

DFES Draft Regulations: *Professionalising the Workforce in the FE System***UCET Response**

UCET welcomes the opportunity to comment on the draft Regulations relating to the Principals' Qualifications and to the CPD of Further Education teachers.

In our view, the Regulations relating to Principals' Qualifications certainly accord with desired policy outcomes. It is imperative that those who have crucial leadership roles to play in the sector undergo a programme of relevant professional education and training. Such professional preparation for the role of Principal is essential if the drive to raise standards and to enhance the quality of the educational experience offered by the sector is to prove successful.

Nor do we see any negative consequences stemming from the Regulations that would impact on equality and diversity in the sector. Indeed, in our view, the introduction of the Principals' Qualification will contribute to a more equitable basis for the selection of Principals. Of course, the Regulations imply equitable access to the professional qualifying programme.

There is certainly a case for making provision for reciprocal recognition between the CEL and the NCSL, but such recognition should not be automatic but based on a careful analysis of the respective programmes. Given the significant differences between school and FE contexts, it may be that those who acquire the qualification for leadership in one sector may need to undertake additional study/activities to be eligible and qualified to perform a leadership role in the other. We therefore support a form of modified reciprocity.

UCET strongly endorses the principle that those who teach, in whatever context, require access to opportunities to extend their professional understanding and skills in order to enrich their teaching. The draft Regulations give effect to this principle by stipulating that full-time teachers should complete 30 hours of CPD in a given year, with pro rata equivalent for part-time teachers and a sensible adjustment for those working with more than one employer. In UCET's view, the Regulations would be improved if the language used affirmed that CPD was an entitlement rather than a burden.

We have a further reservation. Given that the aim of the Regulations is to codify ways in which the work of the sector can be improved, we suggest that it is insufficient simply to make bald reference to the duration of the CPD to be completed. What matters is not the duration of CPD but its quality and appropriateness. For this reason we would prefer to see the draft Regulations amended to refer to 30 hours of CPD to be provided according to a framework agreed from time to time by the IfL and reflecting teachers' assessment of their professional development needs. Such a change would reinforce the practitioners' entitlement to professional development opportunities. It would also be a way of making it an obligation on college senior managements to ensure that the professional development opportunities made available met national standards of appropriateness and quality.

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7 May 2007