

Literacy, language, numeracy and IT skills development in low-paid, low-skilled workplaces

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Executive Summary

The SEEDA-funded Basic Skills programme has created learning partnerships centred on the low-paid workplace in NHS Trusts across the south east region. These learning partnerships deliver literacy, English language, numeracy and IT (LLNIT) skills in NHS workplaces. These have offered a valuable opportunity to investigate, across a number of sites, how on-the-job LLNIT learning might widen participation in learning, to support both organisational performance and the skills development of low-paid workers in the south east.

In summer 2005, SEEDA commissioned a project to further explore these issues and, on the basis of this work, to consider how its funding might most cost-effectively be used to promote on-the-job LLNIT learning opportunities for people in low-paid and low-skilled occupations. The work focuses on the low-paid workforce, as it is among this group that the greatest unmet need for LLNIT skills is likely to exist.

This summary (and the accompanying report) presents findings from the second stage of this project: an analysis of an audit of learning conducted in organisations where low-skilled and low-paid jobs exist.

Project methodology

In commissioning the project, SEEDA collaborated with Alexander Braddell (its Project Consultant and an author of this report) to design a staged process for collecting information about low-paid, low-skilled work and workplaces and the opportunities for LLNIT learning therein. The first stage was a literature review to establish what was already known (and not known) in this field, the methodology for which is published in the first of these reports. The second stage involved Practice Evidence Gathering (PEG) teams gaining agreement to audit learning and development practices in relevant workplaces, and undertaking that audit. It is this aspect we discuss here.

The PEG teams are for the most part made up of qualified LLNIT trainers with extensive and current experience of delivering LLNIT in south east workplaces. The

PEG teams were recruited from south east workplace LLNIT providers already working in partnership with employers. In many cases, these partnerships centred on the low-paid workplace in NHS trusts and were funded by SEEDA as part of the agency's NHS Basic Skills programme. The PEG teams were contracted by SEEDA to recruit organisations to participate in the audit; as well as to undertake the gathering of evidence required by the audit.

The methodology, which guaranteed the involvement of organisations and also offered the benefit of working with experienced practitioners, has implications for the generalisability of the findings. The organisations may be judged to have some predisposition to see the benefits of LLNIT learning; the PEG teams cannot be considered objective evidence gatherers given their involvement in the subject area. While the findings may be, in some aspects, indicative of what is happening in other low-paid, low-skilled workplaces, the large number of health (and related) organisations indicates that this data is most likely to reflect patterns in this sector.

Presentation of findings

Twenty-one organisations (and a total of 27 organisational units) were audited. The units had working in them 53 occupational groups. Forty-three learning events held for the occupational groups encompassed by the units, were reported on by PEG teams. In addition, they gathered information from 52 line managers and 69 low-paid, low-skilled employees. The PEG teams also provided their expert analysis of 165 tasks involving the application of LLNIT skills. Below we present the key findings from each strand of the audit, followed by a discussion of their implications and we conclude with our recommendations for future stages of this project.

Learning and development policy

- LLNIT skills development receives little explicit priority within training policy documents although the existence of a training policy is close to universal. Where there is reference to any of the LLNIT skill sets, IT is the most likely to be identified in training policy in these organisations.
- Performance review systems such as appraisal are common but as these are mostly large, public service organisations this is perhaps not surprising¹.
- The performance review systems were the most frequently identified mechanism for the negotiation of training, however informal discussions with supervisors and

¹ It should be noted that the NHS is currently introducing its first, mandatory, standardised appraisal and performance development system: the knowledge and skills framework and personal development review process. Organisations are currently training managers and staff to implement this system. At the time of the audit this had not yet been fully implemented.

line managers or direct application to HR or training departments were almost as common.

Learning events audited by PEG teams

- Most of the learning events audited were led by external trainers. There was some limited evidence of collaboration between external trainers and employer staff that could offer a useful transitional model to enable changes in delivery to be achieved.
- Non-qualification training formed the majority of learning events and fairly large numbers of these explicitly contained LLNIT skills development in some form.
- Largely, the learning events were configured for groups and delivered off-the-job, but on the employer's site. In one-fifth of events, this mode was combined with on-job learning application support using demonstration and assessment techniques. On-the-job learning was delivered in much the same way, indicating there may be scope for the greater integration and use of on-the-job learning.
- Colleagues, but more frequently, managers and supervisors were seen by PEG teams as key to the development of LLNIT skills at work as well as to their application. Their needs, in the view of the PEG teams, included greater awareness raising training about these skill sets, and practical communication skills such as those necessary for coaching or managing performance.

Line managers' perspective

- Managers reported that some skills or combination thereof were important in recruitment for the occupational groups for which they were responsible. Over one-half of the line managers reported that a combination of skills was required, and four in ten of these combinations included LLNIT skills. Where a single skill was specified, close to one-half of these skills were from the LLNIT grouping.
- Of all the skills specified during the recruitment processes cited by managers (whether these were single or in combination) the ones receiving greatest priority were literacy and skills related to specific trades and crafts. Communication skills were specified in just over ten per cent of cases; however, if customer service skills are combined with this, their specification close to doubles.
- For one-half of the groups reported on by line managers, a mix of experienced and inexperienced recruits was typical. Generally, line managers believed that most recruits required training. This suggests that, even where recruits have skills, the organisations require these to be tailored in some way to meet the needs of work. Unsurprisingly, this is particularly the case for functional and safe practice skills.
- Further analysis of the line manager information demonstrated that much of the training required by experienced recruits was in the area of LLNIT skills; this finding was statistically significant. We believe this is indicative of the importance

of the LLNIT skills in terms of the total skill-set required by these workers; also since a significant amount of the training needed, even by experienced staff, is in the LLNIT skill areas, the extent to which they require a identification in employee development strategies.

- Two-thirds of the line managers in these organisations reported that they monitored the skills in which employees had been trained. However the PEG team data also suggested that one in ten did not undertake any follow-up activities to further embed skills. Monitoring tended to combine formal and informal procedures, although of these two options, informal monitoring was mentioned slightly more often when a single method was used.
- Overall, eight in ten of these line managers felt that skills requirements had increased, while just four in total thought they had decreased. Low-paid, low-skilled workers' participation in decision-making (an information processing skill) was also felt, overall, to have increased in most of these organisations.
- The line managers participating in the audit more readily identified the role of LLNIT skills to the development of better team working than task duties. Unsurprisingly, communication was a common factor here although customer service also gained recognition (a skill that might be considered to combine communication and problem solving, ie some degree of information processing).

Employees' views

- Employees gave information about the skills that had been required at recruitment and most of these identified relevant previous work experience. Task-related and LLNIT skills were required in a broadly similar number of cases. If information processing skills and communication were considered in combination with the skills of the LLNIT acronym, then these skills were the most commonly demanded (in the view of employees).
- Although employees were drawn from a large number of occupations (with varying skills requirements), there was an indication that, in their view, few of these jobs require no skills development following recruitment. More than one-half of these employees reported that a training period of between two weeks and one month would be necessary. However, this contrasted with their own experience of training at the outset of work, where large numbers reported 'only a little' training had been required.
- Employees believed that, of the tasks involving LLNIT skills required by their work, just over one-quarter required the ability to read and comprehend written information. Just over one in ten tasks involved the use of IT. In the case of IT, over eight in ten of the employees reporting its use had also received development. Just two-thirds of the employees who reported that they need to produce written information had received development to support them to do this. Only a small

numbers reported receiving development if their work involved reading in some form.

- Just over one-half of these employees reported that their skills were monitored following development; this suggests that close to one-half did not believe this to be the case. Where monitoring was taking place, largely this included the discussion of their development needs. Almost universally, managers were reported by employees to be responsible for the monitoring taking place and mostly monitoring combined both formal and informal mechanisms.
- Where monitoring was taking place and feedback was part of this, the majority of these employees agreed that they and their manager discussed any further development requirements. However, when asked whether LLNIT development needs were included in these discussions only two-thirds of this group agreed.
- Largely, skills requirements for their work were felt by these employees to have increased. They also felt that they played a greater role in decision-making now. Employee responses indicated that in around two-thirds of instances, training had been delivered to support the changes, suggesting there had been some recognition at organisational level of these new demands on employees.
- Employees were asked about any LLNIT/IPC skills development they would like to receive and the majority related directly to communication skills.
- When asked whether any skills development would help them and their colleagues work better as a team, just under one-half responded positively. Of these, the majority felt that communications development was required.

Activities for which LLNIT skills are required

- PEG teams were asked to report on workplace activities undertaken by the occupational groups they visited. This revealed that most of these groups are required to regularly process information and communicate with colleagues, external companies and/or members of the public. Many of the activities were covered by regulatory frameworks.
- PEG teams reported that almost 90 per cent of activities involved face-to-face communication, some 80 per cent involved paper-based communication, and 35 per cent involved ICT-mediated communication.
- For 84 per cent of the activities the PEG teams believed that the requirement to apply one or more LLNIT skill was specified, or else clearly implied by documentation such as job descriptions, health and safety documentation or competency frameworks associated with the activity. In the majority of cases, PEG teams believed that these requirements were communicated to the workers, mostly by the line manager or at induction. However, in one-quarter of cases, there appeared to be no evidence that the requirement had been communicated.

- For just over one-half of the activities audited (55 per cent) PEG teams reported some form of organisational accommodation was made for limited LLNIT skills. Sometimes this took the form of restricting participation in the activity to those employees judged to have a sufficient skill level for the task. However, PEG teams also reported that there was no evidence of formal assessment of LLNIT skills associated with these activities, nor of managers or supervisors being qualified to assess LLNIT skills.
- The activities in which LLNIT skill needs had been identified were frequently those that contributed to safe working practice, team working and quality assurance. The PEG teams believed that poor levels of LLNIT skills were liable to compromise most of the activities. Poor LLNIT application was judged to pose a risk to safe working in 142 of the 165 activities, a risk to quality assurance in 154, to resource management in 156 and to work management in 155.
- Conversely, strengthened LLNIT skills were believed to help safeguard activities or, in some cases, enhance performance of the activity. Customer service was believed to be the work area that could most benefit from enhanced LLNIT skills.
- Support for the application of LLNIT skills was reported in a majority of the organisations. This was broadly categorised as formal training, coaching, resources, systematic feedback and work organisation. Of these, ad hoc, informal coaching was the most widely available.
- PEG teams believed that these types of support could be applied generally across activities. Furthermore, they believed that this type of support could be adopted to support LLNIT skills development and use (and the attendant performance management systems to encourage these) and thereby respond to perceived organisational shortcomings.
- At the conclusion of the audit, the PEG teams were asked to offer suggestions for how best to make LLNIT skills more visible to organisation and employees. They recommended that organisations should specify both the LLNIT skills required by work activities, and the standard of the application required; and systematically communicate the requirement for LLNIT skills, along with the risk to activities of poor application of these skills, and the value added to activities through effective application of these skills.
- PEG teams believed that a coherent support system would be required in order to bring to staff's attention the need for LLNIT skills in work activities; encourage them to use and develop these skills; help work teams, managers and supervisors to attend to the development and use of these skills; help employees in all roles to develop and implement strategies to apply LLNIT skills.
- Furthermore, LLNIT skill application would need to be reinforced through both coherent development of individuals' abilities in conjunction with 'just-in-time' on-the-job support for the application of LLNIT skills.

Implications of audit findings

It is fair to judge that these organisations have some support for learning and that this is largely task-related and frequently aims to ensure safe workplaces and practices. However, despite the involvement of a large majority of these organisations in the SEEDA NHS Basic Skills programme, LLNIT/IPC skills development receives little explicit priority (as far as PEG teams could ascertain) within the training policies. Where a LLNIT skill area was identified, this largely was IT. This appears to indicate that the need for LLNIT skills is largely not recognised at organisational level and further to this, we would suggest that the role of these skills in underpinning work practice is similarly unrecognised.

At the local level, evidence from the line managers suggests a greater (but by no means universal) recognition of a need for LLNIT skills, although systems for measurement (noted by line managers) could be considered rather ad-hoc. PEG teams reported that the need for LLNIT skills was either specified or implied in much organisational documentation, including job descriptions. However, in one-quarter of the activities recorded, this appeared not to have been communicated to the employee and where it was, the specification itself appears to have been related to task performance rather than skills.

The PEG team activity audit noted that for more than one-half of the audited activities, organisations sought to accommodate limited LLNIT skills (rather than address the development need). Therefore, while the line managers and employees reported opportunities for development in general, opportunities focused on developing the types of LLNIT skills needed in the activities audited appeared to be lacking. It was practice in some organisations to restrict involvement in some activities only to those with requisite levels of LLNIT skills; often, the PEG teams reported, these activities were those that contributed to safe working practice, team work and quality assurance. Low levels of LLNIT skills were judged to compromise many of these activities and functions.

Despite these gaps in LLNIT provision, around two-thirds of the line managers, and a similar ratio of employees, reported that opportunities for career progression existed, and that development and training was available to support this. These organisations therefore appear more willing than most low-paid, low-skilled workplaces to offer opportunities to progress and access to training to support this¹. However, the audit also indicated that, while support (in the form of training or development) for progression exists, there may nonetheless be some failure to capitalise on the increased skill levels attained as a result of this development. For example, while the line managers noted that there were no barriers to the application of newly developed

¹ This willingness may reflect healthcare initiatives such as the Department of Health's lifelong learning framework and action plan, *Working Together – Learning Together*, issued in 2001.

skills at work, their descriptions of how workers would gain this opportunity indicated in many cases that formal or informal progression was required (either to act up or actually gain promotion). The employee data supports this view, and we would note that only in two cases were there indications that they had been given some project that did utilise newly gained skills (rather than the opportunity, for instance, to 'act up'). Therefore, even where skill development is facilitated, organisations may fail to capitalise on their investment.

The audit suggests a lack of linkage between policy and the requirements for LLNIT skills development to perform work. Line managers' perceptions indicate that there is a gap between what is known at local level about the LLNIT skill demands of jobs and central parts of the organisation that facilitate development activities. Employees themselves make the link between development and performance, in many cases identifying that they would like further development to help them perform their jobs better.

Facilitators of on-the-job LLNIT learning

The increasing demand for skills amongst these workers and the increasing demand for them to participate in decision-making are factors likely to facilitate greater embedding of on-the-job LLNIT learning. Training has been offered (in most cases) to support the introduction of such changes, however, the extent to which communication and problem-solving development has been considered within this is unexplored. There would be benefits to further work to explore this issue.

Release from work for low-paid, low-skilled staff is likely to remain problematic. While there were indications from some of the PEG teams that organisational change was required to enable greater release of staff time, it is more likely that organisations will be persuaded to embed LLNIT development where there are not requirements for staff release. Providers should consider whether on-the-job delivery strategies can be used for some of the LLNIT development that is required. While there was support from PEG teams for this approach (on-the-job development) in some cases, where a significant skills gap existed then they believed that some off-the-job training would probably still be required.

Monitoring systems existed in most organisations and comprised informal and formal strategies. Their existence suggests that with organisational support, these could be used to leverage LLNIT skills development needs identification as well as development delivery. However, we found a lack of any development programmes for managers to develop the skills required to be able to engage with these concepts. The PEG teams reported that managers require awareness-raising training for LLNIT skills as well as development support monitoring and coaching (ie, the basics of performance management) if these aspects were to be effectively embedded in provision.

In view of this, we suggest that some form of transitional model is likely to be required to support these types of changes (if indeed these ideas are taken on board by organisations employing low-paid, low-skilled workers). We suggest here a key role for current LLNIT learning providers to work in partnership with organisations that goes beyond the delivery of traditional learning events for employees, to help support the development of skills in management, supervisory and indeed internal training staff, to be able to deliver LLNIT on-the-job themselves.

However, the key change that must be achieved for any of this to be embedded is that of the organisation recognising there is a real need for LLNIT skills. There has been sustained attention on LLNIT skills in recent years. Successive skills white papers have reiterated the government's commitment to Skills for Life. The DfES has invested significant funding in Skills for Life. In the health service the Department of Health has invested in basic skills development through individual learning accounts, and SEEDA too has invested in development of these skills. Despite this, while organisations have undoubtedly become more aware of basic skill issues, there still remains a failure in most cases to *embed* basic skill development in organisational policy and strategy.

Conclusions

The evidence suggests that, despite a positive disposition towards (and in some cases funding for) LLNIT skill development, there has been little action taken to embed LLNIT skill development within these workplaces. Therefore there remain skill deficits that impact on safety, quality and flexibility. Taken together, we may conclude that a benign attitude and the provision of funding, in and of themselves are insufficient to initiate organisational change and embed a strategic recognition of the importance of LLNIT skill development.

The work set out to answer some fundamental questions impacting on LLNIT skills at work, and it is with these that we use to conclude our analysis.

How are LLNIT skills and practices best defined and why?

Given that employers generally struggle with the vocabulary of skills, and in the audit managers and supervisors had difficulty in labelling the types of skills they required in various jobs, we suggest that introduction of another acronym into this area is not helpful. However, it is also acknowledged that employers' use of terms such as 'communication skills' are not helpful in attempting to identify the skill development required. Therefore we make recommendations for the later stage of the work to address this.

What LLNIT skills and practices does the workplace require?

PEG teams identified a range of LLNIT skills and practices required in these workplaces. In brief, these were oral, ICT-mediated, paper-based and either formal or informal communication or information processing skills. We recommend that in the second phase of the work this exploration of skill needs is extended.

How are current demands for LLNIT skills and practices currently negotiated?

The audit indicted that development requirements were mainly negotiated via managers or supervisors and in many cases some training was available. Nonetheless it was evident that, in a majority of organisations, skills deficits remained, and it might, therefore, be more appropriate to ask how LLNIT skill deficits are accommodated, since many organisations had devised ways to circumvent these skill deficits.

What perceptions exist in the workplace towards LLNIT skills and practices?

All individuals interviewed were broadly supportive of the need for LLNIT skills, and this is perhaps not surprising since in many cases they were organisations that had been in receipt of training funded by SEEDA for the development of such skills. However, the absence of LLNIT skills from training and HR policy in many of these organisations suggests that, whatever goodwill exists, it is not leading to the sustainable embedding of LLNIT practices within the workplace. There is a limit to the extent of any direct influence that SEEDA can exert on employers, since in the majority of cases it funds the training providers, not employers.

However, we suggest that SEEDA considers whether it might be possible to make any future development funding contingent upon providers requiring formal sign-up from organisations that will potentially benefit from the training provided under the scheme, so that the organisation becomes a partner in the initiative rather than simply a beneficiary (often with no real idea of the source of the funding). Furthermore, we suggest that, as part of this sign-up process, organisations should be required to agree to revise training and HR policies to embed adult basic skill development before funding is given; in addition, SEEDA should request the recipient organisations to provide a formal evaluation to SEEDA of the impact of the funding on their organisational performance. This would do much to move practice on (in embedding development opportunities) and make the benefits visible to senior management.

What are the consequences of current practices for the workplace?

The consequences of current practices are severe: many adults remain insufficiently skilled for their current positions, let alone any chance of progression; threats to safety, quality and work flow arise from skill deficits; and organisations are rendered significantly less flexible as a result of skills deficits.

Next steps

In light of the findings from this project, it is timely to consider ways to help organisations embed these processes (from the identification of LLNIT skills and recognition of their impacts for practice to ensuring skills development in these areas becomes policy). Below we suggest a staged methodology to take forward this work, in which on-the-job LLNIT skills developments will be trialled and evaluated:

- identification of LLNIT skill needs – establish working groups with line managers and employees to identify which LLNIT skills are required by their work, in what way and at what level;
- development of skills of LLNIT practitioners involved in this work – to support the identification of training needs and skills gaps, and designing and delivering on-the-job learning;
- designing delivery options and materials – development of a range of approaches for on-the-job delivery, and accompanying materials drawing on work-based examples;
- trial the options in different organisations – a subset of options to be trialled at a number of employer sites depending on skills gaps identified;
- implement the pilot – collection of baseline evidence (individual- and organisational), assess individual's skills; develop line managers and deliver skills to employees;
- test and evaluate the pilot – capture learner and manager evaluation of the approach and materials. Assessment of progress ie distance travelled from baseline (individual and organisational). Gather cost estimates from managers of time away from work typically needed for employees to attend training;
- gauge cost-effectiveness – the value of increased performance/(the costs of training including LLNIT practitioner time & management development + cost of salary during training + loss of any business revenue that would be accrued in the employee's absence).

1 Introduction

The SEEDA-funded NHS Basic Skills programme has created learning partnerships centred on the low-paid workplace in NHS trusts across the south east region. These learning partnerships deliver literacy, English language, numeracy and IT (LLNIT) skills in NHS workplaces. They offer an opportunity to investigate simultaneously, across a number of sites, whether on-the-job LLNIT learning might widen participation in learning, to support both organisational performance and the skills development of low-paid workers in the south east.

In 2005, SEEDA, conscious that operating constraints limit the ability of employers to release staff for off-the-job LLNIT skills training, commissioned a project to further explore these issues and, on the basis of this work, to consider whether its funding might be used cost-effectively to promote on-the-job LLNIT learning opportunities for people in low-paid and low-skilled occupations. The work focuses on the low-paid workforce, as it is amongst this group that the greatest unmet need for LLNIT skills is assumed to exist.

The initial task in this project was to set up the project's structure and management arrangements (including confirmation of partners and organisations offering access to workplaces) for the purpose of gathering practice evidence. The next part of the work was to review the literature on low-paid, low-skilled work and to then generate a model of the low-paid workplace which identified its key features and the opportunities that might exist within the low-paid, low-skilled workplace for on-the-job LLNIT learning. This literature review provided the basis for the final stage of the project's first phase:

- the gathering of practice evidence and expert evaluation to determine what, if any, opportunities the low-paid workplace offers for on-the-job LLNIT learning.

The aim of this first phase was to test the viability of a further phase of the project which would trial on-the-job LLNIT learning methods, leading to a final expert evaluation of the potential for on-the-job LLNIT learning to raise skill levels in the low-paid, low-skilled workplace. That evaluation would in turn lead to

recommendations for how public funding could most cost-effectively support this kind of skills development.

1.1 Aims

Here, we report the aims of the audit by the Practice Evidence Gathering (PEG) teams to establish what opportunities the low-paid and low-skilled workplace currently offers for on-the-job LLNIT learning. The key aims of the audit were to:

- gauge the extent to which these workers are currently involved in learning
- identify the forms of learning and training these workers experience
- identify the formats of learning, specifically, the existence of workplace LLNIT learning and in particular, opportunities for on-the-job learning of LLNIT skills
- examine barriers and facilitators to LLNIT learning for these workers, both from their own and their managers' perspectives
- gain some limited contextual information about learning practices and policies within each organisation
- assess the requirements for LLNIT skills in these low-paid, low-skilled jobs and how opportunities for LLNIT learning may be leveraged to met these requirements
- gather the perspective of LLNIT skills experts (ie PEG teams) about the possibilities and opportunities (or otherwise) to embed on-the-job, workplace LLNIT skill development.

1.2 Methodology

In commissioning the project, SEEDA collaborated with Alexander Braddell (its Project Consultant and an author of this report) to design a staged process for collecting information about low-paid, low-skilled work and workplaces and the opportunities for LLNIT learning therein. The first stage was a literature review to establish what was already known (and not known) in this field, published in the first of these reports¹. The second stage involved PEG teams gaining agreement to audit the types of learning opportunities available in relevant workplaces, and undertaking that audit. It is second stage of the project that we discuss here.

IES was tasked with contributing to specific elements of the project, namely, to undertake the literature review, and to design and analyse the audit in partnership

¹ Newton B, Miller L, Bates P, Page R, Akroyd K (2006), *Learning Through Work: Literacy, language, numeracy and IT skills development in low-paid, low-skilled workplaces – Literature Review*, Institute for Employment Studies

with Alexander Braddell. We discuss the constituent parts of this audit tool in section 1.2.3 and follow this with a discussion of the implications of the methodology. However, before this, we provide some information about the PEG teams and discuss the rationale for their involvement.

1.2.1 PEG teams and participating organisations

For the most part, the PEG teams are made up of qualified LLNIT trainers with extensive and current experience of delivering LLNIT in south east workplaces. This LLNIT expertise was supplemented in three of the four teams by organisational HR and training expertise. The PEG teams were recruited from south east workplace LLNIT providers already working in partnership with employers. In many cases, these partnerships centred on the low-paid workplace in NHS trusts and were funded by SEEDA as part of the agency's NHS Basic Skills programme.

In Table 1.1 below, we provide brief details about the PEG teams and the numbers of organisation units they have engaged in this project.

Table 1.1: About the PEG teams

PEG Lead Organisation	Location	Description	No. of organisations	No. of organisational units ⁴ audited
H-BCOT	North and Mid Hants	Workplace LLNIT department of Basingstoke College of Technology, a college of further education. Recent workplace LLNIT projects include the Beacon-award winning Context programme (SEEDA-funded)	3	3
SHIW	South Hants, Isle of Wight	Solent Skill Quest, a voluntary sector Business-Education Partnership, drawing on south east workplace LLNIT practitioners associated with the Network as well as its own staff. Recent workplace LLNIT projects include the SEEDA-funded Springboard, LEAP and Workplace Bridge projects	4	4
TV	Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Milton Keynes and Berkshire	Confederation of organisations working in the Thames Valley area, including Oxfordshire County Council's workplace LLNIT unit, Buckinghamshire County Council's Workforce Development unit and the Workers' Educational Association. Recent workplace LLNIT projects include Oxfordshire Skills for Health, Workwise and Get on Board (all SEEDA-funded)	10	12

⁴ We are using the term 'organisational unit' to refer to different divisions, departments or sites within large organisations.

PEG Lead Organisation	Location	Description	No. of organisations	No. of organisational units ⁴ audited
KSS	Kent, Surrey, Sussex	Sheila Caulfield Associates, a training and development consultancy specialising in workplace LLNIT. Recent workplace LLNIT projects include Surrey and Sussex NHS Trust Skills for Life Project, Surrey and Sussex NHS Trust Facilities Directorate Modular Performance Development Review Programme, GO Local Government Award programme	4	8

Source: IES/SEEDA 2006

The PEG teams were contracted by SEEDA to contribute to the project in two ways: firstly, to engage organisations to participate in the audit; and secondly, to undertake the audit within the organisations. The benefits of contracting with the PEG teams in this way were:

- the PEG teams are basic skills experts who understand the debates about the definition and delivery of these skill sets
- much of the PEG teams' focus is on the delivery of LLNIT skills in workplaces. Therefore, PEG teams should understand how the workplace can be used as a context for learning delivery, and they should also have ideas of how to improve workplace delivery and be able to spot any opportunities currently being overlooked
- through this workplace focus the PEG teams have established relationships with employers where they have developed (or are developing) learning practice in some way. This helped to ensure the recruitment of organisations for the project, which was key to the audit process
- through their practice in workplace basic skills, PEG teams understand the needs of learners who require LLNIT development; this would enable them to readily build trust with participating employees, to explain the audit appropriately as well as discuss issues arising.

These factors were important as the audit had a number of constituent parts that required significant access within the organisations and amongst employees. A further rationale for contracting with the PEG teams was:

- PEG teams are drawn from the workplace LLNIT skills development workforce; their perceptions may be indicative of the perceptions of practitioners currently working to implement public policy in this field.

1.2.2 The audit tool

The design of the project specified an audit of current practices in low-paid, low-skilled workplaces. An audit would provide a snapshot of current activity and practice within organisations and allow a range of perspectives to be included. It would also identify the facilitators of, and barriers to, learning in these settings, and be configured to identify potential learning opportunities. An audit would also maximise the benefits presented by working with the PEG teams and enable a more detailed examination within the organisations they had recruited.

The audit tool comprised two elements. The first element consisted of four parts that captured current workplace, HR and development practices and was designed by IES. This element required the PEG teams to speak with organisational personnel, primarily line managers and employees, as well as to provide a report from a learning event within each organisation. The second element gathered the expert perspective of the PEG teams, and this was designed by Alexander Braddell. This element required PEG teams to provide an analysis of LLNIT/IPC requirements within work tasks. The audit tool is summarised in Table 1.2 and provided in full in Appendices 2 and 3.

1.2.3 When the evidence was gathered

Both aspects of the audit tool were introduced at an event called 'Learning Lab 1' held in London on 1 March 2006 and led by Braddell (for SEEDA) and IES (for details, see Appendix 1). At this event, the findings from the literature review were presented as context to the introduction of the draft audit tool and the process for gathering practice evidence.

Given their prior knowledge and expertise, it was important to have PEG team and employer input into the audits, to ensure the tool was simple to use yet gathered the evidence required. Therefore PEG team members were invited to join small workshop groups convened during the Learning Lab to refine the audit tool before use. In the workshops, feedback was sought on whether the question wording was appropriate, whether the response options presented for questions would cover all the issues likely to arise in answering the questions (from their perspective) and what additional questions might be required. The final version of the audit tool is presented in Appendices 2 and 3 of this report.

A further workshop 'Learning Lab 2' was held in London on 6 March 2006 and led by Braddell for SEEDA. At this event the modified audit tool was trialled for usability by the PEG teams. In addition, practical and contractual matters were discussed. The PEG teams 'went live' with the audit from 7 March 2006 and they were tasked with returning completed audit forms by 19 April 2006.

Table 1.2: Constituent parts of the audit

Element one: current practice	Part A: the organisation	<p>Descriptives eg sector, organisation type, relationship with PEG</p> <p>Existence and contents of training policy; how the policy operates for low-paid, low-skilled workers</p> <p>What training low-paid, low-skilled workers experience</p>
	Part B: the learning event	<p>Descriptives eg who delivered the learning, when it was delivered, which occupational groups were involved, was learning towards qualification, how learning was being delivered</p> <p>Expert perspective on what/who would support individual learning - and what training they might need to do this</p> <p>Expert perspective on any changes required in the organisation to facilitate greater on-the-job LLNIT skill development</p>
	Part C: the line manager perspective	<p>Descriptives eg numbers of workers and range of occupations managed</p> <p>Skill and training requirement during recruitment and once appointed. Whether skill requirements have changed over time - and nature of change.</p> <p>Management methods and links to training needs identification eg use of PDPs, performance checks</p> <p>Line manager perspective on whether there are opportunities to embed LLNIT learning on-the-job - and possible impact of this</p>
	Part D: the employee perspective	<p>Descriptives eg employer and contract, hours worked etc.</p> <p>Skills required at application and in practice in the job, whether skills required have changed and nature of change</p> <p>Experience of training and how it is accessed. How current training is delivered. Whether LLNIT skills are required and employee perspective on opportunities to embed this learning within work.</p>
Element two: potential learning opportunities	The activity audit	<p>Descriptives eg sectoral and occupational context, nature of activity etc.</p> <p>Application of LLNIT skills required by the activity</p> <p>Degree to which the requirement to apply LLNIT skills in the activity is specified and communicated in the workplace</p> <p>Impact of the activity on organisational performance</p> <p>Impact of LLNIT skill application on the activity</p> <p>What if any support is currently available in the workplace for the application of LLNIT skills in the activity</p> <p>How LLNIT skill application in the activity might best be supported</p>

Source: IES/Braddell 2006

1.2.4 Implications of the methodology, mode of analysis and understanding results

A key implication of the decision to utilise PEG teams to recruit organisations to the project is the impact this has on the generalisability of findings. As most of the recruited organisations already had established relationships with basic skills practitioners, it may be assumed that there was some predisposition to consider the

benefits that the development of these skills can bring within the organisations – or at least within the units or departments that were visited. Given that the literature review had identified employer attitudes as a key barrier to acceptance of the need for basic skill development amongst employees, this suggests that the findings are not generalisable beyond organisations that have, at least to some degree, already accepted the value of such work.

In addition, the method of contact with organisations is clearly not random and thus any results should be seen as representative only of what was happening within this group of organisations. While this may well be indicative of what is happening elsewhere, this cannot be guaranteed with any certainty. Similarly, as employees were from specific organisational units, there may be some clustering of their opinions, ie the employees in this project cannot be considered to be independent cases as might be the case in a larger, randomised survey approach. In several organisations a number of departments participated in the audit. This further emphasises the clustering effect.

Neither can the PEG practitioners themselves be considered as entirely objective ‘evidence gatherers’ since, as we have noted, they are specialists in these skill sets. Given that they may have vested interests in this area, this may have implications for how they approached the audit and subsequently, their presence in the methodology, both as evidence gatherers and also as training providers may have implications for the findings. For example, for some there may be a conflict between the aims of this project (to look for opportunities to embed LLNIT learning within organisational work processes) and their own work (to deliver off-the-job LLNIT learning as external trainers to the organisations).

The use of an audit with a relatively small number of organisations rather than a more traditional survey (with a larger sample) has implications for understanding the findings. We would therefore emphasise the fact that the results discussed in this report are not generalisable in the way that a randomised survey would be, and should be interpreted instead as painting a picture of what currently exists in the participating organisations. The nature of the sample restricts any interpretation of the outcome in terms of conclusions that might extend to other organisations more widely. While the data we report here might indicate what may be the case in other organisations, the methodological approach does not allow us to make that claim with any degree of certainty.

1.2.5 Structure of this report

It is intended that this report be read as the companion to the first stage literature review that informed its development, and we discuss links between the findings from the review and from the audit throughout this report.

In Chapter 2, we discuss the findings from the audit on the organisations involved and provide information about the training policies and practices within the organisations. In Chapter 3 the learning events that PEG teams reviewed for the audit are described.

Chapter 4 explores the perspectives of line managers and supervisors within the organisation to the training of the low-paid, low-skilled workers and the opportunities to embed LLNIT learning on-the-job. Chapter 5 discusses the perceptions of low-paid, low-skilled workers towards training and their needs for LLNIT development. Chapters 2 through 5, therefore, cover the first element of the audit.

In Chapter 6, we provide analyses of the potential to use work to develop LLNIT skills. This represents the opinion of the PEG team experts based on their audit of work activity in the organisations visited.

Chapter 7 integrates the findings from the different strands of the audit in answer to the issues raised by the literature review for further investigation through the audit process. Chapter 8 maps the overall findings to the key questions set out in the aims of the project, and discusses the implications for learning and development for low-paid, low-skilled workers in these organisations.

2 The Organisations and Units

As we have noted, the PEG teams invited organisations from their networks to participate in the learning audit. In the first section of this chapter, we describe some characteristics of these organisations (and PEG teams' relationship to them) and then focus on the organisational units involved (since in three organisations a number of divisions were visited). We then consider the extent to which learning appears to form part of policy in those organisations and how that policy is enacted in practice.

In total, 21 organisations were involved in the project. In several of these, a number of departments were visited and the audit gathered data about learning in each of these. A total of 27 organisational 'units' were therefore involved in the audit. Within these organisational 'units' one or more occupational groups were audited, and therefore the total number of discrete occupational groups in the project is 53 and it is useful to make this distinction at the outset. Some 52 managers were interviewed, and because we assured individuals of anonymity we did not seek the information that would allow us to ascertain whether for one group a manager was not interviewed, or whether one manager managed two occupational groups. One or more employees was also interviewed in each manager's occupational group, and therefore the numbers of employees and managers interviewed are not identical.

The literature review findings suggested that local culture is as important to LLNIT learning as 'top level' policy and that local cultures can vary within the same organisation, largely because of the attitudes of managers at local level. In the four organisations for which we received unit-based data, we considered the nature of any bias within their responses compared with the remainder of the sample; while this did not appear to reveal any considerably different practices, we indicate where these units did produce some bias in the responses in the frequency analyses reported below.

2.1 About the organisations

In Table 2.1 we provide an overview of the organisations involved in the audit. While the project was not designed primarily to capture detailed information about the

participating organisations, some contextual information is useful in understanding the practice in these organisations.

Fourteen of the 21 organisations were public sector and a further three were private contractors to the public sector. Just four organisations were located in the private sector. Of the 14 public sector organisations, two were local authorities, two were personal service providers, three were primary care trusts and the remaining seven were hospital trusts.

Table 2.1: Characteristics of the organisations involved in the audit

Characteristic	N	%
Sector		
Public	14	67
Private contractor to public	3	14
Private	4	19
Type of organisation		
Hospital trust	7	33
Primary care trust	3	14
Local authority	2	10
Personal service / care provider	2	10
Outsourced service	3	14
Retail	2	10
Hotel/leisure management	2	10
Training policy		
Training policy exists	20	95
Training policy does not exist	1	5
HT/training department		
HR/training department exists	21	100

Source: IES 2006

The private contractor organisations were outsourced service providers in occupational areas such as cleaning, portering and catering services. Two of the private sector organisations were in retail, while one was a hotel and another a leisure management company.

The large majority (nine in ten) of the audited organisations had a formal training policy in place and all had training or HR departments which we might assume lead or facilitate such policy.

Factors that we felt might indicate good practice in training and development were whether organisations had gained Investors in People (IiP) accreditation (and if so, whether this remained current) or whether they were working towards accreditation; also, if the organisation was in the NHS, whether they had attained Improving Working Lives (IWL) status and at what level. For this reason, the organisation-

focused part of the first element of the audit required this information and this is summarised in Table 2.2 below.

A small majority of organisations either held or were working towards liP accreditation and there appears little differentiation between the sectors in which they operated. PEG teams reported that fourteen organisations were eligible to apply for IWL status and there was little to differentiate between higher and basic status. Five of the organisations that were eligible for IWL were not currently accredited.

Table 2.2: Existence of good practice indicators

Indicator	N	%
liP accredited	8	38
Working towards liP	3	14
Not liP accredited	10	48
IWL Basic	6	29
IWL Practice Plus	5	24
No IWL status	3	14
IWL not applicable	7	33

Total number of organisations = 21, percentages may not sum to 100 because of rounding

Source: IES 2006

2.2 Training policy coverage

Where a training policy exists within the audited organisations (PEG teams reported that just two of these organisations did not have a training policy), it was reported that this most often covered an appraisal or personal development review, induction and the specification of statutory and mandatory training requirements. PEG team evidence suggested that just three organisations had not made these provisions within their policy. Given the large numbers of health sector organisations in the audit, the inclusion of statutory and mandatory training most likely reflects the legislative requirements of this sector.

The large number of organisations operating an appraisal system is unexpected in light of the findings of the literature review which indicated that many low-paid, low-skilled workers do not have access to such systems.⁵ We explore workers' experience of appraisal in Chapter 5; however, note here, that where an appraisal system exists, the literature indicates that experiences of this system may vary considerably between low-paid, low-skilled workers and more senior staff within organisations.

⁵ This may reflect the current NHS policy initiative to introduce mandatory appraisal for all staff (the knowledge and skills framework and personal development review process).

A training entitlement existed within one-half of the audited organisations. Access to optional training to refresh skills, improve skills in the LLNIT range, or to gain the skills required for progression, was relatively high, with 16 of the organisations making this provision. Again, this finding is in contrast to what is suggested to be the case generally amongst low-paid, low-skilled workers, for whom access to optional training is often reported to be restricted. Also the number of organisations that made provision for staff to be released for training was relatively high in this sample.

However, it should be noted that this does not necessarily mean that such options are available to all staff in the organisations: a large proportion of these organisations made management training available (64 per cent) however, it is unlikely that the low-paid, low-skilled sample of workers are able to access this.

As far as PEG teams could ascertain, in only ten organisations did training policy refer to training that was focused on quality assurance and compliance or service improvement. Even fewer organisations had policies that gave relevant staff a Continuing Professional Development (CPD) allowance. This is perhaps surprising given the number of organisations from the health sector; however, it may only reflect the fact that the particular individuals with whom the PEG teams discussed the audit did not mention this.

Table 2.3: The content of the training policies in the 19 organisations where they were reported by PEG teams

Training policy includes provision for:	N	%
Appraisal/personal development review	19	86
Induction	19	86
Specification of <i>statutory</i> training	19	86
Specification of <i>mandatory</i> training	19	86
Specification of <i>optional</i> training	16	73
Release of staff	15	70
Management training	14	64
Training entitlement	13	59
Quality compliance/assurance or service improvement	10	46
CPD allowance	8	36
Other	4	18
LLNIT skills covered by training policy		
IT	10	46
Literacy	5	23
Numeracy	5	23
Language	4	18

Source: IES 2006

Of more interest to this project is the coverage of LLNIT skills (language, literacy, numeracy and IT) within training policy. Except in the case of IT, there is little overt reference to these skill sets within policy. It may be the case that changes in technologies used in work have increased the need for IT skills and, therefore, its explicit acknowledgement within training policy. However, consistent with the

literature, it appears that organisations have failed to engage with the performance implications of deficits in the other LLNIT areas and do not see a need to provide training to develop these skills in their workers, and this is reflected in this aspect of organisational training policies.

Some organisations provided training in areas additional to those noted in the table. In two cases the coverage of this provision was not specified in the PEG team data. Where it was specified, the provision in one organisation included the availability of a learning centre and reflexology centre; and its training covered diversity and equality of opportunity. In the other organisation, Skills for Life provisions were made and the organisation (a local authority) specified customer service skills training in its separate policy document.

2.3 Gaining access to training

As we have noted, the findings from the literature review suggested that access to training varied considerably. Because of this, in the following sections, we now present data from the organisational units visited by the PEG teams. We should note here that, of the four organisations in which multiple units were visited, one was a primary care trust, the remaining two were local authorities. Owing to this, the bias in favour of public service organisations is further emphasised in the following analyses.

The training policy for low-paid, low-skilled workers in these organisations was largely implemented both by HR or training departments and local managers (this was the case in 20 of the organisational units). In five of the units the implementation was led solely by HR, and in two, solely by local managers. In all the units there was a recognised route for these workers to request training.

A range of response options was offered that outlined the various ways in which training might be negotiated and also allowed space for other methods to be specified (see Table 2.4). Details were requested of all the mechanisms for the negotiation of training rather than just the most common approach in each organisation. The data, drawn from the 27 participating units, indicated that performance review is commonly used to negotiate training in these organisations, as are requests to supervisory and line managers (outside these formal meetings) and to a slightly lesser extent by direct request to HR/training departments. The use of probationary review is much less cited as a mechanism for negotiating training, although this may simply reflect a lack of use of probationary reviews in general at least in these organisations. The actual number of organisations that use probationary reviews to negotiate training is just four. Similarly, just three organisations make use of Union Learning Representatives for training negotiation.

A range of other mechanisms for negotiating training were mentioned by organisations. For some of these, the mechanism or approach operated in just a single organisation, while other approaches, for which multiple reports were received,

represented common practice across departments. These additional mechanisms included the provision of Lifelong Learning Champions and an Information Advice and Guidance service; the availability of information in any workplace library or intranet; and learning roadshows organised by external providers.

Table 2.4: Mechanism for negotiation of training for low paid, low skilled workers

Mechanism - training negotiated via:	N	%
Appraisal/personal development review/job chats	24	29
Supervisory or line manager	23	27
Direct to HR/training department	18	21
Probationary review	7	8
Union learning representative	6	7
Other:	6	7
Lifelong learning champions	3	
Course information available on/in workplace intranet/library	2	
IAG service	1	
Training road-shows delivered by training provider	1	

Table based on evidence drawn from the 27 participating units

Source: IES 2006

2.4 Funding learning

Given the national policy focus on uplifting the skill levels of adults in the workplace, the extent to which organisations fund learning and access the various funding streams for learning was also of interest.

Of the 27 organisational units participating in this audit, the evidence we received suggested that just one did not itself fund training for their workers. We note that this represented a single organisation therefore rather than a unit from an organisation for which we received multiple, unit-based audit returns. This organisation was, perhaps surprisingly, a hospital trust. Where organisations offered funding for learning this was for a range of topics, shown in Table 2.5.

Unsurprising, training for health and safety (including fire safety and first aid) was funded by all 26 organisations where funding for learning existed, without doubt aimed at ensuring that requirements for safe working environments and environments safe for the public are met. Funding for National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ) is also common and may be accounted for, largely, by legislative requirements, such as those for care workers. Organisation-led funding for LLNIT skills appears common. While this might appear surprising given that these skills received relatively low priority within organisations' training policies, it may well be the case that this finding has emerged because of the co-funding arrangements

agreed under the SEEDA NHS Basic Skills programme. However, in common with policy, funding for the development of IT skills is prioritised over other LLNIT skills.

Table 2.5: Types of training funded by sampled organisations

Type of training	N	%
Health and safety	26	28
NVQ training	19	21
IT (including ECDL ⁶)	14	16
Literacy	10	11
Numeracy	10	11
Language	8	9
Other learning activities	6	7
No learning or training funded	1	1

Source: IES 2006

Other types of learning that organisations fund include, in health sector organisations and for selected occupational groups: manual handling, infection control, fire safety, stress management, team building and budget management; and as an example, in the leisure management company: first aid, lifeguard, pool plant operator, sports activity coaching and other leisure-specific training. It is clear that a strong link exists between the nature of occupations and the types of training that organisations are willing to fund.

PEG teams were also asked to report on the extent to which organisations and their units accessed external funds for training. The large majority (25 units) confirmed that this was the case. The types of funding that were accessed varied, and all the sources of funding accessed by the organisations are reported in Table 2.6. We should note that not all PEG teams (or members) have any particular funding expertise and so they relied on the individuals from the organisations to identify any relevant funding sources used. The findings then are indicative and may not be an entirely accurate or complete record of the funding accessed by these organisations.

The most commonly accessed funds were those of the LSC (including further education funding) and this probably includes Skills for Life training as well as vocational options⁷. SEEDA is also a significant provider of funds in these organisations, and, as we noted in the methodology, has funded a training programme in NHS organisations in the south east, many of which are participating in this project. We should note that the nature of the SEEDA NHS Basic Skills programme enables organisations to draw down funding from other sources such as

⁶ European Computer Driving Licence

⁷ The audit did not require information about the types of funding drawn down from the different external funding providers.

the LSC. Department of Health training funds distributed through the Strategic Health Authority (SHA) were accessed by eleven of these organisation units.

Table 2.6: Training funds accessed by organisation

Funding source	N	%
Other LSC/FE	22	31
SEEDA	18	26
SHA/WWD/WEC	11	16
ESF	5	7
NETP/ETP	4	6
Other source:	10	14
Charitable trust	3	11
WEA	2	7
NHSU	1	4
Workstep	1	4

Source: IES 2006

The European Social Fund (ESF) was also used by four organisations (and five units). This fund makes provision for the development of basic skills in large organisations (amongst other priorities). The National Employer Training Programme (NETP) (formerly the Employer Training Pilot (ETP)) was not fully operational in the south east at the time of the audit (the forerunner ETP schemes had operated in only 20 of the 47 local LSC regions, only two of which, Berkshire and Kent, overlapped with the SEEDA region) but four units in two organisations reported having accessed funding for training under this scheme.

Small numbers of these organisations had made use of other funds such as those provided by Workstep (a government programme providing support to people with disabilities facing complex barriers to getting and keeping a job⁸). Surprisingly, given the large numbers of health organisations involved in the audit, very few of the PEG team audits reported that the organisations made use of funds provided by the NHSU⁹ however this may largely be an issue of timing since the NHSU was dissolved in 2005 and its learning programmes largely transferred to various of the Strategic Health Authorities.

Where the organisations were accessing such funds, the funds were used for a range of provision (shown in Table 2.7 below). Again the data reflects all the uses of the funding source in all the organisational units.

⁸ Direct Gov website, www.direct.gov.uk, April 2006

⁹ NHSU website, www.nhsu.nhs.uk, April 2006

Table 2.7: How external funding is used

Type of provision	N	%
Literacy	20	18
Language	19	17
Numeracy	19	17
IT	19	17
NVQ training	17	15
Statutory	6	5
Mandatory	6	5
Other activity	5	5

Source: IES 2006

What appears of interest here is that the data indicate that many of these organisations have sought external funding for LLNIT skill development, suggesting, contrary to what is indicated by their policies, that development of these skills is viewed as something of a priority. There are several possible reasons for this. One explanation may be that organisations feel that any lack of proficiency in these skills reflects deficiencies in compulsory education and therefore that the responsibility (and costs) for resolving any such deficiencies must remain with the government (and its agencies). The result of this might be a policy of seeking funds from the government to address such skills shortfalls rather than embedding their development within organisational training policy.

We must also consider that there has been a £3.7 billion government programme (Skills for Life) underway since 2001 to fund LLNIT learning, for which low-skilled workers and public sector workers were two of the five priority groups. Furthermore, the NHS's own lifelong learning framework, published in 2001, gave Trusts the opportunity to support this agenda. Taken together this can only reinforce the above notion.

However, the most likely explanation for the uptake of external funding to support LLNIT skills development arises from the influence of SEEDA funding in these organisations through its Basic Skills programme. As we have noted, this funding has been configured to enable participating organisations to access and draw down funds from external sources such as the LSCs.

Training towards the attainment of NVQs also appears to have been prioritised by these organisations when seeking external funding. When compared with the data about how internal training funds are allocated (see Table 2.5) we can see that organisations are slightly more likely to fund NVQs themselves as seek external funding for them. Again, this is likely to indicate the impact of legislative requirements for qualification in certain occupational roles and organisations. In addition, we must also note the influence (at least in these organisations) of the Department of Health NVQ programme led by Strategic Health Authorities which

provides NHS employers per capita funding (and targets) for NVQs; in addition, that the Employer Training Pilot in Kent also brokered NVQs to NHS employers.

The other forms of training for which external funding was accessed included, in the Personal Service provider organisation, welcome host training (we might consider this task-oriented); and in one Primary Care Trust, alternative learning activities such as foot massage, and task-oriented training such as customer care. In this organisation external funding was used to provide learning support personnel.

2.5 Summary

This chapter presented the organisational strand of the audit of current practice along with contextual information that helps with interpreting and understanding these findings.

- The majority of organisations involved in the audit are drawn from the health sector, either in public service or as a private contractor to the health sector. While such organisations do employ considerable numbers of low-paid, low-skilled staff, the findings can only be considered as illustrating patterns in this sector and cannot be guaranteed to provide any real insight beyond this.
- LLNIT skills development receives little explicit priority within training policy documents although the existence of a training policy is close to universal. Where there is reference to any of the LLNIT skill sets, IT is the most likely to be identified in training policy in these organisations.
- Performance review systems, such as appraisal, are common, but as these are mostly large, public service organisations this is perhaps not surprising. We should note however that their existence does not guarantee their quality, but also that this was not an issue not explored by the audit.
- The performance review systems were the most frequently identified mechanism for the negotiation of training; however, informal discussions with supervisors and line managers or direct application to HR or training departments were almost as common.
- There was little reported use of Union Learning Representatives in training negotiations within these organisations. The literature review found mixed reviews of the interaction between unions and workers participation in learning. However the audit did not explore the question of whether unions were active in these organisations, nor whether (if they existed) local unions were configured to provide learning support. Whichever may be the case this finding suggests that currently unions have little impact, either positive or negative, on training practice in the organisations visited.
- Organisations themselves funded and accessed external funds for training and development. Their own funds appeared to be used for priorities such as health

and safety, although organisations also funded (to some degree) NVQs and, to a far lesser degree, LLNIT skills.

- There was extensive use of external funding to support LLNIT skills development. However, since ten organisations had received funding through SEEDA's NHS Basic Skills programme, this is perhaps not surprising. The LLNIT skill development that was most commonly provided using external funding was IT skills.

Definitive conclusions are, as we have discussed, not possible given the limitations of the audit methodology, however there appears to be some prioritisation of IT amongst the LLNIT skills areas both in policy and in practice. The extent to which technology is driving changed skills requirements, and the need for IT, is explored in the chapters about the perspectives of line managers and employees.

3 The Learning Event

In this section we provide information from the part of the audit that captured a learning event in the organisations. This part of the audit had the aim of clarifying the forms and formats of learning that are found in current practice in these organisations. In addition, the format of this part of the audit required PEG team members to report on the learning event they visited and, while other parts of the audit required PEG teams to gather contemporary information, the learning event strand allowed PEG teams to report on events that had happened in the (relatively) recent past. It also provided an opportunity for PEG teams to consider the potential for on-the-job learning.

We used 'learning event' as an umbrella term that would allow the inclusion of formal and informal training activities, and group and individual learning delivery. The audit did not specify the form or topic of learning, thus it could capture qualification and non-qualification delivery, and delivery in a range of areas. The idea was to allow a 'snapshot' to be taken of the types of learning activity that was going on in these settings at the time of the audit.

In total there were 43 learning events reported, producing on average between one and two per organisation. However, coverage was not as even as this: we did not receive this part of the audit for one unit involved (this may reflect either that no learning event was held or that the PEG team member did not gain access to any learning event); and in four units, a higher number of returns were received (up to five). Most frequently one return was made per unit, although in six cases, two returns were made per unit.

Given this variability in the number of events reported for each organisation, combined with the overall small numbers, we do not propose to segment or stratify responses. Rather we report overall frequencies and note, in light of the first chapter about the organisations involved, that these findings are most likely to indicate practice in the health sector, as the majority of organisations were from, or associated with, this sector.

3.1 Contextual information about the learning events

The learning events audited were generally delivered by external trainers, in which we include PEG team members, with close to three in ten events delivered by these consultants (see Table 3.1 below). As we might expect, given the numbers of these organisations and PEG teams that were involved in the learning partnerships created through the SEEDA NHS Basic Skills project, slightly more of the learning delivered by consultants was led PEG team members (16 compared with 13 events).

Table 3.1: Who delivered learning events

Type of provider	N	%
External training consultant		
PEG team member	16	37
Other external trainer	13	30
Internal staff		
Staff from HR/training department	9	20
Supervisor or manager	4	9
Experienced member of team/occup. group	1	2
Collaboration		
PEG team member and supervisor	3	7
Non-PEG external trainer and supervisor	1	2

Source: IES 2006

PEG teams reported on fourteen events delivered by staff employed by the organisations. The majority of these (nine events) were led by staff in the HR/training department, four were led by work supervisors and one was led by an experienced member of staff. There was also some limited evidence of collaborative delivery practices that involved external consultants and staff from the organisation. The staff members in these cases were supervisors and we should note that collaborative delivery practice was reported by just one PEG team and that, in terms of the events reported on, related to one organisation.

While the audit offered the possibility of reporting an event up to, or just over, six months in the past (ie the event did not have to be contemporaneously observed), it appeared that the majority of events had happened during the period in which the audit had operated in organisations (see Table 3.2). One-half of the learning events had happened within the past month, with 12 of these occurring within the past week.

Table 3.2: When the learning event occurred

How recently the learning event was held	N	%
In the past month	12	28
In the past week	9	20
More than six months ago	7	16
Between four and six months ago	6	14
Between one and three months ago	5	12
<i>Information not provided</i>	4	9

Source: IES 2006

Of more interest to this project is the question of which employee groups had been involved in the learning events. The audit required reports of events targeted at low-paid, low-skilled workers. Consequently these findings show events involving the types of occupational groups who fit this category and who have been involved in some recent workplace learning in these organisations. In Table 3.3 we present the occupational groups involved across the 43 learning events. Given the larger number of health organisations involved in this project, the most frequently cited groups relate to this sector.

Table 3.3: Which workers were involved in the events

Occupational group	N	%
Catering	15	35
Cleaning and/or domestic staff	12	15
Clerical and/or administrative staff	8	10
Linen and/or housekeeping	8	10
Care assistants	6	8
Distribution staff	6	8
Estates and/or maintenance staff	5	6
Healthcare assistants and/or nursing auxiliaries	5	6
Stores	3	4
Retail	3	4
Waste disposal and/or refuse collection staff	2	3
Warehouse	2	3
Manufacturing	1	1
Packaging	1	1
Other (Portering staff)	1	1

Note: PEG teams recorded all occupation groups present at the learning events they audited. 29 of these learning events were delivered to a single occupational group, the remaining 14 events were delivered to mixed occupational groups ranging from two occupations through to seven occupations in one event.

Source: IES 2006

This part of the audit made allowance for the possibility that the learning event would be delivered to a range of occupational groups. We found the greatest likelihood of single occupational group delivery (this was the case in 29 of the 43 learning events). However, once more than one occupational group was involved in an event (ie in 14 of the events recorded), there was little to differentiate between the likelihood of an event being delivered for a combination of two, three or four occupational groups. Indeed at one event, staff were involved from seven occupational groups.

At this early point in the audit process, we requested the PEG teams' professional opinion (based their observations of the workshop content and participating employees' interaction with it) on the extent to which LLNIT skills development (any or all of the skills covered by the term) was required by the workers at the event. If they considered LLNIT development was required, PEG teams were further asked to offer an opinion about the level and range of participants' requirement. We should note that this data reflects all participants at all learning events and that PEG teams could record data at each development level for each event.

While the categories of response are not particularly sensitive (and we also have to consider that PEG team members might be biased in this regard), it appears that there is a considerable LLNIT requirement amongst at least some of those workers present at learning events. Overall, though, there is little differentiation between the level of the LLNIT development that is required.

Table 3.4: Whether learning event participants require LLNIT skills development and if so, at what level

Level	Overall		All learners		Some learners		None of the learners	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Entry level	27	63	7	16	17	40	3	7
Level 1	30	70	1	2	27	63	2	5
Level 2	28	65	1	2	25	58	2	5

Source: IES 2006

3.2 The types of learning being delivered at events

Table 3.5 shows the frequency with which the learning at these events was part of a recognised qualification. In most cases, at least in these organisations and for these staff groups, the learning events were not qualification-based (in the case of six in ten learning events).

Where qualifications were being delivered, there was little pattern to the kinds of qualifications being delivered. When considered in combination, adult basic skill awards (literacy, language – ESOL, numeracy and IT) appear to be being delivered at close to the same rate as non-qualification learning. However this is likely to be firstly

an artefact of the types of learning events PEG teams were involved in or were invited to; and the number of these organisations that were participating in the SEEDA NHS Basic Skills programme.

Table 3.5: Learning events and outcomes

Outcome (may refer to learning programme)	N	%
Non-qualification events	25	58
ABS literacy	5	12
NVQ 2	4	9
ABS ESOL	3	7
ABS numeracy	2	5
ABS IT	2	5
Other qualification	2	5
Health and safety	1	2
ICT Key skills	1	2

Source: IES 2006

NVQs at level 2 were delivered at three events within three organisations. Two of these were NHS organisations and the topic of the NVQ was Support Services in Healthcare. The other example was of an NVQ level 2 in Retail and the learner was based in the retail organisation.

A very wide range of non-qualification training was being delivered at events, and one event, foot massage and literacy, indicated considerable creativity in approach. In Table 3.6 we provide a summary of the non-qualification outcome events, the categories having been applied during analysis rather than in evidence collection.

Table 3.6: Summary of non-qualification training

Category	N	%	Examples
Including LLNIT skill(s) development	9	21	ESOL for healthcare assts; IT taster; Writing short notes and taking messages
Health and safety; safe practice at work	7	16	Asbestos awareness; Fire safety; Manual handling
Task specific	6	14	Cleaning induction; Reception duties;
Policy implementation	4	9	Team appraisals; KSF and personal development review
Personal development	2	5	Confidence and assertiveness
Organisation induction	1	2	

Source: IES 2006

From this data we can state that, at minimum, the PEG teams encountered, or sought out, a relatively high number of events where LLNIT skill development was a concern. Beyond this, it appears that functional training is more prevalent in these organisations, especially if we combine health and safety with task specific training.

This is a similar finding to that of studies reported in the literature review, that often training for low-paid, low-skilled groups is less oriented to developmental topics and more focused on the needs of the job and workplace.

We asked the PEG teams for their opinion on the extent to which LLNIT skills development was required by learners on the qualification and non-qualification provision. The small numbers mean that we cannot offer a sensible analysis of this for either those on qualification routes, or amongst those attending non-qualification oriented training, but we would note that the PEG teams again felt that at around two-thirds of these events LLNIT support would be beneficial.

3.3 How learning is being delivered

A key concern of this project was whether organisations fail to identify LLNIT skill areas as necessary to the performance of job roles for low-paid, low-skilled workers and thus do not focus on the development of these skills in policy or practice. The literature review supported this concern to a large degree. Furthermore, the project aimed to assess the extent to which LLNIT skill development is currently being delivered, and the extent to which there are opportunities to embed LLNIT development in current learning practices and/or 'on-the-job'.

We were, therefore, interested in determining the extent to which on-the-job and informal delivery modes were present in these organisations. These modes were felt to be important since there may be difficulties in gaining release from work for low-paid, low-skilled staff for training, and indeed, these staff may themselves not be prepared to engage with formal learning. If informal and on-the-job learning is taking place within organisations a further point of interest is whether this involves groups or individuals.

Twenty-eight of the learning events that were audited were organised for groups of learners, with seven of the events being delivered to an individual (there were four non-responses to this question). Just three events overall were delivered on-the-job, with thirty-five delivered off-the-job, but at the organisation. There were no instances of off-the-job, off-site learning amongst these events which may reflect findings in the literature that release for (external) training is problematic in low-paid, low-skilled workplaces.

3.3.1 Off-the-job learning events

Where off-the-job training was taking place, in around one-fifth of events this was blended with on-the-job training in the topic of learning. The large majority of the learning events (26 out of 35) involved the use of workplace materials such as workplace scenarios combined with role play and/or problem solving. Six of the nine learning events that included specific reference to LLNIT skills development were using workplace materials such as patient charts and menu cards. One event had been

configured to enable participants to bring materials from work which they wanted to understand better, such as budget reports, or the processes to achieve a mail-merge in a word processing package.

At this point, we again sought the opinion of the PEG teams about whether there existed workplace materials that could be integrated into learning events where this was not happening. Of the 12 responses to this question, in nine cases the PEG teams were confident that opportunities to use workplace materials to develop LLNIT skills were being missed. They believed that there were opportunities to use the types of paper and electronic forms that staff were required to fill out in work as part of these development activities, as well as to use scenarios based on the kinds of communication that were required by work, eg dealing with customers. Indeed one PEG member identified that an observed facilitator had missed the opportunity of asking participants to supply examples from their own work.

3.3.2 On-the-job learning events

The PEG teams provided information about how on-the-job learning was being delivered. As might be expected, practice varied; however, often it would involve a trainer (internal or external to the organisation) demonstrating a task, discussing its features with workers and then providing support to them while they carried out the task. In this way the on-the-job training in evidence in the audit was fully integrated with the performance of work.

Unsurprisingly, where LLNIT skills were involved in this on-the-job learning, this was directly related to job and role requirements such as reading charts (interpreting data) or dealing with paperwork.

3.4 Learning support at work

For learning to be judged effective, there is a need for its application to be demonstrated in some way and monitored to ensure correct application. There is a parallel requirement that any deficits in the application (and thus learning) are rectified. This is particularly the case in workplaces where poor performance of tasks may have negative service or organisational performance impacts. Additional support is generally required to achieve this rectification.

We were interested, therefore, in whether the learners at events received on-going support to develop their skills in the workplace, and also whether this support was available to help them to apply these skills. These issues might also indicate opportunities to leverage support for LLNIT learning via existing practice. Of the learning events audited, the PEG teams identified that ongoing support for skill development was provided in 20 of them. In four cases, the PEG team had not managed to ascertain whether support mechanisms were in place, but in the remainder, they reported that there were none.

Table 3.7 shows the different types of skill development support operating within the organisations. Most frequently cited were supervision, instruction and feedback by a manager or supervisor. We might consider this to constitute performance management in some form. Colleagues are used relatively frequently in these organisations to provide on-the-job support for the development of skills (in close to one-fifth of the learning events), and their role may be considered stronger if mentor/buddy and work shadowing systems are included in this. Contact with a tutor, although only present in five learning events, may be over-represented in these organisations because of the impact of the SEEDA NHS Basic Skills programme.

Table 3.7: On-going support for development of skills

Learning support mechanism	N	%
Supervision, instruction and feedback	16	25
Coaching by colleagues	12	19
Mentor/buddy system	9	14
Shadowing	8	12
Personal contact with tutor	5	8
Resource/learning/IT facility	4	6
Union learning representative/Lifelong learning champion or advisor	3	5
Telephone access to tutor	1	2
Support group with colleagues	1	2

Source: IES 2006

A further point was how far support was configured to help the learners use their skills at work. The PEG teams reported that in 25 of the 43 learning events, support was available for the application of skills, however, in 11 cases there was an absence of ongoing support. In addition, there were seven events for which this information was not discerned. The perspective of the PEG teams suggests that organisations provide similar support mechanisms to applying learning as to supporting its development.

Table 3.8: On-going support for application of skills

Learning support mechanism	N	%
Supervision, instruction and feedback	15	25
Coaching by colleagues	10	17
Mentor/buddy system	9	15
Personal contact with tutor	8	13
Shadowing	4	7
Support group with colleagues	4	7
Resource/learning/IT facility	3	5
Telephone access to tutor	3	5
Union learning representative/Lifelong learning champion or advisor	2	3

Source: IES 2006

There are some slight differences between the two sets of data, however; the extent of reports of the provision of supervision, instruction and feedback, and coaching by colleagues is slightly lower for the application of skills than for their development.

Following on from this short examination of current support arrangements, PEG teams were requested to provide information about whether they felt that there was scope to integrate further support, for either the development or application of the skills delivered at the learning event. For the majority of learning events (34 in number) the PEG teams felt that further support could be made available.

Suggestions for the form this support might take varied considerably, and PEG team members offered a variety of formats of support and ideas that would support learning within these organisations. Many of these included the support of managers or colleagues, and their suggestions largely were for some combination (or blend) of the support offered by the pre-defined categories, or in some cases, these types of approach configured more informally. Some examples of the kinds of support needs/opportunities the PEG teams perceived are given below; it is clear that there is little variance in these requirements by organisation type:

'on-the-job reinforcement of learning to lessen the need for repeat training eg including informal assessment; discussion groups; coaching; mentoring' (about a hospital trust)

'supervisor to lead on-the-job training integrating work examples' (about a primary care trust)

'Union Learning Representatives' work schedules need to flex so that ULRs have more time to identify staff needs. Most refuse staff are on the road most of the day. Flexibility might allow ULRs to accompany staff to assess their needs on-the-job (not sure). ULRs could get involved with basic skills assessment/identification of needs at recruitment and selection as well as on-the-job' (about a local authority)

'promotion of self-reflection with colleagues and supervisor; more structure to support provided by colleagues in induction and subsequent, facilitating transfer and development of skills between inexperienced and experienced colleagues; closer engagement between staff and supervisors on how to improve service and more structured feedback on standards attained' (about a private contractor to public sector)

'after needs have been identified, peers could provide ongoing support at work. Individuals with greater needs should be matched with mentors to provide one-to-one support during work' (about a private sector organisation).

3.5 Developing staff to support LLINIT learning

Having had the opportunity to apply their professional knowledge to considering the additional support needed for the current learning provision, the audit then required PEG teams to consider whether any staff (including managers, supervisors, team/work colleagues and staff from training/HR departments) in the organisation

required development to allow LLNIT learning and application to become embedded into practice. Where we received a response to this question (in actuality for 38 events) there was strong evidence that PEG teams felt that some staff would require support or development (34 of the 38 responses to this question were positive in this regard).

Table 3.9 shows the types of development that PEG teams reported would benefit staff. Perhaps unsurprising is the highlighting of the need for LLNIT skills awareness raising training. This may be PEG team bias, although the literature review would suggest that lack of awareness is a considerable barrier to embedding these curricula in work. Communication skills were also viewed as a high priority for development by PEG teams, perhaps to model best practice communication or to deal with performance issues. Of these, the skills of delivering effective feedback received a greater priority and at almost twice the rate of performance assessment skills. Coaching and mentoring skills (which in part overlap with communication and feedback skills) are also considered important.

Table 3.9: Development that would benefit stakeholders

Type of skills requiring development	N	%
LLNIT skills awareness raising	31	20
Communication skills	30	20
Performance feedback skills	23	15
Coaching skills	22	15
Mentoring skills	21	14
Performance assessment skills	11	7
Other	8	5
Organisational structure and culture awareness	6	4

Source: IES 2006

Among 'other' types of development stakeholders in the workplace required to support LLNIT learning (in the view of the PEG teams), would be the skills of identifying training needs and planning for those needs to be met.

3.6 Changes required within the organisation to support LLNIT learning

The final part of the learning event audit asked PEG teams to consider the learning event they had reported on, and the associated opportunities to further embed workplace materials, or indeed, learning on-the-job, and to put these reflections in the context of the wider organisation where the event occurred. An aim here was to assess what might facilitate greater integration of, in particular, LLNIT skills development, assuming that the supportive conditions identified in the preceding section could be adequately provided.

The response to the question about whether any organisational change was required to help facilitate the development of LLNIT skills for the individual or group of learners at the event was largely positive, with 38 of the learning audits recording that positive change was required. At five other events, change was felt to be unnecessary. Of those advocating change, the most frequently cited change was the involvement of managers and supervisors in development (see Table 3.10). The literature review has already revealed the influence of these stakeholders and how their attitudes can be a significant facilitator or barrier to LLNIT skills development. Their knowledge (even if tacit) of the ways in which LLNIT skills are required by the workplace makes them key to the success of any training from the PEG teams' perspective.

Table 3.10: Organisational change required to better support LLNIT skills

Type of change	N	%
Involving managers and supervisors in training and development	28	17
Change to funding allocation internally	18	10
LLNIT skills included in strategic objectives	17	10
Change to induction procedures	17	10
Increased knowledge of external funding opportunities for LLNIT skills	17	10
LLNIT skills requirements included in job descriptions	15	9
Change in appraisal processes	13	8
Development integrated into appraisal	12	7
Introduction of personal development plans	10	6
Monitoring of learning	5	3
Other	19	11

Source: IES 2006

The allocation of organisational funding for learning is viewed as problematic and requiring of change. Similarly, in the opinion of the PEG teams, greater knowledge of funding streams would also promote greater integration of LLNIT skill development. This finding may reflect common difficulties which they experience when they work with organisations on the issue of funding. It may be the case that organisations are unwilling to fund this development themselves but lack any information of how else it might be funded.

The PEG teams believed that making overt reference to LLNIT skill development in policy is more likely to facilitate its entry into training priorities in workplaces. Fewer, however, identified the need for these skills to be specified in job descriptions. Similarly, a lesser priority was given to changing induction procedures to help raise awareness of, not just opportunities, but also expectations, during organisation inductions.

Changes to appraisal systems were also recommended. Change here might better link performance with development needs. The greater integration of personal development planning was also felt to be a facilitating factor. The monitoring of learning gained least priority for change but this might be because practitioners believe that current systems for this are adequate.

More significantly, the PEG teams felt that wider and more integrated change was required, and 19 of the learning events gave examples of this. While in the broad sense, these desired changes relate to funding and the release of staff (which may not be a feasible change), it is perhaps informative to offer some examples drawn from the different types of participating organisations:

- 'an increased awareness in the growing numbers of staff for whom English is not their first language. Funding to support LLNIT skills in the workplace – further cutbacks in the NHS makes funds to release staff from work for training... particularly important' (*about a hospital trust*)
- 'a whole organisation approach to Skills for Life to support learning opportunities for employees. The organisation is reviewing its current practices and is looking at the integration of personal development plans. Senior management here are active supporters of learning and development as are unions' (*about a local authority*).

A final question in this part of the audit asked PEG teams to report whether any future developments were likely to impact (positively or negatively) on learning opportunities within the organisations. There was a response to this question for 42 of the learning events. Since most of the organisations included in the audit were in the health sector, these illustrate PEG teams' perceptions of the change drivers in this sector (clearly we have not included local authorities and private companies in this analysis since few of these organisations were included in the audit).

The Knowledge and Skills Framework is seen by PEG teams as a key opportunity for change which will offer opportunities to identify staff skill needs and may drive forward training provision. Similarly the Agenda for Change was felt to offer opportunities to embed further training. However, the PEG teams were concerned by the lack of resources available within the health sector and particularly the lack of resource to release staff for training. Indeed PEG teams reported that this was a requirement for change, however, we might consider it an argument for the need to deliver LLNIT differently, perhaps more informally, using other employees and on-the-job. It may also indicate a need for change within providers of this kind of skill development to think more creatively about how LLNIT development can proceed in light of such constraints.

3.7 Summary

In this chapter we have explored some of the learning that is currently taking place within the participating organisations for low-paid, low-skilled occupational groups.

While the findings may be considered only indicative of practice in these particular organisations, they do suggest the possibility for greater integration of LLNIT skills development and workplace learning.

- Most of the learning events audited were led by external trainers which may indicate that significant organisational change is required for more of this learning to be delivered and supported on-the-job. There was some limited evidence of collaboration between external trainers and employer staff, however, this might well offer a useful, perhaps transitional, model while/if changes in delivery were to be achieved. We should note, however, that it is not clear whether organisations invited PEG team members to more of the formal learning events that were happening which would produce bias in this regard.
- Evidence from the PEG teams suggests that, amongst the participants at learning events, fairly significant numbers would benefit from LLNIT skills development to increase the benefits they were likely to gain from the learning. There was no great differentiation between the numbers requiring development and the level of that development.
- Non-qualification training formed the majority of learning events. Where qualifications were currently being delivered there was no clear differentiation between the events audited. However, fairly large numbers of these non-qualification events contained LLNIT skills development in some form.
- Largely the learning events were configured for groups and were delivered off-the-job, but on the employer's site. In one-fifth of events, this mode was blended with on-job learning application support using demonstration and assessment techniques. On-the-job learning was delivered in much the same way, perhaps indicating fertile ground for the integration of greater on-the-job learning.
- There was little to distinguish between mechanisms of ongoing support for skill development and those for the application of skills. Informal or formal performance assessment and feedback was key amongst these; however, provision of a buddy or mentor, or coaching from colleagues were also common.
- Practitioners offered examples of how support could be better configured for LLNIT development. These could be broadly categorised as a blend of support already identified but delivered more informally.
- Colleagues, but more frequently managers and supervisors, were seen as key to the development of LLNIT skills at work as well as to their application. Their needs included greater awareness raising training about these skill sets, and practical communication skills such as those necessary for coaching or managing performance.
- PEG teams identified a range of changes required in these organisations to leverage LLNIT learning. These covered specific inclusion of these skills in policy and job

descriptions. However PEG teams also perceived a need for wider and more integrated changes such as an organisation-wide approach to recognising the need for LLNIT along with an organisation-wide programme to address these.

- From their reports, a large number of PEG teams believe that time for staff to be released for training is a major constraint and change is required. However, we suggest this indicates a need to think differently about how these skills can be delivered and to consider whether informal, on-the-job delivery may be one route to circumvent such constraints. It may also indicate that basic skills training providers also need to reconsider delivery modes.

4 The Perspective of Line Managers

The literature indicated that the attitudes of line managers were a key determinant of learning activity at local level, irrespective of whether a culture of learning was in place; they also determined whether learning policy was implemented for the workers they managed. In this chapter, we explore their role in the participating organisations. The PEG teams gathered evidence from 52 line managers or supervisors. Therefore the PEG teams attained a minimum coverage of at least one line manager for every organisational unit audited, thus ensuring coverage of all the occupational groups later reported on.

4.1 About the line managers and their teams

Of these 52 line managers, 18 were male, 32 were female, and for two we did not receive gender information. All had English as their first language. Similar numbers of these managers had been in their posts up to five years and between five and ten years (16 and 15 line managers respectively). Six had worked in their current role for the past ten to twenty years, while one had been in post for 33 years. Their relationship to their workers is likely to vary considerably since some were responsible for relatively small teams while others (see Table 4.1) might be assumed to be department heads given the size of their teams.

Table 4.1: Size of the line managers' teams

Number of workers managed	N	%
1-10	9	17
11-20	14	27
21-30	5	10
31-50	9	17
51-100	8	15
101-200	4	8
Over 201	2	4
Data not available	1	2

Source: IES 2006

Just over one-quarter of these managers were responsible for teams between 11 and 20 in size. Slightly fewer than one-fifth either managed a team of ten people or one that comprised between 31 and 50 workers. Eight managers (in number) had responsibility for a team sized between 51 and 100 staff.

The employment status of the line managers' workers is shown in Table 4.2. Largely, line managers were responsible for staff employed directly by the organisation, with just five managers having any responsibility for contractor or agency staff and only one manager with sole responsibility for contractor staff. Workers operating under the Retention of Employment arrangement are seconded to a contractor generally through an outsourcing arrangement. Only one line manager in a health organisation reported being responsible for workers with this employment status.

Table 4.2: Employment status of these managers' staff

Employment status	N	%
Direct employees	43	83
Contractor or agency staff	1	2
A mix of direct employees and contractor/agency staff	4	8
Workers operating under retention of employment	1	2
Data not available	3	6

Source: IES 2006

4.2 Line managers' experience of training and development

The PEG teams recorded information for 49 of the line managers about the training that they themselves had received whilst in their current post. The large majority of these (41 line managers) reported that they had participated in training. The forms this training took are shown in Table 4.3.

Training to ensure safe workplaces and practices was by far the most common when responses are grouped, and forms of this training included (with little to differentiate between forms) health and safety, manual handling, fire safety and risk assessment. Food hygiene training was relevant to a limited number of workplaces; however, amongst these, the norm was for organisations themselves to have provided this training. Induction training was relatively common as was basic job training; supervisory and management development and training was noted by 32 managers.

Twenty-four managers mentioned other forms of training they had received. This could be broadly categorised as:

- management training to conform to organisational standards (including appraisal skills, diversity, data protection and absence reporting). This type of training was reported by six managers

- training towards attainment of a qualification, including, for example, a degree in Professional Nursing Practice and relevant NVQ and also, in one case, Chartered Institute for Personnel and Development (CIPD certification). Four managers reported that they had participated in training for a specified qualification since joining their organisation
- task-related training was mentioned by two of these managers; the training that had been received was for social care and pool plant operation
- in one case, a line manager had participated in development aimed at 'Training the Trainer'. The fact that just one report was received of this type of training might be assumed to indicate a lack of strategy in organisations to utilise managers as trainers; however, it is perhaps more likely that most organisations simply do not provide specific development in this way.

Table 4.3: Training line managers have participated in since joining the organisation

Training line managers experienced	N	%
Fire safety	44	12
Health and safety	42	11
Manual handling	39	10
Risk assessment	34	9
Induction	33	9
Management	31	8
Basic job training	28	7
Food hygiene	27	7
IT	24	6
Other	24	6
Supervision	20	5
First aid	19	5
NVQ	11	3

Source: IES 2006

The line managers' evaluation of the training they had received was by and large, positive. In one case, the management training was felt to have been too high level and not directly applicable to the line manager's work. Generally, given their positive attitudes to their own training, we might assume this would continue into their attitudes about access to training for the staff they managed.

A further indication of their attitudes to learning and development might be the extent to which line managers made use of any learning facilities provided by the organisations involved. Thirty-six line managers indicated that some form of facility existed, however only twenty made use of these facilities.

4.3 Skills specifications for occupational groups managed

The extent to which skills are specified during recruitment processes might indicate the extent to which they are required by the work and/or indeed the extent to which the organisations perceive these jobs as requiring skills. The line managers reported to the PEG teams that, by and large, some skills were required and specified. Just seven line managers said that skills were not specified. In three cases managers confirmed that skills were required however did not go on to detail the nature of the required skills.

As might be expected, the kinds of skills required varied considerably since a variety of occupations were being discussed. In Table 4.4 we show the skills that were specified. First the table shows whether a single skill or a combination of skills is required; and secondly, whether LLNIT skills were included in the skill specifications. Note that we have included communication and information processing skills within the LLNIT grouping.

Close to two-thirds of the line managers who detailed their skill requirements reported that this was for a combination of skills. Further analysis of these combinations indicated that close to three-quarters included one or more of the LLNIT/IPC skills. Where single skills were specified, close to one-half of these skills were from the LLNIT grouping. It is also useful to note here that half of the line managers reported that an NVQ qualification was required or preferred; however, as would be expected, the subject and level of NVQ varied by occupation.

Table 4.4: Number of skills specified for recruitment and where LLNIT skills indicated

Number of skills specified	N	%
One skill	15	37
<i>LLNIT is the one skill</i>	7	47
A combination of two or more skills	26	63
<i>Combinations including one or more LLNIT skills</i>	19	73
Number of managers specifying skills	41	

Source: IES 2006

Of all the skills specified during recruitment processes (whether these were single or in combination) the one that received greatest priority was literacy, mentioned by 13 line managers (see Table 4.5). This perhaps indicates a fairly common requirement for managers to communicate with workers, and for workers themselves to communicate with each other, in writing. A similar number of line managers (one in five) reported that trade and craft skills were required in recruitment. In this category we have grouped together skills such as plumbing and electrical, with for instance, catering experience.

Table 4.5: Types of skills specified for recruitment

Types of skills specified	N	%	Including
Literacy	13	21	
Trade/craft skills or experience	12	20	Plumbing; including previous work experience
Communication	7	11	
Language	5	8	
Numeracy	5	8	
Information processing	5	8	Common sense; forward thinking; using initiative
Customer service	4	7	
Personal attributes	4	7	Flexibility; team working; motivational skills; supervisory
IT	3	5	
Health and safety	3	5	Food hygiene

Source: IES 2006

Communication skills were the third most frequently mentioned (ten per cent of the skills required), while just five managers noted a requirement for either language, numeracy or information processing, and fewer still (just three) required IT skills. We noted in the chapter on organisations' training policies that, of the LLNIT skills, IT was most likely to be specified. It would appear from the line manager information that IT skills are less important for the low-paid, low-skilled jobs reported on in these organisations.

Customer service skills (which we might consider to overlap to some extent with communication skills) were specified by four line managers, with a similar number reporting requirements for what we term here 'personal attributes', which might include flexibility, as well as the skills to motivate and supervise.

The number of line managers that mentioned a requirement for health and safety, and related skills such as food hygiene, was just three. However, this may indicate that these skills are 'mission critical' and the organisation expects to train workers in them to ensure the required standards are met. In support of this idea, health and safety was amongst the task-related training that managers identified as being largely delivered during induction (see section 4.4.1)

We were interested in whether the line managers (or the organisation as an employer) tested LLNIT skills during the selection process to validate the applicants' self-declared ability. Some form of testing was reported by fifteen of the line managers. None mentioned using a standard test; rather, tests appeared to be designed in-house. The issues that line managers were interested in, and were testing for, included basic literacy, evidence of team work skills and communication.

The kinds of tests included a writing exercise related to the job; a requirement for applicants to read aloud a simple text passage; a simple calculation and in one case, a scenario to be read before and then discussed during the interview. Line managers

also reported that often communication, verbal skills and use of language was assessed informally on the basis of the interview itself.

In the occupations they managed, fifteen line managers also noted a requirement for NVQ accreditation.

4.4 Recruits' experience and development needs

The extent to which experienced candidates are recruited by organisations might provide an additional measure of the skills required by work roles as well as indicating an underpinning causal indicator for the extent of training needed within the organisations. If experienced candidates were recruited this might reduce the training an organisation would need to provide and/or allow training provision to be focused on different issues.

The PEG teams reported that just over half of these managers (56 per cent) recruited a mix of experienced and inexperienced staff depending on the applicants coming forward in any recruitment round. Of the remainder, around ten per cent reported that they mostly recruited experienced staff. The audit then explored the degree to which both experienced and inexperienced recruits required training once they were working in their jobs (shown in Table 4.6, below).

Table 4.6: Training needs amongst recruits (all aspects of work)

How much training is required	Experienced		Inexperienced	
	N	%	N	%
None	3	6	0	0
A little	20	39	7	17
Quite a lot	22	42	37	71
N	45		44	

Source: IES 2006

PEG teams reported that line managers believed that most recruits required training, with only three noting that experienced staff did not require training of some sort. This may suggest that, even where recruits have skills, the organisations require these skills to be tailored in some way to meet the needs of work or, more likely, that much of this training relates to safe practice. The number of line managers who believed that experienced recruits required either 'a little' or 'quite a lot' of training was broadly similar. However, around two-thirds of these managers believed that inexperienced recruits required a lot of training. The remainder required just a little training and this was linked to their occupation.

We ran a comparative analysis of the number of line managers who reported that experienced recruits required some training and who also reported that the skills the work required included one or more of the LLNIT/IPC skills. Note that we used only

experienced recruits for this analysis since all line managers reported that all inexperienced recruits required training. The analysis indicated that much of the training these experienced recruits required was in the area of LLNIT skills; this finding was statistically significant. We thus suggest that this is indicative of the importance of the LLNIT skills in terms of the total skill-set required by these workers; also since a significant amount of the training needed, even by experienced staff, is in the LLNIT skill areas, this indicates also the extent to which they require a inclusion in employee development strategies.

4.4.1 Task-related development for recruits

We noted above that the majority of recruits in these organisations, whether experienced in the job or not, required training and development of some sort. The types of development that related to the job task included health and safety, hygiene, and fire procedures; machine operation, (eg suction floor cleaners and till operation); and process issues such as how to observe a patient, recording information and expected levels of customer service standards. Around one-fifth of this task-related development involved the use of technology of some kind.

While the forms of task-related development were too wide-ranging to allow a precise analysis, the indications were that much of this training was delivered during staff inductions (around one-fifth of task-related training).

Where training was delivered outside the bounds of induction, delivery tended to be through a combination of modes, such as initial training at induction followed up once on-the-job. The line managers noted a variety of approaches for on-the-job development, and most frequently reported that they themselves coached the workers they supervised (15 per cent of the task-related on-the-job training), although 'buddying' the trainee with an experienced work colleague was only slightly less common (13 per cent of task-related on-the-job training). In these organisations at least, internal trainers delivered around ten per cent of the task-related development, and, in the small number of instances where an external trainer was responsible for delivery, this occurred off-the-job, but on the work site.

4.4.2 LLNIT development for recruits

When asked by PEG teams whether recruits, once on-the-job, required development in LLNIT skills, large numbers of line managers reported this was the case (close to eight in ten). Of greater concern, however, is that the PEG evidence suggests that only 70 per cent of this LLNIT training had been delivered.

Asked for specific examples of tasks involving LLNIT skills, line managers identified the language appropriate for dealing with customers/service users, filling in forms, cashing up a till or for using email. Some more contextualised examples that line managers gave of LLNIT development requirements included: health and safety

related issues such as reading COSHH regulations; completing food diary charts; and confidentiality in communications with patients. Further categorisation of these examples demonstrated that a large majority of the development that was reported related to communication, either written or verbal.

With the same limitations to analysis as for task-related training, there were indications that line managers were the most likely to deliver this type of training (in close to one in five instances), and mixed approaches were the next most common. In contrast with task-related training, however external trainers were much more likely to be involved in LLNIT skill development; they reported delivering around ten per cent of the LLNIT training currently taking place, although this finding may be influenced by the numbers of these organisations participating in the SEEDA Basic Skills programme.

4.4.3 Extent of monitoring by line managers

We were interested in discovering the extent to which, once skills have been developed through training, application of those skills was monitored, and, where this was happening, the approach that the line managers took to monitoring. We received 51 line manager responses to this question. Over eight in ten line managers reported that they did monitor skill use; however, in seven cases, managers said this did not happen.

Generally, monitoring combined formal and informal procedures (in just over half of the instances reported), although of these two options, informal monitoring was mentioned slightly more often when a single method was used. Informal monitoring took place on-the-job, and usually involved the manager visiting the employee during the work period and observing their practice, their visit not being scheduled in any way. More formal mechanisms ranged from spot checks by line managers or supervisors on-the-job to the use of annual appraisal and regular review meetings every six to eight weeks, ie off-the-job approaches.

The line managers were most often monitoring performance on a daily basis; this is perhaps not surprising given the extent to which informal systems were reported. Forty-six of these managers responded to a question about whether they generally found employees were doing tasks in the way they had been trained. Eighty-five per cent of these agreed this was the case.

Asked about what action they would take if work performance did not conform to the appropriate standard, seven in ten reported a combination of approaches, often staged, and moving from informal rectification in some way through to formal warnings (although it should be noted that this last point related to the correct application of safe working practices and health and safety).

Viewed by frequency with which mechanisms for remedying performance were cited in combinations, the majority (around two-thirds; see Table 4.7) of line managers

indicated that they would provide some on-the-spot coaching. Similar numbers of managers said they would either refer the employee to further training or ask a peer to demonstrate. Perhaps of greater concern is that close to one in five of these responses indicate that the manager would simply tell the employee there was a problem and ask them to re-check their actions.

Table 4.7: How performance deficits are dealt with by line managers

Mechanisms	N	%
Manager demonstrates task	33	66
Manager arranges for further training	27	52
Managers asks peer to demonstrate	23	44
Manager tells them to check and remedy	19	37
Other	16	31

Source: IES 2006

4.5 Skill development for low-paid, low-skilled workers

This section of the line manager audit gathered evidence about the extent to which staff development programmes were available for the workers being discussed. We received 47 responses to these questions and these indicated that, in seven out of ten cases, the line managers reported that staff development opportunities existed. However, one-quarter of these managers noted that staff development did not exist for their workers.

Where staff development programmes existed, managers were asked how low-paid, low-skilled staff would access them. Often more than one mechanism for access existed (in 88 per cent of cases). Overall, appraisal was most frequently mentioned of these (see Table 4.8).

Table 4.8: Mechanisms for access to staff development programmes

Mechanisms	N	%
Appraisal	35	67
Tell them about the available training	25	48
Negotiate a personal development plan	23	44
Talk to them regularly	13	25
Signpost following observation	11	21
Talk to them occasionally	9	17
Ask them about training needs	9	17
Other	4	8

Source: IES 2006

Close to one-half of this group of managers reported that they would signpost training outside the appraisal meeting, and 23 (44 per cent) reported the use of

personal development plans (note though that 64 per cent of these managers reported that they themselves had personal development plans, suggesting some lack of parity in the experiences of different levels of workers within these organisations). Where appraisals and personal development plans existed for low-paid, low-skilled workers, then in all but a small number of cases, the line managers reported that these were implemented organisation-wide and for all staff (although the audit did not explore perceptions of the quality of these, nor whether practices varied in any way for the different staff groups).

Similar numbers of these managers said that they would talk to their staff regularly and, through these discussions, signpost learning and development. As noted, they would also signpost training as a response to the issues emerging from their observation of staff in the workplace. Equal numbers (nearly one-fifth of responses in both cases) reported that they talked to staff occasionally about training, as did those who said they would directly ask employees about their training needs. Other approaches were mentioned as well as these and included posting development information on noticeboards and provision of open meetings at a range of times (although this manager indicated that these were not well attended). A further response here indicated that there was a lack of funds for development and that staff release was problematic in any case.

We received responses from only 36 line managers about whether they offered feedback to employees on their performance and learning needs (although we may consider this to be partly encapsulated in the analysis above); of these, all confirmed that employees would receive feedback from them.

4.5.1 LLNIT Skills development

A further strand of the audit asked line managers about the extent to which LLNIT skills were required by their workers, and further, whether employees were able to raise, as part of existing development discussions, any requirements they had for LLNIT skill development.

Thirty-eight responses to the question about the requirement for LLNIT skills at work were recorded. All but one of these indicated that indeed these skills were necessary and the examples given of their use varied from using email and reading reports, through to interpreting information.

Managers were asked whether they encouraged workers to approach them with their LLNIT skills development needs. Close to eight in ten confirmed that they did and in some cases managers gave examples of how employees had approached them about this issue. However, the line manager evidence also suggests that, while these issues could be raised, in around one-third of these organisations these workers were not subsequently able to access anything beyond job-related training.

4.6 Progression opportunities for workers

The literature on the low paid, low skilled workplace indicates that skill development to support progression is often not a feature of low-paid, low-skilled workplaces and this serves to limit the career horizons of low-paid, low-skilled workers. However, this was not the case in the audited organisations where close to two-thirds of managers reported that opportunities to progress existed and, in most of these (over eight in ten cases), managers reported that training and development existed to support this. These organisations, therefore, appear more willing than most low-paid, low-skilled workplaces to offer opportunities to progress, along with access to training to support this.

We received 32 descriptions of progression training. The most frequently mentioned were in-house development programmes such as study skill or management programmes. NVQ accreditation was mentioned in four cases. Three line managers reported what might be considered less formal support, for instance, staff could 'act up' to more senior roles or shadow a more senior colleague. Mechanisms for accessing progression development were broadly similar to those for general staff development.

Similar numbers of line managers to those which reported progression opportunities reported that there were no barriers to workers applying the more advanced skills they might gain from development. It should be noted, however, that this implies that, in one-third of cases, application of newly gained advanced skills was problematic in some way. In addition, the support mechanisms identified by managers for applying these skills in many cases involved actual progression which clearly would impact on the extent to which workers could apply their skills in reality. These findings suggest a lack of strategy to capitalise on improved skillsets in current work roles.

4.7 Changing role requirements

The evidence in the literature review suggested that the way in which low-paid, low-skilled jobs were designed significantly impacted on the availability of, and need for, training and development (amongst other factors). Two contrasting positions exist: firstly, where roles have expanded or been combined, skill requirements increase; alternatively, in some low-paid, low-skilled workplaces, where work has become tightly defined (often as a result of the implementation of new quality assurance systems) skill requirements have reduced, and as the jobs now require little or no discretion there is concomitantly little need, and few opportunities, for learning.

Managers were asked whether, in their view, the skill requirements of jobs in their teams had changed, and, if so, in what way. The majority (eight in ten line managers) reported that skills requirements had indeed changed in the last five years, although of the others, eight noted no change in this regard.

The changes had been largely driven by legislative requirements, introduction of new technologies and/or IT systems or introduction of new quality systems and standards. The line managers regarded underpinning changes to service and quality standards as the drivers of these changing skills requirement (40 per cent of responses here), followed by changes to organisational structure (23 per cent) and role extension and technology (13 per cent respectively).

The extent to which workers were required to participate in decision-making had also been subject to change in the view of 42 of these managers. Two-thirds of these felt the requirement to participate in decision-making had increased.

Line managers were asked to summarise whether skills requirements had generally increased or decreased for their low-paid, low-skilled workers and responses were received from 39 managers. Most of these managers (25 in number) felt that skills requirements overall had increased, while just five thought they had decreased. A further nine felt that the skills required had changed in nature but not level or number.

Where skills were thought to have decreased, line managers were asked whether this had made it easier for staff to do their jobs (three out of four disagreed with this) and whether the organisation could now recruit less skilled workers (just two agreed that they could).

We were interested in whether any additional learning provision had been implemented to support these changes to skill requirements. In all but eleven cases managers responded that there had and, while the indications were that a variety of approaches existed, many of these involved technical training as new equipment or procedures were introduced, or introduction of regular support mechanisms such as forums for issues to be raised.

The issue of whether there were other development needs not being met was explored. Close to six in ten line managers reported that this situation existed. The kinds of development they felt were required encompassed LLNIT skill areas (largely communication and literacy) but in addition substantial numbers were interested in further, sometimes higher level development opportunities in existing areas of task-focused provision.

4.8 Extending work practice to develop LLNIT skills

There is significant evidence in the literature reviewed for our earlier report that LLNIT skills are not a priority in the training of low paid, low skilled workers since their value is not understood by organisations. However, in the defence of employers, it is only relatively recently that statistical modelling has revealed the importance of

these skills to national economic performance¹⁰. We did not necessarily expect line managers to be aware of these issues, however, we were interested in the extent to which they would identify LLNIT skills development opportunities in their employees' work.

Most of the line managers felt that they supervised activities that would make a useful basis for employees to develop their LLNIT/IPC skills while at work. These were necessarily diverse but included:

- literacy examples: such as making care plan assessments, sorting and delivering post, understanding menus, and writing Code Victors¹¹
- numeracy examples: such as completing time sheets and work docket, estimating stock wastage, and confirming the number of patients requesting each menu choice (we would note that these require the processing of numerical information)
- just one IT example was given and this related to a bespoke computer till system
- communication appropriate to the situation, eg with patients or customers and in meetings.

Team working and LLNIT skills

The managers were asked two separate questions in relation to team working and LLNIT/IPC skills, the responses from which are combined in Table 4.9. It appears, perhaps unsurprisingly, that line managers in these organisations see a greater role for LLNIT/IPC skills in the operation of teams rather than in the performance of tasks, and thus prioritise the role of these skills here. Communication skills were uppermost of the LLNIT/IPC skills identified in ten of the manager responses. There was little to distinguish between the frequency with which literacy, numeracy and IT were commented on in the context of improving team working, however, language/ESOL was slightly more frequently identified than the others, as might be expected.

Table 4.9: Improving team work

Skill development would improve team working	N	%
LLNIT skills (base = 52)	42	81
Other skills areas (base = 49)	26	56

Source: IES 2006

¹⁰ Coulombe S, Tremblay J F, Marchand S (2004), *International Adult Literacy Survey, Literacy Scores, Human Capital and Growth across Fourteen OECD countries*, published by authority of the Minister responsible for Statistics Canada

¹¹ A security procedure in the NHS for high risk incidents

Other forms of development that these managers believed would improve team working included complaints handling and customer care (aspects of communication), as well as specific team building activities and in one case, development to support/develop colleagues.

4.9 Summary

In this chapter we have explored issues of task-related and LLNIT skills development within the audited organisations from the perspective of line managers. The findings suggest some potential to leverage the informal monitoring and development undertaken by these managers to include LLNIT skills development. However, some form of support would be important to enable this to happen, and, as we should note, the quality and effectiveness of systems was not explored.

- The majority of line managers had themselves been involved in development activity since joining their organisation. Most frequently this related to workplace safety and safe practice. Supervisory and management development and training was noted by just over one in ten of these managers. Just one manager had received development to help them train other workers.
- Managers reported that some skills or combination thereof were important in recruitment for the occupational groups for which they were responsible. Over half of the line managers reported that a combination of skills was required, and four in ten of these combinations included LLNIT skills. Where a single skill was specified, close to half of these skills were from the LLNIT grouping.
- Of all the skills specified during the recruitment processes cited by managers (whether these were single or in combination), the ones receiving greatest priority were literacy and skills related to specific trades and crafts. Communication skills were specified in just over ten per cent of cases; however, if customer service skills are combined with this, this increases the frequency of their specification to nearer 18 per cent.
- In fifteen cases, tests were conducted for the specified LLNIT skills as part of the recruitment process. No standard tests were used and in-house tests ranged from a simple calculation to a scenario to be read before and then discussed during the interview (indicative of information processing). Line managers also reported that frequently communication, verbal skills and use of language was assessed informally from the interview.
- For one-half of the groups reported on by line managers, a mix of experienced and inexperienced recruits was typical. Generally line managers believed that most recruits required training. This suggests that, even where recruits have skills, the organisations require skills to be tailored in some way to meet the needs of work. This is particularly the case for functional and safe practice skills which we might consider 'mission critical'.

- Further analysis of the line manager information demonstrated that much of the training that experienced recruits required was in the area of LLNIT skills. This finding was statistically significant. We believe this is indicative of the importance of the LLNIT skills in terms of the total skill-set required by these workers; also since a significant amount of the training needed, even by experienced staff, is in the LLNIT skill areas, the extent to which they require a focus in employee development strategies.
- There were indications that line managers were the most likely to deliver LLNIT skills development for new recruits (in close to one in five instances), and blended approaches were the next most common. For task-related skills combination approaches, such as initial formal delivery followed up with observed practical application, was more likely.
- Two-thirds of the line managers in these organisations reported that they monitored the skills for which employees had been given training. However the PEG team data also suggested that one in ten did not undertake any follow-up activities to further embed skills.
- Generally, monitoring combined formal and informal procedures, although of these two options, informal monitoring was mentioned slightly more often when a single method was used. Informal monitoring took place frequently (daily and weekly) while, as might be expect, reviews and appraisals would more normally occur quarterly or annually.
- Informal monitoring took place on-the-job, and usually involved the manager visiting the employee during the work period and observing their practice, their visit not being scheduled in any way. More formal mechanisms ranged from spot-checks on-the-job to the use of annual appraisal and regular review meetings every six to eight weeks, ie off-the-job approaches.
- If any deficiencies in practice were detected during informal monitoring, these line managers largely reported they would rectify these through coaching on-the-job.
- In around two-thirds of cases, line managers reported that opportunities to progress existed. These managers also reported that training and development existed to support progression. An example of this development was the provision of management development programmes. A small number of managers reported less formal progression support such as shadowing a more senior colleague. Mechanisms for accessing progression development included informal discussions as well as formal meetings such as appraisal.
- Similar numbers of line managers to those reporting progression opportunities reported that there were no barriers to workers applying the more advanced skills they might gain from development, although this suggests that in one-third of cases, application of newly gained advanced skills may be problematic. However, the support mechanisms identified by managers for applying these skills in many

cases involved actual progression. This suggests a lack of strategy to capitalise on these skills in current work roles.

- The majority of line managers reported that skills requirements for their low-paid, low-skilled staff had changed in the last five years. The changes were driven by legislative requirements, introduction of new technologies and/or IT systems, introduction of new quality systems and standards. The line managers regarded changes to service and quality standards as key drivers of the changing skills requirement.
- Overall, eight in ten of these line managers felt that skills requirements had increased, while just four in total thought they had decreased. A further nine managers (in number) felt that the skills required had changed in nature but not level or number. Low-paid, low-skilled workers' participation in decision-making (an information processing skill) was also felt to have increased in most of these organisations.
- The line managers participating in the audit more readily identified the role of LLNIT skills to the development of better team working than task duties. Unsurprisingly, communication was a common factor here although customer service also gained recognition (a skill that might be considered to combine communication and problem solving, ie some degree of information processing).

5 The Employees' Perspective

The final strand of the audit relating to current learning and development practice explored the perspective of employees working in low-paid, low-skilled workplaces in the organisations participating in the audit. In each of the organisational units audited, PEG teams were asked to gather evidence from at least one, but no more than three, employees.

5.1 Some characteristics of the employees

In total, 69 employees participated in the audit. Most of these (64 employees) were directly employed by the organisations in which they were audited (and were on permanent employment contracts), one was contracted to the organisation (on a temporary contract) and four worked in their organisations under other employment arrangements, although the data indicates a permanent contract underpinned their employment. This suggests that these workers are not as subject to employment instability as some of the low-paid, low-skilled groups identified in the literature review.

Twenty-nine of the employees were male, and just seven did not have English as their first language. The majority (just over eight in ten) of these staff worked full-time. Eight in ten also worked a day shift, just one worked a twilight shift, while around seven per cent indicated some other shift pattern. There were no particular trends in these other shift patterns which included a three-day shift operation, working every other weekend and 'on-call' work.

The length of time these staff had worked in their respective roles is shown in Table 5.1. One-half had worked in their current role for between one and five years and, amongst this group most commonly, their length of service was between one and two years. One employee was relatively new to their organisation, while the remainder can be considered as having considerable experience in their current job role.

Table 5.1: length of time these staff had worked in their respective roles

Number of years	N	%
One to five	35	50
Six to ten	14	20
Eleven to fifteen	9	13
More than sixteen	8	11
Less than one	1	1
Missing data	2	
Total	69	

Source: IES 2006

5.2 Skills specified in recruitment

The audit requested PEG teams to collect information about the extent to which skills had been specified when the employees had applied for their jobs. Over one-half reported they were not aware of any particular skills required by the job while four in ten said that some skills were necessary when they applied. Where employees remembered skills being specified the PEG teams noted these and we have subsequently grouped them; see Table 5.2.

Table 5.2: Skills required during recruitment for current role

Skill category	N	%
Relevant previous experience	8	28
Task-related skills	6	21
LLNIT (largely IT)	5	17
Customer/service user care	4	14
Communication	2	7
Information processing	2	7
Other	2	7
N	29	

Source: IES 2006

Twenty-nine of these employees gave information about the skills that had been required. Relevant previous work experience was the most prevalent here. There was evidence that task-related skills were required but the data suggests this is to much the same extent as LLNIT skills are required. However, given the numbers of occupational groups covered by this part of the audit, this is hardly surprising. If information processing skills and communication are considered in combination with the skills of the LLNIT acronym, then it could be argued that these skills were most commonly demanded (in the view of employees). This broadly equates to the scale of demand for these skills reported by line managers.

Just over one-quarter of the line managers had mentioned the use of skills tests during recruitment. We also asked the employees in the audit whether they had been subject

to a skills test when they were recruited. Close to nine out of ten of these employees responded that testing had not been a part of their application process, although seven reported that they had taken a test (data was not received on this point from one employee). However, in a question about the skills test used, we received nine responses. Of these, most reported verbal tests during the interview, although in one case a dyslexia assessment had been arranged; in another the test had involved reading menu cards.

There is then some disparity between line manager and employee accounts of the use of testing. This might arise from patchy application of testing or from the tests being a relatively new introduction, since most of the employees had been with the organisation for some time. It might also indicate that the employees are not aware of the informal testing techniques used by the managers (reported earlier) or that employees did not consider the interviews a test (eg of communication skills) and so did not report on this.

A final question in this part of the audit asked employees for their opinion of how long it would take a new person to learn how to do their job. Although employees were drawn from a large number of occupations (with varying skills requirements), there was some indication that few of these jobs require no skills in their opinion, although the categories here were not particularly sensitive; see Table 5.3.

Table 5.3: Amount of time it would take a new person to learn the job

Period of time	N	%
Couple of weeks	23	33
One month	17	25
Longer	15	22
Couple of days	12	17
No time at all	1	1
Data not available	1	1
N	69	

Source: IES 2006

It appears from the table that very few of these employees thought that new recruits would be able to fulfil their roles without some training or development. While around one-third of the employees thought the development required would take around two weeks, one-quarter thought it could take up to one month and a further one in five thought that their jobs would require a longer training period than this.

5.3 Skills development and employees

Employees were then asked whether they themselves had needed any training before they could do their job (see Table 5.4). One-half of these employees reported that they had needed quite a lot of training, while one-third had required a little but not much. However, eleven employees noted that they had not needed any training, although most of these had reported that for new recruits a couple of weeks training would be necessary.

Table 5.4: How much training these employees had needed before they could perform their job

Amount of training	N	%
None	11	16
Not much	22	32
Quite a lot	35	51
Data not available	1	1
N	69	

Source: IES 2006

The majority of those employees who reported that they had required no training, noted that this was because of their previous work experience (eight employees confirmed this to be the case). Just two of these employees reported that the job did not require any skills while another cited other reasons (although further details of these were not supplied).

The employees who had reported receiving training at the outset of their job recalled training being given in a wide variety of subjects. Further analysis indicated, as might be expected, that much of the training, around 75 per cent, was task-oriented, related to the use of machinery and equipment, and often related to the correct performance of work and safe practices.

We asked employees about how the training they had received had been delivered (Table 5.5). They reported that, largely, this had been conducted by workplace peers, through demonstration of the performance of tasks. Second most prevalent was inclusion of the training during the induction for the job.

Off-the-job learning was reported in 17 cases, with ten employees reporting this had been delivered by an internal trainer, four by an external trainer on the work site, and three by an external trainer off the site.

On-the-job learning had been delivered in twelve instances, and in six of these cases was delivered by an external trainer. In three instances managers or supervisors had provided this initial development, and in a further three, an internal trainer had led the development activities. This contrasts with the evidence presented by the line managers (who reported that they themselves conducted around 15 per cent of the task-related training).

However, we have no way of telling if the workers and managers were referring to the same learning experiences or whether this is an artefact of managers providing training for some employees, but not others, depending on need.

Table 5.5: Method of delivery

Delivery method	N	%
Colleague/mentor/buddy showed me	41	33
Formed part of induction	22	18
Internal trainer provided off-the-job learning	10	8
External trainer provided on-the-job learning	6	5
External trainer provided off-the-job learning on work site	4	3
Other method ¹²	4	3
Manager/supervisor provided on-the-job learning	3	2
External trainer provided off-the-job learning off-site	3	2
Internal trainer provided on-the-job learning	3	2

Source: IES 2006

In the view of employees this training had been successful in helping them achieve the requirements of their work. Only in two cases did employees report it had not, although the audit did not further explore why they felt this to be the case.

5.4 LLNIT skills and employees' work

We were interested in the degree to which tasks requiring the use of LLNIT skills formed a part of these employees' work in their view. Where a task involving LLNIT skills existed for these workers we were also interested in whether they had received development to help them achieve the standards required (see Table 5.6).

The audit listed some examples of what these tasks might be. However, PEG teams were also encouraged to interpret these to make them more relevant to the occupational groups from whom they gathered evidence. The audit allowed for each form of LLNIT skill required for work and each type of development received to be recorded for each employee. The audit contained space for any other types of task involving LLNIT skills; however, only four responses were given for this and, when the four responses given were reviewed, they closely related to the categories already specified. We have thus included these responses in the categories below.

Of the tasks involving LLNIT skills that were required by these employees' work, just over one-quarter related to the ability to read and comprehend written information. Around one-fifth of the tasks involved the employees in writing information, reading

¹² Although the audit allowed for other forms of training to be recorded no data was received on this point.

and understanding numerical information and making calculations of some sort. Just over one in ten tasks involved the use of IT. While this finding represents solely the views of these employees, and not the broader range of job requirements within the organisations, it would appear that any focus on raising IT skills (the LLNIT skill that is currently most likely to be explicitly identified in training policy and provision) will not particularly benefit the majority of these employees.

Table 5.6: Job requires LLNIT skills and whether employees received development for these skills

Type of LLNIT skill job involves	Job involves		Development received		Employees received development in task	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Reading, eg notes from someone else; reports	52	27	22	42		
Read and understand numerical information	41	21	22	54		
Make calculations using numerical information, eg stock orders	40	20	23	58		
Writing, eg notes for someone else; reports	37	19	23	62		
Use of a computer	26	13	22	85		
N	196		112			

Source: IES 2006

A further question in this section explored whether the employees had received training for the LLNIT tasks they were required to undertake. Despite the indications that IT is the LLNIT skill that is least required by work in these organisations, some 85 per cent of employees that had reported use of IT had also received development.

Close to two-thirds of the employees who reported that they need to produce written information reported that they had received development to help them to do this. Broadly similar numbers reported they had received development to enable them to make the calculations required by their work. Slightly fewer had had any development to support their ability to read numerical data and reading skills were the least likely LLNIT skill for workers to receive development in (delivered in around four out of ten instances of development).

When asked about how the LLNIT skills development they had received had been delivered, the employees reported that this was most frequently (in around one-third of instances) provided by a colleague who would demonstrate the LLNIT task in some way.

In accordance with the evidence from line managers, employees reported that in close to three in ten instances, line managers had provided the LLNIT skills development they received, and this was delivered on-the-job. In one-fifth of cases, employees reported that LLNIT development was included in their induction.

In fourteen instances internal trainers had led LLNIT development but there was an equal spread of this being delivered either on or off-the-job. This kind of development was led by external trainers in far fewer instances, and most of this took place on the work site, although there was an equal split between on- and off-the-job (but on-site) delivery.

Table 5.7: How LLNIT development was delivered

Delivery via	N	%
Colleague/mentor/buddy showed me	30	32
Manager/supervisor provided on-the-job learning	25	27
Formed part of induction	16	17
Internal trainer provided off-the-job learning	7	7
Internal trainer provided on-the-job learning	7	7
External trainer provided on-the-job learning	3	3
External trainer provided off-the-job learning on work site	3	3
Other method ¹³	2	2
External trainer provided off-the-job learning off-site	1	1
N	94	

Source: IES 2006

5.5 Performance management and skill development

As we have noted, monitoring and feedback are key supports for the correct application of skills at work. We thus explored the extent to which workers believed that they were monitored following development and whether any further development needs were identified within this process.

Just over one-half of the employees reported that their skills were monitored, although of course this indicates that close to one-half of employees did not believe there existed monitoring in this regard. Where monitoring did take place, however, the majority of employees reported that this included a discussion of their development needs. Almost universally, employees reported that it was line managers who were responsible for this monitoring.

The mechanisms for performance management reported by these employees are shown in Table 5.8. In around one-third of the cases reported in this table, employees reported a mixture of mechanisms that blended formal and informal elements. In just one case informal mechanisms were the sole approach.

¹³ Although the audit allowed for other forms of training to be recorded no data was received on this point.

Table 5.8: Performance management mechanisms reported by employees

Mechanism	N	%
Appraisal	27	39
On job discussion	19	28
Negotiation of a personal development plan	12	17
On job observation	11	16
Combination of formal and informal mechanisms	21	31

Source: IES 2006

A further question explored whether employees received feedback as part of the monitoring they experienced. While we did not receive responses for 29 of these workers, those who did respond largely reported this was the case (85 per cent).

Those who responded positively to the question about feedback were asked whether, as part of this, they and their manager discussed any further development requirements. The number of responses to this question had reduced to 36 employees; however, more than ninety per cent of this group agreed this had happened. However, when asked whether LLNIT development needs were included in these discussions about further development, the numbers confirming this point dropped to 25 (representing two-thirds of this group). We should note however, that we do not know whether these employees had any LLNIT development needs which, if they did not, would account for this finding.

5.6 Accessing LLNIT skill development

We were interested in the extent to which employees felt they could approach their managers or HR/training department to request development for LLNIT skills. Where this was the case, the mechanisms that existed for this (and indeed their accessibility) were also of interest.

Seven out of ten of these employees reported that they were encouraged to discuss their LLNIT development needs. Largely, it was the case that they would speak with their manager, with just one indicating they would approach HR or the training department, and one other, the Lifelong Learning Manager.

PEG teams gathered information from 66 of these employees about whether a LLNIT skills development programme existed within their organisation (as far as they were aware). Again, seven in ten reported this was the case, although we have to note here that this may largely reflect the influence of the SEEDA NHS Basic Skills programme.

A further question explored how those employees who had reported the existence of a LLNIT development programme had heard about this. Not all responded to this question, and those who did could name more than one source; however, the indications were that this was through discussion with an internal member of staff

(see Table 5.9). We should note here that this data does not represent how well, or how extensively, the LLNIT development programmes are promoted; rather, and more importantly for the potential impacts of such programmes, it represents the forms of promotion that employees have noted.

Around one-quarter of this group of employees mentioned that they had seen information on noticeboards. Email and intranet systems were reported in only a small number of instances, and again may indicate that IT usage is not particularly common amongst these workers, at least while they are at work.

Table 5.9: How employees found about LLNIT development

Mechanism	N	%
Through discussion with an internal member of staff	25	61
Staff noticeboard	10	24
Email/notice on organisation's intranet	3	7
External trainer	2	5
Roadshow delivered by local college	1	2

Source: IES 2006

A final question in this section explored these employees' perception of the training offered by their organisation: whether this was purely task/job oriented or whether they were able to access other forms of learning not necessarily directly related to their current work. Sixty-seven employees provided a response to this question, and just over half of these (56 per cent) felt that only job-specific development was available to them.

We compared when and where each type of training was most likely to happen. Job-specific training was relatively equally split between on- and off-the-job (but on-site) delivery. This type of training was most frequently delivered by internal staff, who were most often managers.

Other forms of training were much more likely to be delivered off-the-job, and where employees reported undertaking development in their own time, this was mostly for other forms of development than for job-specific issues. In these other forms of development, external trainers were far more likely to lead delivery.

5.7 Skill development to support progression

As was the case with the line managers, the audit required information from the employees about the opportunities for progression and for training that would support any progression.

We received 68 employee responses to this question, of which a majority, just over two-thirds, noted that some form of progression development existed. Fifty

employees responded to a further question about whether they had undertaken any progression training, to which 22 reported that they had.

Where progression training had taken place amongst these workers, it appears that slightly more of this was delivered by external staff, and largely this was off-the-job, although a fair amount of progression training took place off-site at an external provider centre.

Table 5.10: Who delivers progression development and where it takes place (multiple response)

Delivery by	N	%
Internal staff	17	46
Colleague/mentor/buddy	3	
Manager/supervisor	4	
Internal trainer on-the-job	7	
Internal trainer off-the-job	3	
External staff	20	54
External trainer on-the-job	2	
External trainer off-the-job, on-site	10	
External trainer off-the-job, off-site	8	
N	37	

Source: IES 2006

Of the 22 employees who had participated in progression development, all reported they had had opportunities to apply their newly gained skills at work (this represents over 70 per cent of these cases). These employees were asked for examples of this type of opportunity. The opportunities were fairly diverse and tailored to the different workplaces; however, in four instances they were centred on 'acting up' to a more senior role, and in two cases, involved expanded job tasks. In a small number of cases we received indications of one-off application such as working with a database following attendance at an IT course. One employee had gained promotion on the basis of their newly developed skills.

All employees were asked whether they felt there were options to progress to more senior roles within their organisation. We received 39 responses to this question, and these indicated, for most (31 cases), that progression was possible.

5.8 Change in organisations and skills requirements

Changing job and skills requirements in these organisations (and for the occupations from which the employees were drawn) were discussed in the interviews with line managers. Their responses indicated that largely demands had increased. We were thus interested in the extent to which workers themselves would identify increasing skills requirements for their work.

PEG teams recorded responses for around one-half (31) of the audited employees on the issue of whether there had been any change in the skills they required for their work. The large majority of these (94 per cent) indicated that the skills they needed for work had indeed changed. The nature of this change was, by and large, an increase in the skills required. In the one example received of how skills had decreased, this indicated a reduction in the use of IT and management skills.

Information was provided for 31 of these employees about whether their participation in decision-making had increased or decreased as part of these changes. Almost universally, these employees agreed that their role in decision-making had changed, and, for the large majority of these, it appeared their role had increased.

The reasons that the workers believed underlay the changing skill and decision-making requirements are shown in Table 5.11. Note that they were able to identify multiple drivers of change (rather than just one) if appropriate. Most frequently, employees believed that changing skills requirements associated with changes to service or quality standards had driven changes in skills requirements. Technology had increased skills requirements in around one-quarter of instances. Nine employees noted that the changes to the organisational structure had been the cause of change, with just six noting that increasing automisation of job roles had driven change. Where other change drivers were cited these included introduction of new procedural systems and the take-over by a new company imposing higher health and safety standards.

Table 5.11: Employees perceptions of the reasons behind changes in skills requirements

Change driver	N	%
Change to service or quality standards	19	29
Change to technologies	16	24
Change to organisational structure	9	14
Increased automation	6	9
Other	3	5
Expansion of job ie introduction of new task	13	2

Source: IES 2006

Where the skills required by employees' jobs had increased, a further question explored whether they had received any training to support this change. Some 34 responses were received to this question, a higher number than had confirmed that skills had increased; these indicated that, in two-thirds of cases, training had been delivered, most of which (as far as employees were aware) was organised by local managers.

5.9 Employees' self-identified development needs

We asked employees whether there was any training and development they would like that was not currently provided by their organisations. Their responses were evenly split between those who identified that they would like some additional form of development, and those who would not.

Where they had noted that they wanted further development, PEG team members audited the nature of the development required. Responses were subsequently categorised and the outcomes are shown in Table 5.12. In our assessment, much of this unmet developmental need fell into the LLNIT and Information Processing and Communications (IPC) grouping. Indeed the majority of this development related to communication skills.

Table 5.12: Development employees would like not currently provided

Type of development	N	%
LLNIT/IPC	27	54
Task	7	14
Progression (supervisory skills)	7	14
Service (customer/patient care/needs)	6	12
Health and safety	3	6

Source: IES 2006

There was little to differentiate between the numbers of these employees who wanted development in some aspect of work, service or progression. The fact that health and safety skills development was mentioned here may indicate that refreshers or some higher level development of these skills is desired, since, we know from the other parts of the audit, (and indeed this section), this form of development is largely available.

When asked whether any skills development would help themselves and their colleagues to work better together, slightly fewer than one-half responded positively. Of these, the majority felt that communications development was required, although three also identified service and task skills.

Slightly more of the employees (57 per cent) felt that their organisation could do more to support managers and supervisors to deliver development and learning at work. The kinds of development they felt would be of benefit included: raising awareness amongst managers of LLNIT provision and getting them involved in it; development to signpost learning opportunities and programmes; development to carry out the personal development review; general management skills and (relatively frequently) development to improve their communication skills.

5.10 Summary

This chapter presented the employee strand of the audit of current learning and development practice.

- Just over one-half of the employees audited were female (58 per cent) and most had English as their first language. The large majority were employed directly by their organisation and had permanent employment status. This would appear to indicate that these workers are not as subject to the employment instability as some of the low-paid, low-skilled groups identified in the literature review.
- One-half had worked in their current role for between one and five years and, most commonly, their length of service was between one and two years. One employee was relatively new to their organisation, while the remainder can be considered as having considerable experience in their current job role.
- Employees gave information about the skills that had been required at recruitment. Their responses indicated that task-related and LLNIT skills were required in a broadly similar number of cases. If information processing skills and communication were considered in combination with the skills of the LLNIT acronym, then these skills were the most commonly demanded (in the view of employees).
- Although employees were drawn from a large number of occupations (with varying skills requirements), there was indication that, in their view, few of these jobs require no skills development following recruitment. Around one-third of the employees estimated such development would take around two weeks, one-quarter thought it could take up to one month and a further one in five regarded their jobs would require a longer training period than this.
- However, this view contrasted with their own experience of training at the outset of work. While around 22 per cent of individuals had reported that there was no need for skill development following recruitment in response to the previous question, a third reported that only a little or no training had been required when they had started their job. This was largely attributed by them to the advanced standing their prior work experience gave them.
- The employees who reported training at the outset of their job noted a wide variety of subjects. Further analysis indicated that much of this was task-oriented, related to use of machinery and equipment, and often related to the correct performance of work and safe practices. Where training was off-the-job this was more frequently led by an external trainer; when training was on-the-job, by internal trainer.
- Of the LLNIT tasks required by these employees' work, in the view of these employees just over one-quarter required the ability to read and comprehend written information. Just over one in ten tasks involved the use of IT. While this finding represents solely the views of these employees, it would appear that any

focus on improving IT skills above other LLNIT skills would contribute less to work practice. However, close to half report a requirement for IT in their work, thus this finding may indicate an issue of definition and not much more.

- However, in the case of IT, over eight in ten of the employees reporting its use had also received development. Close to two-thirds of the employees who reported they need to produce written information had received development to help them to do this. Broadly similar numbers had received development to enable them to make the calculations required by their work. Slightly fewer had had any development to support reading numerical data; and reading skills were the least likely LLNIT skill for workers to receive development in (delivered in around four out of ten instances of development).
- Just over half of these employees reported that their skills were monitored following development; this suggests that close to half did not believe this to be the case. Where monitoring was taking place, largely this included the discussion of their development needs. Almost universally, managers were responsible for the monitoring taking place and mostly monitoring combined both formal and informal mechanisms.
- Where monitoring was taking place and feedback was part of this, the majority agreed that they and their manager discussed any further development requirements. However, when asked whether LLNIT development needs were included in these discussions only two-thirds of this group agreed.
- Seven out of ten of these employees reported that they were encouraged to discuss their LLNIT development needs with their manager. The same number also reported the existence of a LLNIT skills development programme within their organisation although this may largely reflect the influence of the SEEDA NHS Basic Skills programme.
- Just over two-thirds of these employees noted that some form of progression development existed and twenty-two reported that they had received some sort of progression development. Slightly more of this was delivered by external staff than for other forms of development, and largely this was off-the-job.
- Most of the employees reporting progression development also felt there had been opportunities to apply their newly gained skills at work. These opportunities were fairly diverse and tailored to the different workplaces. However, in four instances were centred on 'acting up' to a more senior role, and in two cases, expanded job tasks were managed. In a small number of cases we received indications of one-off application such as working with a database following attendance at an IT course. One employee had gained promotion on the basis of their newly developed skills.
- Largely, skills requirements for their work were felt by these employees to have increased. They also felt that they now played a greater role in decision-making. Employees were most likely to be report change to service or quality standards as

the driver of change, although technology had increased skills requirements in around one-quarter of instances. Employee responses indicated that in around two-thirds of instances, training had been delivered to support the changes.

- Employees were asked about skills development they would like to receive. In our assessment much of this development lies within the LLNIT and Information Processing and Communications (IPC) grouping. Indeed the majority of this development related to communication skills.
- When asked whether any skills development would help themselves and their colleagues to work better together, just under one-half responded positively. Of these, the majority felt that communications development was required.
- Six out of ten of these employees felt the organisation could do more to support managers to help them to develop and learn at work. In their view what was required was: raising awareness amongst managers of LLNIT provision and getting them involved in it; development to signpost learning opportunities and programmes; development to carry out the personal development review; general management skills and (relatively frequently) development to improve their communication skills.

6 PEG Activity Audit

The remaining element of the audit focused on the requirement to apply LLNIT skills in work activity. It asked the project's four PEG teams to look in detail at three workplace activities undertaken by each occupational group they audited. This chapter of the report describes the findings of that activity audit.

6.1 Scope of the audit

The PEG teams were asked to report on:

- the context and purpose of the activity
- the application of LLNIT skills required by the activity
- the degree to which the requirement to apply LLNIT skills in the activity is specified and communicated in the workplace
- the impact of the activity on organisational performance
- the impact of LLNIT skill application on the activity
- what if any support is currently available in the workplace for the application of LLNIT skills in the activity
- how LLNIT skill application in the activity might best be supported.

In selecting activities for audit, PEG teams were required to use their professional judgement, bearing in mind the project's aim of testing the hypothesis that work activities requiring the application of LLNIT skills might offer opportunity to develop LLNIT skills. It was suggested to the PEG teams (through guidance notes and learning lab briefings) that their selection of activities might take into consideration whether the activity was likely to require a significant application of LLNIT skills and whether, as an activity, it had a significant impact on organisational performance.

Audit guidance notes stated explicitly that activities might be specific to a given occupational group or job role (eg operating a cash till) or generic to any type of group or role (eg completing an accident report).

6.2 About the activities

The 165 activities reported by the PEG teams were spread across 53 departmental workplaces in the 21 participating employer organisations (see Table 6.1). One hundred and twenty of the activities occurred in an NHS workplace (73 per cent of the total sample); 102 of these were situated in acute hospitals, including 27 activities managed by the private sector contractors to the NHS.

Workplaces operating wholly in the private sector (hospitality, leisure and retail) hosted 24 of the activities. Three took place in the local authority-owned workplace that operated as a private sector business while offering supported employment to people with a mental or physical impairment.

Table 6.1: Distribution of activities across sectors

	Public	Private contractor to public service	Private*	Total	Percentage
Healthcare: acute hospital	75	27		102	62
Healthcare: primary care trust	18			18	11
Hospitality: hotel			9	9	5
Leisure: leisure centre	3		6	9	5
Environment: refuse collection/street cleansing	6			6	4
Housing services: household maintenance	3			3	2
Retail: supermarket			6	6	4
Retail: machine tools			3	3	2
Social care: domiciliary	3			3	2
Social care: residential	3			3	2
Social care: supported employment			3	3	2
Total	111	27	27	165	
Percentage	67	16	16		

*Includes local authority-owned business offering supported employment

Percentages may not sum to 100 because of rounding

Source: Braddell, 2006

6.2.1 Occupational groups responsible for the activities

The activities were selected from work undertaken by 15 occupational groups (see Table 6.2), with the largest numbers of activities associated with the work of cleaners (45, 27 per cent of the total sample), caterers (30, 18 per cent), hospital porters (24, 15 per cent) and care assistants (15, 9 per cent).

Table 6.2: Distribution of activities across occupational groups

	Public	Private contractor to public service	Private	Total
Admin & clerical	9		3	12
Cleaning (building interiors)	30	12	3	45
Distribution (driving, supported employment)			1	1
Catering	21	6	3	30
Housing services: household maintenance	3			3
Housekeeping (co-ordination of non-clinical patient services)	3			3
Street cleansing	1			1
Leisure (reception)	1		3	4
Leisure (recreation assistants)	2		3	5
Linen (healthcare)	6			6
Care assistants (health, social care)	15			15
Print finishing (supported employment)			2	2
[Healthcare] Portering	15	9		24
Refuse collection	5			5
Retail			9	9
Total	111	27	27	165

Source: Braddell, 2006

6.2.2 What the activities were

The activities themselves, together with how often they occurred in their respective workplaces, are detailed in Table 6.3. From this, it can be seen that the activities fall into 14 broad categories. Customer service (ie activities that required significant interaction with external customers) was the most heavily populated of the broad categories, accounting for over one-third of the activities, followed by cleaning and portering.

The great majority of activities were task-related (96 per cent), as opposed to generic activities potentially associated with any sort of employment (eg filling in time sheets, attending team briefings). Only two activities, checking in a municipal refuse collection crew and delivering on-the-job training in basic hospital cleaning

techniques, might be seen as supervisory tasks. Otherwise, operative level staff were the primary agents in these activities.

Table 6.3: What the activities were and how often they occurred

	More than daily	Daily	Weekly	On demand	Total
Administrative and clerical, bookkeeping			1		1
Administrative and clerical	3	4			7
Basic training, for hospital cleaning role	1				1
Catering, cook-chill food preparation		1			1
Catering, food or drink preparation	3	6			9
Cleaning, kitchens	3	1			4
Cleaning, non-specialised	8	11	3		22
Cleaning, non-specialised, using machines	1	5	3		9
Cleaning, specialised (healthcare)	1		1	1	3
Cleaning, public lavatories (local authority)		1			1
Customer service, taking food or drink orders	2	3			5
Customer service, food or drink service	12	5			17
Customer service, leisure centre gym induction	1				1
Customer service, leisure life guarding	1				1
Customer service, personal care services	6	2	2		10
Customer service, reception	3	4			7
Customer service, responding to enquiries, offering help	2	1	1		4
Customer service, responding to telephone calls	3				3
Customer service, retail sales	2				2
Customer service, technical: appliance repairs for tenants	2				2
Customer service, till operation	5	1			6
Driving	1	1			2
Generic employment activities (eg time sheets, team brief)		5	2		7
Linen services	3	5			8
Picking, supermarket Internet shopping service	1				1
Portering, dealing with an incident			2		2
Portering, general duties: moving people and things	9	1			10
Portering, kitchen portering	3				3
Portering, post room duties	7				7
Print-finishing, machine operation	1	1			2
Stock management, including food and drink	2	2			4
Storekeeping, including equipment	2				2
Street cleansing, including refuse collection	1	1			1
Total	89	60	15	1	165

Source: Braddell, 2006

The activities were common activities. Ninety per cent occurred at least daily, with 54 per cent occurring more than daily. Of the remaining 16 activities, 15 occurred weekly and one on demand.

6.2.3 Orientation of the activities

From the information gathered by the PEG teams, it is possible to establish a further distinction between the activities: whether they are essentially physical/manual activities or whether they are LLNIT/IPC activities. Audit examples of the former include:

- cleaning wash basins, sinks, baths and showers on a hospital ward
- organising bar food and setting restaurant and bar tables in a hotel
- driving the refuse collection vehicle around designated routes.

Examples of the latter were specified as follows:

- answering all telephone enquiries from patients' relatives and friends, supplying information to other departments, taking and recording dates and times of investigations for inpatients, taking telephoned, urgent pathology reports and informing doctors
- reading instructions on the computer screen, taking money and giving change, clarifying incomplete information on the application form, explaining to the customer the various kinds of membership
- daily handover: information from written notes or printed letters/emails is read out to team members. This is then discussed and debated. Notes are taken.

About two-thirds of the activities fell into the physical/manual category and a third into the LLNIT/IPC category.

The distribution detailed in Table 6.4 suggests that while some occupational groups (such as administrative and clerical staff) may do little physical/manual work, few, if any, groups are not required to regularly process information and communicate, particularly when what is termed here 'generic employment activities' are taken into consideration.

6.2.4 Interactions associated with the activities

This impression is reinforced by the patterns of communication around the activities reported by the PEG teams. Despite two-thirds of the activities centring on the work of a single operative, the 165 activities involved extensive interactions (detailed in Table 6.5) with departmental colleagues, supervisors, colleagues from other departments, external customers and, though to a lesser extent, managers and external suppliers.

Table 6.4: Broad orientation of the activities by occupational group

	Physical/ manual	Information processing/ communication	Total
Admin & clerical		12	12
Cleaning (building interiors)	39	6	45
Distribution (driving, supported employment)	1		1
Catering	25	5	30
Housing services: household maintenance	3		3
Housekeeping (co-ordination of non-clinical patient services)	2	1	3
Street cleansing	1		1
Leisure (reception)		4	4
Leisure (recreation assistants)	1	4	5
Linen (healthcare)	5	1	6
Care assistants (health, social care)	6	9	15
Print finishing (supported employment)	2		2
[Healthcare] Portering	15	9	24
Refuse collection	2	3	5
Retail	4	5	9
Total	106	59	165

Source: Braddell, 2006

Table 6.5: Who staff interact with during the activities

	Depart- mental colleagues	Super- visors	Manage- ment	Non- depart- mental colleagues	External customers	External suppliers
Administrative and clerical, bookkeeping			1			
Administrative and clerical	4	7	2	4	1	1
Basic training, for hospital cleaning role	1	1				
Catering, cook-chill food preparation	1	1		1		
Catering, food or drink preparation	9	5	3	6		
Cleaning, kitchens	1	4		3	1	
Cleaning, non-specialised	6	20		19	15	
Cleaning, non-specialised, using machines	2	9		2	5	
Cleaning, specialised (healthcare)		2		3	2	
Cleaning, public lavatories (local authority)	1	1			1	
Customer service, taking food or drink orders	2	2	2	5	2	1
Customer service, food or drink service	10	13		12	15	
Customer service, leisure centre gym induction					1	
Customer service, leisure life guarding	1	1	1		1	
Customer service, personal care services	7	9	1	8	10	

	Depart- mental colleagues	Super- visors	Manage- ment	Non- depart- mental colleagues	External customers	External suppliers
Customer service, reception	2	5	1	2	5	2
Customer service, responding to enquiries, offering help	1	2	2	3	4	2
Customer service, responding to telephone calls	2	3		3	2	2
Customer service, retail sales		1		1	2	1
Customer service, technical: appliance repairs for tenants		1		1	2	1
Customer service, till operation	1	5	3	3	3	
Driving	1	2		1	2	
Generic employment activities (eg time sheets, team brief)	3	5	4	4	1	
Linen services	5	8	1	6		1
Portering, dealing with an incident	1	1	1	1	1	1
Picking, supermarket Internet shopping service	1	1		1	1	
Portering, general duties: moving people and things	1	8		10	4	1
Portering, kitchen portering		1		2		
Portering, post room duties	6	3		5	1	3
Print-finishing, machine operation		2				
Stock management, including food and drink	2	5	2	3	1	1
Stores and supplies, including equipment	1	1		2	1	1
Street cleansing, including refuse collection	1	1			1	
Total	73	130	24	111	85	18

Source: Braddell, 2006

Just under 80 per cent of activities involved some interaction with supervisory staff. About 70 per cent involved interaction with staff from other departments; and just over 50 per cent involved interaction with external customers.

6.2.5 Where the activities took place

The activities were distributed across 27 locations (detailed in Table 6.6), of which about two-thirds were in places where workers were likely to encounter non-departmental colleagues and/or external customers, such as hospital wards and corridors, leisure centre reception areas, private homes and public streets.

6.2.6 Regulations and record-keeping associated with the activities

Audits indicated that most of the activities fell within regulatory frameworks. Of the 165 activities, 78 were regulated by external quality regimes (77 in public sector

workplaces and one in a private sector workplace). Internal quality regimes regulated 146 activities (124 in public sector workplaces and 22 of 27 private sector activities). Safety regulations applied to 116 activities. Audits also indicated that record keeping was directly involved in 61 of the activities (52 in public sector workplaces).

Table 6.6: Where the activities occurred

	Acute hospital	Primary Care Trust	Domiciliary care	Residential care	Supported employment	Hotel	Leisure centre	Refuse collection	Household maintenance	Retail	Total
Bar						3					3
Catering cook-chill area	2										2
Catering main kitchen	9	5									14
Catering office	3										3
Catering storeroom		1									1
Customer services desk										2	2
Day lounge		1									1
General office				1		1	1	3			6
Guest bedroom						1					1
Gymnasium / pool							2				2
Laundry room						1					1
Linen department	4										4
Medical records	3										3
Multiple locations	21	3				1	2			3	30
Operatives' base office			3								3
Outpatient clinic	3										3
Post room	6										6
Print finishing workshop						2					2
Public lavatory								1			1
Public road system						1		2			3
Reception	3				2		4				9
Resident's bathroom				1							1
Restaurant	9	2									11
Sales station										3	3
Service user's home			1						2		3
Ward	39	6									45
Warehouse									1	1	2
Total	102	18	4	2	2	10	9	6	3	9	165

Source: Braddell, 2006

6.2.7 Requirement to apply LLNIT skills in the activity

The requirement to apply LLNIT skills was indicated in all the activities audited.

Asked to characterise the LLNIT/IPC aspect of the activity, PEG teams reported that just under 90 per cent of the activities involved face-to-face communication; 80 per cent involved paper-based communication; 35 per cent involved ICT-mediated communication.

While the information to be processed and/or communicated might be presented in graphical, numerical or verbal form, most commonly it was verbal.

Regarding formality, over one-half of the activities (58 per cent) required formal communication, compared with 70 per cent requiring informal communication (note that these were not mutually exclusive categories). While that communication was most likely to be one-to-one, a significant demand for communication involving more than one interlocutor was reported. Table 6.7 offers a breakdown.

Table 6.7: Analysis of information processing / communication requirements of activities

	Oral (face-to- face)	Oral (distance)	ICT- mediated	Paper- based	1:1 formal	1:>1 formal	1:1 informal	1:>1 informal
Verbal	144	64	52	116	92	35	105	51
Numerical	63	21	42	83	48	14	33	13
Graphical	11	2	11	29	9	2	4	1

Source: Braddell, 2006

The level of information processing/communication ranged from the basic, in predictable circumstances, to the complex and multi-step in unpredictable circumstances (see Table 6.8). While the most common demand was for straightforward information processing / communication in a familiar, predictable setting, about one in four activities made complex demands and almost one in three placed unpredictable demands on those involved in the activity. The evidence of the audit suggests that most activities make a range of demands and most contain at least some potential for complexity and unpredictability, often linked to interaction with non-departmental colleagues or external customers. Examples include the following:

[Domestics] talk to nurses to find out if there are any patients who can't have drinks or can't have sugar in their drinks. They then talk to patients to find out what drinks they would like and may also need to respond to other requests [Healthcare: patient food service]

Rapid assessment of the situation as soon as the [porter] attends by verbal communication with other hospital staff, with the member of the public and by body language and behaviour. [Healthcare: hospital portering]

The unpredictability of the task is also affected by the accuracy of the information taken and recorded by the call centre team. The activity can also become less predictable if the bin contains contaminated waste or if there is a road closure [Local authority: refuse collection]

The interaction requires a high level of communicative ability on the part of the leisure assistant. Some of the issues that he/she needs to discuss with the customer can be sensitive [Local authority: leisure centre]

Table 6.8: Complexity of information processing/communication requirements of activities

	Simple/ basic	Straight- forward	Complex	Multi- step	Familiar, predic- table	Unpred- ictable
Administrative and clerical, bookkeeping			1	1		1
Administrative and clerical		3	2	4	6	2
Basic training, for hospital cleaning role		1			1	
Catering, cook-chill food preparation		1		1	1	
Catering, food or drink preparation	2	6	1	3	5	4
Cleaning, kitchens	3	1			4	
Cleaning, non-specialised	12	13	2	3	20	2
Cleaning, non-specialised, using machines	5	6	1	1	8	1
Cleaning, specialised (healthcare)		2	1		3	
Cleaning, public lavatories (local authority)		1			1	
Customer service, taking food or drink orders	1		1	3	2	3
Customer service, food or drink service	5	9	3	7	12	5
Customer service, leisure centre gym induction			1	1		1
Customer service, leisure life guarding		1				1
Customer service, personal care services		4	4	5	7	7
Customer service, reception		1	7	4	2	5
Customer service, responding to enquiries, offering help		3	2	2	1	4
Customer service, responding to telephone calls			1	1		2
Customer service, retail sales		2	1	2	2	1
Customer service, technical: appliance repairs for tenants		1	1		2	1
Customer service, till operation		3	1	2	4	2
Driving	1	2			2	
Generic employment activities (eg time sheets, team brief)		6	1	1	6	1
Linen services	4	4		4	8	
Picking, supermarket Internet shopping service				1	1	1
Portering, dealing with an incident			1	1		1
Portering, general duties: moving people and things	4	6	1	4	7	3
Portering, kitchen portering	1	1	2	2	3	
Portering, post room duties	4	2	1	5	6	1
Print-finishing, machine operation		2			2	
Stock management, including food and drink	1	3	1	3	5	1
Stores and supplies, including equipment			1	1	2	
Street cleansing, including refuse collection	1				1	
Total	44	84	38	62	124	50

Source: Braddell, 2006

A distinction was drawn between physical/manual activities and information processing/communication activities. A similar distinction may be drawn between activities that require LLNIT skills to complete specific tasks, eg taking food and drink orders, and activities that require LLNIT skills to deal with issues arising around implementation of activity. An example of this latter type of application comes from an audit of hospital floor cleaning:

This is a busy 18 bed unit with a constant turnover of patients. The operative organises [the activity] in conjunction with the housekeeper. The activity has to be organised and carried out in a piecemeal fashion, bed area by bed area and with speed. It is possible to fit it in around patient movement with another person helping by moving beds and lockers.
[Healthcare: hospital cleaning]

6.2.8 Workplace recognition of the requirement to apply LLNIT skills

PEG teams reported that for 139 of the activities (84 per cent) the requirement to apply LLNIT skills, ie to process information and/or communicate, was specified or clearly implied in documentation associated with the activity. Table 6.9 details this documentation.

PEG teams reported no documented requirement in 15 (25 per cent) of the 59 activities where information processing and/or communication was the main focus of the activity; compared with a lack of such documentation in only 11 (ten per cent) of the 106 activities where the focus was on manual/physical tasks.

Table 6.9: Where the requirement to apply LLNIT skills was documented

	Activities
Job descriptions	70
Standard operating procedures	82
Health and Safety documentation	52
Paperwork used in the activity, eg record-keeping forms	49
Competency frameworks associated with the activity	1

Note: More than one form of documentation may apply to a single activity

Source: Braddell, 2006

Asked whether there was evidence that the documented requirement to apply LLNIT skills had been communicated to those charged with carrying out the activity, PEG teams reported that in 123 of the activities the documented requirement had been communicated. In the majority of cases this was done either at induction, or informally by line managers (see Table 6.10 for breakdown). In the case of 42 activities (25 per cent of the total sample), PEG teams recorded no evidence that the requirement had been communicated to workers.

Table 6.10: How the requirement to apply LLNIT skills was communicated

	Activities
Job induction	84
Health and Safety induction	13
Other formal training	14
Orally, by management	110
At recruitment and selection	19

More than one form of communication may apply to a single activity

Source: Braddell, 2006

6.2.9 Workplace accommodation for limited LLNIT skills

In the case of 75 activities (45 per cent of the sample), PEG teams reported no evidence that any organisational accommodation was made for limited LLNIT skills. These activities took place in hospital trusts (44 activities), PCTs (13 activities), private and local authority leisure centres, local authority refuse collection, local authority household maintenance, retail, and public sector social care (each four or less activities).

In the case of 16 activities (distributed across hospital trusts, PCTs, social care, hospitality and retail workplaces), PEG teams reported that it was organisational policy to restrict participation in the activity to employees judged by management to possess adequate LLNIT ability for the task.

In the 74 activities where there was indication, the accommodation was made mostly for limited English language ability (60 activities). There was evidence of accommodation for limited literacy in 14 activities.

PEG teams reported no evidence of formal LLNIT skills assessment associated with any of the activities, nor of managers or supervisors qualified to assess LLNIT skills.

The accommodation itself was typically ad hoc and informal: colleagues and supervisors taking over when LLNIT demands exceeded an individual's ability. PEG teams identified the use of some systems and resources (eg procedural sheets, computer graphics and forms) to structure and support LLNIT application. They also reported that some activities had been simplified to minimise LLNIT demands. For example:

The activity is organised in a way to minimise the need for reading and writing activities.
[healthcare cleaning (specialised): hospital trust]

In only 15 of the 165 activities (nine per cent) did PEG teams report formal, managed accommodation of limited LLNIT skills; in nine of these cases (all from the same organisation: an acute hospital), that accommodation consisted of extending the probationary period to allow an individual longer to master task procedures.

6.2.10 Impact of the activities on the workplace

As noted above, the activities audited were activities that occurred frequently and involved a range of interactions, often with external customers. A significant number of the activities fell within external and/or internal quality and health and safety frameworks, consistent with the large cohort of activities, such as hospital cleaning, drawn from public sector and specifically healthcare workplaces.

To further gauge the importance of the activities to the employer organisations, PEG teams were asked to assess the impact of the activity on the organisation's overall performance. Specifically, they were asked to consider the activity's contribution to safe working practice, quality assurance, customer service, team working, resource management and work management (ie efficient operation).

PEG teams reported that activities contributed most frequently in the areas of safe working practice (ie helping the organisation operate safely), team working (ie supporting the work of other departments) and quality assurance (ie helping the organisation maintain required operating standards). Table 6.11 details this.

Table 6.11: How the activities contributed to organisational performance

	Activities
Safe working practice	122
Quality assurance	47
Customer service	44
Team working	75
Resource management	32
Work management	10

A single activity might contribute in more than one area

Source: Braddell, 2006

6.2.11 Impact of LLNIT skills application on the activities

Using the same criteria (safe working practice, quality assurance, customer service, team working, resource management and work management), the PEG teams assessed how LLNIT skills application impacted on the activities themselves (as opposed to the performance of the organisation as a whole).

Consistent with the concept of LLNIT as key enabling skills, poor application of LLNIT skills was judged liable to compromise most activities from most perspectives. Thus, poor LLNIT application was reported to pose a risk to safe working in 142 of the 165 activities, a risk to quality assurance in 154, a risk to customer service in 161 (an example of which is given immediately below), a risk to team work (ie team work within the activity) in 154, to resource management in 156 and to work management (principally related to the extra support and supervision likely to arise) in 155.

Poor customer feedback resulting from patients feeling frustrated by poor communication with staff. [Healthcare: hospital food service]

Notably, evidence from the PEG teams, suggested that poor application of LLNIT skills posed greatest risk in the areas of safe working practice and quality assurance (Table 6.12).

Table 6.12: Single greatest risk associated with poor application of LLNIT skills in activity

	Activities
Safe working practice	71
Quality assurance	39
Customer service	22
Team working	6
Resource management	19
Work management	8
Total	165

Source: Braddell, 2006

As well as considering the risk to the activity of poor LLNIT skill application, PEG teams examined the benefits of strong LLNIT skill application.

Just as poor application was considered likely to compromise the activities, so the application of strong skills was thought likely to safeguard the activities (ie help ensure that the activity was carried out as intended). Beyond this safeguarding, PEG team audits identified, for many activities, areas in which the application of strong LLNIT skills could enhance the activity (ie add value to the activity for the organisation). This was most evidently the case where the activity involved interaction with external customers, but by no means limited to that, as the breakdown given in Table 6.13 indicates.

Table 6.13: Where the application of strong LLNIT skill offers most benefit

	Activities
Safe working practice	18
Quality assurance	25
Customer service	68
Team working	23
Resource management	11
Work management	20
Total	165

Source: Braddell, 2006

6.2.12 Workplace support for LLNIT skill application in the activities

As well as auditing arrangements to accommodate limited LLNIT skills, PEG teams audited how the LLNIT skill application required by the activity was supported. This support was audited in five categories: formal training, coaching, resources, systematic feedback and work organisation. Each of these is discussed in the following sections, but first we provide an explanation for each category.

- ‘Formal training’ categorised any planned instructional activity, sponsored by the organisation and delivered (typically in a training room) by someone in the role of trainer, that requires the release of participating staff from normal work routines. Examples cited by PEG teams included health and safety training and conflict management training.
- ‘Coaching’ categorised instructional activity delivered by someone in the role of expert practitioner (typically a supervisor) that aims, through on-the-job guidance and feedback, to support one or more employees gain greater competence in the performance of a task. It does not require staff to be released from normal work routines.
- ‘Resources’ categorised all materials designed to support target behaviours in work activities. Examples cited by PEG teams include standard operating procedures and customer service scripts.
- ‘Systematic feedback’ categorised feedback that was delivered at specified intervals. Annual appraisal was a cited example.
- ‘Work organisation’ categorised workplace arrangements designed to support target behaviours in work activities. An example cited was the rostering of experienced staff with inexperienced to ensure a minimum level of expertise.

No support of any description for LLNIT application was reported for 35 of the activities (21 per cent). These 35 activities occurred in healthcare, hospitality, local authority and retail workplaces.

Broadly, PEG teams reported limited support for LLNIT application in the activities (see Table 6.14 for summary). Taking the five types of support together, audit evidence suggests that where there is workplace support for LLNIT skill application in these activities, it is generally informal and ‘defensive’, ie aimed at compensating for the limited LLNIT skills of individuals, rather than supporting strong LLNIT skill application to add value to the activities.

Formal training

For 59 of the activities, some sort of formal training was available. Much of this, including NVQ programmes, health and safety training, conflict management training and induction training, was not specifically geared to LLNIT application. For 26

activities (occurring in healthcare, local authority and social care workplaces), PEG teams identified generic (ie not specific to the activity) LLNIT training available in workplace, though not necessarily accessible to staff responsible for the activity. In one of these organisations, a lifelong learning facilitator was employed (through SEEDA funding) to promote LLNIT and other learning to low-paid, low-skilled staff.

Table 6.14: How organisations supported application of LLNIT skills in the activities

	Activities with none		Activities with some		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Support of some kind	35	21	130	79	165	100
Formal training	106	64	59	36	165	100
Coaching	46	28	119	72	165	100
Resources	100	61	65	39	165	100
Systematic feedback	103	62	62	38	165	100
Work organisation	101	61	64	39	165	100

Source: Braddell, 2006

For 106 of the activities (64 per cent), spread across all workplaces included in the audit, no formal training of any kind to support LLNIT application was identified.

Coaching

For 46 of the activities (28 per cent), spread across all workplaces included in the audit, no coaching of any kind to support LLNIT application was identified.

In the 119 activities where coaching was identified, it was delivered by a range of people, the most commonly cited being the supervisor (68 activities). Peer coaching was reported in 37 activities and manager coaching in 32 (in 15 of which both manager and supervisor were reported to lead coaching). Team leaders were reported as the coach in ten activities.

Twelve activities, distributed over seven workplaces, benefited from coaching from an internal trainer. For 21 activities, taking place in 14 workplaces, coaching was available from an external trainer.

The sort of coaching that was being delivered, and how specific it was to LLNIT application in the activity, was not always clear. Of the 119 activities where coaching was reported, training in coaching for the coach was reported for only 29 of the activities. The following give some indication of what this training may have consisted of:

The Polish supervisor supervises the Polish domestics as she can speak in Polish if necessary. She is also undertaking a coaching and mentoring course to support this work.
[Healthcare: hospital]

Team leaders have received some basic training in dealing with foreign employees with poor language skills from an internal company trainer. [Retail]

One toilet cleaner is a Union Learning Representative and has received some basic skills awareness training. [Local authority: street cleansing]

As part of the ward matron's own professional training. [Healthcare: PCT]

The manager is a qualified trainer and NVQ assessor, though not a qualified LLNIT teacher. [Social care: domiciliary care]

The supervisors in this organisation have a dual role of standard supervision and mentoring the workforce to upskill them during the performance of their work. The supervisors are trained to work with the special needs of this workforce. [Social care: supported employment]

Resources

PEG teams reported no resources likely to support the required application of LLNIT skills for 100 (61 per cent) of the activities. In 49 activities, documentation associated with standard operating procedures was reported. In 12 activities paperwork germane to the activity itself, such as reporting forms, was reported.

For three activities drawn from the same workplace, task-specific ESOL resources were reported. For one activity, non-task specific materials for a worker with dyslexia were noted.

Systematic feedback

Systematic feedback on LLNIT skill application was reported for 62 activities occurring in 25 of the audit's 53 workplaces. This feedback was delivered by managers, cited in 35 activities, and supervisors, cited in 36 activities (in 15 of which managers also gave feedback). For a small number of activities feedback from internal and external trainers, team leaders and colleagues was reported.

Appraisal, which will be mandatory in NHS workplaces from October 2006, was noted in only three activities (occurring in three different healthcare workplaces).

As with coaching, it is by no means clear how specifically geared this feedback was to LLNIT skill application. There is little to suggest managers or supervisors had received training to deliver feedback supportive of LLNIT skill application.

No feedback at all was reported for 103 (62 per cent) activities distributed across 39 workplaces.

Work organisation

Work organisation was cited for 64 activities. For 57 of these this amounted to ad hoc arrangements between staff and/or managers to support LLNIT skill application informally. Staff 'Skills for Life champions' were reported in the reports of five activities (located in the same employer). The availability of NVQ programmes was identified in two activities (in the same workplace). Induction training was noted for four activities (occurring different workplaces). Appraisal was reported for one activity (as well as the three referred to above). Work allocation of the type exemplified in the following three quotes was cited for six activities

The dyslexic member of staff is not given [certain tasks], neither are members of staff who are seen as 'slow'. [Healthcare: hospital]

The organisation tends to balance the crews in terms of experience, skills and qualifications. [Refuse collection: local authority]

The manager and supervisor indicated that they would arrange their team in such a way as to compensate for any weaknesses. [Healthcare: hospital]

6.3 Identification of opportunities to support the application of LLNIT skills in activities

Having audited the activities to establish what application of LLNIT skills each activity required and how that requirement is currently negotiated, PEG teams were asked to specify what, if any, additional support for the application of LLNIT skills might usefully be offered through:

- formal, off-the-job training
- coaching (ie on-the-job guidance and feedback)
- resources
- systematic feedback
- work organisation and/or
- any other method of support.

The PEG teams were also asked to describe how the support specified would enable individual employees to develop their LLNIT skills.

6.3.1 Categorisation of support opportunities identified by PEG teams

The practitioners identified opportunities for additional support for LLNIT skills application in all the activities. Within the six broad categories (including 'other') PEG team members specified some 38 variants of support across the activities (see

Appendix 4 for specification of variants). Table 6.15 shows the categories in which recommendations were made for each type of activity.

Table 6.15: Where PEG teams saw opportunity to support the application of LLNIT skills

	Off-the- job training	Coaching	Resources	Systematic feedback	Work organ- isation	Other
Administrative and clerical, bookkeeping	*	*	*	*	*	*
Administrative and clerical	2	6	6	7	4	
Basic training, for hospital cleaning role	1	1	1	1		
Catering, cook-chill food preparation	1	1	1	1	1	
Catering, food or drink preparation	5	7	5	6	6	
Cleaning, kitchens	2	4	4	3	2	
Cleaning, non-specialised	10	17	18	16	15	2
Cleaning, non-specialised, using machines	4	6	6	5	2	
Cleaning, specialised (healthcare)	3	3	2	2	1	
Cleaning, public lavatories (local authority)	1		1			
Customer service, taking food or drink orders	3	5	2	5		1
Customer service, food or drink service	10	11	9	10	8	2
Customer service, leisure centre gym induction	1		1			
Customer service, leisure life guarding	1	1	1	1		1
Customer service, personal care services	9	10	9	10	7	
Customer service, reception	4	7	5	6	4	1
Customer service, responding to enquiries, offering help	3	3	4	4	3	1
Customer service, responding to telephone calls	2	2	2	2		
Customer service, retail sales	2	2	2	2	2	
Customer service, technical: appliance repairs for tenants	2	1		2		
Customer service, till operation	6	5	5	5	1	1
Driving		2	1	2		1
Generic employment activities (eg time sheets, team brief)	4	7	6	4	3	
Linen services	5	7	6	4	6	3
Picking, supermarket Internet shopping service	1	1	1			
Portering, dealing with an incident	1	1	1	1	1	
Portering, general duties: moving people and things	8	8	9	7	5	
Portering, kitchen portering	*	*	*	*	*	*
Portering, post room duties	5	6	7	5	6	3
Print-finishing, machine operation	1	2				
Stock management, including food and drink	2	2	2	1	2	
Stores and supplies, including equipment	1	2	2	2	1	1
Street cleansing, including refuse collection	1	1	1	1	1	
Total	101	131	120	115	81	17

* Not indicated in audit return

Source: Braddell, 2006

As the table illustrates, PEG teams identified a wide range of opportunities to support LLNIT skill application across the full spectrum of activities, occupational groups, workplaces and employers.

From whatever range of opportunities they had identified, the PEG team members were then asked to recommend the three options that, in their professional judgement, were most likely to prove effective in supporting the application of LLNIT skills in the activity, bearing in mind the practical realities of the specific activity in the given workplace. PEG teams were not asked to prioritise within the three options but they were asked to explain their selection. Table 6.16 summarises those selections, again by broad category.

Table 6.16: Categorisation of three support options recommended by PEG teams

	Support option 1	Support option 2	Support option 3	Total
Off-the-job training	65	26	24	115
Coaching	45	49	23	117
Resources	20	42	49	111
Systematic feedback	1	9	26	36
Work organisation	24	23	19	66
Other*	6	12	7	25
Not indicated	4	4	17	25
Total	165	165	165	495

* NVQ programmes, on-the-job e-learning, peer learning

Source: Braddell, 2006

Within what was overall a wide variety of combinations of support, the approaches most frequently recommended fell into the categories of training, coaching (in which feedback was often specified) and resources. Recommendations for both training and coaching were made for 77 of the activities (47 per cent of the total sample). Of these 77 activities, 27 (16 per cent of the total sample) combined training and coaching with resources. In 22 other activities, resources and coaching were recommended together, in combination with some other category of support.

As shown in Table 6.16, PEG teams made some 470 recommendations to support the application of LLNIT skills in activities. Within that total, they specified 38 different types of support (see 'Systematic support' below and appendix). Table 6.17 shows the distribution of these 38 different types of support across the six broad categories. The table shows that while 343 (73 per cent) of the 470 recommendations fell into the categories of training, coaching and/or resources, these three categories together accounted for only 14 of the 38 different types of support recommended. There was most variation, 16 different types of support, in the PEG teams' recommendations categorised as work organisation, even though there were far fewer recommendations made in this category (66 for 52 activities).

Table 6.17\> 6.18: Different approaches to LLNIT support recommended within each category

	Recommendations within this category		Different approaches to this category of support	
	Number	%	Number	%
Off-the-job training	115	24	4	11
Coaching	117	25	6	16
Resources	111	24	4	11
Systematic feedback	36	8	4	11
Work organisation	66	14	16	42
Other	25	5	4	11
Total	470	100	38	100

Percentages may not sum to 100 because of rounding

Source: Braddell, 2006

6.3.2 Characterisation of support opportunities identified by PEG teams

One of the most salient features of the PEG specification for support was its general applicability across activities. The following examples are representative.

Instructions, guidance sheets to promote literacy and communication skills through reading, discussion, self assessment, reflection, service development and consistency of approach [Healthcare: hospital portering]

Short off-the-job training to enhance LLNIT skills specific to this task, eg communication skills/speaking/listening/note taking to ensure the operatives have the skills and knowledge to share information in an effective, clear and succinct manner [Social care: domiciliary care assistants]

The other notable feature of the approaches related to the rationales given by the PEG teams for their recommendations. In many instances, their recommendation was made in response to what they perceived as a shortcoming in organisational systems and/or practice. Examples include the following.

This would ensure that staff know they are able to talk to the manager on a regular basis to share concerns or ideas for developing the service. The manager would be able to feed back positive aspects that she has observed and build the staff members' confidence [Retail: customer services]

Will encourage the supervisor to address the problem rather than cope with it by doing the problematical tasks and will help the worker to see the relationship between the work task and the LLNIT skill [Healthcare: administrative and clerical]

On the basis of their general applicability and close relationship to organisational practice, it is possible to group the various recommendations into something

approaching a coherent system of support for LLNIT skills application. This chapter concludes with a review of the different recommendations from that perspective.

6.4 Systematic support for the application of LLNIT in work activity

PEG teams were asked to identify opportunities to support LLNIT application in specific activities undertaken in specific workplaces. Recommendations were based on the PEG team members' analysis of the activities from their perspective as workplace LLNIT practitioners (or, in the case of four of the 25 PEG team members, general training professionals with experience of workplace LLNIT skills development). The review that follows organises these recommendations systematically but makes no claims about their quality or feasibility, individually or collectively. That said, they should be seen as indicative of the extent and nature of the opportunity perceived by these professionals to develop the LLNIT skills of individual employees by supporting the application (by work teams) of LLNIT skills in work activity.

Having audited activities in workplaces where support for the application of LLNIT skills is restricted in part because recognition of the requirement to apply LLNIT skills is patchy, a first priority for many of the PEG teams was to make the requirement more visible to both organisation and individual employee. This, they reported, was likely to benefit the performance and progression of both.

To achieve this, PEG teams recommended that organisations:

- specify the LLNIT skills required by work activities and the standard of the application required
- systematically communicate (in plain English and through accessible means) the specified requirement to apply LLNIT skills along with the risk to activities of poor application and the value added through strong application.

On the basis of this systematic specification and communication of the requirement to apply LLNIT skills, PEG teams recommended a coherent system of support to help staff meet the requirement. PEG teams identified the following objectives for this support system:

- reinforce staff awareness that work activities require the application of LLNIT skills
- motivate staff to attend to this requirement
- motivate supervisors and managers to attend to this requirement
- help work teams (including supervisors and managers) develop and implement strategies to apply strong LLNIT skills

- help individual employees (in whatever role) develop and implement strategies to apply strong LLNIT skills
- reinforce strong LLNIT skill application with:
 - coherent development of the individual employee's ability to apply task-specific LLNIT skills
 - just-in-time, on-the-job support for the application of LLNIT skills.

To achieve those objectives, PEG teams recommended actions for employer organisations, managers, supervisors, operatives and workplace LLNIT practitioners, which we discuss in the following sections. However, the following quotation drawn from a practitioner account illustrates the extent of integration that is required.

Introduce some [LLNIT] activities into the recruitment process and integrate into the induction checklist. [This] would ensure staff member feels supported from the beginning and would make LLNIT/IPC a natural part of work standards and protocols against a clear assessment process and would add a process to the system that links to training matrix.
[Healthcare: catering]

Organisational support

PEG teams recommended that employer organisations:

- map work processes for the requirement to apply LLNIT skills
- raise awareness of this requirement among:
 - senior management, including those responsible for designing and documenting work practices, including standard operating procedures
 - staff responsible for training and development
 - operative staff, supervisory staff and first line management charged with the activities that require the application of LLNIT skills
 - colleagues from other departments
 - trades union representatives
- communicate to managers and supervisors the value of modelling and reinforcing, through explicit reference, strong LLNIT skills application to staff
- assess the ability of managers and supervisors to apply the LLNIT skills required by their own jobs and, where indicated, support them to develop their LLNIT skills
- train (and then support) managers and supervisors to:
 - assess the application of LLNIT skills (ie which skills and to what standard) required by the work activities of their staff

- communicate the requirement to apply LLNIT skills to their staff, making clear the risk to activities of poor application and the value to be added by strong application of LLNIT skills
- assess the performance of staff in applying LLNIT skill
- feed back systematically to staff on their application of LLNIT skills; as well as continuous on-the-job feedback, close in point of time to the actual application of LLNIT skills, PEG teams reported that team meetings, team briefs and appraisal offer opportunities to feed back constructively to staff
- include LLNIT skills development in the Personal Development Plans of individuals
- coach individuals in the application of LLNIT skills required by activities.

To develop the ability of work teams and individual employees to meet and, wherever possible, exceed the standard of LLNIT skills application required by work activities, PEG teams recommended organisations invest in a combination of off-the-job training, on-the-job coaching, peer learning, workplace resources and work organisation techniques.

Off-the-job LLNIT skills training

PEG teams recommended off-the-job LLNIT skills training when protected time was perceived necessary to address significant skills gaps.

For those with more serious difficulties this type of training would address the underlying literacy problems away from the pressures of work and other staff. ...Using work based situations and materials but addressing underlying skill issues would probably be most effective. It should be short, only 4-6 [hour-long] sessions, and on-site [Healthcare: administrative and clerical]

Recommended types of off-the-job training included:

- LLNIT learning 'embedded' into existing departmental training, eg statutory and mandatory training
- training customised to the needs of an individual employee to apply the LLNIT skills required by a specific work activity, eg note-taking skills to deal with telephone enquiries
- more generalised training customised to a role (rather than a specific activity), eg English language training for non-native speaker catering assistants
- e-learning programmes accessed through a workplace learning centre.

More central though than off-the-job training to the PEG teams' support strategy was (on-the-job) coaching.

Coaching

PEG teams proposed a comprehensive network of LLNIT coaching, facilitated by workplace LLNIT practitioners and involving managers, supervisors, operatives and trainers. In contrast with current arrangements, ie ad hoc coaching by untrained personnel, PEG teams recommended that all those who might usefully coach colleagues in the application of LLNIT skills (including operative level staff) be trained in LLNIT coaching.

It was through this coaching network that awareness of the requirement to apply LLNIT skills would be reinforced, just-in-time support delivered and standards of LLNIT application raised.

By focusing on the application of LLNIT skills required by work activities, coaching would offer individual employees an accessible and immediately relevant opportunity to develop their skills. The potential for coaching to motivate and support employees to self-assess their LLNIT skills was also stressed in a number of audit reports.

Design a LLNIT/IPC coaching programme in partnership with trainers, managers, supervisors and staff. Coaching is action-orientated and would enable learner to take responsibility for developing these skills once they had identified what it means to them to achieve their work, life and home goals. The coach would then develop enhanced skills to support appraisal and performance processes [Healthcare: hospital portering]

Developing managers, supervisors and operatives as coaches would significantly enhance management and supervisory skills and add value to operative level jobs. It would also minimise the current tendency for work teams to compensate for, rather than address, individual and collective limitations in LLNIT skills.

Other forms of learning

As well as formal off-the-job training and on-the-job coaching, PEG teams recommended:

- NVQ training and assessment programmes
- on-the-job self-directed study

Developing confidence and increasing speed on the keyboard would greatly improve efficiency in this case. Therefore teach yourself programmes on her work station might be one solution for this problem. This would be on-the-job self-help at appropriate times of the day [Leisure: leisure centre reception]

- project work.

In relation to project work, a number of audit reports identified scope within work activities for projects that would offer work teams opportunity to practice LLNIT

skills. One report, for example, suggested hospital cleaners involved in taking patient food orders be encouraged to collect and analyse data on meals ordered over a set period, monitored by the ward clerk. (See also 'Work organisation' below.)

Resources

In the case of a good many of the activities, PEG teams recommended the development of templates and instruction sheets to specify task requirements and standard operating procedures. Wherever possible, it was recommended that the staff charged with the activity be involved in the authoring (see 'Work organisation' below).

Not only would these materials serve to communicate, guide and reinforce the application of LLNIT skills during the relevant activity (for management as well as operatives); they would also serve as open learning materials, allowing employees to better practice and rehearse task specific applications of LLNIT skills, both on and off-the-job.

Such resources would support the coaching and more formal off-the-job training described above, as well as facilitating self-directed and peer learning. They would be valuable as open learning materials to NVQ training and assessment programmes.

PEG teams also recommended the development of materials for short LLNIT skills workshops to be delivered by managers and/or supervisors at team meetings or during other job-related training.

PEG teams sought to support the input delivered through coaching, resources and off-the-job training, with systematic feedback and adjustments to work organisation.

Systematic feedback

As well as the continuous feedback delivered by manager- and supervisor-coaches, PEG teams recommended feedback on LLNIT skill application through formal appraisal. They also envisaged:

- feedback from LLNIT trainers to employees who had undergone LLNIT training on the employee's subsequent application of any learning to work activities
- peer feedback.

[Bilingual colleague] could be tasked with circulating [non-native speaker] staff and asking them to evaluate their own language progress and discuss any queries arising from the work that day [Healthcare: hospital cleaning]

Work organisation (including employee involvement)

PEG teams identified a number of opportunities to support LLNIT skills application through the organisation of work. These included

- techniques, such as job rotation, acting-up and job shadowing, used to increase operational flexibility by extending an employee's understanding of the workplace,

Job rotation: there is a lack of transferable skill in Linen Distribution and there is bad feeling between the teams. Staff would have a better chance of using different LLN skills if they rotated more frequently. [Healthcare: hospital linen services]

- allocating work in a way that ensures peer coaching of LLNIT skills is available in work teams
- modifying work practices to reinforce LLNIT skills application (eg reorganisation of a post room sorting system).

Other recommendations in this category sought to involve employees in activities to utilise and develop LLNIT skills (see also the project work described in 'Other forms of learning' above). As well as the peer coaching previously discussed, these included:

- employee involvement in the creation of workplace resources (see 'Resources' above)
- continuous improvement team exercises (eg process reviews; development of procedural guidelines)
- the creation of staff 'skills champions' not only to communicate and reinforce the requirement to apply LLNIT skills but also to identify and develop workplace LLNIT learning opportunities (eg a bilingual employee supporting non-native speaker colleagues develop their English language skills)
- activities to develop LLNIT skills, while building rapport between colleagues and alleviating work perceived by staff as monotonous (eg inter-departmental 'round robin' story sheet, collated weekly and entered into a prize draw).

A number of PEG team members recommended organisational investment to develop work teams' understanding (both theoretical and global) of activities. Lack of understanding of the theoretical knowledge underpinning procedures was seen to undermine procedures. In areas such as hospital infection control, these shortcomings could pose serious risks.

Use of [cleaning chemicals] in the workplace seemed haphazard, not in accordance with instructions for use and not applied to proper usage. Tablets were broken into random parts and applied to liquids randomly. This is an area of concern for reasons of health and safety and patient safety. ... Domestics must understand the importance of cleaning systematically according to rotas. Numerical skills can be developed as domestics will be required to demonstrate their understanding of cleaning chemical ratios. Verbal

communication skills will be developed as they will have their awareness of infection control issues increased. [Healthcare: hospital cleaning]

Developing work teams' global understanding, ie how an activity contributes to broader organisational objectives, would enhance multi-disciplinary teamwork and customer service.

Both types of development would offer opportunities to build LLNIT skills.

Role of the workplace LLNIT practitioner

Although PEG teams were not asked to make recommendations relating to the role of the workplace LLNIT practitioner in this system, the following functions were indicated:

- support organisations, through training and consultancy, to specify and communicate the LLNIT skills required by work activities
- assess LLNIT skills, both those required by activities and those evidenced by individual employees
- train others to assess LLNIT skills
- deliver off-the-job LLNIT training to enable individuals (including managers and supervisors) develop the LLNIT skills their roles require
- coach employees on-the-job
- offer workplace feedback to employees
- support other organisational training, eg 'embedding' LLNIT learning in it
- train and support 'skills champions'
- train and support managers, supervisors and operatives to support and develop strong LLNIT skills application by work teams
- develop and facilitate the development of workplace resources
- advocate for forms of work organisation conducive to effective application of LLNIT skills.

6.4.1 Outcomes anticipated from the system of support

PEG teams indicated that this system of support would move organisations and their employees from their present state of limited awareness of, and support for, the requirement to apply LLNIT skills, to one where:

- the requirement to apply LLNIT skills in work activities is fully recognised

- work teams are motivated and comprehensively supported to meet and wherever possible exceed the minimum standard required for application of LLNIT skills
- the potential of work activities to develop the LLNIT skills of those involved in them is fully exploited, to the benefit of all stakeholders (ie individual employees, their colleagues, supervisors and managers, internal and external suppliers and customers).

6.5 Summary

The PEG teams audited 165 activities undertaken by 15 occupational groups in 53 workplaces distributed among 21 employer-organisations. The largest occupational grouping was cleaning (27 per cent) and the most common context was healthcare (73 per cent of activities).

Activities fell into thirty-three different categories, from specialist healthcare cleaning to hotel bookkeeping; from retail picking for Internet shoppers to public urinal cleaning.

PEG team evidence does not indicate significant differences between occupational groups, workplaces, employer-organisations or sectors in the application of LLNIT skill in work activities.

PEG team evidence suggests that the activities audited:

- occur frequently
- impact on organisational performance in important areas including externally regulated quality assurance and safe working practice
- require the application of LLNIT skill, either to deal with issues arising around the management and implementation of the activities, or because the activities themselves have information processing and/or communication as their focus.

The evidence suggests that though the requirement to apply LLNIT skills is (more often than not) documented by organisations and communicated to staff (often at induction), it is expressed in terms of tasks. There was:

- little evidence of explicit reference to LLNIT skills
- no evidence of formal organisational procedures to assess the LLNIT skills of employees
- no evidence of organisational staff qualified to assess LLNIT skills.

Insofar as organisations accommodate limited LLNIT skills, the accommodation tends to be for workers from abroad whose command of English is limited. The accommodation itself often amounts to little more than informal peer support.

PEG teams judged poor application of LLNIT skills likely to pose a risk to activities, especially regarding safe working practice.

They identified ways in which application of strong LLNIT skills could add value to the activity (and hence organisational performance), particularly in relation to customer service (internal and external).

What workplace support there is for LLNIT skill application in these activities, the PEG teams found to be patchy, unsystematic and concerned primarily to mitigate individuals' limited LLNIT skills, as opposed to adding value by reinforcing the application of strong LLNIT skills.

Asked to identify practical opportunities to support LLNIT skills application in the various activities, consistent with the circumstances of the workplaces in which those activities occurred, the PEG teams recommended some forty different types of support, 40 per cent of which relate to work organisation. Most frequently recommended were types of support related to coaching, off-the-job training and workplace resources.

Taken together, PEG team recommendations offer a systematic approach to supporting LLNIT application in work activities. This system would aim to ensure:

- the requirement to apply LLNIT skills in work activities is fully recognised
- work teams are motivated and comprehensively supported to meet and wherever possible exceed the minimum standard required for application of LLNIT skills
- the potential of work activities to develop the LLNIT skills of those involved in them is fully exploited.

To achieve these aims, PEG teams recommended:

- organisational specification and communication of the requirement to apply LLNIT skills in work activities
- LLNIT skills awareness-raising (including skills assessment) throughout the organisation.

The system itself is centred on an extensive network of workplace coaches (including operative level staff, supervisors, managers and workplace LLNIT practitioners) to deliver just-in-time support and development on-the-job.

Coaching is supported by:

- workplace resources to communicate, guide and reinforce the application of LLNIT skills, while also supporting LLNIT skills practice on- and off-the-job
- targeted off-the-job training to support activity-specific LLNIT skills application
- other forms of learning including NVQ programmes and self-directed study

- systematic feedback at appraisal and on a continuous basis
- work organisation techniques such as job-rotation
- employee-involvement techniques such as continuous improvement exercises and the creation of employee 'skills champions'.

The role of the workplace LLNIT practitioner is to facilitate and support this system.

Pursued systematically or not, the recommendations from the PEG teams suggest that these workplace LLNIT professionals saw significant practical potential to develop the LLNIT skills of employees at all levels (ie operative, supervisory, and managerial) through work activities, both task-specific and generic, to the benefit of organisational performance.

Evaluation of the feasibility and effectiveness of these recommendations (in relation to organisations, work teams, employee-learners, LLNIT learning providers and public funding bodies) falls outside the scope of this phase of Learning through Work; they do, however, provide a useful starting point for further consideration.

7 Discussion of Findings

In this discussion, the findings from the different strands of the audit relating to current practices in these workplaces are discussed using the key themes identified in the preceding literature review as the structure for the discussion. The section concludes by presenting policy recommendations and future steps, including an assessment of the potential for testing out methods of work-based, on-the-job, LLNIT skill development.

It is worth stating again that the organisations who participated in the audit were largely health-related or in the public sector (and here only local authorities were included); very few of the organisations were private sector. The methodology did not aim to achieve a representative sample of low-paid, low-skilled workers, managers or employers and thus what we have reported here represents only what is happening within the audited organisations.

7.1 Skills and learning within the organisations

7.1.1 Extent to which learning is supported

Most of the organisations participating in the audit had a training policy and all had an HR/training department. Sizeable numbers had accreditation of some sort (IiP or IWL) that would indicate a positive approach to employee development. Significant numbers have also participated in the SEEDA NHS Basic Skills programme which has the dual intended impact of stimulating LLNIT skills development activity and allowing the organisations to attract external funding for LLNIT skills development. It should be noted that SEEDA will be evaluating the impact of their funding in the near future. However, as far as can be determined from the audit information, while these organisations had been stimulated to provide some development, this did not appear to have become embedded in organisational policy or procedures by the time of the audit.

Training policies most often included: appraisals/personal development reviews; induction; and specification of statutory and mandatory training. Optional training and release of staff from work to attend training were less likely to be covered but still remain prevalent.

It may be fair to conclude then that, while these organisations have some support for learning (the evidence supports the view), this is largely task-related and frequently aims to ensure safe workplaces and practices. In line with policy, evidence from both the line managers and employees demonstrated much of the learning they have experienced relates to statutory and mandatory requirements and is largely task/job-related.

7.1.2 Recognition of LLNIT skills in organisational policy and recruitment

There are two key ways that employers can access the skills they require. The first is through recruiting workers who already have these skills; the second is by developing current workers to perform at higher (or at least different) levels. In this section, we look at the evidence relating to the first of these mechanisms. We review the evidence relating to the second in the section that follows on from this.

Looking to the local level, all but seven of the line managers noted that, for the occupational groups to which they recruited, some level of skill was required, and, in over half of these instances, a combination of skills was preferred. Task-related skills and literacy were most frequently required (in around one-fifth of instances). There was little to differentiate other aspects of LLNIT, although IT was the least likely to be noted. The PEG team evidence suggests that in fewer than three in ten cases did line managers test for the LLNIT skills they had specified.

However, fewer than one-half of the employees believed that skills had been required for their job. Largely, their fulfilling of any skills requirement was demonstrated by previous work experience or task-related training. There appeared to have been some requirement of LLNIT/IPC skills amongst these employees, however this was in a small number of cases. If customer care or service and communications were grouped together, then these can be viewed as the priority amongst the skills of the LLNIT acronym in the cases mentioned.

Overall, the local level evidence from the managers suggests a greater (but by no means universal) recognition of a need for LLNIT skills although systems for measurement (noted by line managers) could be considered rather ad-hoc. This, in itself, is suggestive of some lack of engagement with LLNIT issues. However, if we consider the importance of communication and customer service skills indicated in the employee data, managers' assessment during interview becomes relevant and more engagement with LLNIT skills may be taking place than was noted in the audit. However in this regard we must note that largely, managers did not emphasise these skills.

This view, that there is currently a lack of real engagement with the LLNIT skill requirements of these jobs, is supported by the reports from the PEG teams that LLNIT /IPC skills development received little explicit priority (as far as PEG teams could ascertain) within the training policies of these organisations. Where underpinning LLNIT skills were identified, these largely related to IT (driven by, perhaps, changes in work design). This suggests that, (in some cases beyond IT), these skills are not recognised at organisational level.

Given the influence of the SEEDA NHS Basic Skills programme within many of these organisations, one potential explanation of this situation is that, although these organisations are *aware* of basic skills issues (and particularly skill development issues) they have not taken the additional step of considering any changes that might need to be made to organisational training policy and practice in order to fully embed access to development (and the various supporting processes such as assessment and performance management needed to fully ensure that skills are recognised, monitored and, arguably, valued).

In other words, funding focused on specific groups of workers with specific difficulties (and thus brought into the organisation with this specific objective in mind) may not lead to change in overall training policy at an organisational level – which would be needed in order to ensure embedding of development in organisational practice in the future. In fairness, this is offered as a suggestion for why the pattern of findings was obtained and it should be noted that we do not have evidence from the audit relating directly to this suggestion. However, SEEDA might wish in future to consider discussing with organisations the types of policy review that might follow on from support for basic skill development and agreeing some form of policy change that would embed development systematically within the organisation, in return for the provision of free training.

7.1.3 Support for progression

Another issue identified by the literature review was the lack of skill development linked to progression for many low-paid, low-skilled workers. However, in around two-thirds of the cases examined in the audit, line managers reported that opportunities to progress did exist and, in most of these (over eight in ten cases) line managers reported that training and development existed to support this.

The responses of employees, who were asked much the same question, indicated that they too believed that they could, if they wished, receive training or development to help them progress in their careers. Around one-third of the employees who participated in the audit reported that they had themselves received development of this kind.

It may be argued therefore, that these organisations appear more willing than most low-paid, low-skilled workplaces to offer opportunities to progress along with access to training to support this.

However, we also must note that while support (in the form of training or development) for progression exists by all accounts, there appears to be some failure to capitalise on the increased skill levels implied by this development. For example, the line managers noted that there were no barriers to the application of newly developed skills at work, however, the qualitative information they supplied to describe how workers would gain this opportunity, indicated in many cases that formal or informal progression was required (either to act up or actually gain promotion). The employee data supports this view, and we would note that only in two cases were there indications that they had been given some project that did utilise newly gained skills (rather than the opportunity, for instance, to 'act up').

This suggests that, even where skills are developed, organisations are failing to capitalise on the increase in human capital potentially at their disposal. This may arise in part from the failure to develop managers and supervisors to assess and monitor their workers' actions which, if performed properly, would imply that as workers exceeded the requirements of their current role, they would be moved to activities that demanded these skills levels.

7.1.4 Identification of LLNIT learning opportunities in job tasks

The majority of managers noted that they generally recruited a mixture of experienced and inexperienced workers, but in any case, almost universally they reported that all recruits would require some training to be able to perform work. Given that in around three in ten instances, line managers reported some requirement for LLNIT skills at recruitment of their workers, we might judge that a significant part of the development workers need is in these skills. This implies that the value of these is also recognised. However, the lack of emphasis on testing the performance of these skills indicates that, nonetheless, they receive less attention. Where any LLNIT development exists, the managers' reported that they themselves were largely responsible for delivery, although it was also the case that external trainers (rather than trainers drawn from HR/training departments) would lead in this regard.

What is more certain is that line managers tended to identify LLNIT and IPC skills when discussing how team-working could be improved. However, the skill that is most frequently recognised here is that of communication (and to a lesser extent information processing) rather than the whole range of skills of the LLNIT acronym. While this is hardly surprising, it may indicate how far cultures will require changing if development of LLNIT skills is to be located on-the-job.

On a more positive note, both line managers and workers were able to identify parts of their work that required the use of LLNIT skills. Managers identified literacy and

numeracy examples most frequently (eg filling out care plans, estimating stock wastage) as well as contextualised communication skills (eg appropriate to the patient/customer being served; alternatively, language for meetings). Notable again is the lack of identification by managers that there were any real opportunities presented by work for these employees to develop their IT skills.

The LLNIT skills that employees regarded as essential to their work largely related to the ability to read and comprehend written information (literacy). Just over one in ten tasks involved the use of IT. While this finding represents solely the views of these employees, it suggests that any focus on raising IT skills above other LLNIT skills would contribute less to work practice. However, given that close to one-half report a requirement for IT in their work, this finding may indicate that employees do not perceive the ways in which they currently use IT actually as IT (ie they may view the term IT to indicate programming skills rather than use of software applications); however this is conjecture.

The audit of work activities suggested that few, if any, tasks do not require oral communication. Most tasks will bring workers into contact with documentation and many will involve the use of ICT. Information processing (in the sense of problem solving) is required not only by the extensive dealings the majority of these employees have with external customers but also in order to cope with issues such as language barriers and cultural differences within work teams, short staffing and interactions with internal customers and suppliers.

These demands for communication and information processing were seen by the LLNIT practitioners to offer a considerable range of opportunities to develop LLNIT skills on-the-job, in ways that would serve to support and reinforce existing performance management systems. LLNIT practitioners felt this would be of benefit both to the activity being undertaken and to individual skills development.

7.1.5 Engagement with LLNIT skills development

Although many of these managers and employees appeared to recognise the need to communicate and process information in a wide range of tasks and activities, there was much less awareness of the skills required to do this effectively (with the possible exception of IT skills). In addition, while line managers and workers may recognise (to some degree at least) that LLNIT skills are required by work, there is little evidence of HR/training department staff being involved in their delivery. Therefore, the possibility exists that these personnel who are central to overall development of training and HR policies may remain either unaware of the requirements for these skills, or at least uncommitted to their development, leading to these skills remaining largely unacknowledged within organisational policy and strategy.

The evidence from the learning events audited in these organisations demonstrated that internal staff led in only two in ten of these training events and by no means did

all of these involve LLNIT skills. While we cannot be certain that the learning events were typical of the organisation we have little reason to think otherwise either. With this caution in mind, the suggestion from this part of the work supports notions that opportunities to influence policy direction by direct exposure of training and HR staff to the realities of the skill needs of some groups of staff are limited. The data from line managers and employees support this, suggesting that internal trainers tend not to be involved in LLNIT skill development. Again, this is further evidence of a disconnection between policy and practice in LLNIT and IPC skills and development.

Employees identified a need for more of this kind of development which may imply that they perceive that their own LLNIT skills are at just a basic level, or possibly that the way these skills are actualised in the workplace is organisation-specific. Either way, there appears a case to explicitly state requirements and embed development programmes within training policy and recruitment practice. The PEG teams themselves felt that this was one facet of any attempt to move forward on this point, and their position on this is largely supported by the line manager evidence.

7.2 Facilitators of on-the-job LLNIT learning in these organisations

7.2.1 Increasing skill requirements

Managers reported that skills requirements for the low-paid, low-skilled occupations they managed had increased. These workers' participation in decision-making (which could be classified an information processing skill) had similarly increased according to their managers. The employees mirrored this view and, in two-thirds of cases, had received some kind of development to support them to meet the new challenges in their work.

In these organisations, changes to service standards were (perceived to be) driving the increasing skills needs; there was less evidence of the introduction of new technologies driving this change. It may well be the case that this pattern is influenced by the number of health service organisations involved in the audit, or the number of public sector bodies. However, it suggests there was some dissonance between these findings and the nature of low-paid, low-skilled work that is more usually presented in the literature.

Whatever may be the case, we consider that these three aspects, increasing skills requirements, increased requirement for workers to participate in decision-making, and service-focused change drivers, suggest there would be support for the greater inclusion of LLNIT skills development for these workers. This is especially the case since both line managers and workers identified that these skills were required; and the PEG teams' evidence indicated the potential impact of poor LLNIT skills on safety and quality. Taken together, there should be a considerable driving force for inclusion

of LLNIT skills development. The question remains of course whether such calls are audible to the organisational gatekeepers of training policy.

7.2.2 Release for training/on-the-job learning

It is the case, as far as we can assess, that releasing staff from work for training is problematic in these organisations (and this would reflect the findings that emerged in the literature). That is not to say that group training does not take place off-the-job for these low-paid, low-skilled workers since many of the learning events we have reported were configured precisely this way. However, at the policy level, time release is by no means a universal right, and where it exists, we might assume this part of the policy is targeted to certain employers for whom legislation may drive training requirements.

While one of the changes required in these organisations identified by the PEG teams is the greater allowance for staff to be released for training, the reality appears to be that this is unlikely to happen. We should remember that these are organisations in which the SEEDA NHS Basic Skills programme has had an influence which has stimulated LLNIT skills development in many cases. Therefore if this hurdle still exists in these organisations *despite* their participation in LLNIT development provision, it is likely to be even more problematic in organisations without this positive predisposition to LLNIT learning.

It appears, from the evidence we have presented, that a strong case exists for the provision of on-the-job LLNIT skills development. While these skills remain unrecognised by policy, there is little likelihood that organisations will allow staff time out from work for their development. Indeed in negotiating with organisations, offering development that does not detract from working time, and delivers learning that is directly relevant to the focus of work, may be the most assured route to gaining organisational agreement for development to proceed.

The PEG teams activity audits, and (perhaps to a lesser extent) the other components of this work, demonstrated there are both opportunities for this kind of learning, and delivery practice that draws on work examples. These together again suggest there is scope for greater integration of LLNIT (and IPC) development with on-the-job activities.

7.2.3 Skills monitoring and delivering on-the-job learning

In the majority of cases, line managers reported that they monitored the application of skills amongst their workers. However, there were considerable numbers who said they did not. We have discussed the importance of individuals being able to apply skills in order to allow the individual to rehearse the skill and become fully competent; opportunity to apply the skill is also important in order to allow the individual to demonstrate that the skills have indeed been fully learnt. This is much

the same for LLNIT skills. Activity audits indicated that systematic feedback on LLNIT skills application was unusual and that, where any support was available to employees to apply LLNIT skills, this tended to be ad hoc and delivered by people with no training in either LLNIT skills or coaching. However, the monitoring that was in evidence indicates opportunities for on-the-spot coaching to rectify deficiencies in application.

There is a confused picture about how LLNIT development is currently taking place within these organisations. The learning events appeared a relatively rich source of this, however line managers were likely to report that they were responsible for any LLNIT coaching. This may represent some intentional mixing or blending of delivery modes or, that the managers chose to refer to LLNIT development in their immediate environment and did not look beyond this to off-the-job programmes. The activity audits suggested that LLNIT skills application was supported by off-the-job programmes in only a small minority of cases, and, where support was available, it came from on-the-job coaching by supervisors (who may be untrained in either LLNIT skills delivery in general or in coaching skills).

Whatever may be the case, the audit did not allow an assessment of the quality of learning events or managers' coaching. What we can say more certainly was that there was a lack of evidence of development programmes for managers to deliver these skills. PEG teams identified that this group particularly required LLNIT awareness training and we would add to this, some development that would support performance monitoring and coaching.

7.2.4 Terminologies

There is an issue of how best to term this form of skill development and what acronyms may be most attractive to, and understood by, employers and their workers. There is some acceptance, in the literature, that using terms such as basic skills somehow underplays the importance of these skills sets. However, using the LLNIT acronym instead does little to describe the potential linkage with work tasks and performance. Communication skills and to a lesser degree perhaps information processing might mean more to employers than this term.

We have noted that oral communication skills are commonly required in the audited organisations, but literacy is important too. Use of the term 'communication' allows both written and verbal skills to be encapsulated in a single term. Information processing, when explained, allows us to indicate the skill of making sense out of written or verbal communications and numerical information amongst other things although the extent to which employers would understand it as such is unknown (at least from this project). However, employers may find it easier to relate to more specific terms, perhaps task-related and contextualised; whichever may be the case, this indicates an issue for exploration in any future work in this area. Given the barriers we have detected to the greater integration of LLNIT skills development,

some testing of their preferred framing of these skills is likely to be important. In addition, it would be wise to explore whether what is preferred by employers and those in policy-making roles is equally accessible to line managers and providers who are charged with identifying the specific nature of the skill to be developed.

8 Conclusions and Next Steps

The evidence presented here has started to unpick the question of the extent to which there are opportunities for LLNIT skill development in the selection of workplaces audited. In addition, the PEG teams reported on the potential such workplaces have to offer skill development opportunities on-the-job.

We noted at the beginning of this report that the organisations could not be viewed as either a representative sample nor one from which any broad generalisations could be drawn. However, they undoubtedly are typical of the types of organisations where SEEDA has chosen to fund LLNIT skills development in the hope of encouraging a more flexible approach to basic skills development in the region. While the National Employer Training Programme funds training for basic skills, the requirement is that this should be directed towards attainment of a qualification and may require many hours off-the-job (although this will vary with the mode of delivery). For the reasons outlined in the previous chapters, many organisations are reluctant to release individuals from work for training (we will not discuss the pros and cons of this attitude here; we merely note it as a matter of record). For these organisations – and these individuals – SEEDA is hoping to provide funding that will enable a more flexible approach to development to be adopted in the participating organisations.

The evidence indicates that, despite funding and a positive disposition amongst these organisations, there has been little in the way of mandating these skills or embedding their development within the workplace. This suggests a lack of change despite these considerable actions by SEEDA to ‘springboard’ LLNIT skills interventions.¹⁴

Should we be concerned by this failure to embed LLNIT skills within human resource and performance management procedures in these organisations? There are in fact several reasons to be concerned:

¹⁴ In the case of one participating organisation, a SEEDA-funded programme has been sustained after the end of SEEDA funding, but only through further external funding being secured, in this case by the employer from its Strategic Health Authority.

- First, the PEG teams identified that these skills are central to safety and quality, amongst other issues. Where these skills are missing or sub-optimal, it stands to reason that safety and quality are compromised.
- Secondly, managers and supervisors indicate that one way in which they deal with these skill deficits is to avoid allocating tasks demanding these skills to workers with insufficient skill levels. This means that only a proportion of staff that potentially should be able to take on these tasks do so. This in turn must lead to constraints on the team's work flow rates.
- Thirdly, and related to the above, is the alternative coping strategy noted by managers in some of these workplaces, of instructing a worker to continue with a task until a critical point is reached (demanding a specific skill or skill level), and then asking the supervisor or competent colleague to take it over at that point. On the grounds of probability, there must be occasions on which the colleague or supervisor is unable to address the task immediately (and occasions when such cover is not available). The resulting hiatus and reduction in productivity, as well as the lack of flexibility this affords the organisation, are strong arguments for increasing skill levels.

These points summarise the case for improved provision for support of these skills. We now turn to consider the original set of questions posed for this project. It will be recalled that the literature review that preceded the audit, features of the low-paid, low-skilled workplace and the types of learning opportunity that were available in those types of workplace were identified. In that review we sought to learn what was already known about current practice in developing LLNIT skills in low-paid, low-skilled workplaces.

In the second part of the work the audit of workplace learning practice (actual and potential) was used to assess the extent to which these workplaces matched the descriptions of low-paid, low-skilled workplaces, the types of development opportunities that were available and the potential for extending development opportunities on-the-job. The findings in relation to the questions posed for this part of the work are summarised below:

How are LLNIT skills best defined? (Why?) How are LLNIT practices best defined? (Why?)

We noted in the literature review that there has been a continuing struggle to identify useful terms to indicate what have been variously described as enabling skills, adult basic skills, key skills, etc. The audit indicated that these employers struggle to describe their skill requirements and that their difficulties in identifying the skills required by tasks appear to increase by an order of magnitude when they try to get to grips with basic skills. In this respect they are no different from the majority of employers: commonly, surveys of employers' skill needs report not only employers'

difficulties in analysing their skill needs but their difficulties in finding the vocabulary needed to describe their requirements in the first place.

Added to this is the fact that the term 'LLNIT skills' has yet to enter the literature to any significant degree. We suggest that this term will not help employers to understand their skill requirements in this area and clearer and more concrete terms – perhaps focused on tasks – might help. If this project was to proceed to a second phase, we suggest that one part of the work that usefully could be done would be for the PEG teams to work with employers to identify and describe in accessible terms the (LLNIT) skills and practices involved in common work activities. These newly developed terminologies could then be tested for utility with further employers – to determine whether they made it easier for employers to understand (and in turn identify in their own workplaces) the skills they require.

What LLNIT skills and practices does the workplace require?

We have noted above the fact that the employers the PEG teams spoke with struggled to identify their LLNIT skill needs. Largely they articulated these as 'communication skills' or 'customer care skills'; less often they referred to 'language skills' and 'IT skills'. This does not mean that the LLNIT skill cluster is not required at work; rather, that supervisors and managers remain unfamiliar with this vocabulary.

We support this assertion with the evidence provided by the PEG teams in their capacity as LLNIT professionals. They analysed the various tasks being undertaken by these workers and confirmed that all the activities they observed were requiring of skills within the information processing/communication grouping. Table 6.7 gave a break-down of the types of skills needed: oral, ICT-mediated, paper-based, and variously formal or informal. A second phase of the work could usefully seek to extend this exploration of the types of communication (and other skill) required in these positions. Clearly, professionals such as those in the PEG teams, would need to be involved in such work, since a key barrier is familiarity with the skills vocabulary.

How are the current demands for LLNIT skills and practices presently negotiated?

The audit revealed a range of approaches to how demands are 'negotiated' – in fact, a better term might be 'accommodated'. While there were many reports of training and development opportunities from both the PEG teams and the managers and employees, nonetheless it was evident that significant skills deficits existed. In fact, this was so much the case that organisations reported having specific strategies for working around these deficits. Therefore, at present, the demand for LLNIT skills and practices partly is being met by training, and this is typically – although not exclusively – negotiated via supervisors and managers (and largely delivered off-the-job); however, this appears not to be occurring to the extent that it provides organisations with sufficient skill levels. Indeed, the demand for application of LLNIT

skill is met (insofar as it is) by ad hoc coping strategies often adopted informally by work teams and their departments.

What perceptions exist within the workplace towards LLNIT skills and practices?

The supervisors, managers and employees to whom the PEG teams spoke were broadly supportive of the need for LLNIT skills. However, as we have noted previously, these are not the people who take the decisions that enable the embedding of issues such as LLNIT within HR and Training policy. Those decision-makers need to be convinced of the value of LLNIT skills. While supervisors find ways to work around LLNIT skill deficiencies, HR and Training decision-makers are unlikely to be alerted to the issue. Nor, perhaps more importantly, are operational directors, the decision-makers responsible for delivering services to specified standards within budget. Any attempt to embed LLNIT skills development in organisational practice will benefit from the support of this group of decision-makers. That support is likely to rest on their perception that LLNIT skills development can be delivered within existing constraints and can be shown to measurably benefit departmental performance.

Further work to address higher level organisational issues – perceptions, policies and the long-term sustainability of any initiatives arising from SEEDA funding – therefore arguably could usefully be undertaken by SEEDA. We have noted already that ad hoc funding may fail to result in organisational change. We do not consider it unreasonable to suggest that SEEDA might require evidence of organisational policy change and a long term action plan for embedding LLNIT skill development in return for funding to help address organisational skills deficits¹⁵.

Furthermore, SEEDA should also consider making funding for training contingent upon recipient organisations agreeing to evaluate the impact of basic skill training delivered using these monies. This would have the benefit of making the *value* of such training visible to the recipient organisation (hence making it more likely that it will become embedded within organisational policy and practice thereafter) as well as providing SEEDA with information about the success (or otherwise) of such initiatives.

As identified in the footnote below, employing organisation are not usually in direct receipt of SEEDA funding. This has tended to be the exception rather than the rule to date and the normal recipient of funding is the learning provider, who then negotiates with the employer to provide training for their employees. While this may be common practice in workplace LLNIT provision, we consider it is worth reviewing

¹⁵ We note that funding technically is allocated to providers, who then negotiate to provide training (free of charge) to organisations. However, in effect it is the organisation that is the beneficiary of the funding and it is this that we refer to here.

the extent to which recipients of the training (the employing organisations) are allowed to benefit with no obligations being placed upon them in return.

What are the consequences of current practices for the workplace?

We have identified many of the consequences of current practices already: the fact that many adults in work remain insufficiently skilled for their current positions, let alone any chance of progression; the threats to safety and quality that arise from such shortcomings; and the lack of organisational flexibility that results.

Although much NVQ provision has moved directly into the workplace, at present this is far less the case for LLNIT skill development. This work therefore represents the first real opportunity to attempt to develop a methodology for doing so.

8.1 Next steps

These findings suggest that creating momentum in and of itself will not lead to organisational change. Given the considerable organisational policy commitment to widening participation on the one hand, and the Skills for Life strategy on the other, it appears that organisations need more than funding: what is needed now is a practical way to address LLNIT skills.

While we did not test willingness amongst line managers or supervisors to deliver LLNIT development, it was often the case that they believed themselves to be doing this already – and on-the-job. While we cannot speak to the effectiveness of this (or to the level of their skills in so doing), it does suggest that, potentially at any rate, these organisations could be persuaded to trial new delivery methods and test the support that will be needed to make them fully embedded. The question of the type of support that will be needed is an important one, for there are indications that some form of transitional model will be required to support these types of changes (if indeed these ideas are taken on board by organisations employing low-paid, low-skilled workers). We suggest there could be a key role for current LLNIT learning providers to play, working in partnership with organisations, which goes beyond the delivery of traditional learning events for employees, to help support the development of skills in management, supervisory and indeed internal training staff, to be able to deliver LLNIT skills development on-the-job. However, as we have emphasised, a key change that must be achieved for any of this to become sustainable is for organisations to embed the identification of LLNIT skill requirements, assessment of LLNIT skills, development and subsequent use of LLNIT skills firmly within their HR and training policies.

8.1.1 Developing a methodology for Phase 2

Here we consider the issues that would need to be addressed in designing a methodology for Phase Two. The audit suggests that several components could

usefully comprise this phase of the work. We suggest a range of component activities, all of which we feel would be useful additions to the knowledge base in this area; however, depending on the availability of funds the project sponsors may wish to prioritise just a few of these.

Identification of LLNIT skill needs - PEG Teams plus managers and supervisors

We have noted the difficulty in general that managers and supervisors have in identifying the component skills required by various activities. This difficulty appears to double when basic skills are under consideration. Before opportunities to develop LLNIT skills are identified, then, one of the most useful exercises that could be undertaken would be for PEG teams to facilitate either interviews or working groups with managers, supervisors and employees involved in specific tasks to identify which LLNIT skills are required in these situations, how, and at what level. This identification process will feed directly into agreement about the types of skills to be the focus of pilot development activity at these participating sites. In addition, the working groups should identify appropriate performance measures that they believe would show a change were the skills development to be successful (eg work flow rates, quality indicators, time to complete task etc.). The interviews/working groups should also identify any skill development needs of the supervisors in terms of, for example, development of coaching skills, performance monitoring and assessment, etc.

Development of LLNIT practitioners' skills

Some of the work involved may involve activities outside the current bounds of providers' experience and capability. Identifying training needs and skills gaps and designing and delivering work-based learning opportunities require particular skill sets. Therefore, an assessment will need to be made of the participating LLNIT practitioners' skills in this regard, and, where necessary, development opportunities be offered to them to help them in taking forward this work.

Design development options and materials

Based on details of the types of LLNIT skill required, and the specific work settings in which they are needed, that are identified in the working groups, a range of appropriate development approaches will need to be identified and related materials designed. Design should draw on both examples of work-based materials identified in the literature review and any opportunities identified on-site, such as those outlined in Chapter 6 of this report.

Agree trialling of different development options in different organisations

Ideally, some plan should be agreed by the project manager with the pilot teams and sites to trial a specific sub-set of development options at each site, taking into account the skills identified as needed.

Implementing the pilot

At each site, an agreed set of baseline data will need to be collected. We suggest an initial assessment of the participating individuals' relevant skill levels (we assume this would be done in any event, in order to gauge the level of input needed) plus an assessment of baseline for the relevant organisational performance measure(s) identified in the working groups.

Any employees who did not participate in the working groups but who will participate in the pilot will need to be briefed on the initiative. All employees should be informed of any options available for different development approaches and (where possible) given the chance to choose their preferred method(s) for development.

The PEG teams will also need to consider whether training is required for managers and supervisors, if they are to be involved in coaching or performance management as part of the pilot. Where this is the case, this will have to be put in place before any subsequent LLNIT skill development activity.

Ideally, each individual taking part should have an Individual Development Plan drawn up, with the skills to be developed identified, the methods outlined, how attainment will be measured and a target date for that achievement.

Test out methods

The pilot development activities would then run for a specified length of time, to be agreed with the project manager. We suggest a minimum of three months, and optimally, six months.

We suggest that learner reactions are sought using a standard questionnaire at three points during the pilot: at outset, mid-point and conclusion. The reason for surveying at outset is to identify any anxieties or concerns at outset that it may be possible to resolve through redesign of information given in later implementation. At midpoint, it will be possible to determine whether anything is proving difficult to understand or implement in the early stages of adopting such approaches. At conclusion, it will be possible to determine whether any issues identified at outset and/or mid-point have resolved themselves through growing familiarity with the system or remain to be addressed in any further redesign work.

At conclusion of the work, assessments of the individuals and the organisational indicators will need to be taken, for comparison with baseline. We would note however that it may be useful during the pilot to take organisational performance indicators at the mid-point, since in some cases introduction of new initiatives can temporarily slow work in the initial start-up and familiarisation phase. Such information would be useful as a resource to reassure subsequent participating organisations in the long-term, and could also be fed into the cost-effectiveness calculation.

As part of the pilot, it will also be important to gain cost estimates from managers of any time away from work that would typically be needed for employees to attend a training course for an equivalent skills gain, and the cost of that training (if provided by external provider, or indeed, the cost of an internal trainer).

Calculating funding efficiency

The utility of training is usually calculated as:

$$\frac{\text{The value of increased performance}}{(\text{the cost of training} + \text{cost of salary during training} + \text{loss of any business revenue that would be accrued in the period of the trainee's absence})}$$

In this situation, the performance indicators identified by the managers and employees would constitute the basis for estimates of value. Within the cost of training, during the pilot this would need to include the PEG team costs and (potentially) any slowing of work during implementation.

This calculation would then be performed again using the estimates of the cost of conventional training and time away from job gained from the managers. These calculations will need to take level of attainment into account (ie where did the learner get to, for the relevant funding investment) to ensure like with like comparison.

The estimate of cost-effectiveness would be obtained by comparison of the ratio for the pilot site development activity with the ratio estimated for conventional training activity. With this information, it will be possible to answer the main questions posed for the second phase of the work:

- How can on-the-job LLNIT learning opportunities best (ie most cost-effectively) be maximised (ie allowed to occur as widely as possible)?
- How can on-the-job LLNIT learning opportunities best (ie most cost-effectively) be optimised (ie made as accessible and productive as possible)?

Appendix 1: The Learning Labs

A1.1: Learning Lab 1

When	Wednesday 1st March 2006	
What time	9.30 for 10.00 to 4.00 (lunch included)	
Where	CITYside Training & Conference Centre Black Lion House, 45 Whitechapel Road, London E1 1DU www.cityside.co.uk	
Draft agenda	10.00am	Welcome [SEEDA] Introductions & Housekeeping [AB]
	10.10am	PEG team leads introduce themselves, their team & employers themselves - who, where based, focus
	10.30am	Introduction to the Learning Lab [AB] LtW background Schedule of the day Aims for the day
	10.50am	Questions
	11.00 am	Break
	11.30am	Overview of literature review - Key points [BN]
	11.45	Introduction to the Audit tool - Overview and purpose, How it works What we would like you to do today Audit tool Part 1 [LM]
	12.00pm	Audit tool Part 2 [AB]
	12.20pm	Data protection; ethics; Sending in your data
	12.30	Questions
	12.45	Lunch
	13.45	Parallel facilitated workshop sessions [Four workgroups facilitated by AB, DR, LM, BN]
	15.00	Plenary - feedback from the workshops
	15.15	Requirements for Learning Lab 2 [SEEDA/AB]
	16.00	Close [SEEDA]

Purpose of the Working Groups with PEG teams

We want to make this audit tool as easy for you to use as possible. To do this we need your help. We have tried to anticipate the answers you are most likely to give so that, in most cases, you will only have to put ticks in boxes (and note that, for all questions where it's appropriate we have also given you an 'other – please describe' option).

But we want to minimise the work that you have to do to complete these audits. To help us make the audit document as easy to complete as possible, what we would like you to do is:

For each question in the section you have been allocated, consider:

- Is the question clear? If not, please recommend the re-wording you would prefer. Another question you might want to consider is whether the language is likely to be as easily understood across the various sectors in which you are working?
- Are the answers clear? If not, please recommend the re-wording you would prefer
- Are there any potential answers we've missed (ones that, in your opinion, are likely to come up), that should be added to the list of possible options? Please list them

Note, for a few questions we are asking you to brainstorm possible answers from scratch

Please keep notes of the changes you are recommending. We will have a brief feedback from each group at the following plenary session and then IES will collate the information you have given today when finalising the audit tool.

A1.2: Learning Lab 2

When	Monday 6th March 2006
What time	10.00 for 10.30 to 4.00 (lunch included)
Where	CITYside Training & Conference Centre Black Lion House, 45 Whitechapel Road, London E1 1DU
What	Review the audit tools Clarify terminology and intentions Clarify expertise assumed Practise using the tools Agree the volume and scope of work to be undertaken Consider working methods
Draft agenda	10.30 Welcome: housekeeping; schedule, aims for day [AB] Audit tool review Terminology, intentions Expertise assumed
	11.00 Break
	11.15 Practise using the tools (1)
-	1.00 Lunch
	1.45 Practise using the tools (2) Work allocation Working methods
	4.00 Close [AB]

Information processing and communication skills

The LtW project aims to explore demand for those in low-paid, low-skilled jobs to:

- process oral and written information (including numerical and computer-mediated information); and
- communicate (including using the English language and using ICT)

Particularly as indicated (ie stated explicitly or clearly implied) by the workplace standards (ie the occupational and organisational standards) that define these roles.

The audit tools ask you to

- a) identify workplace tasks and activities that require the worker groups we are interested in to process (ie extract meaning from) information and/or communicate and then
- b) describe that requirement in terms of skill. There are a number of ways in which this might be done.

A1.3: Different skills types

Skill	Description
Basic skills	The ability to read, write and speak in English and to use mathematics at a level necessary to function and progress at work and in society in general (Basic Skills Agency)
Core skills	Working with others; communication; numeracy; problem-solving.
Key skills	Communication; application of number and information technology; working with others; improving own learning and performance; problem solving
Employability skills	Motivation; communication; problem solving; positive attitudes and behaviours; adaptability, and working with others
Soft skills	Teamwork; communication; problem-solving; leadership ability; customer service orientation
Transferable skills	Communication; organisation, planning and research; working with and leading other people; dealing with conflict; problem-solving
Hard/technical skills	Occupation/Job-specific skills (usually for skilled work)
Intermediate skills	eg demonstrated by level 3 qualifications; BTEC HNC/HND; City and Guilds; Modern Apprenticeships (again considered more for skilled work)
Higher skills	eg demonstrated by level 4 qualifications and above (Degree or HE Diploma etc); membership of professional institutions

Source: IES 2006

How does this relate to basic skills, Skills for Life, Key Skills, functional skills etc?

In workplaces, the terms 'basic skills', 'key skills' and 'essential skills' may be used to refer to quite different, vocational skills (eg fork lift truck operation). The term 'skills

for life', if understood at all, may be taken to refer to skills other than adult literacy, numeracy, ESOL and IT.

In adult basic education, the term 'basic skills' is generally defined as the ability to read, write and speak in English and to use mathematics at a level necessary to function and progress at work and in society in general. Basic skills are often referred to as LLN (literacy, [English] language and numeracy), or LLNIT (literacy, [English] language, numeracy and IT). Collectively they may be called 'Essential Skills' or 'Skills for Life'.

Basic skills provision funded by the LSC and regulated by the Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI) is defined by a set of national standards at National Qualifications Framework Entry level, level 1 and level 2. Core curricula published by the DfES set out what adults should be taught to do in each skill area to meet the standards at each level. Standards and a curriculum for IT are being finalised. Tests leading to national qualifications exist for literacy, numeracy and English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) at levels 1 and 2.

At levels 1 and 2, basic skills overlap with key skills, a mandatory component of publicly-funded apprenticeship programmes. Key Skills are defined as the skills commonly needed for success in a range of activities in education and training, work and life in general. As well as 'Application of Number' (equating to Adult Numeracy), 'Communication' (Adult Literacy and ESOL) and 'Information and Communication Technology' (IT), Key Skills include 'Improving Own Learning' and 'Performance, Problem Solving and Working with Others'. Standards exist for each skill at levels 1 to 4. There is also a level 5 Key Skills unit in 'Personal Skills Development'.

Basic skills can be defined as the fundamental techniques of literacy and numeracy. The acquisition of basic skills does not necessarily mean a person can apply them in a practical way. It is this application which Key Skills address.

As well as basic and key skills, the government is developing functional skills in English, mathematics and IT to ensure that young people and adults can engage purposefully as citizens and in employment.

At this stage, we suggest you let Skills for Life and its associated funding and quality assurance regimes inform but not constrain your understanding and description of the skills you identify.

Further information

<http://www.basic-skills.co.uk/site/page.php?cms=2>

<http://www.qca.org.uk/596.html>

<http://www.qca.org.uk/603.html>

<http://www.qca.org.uk/15891.html>

<http://www.totallyskilled.co.uk/>

Dench S, Perryman S, Giles L (1998), *Employers' Perceptions of Key Skills* IES Report 349, Institute for Employment Studies, Falmer

Appendix 2: LLNIT Skills Development Audit - Introduction

This audit has been commissioned by SEEDA to consider how on-the-job literacy, language, numeracy and IT (LLNIT¹⁶) learning might help widen participation in learning to support both organisational performance and the skills development of low-paid workers in the NHS, local government and other organisations in the south east. SEEDA wishes to explore these issues with a view to identifying how public funding can be used most cost-effectively to promote LLNIT learning opportunities for people in low-paid occupations. The work is made up of **three components**:

- gathering of practice evidence on current training and development provision and expert evaluation to determine what opportunities the low-paid workplace offers for on-the-job LLNIT learning
- gathering of practice evidence and expert evaluation to determine how existing training and development opportunities can be maximised and made as accessible as possible
- expert evaluation to determine how public funding could most cost-effectively support this kind of skills development.

This audit is designed to gain information for the first two of these components. In the later stages of the work the information that you gather will then be used to consider, firstly, how participating workplaces could make skill development opportunities for lower skilled groups of staff more effective and more widely available; and secondly, how public funding might be used to support organisations in this effort.

¹⁶ A discussion of the LLNIT acronym is available in the literature review and in the introductory section of the activity strand of the audit.

How this audit works

You have been contracted by SEEDA in your professional capacity as a practitioner engaged in training in the SEEDA region to provide information for the SEEDA review of workplace training practice.

You have been contracted for ____ days' work in total on this audit to be completed by 17 April 2006. We would like you to use this time allocation to collect information on training activity in the organisations you visit. We are asking you to undertake three types of activity: complete an audit for the learning activity and description of the organisation and group(s) you are working with; talk to at least one and no more than three of the participants you have been working with about the skills development they receive, would like, and their perceptions of further LLNIT skills development opportunities in the workplace; and talk to their line manager about LLNIT skills development for this group of employees.

What we would like you to do:

Identify some days on which you have been invited by the employer to visit an organisation. You will need sufficient time on the day itself, or the immediately following day, to complete the audit so please allow for this. For each occupational group you work with on those days, we would like you to submit one of these audits. To complete an audit, you will need to do the following:

- Brief the staff and managers on the work – we suggest you say something like: this is a review of the types of learning you receive and of what other opportunities there might be for on-the-job learning [of LLNIT skills], ie learning through work activities. The potential benefits of this review include (a) improved opportunities for learning at work; (b) more learning for everyone, perhaps with less need for people to be released from work; (c) support for implementing the KSF; and (d) better service delivery. It is possible there could be other benefits too, such as more effective team working and helping people to feel more confident about how they do their jobs.
- Fill out the sections that relate to background information on the organisation and the occupational group(s) you are working with in the session you have selected. If you run separate sessions for different occupational groups, please fill out a separate questionnaire for each group.
- Fill in the sections that describe the profile of the participants you were working with in this session.
- Describe the type of learning activity you are involved in today with the group, any problems you experience with delivery of the training particularly with on-the-job delivery, not just on-site, and give your opinion on any way the learning could be further facilitated or alternative opportunities that could be offered in the workplace to develop LLNIT skills, on-the-job.

- Interview the supervisor or line manager of the occupational group you have been working with, **using Part C** of this questionnaire.
- Interview at least one and no more than three of the participants from an occupational group about their training and learning experiences to date and needs and opportunities for further learning, **using Part D** of this questionnaire.

Gaining consent

- It is important to gain the consent to undertake the audit with the employers.
- At the local level, you will also need the consent of managers/supervisors and the workers before entering into a discussion with them.

Data protection issues

- We do not want you to record any information that would make the individuals or organisations you audit identifiable. When saving any data that you have inputted electronically into the audit, please do not give the files created titles that allow individuals or organisations to be identified.
- All information is confidential and no personal data must be stored.
- No individual or organisation will be identified in the report.
- The information individuals give you is confidential and should not be shared with anyone else in the organisation.
- The information gathered may only be used for the purposes of this study.

Collating and coding the audit

- Once the four aspects of the audit have been completed for an organisation (or sub-organisation), please forward the audit to IES.
- You can email the audit to: ltwaudit@employment-studies.co.uk
- You can post the audit to: Becci Newton, IES, Mantell Building, Falmer, Brighton BN1 9RF

Part A: About the Organisation

Coding information

PEG area code

Organisation number

PEG Member initial

Sub-Organisation number

Learning and Development Audit

1 Is the organisation:

In the public sector ☐In the private sector ☐Private contractor to
public sector ☐

2. What type of organisation is it?

Hospital trust ☐Hospital trust ☐Primary care trust ☐Care home ☐Local authority ☐Personal service provider
(eg home care) ☐Mental health trust ☐Retail store/outlet ☐Ambulance trust ☐

Other (specify)

Outsourced service provider ☐

3. Are you (the PEG team member):

Directly employed by
this organisation ☐Seconded to this organisation ☐External to the organisation ☐

4. Does the organisation have a formal training policy?

Yes (Go to Q4A) ☐No (go to Q5) ☐

4A. If yes, what does this contain? (tick any/all that apply)

Induction ☐Release of staff ☐

Training entitlement

Specification of

- statutory training	<input type="checkbox"/>	Management training	<input type="checkbox"/>
- mandatory training	<input type="checkbox"/>	Appraisal/personal development review	<input type="checkbox"/>
- optional training	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Literacy	<input type="checkbox"/>	Quality compliance/ service improvement/QA	<input type="checkbox"/>
Numeracy	<input type="checkbox"/>	CPD allowance	<input type="checkbox"/>
Language	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (describe)	
IT	<input type="checkbox"/>		

5. Does the organisation have an HR or training department?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
-----	--------------------------	----	--------------------------

6A. Does the organisation have Investors in People accreditation, or is it working towards IiP accreditation?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	Working towards	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Lapsed	<input type="checkbox"/>

6B. Is this organisation involved in the Improving Working Lives initiative?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>		

7. Generally, how is training policy for low paid, low skilled workers implemented in the organisation?

Centrally through direct training interventions organised by HR or the Training Department	<input type="checkbox"/>	By discretion and decision of local managers and supervisors	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Mixture	<input type="checkbox"/>

8. Is there a recognised route through which employees can request training and development or make the organisation aware of their learning needs?

Yes Go to questions 8A and 8B	<input type="checkbox"/>	No Go to question 9	<input type="checkbox"/>
-------------------------------	--------------------------	---------------------	--------------------------

8A. By what route do low skilled, low paid employees in this organisation usually request training and development (tick all that apply)?

Verbally	<input type="checkbox"/>	Written request or training application form	<input type="checkbox"/>
Training & development website	<input type="checkbox"/>		

8B. Is this done in any particular situation (eg appraisal) or through any particular individual or department? (Tick any/all that apply)

- | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Through PDP/PDR/Appraisal/'job chats' | <input type="checkbox"/> | Via Supervisor/Line manager | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Through probationary review | <input type="checkbox"/> | Direct to training/HR department | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Via Union Learning Rep | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other (please specify) | <input type="checkbox"/> |

9. Does this organisation fund any learning activities for low-paid, low-skilled employees itself?

- | | | | |
|------------------|--------------------------|----------------|--------------------------|
| Yes (Go to Q 9A) | <input type="checkbox"/> | No (Go to Q10) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|------------------|--------------------------|----------------|--------------------------|

9A. What types of learning activities for low paid, low skilled staff does it fund? (Tick any/all that apply)

- | | | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| NVQ training | <input type="checkbox"/> | Language | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Hygiene/health & safety | <input type="checkbox"/> | IT | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Literacy | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other (please specify) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Numeracy | <input type="checkbox"/> | | |

10. Does the organisation access any funding sources to fund training/development for low-paid, low-skilled workers?

- | | | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|----------------|--------------------------|
| Yes (Go to Q 10A and 10B) | <input type="checkbox"/> | No (Go to Q11) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|----------------|--------------------------|

10A. What sources of funding does it access? (Tick any/all that apply)

- | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| Train to Gain/National Employer Training Programme or Employer Training Pilot | <input type="checkbox"/> | ESF | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Strategic Health Authority | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other LSC/FE funding | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | | SEEDA | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | | Other (Please specify) | |

10B. What types of learning activities for low paid, low skilled staff does it fund through this/these source(s)? (Tick any/all that apply)

- | | | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| NVQ training | <input type="checkbox"/> | Language | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Hygiene/health & safety | <input type="checkbox"/> | IT | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Literacy | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other (please specify) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Numeracy | <input type="checkbox"/> | | |

11. Is there any particular type of training, development or learning initiative or other process (eg appraisal, performance management) in this organisation that you would like to commend as part of this audit?:

Please describe

Please return the audit by email or post to:

ltwaudit@employment-studies.co.uk

Becci Newton, Institute for Employment Studies, Mantell Building, Falmer, Brighton
BN1 9RF

Part B: The Practitioner Visit

Coding information

PEG area code

Organisation number

PEG member initial

Sub-organisation number

Learning and Development Audit

1. *In this section, are you reporting on a learning (training and development) session that was delivered:*

By yourself ☐By a trainer/HR employed by the ☐
organisation, (ie, not yourself, if you
are employed by the organisation)By an external trainer contracted to
provide the training ☐

Other (please describe

By a supervisor/manager ☐

1A. *When did the session take place?*

In the past week ☐Between 4-6 months ago ☐In the past month ☐More than 6 months ago ☐Between 1-3 months ago ☐

2. *In the learning session you are reporting here, what occupational group(s) participated? (Tick any/all that apply)*

Care workers/assistants ☐Catering ☐Gardeners ☐Cleaners/domestics ☐Estates/maintenance staff ☐Waste disposal/refuse collection ☐Clerical/administrative staff ☐Retail ☐Manufacturing ☐Warehouse ☐Packaging ☐Health care assistants/Nursing
auxiliaries ☐Stores ☐Distribution ☐Linen/housekeeping ☐

3. *In your professional opinion, do any or all of them require LLNIT development - and at what level?*

Entry level	Yes all	<input type="checkbox"/>	yes some	<input type="checkbox"/>	no	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 1	Yes all	<input type="checkbox"/>	yes some	<input type="checkbox"/>	no	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level 2	Yes all	<input type="checkbox"/>	yes some	<input type="checkbox"/>	no	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. *What was the topic of the learning today? Please tick any/all that apply and give details*

NVQ Qualifications

NVQ level 1 ☐ Please give title

NVQ level 2 ☐ Please give title

NVQ level 3 ☐ Please give title

NVQ level 4 ☐ Please give title

Adult basic skills award eg National Certificate in Literacy, Numeracy or ESOL

Literacy ☐ Please give level

Numeracy ☐ Please give level

Language ☐ Please give level

IT ☐ Please give level

Other Qualification

Please give course name and subject) Please indicate (or give indicative) level

Non-qualification programme

Please give name of subject Please give indicative level

5A. *If the session involved NVQ delivery and the learner group is not receiving support for LLNIT skills development, do any of the participants (in your professional opinion) have additional LLNIT support/development needs that are interfering with their attainment of the NVQ?*

Yes ☐ No ☐

5B. If the session was part of a qualification other than NVQ (and not an adult basic skills award) and the learner group is not receiving support for LLNIT skills development, do any of the participants (in your professional opinion) have additional LLNIT support/development needs that are interfering with their attainment of the NVQ?

Yes ☐ No ☐

6A. Was the learning opportunity you identified in Q.4 provided:

To an individual ☐ To a group ☐

6B. Was the learning opportunity you identified in Q.4 provided:

On-the-job (go to Q9) ☐ Off-the-job, off-site (go to Q7) ☐

Off-the-job, on-site (go to Q7) ☐

7. If the session was off-the-job, do these individual/this group also receive training on-the-job for this topic/qualification?

Yes (please go to Q9) ☐ No (go to Q8) ☐

8. Does the off-the-job learning/training use work-based materials (ie, materials drawn from, or relating to, these participants' workplaces and jobs)?

Yes (Go to 8A) ☐ No (Go to 8B) ☐

8A. If yes, please give brief explanation of materials used: (go to Q9)

8B. If no, in your opinion, are there any materials or situations in the participants' workplace or job that could offer the participant an opportunity to develop their knowledge or skill in relation to this area of learning and development or be used to support learning in this skill area?

Yes ☐ No (go to Q11) ☐

Please describe (then go to Q11)

9. If some or all of the training is on-the-job, please describe the way in which this individual/this group receive(s) training on-the-job:

Please describe ☐ Not applicable ☐

10. For the on-the job training, please describe the learning activity/activities that occurred during the learning session you are reporting here (the activity used, the focus of the learning, any additional support materials used):

Please describe

Not applicable ☐

11. Is there any type of on-going support for this/these participants in their workplace to support development of this/these skills (the skills that were being developed in the session you are reporting)? (ie support for learning)

Yes (Go to Q11A)

☐

Don't know (Go to Q12)

☐

No (please describe in 12)

☐

11A. Please indicate what type of support this is:

Mentor/buddy

☐

Telephone access to tutor

☐

Supervisor instruction and feedback

☐

ULR/learning champion/LLL advisor

☐

Coaching by colleague(s)

☐

Self-support group with colleagues

☐

Resource centre/IT facility

☐

Personal contact by tutor

☐

Shadowing

☐

Other (please describe)

12. Is there any type of on-going support for this/these participants in their workplace to apply/use this/these skills (the skills that were the focus of the session you are reporting)? (ie in-work support to help individuals apply learning)

Yes (please indicate in 12A)

☐

No (please go to Q13)

☐

Don't know (please go to Q13)

☐

12A. Please indicate what type of support this is:

Mentor/buddy

☐

Telephone access to tutor

☐

Supervisor instruction and feedback

☐

ULR/learning champion/LLL advisor

☐

Coaching by colleague(s)

☐

Self-support group with colleagues

☐

Resource centre/IT facility

☐

Personal contact by tutor

☐

Shadowing

☐

Other (please describe)

13. In your professional opinion, is/are there ways in which the development of this/these skills in this individual/group could be supported (or further supported, if you answered yes to Qs 11 or 12 above) in the course of their day-to-day work?

Yes (please describe in 13A)

☐

No (go to Q14)

☐

13A. If yes, please describe how this might happen:

14. In your professional opinion, to fully support the development of LLNIT skills in this individual or group, is any training or development needed amongst other members of their work group/unit/department?

Yes (Go to 14 and 14BA) ☐ No (go to Q15) ☐

14A. In your professional opinion, is the training needed by

Peers ☐ IAG personnel ☐

Trainers ☐ Other (Please specify)

Supervisors/line managers ☐

14B. In your professional opinion, is the training needed in:

Mentoring skills ☐ Communication skills ☐

Performance assessment ☐ Awareness of organisational structures and cultures ☐

Performance feedback skills ☐ Coaching skills ☐

Essential (basic skills) awareness-raising ☐ Other (Please specify)

15. In your professional opinion, would any organisational change help to facilitate the development of LLNIT skills in this individual or group?

Yes (please specify in 15A) ☐ No (please go to Q16) ☐

15A. If yes, what type of organisational change is needed:

Change to way funds for learning are allocated internally (please explain) ☐ Job descriptions to include skill specification ☐

Change in appraisal processes (please explain) ☐ Change to induction procedures ☐

Introduction of personal development plans ☐ Introduction of departmental developmental 'scorecard'/monitoring of uptake in different departments ☐

Development being made part of appraisal process ☐ Involvement of supervisors and managers in training and development ☐

Skills for Life included in key strategic objectives ☐ Increase knowledge of external funding availability ☐

Other (please specify)

LLNIT skill specifications

16. In your opinion, are any future developments likely to impact (positively or negatively) on learning opportunities in this organisation?

Please describe

17. Do you have any further comments you would like to make?

Please comment here

Please return the audit by email or post to:

ltwaudit@employment-studies.co.uk

Becci Newton, Institute for Employment Studies, Mantell Building, Falmer, Brighton
BN1 9RF

Part C: The Line Manager Viewpoint

These questions should be asked to the person who normally line manages the group of workers you have been training/working with on their learning and development needs. Please introduce the purpose of the audit by saying something along the lines of: 'This is a review of the types of learning offered by organisations and what other opportunities there might be for on-the-job learning of information processing and communication skills'. We are particularly interested in opportunities to gain learning opportunities through work activities. The long term benefits of this review may include (a) improved opportunities for learning at work; (b) more learning for everyone, perhaps with less need for people to be released from work; (c) support for implementing the Knowledge and Skills Framework (NHS only); and (d) better service delivery. It is possible there could be other benefits too, such as more effective team working and helping people to feel more confident about how they do their jobs.

Emphasise that:

- no personal information will be recorded that will allow them to be identified
- no individual or organisation will be identified in the report
- we are not trying to check up on you in anyway and are entirely independent of this organisation (the one being visited). Anything you say will be treated confidentially and will not be reported to anyone here
- we are simply interested in what is happening in this organisation in terms of development and training and our audit has no other purpose than this.
- the worker(s) you would like to be talk about with the supervisors will be the same as you interview for Part D.

Coding information

PEG area code

PEG member initial

Organisation number

Sub-organisation number

Learner number

Supervisor characteristics

Male

☐

Job

Female

☐

English is not first language

☐

Occupational group

Learning and Development Audit

1A. How many of [this group of workers] do you manage/supervise?

Enter number:

1B. Are these workers:

Directly employed by this organisation ☐

Both (ie a mixture of direct and indirect) ☐

Employed by a contractor or agency ☐

Workers operating under 'Retention of employment' ☐

2. When you recruit to this group of workers, do you usually specify any particular skills you are looking for?

Yes ☐

No ☐

Please specify skills sought

2A. Do you/does your organisation test for (IPC/LLNIT) skills on entry?

Yes (Go to 2B) ☐

No (Go to 2C) ☐

2B. I would like some information about how this organisation tests for (IPC/LLNIT) skills on entry?

Please specify what particular skills are tested for

Please specify the test used

Please specify how these skills are assessed

2C. Do you/does your organisation specify NVQ or other qualification(s) that applicants should hold?

Yes ☐

No ☐

Please specify NVQ/other qualification

3. Do you find there is a general tendency for applicants to have some experience in this type of work, or do they tend to be completely new to the area?

Mainly experienced ☐

A mixture of the two ☐

Mainly inexperienced ☐

3A. (depending on answer to 3, focus on differences between experienced and inexperienced recruits). When you recruit people to this type of job, do they usually need any training to develop skills before they can do the job?

	No	Yes, but not much	Yes, quite a lot
Experienced recruits	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Inexperienced recruits	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Go to Q4	Go to Q5	Go to Q5

4. If no, is this because they already have the necessary skills or because the job does not demand much in the way of skills or knowledge?

	Already have skills needed	Job does not require skills/knowledge	Other (please specify)
Experienced recruits	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Inexperienced recruits	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

5. If yes, is there any particular **type** of job activities for which they require skill development or training? (up to 4 types of job activity eg preparing food; cleaning bathroom etc)

Yes (Go to 5A)	<input type="checkbox"/>	No (Go to 6)	<input type="checkbox"/>
----------------	--------------------------	--------------	--------------------------

5A. [The matrix below will capture job-specific skills and training, whether this relates to implementation of technology, and how this training/development is delivered. Please fill out a line for each of the activities specified by the line manager - up to four activities]

Specify job-specific development	Does this relate to technology	Do they receive this training	How is training delivered (enter number from list below)
	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	
	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	
	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	
	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	

-
- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 Part of induction | 7 External trainer on-the-job learning |
| 2 Formal training programme | 8 External trainer off-the-job but on-site learning |
| 3 Buddy system | 9 External trainer, off-the-job, off-site learning |
| 4 I coach/train them | 0 Other - please specify |
| 5 Internal trainer on-the-job learning | |
| 6 Internal trainer off-the-job learning | |

6. *And do you find they need any **general**¹⁷ skill development in eg what language is appropriate when dealing with customers, help with filling in forms, help with cashing up or calculations, or help with using email or computer?*

Yes (Go to Q 6A)

☐

No (Go to Q7)

☐

6A. *[The matrix below will capture general skills and training, and how this training/development is delivered. Please fill out a line for each activity specified by the line manager]*

Specify job-specific development	Do they receive this training	How is training delivered (enter number from list below)
	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	
	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	
	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	
	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	

-
- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 Part of induction | 8 External trainer off-the-job but on-site learning |
| 2 Formal training programme | 9 External trainer, off-the-job, off-site learning |
| 3 Buddy system | 10 Access to learndirect courses |
| 4 I coach/train them | 0 Other - please specify |
| 5 Internal trainer on-the-job learning | |
| 6 Internal trainer off-the-job learning | |
| 7 External trainer on-the-job learning | |

7. *Generally speaking, do you tend to monitor staff to see if they are doing the job correctly particularly when they have recently received some training?*

Yes (Go to 7A, B and C)

☐

No (Go to 7D)

☐

¹⁷ General skills is a badge for LLNIT/Basic skills at work

7A. And how do you do this? eg will this be through a formal meeting, or would you 'visit' them informally on-the-job?

Please provide brief details

7B. And roughly how often do you do this (check on their performance)?

Please provide brief details

7C. Generally, do you find they are doing things the way they have been trained to do so?

Yes ☐ No ☐

7D. And, while we are not saying this has happened, if you were to find that someone was not doing some aspect of their job as you would hope, what would you do (prompt with examples below if necessary)?

Show them how to do it ☐ Arrange for them to have training ☐

Tell them they must check they are doing things the right way ☐ Other (please specify)

Ask someone in the work team to show them ☐

8A. Is there a skills development programme in place for this group of workers?

Yes (Go to 8B) ☐ No (Go to 9) ☐

8B. Do they access this through some formal or informal procedure such as:

Appraisal (go to 8C) ☐ Tell them about training that is available ☐

Observation (Go to 8E) ☐

Talk to them occasionally (Go to 8E) ☐ Negotiate personal development plan (Go to 8E) ☐

Talk to them regularly (Go to 8E) ☐ Other (please describe) (Go to 8E)

Ask them about training needs (Go to 8E) ☐

8C. If appraisal is mentioned, Do all staff have regular appraisals?

Yes ☐ No ☐

8D. If personal development plan is mentioned, Do all staff have a personal development plan?

Yes ☐ No ☐

8E. Do you give any type of feedback on performance and learning needs?

Yes ☐ No ☐

8F. Are IPC/LLNIT/communication skills (eg using email, making calculations, talking with customers/service users/patients, reading or writing up reports or information) needed for this job at all?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Please specify in what ways

9. Do you ask employees to tell you about any general skills needs (such as those needed for dealing with 'customers' or making calculations or using the computer) they feel they have?

Yes ☐ No ☐

10. Does your organisation allow only job-specific learning and development or does it also allow job-related training in areas such as using email, making calculations, talking with 'customers', reading or writing up reports?

Job-specific only ☐ IPC/LLNIT *also* ☐

11A. Are there progression routes to higher level jobs in this organisation for this group of workers?

Yes (Go to 11B) ☐ No (Go to 13) ☐

11B. Is there any training or development available that help this group of workers to gain the skills they would need to progress into these routes?

Yes (Go to 11C) ☐ No (Go to 13) ☐

Please give an example of this type of training

11C. If yes, how would a worker access this kind of training

Please specify

If necessary, prompt examples such as formal discussion with line manager, informal discussion, part of appraisal or personal development plan

11D. In your opinion, would you say there are any barriers to workers applying the more advanced skills they may have gained through such training?

Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
------------------------------	-----------------------------

Please give an example of a barrier

Please give an example of how a worker might be encouraged to use new skills

12. In your opinion, has there been any change in the skills needed in these posts in the last five years?

Yes (Go to 13A, B and C) <input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know (Go to 16) <input type="checkbox"/>
---	--

No (Go to 16) ☐

13A. If yes, in *what way* have the skills needed changed?

Please give brief description

13B. Please provide an example of how skills have changed

Please give brief description

13C. Was there any particular *reason* why these skills needs changed?

Change to organisational structure ☐Change to service/quality standards ☐Role change/ extended role ☐Increased job-specification/reduced role autonomy ☐Change to technology ☐

Other (please specify)

13D. Has the extent to which this group is required to participate in decision-making changed? ?

Yes (Go to 13E) ☐

Don't know (Go to 13F)

No (Go to 13F) ☐

13E. Would you say that for this group of workers there is

Decreased requirement to make decisions ☐Increased requirement to make decisions ☐

13F. Please categorise how skills have changed

Skills needed have **changed in nature** (Go to 14) ☐Skills needed have **decreased** (Go to 15) ☐Skills needed have **increased** (Go to 14) ☐

14. If skills increased/changed in nature: How did you/the organisation address these changing requirements? (Prompt: meetings to introduce changes, training or development) Were actions initiated locally or centrally?

Please describe

14A. (If not clear) Has any type of learning provision subsequently been incorporated into induction or any other organisational procedures?

Please describe

Please Go to Q16.

15. If skills decreased: Is it easier for staff to do their jobs since that change?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Please describe why

Please describe why

15A. Are you able to use less skilled workers now than you could previously?

Yes ☐ No ☐

16. Are there any areas for which you feel your staff need skill development but it is currently not provided?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Please describe these

17. Do any of the activities that you supervise could make a useful basis for employees to learn from and develop their LLNIT skills while they are at work?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Please describe these

18. Do you think there are any LLNIT skill areas which, if your employees were to receive training for, would help you and them work together better as a team

Yes ☐ No ☐

Please describe these

19. Is there any other type of skill development which, if your employees were to receive training for, would help you and them work together better as a team

Yes ☐ No ☐

Please describe these

Finally I would like to ask a few questions about your role and the learning and development you have experienced while in this organisation

20. Can I ask how long you have worked in your current job?

Please specify roughly in years

21A. Since you took up your current role in the organisation, have you received any training?

Yes (Go to 21B) ☐ No (Go to 22) ☐

21B. If yes, was that

Induction	<input type="checkbox"/>	First aid	<input type="checkbox"/>
Basic job training	<input type="checkbox"/>	NVQ	<input type="checkbox"/>
Health and safety	<input type="checkbox"/>	IT	<input type="checkbox"/>
Food hygiene	<input type="checkbox"/>	Supervisory	<input type="checkbox"/>
Manual handling	<input type="checkbox"/>	Management	<input type="checkbox"/>
Risk assessment	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (specify)	
Fire	<input type="checkbox"/>		

21C. Did you find that training useful?

Please specify which training was useful from answers above ☐ No ☐

22A. Have you been offered any training that you have not taken up

Yes (Go to 22B) ☐ No ☐

22B. If yes, why?

Please specify

23. Do you have a personal development plan?

Yes ☐ No ☐

24A. Does this organisation offer any learning facilities or programmes that you can use?

Yes (Go to 24B) ☐ No (Go to 25) ☐

24B. What learning facilities or programmes can you use?Learning centre ☐ Other (please specify)Employee development prog. ☐**24C. Do you use any of these facilities?**Yes (Go to 24D) ☐ No (Go to 25) ☐**24D. And which facilities do you use? (Please note any used)**Learning centre ☐ Other (please specify)Employee development prog. ☐**25. Are there any general skill areas (such as using the computer, communicating with customers etc.) that you personally feel you would like development in? (Tick all that apply)**Reading and writing reports ☐ Using the computer ☐Making calculations ☐ Other (please specify)Communicating with customers and/or staff/colleagues ☐**26. Do you think this type of development would help you to improve how you manage or supervise your team(s)?**Yes ☐No ☐**27. Are there any other skill areas you would like development in to help you with your supervisory and/or management responsibilities?**Yes ☐Please specify skills ☐ No ☐

Please specify why you would like this development

Please return the audit by email or post to:

ltwaudit@employment-studies.co.uk

Becci Newton, Institute for Employment Studies, Mantell Building, Falmer, Brighton
BN1 9RF

Part D: The Employee Viewpoint

These questions should be asked to one (of the group) of workers you have been working with on the learning activity reported in Part B. Please check that workers are willing and feel comfortable contributing to the audit. Introduce the purpose of the audit by saying something along the lines of:

We are 'conducting an audit of'/'doing some fact finding about' learning and development in this organisation/department. With your help we can find out about the learning and training that is available and offered here and what more might be needed. We would also like to find out how learning and training can be best delivered to suit workers such as yourself'

Emphasise that:

- no personal information will be recorded that will allow them to be identified
- no individual or organisation will be identified
- all information they give is confidential
- the views of individuals will not be passed to or discussed with anyone else in this organisation.

Coding information

PEG area code

Sub-organisation number

PEG member initial

Learner number

Organisation number

Participant characteristics

Male ☐

Job

Female ☐

Occupational group

English is not first language ☐

Learning and Development Audit

1A. Can you tell me about who employs you:

Employed by this organisation ☐

Seconded to private contractor eg
under retention of employment ☐

Contracted here from an agency ☐

Other (please specify)

1B. And can you tell me about your employment contract, is it

Permanent ☐ Temporary ☐

1C. And do you work full or part time?

Full-time ☐ Other (specify)

Part-time ☐

1D. And when do you work normally?

Day shift ☐ Weekends ☐

Twilight shift ☐ Other shift pattern ☐

Night shift ☐

1E. And how long (how many years) have you been doing this job for this organisation?

Specify approximate number of years

2. When you saw the advert or heard about this job, were you aware if they were looking for people with particular skills?

Yes (please specify below) ☐ No ☐

Skills sought ☐ Don't know ☐

2A. Were you tested at all on your skills before starting work?

Yes (please specify below) ☐ No ☐

Test undertaken ☐ Don't know ☐

2B. How long do you think it would take someone new to learn how to do your job?

No time at all ☐ One month ☐

A couple of days ☐ Longer ☐

A couple of weeks ☐

3. Did you need any training before you could do the job?

Yes, quite a lot eg over one week (Go to Q5) ☐ Yes, but not much eg 1 or 2 days (Go to Q5) ☐

No (Go to Q4) ☐

4. *If no, why was this*

Had done this type of work/job before in this organisation or elsewhere ☐ Other (specify)

The job does not need much in the way of skills or knowledge ☐

5. *If yes, what part of the job did you require training to be able to do?*

Please specify

5A. *Was this to do with the use of any equipment or technology?*

Yes ☐ No ☐

5B. *And how was this [TASK SPECIFIC] training delivered?*

It was part of induction specify who provided this. ☐ An external trainer provided on-the-job learning ☐

Colleague/mentor/buddy showed me ☐ An external trainer, off-the-job training (but on-site) ☐

The manager/supervisor showed /trained me ☐ An external trainer, off-the-job training, off-site ☐

An internal trainer provided on-the-job learning ☐ Other (specify)

An internal trainer provided off-the-job learning ☐

5C. *And after this did you feel able to do the job? (if interviewee mentions they had LLNIT skill needs as well, record on next question)*

Yes ☐ No ☐

6. *I would like to know whether you have to do tasks which involve general skills, for instance, using the computer or making calculations, and whether you received any training or development to help you do this. I'll first mention the kind of task I mean and then ask about whether you received any training to help you do it. Do you do have to:*

	Job involves task	Training received
Write up eg notes or processes for someone else; reports	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Use a computer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Read eg notes or process notes from someone else; reports	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Read numerical data	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Make calculations using numerical data eg managing stock orders	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (<i>please specify</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If training in any general/LLNIT skills was received, Go to 6A

6A. And can you tell me how did this training happened?

It was part of induction	<input type="checkbox"/>	An external trainer, on-the-job training	<input type="checkbox"/>
Colleague/mentor/buddy helped me	<input type="checkbox"/>	An external trainer, off-the-job training (but on-site)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Manager/supervisor showed/trained me	<input type="checkbox"/>	An external trainer, off-the-job, off-site training	<input type="checkbox"/>
An internal trainer provided on-the-job learning	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (specify)	
An internal trainer provided off-the-job learning	<input type="checkbox"/>		

7. Generally speaking, does your supervisor check if you are doing the job the way you have been trained/shown how to do it?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
-----	--------------------------	----	--------------------------

8. Since you started this job has anyone checked whether you need any further skills development?

Yes (<i>Go to Q9A</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>	No (<i>Go to Q10</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>
--------------------------	--------------------------	-------------------------	--------------------------

9A. Who was this?

Supervisor/manager (<i>Go to 9B</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Trade union rep.	<input type="checkbox"/>
HR/training dept. (<i>Go to 9B</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (<i>please note details</i>)	

9B. (If supervisor/manager or HR/training), How did they do this? (N.B., tick any/all that apply)

During appraisal	<input type="checkbox"/>
------------------	--------------------------

By observation of my work performance ☐ We have negotiated a personal development plan for me ☐

When they were talking to me in the workplace ☐

9C. [this question refers to previous answer(s)] As part of this, are you given any type of feedback on your performance?

Yes (Go to 9D) ☐ No (Go to 10) ☐

9D. Does this include talking about any further learning or training needs you might have?

Yes ☐ No ☐

9E. Is any discussion of any general (ie LLNIT) skill development needs you might have a part of this development/negotiation etc

Yes ☐ No ☐

10A. Does your employer, (or supervisor or manager) encourage you to let them know about any general skills training that you would like to?

Yes (Go to 10B) ☐ No (Go to 10C) ☐

10B. Who are you meant to talk to about this?

Your manager/supervisor ☐ Other (please specify)

HR/training department ☐

10C. Does your organisation offer any general skills/LLNIT training and development?

Yes (Go to 10C) ☐ No (Go to 11) ☐

10D. How do you find out about it?

Verbally eg from manager/supervisor/union rep ☐ Email ☐

Other (please specify)

Advertised on noticeboard ☐

11. Which of these statements best describes the training and learning this organisation lets you do?

Only to have training for specific things, ie that are to do with your

OR

To have training in things such as IT/LLNIT skills, that are not

current job ☐

necessarily part of your
current job ☐

11A. Can you tell me about when and where this type of training would take place? Can you also tell me who would deliver this training?

During my working hours but away from my job ☐ Off-site eg college ☐

A trainer from this organisation ☐

During my working hours and while I do my job ☐ External training ☐

During my own time ☐ Manager/supervisor ☐

On-site eg learning centre ☐ Other (please specify) ☐

12. Are you allowed to do training and learning that helps you to progress at work (eg gain the skills you need to do jobs other or more senior than your own)?

Yes (Go to Q12A) ☐ No (go to Q13) ☐

12A. And have you done any of this kind of training?

Yes (Go to Q12B) ☐ No (go to Q13) ☐

12B. If yes, how was this training delivered to you?

Colleague/mentor/buddy ☐ An external trainer, on-the-job training ☐

Manager/supervisor ☐ An external trainer, off-the-job training (but on-site) ☐

An internal trainer provided on-the-job learning ☐

An internal trainer provided off-the-job learning ☐ An external trainer, off-the-job, off-site training ☐

Other (specify) ☐

12C. And do you get the chance at work to use what you have learned (eg by taking on new or additional tasks to those in their current job description)?

Yes (Go to 12D) ☐ No (Go to 12E) ☐

12D. Can you give me an example of this (when you have done training that might help you to progress and been able to use what you learned during your work)?

Please describe:

12E. *If you wanted to progress (gain a more senior job in this organisation) do you think you could?*

Yes (Go to 13) ☐ No (Go to 12F) ☐

12F. *Why is that?*

There aren't really any jobs to progress to ☐ We are not encouraged to progress by our employer ☐

I don't want a different job ☐ Other (please specify)

13. *In your opinion, during the time you have worked here has there been any change in the skills you need for the sort of work you do?*

Yes (Go to 13A) ☐ No (Go to 16) ☐

13A. *If yes, does your job now require additional skills or fewer skills than previously?*

Additional skills ☐ Fewer skills ☐

Please specify these skills Please specify these skills

13B. *And would you say that you are now required to make more or fewer decisions in your job than previously?*

Now I make more decisions ☐ Now I make fewer decisions ☐

13C. *As far as you know, why did these skills change? (Tick all that apply)*

Change to organisational structure ☐ Increased automation ☐

Expansion of job ie introduction of new tasks ☐ Other (please specify)
Don't know ☐

Change to technology ☐

Change to service or quality standards ☐

Please make an assessment of how skills have changed:

- If job requires **additional** skills and/or **greater decision-making**
Go to 14A about increased skills requirements
- If job requires **fewer** skills and/or **less involvement in decision-making**
Go to 15A about decreased skills requirements

14A. If job requires more skills or greater input into decision making ie skills requirements increased Did you receive any training because of this?

Yes (Go to 14B) ☐ No (Go to 16) ☐

14B. If yes, was this arranged at local level (in your department, by your supervisor/manager) or centrally (by HR or training dept)

Local ☐ Don't know ☐

Centrally ☐

14C. (If not evident from previous responses) Does any type of training in these (increased) skills now form part of induction or the early days of starting work here?

Yes (Go to 16) ☐ Don't know (Go to 16) ☐

No (Go to 16) ☐

15A. (If job requires fewer skills or lesser input into decision making ie skills requirements decreased): Have you found it easier to do your job since that change?

Yes ☐ Please note any comments about
No ☐ nature of work eg is it now more
boring or enjoyable

16. Are there any areas for which you feel you need training or skill development but it is currently not provided?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Please specify

17. Do you do any activities at work through which you would be able to further develop your (general/LLNIT) skills?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Please specify

18. Do you think there are any (LLNIT) skill areas which, if you and your colleagues were to receive training, would help you and them work together better as a team?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Please specify

19. Is there any other type of skill development which, if you and your colleagues were to receive training, would help you and them work together better as a team?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Please specify

20. Is there anything this organisation could do to support managers and supervisors to help you develop and learn at work?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Please specify

Please return the audit by email or post to: ltwaudit@employment-studies.co.uk

Becci Newton, Institute for Employment Studies, Mantell Building, Falmer, Brighton
BN1 9RF

Appendix 3: LLNIT Skills Activity Audit

Introductory Note

Learning *through* Work is based on a simple premise...

LLNIT skills are relevant in the workplace to the extent that the 'work' of the enterprise requires members to practise these skills.

Any requirement to practise a skill offers opportunity (in principle) to develop that skill.

To the extent that work activities demand the practice of LLNIT skills, potential exists to develop those skills through the activities themselves (ie on-the-job learning).

This LLNIT skills activity audit addresses the question of whether the workplace demands LLNIT skills – and if so, in what circumstances and with what implications for performance? We would like you to use your professional skills to identify:

the work activities which require post-holders to:

- process oral and written information (including numerical and computer-mediated information)
- communicate (including using the English language and using ICT) and the impact that the required application of those skills has on performance, with reference to:
 - safe working practice
 - quality assurance
 - customer service
 - team working
 - resource management
 - management (and supervision) of work.

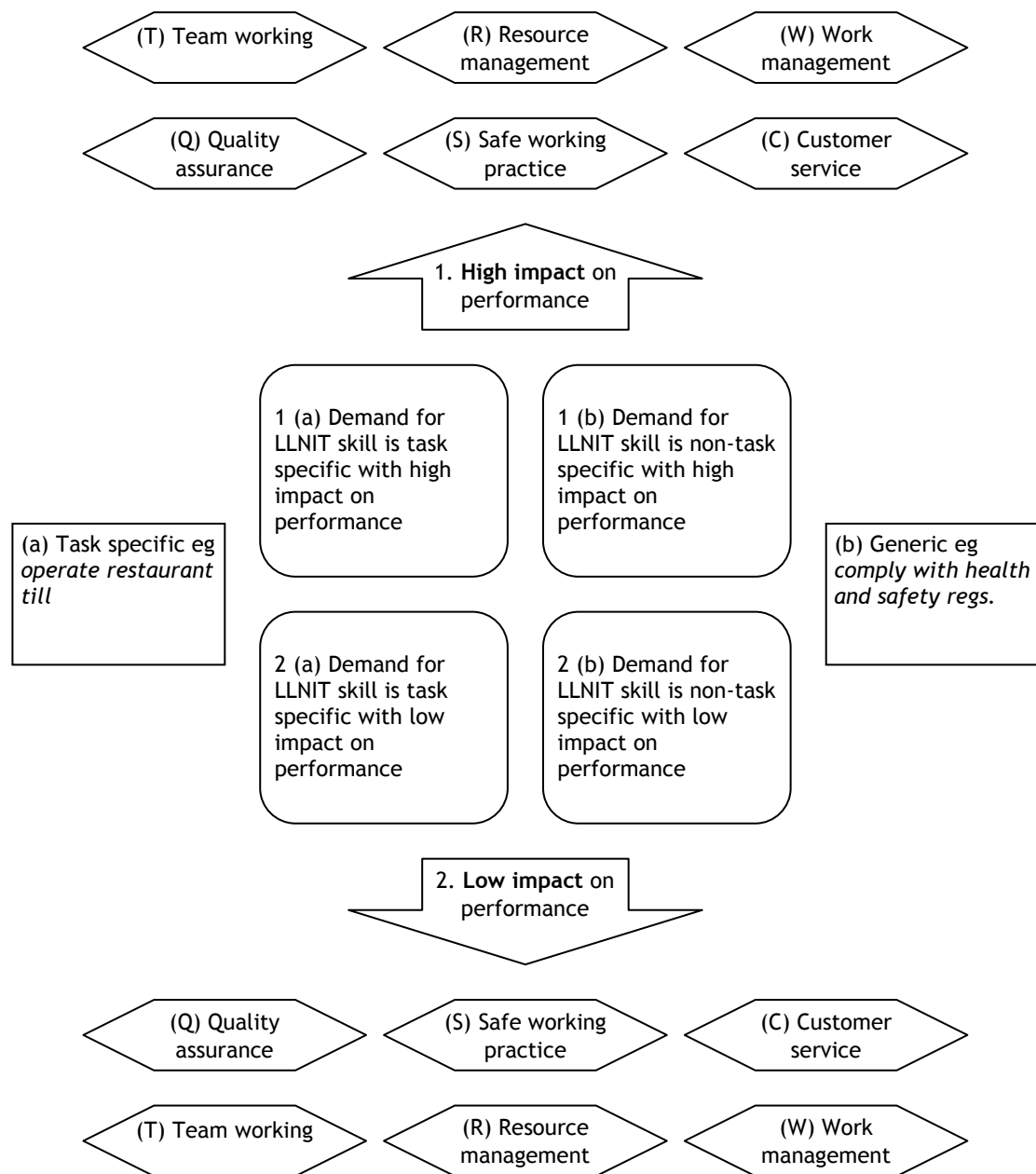
the potential of the activities you identify to serve as vehicles for the development of LLNIT skill.

Selection criteria

For each occupational group, we would like you to report on three workplace activities that:

- require a significant application of LLNIT skill
- have a high impact on performance in relation to one or more of the following
 - ☐ safe working practice
 - ☐ quality assurance
 - ☐ customer service
 - ☐ team working
 - ☐ resource management
 - ☐ work management (including supervision)

Note that the activity may be task-specific (eg operating a cash till) or non-task specific (eg complying with health and safety regulations).

LLNIT skills activity audit: selection criteria


Source: Braddell, 2006

What are We Talking About When We Talk About LLNIT Skills?

The LtW project aims to explore demand for those in low-paid, low-skilled jobs to:

- process oral and written information (including numerical and computer-mediated information); and
- communicate (including using the English language and using ICT)

particularly as indicated (ie stated explicitly or clearly implied) by the workplace standards (ie the occupational and organisational standards) that define these roles.

How does this relate to basic skills, Skills for Life, Key Skills, functional skills etc?

In adult basic education, the term 'basic skills' is generally defined as the ability to read, write and speak in English and to use mathematics at a level necessary to function and progress at work and in society in general. Basic skills are often referred to as LLN (literacy, [English] language and numeracy), or LLNIT (literacy, [English] language, numeracy and IT). Collectively they may be called 'Essential Skills' or 'Skills for Life'.

Basic skills provision funded by the LSC and regulated by the Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI) is defined by a set of national standards at National Qualifications Framework Entry level, level 1 and level 2. Core curricula published by the DfES set out what adults should be taught to do in each skill area to meet the standards at each level. Standards and a curriculum for IT are being finalised. Tests leading to national qualifications exist for literacy, numeracy and English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) at levels 1 and 2.

At levels 1 and 2, basic skills overlap with key skills, a mandatory component of publicly funded apprenticeship programmes. Key Skills are defined as the skills commonly needed for success in a range of activities in education and training, work and life in general. As well as 'Application of Number' (equating to Adult Numeracy), 'Communication' (Adult Literacy and ESOL) and 'Information and Communication Technology' (IT), Key Skills include 'Improving Own Learning' and 'Performance, Problem Solving and Working with Others'. Standards exist for each skill at levels 1 to 4. There is also a level 5 Key Skills unit in 'Personal Skills Development'.

Basic skills can be defined as the fundamental techniques of literacy and numeracy. The acquisition of basic skills does not necessarily mean a person can apply them in a practical way. It is this application which Key Skills address.

As well as basic and key skills, the government is developing Functional Skills in English, mathematics and IT to ensure that young people and adults can engage purposefully as citizens and in employment.

In workplaces, the terms 'basic skills', 'key skills' and 'essential skills' may be used to refer to quite different, vocational skills (eg fork lift truck operation). The term 'skills for life', if understood at all, may be taken to refer to skills other than adult literacy, numeracy, ESOL and IT.

However, models drawn from basic education present another more serious problem. They are based on the following process:

- Individual lacks skills
- Individual joins classroom group of other individuals to learn skills at FE college
- College defines learning against set criteria

- College provides learning against set criteria
- College tests learning against set criteria

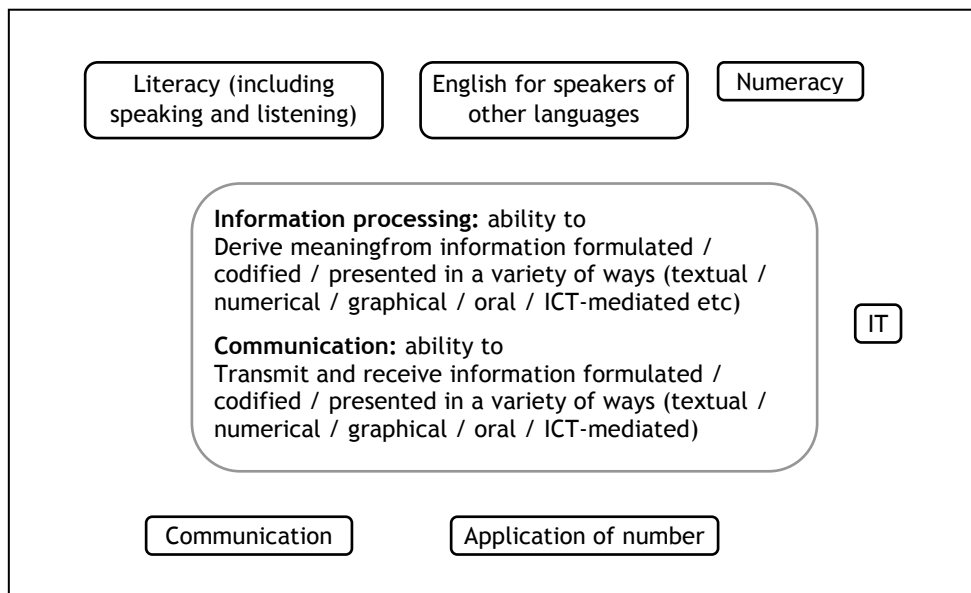
The audit tools ask you to

(a) identify workplace tasks and activities that require the worker groups we are interested in to process (ie extract meaning from) information and/or communicate (information) and then

(b) describe that requirement in terms of skill.

We use the term LLNIT skills to describe the skills people use to process information and communicate.

LLNIT skills as an attempt to specify information processing and communication



Source: Braddell, 2006

At this stage, we suggest you let Skills for Life and its associated funding and quality assurance regimes **inform** but **not constrain** your understanding and description of the skills you identify.

LLNIT Skills Activity Audit Tool

LLNIT skills activity audit tool (enter coding info at end of document)

1. Please specify the occupational group you are reporting on

- (i) Employer's sector: Public sector ☐ Private sector ☐ Private contractor to public sector ☐
- (ii) Type of workplace: Hospital trust ☐ PCT ☐ local authority ☐ care home ☐
 personal service provider ☐ retail store/outlet ☐ Other (specify):
- (iii) Care workers/assistants ☐ Catering ☐ Cleaners/domestics ☐
 Clerical/administrative staff ☐ Distribution ☐ Estates/maintenance staff ☐
 Gardeners ☐ Health care assistants/ Nursing auxiliaries ☐ Linen/housekeeping ☐
 Manufacturing ☐ Packaging ☐ Retail ☐ Stores ☐ Warehouse ☐
 Waste disposal/refuse collection ☐ Other (specify):

2. Please describe the activity you are reporting on

- i. What the activity is commonly called in the workplace?
- ii. Who is generally involved [eg managers / supervisors, operatives, customers, suppliers] in the activity?
- iii. Where the activity generally takes place?
- iv. How often the activity generally takes place: more than daily ☐ daily ☐ weekly ☐ monthly ☐
 less frequently than once a month (specify):
- How the activity is generally authorised | organised | monitored | supervised | supported | reported
 (including what the activity contributes to departmental performance ratings [cf Q5]):

3. Does the activity require information to be processed and / or communicated? Yes ☐ No ☐

i. If yes, please summarise the information processing / communication element of the activity:

ii. Please specify if the **information processing / communication** is [*please tick any and all that apply*]:

a.	verbal (words)	numerical	graphical
oral (face-to-face)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
oral (distance)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ICT-mediated*	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
paper-based	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1:1, formal	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1:1, informal	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
group, formal	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
group, informal	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

* Note: ICT includes telephones, bleeps, PDAs and other devices as well as desk-top and lap-top computers

b. simple / basic ☐ straightforward (ie neither basic nor complex) ☐ complex ☐ multi-step ☐

c. familiar / routine / predictable ☐ unpredictable / requiring adaptation to others ☐

Further comment::

4. Is the requirement to apply LLNIT / IPC skill specified / clearly implied in documentation for the activity?
(eg safety regulations / written safe systems of work, quality standards, standard operating procedures)

Yes ☐ No ☐ If yes, please say

i. Where the LLNIT / IPC skill application requirement is specified / implied:

ii. Whether those involved in the activity are aware of the specified / implied requirement

Yes ☐ No ☐ If yes, (a) how is the requirement communicated to them:

(b) Is any allowance made for limited English ☐ and /or limited literacy ☐? If yes, describe:

Further comment:

5. Please describe what impact the activity has on organisational performance [cf Q2 (v)] in relation to:

i. safe working practice:

ii. quality assurance:

iii. customer service:

iv. team working:

v. resource management:

vi. work management (including supervision):

Further comment:

6. Please describe the risk to the activity of poor application of LLNIT / IPC skills in relation to:

i. safe working practice:

ii. quality assurance:

iii. customer service:

iv. team working:

v. resource management:

vi. work management (including supervision):

Further comment:

7. Please describe the benefit to the activity of support for LLNIT / IPC skills application in relation to:

i. safe working practice:

ii. quality assurance:

iii. customer service:

iv. team working:

v. resource management:

vi. work management (including supervision):

Further comment:

8. What (if any) support for the LLNIT / IPC skill application required by the activity is currently available to those involved in delivering the activity:

i. Formal training to support LLNIT / IPC skill application in the activity; if yes, please specify:

ii. Coaching from qualified internal trainer ☐ qualified external trainer manager ☐ supervisor ☐
team leader ☐ colleague ☐ Other (specify):

Have any of the above received training relevant to this kind of support? (describe):

iii. Resources to support individual LLNIT / IPC skill application in the activity (including scripts, instructions, FAQ sheets); if yes, please specify:

iv. Systematic feedback for individuals on LLNIT / IPC skill application in activity from
[SfL/ Key Skills] qualified internal trainer ☐ [SfL/ Key Skills] qualified external trainer ☐
manager ☐ supervisor ☐ team leader ☐ colleague ☐ Other (specify):

v. Work organisation (eg collective responsibility for LLNIT / IPC skill application in the activity allowing teams to compensate for individual skills deficits); if yes, please specify:

Further comment:

9. In your professional opinion, which of the following might support LLNIT / IPC skill **application** in the activity?

i. Formal (off-the-job) training to support LLNIT / IPC skill application in the activity

Yes ☐ No ☐ Why:

How it would offer individual workers opportunity to develop their LLNIT / IPC skills:

ii. Coaching

Yes ☐ No ☐ Who from (1): Why:

Who from (2): Why:

Who from (3): Why:

How it would offer individual workers opportunity to develop their LLNIT / IPC skills:

iii. Resources to support individual LLNIT / IPC skill application in the activity (including scripts, instructions, FAQ sheets)

Yes ☐ No ☐ What (1): Why:

What (2): Why:

What (3): Why:

How it would offer individual workers opportunity to develop their LLNIT / IPC skills:

iv. Systematic feedback for individuals on LLNIT / IPC skill application in the activity

Yes ☐ No ☐ Who from (1): When: Why:
 Who from (2): When: Why:
 Who from (3): When: Why:

How it would offer individual workers opportunity to develop their LLNIT / IPC skills:

v. Work organisation

Yes ☐ No ☐ What (1): Why:
 What (2): Why:
 What (3): Why:

How it would offer individual workers opportunity to develop their LLNIT / IPC skills:

vi. Other (specify):

Yes ☐ No ☐ What (1): Why:
 What (2): Why:
 What (3): Why:

How it would offer individual workers opportunity to develop their LLNIT / IPC skills:

Further comment:

10. Using your professional judgement, identify the three most effective types of support for LLNIT / IPC skill **application** in the activity (allowing for the practical realities of this activity in this workplace)?

- Type of support (1) for LLNIT / IPC skill application in the activity:

Why this is likely to be particularly effective:

- Type of support (2) for LLNIT / IPC skill application in the activity:

Why this is likely to be particularly effective:

- Type of support (3) for LLNIT / IPC skill application in the activity:

Why this is likely to be particularly effective:

Further comment:

Coding information

PEG area code

PEG member initial

Organisation number

Sub-organisation letter

Activity number

Please return this audit to Alexander Braddell by email at alex@bscity.fsnet.co.uk

Appendix 4: PEG Team Evaluation

PEG team experience

Implementation of public policy in the area of workplace LLNIT skills ultimately relies on learning providers and practitioners. Involving workplace LLNIT practitioners to gather evidence offered the project an opportunity to gauge the response of practitioners to the concept of on-the-job LLNIT development. Towards the end of the auditing phase, PEG teams were invited by the project consultant to comment on their experience of the audit. Allowing for some discomfort using the audit tools, PEG comments suggested that practitioners considered the project allowed them to approach workplace LLNIT from a productive perspective. In particular, they identified the benefit of access to work processes afforded by the project; the audit requirement to examine the application of LLNIT skills from the perspective of the workplace; and the opportunity to think critically about the impact on LLNIT skills development of wider organisational practices. Comments also indicate that practitioners perceived a positive response from their employer-partners.

- *The experienced practitioners in the team all commented on their deep interest in the way that workplaces will go to great lengths to adjust job roles so that LLNIT skill is not needed. It was our view that most workplaces would rather adjust the job than tackle the issue of lack of LLNIT skills with an employee. As we had a private sector organisation involved, we were able to see that the 'LLNIT' proofing' of jobs was done to a much greater extent in this organisation than in the public sector.*
- *As practitioners, we all gained from having to consider developing learning activities that could take place on-the-job. This seemed similar to issuing extension work as one would in a classroom setting. The challenge of doing so in a workplace setting forced us to consider the validity of the [Adult Literacy, Numeracy and ESOL] Core Curricula, and it was refreshing to work outside the barriers of the curricula.*
- *What we have gained from our participation is greater ability to rapidly diagnose the LLNIT needs in a low skilled workplace, and to better understand the more 'invisible' effects of poor LLNIT skills ie poor team working – surely a valuable skill for any practitioner.*
- *We were also all quite pleased with the new acronym 'LLNIT'! It is destined to become assimilated into the world of basic skills!*

-
- *It has widened my knowledge of factors which effect other organisations such as the NHS.*
 - *[I have gained] a much better insight into the importance of key communication skills to all levels of activity within the NHS, particularly at managerial level at which I seem to concentrate at present.*
 - *[I have gained] more understanding of the degrees of understanding of SfL [Skills for Life] that exist within different organisations and at what levels in organisations that knowledge exists.*
 - *[I have gained] a deeper understanding of a whole organisation approach to SfL and its direct interface with LLNIT/IPC.*
 - *I found it difficult at times to grasp the range of influencers relevant to certain work places with which I was less familiar, such as the NHS.*
 - *A lot of the jobs are easy in many respects but then more complex at surprising points.*
 - *I met new personnel and managers in departments who didn't think anyone cared about them and what they did.*
 - *Colleagues mentioned [participation in the project] has helped them to take in the 'bigger picture' and to listen to opinions. Also gave an opportunity to try something new.*
 - *I think it allowed me to continue the discussions with NHS colleagues on the value of learning and development on-the-job. It was clear that if funding was made available, this would be most welcome by the Trusts I work with. Generally, the staff who were shadowed took some pride from the fact that their work was being recognised.*
 - *While I can see the learning opportunities that discrete tasks / activities provide, I think that it is more interesting and beneficial to look at a "mix" of activities and learning scenarios.*
 - *Work on the project has strengthened my view that a relatively small number of strategies are likely to work best in this type of learning opportunity, and each gives the chance to develop a supportive colleague, be it supervisor, coach, mentor, buddy or other eg SfL [Skills for Life] champion.*
 - *[It was] interesting to see the relationships with other colleagues. I had the chance to observe activities that would be more difficult to arrange were it not for the project.*
 - *The goals of the project were universally applauded [by employer partners] in my experience, and we (and SEEDA) were seen as fighting their corner, and helping to address an urgent and problematic need.*
 - *I found it difficult to think of new and better ways of addressing on-the-job learning in the different areas of work. I will find it very interesting to see the collated information, as I think there is potential for some useful exchanges of ideas. I felt that the scope of the separate activities limited the potential outcomes for learning, and I felt somewhat confined by them. This could be a real limitation, or a reflection of some learning and development needs of my own!*

-
- *We felt that the first phase of the project gave us the chance to reflect on what we do and to analyse carefully what really works best in the workplace. We were able to build up a true picture of what is possible to achieve as well as the limitations and this increased our belief in the need for a very flexible approach to this type of teaching and learning.*
 - *In terms of our relationship with [the employer] we feel that we have built up a much stronger understanding of how the organisation works and how training is delivered and we have become much more aware of the difficulties and barriers involved.*
 - *One large benefit has been the chance to analyse particular workplace tasks in detail and to think clearly about the impact of LLNIT skills (or the lack of them) on different aspects of performance. We both now have a heightened awareness of the need to improve LLNIT skills in the workplace for all tasks performed.*
 - *We would welcome the opportunity to implement some of the ideas we suggested in the audits for things that would work best. We would like to try out the model of some off-the-job training followed by coaching followed by feedback and the use of materials to support learning.*

PEG teams in relation to south east workplace LLNIT providers

The four PEG teams, contracted on the basis of their expertise in the field of workplace LLNIT skills development, included 25 practitioners drawn from a variety of providers across the region including colleges of further education, local authorities, voluntary sector organisations and private providers.

The table below shows their distribution in relation to recognised SE providers of workplace LLNIT learning. The information about LLNIT practitioners in the south east is drawn from a Directory of Workplace Basic Skills Providers in the South East¹⁸ published by The Network, at University of Lancaster.

Of the 25 PEG team practitioners, at least 17 brought over five years experience; four had at least two years and the remaining four had over five years experience of general training and development. Lack of data on the numbers, skills, qualifications and experience of workplace LLNIT practitioners active in the south east overall makes it hard to judge how representative the PEG team members were.

¹⁸ The Network directory lists 'all the providers of workplace LLN known to each of the LSC offices in the south east, plus those that have come to the attention of the Network'. Available from: <http://www.thenetwork.co.uk/region/southeast/directoryofproviders/index.htm>, downloaded April 2006.

Table A4.1: South east workplace LLNIT learning providers by sub-region and sector compared with sector and sub-regions of PEG teams

	Colleges		Local Authorities		Voluntary		Private	
	SE	PEG	SE	PEG	SE	PEG	SE	PEG
Berkshire	6				1	1		
Hampshire & Isle of Wight	14	1			4	1	3	
Kent and Medway	6		3		2		3	1
Milton Keynes, Oxon, Bucks	4		2	2	1	1	1	
Surrey	10						2	
Sussex	7		1		2			
Region-wide*					1	1		
Total	47	1	6	2	11	4	9	1

* The Network team of five workplace LLNIT development officers

Source: Braddell/The Network (2006)

Appendix 5: Variants of Support Recommended by PEG teams

Variants of coaching recommended by PEG teams

- Coaching by internal LLNIT skills 'champion' (unspecified) trained by/working with LLNIT practitioner
- Coaching by peers, trained by LLNIT practitioner
- Coaching and mentoring scheme involving all members of team
- Coaching by LLNIT practitioner
- Coaching by supervisor (facilitated by LLNIT practitioner)
- Off-the-job task-specific coaching in LLNIT by peers

Variants of off-the-job training recommended by PEG teams

- Off-the-job LLNIT training followed by on-the-job coaching by supervisor
- LLNIT training embedded into existing organisational task-specific training (LLNIT element delivered by LLNIT practitioner)
- Task-specific LLNIT training (focused on individual needs) in response to performance-related LLNIT problems
- Training via e-learning in learning centre

Recommendations by PEG teams categorised as 'other'

- Peer learning: Inter departmental 'round robin' story sheet to collated into full story weekly and entered into prize draw judged by management in order to alleviate monotonous job while providing LLNIT practice opportunity

- Self-study, on-the-job: Teach-yourself (e-learning) programme to be pursued in bite-sized chunks at work station in order to develop task specific LLNIT skills
- On-the-job training (method unspecified)
- Training and assessment: NVQ programme

Variants of resources recommended by PEG teams

- Learning materials for short LLNIT skills workshops to be delivered by manager and/or supervisor at eg team meeting
- Open learning materials that support the NVQ programme covering the task
- Task-specific open learning resources including (i) templates and instruction sheets specifying task requirements; (ii) self-study resources with practice material
- Task-specific resources designed by staff

Variants of systematic feedback recommended by PEG teams

- Feedback to employee from appraiser on LLNIT skill application at appraisal and at regular intervals
- Feedback to employee from LLNIT practitioner on LLNIT skill application close in time to performance
- Feedback to employee from supervisor on LLNIT skill application close in time to performance
- Feedback to work team from manager at team briefs etc

Variants of work organisation recommended by PEG teams

- Allocation of work by manager in order to enable peer coaching of LLNIT skills
- Enhanced induction process
- Introduce LLNIT activities (unspecified) into recruitment and induction processes
- Introduce LLNIT assessment to recruitment and selection
- Introduce LLNIT-rich activities into task
- Job rotation within department
- LLNIT awareness raising for charge hands, supervisors, managers and union reps
- LLNIT-awareness raising for whole team

- LLNIT-awareness raising training for senior organisational management, including those responsible for SOPs and supporting documentation
- Make work documentation available on organisation intranet
- Map demand of work processes for LLNIT-skill application
- Modify work practices associated with task
- Role-specific LLNIT skills assessment of staff
- Training to recognise and respond to workplace LLNIT skills issues (unspecified) for organisational trainers
- Training for staff as LLNIT coaches
- Training for supervisors to communicate the LLNIT standards demanded by the task