

## MARK NOVELS

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### Summary

A strategic, dynamic and highly motivated professional with extensive knowledge and experience of the vocational education and training policy environment - a highly effective leader focused on quality, with the capacity to influence and secure confidence in stakeholders at all levels.

### Professional Experience and Achievements

**August 2009 to present: Managing Director, Novels Consulting Ltd** – An education management consultancy specialising in qualifications, standards and regulation (see: [www.novelsconsulting.com](http://www.novelsconsulting.com)). Since 2009, Novels Consulting has provided research, project management and development services to around 35 clients, including: government departments and agencies; British Council; Sector Skills Organisations; qualification regulators; and professional and awarding bodies.

#### *Examples of UK-based work:*

- Evaluated readiness for Ofqual validity audits, recommended improvements and supported programme of business change (TCL, 2015)
- Developed strategies to ensure the validity of qualifications and supported compliance with Ofqual General Conditions of Recognition (FDQ, Dec14-Jan15)
- Advised and managed the development of new engineering qualifications for schools (EAL, 2014)
- Evaluated the quality of assessment plans for Trailblazer apprenticeships (BIS, 2014 and 2015)
- Evaluate the suitability of 14-19 qualifications for inclusion on school performance tables (DfE, 2013-2015)
- Undertook a study of the UK Skills Sector to inform strategic planning activity (British Council, 2013)
- Assessed National Occupational Standards (NOS) against published criteria and developed new NOS models to inform the review of qualifications and Apprenticeships in England (UKCES, 2013 and 2014)
- Delivered training workshops on developing QCF units and qualifications (Various, 2013)
- Evaluated the value, viability and innovative potential of employer led skills solutions as part of the Employer Ownership of Skills Pilot (UKCES, 2013)
- Reviewed and developing policies for developing, delivering and awarding qualifications to comply with regulatory requirements (Several awarding organisations 2012, 2013, 2014)
- Investigated potential markets for qualifications in the creative sector (NOCN, 2012)
- Researched and reported on potential options for the recognition/accreditation of intercultural skills (British Council, 2012)
- Managed the development of qualifications for Music Educators and Creative and Cultural Practitioners Working with Children and Young People (CCSkills, 2012 and 2013)
- Developed a Data and Intelligence Strategy to support the commissioning of NOS, Apprenticeships and qualification related outputs (UKCES, 2012)
- Facilitated workshops to review and revise the Association for Project Management (APM) Body of knowledge (APM, 2011 and 2013)
- Mapped learning programmes to units and qualifications (University for Industry, October 2011)
- Developed policies and procedures to improve business performance and support competitive tendering (Registry Trust, 2011)

- Revised the Qualification Strategy for the Creative and Cultural Industries, carried out a review of level 3 Visual Arts provision, and developed QCF units for Music and Design (CCSkills, 2011)
- Managed the development of Apprenticeship Frameworks to align with the Specifications of Apprenticeship Standards for England and Wales (LLUK/LSIS, various)
- Managed large scale quality reviews of QCF units and qualifications to inform the on-going development of regulatory arrangements (Ofqual, various)
- Developed QCF units and rules of combination for non-formal learning programmes, working with the Network for Accreditation of Young People's Achievement (QCDA 2010)
- Managed a programme of business change to secure the successful delivery of qualification reform outcomes (LLUK, 2010)
- Prepared a Ministerial report relating to 14-19 qualifications and funding eligibility (LSC, 2010).

*Examples of international work:*

- Delivered UK seminars for international visitors, focusing on quality assurance and the development of standards, qualifications and qualification frameworks (British Council, 2011, 2013 and 2014)
- In the role of in-country Team Leader, managed a programme of work to develop National Occupational Skills Standards in Saudi Arabia (Alpha Plus/Saudi Skills Standards, 2014-2015)
- Delivered speeches and workshops in Hanoi to explore the development of a National Qualification Framework, in order to support labour mobility and Vietnam's integration with the ASEAN reference framework (British Council, 2013)
- Delivered workshops in China and the UK on using occupational standards to inform curriculum and progression pathways, and supported on-going work to establish and maintain Sino-UK college partnerships (British Council, 2011 and 2013)
- Supported the design and delivery of 'Building Effective Employer Engagement: International Conference' in Tunis, conducted a skills scoping exercise in country, and supported initial work to promote and secure international skills partnerships (British Council, 2012 and 2014)
- Worked with the Ministry of Education in Eritrea, through policy articulation and interactive workshops, to develop proposals for a credit-based system of qualifications (British Council, 2011)
- Delivered a seminar on UK qualification frameworks at a high profile National Conference on Human Capital Development in Astana, Kazakhstan (British Council, 2010).

**October 1997 to August 2009: Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency (QCDA) - Non-Departmental Public Body set up to develop the curriculum, improve and deliver assessments, and review and reform qualifications (previously QCA).**

*Head of Policy Articulation and Regulation (2008-2009):*

- Led on the development and implementation of arrangements for advising the Secretary of State on the eligibility of 14-19 qualifications for public funding
- Working with government, legal advisers and QCA departments, developed policies to underpin the legislation for establishing the QCDA
- Agreed, implemented and managed the delivery of high level protocols and operational arrangements to govern the business interface between QCDA and Ofqual (the new independent qualifications regulator)
- Managed a team of 5 staff and a budget of £400k, including the relocation of the team from London to Coventry through recruitment, induction and knowledge transfer.

*Qualification Reform Programme Leader (2006-2008):*

- Led and managed a comprehensive programme of work to deliver evidence-based policy to steer vocational qualification reform in response to skills and employment needs
- Worked with key stakeholders across the UK to plan and guide the development and delivery of reformed vocational qualifications to meet the UK competitiveness agenda
- In partnership with other UK regulators, managed the National Occupational Standards Programme and its subsequent transfer of to the UK Commission for Employment and Skills
- Led and managed a team of 21 staff and a budget of £1 million, including the redundancy and redeployment of staff to meet organisational efficiency targets.

*Strategic Manager (1997-2006):*

- Designed a new strategic approach to planning and developing vocational qualifications to meet employer needs and completed pilot work in key sectors, resulting in its adoption as part of the UK-wide programme to reform vocational qualifications
- Managed high value contracts to develop National Occupational Standards and related products and provided technical advice and guidance to sector bodies to secure value for money and the delivery of high quality outputs
- Advised awarding organisations on the content, structure and assessment of vocational qualifications and managed regulatory processes for the recognition of awarding organisations and the accreditation of qualifications

**October 1995 to October 1997: National Council for Vocational Qualifications (NCVQ)** - Set up to develop and accredit a framework of National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) based on industry defined standards - merged with the School Curriculum Assessment Authority in 1997 to form QCA (see above).

*Principal Officer:*

- Provided advice and guidance to sector and awarding organisations to secure high quality, rational and coherent standards and qualifications
- Led quality audits of awarding organisations and produced reports and recommendations to secure improvements to the qualifications system.

**September 1985 to September 1995: City & Guilds of London Institute** - National awarding organisation responsible for developing, delivering and awarding vocational and other qualifications to meet the needs of learners, employers and the wider community.

*Senior Divisional Officer/National Account Manager:*

- Identified and coordinated the delivery of bespoke products and services to meet employer needs
- Managed end-to-end development, delivery and award of qualifications for a varied portfolio of subjects/sectors.

**March 85-Sept 85 - Stoll Moss Theatres - Box office assistant**

**July 79-Jan 85 - Eastern Electricity - Clerical Officer**

## Education

- 1994 - Birkbeck College, University of London - History BA Honours, 2:1
- 1981 - Southgate College - BEC National Certificate in Business Studies
- 1979 - Edmonton School - 7 GCE O-levels, including Maths and English

## Professional Development and I.T. Skills

- Various training courses: MCI management modules; Managing Successful Programmes (MSP); Understanding Bills and Legislation; Diversity and Inclusion
- Microsoft Office Suite (Outlook, Word, PowerPoint, Excel), Microsoft Project and Visio