

It is now five months since the Education and Training Foundation was launched, and a very busy four months since I became Interim Chief Executive. Thus I felt it was timely to update you on progress and alert you to some immediate opportunities for working with the Foundation, as well as giving you some insights into our early thinking for 2014-2015 activities. I am also very keen to establish even better communications channels, so we can keep you and/or your team informed of activities and especially opportunities to work with us.

Building the Foundation

A key focus for me since joining has been to ensure that the Foundation has the right team, robust processes and is working in the right way, as well of course as getting activity underway. I am very grateful to the strong and dedicated interim team, that quickly mobilised the organisation and began delivery on key elements of our plan.

Recruitment of permanent staffing has progressed well, and we have 35 people (that's 26 of the 32 FTE we have committed to) starting before the end of February. As a new organisation, ensuring that we have the skills and expertise, the vision and the capability for the sector and our own needs is important. I am pleased that the diverse new team will include skilled staff who were previously at LSIS, alongside people who have significant sector expertise and others who bring professional skills from other fields into the Foundation. Our connection with the sector is consolidated through the sector representation we have on our Board of [Directors](#) and our [Expert Panels](#). We will be announcing the members of these Expert Panels in the New Year, but it has been good to see the commitment of sector professionals to support the Foundation in meeting a core element of our aim of ensuring we meet the priority needs of the sector.

As a tightly structured organisation, commissioning has to be the main form of operation for the Foundation; and we are committed to open and transparent, competition based procurement. This has gone well and we now have contracts in place to continue [services](#) that transferred from LSIS, develop new programmes and undertake research to inform future programme development and evaluation.

Immediate opportunities for you

There are a number of opportunities for your organisation to participate in projects funded through the Foundation. These include opportunities to share your good practice, apply to participate in development and collaborative projects or to work in consortia to develop particular sector needs.

Details of all these can be found [here](#) so please do take the opportunity to be supported by the Foundation and to work with us to enhance professionalism across the sector.

Developing the workforce

Our initial work in this area has covered a number of interrelated strands. Shaping the workforce of the future, we have worked in partnership with BIS and others to improve the quality in initial teacher education. This has included clarifying and extending who is [eligible for Teacher Education bursaries](#), and there are real opportunities here for providers to develop their future workforce. This work has been underpinned by the [development of a toolkit](#) to enable providers to promote the bursaries to potential students.

For current professionals, we have focussed on the development of skills and knowledge in curriculum areas; primarily making sure that teachers and trainers can access [maths enhancement programmes](#), ensuring that they have the knowledge for teaching of GCSE maths. This is a programme we are monitoring very closely and working hard to make sure it does deliver what you need; your feedback would be appreciated. In the meantime I hope you will continue to support and encourage your relevant staff to attend one of the courses. We have also ensured that there is continued support for professionals teaching science, technology, engineering and mathematics ([STEM](#)) subjects and [working with learners with disabilities](#).

And we have begun the progress of [shaping the professional standards](#) for teachers and trainers. This review is being informed by internal research, discussions with stakeholders and has significant input from practitioners from across the sector. It is clearly essential that lecturers, teachers and trainers having responsibility for, and ownership of, their own professional learning. We will consult on the revised structure and purpose of the standards in the New Year, and I do ask you to encourage teachers and trainers in your organisation to respond to this consultation.

It's all about work

That's the one message from the report of the [Commission on Adult Vocational Teaching and Learning](#), which was published earlier in 2013. The Foundation is responsible for implementing the recommendations of this report, and to that end we co-hosted the [first National Vocational Educational and Training conference](#) at the Skills Show in November, where the importance of a clear line of sight to work being at the heart of vocational education and training, supported by dual professionals was paramount. [Teach Too](#) is an early priority for us as well; and that's why we are calling for exemplars of this practice that we can share across the sector and build upon further.

We are also commissioning programmes to support the introduction of traineeships, the implementation of reforms to apprenticeships, including higher apprenticeships, and professional development support to embed skills competitions practice. Further programmes taking forward the Commission's recommendations on the two-way street, improving the distinctive practices of vocational teaching and learning, support for occupational updating and the use of learning technologies will follow early in 2014. We will also consult on the longer term development of a National Vocational Education and Training Centre, which could act as a focal point for excellence and innovation in vocational teaching and learning.

Talking about Leadership

Through the consultation that was undertaken early in 2012, the sector emphasised the profound impact that the quality of leadership, management and governance has on the effectiveness of teaching and learning. We must not lose sight of this, and that's why we have commissioned projects to: facilitate opportunities for mentoring, coaching and work shadowing through a central register that matches demand to available expertise; implement a coherent approach to management training, so that specialist skills needs are met; and further develop the leadership skills of the community workforce.

Following the major review of Governance, we have commissioned the development of a new programme for college governors and have continued to provide support for the [Senior Leadership and Management Development Programme](#), where we are offering a bursary for applicants undertaking the programme in 2014. We are also supporting programmes aimed at support for governance development in non-college providers.

With the support of the sector, these programmes will ensure there is a full and rounded discussion on leadership that captures the ideas and innovation in the sector, but addresses the changes leaders currently face and the challenges they may face in the future, as well as the many opportunities resulting from changes in Government policies and approaches.

Shaping the future

So 2014 is quickly approaching, and at the end of January, I will be handing over to David Russell, as permanent Chief Executive. David's knowledge of education and skills is informed by his training as a teacher, as well as his years working across government policy, which will give him an excellent basis on which to take the Foundation forward into the future.

The activity that I have highlighted here is just a snapshot of the work that the Foundation team have begun. Some of these programmes are already benefitting the sector, others are calling for you to share your ideas and expertise; but all are shaping the future and are indicators of what the Foundation will continue to do, informed by your insights, needs and expertise, in the years ahead. The team are already working up the proposed programmes for 2014-2015, based on current work and agreed priorities.

Please [do keep in touch](#) with the Foundation over the next year. I know the Foundation will have much to offer the sector and I am equally certain that sector professionals have as much to share with us.



Peter Davies, CB, CBE
Interim Chief Executive