

Investors in People Assessment and Recognition Units

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QPID

QUALITY and PERFORMANCE
IMPROVEMENT DISSEMINATION

Investors in People Assessment and Recognition Units

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 In December 1999, Quality and Performance Improvement Dissemination (QPID) was commissioned to carry out a study of the ways in which assessment and recognition arrangements for Investors in People in England operated at the local level. Aubrey Carter Lucas carried out this study on behalf of QPID.

Background

1.2 Investors in People (IiP) is a national Standard for the development of people to achieve business objectives. It is based on four key principles:

- commitment from the top to developing all employees to achieve the organisation's business objectives;
- regular reviews of needs, resulting in planned training and development of all employees;
- taking action to train and develop individuals on recruitment and throughout their employment; and
- evaluating the investment in training and development to assess achievement and improve future effectiveness.

1.3 Investors in People UK (IiP UK) is the custodian of the national Standard and of the quality assurance arrangements for the assessment and recognition processes through which employers become an "Investor in People". It has overall responsibility for promoting the Standard and also leads assessments and recognitions of some national employers through the national assessment unit.

1.4 In England, Training and Enterprise Councils and Chambers of Commerce, Training and Enterprise (TECs)¹ are responsible for promoting IiP to their local employers - working with them to gain their commitment, supporting them as they progress towards assessment and formal recognition as an Investor in People and providing on-going support to assist employers in maintaining the Standard thereafter.

1.5 Assessment of organisations against the Standard and recognition of them as Investors in People is carried out by IiP UK approved assessment and recognition units. In England, with the exception of the national unit, these units are all linked in some way to their local TEC(s).

1.6 The White Paper² and subsequent policy documents on Post 16 Education and Training set out proposals for the introduction of the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) and Small Business Service (SBSs) franchises. Subject to passage of the required legislation, they will replace the current TEC/Business Link infrastructure.

1. Throughout this report the term TEC or TECs is used to represent both Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs) and/or Chambers of Commerce, Training and Enterprise (CCTEs).
2. **Learning to Succeed: a new framework for post-16 learning.** (Cm 4392, June 1999).

- 1.7 In relation to liP, the White Paper proposed that the LSC's functions would include:
- promoting liP;
 - taking forward “the drive to achieve the national targets for organisations to be recognised as Investors in People” (elsewhere “taking responsibility for meeting the targets for liP recognitions”); and
 - (working closely with the SBS and liP UK) having “responsibility for funds to support employers to become recognised as Investors in People”.
- 1.8 The “Guidance for Proposals to Deliver Local Services on Behalf of the Small Business Service” outlines the role which SBS service providers will undertake in relation to liP:
- “liP and other workforce development services for Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs) will be delivered through SBS”; and
 - “SBS franchises will also deliver to SMEs support for liP under contract to the local LSC”.
- 1.9 The changes brought about by the White Paper afforded an opportunity to review the provision of liP assessment and recognition services.

Objectives for the Review

- 1.10 Given this context, the objectives for the review were to:
- map the type and range of assessment and recognition arrangements;
 - consider “good” and “bad” practice in the design of local assessment and recognition centres;
 - identify the issues around existing arrangements which might impact on the design of future arrangements; and
 - outline and analyse the generic issues which need to be considered for liP assessment and recognition under the LSC structure.

Methodology

- 1.11 A two stage approach was adopted. Stage 1 (late November to mid-December 1999) focused on the first two objectives for the study and involved a number of face-to-face and telephone interviews with:
- liP UK;
 - nominated contacts in each of the Government Offices (GOs);
 - nominated contacts in some TECs; and
 - managers of five liP assessment and recognition centres.

- 1.12 Stage 2 (late January to mid-February 2000) provided further detail for the mapping exercise, and thereby more information on good and bad practice, but was particularly focused on the third and fourth objectives for the study.
- 1.13 Stage 2 work primarily comprised of face-to-face discussions with:
- liP UK;
 - managers of liP assessment and recognition units;
 - TECs associated with assessment and recognition units;
 - liP committed and recognised employers; and
 - a number of other stakeholders.
- 1.14 With regard to employers, most of the assessment and recognition units involved in the fieldwork were asked to nominate two employers (ideally one that was liP-committed and one that had been recognised as an Investor in People) for telephone interviews with the consultants. A total of thirty-two employers were involved in such discussions.
- 1.15 A full list of organisations involved in the study is attached at Annex 1. This includes an indication of the range of employers involved in the telephone survey. Checklists of issues, agreed with the Department for Education and Employment (DfEE), were used to guide all of the discussions.
- 1.16 The key findings from this study have been used to inform policy developments regarding the future arrangements for Investors in People, and in particular the provision of assessment and recognition services. Ministers have agreed that these services will be provided in future through regional assessment, recognition and practitioner development units. These units will be contracted to the national Learning and Skills Council and licensed by Investors in People UK.
- 1.17 In April, the Department published a framework document for TECs and their Investors in People Assessment Unit staff. This announced a series of regional meetings with people involved in the provision of Investors in People services during May. The outcomes of these discussions fed directly into the development of bidding guidance for the new assessment units which was issued in July 2000.

Structure of this Report

- 1.18 This report constitutes the final output from the review. The remaining sections:
- summarise the main findings (Section 2);
 - review current approaches to assessment and recognition (Section 3); and
 - consider the more forward-looking objectives set for the study (Section 4).

2. SUMMARY

Current Approaches to Assessment and Recognition

2.1 Three broad types of assessment and recognition unit which (with the national unit) currently deliver the liP assessment and recognition process under license from liP UK can be identified – i.e.:

- single TEC assessment and recognition units – both assessment and recognition functions are provided by an individual TEC, generally for its own (exceptionally for another TECs') employers;
- independent (multi-TEC) assessment and recognition units – assessment and recognition functions are provided by a central unit (established as either a company limited by guarantee or a partnership) for a number of TECs (generally in the same Government Office region); and
- collaborative (multi-TEC) assessment and recognition units – individual TECs retain their own assessment (and in some cases recognition) functions; a central unit co-ordinates service delivery for the participating TECs and is the licensed unit for liP UK purposes.

2.2 Using these broad categories, the current picture of assessment and recognition practice can be broadly summarised as follows:

- a common approach to assessment and recognition across all TECs in a particular Government Office exists in two regions (Eastern and the North East);
- nineteen TECs operate their own assessment and recognition unit – an additional two TECs operate their own recognition units (Bradford and Wight);
- TECs participating in Assessment West Midlands' (AWM) collaborative arrangement and Assessment South West's (ASW) independent unit also have their own recognition panels but these are regarded as satellites of the central, liP UK-licensed, (i.e. AWM or ASW) unit rather than units in their own right;
- single TEC units are common in the South East and the North West regions – elsewhere only one or two TECs have opted out of some form of collaborative arrangement. Generally these are large TECs – either geographically (Lincolnshire, Cumbria) or in terms of the relative size of their local economy (Birmingham);
- fifty-four TECs are covered by some form of collective arrangement with other TECs (i.e. an independent or a collaborative unit). Generally these arrangements operate within a single Government Office region;
- only three TECs use the services of a unit which is based outside their region; and
- one region (the South East) has no form of collective arrangement for liP assessment and recognition covering its TECs.

- 2.3 In practice, within the three broad categories specified above, the fieldwork has identified nine approaches for delivering liP assessment and recognition in addition to the national unit. These are:
- single TEC assessment and recognition units – the principal variants are defined by reference to delivery: either largely in-house (model 1) or largely sub-contracted (model 2);
 - independent (regional) assessment and recognition units (operating as limited companies) – the principal variants are defined by reference to geographical coverage: whole Government Office region “plus” (model 3); whole Government Office region (model 4); “almost” whole Government Office region (model 5) and sub-regional (model 6);
 - independent (regional) assessment and recognition units (operating as partnerships) (model 7);
 - collaborative units (model 8); and
 - TECs using the assessment and/or recognition services of one of the above units whilst not formally being part of the unit (model 9).
- 2.4 Based upon the fieldwork, no single model emerged as the most effective in all circumstances.
- 2.5 In an liP context, standardisation would appear to be most important in terms of process (i.e. a guarantee that a service of consistent quality is being delivered across the country – and therefore that the notion of a national Standard has credibility) and less important in terms of the design of the unit delivering assessment and recognition services.

Key Findings and Issues for Consideration

- 2.6 The issues covered in the following paragraphs are generic in the sense that they are key elements which, on the basis of the research, need to be considered when designing future arrangements for liP delivery. This is the case regardless of the actual structure for delivery which is ultimately adopted.
- 2.7 Concerns regarding **the potential for conflicts of interest** to arise in the liP process (and as a consequence for the integrity of the Standard to be brought in to question) were raised in relation to the operation of single TEC assessment and recognition units. In essence these doubts arise because, in the case of single TEC units, the organisation which has performance targets in relation to liP (i.e. the TEC) is also responsible for undertaking the advice and assessment roles. The potential for a conflict of interest to arise would appear to be greatest in cases where both advice and assessment are delivered by the TEC in-house.
- 2.8 Although no one was suggesting that anything untoward had happened to date, to reduce the risk of conflicts of interest occurring in future, wherever practical, **the situation where one organisation employs on its staff both assessors and advisers whilst it also has delivery targets in relation to liP should be avoided – the purchaser-provider relationship needs to be clear.**

- 2.9 A key feature of liP is that it is **a national Standard, consistently applied across the country**. Consistency of the assessment and recognition process is currently assured through a variety of means - internal (employed by the assessment and recognition units) and external (employed by liP UK) verifiers, training and development for assessors (advisers are also often included – either by invitation or because they are also assessors), work shadowing, regular assessor forums etc. In addition all units have to have a procedures (quality assurance) manual which has been approved by liP UK.
- 2.10 **It is important that national and local quality assurance procedures are retained to provide continued assurance that assessment and recognition practices are producing consistent results (in terms of the standard reached by liP-recognised employers) across the country.**
- 2.11 In general **quality assurance arrangements in relation to advice** are currently less formalised than those that apply to assessment and recognition. Based on feedback from assessment and recognition units and employers, **there is a need for quality assurance procedures to cover those offering liP advice**. These should start at the adviser registration stage, include training and development requirements and focus on the quality of advice provided to the candidate organisation both pre- and post-recognition.
- 2.12 Concerns were raised by some employers regarding the **experience (and therefore suitability) of advisers and assessors**. This suggests that there may be a need for **adviser and assessor registration to be more tightly prescribed – in terms of the type of organisation that individuals are “qualified” to work with on liP – in future**. There is scope for doing this at a fairly high level – on the basis of an organisation’s size (small, medium or larger in terms of employee numbers), type (public, private or voluntary) and/or complexity (single or multiple site) – whilst still adding value.
- 2.13 Notwithstanding the above, there is strong support for **organisations to continue to use non-registered advisers on a “buyer beware” basis**.
- 2.14 Advisers benefit from assessing and vice versa – **individuals should therefore be encouraged to do both roles (but not at the same time for the same organisation). The distinction between the roles of adviser and assessor should be retained under future arrangements for liP delivery**.
- 2.15 It is important that, at key points in the process, both adviser and assessor are involved in order to ensure that the client organisation receives a seamless liP service. In particular **the adviser needs to be involved before, during and after the assessment**.
- 2.16 Although in the recent past there has been considerable pressure for Recognition Panels to be retained, their role is not always clear to employers about to be recognised. **There is a need to reconsider the Recognition Panel’s remit - in particular to determine where and how Panels can best add value to the process and to tailor their input accordingly**.
- 2.17 Currently assessment and recognition units are either:
- very small – less than (often considerably less than) 100 assessments/reviews per annum (the smaller single TEC units);
 - medium sized - between 300 and 400 assessments/reviews per annum (the larger single TEC units, sub-regional and smaller regional units);
 - large – over 700 assessments/reviews per annum (the larger regional units).

- 2.18 Looking to the future, there must be **doubts over the future of the smallest units on efficiency grounds** – although there may be other pressures/considerations (e.g. relative remoteness/rurality) which make them an effective means through which to deliver liP.
- 2.19 The larger TEC units and some regional units currently appear to enjoy comparable levels of efficiency (approximately 100 assessments/reviews per member of staff at the unit). Some sub-regional and larger regional units appear to be more efficient than this on a straight staff to number of assessments/reviews basis, however the extent to which economies (and diseconomies) of scale apply with larger units remains largely untested.
- 2.20 A note of caution in relation to the above should be sounded. Following the changes to the post-recognition review process, the feedback received during the course of this study suggests that the majority of assessment and recognition units are expecting the length of time between recognition and post-recognition reviews to shorten (typically to between twelve months and two years).
- 2.21 One consequence of more frequent reviews is that **the number of employers handled by assessment and recognition units each year will increase significantly year on year**. This represents a major change in the employer-assessment and recognition unit relationship – as a result, what has gone before, in terms of assessment and recognition experience, may not provide an appropriate basis upon which to make decisions on appropriate delivery arrangements.
- 2.22 Currently liP UK licenses assessment and recognition units to ensure full geographical coverage. **Competition between units for business tends to happen only in relation to larger regional and national employers. This lack of direct competition between units for local business has positive consequences.**
- 2.23 National employers are likely to present different challenges to those posed by smaller, more locally/regionally based employers. **In addition to being able to work with local/regional units, national employers will want the option of having liP advice and assessment co-ordinated by a national unit.** This would need to be subject to the same integrity considerations as more local delivery units.
- 2.24 Because national employers present different challenges, advising and assessing them is a different task to advising and assessing local employers. There is a need for a different type (or calibre) of adviser/assessor to undertake this role. This would suggest that **a separate register of advisers and assessors who are able to deliver liP to national employers needs to be established.**
- 2.25 The fieldwork for this study also found that liP delivery to national employers can be patchy, with certain parts of the employer pursuing liP recognition in isolation from the rest of the organisation rather than as part of a considered strategy. **There is a need for greater coordination of work with national employers (who is doing what with whom).** In this context, the option of building a national database for liP activity, possibly incorporating a central helpline which routes enquiries to the appropriate local agency, is also worth considering.

3. CURRENT APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT AND RECOGNITION

Introduction

- 3.1 This section reviews the current approaches to assessment and recognition unit design which were observed during the course of the fieldwork. Following a brief overview, the three broad types of assessment and recognition unit which (with the national unit) currently deliver the IIP assessment and recognition process are outlined – i.e.:
- single TEC assessment and recognition units – both assessment and recognition functions are provided by an individual TEC, generally for its own (exceptionally for another TECs') employers;
 - independent (multi-TEC) assessment and recognition units – assessment and recognition functions are provided by a central unit for a number of TECs (generally in the same Government Office region); and
 - collaborative (multi-TEC) assessment and recognition units – individual TECs retain their own assessment (and in some cases recognition) functions; a central unit co-ordinates service delivery for the participating TECs and is the IIP UK licensed unit.
- 3.2 Each type is illustrated by reference to an actual (unnamed) example. The fact that the approach of a particular unit is singled out in this way should not be taken to imply that it necessarily represents good (or best) practice. Variations in approach, drawn from the consultants' observations of models adopted by similar units, are made. Potential strengths and weaknesses of each approach are also considered.

Overview

- 3.3 Annex 2 contains a summary of current assessment and recognition delivery mechanisms. The following points are worth highlighting:
- a common approach to assessment and recognition across all TECs in a particular Government Office region operates in two regions (Eastern and the North East);
 - nineteen TECs operate their own assessment and recognition unit – an additional two TECs operate their own recognition units (Bradford and Wight). Those TECs participating in Assessment West Midlands's (AWM) and Assessment South West's (ASW) arrangements have their own recognition panels but these are regarded as satellites of the central (AWM/ASW) unit rather than units in their own right;
 - single TEC units are common in the South East and the North West region – elsewhere only one or two TECs have opted out of some form of collaborative arrangement (generally these are large TECs – either geographically or in terms of the size of their local economy);

- fifty-four TECs are covered by some form of collective arrangement with other TECs. Generally these arrangements operate within a single Government Office region;
- only three TECs use the services of a collective unit based outside their region; and
- one region (the South East) has no form of collective arrangement for liP assessment and recognition covering its TECs.

Single TEC Assessment and Recognition Units (e.g. A Large Single TEC Unit)

- 3.4 There are a total of nineteen single TEC units. Whilst there are broad similarities between the models each uses in relation to how advice, assessment and recognition are delivered, at a more detailed level the single TEC units interviewed by the consultants vary in their approach to liP delivery.
- 3.5 Key points to note in respect of the operation of the illustrative single TEC unit in relation to advisers include:
- all advisers are external (non-TEC) staff – the TEC buys a set number of days per annum from each adviser at a standard rate;
 - advisers are brought in at a relatively early stage in the liP process – once initial contact with an employer has been made, if the employer expresses any interest in liP then an external adviser is brought in immediately;
 - employers are not charged for any adviser time they use – the TEC monitors the time input by advisers into each employer for reasonableness; and
 - advisers have a continuing role with their employers post-assessment.
- 3.6 Other single TEC units use a combination of internal and external advisers or an entirely in-house adviser team. Those with an entirely in-house team tend to cover comparatively large geographical areas where it is believed, or has proved, to be too difficult to provide an adviser service outside the TEC.
- 3.7 One single TEC unit is not involved in an adviser registration unit but maintains a list of approved associates who are able to provide support to the TEC across one or more of the range of its activities. In the case of liP, associates are called in to provide support to employers in relation to specific areas of need identified by the employer and their business adviser.
- 3.8 Key points to note in respect of the operation of the illustrative single unit in relation to assessors include:
- assessors are drawn from three pools – TEC employees, independent consultants registered with the TEC, and others (known, used and recommended by other TECs);
 - employers are charged for assessor time on a number of days times a daily rate basis (the TEC is considering moving to a flat rate(s) structure to give more certainty to the total cost of liP recognition from the employer's perspective);
 - actual fees charged in respect of assessment will vary between employers – in particular schools tend to be heavily subsidised.

- 3.9 Other single TEC units use either predominantly internal or predominantly external (sub-contracted) assessors. Where assessors are TEC employees, generally they will also act as liP advisers. In some cases the assessor/adviser teams are organised on a geographical basis with each adviser/assessor advising within their own patch but only assessing outside it. Elsewhere the (mainly internal) adviser team is under a different manager to the (mainly external) assessor team.
- 3.10 Those single TEC units which used a predominantly internal assessor/adviser resource considered that they were able to buy more assessor/adviser input with their liP budget than other units (single TEC or otherwise) that used an external resource – i.e. it was claimed to be cheaper to employ assessors and advisers than to sub-contract out delivery of these services.
- 3.11 It is also claimed that using an exclusively or primarily in-house team enables the TEC better to train and manage the culture of the liP team and the way in which it interfaces with employers.
- 3.12 Key points to note in relation to recognition arrangements in the illustrative single TEC unit include:
- recognition being operated by a separate unit within the TEC with a different manager to the assessor unit; and
 - extensive use of “virtual Panels” outwith the Recognition Panel meeting structure, especially where the assessor is experienced and the Panel are comfortable with the general quality of their recommendations – virtual Panels require only two Panel members in order to operate and, as the terminology suggests, do not require face-to-face discussions between Panel members.
- 3.13 Other single TEC units attach greater importance to holding actual (non-virtual) Panels.
- 3.14 Additional points to note from single TEC assessment and recognition units include:
- the use of flat rates (rather than a daily rate) as a means of charging employers for the liP service delivered within a given time period (usually six months); and
 - payment of (external) advisers linked to progression points on the way towards achieving the standard (rather than on a daily rate basis).
- 3.15 The principal strength claimed for the single TEC unit is that it gives the TEC closer control of liP delivery and budgets. In comparison to independent units, it is argued that this:
- enables a greater degree of control to be maintained over quality;
 - offers opportunities for a more client-focused service to be delivered;
 - enables other elements of the process (in particular charging policy) to be flexible to the needs of individual clients without “compromising” the standard by providing an obvious subsidy to the employer;
 - helps the flow of employers through the process up to successful assessment and recognition to be effectively managed (i.e. less year end bunching of assessments) – although a number of Government Offices commented that they had seen no evidence of this being achieved in practice in their single TEC units; and

- reduces the lead time for booking assessments – in particular the cut-off date for assessment bookings at year end can be pushed back closer to the actual year end than is the case with other types of unit.
- 3.16 It is also claimed that liP opens up other business opportunities for TECs – in broad terms single TEC units have greater control over the liP process and therefore a better chance of converting opportunities for selling on other TEC products/services at the appropriate time (i.e. it is easier to offer a more holistic support service to the employer).
- 3.17 It is worth noting that a number of the single TEC units cover relatively large and geographically more isolated parts of England (Devon and Cornwall, Humberside and Lincolnshire) which it might be difficult to resource from the current regional centres which other TECs in their region utilise (based in Gloucester, Harrogate and Derby respectively).
- 3.18 The principal concerns with the single TEC model relate to:
- consistency – the fact that single TEC units act in isolation may make it difficult for them to benchmark their standard of delivery against that of others (and therefore add to the risk that what is, in theory, a single national standard will, in practice, vary across the country) – although at least one single TEC unit has argued that they are better placed to control the quality of delivery because their advisers/assessors are TEC employees, therefore more closely tied in to the system;
 - credibility of the Standard – the fact that the body which is responsible for assessment also has contractual targets in relation to liP to meet, may give rise to concerns vis a vis credibility. These concerns could be compounded in circumstances where advice and assessment are carried out in-house (i.e. assessors are assessing employers who have had advice delivered by one of their colleagues);
 - cost – the economies of scale that can in theory be earned from larger (regional) operations may not be available to single TEC units. They may not represent the most cost effective solution;
 - development of assessors – the opportunities for assessors to gain experience on a range of employers may be limited in single TEC units;
 - quality assurance – some single TEC units have experienced difficulties in staffing the internal verifier role. This role (currently in the process of being replaced by quality managers) has been, and will continue to be, key for day-to-day quality assurance of delivery;
 - management – the task of managing an assessment and recognition network comprised mainly of local single TEC units is likely to be considerable.
- 3.19 It is important to note that TECs that have their own assessment and recognition units, appear to remain “in the loop” where collective arrangements operate for others in their region. This includes participation in regional meetings and workshops, including those run by the regional unit, training and development activities and other regional events. In the South East region, where there is no regional assessment and recognition unit, the single TEC units also appear to work together on development-related issues etc.

- 3.20 The fact that single TEC units operating alongside a regional grouping do not appear to do so in complete isolation from it may mean that some of the problems which, in theory, might apply to the single TEC unit (e.g. in relation to benchmarking) are less significant in practice.
- 3.21 There is however still the risk that the Standard may be perceived by some to be compromised, particularly where the same organisation delivers advice and assesses as well as having performance targets for liP. Employers, including a number of those currently operating under single TEC arrangements, considered that there was value in having assessors who were unequivocally independent of advisers. This point is developed in the following section.
- 3.22 Finally the fieldwork suggests that the smaller single TEC units are less efficient when compared to alternative models. Again this point is developed further in the following section.

Independent Assessment and Recognition Units (e.g. A Large Regional Unit)

- 3.23 Although there are differences between models, independent assessment and recognition units tend to be more homogeneous than single TEC units.
- 3.24 The illustrative independent unit is established as a limited company (i.e. it has Articles of Association, a Memorandum of Association, a Board of Directors and a Company Secretary etc). There is also an independent unit which operates on a partnership basis.
- 3.25 The majority of TECs in the unit's region subscribed to the initial share capital. Elsewhere, those TECs within regions where a regional unit is established that are not among the original subscribers may use the assessment service it offers under the terms of local service level agreements.
- 3.26 Board members of the illustrative unit are drawn from the executive directors of each shareholding TEC. Subject to profits being made, dividends are paid out to each shareholding TEC. Other similar units pay their member TECs a management fee in respect of the time contributed by the TEC executive directors to their activities as Board members of the unit. In the case of the partnership any profits are re-distributed according to number of assessor days used by each TEC.
- 3.27 Key points to note in respect of the operation of the illustrative independent unit in relation to advisers include:
- liP advisers are provided in-house by the member TECs and their Business Links;
 - the unit also providing an adviser registration service for TECs outside the region (for which it charges); and
 - post-recognition, employers are handed back to their TEC for further support prior to subsequent assessments.
- 3.28 Key points to note in respect of the operation of the illustrative independent unit in relation to assessors include:
- the vast majority of assessors are employed on a sub-contract basis by the unit;

- the adviser does not have to meet and/or discuss the employer with the assessor at the “handover” point – the level of information provided to the assessor by the adviser at this time is also variable;
 - (subject to adequate information being available) the unit attempts to achieve a close match between assessors and employers (for example in terms of the assessor’s sectoral experience and/or size of employer the assessor has worked with);
 - the unit invoices the employer for the standard amount (£550 per assessor day)³ – the employer then invoices their TEC for the agreed contribution towards the cost;
 - each assessor is assigned to one of the unit’s quality managers. The quality managers are responsible for assuring the work of their team of assessors and ensuring that any development needs identified are addressed;
 - the unit develops training tools and procedures to try to ensure consistency of practice among assessors.
- 3.29 Independent units vary in the extent to which they use TEC staff as assessors. Where TEC staff are used, it is fairly standard practice in independent units for them not to assess any employer based in their own TEC area. All independent units employ their own staff in the internal verifier role; none appear to employ their own assessor resource.
- 3.30 Elsewhere the “handover” from adviser to assessor prior to assessment is more formalised (e.g. a set-up meeting between the adviser, allocated assessor and employer). The adviser, allocated assessor and employer may also be involved in a post-assessment feedback meeting in order to ensure that there is an effective “handback” of the employer from assessor to adviser.
- 3.31 In some cases, member TECs can have their own “preferred list” of assessors with whom they would like (or require) their employers to work.
- 3.32 Payment arrangements tend to follow those outlined above – i.e. the unit invoices the employer at the standard daily rate; the employer then invoices their TEC for any contribution. In at least one case the unit invoices the TEC at the standard daily rate, the TEC then invoices the employer net of any TEC contribution. Units also tend to invoice TECs direct when there is no cost to the employer (i.e. the cost of assessment is fully subsidised).
- 3.33 Key points to note in relation to the illustrative independent unit’s recognition arrangements include:
- extensive use of virtual Panels;
 - notwithstanding the use of virtual Panels, difficulties in resourcing the recognition stage of the process; and
 - some member TECs operating their own Recognition Panels – largely because they believe that there is value in local peer group recognition for successful employers.

3. To ensure a consistent approach, IIP UK have set a maximum daily rate for assessment (£550 plus expenses plus VAT) which it recommends is the standard daily rate charged by all assessment units to all employers. The cost to the employer may be reduced through TEC subsidies. IIP UK’s national assessment unit charges employers £750 per day (plus expenses and VAT).

- 3.34 Other independent units appear to place greater reliance on the use of actual (rather than virtual) Panels. They also experience fewer difficulties in getting Recognition Panels together.
- 3.35 Independent assessment and recognition units enjoy a substantial degree of autonomy from their shareholder TECs. As a result their objectivity is less open to question and the liP process may therefore be perceived to have greater credibility than is the case under single TEC units – responsibility for performance targets and delivery of advice are clearly separated from delivery of assessment.
- 3.36 They should also be well placed to ensure that:
- consistency between assessments in different TECs in the same region is achieved;
 - economies of scale are gained and opportunities for use of ICT are maximised (because more resource is available to invest in systems);
 - there may be no on-going demand on shareholders for funds – i.e. after the initial injection of working capital by the shareholders, independent units have become self-financing;
 - best practice is identified and acted upon on a wider basis;
 - assessors are able to access a broad range of development opportunities;
 - (subject to adequate information on the employer being provided to the assessment unit) because the pool of assessors is larger, there is more chance of assessors with an appropriate background being found for employers; and
 - (from an liP UK perspective) management/co-ordination of the liP network is easier than it would be under a widespread single TEC model.
- 3.37 Concerns regarding the independent unit model include:
- control over the flow of business – for example seasonal fluctuations may be significant and at times difficult to manage. Member TECs have raised concerns regarding difficulties in getting assessments scheduled at certain times of year;
 - the risk of divorcing the business constituency from its locality – some TECs consider that they get wider benefits from liP (eg securing more general continued involvement from their local employers in the work of the TEC), although whether this requires TECs to control assessment is debatable;
 - the “handover” from local adviser to regional assessor - this may create difficulties in terms of ensuring continuity of seamless service (although, as noted, some independent units have built in procedures to try to avoid this);
 - funding flows - these may appear strange to the client (in most cases the employer pays the independent unit and then receives a refund for a proportion of the cost from their TEC). The process may also cause cash flow difficulties for employers;

- problems can arise at year end with regard to relatively early (mid-February) deadlines being set for receipt of requests for assessment;
- recognition arrangements – for some independent units there seems to be a difficulty in getting Recognition Panels together, even on a virtual basis; and
- “ownership” of the employer – there are some concerns that this becomes (unhelpfully) blurred under an independent unit with both the unit and the TEC seeing the employer as “theirs”, although member TECs were generally clear that the employers were their clients and that the regional unit was simply delivering a service for them.

Collaborative Assessment and Recognition Units

3.38 Collaborative units can be regarded as providing a middle way between single TEC assessment and recognition units and independent units. There is currently only one example of this approach. The ASW approach occupies something of a “middle ground” between collaborative and independent units; comments in relation to it have been included in the preceding section rather than here.

3.39 The collaborative unit comprises two staff (a manager and an administrator). It:

- reports directly to the TECs that own it, rather than through an independent board (as is the case with independent units); and
- utilises the assessment, verification and recognition Panel resources held by the local TECs, rather than having assessors and internal verifiers on its own books and operating its own Panel.

3.40 The unit is funded by a majority of the region’s TECs on an annual basis. Additional resources for the unit are generated by adviser registration fees (the unit also operates a regional Adviser Registration Unit for the TECs).

3.41 Key points to note in respect of the operation of the collaborative unit in relation to advisers include:

- each TEC maintains its own pool of advisers – this comprises TEC employees and/or external advisers; and
- post-recognition, employers are handed back to their TEC for further support prior to subsequent assessments.

3.42 Key points to note in respect of the operation of the collaborative unit in relation to assessors include:

- each TEC having its own quality manager (internal verifier);
- advisers notifying their quality manager when they think each of their employers will be ready for assessment. The quality manager determines the cost of the assessment and allocates a date for the assessment and an assessor from their own pool of assessors to undertake it. This information is communicated to the collaborative unit on standard documentation;

- if there is a conflict of interest or their own pool of assessors are unable to conduct the assessment then it is referred to the collaborative unit. The unit reviews the list of assessors active in the region and makes an allocation of assessor to assessment;
- in effect:
 - individual assessors are “sponsored” by one member TEC but belong to a regional “bank” of assessors which can be accessed, via the collaborative unit, by all member TECs;
 - each member TEC sponsors as much assessor time as it thinks it will need to use for its own purposes over the course of the year;
 - the collaborative unit monitors member TECs to ensure that they remain broadly in balance in terms of assessor time used over the year (i.e. that they are not consuming more than they have contributed);
 - where TECs are in the “red” they are likely to be called upon to provide one of their own assessors for other TECs’ assessments in future, thus moving their “account” back into balance;
- in all cases it is the collaborative unit which writes to the employer to confirm the cost of the assessment, the assessor who will be undertaking it and the provisional date for it;
- assessors are paid the same rate by all member TECs;
- the collaborative unit has no involvement in the financial flows associated with assessment – assessors are paid by the TEC for whom the assessment is done; employers are invoiced by their home TEC according to the TEC’s own charging policy.

3.43 Key points to note in relation to the collaborative unit’s recognition arrangements include:

- each member TEC has its own Recognition Panel;
- virtual Panels are used when there are too many recognitions for actual Panels to cover or where an assessor is unable to attend a Panel due to workloads; and
- in the majority of cases recommendations for recognition will be presented to the employer’s own TEC’s Panel – where this is not possible within the prescribed turnaround time the collaborative unit can approach other member TECs with a view to getting the employer in front of another TEC’s Panel.

3.44 The collaborative unit works to ensure consistency of practice across member TECs. For example:

- there is a single quality manual and common quality procedures are followed by all member TECs;
- advisers, assessors and Panel members from each TEC undergo the same training and development activities (delivered by the collaborative unit’s manager); and

- there is a single contact point for liP UK (the collaborative unit's manager) who disseminates information to member TECs, leaving less scope for individual interpretations of central directives.
- 3.45 Having a regional layer above the assessment and recognition operations of individual TECs:
- offers opportunities for formalised sharing of best practice and benchmarking between TECs which may not be there in single TEC units;
 - allows for local flexibilities to be retained (e.g. in respect of charging policies) within the context of a consistent assessment process;
 - enables local TECs to be the point of contact for liP for their own employers throughout the process; and
 - facilitates TECs accessing a larger pool of assessment and recognition resource than they could maintain themselves when necessary.
- 3.46 However:
- collaborative units could be seen as representing an additional and unnecessary layer of bureaucracy in the system;
 - the unit is not self-funding - there is a year on year requirement for resource to be contributed by the member TECs for it to remain operational;
 - collaborative units do not appear to offer economies of scale in terms of the costs of assessment and recognition – in fact potentially quite the reverse since each member TEC maintains its own pool of assessors and runs its own recognition Panels (although there may be economies of scale in relation to training and development which alternative approaches may not be able to access); and
 - the unit must operate through securing consensus and, even when consensus is reached, has no formal authority to enforce recommendations or agreed ways forward.

Conclusions

- 3.47 Discounting details at the operational level, we believe that our fieldwork has identified nine approaches for delivering liP assessment and recognition in addition to the national unit. These are:
- single TEC assessment and recognition units – the principal variants are defined by reference to delivery: either largely in-house (model 1) or largely sub-contracted (model 2);
 - independent (regional) assessment and recognition units (operating as limited companies) – the principal variants are defined by reference to geographical coverage: whole Government Office region “plus” (model 3); whole Government Office region (model 4); “almost” whole Government Office region (model 5) and sub-regional (model 6);

- independent (regional) assessment and recognition units (operating as partnerships) (model 7);
- collaborative units (model 8); and
- TECs using the assessment and/or recognition services of one of the above units whilst not formally being part of the unit (model 9).

3.48 Based upon the fieldwork no single model has emerged as “the most effective in all circumstances”

3.49 Standardisation would appear to be most important in terms of process (i.e. that there is a guarantee that a service of consistent quality is being delivered across the country – and therefore that the notion of a national Standard has credibility) and less important in terms of the design of the delivery unit.

4. ISSUES ARISING

Introduction

- 4.1 In this section we consider the more forward-looking objectives which were set for the study – i.e.:
- to identify the issues around existing arrangements which may impact on the design of future arrangements; and
 - to outline and analyse the generic issues which need to be considered in whatever arrangements are put in place for liP assessment and recognition under the LSC structure.
- 4.2 Throughout the section the key issues for consideration are highlighted in bold typeface.

Conflicts of Interest and the Integrity of the Standard

- 4.3 Concerns regarding the potential for conflicts of interest to arise in the liP process (and as a consequence for the integrity of the Standard to be brought into question) were raised in relation to the operation of single TEC assessment and recognition units. In essence these doubts arise because, in the case of single TEC units, the organisation which has performance targets in relation to liP (i.e. the TEC) is also responsible for undertaking the advice and assessment roles.
- 4.4 As has been noted in the preceding section, single TEC units vary in the extent to which they contract out liP advice and/or assessment. The potential for a conflict of interest to arise would appear to be greatest in cases where both advice and assessment are delivered by the TEC in-house and reduced where one or both are delivered under sub-contracting arrangements.
- 4.5 In this context it is important to note that no one was suggesting that anything untoward was currently taking place. Also, as was noted in section 3, a number of the more remote single TEC units stated that it would be difficult to provide adviser and/or assessment services locally if they were not delivered by employees of a local delivery unit (i.e. the TEC).
- 4.6 Nevertheless, the theoretical risk of conflicts of interest arising in single TEC units exists. The fact that a theoretical risk exists may lead to the perception that the process of becoming an Investor in People is less onerous in some areas, albeit that there is nothing in practice to suggest that this is the case. **Wherever practical, the situation where one organisation employs on its staff both assessors and advisers whilst it also has delivery targets in relation to liP should be avoided – the purchaser-provider relationship needs to be clear.**

Consistency and the Integrity of the Standard

- 4.7 A key feature of the Standard is that it is national and consistently applied across the country.
- 4.8 The consistency of the assessment and recognition process is currently assured through a number of means. These include, internal verifiers (employed by the assessment and recognition units), external verifiers (employed by liP UK), training and development for assessors (advisers are also often included – either by invitation or because they are also assessors), work shadowing, regular assessor forums etc. In addition all units have to have a procedures (quality assurance) manual which has been approved by liP UK.
- 4.9 **It is important that these quality assurance procedures are retained and enhanced to provide continued assurance that assessment and recognition practices are producing consistent results (in terms of the standard reached by liP-recognised employers) across the country.** In this context, liP UK has recently put in place new, enhanced, quality assurance arrangements which will be assessed and verified by one liP UK representative (i.e. providing greater assurance of consistency).
- 4.10 Although there are exceptions (one unit involved in the study had formal review procedures for those acting in an advisory capacity), in general quality assurance arrangements in relation to advice are currently less formalised than those that apply to assessment and recognition (although the Practitioner Pilot may have an impact in this area).
- 4.11 The ability of an organisation to progress to assessment and recognition is, to a significant degree, dependent upon the quality of advice that they receive. Based on feedback from assessment and recognition units and employers regarding the quality of advice which has been received, **there is a need for quality assurance procedures to be developed in relation to advice.** These would start at the adviser registration stage (this point is developed further below), include training and development requirements and focus on the quality of advice received by the candidate organisation both pre- and post-recognition.
- 4.12 One option would be for advisers to be quality assured by existing assessment and recognition unit internal verifiers. As has already been noted, increasingly advisers are also trained to assess; there may therefore be some value in the internal verifier having a fuller picture of the quality of service which adviser/assessors are able to deliver.

Adviser Registration

- 4.13 Currently advisers are generally registered with a Regional Adviser Registration Unit – one per Government Office region. This is primarily for information dissemination and training and development purposes. These arrangements appear to work well. Certainly even those TECs that are not part of regional assessment and recognition units are usually (though not always) still part of regional adviser registration arrangements.
- 4.14 As has been noted, concerns were raised by some employers regarding the experience (and therefore suitability) of advisers. This suggests that there may be a need for **adviser registration to be more tightly prescribed – in terms of the type of organisation that individual advisers are “qualified” to advise.**
- 4.15 Doing this on a sectoral basis would seem to be unnecessarily restrictive (as well as being contrary to the notion of liP being a national Standard, applicable to all sectors). Indeed the study suggests that, from an employer’s perspective, an adviser’s sectoral

expertise matters less than their having a broad understanding of business processes and HRD expertise – although a degree of sectoral awareness (for example in terms of the language, dynamics, culture and broad issues of the particular sector in which the organisation operates) might be helpful.

- 4.16 An alternative would be to consider an organisation's size (small, medium or larger in terms of employee numbers), type (public, private or voluntary) and/or complexity (single or multiple site). Introducing a more restricted form of adviser registration to take account of these factors could add value.
- 4.17 Finally in relation to advisers, a number of organisations currently choose to use non-registered advisers. In some cases this will be because they wish to keep the process in-house (e.g. for reasons of ownership); others may already have a relationship with an external adviser whom they wish to use for liP purposes. For this reason, **the ability of organisations to continue to use non-registered advisers should be retained on a "buyer beware" basis.**

The Distinction Between Adviser and Assessor Roles

4.18 There has been some debate as to whether there is a continuing need for separate adviser and assessor roles, particularly given the opportunities which now exist for phased assessments and more frequent post-recognition reviews (hence more regular assessor contact with the employer). The clear findings from this study suggest that:

- **the distinction between the roles of adviser and assessor should be retained under future arrangements for liP delivery;** and
 - that advisers benefit from assessing and vice versa – i.e. **that individuals should be encouraged to do both roles (but not at the same time for the same organisation).**
- 4.19 In particular the employers contacted for this study attached value to a continuing separation of the roles. In broad terms:
- the adviser acts as a guide/support through the liP process, both pre- and post-recognition; and
 - the assessor provides an independent assessment of how the organisation stands up against the national Standard, thereby conferring credibility.
- 4.20 Whilst there is a strong case for separate adviser and assessor roles to be retained, it is important that, at key points in the process, both are involved in order to ensure that the client organisation receives a seamless liP service. In particular **there is a need to ensure that the adviser is involved in the assessment process:**
- pre-assessment – to ensure that there is an effective "handover" of the organisation to the assessor;
 - during assessment – to allow the adviser to clear up any misunderstandings, provide clarification etc in relation to the assessment process;
 - **post-assessment – to ensure that the adviser is fully briefed on any issues which have arisen during the assessment, action points etc.**

- 4.21 During the course of this study it was suggested that a number of what were characterised as “old school” assessors were still reluctant to involve advisers in the assessment process in the ways outlined above.

Assessors

- 4.22 The key findings of the study in relation to assessors largely mirror those for advisers. Many of the points made in relation to adviser registration and the distinction between adviser and assessor roles therefore also apply to assessors.
- 4.23 There was general support for the skills of assessors being generic, and therefore for assessors being able to assess across a wide range of employers – in fact smaller employers in particular appear to value non-sector specific assessors, considering that they are able to bring a wider perspective to bear on their organisation.
- 4.24 However, as was the case with advisers, there may be **merit in making assessor registration more specific in terms of the type of organisation that individual assessors can assess on a size and/or type and/or complexity basis.**

Recognition

- 4.25 The role of and need for the Recognition Panel has been the subject of some debate in recent years. Indeed it is largely as a result of pressure from TECs that they currently continue to exist.
- 4.26 The role of the (often virtual) Recognition Panel is broadly:
- confirming (or otherwise) the assessor’s view that the employer should be awarded the designation “Investor in People”;
 - providing pointers to further development that the employer should consider undertaking (i.e. re-enforcing the messages in the assessment report);
 - assessing the employer’s satisfaction with the assessment process;
 - providing feedback to, and identifying developmental needs of, assessors on the basis of the above; and
 - achieving (or re-inforcing) employer ownership of the Standard – i.e. the notion that liP is awarded by employers to employers.
- 4.27 Current Recognition Panel practice varies widely. In some instances Panel recognition of the employer as an Investor in People appears to be little more than a “rubber stamp” exercise. Elsewhere, Recognition Panels appear to operate in a less “passive” (perhaps more “rigorous” or “old style liP”) way. In particular:
- assessors are generally required formally to present their employer and make the case for recognition;
 - the Panel can (and do) reject employers – although this tends to happen relatively infrequently in practice (99% of assessor recommendations to recognise are accepted); and
 - (although not required by liP UK) in some cases Panels are also signing off post-recognition reviews.

- 4.28 Among those employers contacted during the course of the study who had been recognised there was some confusion as to the precise role of the Recognition Panel in the liP process. There is a general assumption among employers that they are recognised once the assessor “passes” them, rather than once they have been to a Panel. From some employers’ perspective, the existence of a “Recognition Panel” appears to confuse and to add cost, rather than value, to the process.
- 4.29 In relation to added value from the employer’s perspective, concerns were also expressed regarding the impact which Recognition Panels were having on:
- post-assessment feedback - the fact that assessor recommendations have to go to a Recognition Panel for approval may restrict the feedback which assessors feel able to give to employers post-assessment (in case their recommendation is rejected); and
 - report content - reports may be written “for the Panel” rather than for the employer.
- 4.30 *Prima facie* it would appear that some of what Recognition Panels do (i.e. in relation to obtaining customer feedback and assessor development) is primarily for the units’, rather than the employers’, benefit. It could perhaps also be done more effectively by others (e.g. the internal verifier) or through other means (e.g. post-recognition survey activity).
- 4.31 Demonstrating employer ownership of the Standard is important. Whilst it may in theory be reasonable to question whether having employers working at an operational level (i.e. on Recognition Panels) is the best means of achieving this, being realistic, peer recognition is currently well-embedded and removing it (if removal is necessary) at this stage is likely to be a challenge, particularly given the wider context of change necessitated by the move to the LSC, local LSCs and SBSs.
- 4.32 Nevertheless, **there is a need to reconsider the Recognition Panel’s remit. In particular there is a need to determine where Panels can best add value to the process and to tailor their input accordingly.**

Post-Recognition Reviews

- 4.33 Following the changes to the post-recognition review process, the feedback received during the course of this study suggests that the majority of assessment and recognition units are expecting the length of time between recognition and post-recognition reviews to shorten (typically to between twelve months and two years). The fieldwork suggests that some units are expecting 80% of their employers to opt for shorter review periods.
- 4.34 There are potentially a number of advantages to more frequent reviews:
- they can offer an effective way of ensuring continued employer commitment to the Standard;
 - they can offer opportunities to demonstrate the on-going added value of being an Investor in People;
 - (related to the previous point) the three yearly review cycle appears to have been prone to employers “buying the badge”, rather than seeing liP as a continuous business improvement tool.

- 4.35 However one consequence of more frequent reviews is that the number of employers handled by assessment and recognition units each year will increase significantly year on year. This represents a major change in the employer-assessment and recognition unit relationship.
- 4.36 It is relatively early days in terms of the new review procedures and the impact which they will have on client volumes remains untested. The issue is raised here to highlight the fact that what has gone before, in terms of assessment and recognition experience, may not, if taken in isolation, provide an appropriate basis upon which to make future, delivery-related, decisions.

Focus for Delivery

- 4.37 There are a number of aspects of the liP process which clearly benefit from being delivered locally to the majority of employers. In particular this includes:
- the pre-commitment “sales” task – local human resource is needed to “bring” employers to liP;
 - on-going support/advice pre-recognition – having a reasonably local source of support/advice is important if momentum is to be maintained by the employer; and
 - on-going support/advice post-recognition – the fieldwork suggests that local employers prefer to obtain post-recognition support from a local source.
- 4.38 Equally there are other liP-related activities which appear to operate well at a regional level (adviser registration could be considered to be an example). Fieldwork with employers also suggests that local assessment is not as important as local advice in the liP process.
- 4.39 In terms of current practice, assessment and recognition units appear to be either:
- very small – less than (often considerably less than) 100 assessments/reviews per annum (the smaller single TEC units);
 - medium sized - between 300 and 400 assessments/reviews per annum (the larger single TEC units, sub-regional and smaller regional units); and
 - large – over 700 assessments/reviews per annum (the larger regional units).
- 4.40 Looking to the future, there must be doubts over the future of the smallest units on efficiency grounds – although there may be other pressures/considerations (e.g. relative remoteness/rurality) which make them an effective means through which to deliver liP.
- 4.41 Although this study did not look at this area in detail, measured in terms of the staff:assessment/reviews ratio, the larger TEC units and some regional units currently appear to enjoy comparable levels of efficiency (approximately 100 assessments/reviews per member of staff at the unit). Some sub-regional and larger regional units appear to be more efficient than this on a straight staff to number of assessments/reviews basis, however the extent to which economies (and diseconomies) of scale apply with larger units remains largely untested.

- 4.42 Finally, at a national level, outwith the assessment and recognition process for national employers (to which we turn below), it is possible to envisage a national “helpline” for liP. In addition to providing basic information on the Standard, more definite expressions of interest would be fielded centrally and then passed out to the delivery network according to the employer’s location. If local delivery units were required to communicate their liP-related activity to the central unit (employer commitments, recognitions etc), this could provide a comprehensive and effective database of liP activity across the country.

National Employers

- 4.43 It is important not to lose sight of national employers. In relation to liP, they are likely to present different challenges to those posed by smaller, more locally/regionally based employers. **In addition to being able to work with local/regional units, national employers will want the option of having liP advice and assessment co-ordinated by a national unit.** This would need to be subject to the same integrity considerations as more local delivery units.
- 4.44 Advising and assessing national employers is of a different order to advising and assessing local employers. There would therefore appear to be a need for a different type (or calibre) of adviser/assessor capable of undertaking this role. This suggests that **a separate register of advisers and assessors who are able to deliver liP to national employers needs to be established.**
- 4.45 The fieldwork for this study also found that liP delivery to national employers can be “patchy”, with certain parts of the employer pursuing liP recognition in isolation from the rest of the organisation rather than as part of a considered strategy. **There is a need for greater co-ordination of work with national employers (who is doing what with whom).** In this context, the option of building a national database for liP activity has already been mentioned in this report.

Competition Between Assessment and Recognition Units

- 4.46 Currently liP UK licenses assessment and recognition units. Each unit provides elements of the liP service to one or more TECs employers, based in any given individual TEC, generally going with that TEC’s preferred unit for assessment and recognition purposes. As a result, **competition between units for business tends to happen only in relation to larger regional and national employers. This lack of direct competition between units for local business has positive consequences.**
- 4.47 The existence of what amount to local monopolies for most employers has three such major benefits:
- quality is not compromised by the profit motive;
 - there is an active network which is willing to share experiences;
 - the Standard is not subject to devaluation through competitive behaviour.
- 4.48 It would be unfortunate if either the willingness to share experiences or the value of the Standard were devalued under new arrangements introduced with the LSCs and SBS.

LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

Stage 1 interviewees

liP UK

Government Offices

East Midlands
North West
London

North East
Eastern
West Midlands

Yorkshire & Humberside
South West
South East

TECs

County Durham TEC

Norfolk & Waveney TEC

Yorkshire & Humberside
Regional TEC Grouping

Assessment and recognition units

Assessment West Midlands
Yorkshire Assessment Ltd

Birmingham & Solihull TEC
The Assessment Network

Assessment North East

Stage 2 interviewees

Assessment and recognition units

Assessment South West
CAR(NW)
Heart of England TEC
Hampshire TEC
liP Scotland (*)

Assessment East Midlands
ELTEC
AZTEC
Manchester TEC
Kent TEC (*)

London Assessment Centre
Humberside TEC
Lincolnshire TEC
liP National Assessment Unit
Sussex TEC (*)

TECs

The Link Group
NW London TEC
Bradford TEC

Oldham CCTE
Shropshire CCTE
Northamptonshire CCTE

CEWTEC
Greater Nottingham TEC

Other interviewees

TEC National Council
Small Business Service
Association of British
Chambers of Commerce

NTO National Council
liP UK external verifier

DfEE
CBI

Employers (*)

Small (up to 49 employees) – 13

Medium (between 50 and 249 employees) – 10

Large (250 or more employees) – 9

} Half the employers interviewed were
} recognised; a minority had been or
} were being re-recognised.

(*) Telephone interviews

SUMMARY OF DELIVERY ARRANGEMENTS FOR IIP ASSESSMENT AND RECOGNITION

Government Offices	Single TEC Unit	Independent Unit	Collaborative Unit	Other Arrangements
Eastern		The Assessment Network (TAN)		
East Midlands	Lincolnshire TEC	Assessment East Midlands		Northants CCTE (Use TAN)
London	Focus Quality Services West London TEC AZTEC	London Assessment Centre		North London (Use TAN)
North East		Assessment North East		
North West	ELTEC Enterprise Cumbria LAWTEC Manchester TEC Normid TEC S&E Cheshire TEC	CAR (NW)		St Helens CCTE (Use CAR NW) CEWTEC (Use CAR NW)
South East	Hampshire TEC Heart of England TEC The Learning & Business Link Co. Surrey TEC Sussex Enterprise Thames Valley Enterprise			Milton Keynes & North Bucks (Use TAN) Wight Training & Enterprises (Use Hampshire TEC)
South West	Prosper	Assessment South West		
West Midlands	Birmingham & Solihull TEC		Assessment West Midlands	
Yorkshire & Humberside	Humberside TEC	Yorkshire Assessment Ltd		
SUMMARY	19 single TEC units	7 independent units covering 41 TECs	1 collaborative unit covering 8 TECs	6 TECs using the arrangements of neighbouring region/TECs

QFAD PUBLICATIONS

QPID Study Report Series

Study No.	Title	Published	Prolog Product Code
69	Funding Sources for Projects for Disaffected Young People	February 1998	QPID69
70	Work Based Assessment : National Vocational Qualifications and Youth Programmes	December 1998	QPID70
71	Modern Apprenticeships and Gender Stereotyping	March 1999	QPID71
72	Leaving TFW - Trainees who do not Achieve a Payable Positive Outcome	March 1999	QPID72
73	Training for Jobs - Job Outcomes from TFW	March 1999	QPID73
74	Modern Apprenticeships in Licensed Premises	April 1999	QPID74
76	Tackling Early Leaving from Youth Programmes	September 1999	QPID76
77	Entry to Work Based Training for Adults.....	September 1999	QPID77
78	Review of the 1999-2000 Careers Service Planning and Contracting Round	September 1999	*
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81	Mentoring for Work Based Training	January 2000	QPID81
82	Evaluation of Government Office Reports on TEC/CCTE Performance	January 2000	*
83	TEC/CCTE Core Business and Strategic Activities	March 2000	*
84	Modern Apprenticeships and People with Disabilities.....	March 2000	QPID84
85	TEC/CCTE Activities to Promote National Vocational Qualifications	May 2000	QPID85
86	Implementation of TEC/CCTE Equal Opportunities Strategies ..	June 2000	QPID86
87	TEC/CCTEs and the Learning Gateway	August 2000	QPID87

* Only available on the Internet - www.dfes.gov.uk/studynet. Studynet also provides information on forthcoming studies and studies produced in 1996 and 1997.

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