

IfL preparatory research to inform the work of the Commission on Adult Vocational Learning

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LSIS Research Conference 2012

Clarifying the purposes of Vocational Learning

- Preparing learners for employment
- Engaging people in learning for wider benefits
- ‘the most important trend in industrial training today is the steadily increasing realisation among employers of the need to consider something beyond technical training.’

Which teaching methods give learners the best learning opportunities?

- There is no one size fits all approach
- There is a strong consensus that effective teaching methods for vocational learning are based on realistic work problems and scenarios
- led by teachers and trainers who have recent and relevant vocational experience

Active Learning

- The most effective teaching methods are interactive, and develop learner autonomy as well as specific skills and knowledge

This has implications for teaching –

- The best learning process is based on mutual respect between teachers and learners – and thereby hangs a tale

Barriers to improving teaching approaches in vocational learning

Weak resources of:

- Staff time
- Realistic or realistically simulated working environments, particularly at level 3 and beyond
- Recent and relevant vocational experience of teachers and trainers

Linking maths, science and English to vocational learning

- There is an almost universal agreement that embedding of these skills within vocational qualifications is best practice
- How may this endeavour best be supported so that embedding leads to real progress in learners' skills?
- How may English, maths and science specialists be integrated to vocational subject teams, to give support to staff and to learners, as needed?

Teacher training and subject mentoring

- Most initial training is on generic programmes. Most are valued highly, but there is a need to supplement initial training with workplace support to develop practice.
- Can the provision of vocational subject mentors be extended, as the few staff who have had them, valued the support highly?