

MARK NOVELS

T: 0845 521 5205; M: 07775 892928; E: mark@novelsconsulting.com

Summary

An articulate, strategic and highly motivated senior manager with extensive knowledge and experience of the qualifications and skills policy environment, focused on high quality delivery through effective project management and creative analytical and problem-solving techniques. Influences and secures confidence in stakeholders through dynamic leadership, diplomacy and excellent communication and interpersonal skills.

Professional Experience

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

- Managed a review of qualifications in the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) and delivered an evaluation report to inform the on-going development of regulatory procedures (Ofqual, Aug10-Sep10).
- Developed units of assessment and rules of combination for non-formal learning programmes that can be admitted to the QCF and Foundation Learning catalogue, along with a good practice guide for stakeholders (QCDA, Feb10-Jul10).
- Support a programme of change to improve business performance and ensure the successful delivery of outcomes relating to the reform of vocational qualifications in the lifelong learning sector (Lifelong learning UK, Apr10-Jul10).
- Managed a review of units of assessment within the QCF and delivered an evaluation report to inform the on-going development of regulatory procedures (Ofqual, May10-Jun10)
- Contributed to the development of vocational education and training policy in international contexts through: a) an interview on Armenian television (Oct09); and b) delivery of a presentation and seminar at the National Conference on Human Capital Development in Kazakhstan (British Council, Mar10).
- Developed QCF units of assessment and rules of combination for Music and Design and provided advice on the suitability of enterprise units for the 'Qualify with a Business' initiative (Credit Works, Jan10-Mar10).
- As an associate with KPMG, provided specialist support and advice on streamlining the awarding model for the Diploma in England (QCDA, Jan10-Apr10).
- Prepared a report for the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families (now Department for Education), which reviewed the 14-19 learning landscape and made recommendations to ensure the Government's plans for a coherent 14-19 qualifications offer can be realised by 2013 (LSC, Nov09-Jan10).

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)

- Developed and implemented 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.
- Developed policies to underpin the legislation for establishing the Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency (QCDA) and influenced government officials throughout 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 from staff and the continued delivery and achievement of business objectives throughout the process.

Qualification Reform Programme Leader (2006-2008)

- Managed a comprehensive programme of work that developed and delivered evidence-based policy and guidance to reform vocational qualifications in response to skills and employment needs.
- Worked with key stakeholders to plan and guide the development and delivery of reformed vocational qualifications to meet the UK competitiveness agenda.
- In partnership with Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, managed the National Occupational Standards Programme (including NVQ levy) and its subsequent transfer of to the UK Commission for Employment and Skills, achieving a reduction in surplus levy funds from £9 million to £2 million.
- Led a team of 21 staff and managed a budget of £1 million - managed 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 better meet employer needs, working with the qualifications regulators in Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland. Completed 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 secured 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 in media, culture and other areas 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-March 85 - Eastern Electricity - *Clerical Officer*

Current memberships, affiliations and other work

- Member of the Council for Dance Education and Training (CDET) Validation Board.
- Active member of professional theatre company.

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.