these) please keep an eye on the web site for a report on the outcomes of the events and how we take forward the key messages from participants.

In the meantime, we look forward to building on the foundations of the IQF to date, and we will continue to post information on the CWDC web site and in future newsletters as the project develops to keep you informed.

### Want to find out more?

For more details on the IQF visit CWDC at [www.cwdcouncil.org.uk](http://www.cwdcouncil.org.uk), CWN at [www.childrensworkforce.org.uk](http://www.childrensworkforce.org.uk) or email Frances Evesham at [iqf@cwdcouncil.org.uk](mailto:iqf@cwdcouncil.org.uk)

For information on CWN work and CWN's e-bulletin, please contact Hilary Barnard, project management services to CWN, at [hilarybarnard@aol.com](mailto:hilarybarnard@aol.com)

