

AGRICULTURE INDUSTRY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (AIAC)

TRAINING AND EDUCATION GROUP (TEG)

List of action points from 4th meeting held on 02/12/09 at City and Guilds NPTC, Abbey Park, Stoneleigh, Warwickshire.

List of group members in attendance:

Alastair Mitchell – HSE (AM)- Chair

Laura Biddick-Bray – Lantra Sector Skills Council (LB)

Michael Britten – National Farmers Union (MB)

Philip Canning – IOSH rural industries group (PC)

David Owen – Lantra Awards (DO)

Alan Plom – HSE (AP) - Secretary

Apologies:

David Bell – IOSH rural Industries Group (DB)

Neil Catton – Gs Marketing (NC)

Suzie Cave – NPTC City and Guilds (SC)

Charlie Clutterbuck – Unite, the Union (CC)

James Eckley – National Federation of Young Farmer’s Clubs (JE)

Geoff Gregory – Land Based Colleges Aspiring to Excellence (GG)

Item/Issue	Key Points and Actions	Action by
1. Introduction	The Chair welcomed members to the fourth meeting of the group.	
2.Membership of the TEG	Members were informed that David Bell and Geoff Gregory had resigned from the TEG. Geoff had also resigned from the main AIAC but a replacement representative from LANDEX was likely to be appointed. The chair welcomed Philip Canning who was attending for IOSH on this occasion. David Bell would not be attending in future but IOSH would continue to send a representative to the TEG. There was a general discussion on the merits of inviting other industry representatives to join the TEG – in particular, from the Agriculture and Horticultural Development Board (AHDB) and the six associated sector divisions. The chair agreed to identify suitable individuals who could be approached.	AM
3. Seminar workstream		
3.1 Feedback from the VQ	The chair reported that 52 delegates had attended the event. This included several	AM/DO/SC

<p>seminar held on 14/10/09</p>	<p>representatives from large agri-food organisations in the poultry industry after an approach was made to the British Poultry Council. Keynote address given by farmer Adam Henson, contributor to BBC Countryfile programme, was excellent and it was clear that he was fully supportive of what HSE and stakeholders are trying to achieve.</p> <p>Both Lantra Awards and City and Guilds NPTC attended with their trade stands. Promotional materials for the VQs were included within the delegates packs (also included copies of HSE Farmwise, Self assessment CD-Rom).</p> <p>Members agreed that James Chapman spoke very well and were supportive of the proposal for HSE to use him for other promotional/publicity work. It was suggested that his presentation could be filmed and used by stakeholders.</p> <p>Awarding bodies were provided with the delegate lists to allow them to follow up with attendees.</p> <p>The chair confirmed Vion Food Group (Southern Region) are intending to send their farm managers on VQ training courses. Also HSE are following up with BPC as the poultry industry are engaged in work to produce training and qualifications for their sector. Proposal to have a look at what they are doing and how it might integrate with the VQs.</p>	
<p>3.2 Seminar – lessons learned</p>	<p>Lessons learned for future events of this type: (i) very difficult to identify/target specific businesses (use of general adverts on websites etc) (ii) Identifying incentives for people to attend. (iii) Very time consuming to organise.</p> <p>Members agreed that special thanks should be offered to LB, Alison Bailey and staff at Lantra for providing the venue, and administrative support for the event.</p> <p>Members thought that the use of case study type materials and presentations were an excellent way of getting the message across and urged HSE to make such DVD material available for stakeholders to use. This was felt to be more effective than the more</p>	<p>AM to raise at next full AIAC</p>

	traditional approach to videos and DVDs taken by HSE.	
3.3. Seminar – future events	Members agreed that any decisions on holding further seminar type events should be put on holding pending evaluation of the October 2009 event. The chair informed the group that it was intended to follow up with all delegates within 3 months to ascertain whether or not they had undertaken the VQs as a measure of effectiveness.	AM
4. Incentives workstream		
4.1 Incentives – ETI and retail/supply chain	The chair informed members that Asda now appeared to be a potentially receptive to an approach on VQs following the representations on corporate responsibility made by AIAC member Chris McCann at the last full AIAC meeting. The next AIAC meeting is to be held at Asda offices in Leeds and opportunities might become clearer at that meeting.	AM
4.2 Incentives – Farm assurance schemes	Members agreed that a fresh approach should be made to the various farm/crop/livestock assurance schemes to incorporate the VQs. The chair reminded members that HSE had tried this previously through the work of HSE Inspector Bruno Porter (the Food Supply Chain project) but this had been unsuccessful. Members thought this area was worth pursuing once again given the link to increasing professionalism, upskilling and the agric skills agenda, as reported by MB (see below).	AM
4.3 Incentives – Lantra SSC	AP requested that the profile of health and safety within Lantra SSC’s industry groups (including the VQs) should be raised. The TEG had previously requested that health & safety would feature as a standing agenda item for these groups but AP’s recent experiences with the groups had suggested this had not happened. LB agreed to raise this at a forthcoming meeting of Industry Partnership Managers. There was also a discussion on the new land based and environmental diplomas and whether there might be scope for including the level 2 VQ. Further enquiries are necessary to see if this is possible.	LB

<p>4.4 Incentives – National Occupational Standards</p>	<p>VQs should be a key component of the core National Occupational Standards (NOS), used to build up job profiles and linked to apprenticeships. AM confirmed that a meeting had taken place with Lantra but the outcome remained unclear.</p>	<p>LB</p>
<p>4.5 Incentives – Skills Forum</p>	<p>MB updated members on what had been discussed at the NFU led Agri Skills Forum and meetings with the Defra Minister, Hilary Benn. A draft strategy document was now available to view and members asked to see it. The general background to this had been described at previous TEG meetings but in summary it is a co-ordinated industry approach to develop professionalism in farming through training, skills recognition and CPD. A final version is due to be launched in Feb 2010. The issue of funding from RDAs had been raised with Mr Benn and it was likely that this would be looked at in more detail – particularly the regional variations that appeared to impact on the availability of funding. AM confirmed that he would be attending the Agri Skills Forum's "Future of farming" event at Lantra on 10/12/09 and would report back at a future TEG meeting. AP asked MB if HSE should and could be represented on the main Skills Forum or management group, in view of HSE's direct involvement in developing and promoting training. This was agreed.</p>	<p>AM/MB/LB</p>
<p>5. Colleges workstream</p>		
<p>5.1 College uptake</p>	<p>The chair reported on promotional visits that HSE had undertaken to land-based colleges throughout the summer and autumn of 2009. Colleges had been selected on the basis of positive feedback shown towards the VQs. Visits had been made to the following colleges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Royal Agricultural College, Cirencester • Writtle College, Chelmsford • Otley College, Ipswich • Reaseheath College, Nantwich • Walford and North Shropshire College, 	<p>SC/DO</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Northumberland College, Newcastle • KMC, Dorchester • Wiltshire College, Chippenham • Bicton College, Exeter <p>Numbers of students undertaking traditional agric courses is low in comparison to numbers undertaking other land based courses such as equine, countryside management, leisure and tourism, small animal care. This might explain why the total number of VQ registrations for 2009 is running at about half the total for 2008. Generally the colleges visited had indicated a willingness to offer VQs, albeit that this was unlikely before autumn 2010.</p>	
5.2 College uptake – learning materials	Colleges visited have indicated that they would welcome learning materials and other teaching aids such as cases studies. The chair informed members that work was on-going with the Land Based Colleges National Consortium (LBCNC) to facilitate development of additional learning materials. It had been agreed by LBCNC to review/adapt the publication “Fit for Tomorrow” to align it to the VQs and a LBCNC working group was to be formed to take this forward.	AM
5.3 College uptake – funding	Some concerns had been expressed over funding and student learner numbers. Funding mechanisms are due to change next April. Learning and Skills Council will be replaced by Local authorities who will be taking on responsibility for commissioning and funding 16-19 education and training from April 2010, supported by the Young Peoples Learning Agency (YPLA). Skills Funding Agency (SFA) single funding provider for adults 19 + outside Higher Education. Full impact of this yet be established but chair commented that HSE would continue to monitor the situation.	AM
6. Funding workstream		
6.1 Funding - Government policy	MB covered this area in the feedback on the Agri Skills Forum. CC did not attend the meeting so unable to check if he has anything to report.	MB
6.2 Funding -	AM informed the group that there were	DO/PC/AM

Regional charitable trusts	<p>numerous charitable trusts around the country and that an approach should be made to a number of them to see if they would fund VQs. In particular, in the East Anglia region. The website www.afcp.co.uk contains a list of such organisations and might be a useful starting point. PC recalled how students in North Lincs had been able to access funds from trustees at the college and the chair asked PC to follow this up. There was a suggestion that NFYFC might also be able to access funds (possibly through the RDAs) but this would need clarification.</p>	
7 Other matters		
7.1 Other matters – Fresh start	<p>The chair confirmed that a further approach had been made to the Fresh Start Initiative - Alison Rickett, National Project Manager. This scheme, established in 2004 by DEFRA, aims to encourage young rural entrepreneurs to consider making their career in farming or other rural related businesses. In addition to working with potential industry new entrants, Fresh Start seeks to help established farmers think about how they can develop their business or succession planning.</p> <p>The Fresh Start Academy involves three elements – business skills training, mentoring and the possibility of identifying business opportunities via a match making network.</p> <p>There are 24 academies around the country each with a co-ordinator, often linked to local land based colleges.</p> <p>There is a proposal to hold two national meetings for academy co-ordinators in Spring 2010 (one north, one south) – opportunity to give a presentation on the VQ work. HSE have submitted items for their newsletter and Ms Ricketts appears very keen to have health and safety on their agenda. Some academies have been able to access funding from their local RDAs.</p>	AM
7.2 Other matters- care and maintenance	AM informed the group that “care and maintenance” work with awarding bodies had continued in order to ensure that the VQs remained current and fit for purpose to	AM/SC/DO

	comply with educational requirements.	
7.3 Other matters – International work	AM and AP described HSE’s imminent work with the ILO to produce a code of practice for farming health & safety. The Ag Sector were providing a secondee and HSE had been invited to comment on the draft ILO document. Members were provided with a copy of the chapter on training and qualifications. This makes specific reference to the need to have training and qualifications (like VQs) for workers and managers.	

Notes

The four work areas or workstreams proposed at the last full AIAC meeting (11/11/08) as providing a steer for the work of the TEG and formally agreed by TEG members at the January 2009 meeting were as follows:

(I) VQ work should focus specifically on working with some of the larger farming organisations or groups who may be more receptive to training - proposal to identify and target these organisations. This is known as the seminar workstream.

(ii) A renewed effort should be made to identify "drivers for uptake" and other incentives given that previous attempts have had limited success - proposal to identify incentives for farmers and workers to undertake VQs. This is known as the incentives workstream

(iii) VQs should be pursued more vigorously through the agricultural college network to facilitate greater uptake. This is known as the College workstream

(iv) More should be done to explore potential for funding through the Regional Development Agencies in England, and their counterparts in Wales and Scotland (and other funding streams). This is known as the funding workstream

Date of next meeting: date and venue to be confirmed