

# Evidencing Personal Skills in Literacy and Numeracy Guidance to Teachers and Employers

September 2008



The aim of this guidance is to inform teachers and employers about evidencing personal skills in literacy and numeracy, which is a key requirement for conferral of licensed practitioner status by the Institute for Learning (IfL)<sup>1</sup>. The document is in two parts:

- **Part one** explains how the requirements affect teachers and what they should do to meet the requirements for personal skills in literacy and numeracy;
- **Part two** gives background information and explains how the list of approved qualifications was identified.

For the purposes of this document the term 'teacher' has been used generically to represent teachers, tutors, trainers, lecturers and instructors in the further education (FE) sector<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup>Professional Formation July 2008 Version 0.1 IfL

<sup>2</sup>There are 470 UK FE institutions, whose work is primarily concerned with post-compulsory learning, although the sector also includes work based learning and community based learning provision, plus institutionally based programmes

## Part one

### Personal literacy and numeracy skills and licensed practitioner status

Evidencing the personal skills of literacy and numeracy is a mandatory element of the professional formation process of the Institute for Learning. This is the process that enables a teacher to gain licensed practitioner status, Qualified Teacher, Learning and Skills (QTLS) or Associate Teacher, Learning and Skills (ATLS). Further information on the process of professional formation is available on the IfL website at [www.ifl.ac.uk](http://www.ifl.ac.uk).

The Further Education Teachers' Qualifications (England) Regulations 2007<sup>3</sup> state that no person may be employed in a teaching role unless they have either satisfied IfL that they have the necessary numeracy, literacy and ICT skills to teach or hold an award approved by the Secretary of State. The regulations apply to all those who entered teaching in the FE sector from 1 September 2007 (see below for those who were teaching prior to this point).

This document provides guidance to teachers and employers about how to evidence personal skills in literacy and numeracy, for those who have obtained an award approved by the Secretary of State. Guidance on how others might evidence their skills to the satisfaction of IfL is being developed and will be published on the IfL website.

A process for evidencing personal skills in Information and Communications Technology (ICT) is being considered for the future. The ICT element will not prevent teachers from achieving professional standing with IfL at this time. Once the ICT requirement is introduced, those teachers who have already achieved professional standing will not be expected to meet new requirements retrospectively, although all teachers are encouraged to improve their personal ICT skills as appropriate to meet the needs of their professional role.<sup>4</sup>

### The list of approved qualifications for literacy and numeracy

The terms literacy and numeracy are those used in the 2007 FE regulations. However, it is recognised that some acceptable qualifications will have English/communication or mathematics/maths in their titles. Any listed qualification may be used as evidence, irrespective of date of achievement or current availability.

A list of approved qualifications can be found on the Standards Verification UK (SVUK) website at [www.standardsverificationuk.org](http://www.standardsverificationuk.org). This list will be subject to periodic review to ensure it remains fit for purpose.

### Teachers who are required to meet the 2007 regulations

Evidence of personal skills in literacy and numeracy may have been acquired before the period of professional formation, or may be acquired within the time period allowed (up to five years from commencement of the first contract in the sector). In either case, evidence of personal skills is submitted during the professional formation period. The mechanism for providing evidence is detailed on the IfL website.

### Teachers who are not required to meet the 2007 regulations

The 2007 qualifications regulations are not retrospective. Existing teachers, i.e. those who entered teaching in the FE sector before 1 September 2007, do not have to gain licensed practitioner status with IfL. However, teachers who entered teaching in the FE sector between 2001 and 2007 regulations need to hold an appropriate qualification as required by The Further Education Teachers' Qualifications (England) Regulations 2001. All teachers, irrespective of when they entered the profession, need to register with IfL and meet the annual CPD requirement as required by The Further Education Teachers' Continuing Professional Development and Registration (England) Regulations 2007.

<sup>3</sup>Statutory Instrument 2007 No. 2264 (2007 Regulations)

<sup>4</sup>Evidencing the personal skills requirements for teachers, tutors and trainers in the lifelong learning sector- position statement LLUK July 2008

In addition, all existing teachers opting to gain licensed practitioner status will need to fulfill the same requirements of professional formation as new teachers, including the requirement to evidence personal skills in literacy and numeracy

### QTS holders who joined the FE sector after September 2007

The regulations also require those who began teaching in the FE sector after 1 September 2007, and who already have Qualified Teacher Status (QTS), to acquire QTLS or ATLS status. The regulations require such teachers to register with IfL and complete a period of professional formation which includes an orientation to teaching in the FE Sector, but they are not required to obtain further qualifications. These teachers have already evidenced level 2 skills in literacy and numeracy as part of gaining QTS, so are not required to do so again.

### How does this affect employers?

It is important for employers in the FE sector to understand the implications of the reforms in order to support their teaching staff in gaining licensed practitioner status. The full requirements for new teachers and existing teachers can be found in the LLUK document titled 'Further Education Workforce Reforms'<sup>5</sup>.

A key responsibility for employers is to support teachers as they either prepare their submission for professional formation, including, in some cases, authentication of personal skills evidence, or support a colleague in preparing a submission.

Further details of the authentication process are available from IfL.

### What if a qualification is not on the approved list or if the candidate has no qualifications in literacy and/or numeracy?

Qualification titles and types have changed over the years. To help with this, a list of equivalence descriptors will be available on the SVUK website. If a particular qualification title is not on the approved qualification list, these descriptors will help to determine whether the qualification is likely to be eligible as evidence.

Further work is being carried out by Lifelong Learning UK (LLUK), SVUK and IfL into alternative evidencing processes, including the use of qualifications that have literacy and numeracy personal skill requirements embedded within them, qualifications gained abroad and future evidencing of personal skills in ICT. LLUK and SVUK will produce a list of frequently asked questions to further support teachers and employers to evidence the personal skills element of professional formation.

At this time, there are no plans to develop bespoke tests for personal skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT for teachers seeking licensed practitioner status, equivalent to skills tests for intending schools teachers. This position will be reviewed as part of future evaluations and updates of the personal skills requirement.

The National Tests in Adult Literacy and Numeracy at level 2 (which appear on the list of approved qualifications) are widely available, and support can be provided for those who need to update their skills before taking these tests. Information on the content and format of the test can be found on the readwriteplus website at [www.dcsf.gov.uk/readwriteplus/NationalTestLeaflet](http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/readwriteplus/NationalTestLeaflet).

Test centres can be located using the "Find a Course" facility on the Directgov website at [www.learnirect-advice-search.co.uk/pls/hotufi2/aff\\_page\\_pls\\_all\\_homepage?a=260405](http://www.learnirect-advice-search.co.uk/pls/hotufi2/aff_page_pls_all_homepage?a=260405)

<sup>5</sup>Further education workforce reforms: Explaining initial teacher training, continuing professional development and principals' qualifications in England, LLUK 2007

# Part two

## Background

The 'minimum core of literacy, language, numeracy and ICT for inclusion in all post-16 teacher education programmes'<sup>6</sup> was first identified in 2004. It supports awarding institutions and teacher education programmes in equipping all trainee teachers with the skills to develop inclusive approaches that address the language, literacy and numeracy needs of their learners. As part of the reform of teacher education, a new teacher qualifications framework for the lifelong learning sector in England was introduced in September 2007. The minimum core was revised for inclusion within the new teacher education programmes. The revised minimum core continued to detail the knowledge, understanding and personal skills in literacy, language and numeracy expected of all teachers in the sector. Requirements relating to ICT were included for the first time. Full details of the revised minimum core can be found in 'Addressing Literacy, Language, Numeracy and ICT needs in education and training: defining the minimum core of teachers' knowledge, understanding and personal skills'<sup>7</sup>.

When the personal skills requirement was first implemented in 2004, it was described as "at a level at least equal to that demanded of learners in the national curriculum for schools". That is level 2 of the New Qualifications Framework (NQF) / Qualifications Credit Framework (QCF). The skills described will support all teachers in developing effective pedagogic skills and inclusive approaches for learners with literacy, language and numeracy needs. It should be noted that level 2 skills are a minimum and that many teachers will already have or may need to develop their skills further in order to teach their area of specialism.

The personal skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT considered to be appropriate for all teachers in the FE Sector are detailed in the minimum core. However, it is recognised that no existing or previously available qualification in literacy or numeracy fully meets the personal skills requirement of the minimum core. It is also recognised that many teachers already hold qualifications in English and/or mathematics at level 2 and above, which they may wish to use to demonstrate they have personal skills in literacy and/or numeracy. Therefore, research into qualifications which could acceptably count as evidence for the personal skills in literacy and numeracy has been carried out by LLUK.

Following a mapping exercise of literacy and numeracy qualifications at level 2 and above to the relevant minimum core personal skills specifications, a benchmark was established for each qualification type, for sufficient coverage of the literacy and numeracy skill areas. This benchmark, together with two overarching criteria, has been used to draw up a list of 'approved qualifications' commonly held by teachers.

The overarching criteria are:

1. Any qualification(s) or other accredited evidence must be at a minimum of level 2 (NQF/QCF) in England, or its equivalent in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland
2. All qualification achievement grades must be a pass or above, at a level equivalent to at least level 2 (NQF/QCF) in England, for example an A\*-C in GCSE

<sup>6</sup>FENTO 2004

<sup>7</sup>LLUK 2007

## Further advice

The LLUK Information and Advice Service is funded by the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS) and staffed by experienced practitioners and teacher trainers. The service offers free confidential, specialist advice on all aspects of working in the lifelong learning sector. The service also includes the National Reference Point for Skills for Life professional development. IAS can also be contacted with enquiries about:

- How to provide evidence of qualifications where certificates have been lost or mislaid
- Queries about qualifications other than those which appear on the list

You can telephone the Information and Advice Service on **020 7936 5798** or email [advice@lluk.org](mailto:advice@lluk.org).

All other enquiries about professional formation and the mechanism to provide evidence should be referred to IfL on **020 7190 1633** or email [cpd@ifl.ac.uk](mailto:cpd@ifl.ac.uk).