

MARK NOVELS

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Summary

A strategic, dynamic and highly motivated freelance consultant with extensive knowledge and experience of the vocational education and training policy environment; focused on delivery using established project management principles and creative problem-solving techniques; able to influence and secure confidence in stakeholders at all levels through excellent communication, leadership and interpersonal skills.

Professional Experience and Achievements

August 2009 to present: Director, Novels Consulting Ltd – Education management consultancy specialising in qualifications, standards and regulation (see: www.novelsconsulting.com).

UK-based work

- Developed a comprehensive policies manual to comply with Ofqual General Conditions of Recognition (FDQ, Nov12-Jan13)
- Audited policies and procedures to support the process of self-evaluation process against Ofqual General Conditions of Recognition (Lifetime Awarding, Jul-Aug12)
- Undertook research to investigate the market potential for qualifications in the Craft, Creative Arts and Design Sector (NOCN, Jun12)
- Through research and consultation, prepared a report on potential options for the recognition and/or accreditation of intercultural skills to support employability (British Council, Apr-May12).
- Managed the development of qualifications (units, rules of combination and assessment principles) for Music Educators and Creative and Cultural Practitioners Working with Children and Young People (CCSkills, Jan-Jun12 and Sep12-Mar13).
- Developed a Data and Intelligence Strategy to support the commissioning of National Occupational Standards (NOS), Apprenticeships and qualification related outputs (UKCES, Mar12).
- Facilitated workshops to revise the APM Body of Knowledge and supported the development of organisational policies and procedures to comply with Ofqual Conditions of Recognition (APM, October 2011 and Jan-Mar12).
- Mapped Community Leadership Programme to units and qualifications on the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) and prepared a report and recommendations to inform next steps (UFI, October 2011).
- Developed policies and procedures to meet organisational needs and improve business performance (Registry Trust, Sep11).
- Prepared a refreshed Sector Qualification Strategy for the Creative and Cultural Industries, carried out a detailed review of level 3 Visual Arts provision, and developed QCF units and rules of combination for Music and Design (CCSkills, various contracts).
- Managed the development of a number of Apprenticeship Frameworks to align with the Specifications of Apprenticeship Standards for England and Wales (LLUK and LSIS, various contracts).
- Tested and evaluated Artsmark recognition criteria and processes by conducting visits to FE Colleges and reporting on their potential compliance (Arts Council England, Nov-Dec 2010).
- Managed large scale quality reviews of units and qualifications in the QCF resulting in evaluation reports to inform the on-going development of regulatory arrangements (Ofqual, various contracts).
- Developed and delivered units of assessment and rules of combination for non-formal learning programmes, including a good practice guide for stakeholders (QCDA, Feb10-Jul10).
- Managed a programme of business change to ensure the successful delivery of qualification reform outcomes and developed policies and procedures to meet regulatory and other requirements (Lifelong learning UK, Apr10-Jul10).

- Provided advice on the suitability of enterprise units for the 'Qualify with a Business' initiative (LSC, Jan10-Mar10).
- Working with KPMG, provided specialist support and advice on streamlining the Diploma awarding model (QCDA, Jan10-Apr10).
- Prepared a high level report for Ministers setting out recommendations for the provision of 14-19 qualifications and funding eligibility (LSC, Nov09-Jan10).

International work

- Delivered workshops in China and UK to support the development of Sino-UK college partnerships (British Council, Jan13 and Mar13).
- Co-ordinated the design and delivery of 'Building Effective Employer Engagement: International Conference' in Tunis (British Council, Feb12).
- Managed the design and delivery of seminars (including external visits) for international delegates, focusing on quality assurance in UK vocational education and training (British Council, Dec11 and Feb13).
- Delivered workshops in Guangzhou, China, relating to the development of occupational standards and curriculum to enhance progression pathways and support the reform of vocational education and training (British Council, Sep11).
- Advised the Ministry of Education in Eritrea on establishing a credit-based system of qualifications, prepared a comprehensive guidance manual, and supported capacity building in-country through a series of interactive workshops (British Council, Apr11-Jun11).
- Delivered a presentation and seminar on the development of UK qualification frameworks at a high profile National Conference on Human Capital Development in Kazakhstan (British Council, Mar10).
- Interviewed on Armenian TV about UK vocational education and training policy (British Council, Oct09).

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)

- Provided strategic direction for the development and implementation of policies and procedures for advising the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families on the eligibility of 14-19 qualifications for public funding, resulting in the alignment of funded provision with government objectives.
- Working with government, legal advisers and QCA departments, developed policies to underpin the legislation for establishing the QCDA and managed input to the Parliamentary process to ensure emerging legislation was aligned to organisational requirements and expectations.
- Agreed, implemented and managed the delivery of high level protocols and operational arrangements to govern the boundaries between QCDA and Ofqual (the new independent qualifications regulator), resulting in effective working arrangements and clear demarcation lines in key business functions.
- Managed a team of staff and a budget of £400k, including the relocation of the team from London to Coventry through recruitment, induction and knowledge transfer. Maintained commitment of staff and the achievement of business objectives throughout the process, often on a remote basis.

Qualification Reform Programme Leader (2006-2008)

- Managed a comprehensive programme of work that developed and delivered evidence-based policy and guidance to steer the reform of vocational qualifications in response to skills and employment needs, and in line with credit-based principles and processes.
- Worked with the Department for Business Innovation and Skills and the devolved administrations, the UK Commission for Employment and Skills, the four country regulators, funding bodies, sector bodies and awarding organisations to plan and guide the development and delivery of reformed vocational qualifications to meet the UK competitiveness agenda.
- In partnership with regulators in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, managed the National Occupational Standards Programme (including the NVQ levy) 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 strategic approach to planning and developing vocational qualifications to meet employer needs, working with the qualifications regulators in Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland. Completed initial pilot work to test the approach in key industry sectors, resulting in its adoption as part of the UK-wide programme to reform vocational provision.
- Managed high value contracts to develop National Occupational Standards in the creative, media and other sectors and provided technical advice and guidance to sector bodies and other contractors to secure the delivery of high quality products and value for money.
- 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 in accordance with published regulatory criteria.

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).

Principal Officer

- Secured high quality, rational and coherent standards and qualifications (NVQs) through the provision of high quality advice and guidance to sector and awarding organisations;
- Led quality audits of awarding organisations and produced reports and action plans that secured improvements to the qualifications system.

September 1985 to September 1995: City & Guilds of London Institute - National awarding organisation responsible for developing and quality assuring 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 the needs and requirements of employers, including a number of blue chip companies;
- Led the successful development of vocational and occupational qualifications (including content, assessment and quality assurance arrangements) in creative, cultural and other sectors.

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

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

Current Memberships, Affiliations and Other Work

Member: Council for Dance Education and Training (CDET) Accreditation Board.

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 IT 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), and Microsoft Project.

References

Available on request