

**1. Evidence - Values, leadership and culture**

**1.1 Is research/enquiry at the heart of the organisation?**

**1.1 a and b Planning of CPD and commitment to being a learning organisation**

Planning for CPD is based around developing pedagogical approaches to teaching and learning. July 2009 training centred around a cross college conference on Teaching and Learning introducing the ‘Yale College Teaching and Learning Strategy’, which was a collation of current best practice in teaching and learning. Training for 2009-2010 is based on key learning strategies from this document. As a dynamic learning organisation, the College is actively involved in developing Welsh Assembly Government and DCELLS initiatives. The College has undertaken several pilots over the last two years as part its planning cycle, including the ESDGC (Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship) toolkit for work based learning, the SAPs (Student Assistance Programme) and Learner Voice pilots. The results of these pilots are fed back to stakeholders prior to national rollout.

**1.1 c Management Support**

Research and enquiry are very much at the heart of Yale College. Research forms much of the basis for change in the College and the College prides itself on its informed decision making. The senior leaders of the College are from an academic background with the Principal and the Vice Principal involved with teacher training over the years. 5 College leaders undertaken the Fforwm MA in Leadership and Management programme. One result of research for this programme has been a redevelopment of the College’s quality system. As a result of this work Yale College won over all winner of the 2008 Wales Quality Awards and this colleague is currently doing a PHD at Glyndwr University focussing on quality management.

**1.1 d Mentioned in Inspections**

For three years the College has resourced 4 Teaching and Learning Mentors (TLMs) to work with teams to develop peer observation processes and improve the quality of teaching and learning through teams researching and enquiring into best practice. This work has featured in Yale College’s October 2009 inspection as an example of outstanding practice, with Estyn praising the leadership and managers in their decision to resource TLMs. Estyn recognised the TLMs as instrumental in promoting a learning culture across College.

**1.2 Is school culture supportive?**

**1.2 a Outcomes are shared**

The College undertakes an evidential approach to all development and strategic decisions. The Curriculum Planning Group (CPG - representing all areas of College) share the progress and outcomes of pilots, and academic research. The group looks at key topics, creatively problem solving issues from different perspectives and developing key synergies. November 2009 CPG group analysed the research of the ILT department’s learner survey of learning technologies. Main findings centred around accessibility to ILT and Moodle, and more cutting edge use of ILT including the use of blue tooth and mobile phones as pedagogical tools.

There is also a regular submission and presentation of research papers to the College’s cross college stakeholder group known as QASC. The QASC committee meets twice a year and discusses submitted papers. These are also published internally on the College intranet.

**1.2 b Mentioned in College Publicity**

Outcomes of research are shared through training and conferences. The outcomes for all events are marketed externally in the local press, on the College internet, and internally in our magazine Y Talk and on the intranet. For the last two years the College has held a conference every July. All staff and key stakeholders have been invited to attend these, and in 2008 The Spotlight on Learning Conference extended invitations to all colleges in Wales to attend. Take up for this conference was excellent with colleagues from North and South Wales, Shropshire and Cheshire attending the conference.

**1.2 c Research undertaken is recognised officially**

Many of the College’s research findings are published. Colleagues have had their research published or have presented research at conferences. (c.f 3.3) In 2007-2009 colleagues have

presented papers to CEL, LLUK, LSIS and Fforwm conferences and another colleague presenting research findings on organisational change in public bodies for the Welsh Assembly Government Sustainable Change conference in Swansea in September 2009. All celebrations of staff's academic success are published in our internal magazine Y Talk so that staff have opportunities to contact each other about research undertaken. PGCE students in College (of which around 75% are employed as lecturing staff in College) present their research findings at an annual conference in Glyndwr University, which also is an opportunity for the students to celebrate their achievements and talk to other learners about their research.

### [1.2 d Support from management](#)

2006-2008 Yale College resourced a major learning project 'Spotlight on learning' investing over £30,000. The College also invested substantial time in resourcing 4 TLMs to undertake and support staff with research. 16 teachers from a wide range of subject areas across the College undertook action research projects on how learners learn best. Over 400 learners were tested using the Hermann Brain Dominance Instrument (HBDI). How learners learn best formed the basis of CPD for two years and anticipated the new Welsh Common Inspection Framework where learner participation and the quality of learning are core. The College values these investments as part of its learning culture and believes them to be sector leading.

The College is also supportive of other staff pursuing higher education qualifications and is currently supporting 7 staff with their university fees. All staff who engage on HE courses are asked to disseminate their work with other staff and training sessions are arranged in our July training to allow staff to share their research. The College also releases its staff to engage in PGCE qualifications. The College has a well developed PGCE course which all teaching staff in the College must engage with. The course requires year 2 students to undertake two action research projects. Many staff have gone on to pursue a BA in Education at Glyndwr University as a result of their experiences doing the PGCE course. The BA is currently free to staff at Yale under local agreements with Glyndwr. One outcome of the BA is its module in mentoring where staff researching mentoring become mentors for current PGCE students.

### [1.3 How does research contribute to learning?](#)

#### [1.3 a. Reflective Practice](#)

Reflective practice is seen as vital to CPD in the College. The College has invested in 2009 in a software tool so that all staff can input and take control of their CPD. All staff consider personal reading and research as part of their essential CPD and can log this and reflect/ evaluate on the impact that this research has on their practice. The system promotes both short term and longer term reflective practice, asking staff to reflect on the impact of CPD on their working practices over time. This is also discussed at the annual performance review with the line manager, which each member of staff has.

#### [1.3 b. Students gain research and analysis skills](#)

The College fully embeds Key skills for all learners, which includes communications (research) and problem solving (analysis). The vast majority of courses offered in College contain elements of research and analysis and a strategic objective for the College is to continue to develop e learning strategies which encourage research and enquiry. The rollout of the Welsh Baccalaureate for over 800 learners in 2009 means that all these learners will have to engage with key skills and also undertake a research project. Year on year the number of learners undertaking the Welsh Baccalaureate is set to grow.

#### [1.3 c Change to teaching/learning methods](#)

Changes to teaching and learning methods as a result of research seen in Spotlight on Learning Project (c.f. 1.2d) were evidenced in all 16 subjects involved in the Spotlight on Learning project. Findings from the research promoted more implementation of differentiation and a wider variety of learning methods to encompass the wide range of learning styles identified in the HBDI research.

#### [1.3 d Changes to classroom materials and resources](#) (c.f. 1.3 c)

Spotlight on Learning also informed the design of Moodle, as one research project focussed on learner preferences for e-learning materials. As a result, research learner forums were modified on the site and more focus given to using Moodle for formative assessment, revision and extension opportunities (learner preference)

**1.3 e Change to curriculum**

Pilot of 14-19 collaboration (2006) with Yale College leading 14-19 curriculum developments have led to roll out (2007-2008) and full provision of vocational and academic courses for all learners across Wrexham schools (2009 on). The Wrexham 14-19 consortium of FE and schools has been sector leading in Wales.

**1.3 f Change to College systems and structure** (c.f. 1.1b, 1.1c, 1.3e)

**1.3 g Increased / sharing of knowledge** (c.f. 1.2 a 1.2b)

**1.4 How do senior leaders demonstrate support**

**1.4 a and b Time, resources and praise recognition**

Over the last 3 years the College supported 32 staff to pursue higher education courses and contributed over £30,000 towards their fees. In return the College expects these staff to give their time to support others and to share their learning in staff training opportunities.

The Teaching and Learning Mentors (TLMs) are also a valuable resource for research. Estyn 2009 inspection of Yale College commented on the good practice of resourcing the TLMs under Key Question 7 College Resources.

(c.f.1.2d – investment in Spotlight on Learning Project)

Staff are encouraged to showcase their research within College and externally. (c.f.1.2c) All higher degree achievements are celebrated publicly in the College internal magazine

**1.4 c Embody evidence based decision making** (c.f. 1.2a)

**1.4 d Sharing with other leaders** (c.f. 1.2a)

The College regularly leads cluster groups and network events. An example of the sharing of research with other leaders would be the sharing of expertise on ALIS with other FE Colleges, including Coleg Llandrillo and the presentations evidenced in 3.3 b

**1.5 How is commitment to research/ enquiry evident in the College?**

**1.5 a Public acknowledgement of commitment to research engagement**

The College has been recognised as sector leading in several areas as a result of research engagement. An example of this would be the winning of the 2009 Fforwm Award for the implementation of ESDGC (sustainability and citizenship) across the College. The submission outlined the research undertaken and the subsequent implementation of actions arising

**1.5 b and c Results shared with colleagues and visible changes to working practice**

The College's sector leading implementation of EFQM principles is regularly shared with colleagues across the sector. The Quality Manager has delivered lecturers on EFQM and research as part of the Fforwm MA in Leadership and Management.

As a result of the Spotlight on Learning Project, planning for a variety of learning styles is now discussed regularly in teams and the profiles of all learners are undertaken across College as part of the induction process. The College has fully implemented many aspects of research undertaken, including learner voice, the student assistance programme, embedding ESDGC and adopting EFQM in Quality systems.

**1.5d-f results published in materials available to visitors**

The Spotlight on Learning Conference in 2008 showcased all research done as part of the project to delegates from across the sector and across Wales. Staff explained their research in workshops and enthused about the work undertaken.

**Evidence – 2. Support Systems**

**2.1 How time is made available?**

**2.1 a-c Inset days, CPD other training , study leave, team meetings, team teaching, time to attend conferences, events and courses**

The College has 5 days set aside each year as training days. Faculties also have flexibility to develop training days specifically for their teams. The College is committed to at least one large scale event each year with a guest expert speaker.

Bespoke training occurs on a training needs basis identified in performance reviews and by teams.

Teaching and Learning Mentors (TLMs) provide opportunities for peer observation, team development of new ideas and research discussions. Each team discusses teaching and learning developments and TLMs work with teams to develop new practices. This often involves peer to peer support and lesson observations.

Many of our staff attend conferences, courses and training events. Training is identified on annual performance reviews and every subject area undertakes an external update about their qualifications each year, usually through the examination awarding body. The College also attends many network events at a local, regional and national level including AOC conferences, Welsh Assembly Government Pedagogy Conferences, LSIS Conferences and Fforwm events.

**2.1 e-g Allocated time and sabbaticals, day release**

The College is committed to helping each member of staff achieve 30 hours of professional development per year. The College has supported 3 members of staff to undertake sabbaticals at Bangor University in order to improve their Welsh language skills. This has enabled staff to teach through the medium of Welsh and extended our bilingual provision.

PGCE students employed in college are given remission off timetable of one afternoon per week. Mentors of PGCE staff are given 8 hours remission.

**2.2 What access do you have to other resources from the school?**

**2.2 a librarian**

The LRC Manager is a qualified and Chartered Member of the Chartered Institute of Information and Library Professionals (CILIP) and the LRC team are either qualified professionals or para-professionals. The College has a well resourced and extensive Learning Resource Centre with 8 library staff and a wide range of journals and books.

**2.2 b IT support, equipment, software**

The LRC has 120 computers, and has developed a wide collection of e-books and other licenced e-resources which can be accessed remotely through Athens. Staff and learners can learn how to research journals and online resources through carefully designed programmes. (may also wish to mention that we have wi-fi which is helping to extend access to the college network). The LRC has a proactive attitude towards providing research opportunities through the use of technology to enhance the learner experience.

**2.2 c Research manager / officer**

The Head of the LRC has extensive expertise in supporting research. Our learners at College undertake courses at level 4 and post graduate level in association with Glyndwr University.

**2.2 d University link person**

Yale College has its own franchise officer, Rosemary Jones, at Glyndwr University who supports all our franchised courses, including teacher training and construction courses

**2.2 e Administrative support**

The professional development unit has a full time administrative support.

**2.2 f Statistical support**

The College has a quality technician who is able to provide statistical support for research projects.

**2.3 - What mentoring support is available?**

**2.3 a Partner institution, Partner university and link person**

Support has been developed through Yale College's extensive networks and partnerships. Staff regularly attend Fforwm and Dysg groups (networks for FE and work based learning providers) Yale College also works closely with neighbouring colleges including Deeside, Menai and Llandrillo. Staff have also undertaken visits more widely to other colleges in the UK, including Newcastle Under Lyme, Telford, Runshaw and Shrewsbury.

Teacher training, Child care and the Engineering and Construction department work closely with Glyndwr University, with Yale franchised to provide HE courses. Other departments such as English, Performing Arts and Art have well established links with Glyndwr University and many learners progress onto their HE courses. Yale College has a designated Director of Faculty who works with Glyndwr University on developing HE links. C.f. (2.2d)

**2.3 d Local authority**

Yale College is a leading member of the 14-19 consortium developing extended learning provision across Wrexham’s local authority schools. The Estyn Inspection 2009 identified this as an area of outstanding practice. The work with the local authority has resulted in innovative projects including the development of a cross sector 14-19 Moodle site for all learners in Wrexham and an e-ILP which will log and track the learning progress of all young people from school through to post compulsory education or training.

**2.3 e f g h Consultant researcher/ researchers from other organisations / businesses / tutor**

As part of the Spotlight on Learning project, the College used Professor David Frost of Cambridge University as a critical friend. The expertise of the education and business departments at Glyndwr University is also regularly utilised. The College also consults on research projects with RSC Wales and with its respective Fforwm and Dysg groups.

**2.3 i-l Colleague/ email/ phone/ group/ buddy support**

The TLMs support any staff undertaking research projects. The PGCE team also share their expertise with staff undertaking research. Many staff with higher degree qualifications also act as critical friends supporting colleagues. The Learning Resource Centre also has research expertise and helps colleagues to locate and access research material.

**2.4 - What other ways do people gain access to research findings and expertise?**

c.f. 2.2 a The LRC holds training for all students on research skills and for our PGCE course. It also offers informal help and support for staff at any time. The LRC holds many journals and e-books as well as subscriptions to many online resources including Athens and subject specialist resource sites.

**Evidence 3. Research activity**

**3.1 - What is the system for encouraging research engagement?**

**3.1 a and b clear goals, a planned system rather than a collection of individual activities,**

The College’s Spotlight on Learning project 2006-2008 is an example of how the College set a clear research goal to find out how learners learn best, and enthused teachers from across College to undertake action research projects. These projects were co-ordinated by the Professional Development Manager and consisted of 16 staff using the Hermann Brain Dominance Instrument (HBDI). Learners were diagnostically assessed for their learning preference through individual online assessments and then a group profile was collated for each subject area. The TLMs, who had been trained in HBDI at level 1 and 2, worked with the researching staff to identify possible interventions that would help learners to learn more effectively based on their learning preferences.

**3.1 c.-d. monitoring of progress, evaluation of success, and sharing of findings**

The interventions were monitored by the TLMs and results were used to inform practice. The results of all the action research projects were presented at Yale College’s Spotlight on Learning Conference in July 2008. This conference had key note speakers in the morning, including David Frost of Cambridge University (who acted as a critical friend on the project) talking about teachers using action research. The afternoon was devoted to workshops where the participating teachers disseminated their findings to other teachers and external guests, showing how their research informed their practice.

**3.2 - How do research areas reflect the interests of the organisation?**

**3.2 a-b linked to college improvement plans and college strategy**

The Spotlight on Learning Project was core to the development of Yale College as a learning culture. Yale College’s main core value is that ‘exceptional learning is at the heart of all we do.’ This is further translated into the strategic objectives which are to develop excellence in teaching and learning. The Spotlight on Learning research projects helped the College to

evidence to all staff that learners learn in different ways and that it is imperative to understand this and to vary learning activities to engage learners. The research also linked to improvement plans in one department, where the research clearly linked under performance of one particular cohort to the delivery method and highlighted the need for greater differentiation in this particular subject. As a result of the intervention and follow up work, results in this department dramatically improved. Results of The Spotlight on Learning project were linked into the College's Strategic Annual Review in 2008

**3.2 c linked to staff development**

Spotlight on Learning formed the central thrust of staff development 2006-2008. The long term result of the project was the development of a Teaching and Learning Strategy for the College. This outlines (as a result of the research) the most effective teaching strategies to promote effective learning. These strategies form the basis of staff development on teaching and learning going forward.

**3.2 d linked to Ofsted/Education and Training Inspectorate reporting**

Professional development was highlighted as outstanding practice in the 2009 Estyn Inspection of Yale College. College Leadership and Management was also graded as outstanding.

**3.2 e special status of school linked to research area**

Other research has also impacted on College improvement plans. In 2007 one colleague's action research into Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship (ESDGC) led to a strategy for action and development, which in turn led to a roll out of ESDGC training across the College. As a result of this, the College was acknowledged as sector leading in this area and received the 2009 Fforwm Award for ESDGC.

**3.3 - Main research activities in the last three years**

**3.3 a at least one example to be given in full**

The Spotlight on Learning project (2006-2008) – evidenced in 1.2 d, 3.1, 3.2 and throughout this submission. Large scale project involving 16 staff in action research.

Organisational change – the embedding of ESDGC into learning and institutional management(2006-2009) c.f. 3.2e

Research project on the forms of online learning accessed and enjoyed/ valued by learners who use Moodle as blended learning.

Using EFQM for total quality management (2006 to present)

PHD on the concept of 'the teacher' awarded 2007 Sheffield University

**3.3 b and c links to other examples where possible and references to publications**

Cartmell J. Sector-Wide Transformational Leadership: In the strategic pursuit of excellence, how can leaders and managers bring about effective self regulation? in D. Collinson (ed) *New Directions in Leadership Excellence: Towards Self-Regulation*. . University of Lancaster: CEL Research Programme, 2008, 58 – 78. (link below)

<http://www.centreforexcellence.org.uk/UsersDoc/PRPVVolume10.pdf>

<http://www.centreforexcellence.org.uk/event/UsersDoc/NPRC09SectorwideTransformationalLeadershipWeb.pdf> EFQM Total Quality Management presentation

<http://www.centreforexcellence.org.uk/event/?Page=NPRCProgramme> presentation to LSIS

<http://www.fforwm.ac.uk/5102.html> Spotlight on Learning project

[http://www.ngfl-cymru.org.uk/2-0-0-0\\_national\\_initiatives/pedagogy-conf-08.htm](http://www.ngfl-cymru.org.uk/2-0-0-0_national_initiatives/pedagogy-conf-08.htm) Yale College presentation to schools and FE sector on Spotlight on Learning project – National Pedagogy Conference

<http://fforwm.accessible.sequence.co.uk/index/news/5342.html> Spotlight on Learning project

[http://www.lluk.org/documents/conference\\_2007.pdf](http://www.lluk.org/documents/conference_2007.pdf) presentation to LLUK conference on Spotlight on Learning

**3.4 - How is ethical practice ensured?**

**3.4 a and b policy agreed and in place**

Yale College uses the ethical guidelines set out by Glyndwr University as the basis of its ethical practice. This includes obtaining full permission from the learners and all involved in

research, plus permission from the College. Yale College also ensures that no research will have a detrimental effect on any learners in terms of their access to opportunities, and care is taken to design research so that all learners have equal access to beneficial new techniques.

**3.4 c ethical issues identified at the start of a research investigation**

All formal submissions of research projects undertaken as part of PGCE or research with Glyndwr University considers ethical issues that may arise.

**3.4 d steps are taken to ensure ethical practice**

All learners on the PGCE course and undertaking research with Glyndwr University have taught sessions on ethics and best ethical practice in research. TLMs also oversee ethical issues in research, one TLM lectures on this area and has specific expertise based on her own MA module in research methodology.

**3.4 e parental permission given for involvement of students as necessary**

As our learners are over 16, we obtain permission directly from them.

**3.4 f adherence to Data Protection Act and Copyright, Designs and Patents Act**

The College has a strong data protection policy and all staff are asked to sign compliance of this. Each team has a data protection officer and there is one member of staff with total control for data protection in the College. The College own the rights to all work produced by staff whilst employed by the College under their initial contract of employment.

**3.5 - How is quality of process and outcomes assured?**

**3.5 a and b quality assurance procedure agreed and in place , and quality checked by critical friend/mentor (someone with research knowledge) at draft stage**

Large research projects, such as the Spotlight on Learning Project are project managed with a task focussed team, involving the TLMs. As referenced in 2.3, critical friends are used from HE institutions to steer the research. All research produced for the PGCE programme is marked and moderated internally and externally in franchise moderation meetings. Other research undertaken is usually linked to higher qualifications and quality assured under the respective university procedures.

**4. Impact**

**4.1 - How does the organisation show its commitment to sharing results?**

c.f. 1.2, 1.5, 3.3

**4.2 - What opportunities are there for sharing results outside the school?**

c.f. 1.2, 1.5, 3.3

**4.3 - How has your school contributed to external research-related partnerships, networks, events or publications? (Two specific examples to be given.)**

Yale College works closely with the Welsh Assembly Government on projects and pilots.

**Example One – Learner Voice pilot 2008-2009**

Yale College has implemented learner voice surveys and is currently collating the findings to send back to DCELLS. The results of this pilot will help inform DCELLS when they roll out Learner Voice surveys across all FE Colleges in Wales in 2010. This survey will be used to benchmark FE Colleges so it was vital that the survey questions capture data effectively.

Yale College has also piloted the work based learning toolkit, now used as standard practice across the sector.

**Example Two – Wales Quality Awards 2007-present**

Yale College have worked with the Wales Quality Awards organisation to develop EFQM (Effective Framework for Quality Management) in the College. The partnership has involved two submissions for awards, audits from the organisation and the development of partnerships from other award winners, all helping to develop the College as a learning organisation through sharing best practice and research findings. Yale College won the overall Wales Quality Award in 2008. This led to further research by Yale College and a visit to World class leaders in quality management, including Runshaw College in Lancashire and Richmond College in Dallas. The Quality Manager, the Principal and Vice Principal used the partnership

with Richmond College to research what makes a world class organisation, findings provided the basis of presentations to the sector (including presentations to LSIS and CEL).

## **5. Sustainability**

### **5.1 - How many staff have been involved in research in the last three years? must be at least 50% of staff in the school, college, department or faculty**

Over the last three years all staff in the Education department has been involved in research. Across our large college of 188 full time academic staff this number extends to approximately 97 staff undertaking research as part of ongoing qualifications or action research projects.

### **5.2 - Which members of your organisation have been involved as researchers?**

Teaching staff have been involved as researchers. In addition to this support staff helped the development of the Spotlight on Learning project with data management and collation of results. Pupils were also involved in the Spotlight on Learning research and took part in the explanation of the project and the dissemination of the findings. All PGCE students are encouraged to share their findings with their learners.

### **5.3 - How do you encourage people to become involved for the first time?**

TLMs support first time researchers and give them practical ideas and support for their research. The staff member has an opportunity to record their research as professional development on our CPD software. This will then be recognised by the line manager and discussed at the staff member's annual performance review. Many of the College's staff from vocational areas may be new to teaching and as such they are inducted onto the PGCE programme in their first year of teaching. This means that they are also inducted into research with formal inductions at Yale College LRC and at Glyndwr University. The College showcases research both through the Glyndwr University annual conference for all PGCE students and through conferences at Yale College on July training days.

### **5.4 - How sustainable is your organisation's research engagement in the next three years?**

The focus on research into learning at Yale College is set to continue. The College has set out the 10 teaching and learning methods and is focussing training and research on these areas. An evidence based approach to organisation change is culturally embedded in Yale College, as evidenced through the submission with the QASC committee and the commitment to research in the leadership and management of the organisation. The College is promoting e learning courses through Glyndwr University to all staff and is working with Glyndwr University to deliver modules of the BA in Education which in turn can be accessed by our staff free of charge. Working with Glyndwr University helps us to build sustainable courses that can be funded through them and also can be accessed by all staff at Yale College.

The College's commitment to professional development is also evidenced in the statements in 5.5 which echo the College's priorities of encouraging all staff to engage in research in teaching and learning and in developing e-learning.

### **5.5 - How do you intend to build your school's research skills, capacity and impact in the next three years?**

Yale College's 2008-2011 Strategic Summary gives a commitment to:

- 'emphasise outstanding teaching and learning as the key priority for the college, with staff understanding the part they have to play in it.'
- 'introduce more higher education programmes where appropriate'
- 'develop strong links with Richland College, Dallas and benchmark with other national and international programmes'
- 'to ensure that teaching and learning is underpinned by appropriate e-learning strategies'

The College leadership and management structure has been re-structured to give the Director of Curriculum Performance leadership of teaching and learning and professional development in College. This clearly aligns resources and quality with developing teaching and learning projects and using the TLMs to support and develop further research opportunities which as a learning organisation will then be shared back to all members of College.