

## Learning and Skills Research Network Conference

# Conference announcement and call for submissions

**Thursday 4 December 2008**

Thistle Marble Arch, Bryanston Street, Marble Arch, London W1H 7EH



We are pleased to invite you to the Learning and Skills Research Network Conference which brings together practitioners from further and higher education, adult community learning, voluntary organisations and training providers who are interested in research and development in the Learning and Skills Sector.

The theme of this year's conference, professional identity and practice is of huge importance to colleagues working across the sector.

The nature of professionalism and professional identity in current contexts continues to be problematic, contested, and debated.

The conference will allow us to explore and debate the notion of professionalism, including questions around where, how and whether professionalism exists or is being eroded or developed (or not) for staff and students in the sector.

The conference provides a unique opportunity to share interests and explore how research can help our understanding of the policy and practice of facilitating learning for young people and adults. The conference offers those who are conducting or using research the opportunity to inform others about it.

We welcome contributions and participation from practitioners in:

- Adult and Community learning
- Further Education
- Higher Education
- Learning and Skills Councils
- Lifelong Learning Networks
- Prisons
- Private Training Providers
- Probation Services
- Trade Unions
- Voluntary and Community sector
- Workbased learning providers

### Conference themes

1. Engagement with research and development
2. Working collaboratively to develop professional identity and practice
3. Building research capacity
4. Increasing the influence of research findings
5. Action research and its role in improving practice

### The aims of the event

- To help participants engage with research and development in the Learning and Skills Sector
- To disseminate and debate research findings relating to professional identity and practice

### What participants will get out of attending the event

- update on national policy and current research relating to professional identity and practice
- opportunity to meet with colleagues regionally and nationally
- opportunity to disseminate research findings nationally
- opportunity to meet members of regional networks
- the conference will count towards the 30 hour CPD requirement for all FE staff

### How participants can use the information gained from the event when they get back to their institutions

Participants will be able to:

- draw upon the LSRN website which will contain papers and resources from the event
- join their regional LSRN
- identify appropriate opportunities within their own organisations and practice to engage with research

### Call for contributions

The planning group invites contributions to the conference. There are three forms of contribution:

- those that will be placed in our directory of project summaries
- those that are presentations for the conference. Papers will be made available on the LSRN web-site following the conference
- those that are topic and discussion based

Presentations are welcomed in a variety of formats:

#### Presentations

Paper presentations will typically involve a 20 minute presentation followed by questions from the floor.

Presenters are asked to identify your research aim, the research methods you have used or intend to use and, where appropriate, your findings.

#### Participative discussions

This is an opportunity for delegates who would like to lead a discussion on a topic or theme such as emerging research findings or a particular area of research interest. You will facilitate the discussion and will need to bring along a rapporteur for the session. We would like you to give a brief introduction to your topic and then open it up for discussion.

#### Guidelines for submissions

Summaries should be submitted by e-mail (MS Word file) to: [vicky.duckworth@edgehill.ac.uk](mailto:vicky.duckworth@edgehill.ac.uk)

The subject line should refer to the Learning and Skills Research Network 2008 conference.

The summary should include the following:

- name of author/presenter(s) – making it clear who is the primary contact
- organisation represented, contact e-mail, telephone and postal address
- title of submission
- For presentations - 150-word summary that indicates the key conference theme being explored, the research aims, questions, methods, and findings. Where research is ongoing, these may be initial findings.
- For participative discussions – a paragraph stating the topic or theme you'd like to discuss, why it is of interest and questions you would like to discuss.

### Dates

The deadline for submission of presentations and participative discussions:

**Wednesday 3 September 2008**

Notification of acceptances or declines of submissions:

**Friday 26 September 2008**



Learning and  
Skills  
Research  
Network

### About the Learning and Skills Research Network

The Learning and Skills Research Network (LSRN) began in 1997 and works collaboratively with multiple partner organisations. It is a network based in the regions of England with links to partners in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. It brings together people involved in producing and making use of research in the learning and skills sector and higher education and provides a welcoming atmosphere for those new to research.

Conferences and meetings are held and projects undertaken in some regions. A new national planning group is developing coherence across the network.

In pursuing its purpose, the network places particular value on:

An inclusive approach which:

- recognises the variety of relevant methods and topics
- involves participants from a wide range of backgrounds, including practitioners, researchers, developers, managers and policymakers
- identifies the specific role of practitioners and others in evaluating and implementing findings.

Applying research to the concerns of practice and policy by:

- encouraging reviews of existing knowledge before new research is undertaken
- distilling and communicating key messages in appropriate ways for different audiences .

Addressing capacity by:

- building practitioner training into projects
- encouraging engagement with research through professional development activity
- demonstrating the value of research and development to budget holders
- maximising connections between regional groups.

Website:

<http://www.theresearchcentre.co.uk/LSRNW/value.htm>