







# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY





## Recommendations: Participant engagement and satisfaction

R 7:







heard evidence from participants that where the AP role is being actively managed and supported within the provider organisation, the APP is meeting a lot of their organisational development needs.

APP helped to create a cadre of knowledge managers whose role is to capture and share relevant learning to improve pedagogic practice, and thus improve the quality of learning experiences in the VHFWRU 7KHUH LV HYLGHQFH WKDW \$3V DUH PDNLQJ LPSURYH professional practice. It can be expected that in time, and following the direction of the logic model, these will transform into improved experiences for learners.

### Recommendations: Programme effectiveness

## Recommendations: Monitoring and evaluation

**R 30: Consider extending evaluation timescales where possible**, for example to the end of programme activity, to capture data on all programme activities as well as medium to longer term outcomes and impacts.

**R 31: Develop a consistent participant management information system which all delivery partners use** to record participant engagement and characteristics

# 1. INTRODUCTION

## **The Education and Training Foundation**

The Education and Training Foundation (the ETF) is the expert body for professional development and standards in Further Education (FE) and Training in England. Their role is to design, develop and deliver continuous professional development (CPD) for teachers, leaders and trainers in the sector, to support government policy and meet sector needs, and improve education and training for learners aged 14 and over. One of the priority areas for the ETF and the Department for Education (DfE) has been the development of Basic Skills (English, maths and essential digital skills).

To achieve their goals, the ETF pursue five strategic objectives<sup>1</sup>:

- í **Grow** the capacity of the sector
- í **Lead**







**Outcomes/  
impacts**

- j) How effective were the different activities of the ETF programme?
- k) Have there been any implemented or planned changes to individual practice?
- l) Have there been any changes to organisational culture and practice?
- m) Have participants undertaken CPD leadership roles and/or modelled effective CPD behaviours within their organisation? Have they contributed to inter-provider improvement networks?
- n)





- í Chapter 5: Programme effectiveness
- í Chapter 6: Conclusions and recommendations.

The report is supplemented by five Annexes. Annex A provides additional detail around the evaluation methodology. Annexes B and C present programme management and participant survey data used to inform the report. Annex D presents the four case studies undertaken as part of the HYDOXDWLRQ GDWD FROOHFWLRQ SKDVH \$QQH[ ( SUHVHQWV D effective CPD in FE and Training.

2.







## Figure 2-1: #APConnect Living Archive

Source: #APConnect Living Archive: A Story of Advanced Practice –the past, the present and the future

### **Principles of effective CPD design and delivery**

All professional development programmes delivered by the ETF are underpinned by 12 principles of effective CPD in FE and Training introduced in 2021-22. They provide a framework that embodies best practice in the design of content, recruitment, and delivery of the ETF programmes to ensure

- 9 Refer to the Professional Standards or the Leadership Excellence Framework
- 10 Enhance and extend specialist knowledge
- 11 Have opportunities for deliberate practice
- 12 Support participants to measure their progress, reflect on their learning and plan next steps

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*-level group and see if there are ways of engaging them. That is the thinking change we need for lots of the great work that people are fighting to do one layer down.*

**Design and Delivery Team Member**

**Delivery principles**

Separate Slack channels have been set up for Skylark participants to share learning and test ideas for the practitioner-led CPD activities they designed for their peers.

Northstar participants are added to a WhatsApp group with other participants, and are provided with direct support by a mentor. Through these channels participants can share learning with each other as the programme progresses and in future.

Even for the CPD modules, which are generally lighter touch, participants are encouraged to engage with one another through the chat function (for online courses) and are brought back together as a group for follow-on sessions.

### **9: Refer to the Professional Standards or the Leadership Excellence Framework**

According to the design and delivery team, the professional standards were specifically mapped into the programme during the early design, though they did feel that the programme lends itself more to





## Summary



and WhatsApp groups). APs are encouraged to continue these relationships outside of the programme.

Being an AP is a specialist role. Programme content enables APs to **enhance and/or extend their specialist knowledge** (Principle #9). For example, knowledge is developed around techniques for observations, leadership skills, conducting and synthesising research and using communication techniques such as *Thinking Environments*.

Participants are also provided with opportunities to implement this specialist knowledge through **deliberate practice** (Principle #11), for examples through projects (Constellations) and practitioner-





### 3. PARTICIPANT ENGAGEMENT AND SATISFACTION

This section of the report outlines the numbers and characteristics of people who participated in the APP, their satisfaction with it and enablers and barriers that affected their engagement with the programme. Data analysis refers either to unique participants or participations. Participations are the number of activities participated in by APs. As it was possible to participate in more than one activity, participations show the scale of the activities for each strand, while unique participants identifies the number of individuals involved in the programme overall during the year.







## **Organisation B: Case of high levels of APP satisfaction**

All participants interviewed expressed high levels of satisfaction with the APP. They were satisfied with all of the strands of activity they had participated in, recognising that each strand serves its own purpose, and forms part of a pathway for them as APs throughout their years of APP participation. In particular, participants highlighted the benefits of the Communities of





There was mixed feedback from participants on the amount of remission or protected time they have available for participation, and some participants reported that they were unsure about the amount of time the programme would require beforehand. The programme should therefore establish clear expectations on the amount of time required for participation in advance, to the benefit of both individuals and their organisation. In addition, the programme team can consult with practitioners to understand the amount of time they may have available to participate, as well as the best timing for the activities to ensure all have an equal opportunity to engage. If it is possible to schedule more than one instance of an activity, for example on different days or times, which could also provide more opportunity for participation, around timetables and other responsibilities. A more general, and perhaps obvious, point is that organisations should be encouraged to provide those in or aspiring to AP-type roles with more protected time in order to participate in CPD and implement their learning.

**Senior leader support.** The amount of time available to participate in the APP was interconnected with the level of support provided by FE and Training institutions for staff CPD. Some participants reported receiving support from both their direct line manager and senior leadership, through mechanisms such as linking CPD engagement to workplace targets and facilitating lesson cover where APP events coincided with teaching responsibilities. Some other participants who may have been supported to attend one-off day events, through remission or protected time, also reported a lack of support when stating their desire to become involved in additional APP strands. The importance of organisational support as an enabling factor for participation varied across strands. The strands which required the largest level of time and resource commitment (i.e., Constellations, Skylark and Northstar) also required the most amount of organisational support. Two of these strands, Skylark and Northstar, had this built into the programme as managers were required to approve participation.



continue their learning, whether through a similar AP focused CPD programme, other programme from the ETF or other external training.

## Summary

The programme delivered the outputs specified in the logic model. Overall, the programme achieved a high level of engagement, both from direct participants and indirect beneficiaries, and in most instances exceeded its reach targets by 1 March 2022. Table 3-5 presents a summary of engagement across the main strands of activity against original programme targets. A total of **390 unique participants** (from all activities) from 146 unique organisations participated in the APP.

For select strands, participants were required to provide support to peers as part of their participation, this **'indirect' support was provided to 2,178 colleagues**, exceeding the target of 1,730 (by 1 March 2022, noting that this number was expected to increase).

**Table 3-5: Summary of programme engagement**

<b>Strand</b>	<b>Target number of participants per strand</b>	<b>Actual number of participants per strand</b>	<b>Target number of indirect beneficiaries</b>	<b>Actual number of indirect beneficiaries</b>
Advanced Practice online <b>CPD modules</b>	100	137	N/A	N/A
<b>Northstar</b> Train the Trainers in Advanced Practice	25	10	100	TBC
<b>Constellations</b> Communities of Practice	150	152	300	324
<b>Skylark</b> Practitioner-led Professional Development	90	109	1330	1854
Skylark lite Practitioner-led Professional Development	N/A	50	N/A	N/A

Source: SQW analysis of delivery partner programme management information

The programme attracted participants from a range of organisation types and even job roles, however **participants most commonly came from General FE Colleges and classed themselves as either Advanced Practitioners or Teachers**. It is not possible to say whether programme participants or their provider organisations were **representative of the wider workforce** for two reasons. Firstly, up to date data regarding the profile of the workforce is held by DfE and has not yet been published. Previous data is however available from the 2018/19 Staff Individualised Record (SIR)<sup>19</sup> which provides estimates of the numbers of staff in the FE and Training workforce and their characteristics (such as gender, age and ethnicity). However, the APP

<sup>19</sup> ETF (2020) Further education workforce data for England Analysis of the 2018-2019 Staff Individualised Record (SIR) data. <https://www.et-foundation.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/SIR27-REPORT-FOR-PUBLICATION.pdf>  
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did not capture gender, age and ethnicity characteristics and consequently it is not possible to comment on representativeness.

Participant satisfaction measured through survey responses was high:

Over 85% of participants either strongly agreed or agreed that they were **satisfied with the skills and knowledge of the facilitators**.

The majority of participants agreed that they were satisfied with the information they received.

The majority of participants also said they were moderately to extremely **confident in their knowledge and understanding** of the given topic and **would be highly likely (10/10) to recommend the programme to a friend or colleague**. Respondents for the Constellations mid-point survey were slightly less likely than the other two strands to recommend their learning experience to others, having more respondents that selected eight or below on the ten-point scale for this question. However, significance should not be ascribed to this finding as this is not based on end-point surveys for all participants, and general satisfaction rates were high for this strand.

Those providing satisfaction scores may not be a truly representative cross section of the participant cohort at the time of report writing, as end point survey data was not yet collected for all strands, and respondent characteristics were not included with the survey data. 119 surveys (of a total of 458 participations) were completed which is a decent proportion for any self-completion survey. Those that did not respond may not have played an active part in the programme, may not have wanted to share their views on their experience, may be waiting for the end-point survey for certain activities and/or may not have had time to respond to the survey. Therefore, there may be some respondent bias.

Participants who were interviewed for the evaluation suggested a range of factors that were either experienced as enablers or barriers to their involvement in the programme including:

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**Cost.** This year the programme was free to participants. Perhaps surprisingly this factor was not raised as an enabler by participants or stakeholders. Had the programme required participants to pay this might have created both administrative and budgetary barriers to participation but the evaluation cannot provide evidence to suggest how important a factor free-provision was regarding participation.

For participants to be ready to engage with APP and for their organisations to benefit a range of **mechanisms for change** can either be strengthened or overcome, including:

**Senior managers need to understand the potential** for positive change that practitioners in AP roles can deliver for their teaching colleagues. Organisations with AP roles in their structures benefit from the programme when individual practitioners participate in the programme.

**Organisations without AP roles may need senior managers to attend** the programme first so that they learn about the role and how the programme supports effective practice in the workplace.

**APP alumni** can be ambassadors for the programme to explain how their role works and share their experiences of programme participation.

**APP participants need time allocated** in their timetables to participate. This may need some back-filling for those with busy teaching timetables to enable them to engage fully in the programme.

The **time commitment required for the different strands of the programme needs to be clearly communicated** to both practitioners and manager to ensure expectations are managed and time allocated is both sufficient and realistic.

Timing of key activities and networking events can be negotiated between the delivery partner and participants to maximise numbers able to participate. If possible, **schedule multiple instances of the same activities** on different days or times to provide ample

## 4. OUTCOMES AND IMPACT

The previous section presented evidence on the number of participants who engaged with the programme and the levels of satisfaction they reported. It showed that planned activities have been implemented across five different strands reaching 390 unique participants. They have developed skills to support other teachers, implement collaborative practices and share learning within and between organisations.

This section presents evaluation evidence of the effect of that activity. It explores observed and anticipated improvements to professional practice, organisational performance and learner (Annex A). It also considers the level of attribution of these outcomes and impacts to the programme and explores the mechanisms for change in relation to the implementation of learning. This section draws on participant interviews, case study interviews, the design and delivery focus group discussion, and participant survey feedback (summarised in Annex C).

### Anticipated outcomes of APP

The programme logic model (see Annex A) for the APP outlines the expected outcomes and changes to participants professional practice were expected, including improved ability of APs to improved capacity to teach themselves and provide high quality peer support, and improved confidence in their AP role and use of support/tools. Additionally, APs were expected to disseminate learning to multiple recipients, and improve their collaborative and networking practices.

By achieving these short-term outcomes, it was anticipated that over the medium-term participants would be motivated to use innovative solutions and act as agents of change, as well as undertaking CPD leadership roles and model effective CPD behaviours within their organisations. Through dissemination of learning and their improved ability to provide peer-to-peer support, it was also expected that the professional practice of colleagues within their organisation would improve as well, particularly the quality of their own teaching, learning and assessment.

The logic model suggests that there is a sequence of events where skills acquisition leads in the short term to outcomes for individual practitioners, and their peers, which in time generate organisational effects that lead to better experiences for learners and ultimately to improved learner outcomes. The evaluation evidence suggests this sequential and logical chain of transmission does not occur in neat stages but varies from one organisation and individual to another and can be experienced very rapidly or over extended periods (if at all). This section therefore presents evidence structured around outcomes for participating professionals and their peers, organisations and learners, rather than effects over time as suggested in the logic model.

### Outcomes for professional practice







## APP Participant

### Organisation B: Case of improved levels of confidence

In addition to professional practice, participation in the APP has led to improved confidence for participants. If the programme was for them. However, as soon as they got involved, the ability to connect with other practitioners and find new creative ways of supporting peers and improving teaching learning and assessment led to improved confidence in themselves and their role. In addition, interviewees felt that by using Thinking Environments and other concepts learnt through APP throughout the college has provided practitioners with a voice and ownership over their own CPD, improving their confidence as well.

Related to confidence, some participants also felt that the programme had made them more excited about their work, keeping them motivated, and they used new techniques to share their views and learning, such as podcasts and blogs.

*recognising that taking part and getting involved is exciting and re-involved, you tend to feel demotivated, demoralised and uninvolved, but by getting involved,*

## APP Participant

In the mid-point and end-point surveys, participants were also asked about confidence, particularly whether or not the learning experience had increased their confidence to deliver the topics included in the activities. A majority<sup>22</sup> of respondents for all three surveys either strongly agreed or agreed with this statement.

### Peer-to-peer support and dissemination

The AP role requires practitioners to promote good practice and share their skills and experience with their teaching colleagues. APP participants said that the programme had provided them with tools to provide effective peer-to-peer support. Many APs use regular meetings or sessions to discuss areas for development and ways to improve teaching, learning and assessment. Sessions such as this have been used to disseminate learning from the APP to other APs and teaching staff, for example:

*delivery. Through the AP role, I have standing meetings every week to disseminate the learnings I get on training sessions, so it can impact students across the college. I look after two*

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<sup>22</sup> 31 of 34 Skylark mid-point survey respondents strongly agreed or agreed (See Annex C, Table C-11); 38 of 47 Constellations mid-point survey respondents strongly agreed or agreed (See Annex C, Table C-4); 34 of 38 CPD end-point survey responses strongly agreed or agreed (See Annex C, Table C-18)

*faculties, and combined that is 67 members of staff. As APs, we come together on a*

### **APP Participant**

One participant mentioned using *-during-* reflection sessions, where they would invite teachers to participate and observe their teaching, and another mentioned using peer learning visits and reflection sessions. By using these techniques, peers see others teaching practice, discuss it with them and their colleagues, and learn from the experience.

A few participants mentioned improvements to their coaching and mentoring practices as a result of the programme, which they feel have allowed them to better support and empower peers.

*themselves and help them consider what else can be done before I intervene in any issues.  
I make the teachers in my college a bit more autonomous and feel*

### **APP Participant**

Underpinning many of these activities are the components of *Thinking Environments* which participants have learnt through the APP and use in meetings, trainings, and coaching and support sessions. By using these techniques, a space for free-flowing thinking can be established, where everyone is invited to contribute. It creates a safe space for people to speak without fear of judgement and allows everyone to bring their knowledge and experiences to the table, ultimately allowing for new voices and ideas to be heard and the chance for better outcomes or new solutions. For example:

*really bought into those values and it has changed the way I have approached meetings and my team, the way we hold meetings in our department and when we hold meetings with wider teams, we always start with the practice of care component. It has really made me think about diversifying what we do but also creating spaces where we hear from a diverse range of*

### **APP Participant**

had left the session with numerous allies and with a raised spirit.

Similar findings were reflected in the participant surveys, as a majority<sup>23</sup> of respondents to the two mid-point and one end-point survey either strongly agreed or agreed that participation had improved their ability to support other teachers with their teaching, learning, and assessment.

### **Collaborative and networking practices**

Opportunities for networking and collaborative practice are embedded throughout the APP. These communities, facilitated through Slack, WhatsApp and social media platforms provide participants with a space to connect with practitioners in similar roles, hear how others have approached similar challenges, and get feedback on their ideas.

Many participants reported that discussing ideas with other like-minded practitioners allowed them to explore their own understanding of content and gain the perspectives of others. By providing a collaborative environment within the APP, participants were able to develop a support network and continuously improve their own practice beyond the remit of the programme. More experienced participants found this to be a particularly beneficial element of the programme.

*but just finding this network has opened up a whole new world and continues to support my*

**APPW\* n4(f)-2( )-2(t)-2(h)4(e)4( )-2(p)4(ro)4(g)-6(ra)4(mme)3(.)-2( )JTETQ 422u3 0.973 rg reW\* nBT/**



of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that participation had led to improvements in their collaborative practice and/or networking skills.

### **Outcomes for organisational performance**

The programme logic model (Annex A) also outlines expected outcomes and impacts for organisations, as a result of participation in the APP. In the medium-term, outcomes are expected in relation to the AP role and their ability to act as agents of change and model effective CPD practices within their organisation, contributing to the organisational culture and performance. It was also anticipated that participation in the programme would lead to improvement in the quality of teaching, undertake the AP role effectively and share learning.

### **CPD leadership and modelling effective behaviour**

Many of the APP participants indicated that they undertake CPD leadership roles and/or model effective CPD behaviour within their organisation. It is important to note that as the roles and levels of seniority of participants varied their level of influence varied. For example, some participants had more senior roles and were therefore in a position to influence plans that affected whole cohorts of

## APP Participant

## CPD Lead / Manager

An issue which was raised by participants and the design and delivery team is around the career progression of APs. It was felt that, in some instances, once an AP becomes experienced in their role, the only place for them to go is into management. However, APs do not always necessarily want to move into that space, as their skills, in supporting the development of practitioners and improving teaching, learning and assessment, do not always align with managerial responsibilities. This can at times end in APs leaving their positions or teaching for other positions such as consulting.

*trained with*





## Organisation A: Case of using unseen observation

Through the Developmental Observations module, the college began piloting unseen observations as part of their teacher induction programme. Within unseen observation, teachers are empowered to draft lesson plans, before working with a coach/peer to discuss lesson plans and reflect on the session based on their own account and student feedback. Early pilot feedback suggests that unseen observations have removed anxiety and demonstrated trust in new teachers, whilst also allowing the college to shape expectations around effective planning. New teachers experiencing unseen observation are subsequently said to be disseminating learning and acting as models of best practice within their departments.

A different college that has removed formal observations from their quality improvement processes and has instead implemented Teaching Triangles which follow a community of practice model. These communities provide staff with the opportunity to plan, test and reflect on improvements to their practice with their peers:

*observation process we moved more into peer Communities of Practice and developing the confidence and the reflective practice skills of colleagues through Thinking Environments but also Ideas Rooms to share those practices more widely within the college gr*

### APP Participant

In addition to the changes mentioned above, participants reported that their organisations were experiencing greater cross-organisation collaboration. There were greater opportunities for staff members from different departments or curriculum areas to come together, through *Thinking Environments*, *Ideas Rooms* and Communities of Practice, for example. This was seen as a benefit, as it breaks down silos within organisations and provides the opportunity for sharing resources, ideas and best practice and to tap into knowledge and potential problem solvers across the college. Breaking these silos down is also seen as a way to better embed Basic Skills, such as maths and English, into more vocational areas, and to create a higher quality and more holistic learning experience for learners.

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### **Organisation C: Case of cross-departmental sharing**

There was evidence of better cross-departmental sharing as a result of the Skylark project. One of the APs on the Skylark programme, who works on the built environment and was running the T level programme, has developed a strong approach centred around project-based learning. They had started developing this practice with their neighbouring engineering department who

## Attainment and Basic Skills

APP participants indicated that they have already or anticipate seeing improvements in learner outcomes related to attainment, based on changes that have been made to teaching practices as a result of APP. For example, APs from one of the participating colleges have focused their quality improvement processes on retrieval practices for learners, something which has been supported through participation in Constellations C and Skylark. The CPD lead for this college, interviewed as part of the case studies (see Annex D for more information), indicated that they are already seeing different retrieval activities being used, and expect that this will have long term impacts on learning attainment, especially on assignments and exam results.

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Skills development (maths, English, EDS and ESOL). Examples of this include:

An APP participant who specialises in maths felt that the programme had impacted on their practice, and in turn outcomes for their learners. They thought the changes they had made to their practice had this made a difference to their learners including one who had failed the maths GCSE exam six times, but passed on the seventh attempt, and a learner who was suffering from physical and mental health problems, but still passed their GCSE exam and has gone on to higher education opportunities. The practitioner said that the tools and techniques they learned and practiced with these learners made the difference.

**Embedding maths and English into vocational education** has also been a focus for a number of participants, in order to make these subjects more relevant and practical with 200 ( )TJETQse

## Organisation B: Case of improving digital skills

TLQLs felt that digital skills have been improved across the college, as learners and staff alike have had to adapt to online learning. Practitioners have used techniques learnt in APP in participation. Through this, they feel students have learnt crucial digital literacy skills, as well as employability skills needed for an increasingly online professional world.

### Engagement and motivation

Several participants indicated that they have used concepts they had learned through the APP with their students to improve engagement and motivation, as well as confidence. For example, multiple participants have used the components of *Thinking Environments* with their learners and have encouraged learners to use these amongst themselves. Whether taking the form of a Thinking Council or an Ideas Room, using these techniques with students has created open spaces for them to voice their opinions and ideas, making them feel more comfortable contributing. Participants have seen improvements in confidence and participation as a result. For example:

*the one that never sa*

### APP Participant

Other examples of ways in which *Thinking Environments* have successfully engaged students included an AP working in the digital curriculum area who has used the approach with students, and a college that used the components of *Thinking Environments* with a cohort of digital students. This opportunity allowed students to develop problem solving and communication skills while working in their digital curriculum area.

## Organisation C: Case of using Thinking Environments

Whilst consultees felt it was too early to evidence impacts on learners, it was acknowledged that one of the APs had started using the same approach in their delivery to students. The AP who worked on the digital curriculum had been using the Ideas Room approach for project meetings with computer software designers for brainstorming ideas and fault-finding. The students had bought into this approach and had been learning how to listen, deal with students were getting better ideas and getting their assumptions challenged without feeling threatened. The APs hope to cascade this approach to other student groups and roll it out more widely in the college.

### Wider impacts on learners

In addition to improving engagement, motivation and confidence, several APs mentioned that

learning from APP had been used to improve wellbeing and employability skills for learners. For example, at one college they have been holding wellbeing check-ins with learners which follow Thinking Environment principles. The AP, who had participated in the CPD module *Thoroughly Thinking Environments*, felt that these sessions had already improved wellbeing:

*some observations where I saw it happen. They are learning to listen, take turns, to share*

## APP Participant

In another example, a college had developed a new programme of support which is focused on providing a holistic learning experience, including sessions on safeguarding issues and the development of employability skills. The college used *Ideas Rooms* and the Constellations community to generate innovative and relevant ways to share this with learners.

### Organisation B: Case of learner wellbeing outcomes

An area of focus for the college has been around improving the overall learning experience for learners to ensure they are happy and healthy and to improve confidence. A programme has been implemented which covers safeguarding and employability topics while also providing a supportive and caring space. One of the TLQLs who has participated in APP has worked with colleagues to transform the way these topics are taught. As many practitioners find some safeguarding topics difficult to teach (sexual harassment for example), the TLQL has brought together staff from different roles, such as practitioners, LEAPs and safeguarding representatives using Ideas Rooms to come up with creative ways to teach challenging topics. These sessions have been well received, with a lot of student involvement asking questions during and after sessions. Following these sessions, the college has experienced a significant increase in reports by students to the safeguarding team. While this is alarming, it also means that the messages from these sessions are getting through to students and they feel more comfortable reporting challenging issues they may be facing in their lives.

Overall, interviewees anticipate that impacts for learners will increase over time. While these achieved and expected impacts are positive, participants also **indicated how difficult it can be to evidence learner outcomes, and attribute them to the APP**. Particularly there is a feeling that comparing exam results and attendance records over the last two years is difficult given disruptions to education during the Covid-19 pandemic. Additionally, as it often takes time to embed changes in teaching, learning and assessment within an organisation, some participants feel it is too soon to comment on learner outcomes related to said changes, though they are hopeful that there will be improvements in future.

*there would still be an programme. I mean if you look at the English and Maths area attendance has improved over the*



*put in those practices, and I think APP really was the catalyst for where we are now, even*

## **APP Participant**

### **Mechanisms for change: implementation of learning**

APP participants also reflected on how programme participation has led to the outcomes and impacts discussed above, particularly any enablers and barriers that have, or will, influence the implementation of learning from the programme. Ways in which these mechanisms for change can be strengthened (enablers) or overcome (barriers) are highlighted in the chapter summary.



overcome these barriers, the APP allowed participants to be flexible with the scale of their project work and provided PHQWRUV WR DGYLVH RQ KRZ SURMHFWV FRXOG EH own circumstances.

In addition to support from managers/senior leaders, the third key enabler was to have **other staff members onboard with plans for change**, who recognised the AP role and were willing to adopt new practices. If others in AP-



teaching, learning and assessment, as well as their wellbeing. There were also examples of practitioners saying their coaching and mentoring practices were improved.

Learning from the programme was **disseminated throughout organisations** by participants through regular sharing sessions and meetings.

The **extent to which observed improvements can be attributed to participation** in the programme is mediated by two factors. The first is the limited evidence base as the evaluation drew upon evidence from a sample of participants that may not have been a representative reflection of the experience of all. Second is that the ability of participants to make improvements is conditional on their role, support from managers and from peers. We can confidently report however, that where participants were able to implement either *Thinking Environments* or *Ideas Rooms* their feedback was overwhelmingly positive and they would not have been exposed to these concepts were it not for APP.

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## 5. PROGRAMME EFFECTIVENESS

### **Meeting programme objectives**

The APP programme aimed to provide new and experienced APs with training and support to help them in their AP role to provide high quality peer-to-peer support in order to improve the quality of education in the FE and Training sector and to support increased professionalism for practitioners in the sector. This report has presented evidence that the APP has met these objectives through the following:

The programme reached 390 unique participants from 146 different organisations.

Within the evaluation period, at least 2,178 colleagues participated in information exchange, discussion or were actively involved in implementing changes as a result of AP interaction, indirectly benefiting from the APP.

The quality of the programme can be considered high as it mapped positively against the 12 principles of effective CPD and was assessed by the ETF quality team.

The programme was differentiated to provide content that was relevant to both new and





One generic organisational need that was met by the programme was effective internal communication. Respondents identified ways in which participation had improved internal communication including better interaction between Skylark groups and their teams and the benefit of having a group of peers to share thoughts and issues with:



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*have time to think at all, whereas here you get the space to think, model and practice what you would be devastated if there*

### APP Participant

3DUWLFLSDQWV IRXQG LW GLILFXOW WR WKLQN RI H[DPSOHV R mentoring programme was reported as one of the most closely aligned by a few participants. Even these participants, however, felt the programmes served different purposes, they

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change processes, others might not even recognise that staff members are participating. The evaluation heard evidence from participants who reported that where the AP role is being actively managed and supported within the provider organisation, the APP is meeting a lot of their organisational development needs.

The **APP is distinct and fills a gap in the marketplace of provision with non-ETF providers.**

7 K H Q H D U H V W F R P S D U D E O H R I I H U Z D V V D L G W R E V E R T H E S S ¶ V P H Q W

distinctly different in its focus and delivery model.

The programme could be **strengthened** by:

Including advice that supports APs to engage their peers and managers in their organisation who would benefit from their support but who are resistant to it.

Either including sessions on leadership and management skills as part of APP, or signpost participants to other ETF courses that develop these skills.

Enabling practitioner-led networks and Communities of Practice developed through the programmes to be maintained where possible.

Promoting the benefits of including AP-type roles in quality improvement processes to senior managers through the ETF senior leadership and governance programmes.

Requiring employer organisations to commit to releasing time for participants to engage in AP professional development.



two of which were new for this year, and one of which was out of scope for the evaluation due to its timing (the National Conference).

The delivery of the programme had **high fidelity with its design**. The only two amendments were around the addition of the light touch Skylark option, which was added to provide five organisations with a less resource-intensive practitioner-led training option, and the timing of the Northstar programme, which came later in the year.

There is also strong evidence that the programme **embodies the ETF's 12 principles of effective CPD design**. It can evidence particularly strong alignment with six principles, with either weak evidence or evidence for improvements to three principles and sufficient evidence for the remaining principles.

### **Recommendations: Programme design and delivery**

- Recommendation 1: **Embed all 12 principles of effective design in programmes that support professional development of Advanced Practitioners**. The APP was especially strong in its use of evidenced-based content and opportunities for deliberate practice and



data had not yet been collected for several of the programme activities, as the programme came to a close at the end of March 2022 (after evaluation reporting). Nevertheless, the testimony of several participants about the quality of their experience, its uniqueness and the quality of the delivery team was both authentic (as they also talked about improvements and limitations) and enthusiastically positive.

### **Mechanisms for change**







learning dissemination. Those APs who have support from management or are in leadership positions themselves are more able to implement learning from the APP across staff cohorts or entire organisations. Without this supportive culture, it can be difficult to progress and embed learning. This extends to other staff as well, APs need the peers they are trying to support to be open to improvements and willing to help them push changes forward.

Alongside these enablers, participants identified several **barriers** that they have experienced, or expect to experience, in implementing their learning from the programme. The first of these is an external environmental factor associated with the pressures on the sector during this period of Covid-19 disruption to an already challenging sector. Other barriers included lack of organisational support, finding time to i

the role compared with those who had been doing it for some time or who had participated in  
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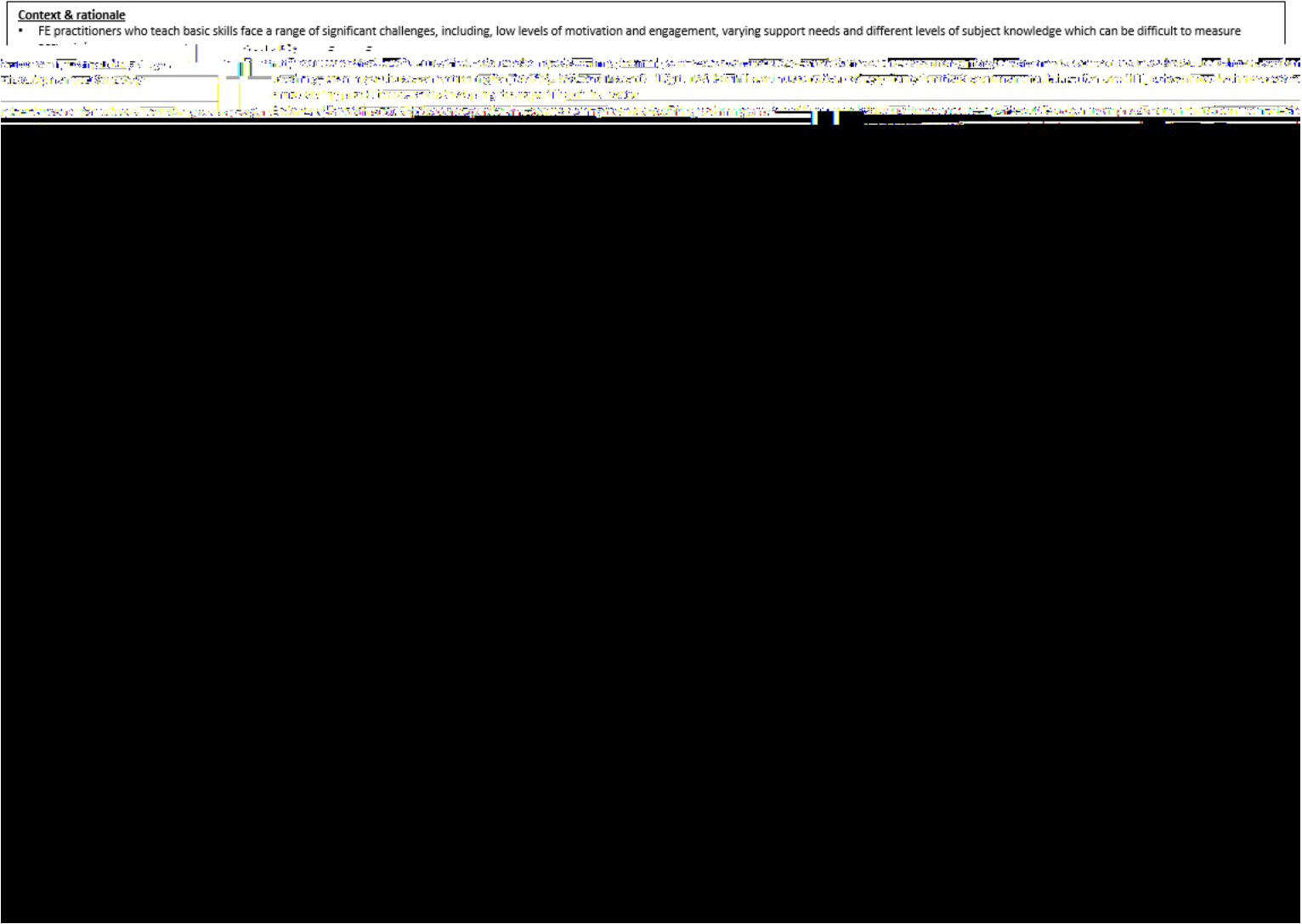
This evaluation ran to March 2022, however the programme continued beyond the timescales of the evaluation. Therefore, while this evaluation has been able to present findings around short term outcomes, the extent to which medium-







Figure A-1: APP logic model



Source: SQW





Logic model	Chapter	Research question	Monitoring data/QA	Survey data	Design & delivery focus groups	Participant interviews	Provider case studies
	5	Have participants undertaken CPD leadership roles and/or modelled effective CPD behaviours within their organisation? Have they contributed to inter-provider improvement networks?					
	5	To what extent can any observed improvements in participants ability to provide quality peer-to-peer support to their colleagues be attributed to participation in the programme?					
	5	To what extent can any observed improvements to professional practice, organisational performance and learner outcomes be attributed to participation in APP, bearing in mind the limited evaluation timescales?*					
	5	What barriers prevent programme participants from improving professional practice, organisational performance and learner outcomes? What supporting activities overcome these barriers?*					
	5	What enablers support programme participants to improve professional practice, organisational performance and learner outcomes? How could these be strengthened?					
	6	What actions should be taken to strengthen programme quality and impact?*					

# **ANNEX B: PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT INFORMATION TECHNICAL ANNEX**

## **Management information data collection**

activities they would be shadowing (who were also then typically marked a withdrawal). For those who truly did not attend, the delivery partner indicated that this was typically due to Covid-19 related



Source: SQW analysis of delivery partner programme management information

### **Other activities**

In addition to the five main strands of activity, programme management information for additional

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### **Table B-**

## ANNEX C: PARTICIPANT SURVEY TECHNICAL ANNEX

The ETF request participant feedback for many of their courses via an online self-completion survey. The survey asked participants to respond to key questions relating to a range of topics including: how participants will apply their learning in the next two months; likelihood of them recommending the learning experience to a colleague; and elements that participants like most and would improve about the learning experience.

This Annex presents an analysis of responses to the surveys completed by APP participants. It

contains multiple responses from one individual. As the survey data is anonymised, it is not possible to aggregate or compare responses from a single individual.

**Findings from Constellations mid-point survey**

The tables below present analysis by question for the APP mid-point learning experience and satisfaction survey for 47 Constellations participants.

**Table C-2: I was satisfied with...**

	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Don't know</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>Total</b>
My learning experience overall	23	17	3	0	3	1	0	47
The information I received	23	19	2	0	3	0	0	47
The organisation overall	25	15	4	0	3	0	0	47
the skills and knowledge of the facilitators								



**Strongly  
agree**

**Agree**

**Table C-6: How likely are you to recommend this learning experience to a friend or colleague?**

<b>Rating</b>	<b>No. of responses</b>
10 (extremely likely)	20
9	4
8	9
7	7
6	2
5	2
4	0
3	0
2	3
1 (not at all likely)	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>47</b>

Source: APP Constellations mid-point survey

**Table C-7: How confident are you in your knowledge and understanding of the topic?**

	<b>No. of responses</b>
Extremely confident	4
Very confident	24
Moderately confident	16
Slightly confident	3
Not at all confident	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>47</b>

Source: APP Constellations mid-point survey

**Table C-8: Constellations mid-point survey open response questions**

<b>Open response question</b>	<b>No. of responses</b>	<b>Common themes</b>
What do you think was the best part of the learning experience?	41	Time to reflect on own practice Being able to explore in a supportive environment Working with mentor Collaborating and networking with others Knowledgeable and passionate facilitators Online sessions Learning new information and developing new ideas
Please name one thing that would improve the learning experience	34	More comprehensive introduction to the module prior to commencing Dividing up of content to make it more manageable More guidance, clarity and structure post-event, including intended outcomes and objectives Event scheduling - In-person and more regular events More opportunity to share experiences Greater variety of facilitators and delivery style

### Findings from APP Skylark mid-point survey

The tables below present analysis by question for the APP mid-point learning experience and satisfaction survey for 34 Skylark participants.

**Table C-9: I was satisfied with...**

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	N/A	Total
My learning experience overall	19	13	0	0	1	0	1	34
The information I received	25	8	0	0	1	0	0	34
The organisation overall	26	7	0	0	1	0	0	34
the skills and knowledge of the facilitators	28	5	0	0	1	0	0	34

Source: APP Skylark mid-point survey

**Table C-10: The content was relevant and appropriate to my role**

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	N/A	Total
The content was relevant and appropriate to my role	23	10	0	0	1	0	0	34

Source: APP Skylark mid-point survey

**Table C-11: My learning experie**

			<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Don't know</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>Total</b>
will have a positive impact on my professional practice	18	15	0	0	1	0	0	34





## **Findings from APP CPD modules end-point survey**

The tables below present analysis by question for the APP end-



**Table C-18: My learning experience...**

**Strongly  
agree**

**Agree**

**Neither  
agree nor  
disagree**

**Table C-19: Have you shared the learning? If yes, with how many?**

Open response question	No. of responses	Common themes
collaborative practice or networking skills		Made connections and have collaborated with other participants post-event Bringing learned theory into practice (unseen observation, mentoring etc) & OR V H D W W H Q W L R Q W R W K H L Q C their influence on others
How have you shared learning with your colleagues?	37	Through active practice in meetings and the workplace Sharing thoughts via social media Developing new structures and communities within organisations Dissemination of physical resources
What do you think was the best part of the learning experience?	37	Time to reflect on own practice Being able to explore ideas and experiment with practice in a supportive environment Working with mentor Collaborating, sharing and networking with others Knowledgeable and passionate facilitators Online sessions Learning new information and developing new ideas



college and with other colleges. Constellation B & C Connection Days have invited like-minded practitioners from institutions around the country, to establish relationships which are then continued through the AP Slack group - an online collaboration platform allowing participants to share questions, ideas and resources. The college were instrumental in developing #ThinkFest - a cross-country event to showcase the Skylark programme and bring the AP community together.

Through networking and community events, the College have been able to share their learning beyond those who were directly involved in the programme. For example, with events like

programme for new APs within the organisation. By delivering an AP programme in-house, the college hopes to create continual development opportunities, helping to improve retention of AP expertise in a sector facing significant employee churn.

### Impacts for learners

Participants reported a culture shift emerging within the college which has been influenced by the activities of APs and their involvement in the programme. Staff were said to feel more motivated and empowered in their responsibilities. Following dissemination of learning from the programme, teachers have begun adopting *Thinking Environment* principles within the classroom. It was reported that learners appeared to be more confident in themselves and their ambitions for HE and employment, with the expectation that a more inclusive culture will improve learner outcomes in the medium term.

*some observations where I saw it happen. They are learning to listen, take turns, to share equality of space with th*

### APP participant – Manager/CPD lead

Despite having reported positive outcomes and impacts through participation in APP, staff still feel there are opportunities to further demonstrate how *Thinking Environments* can support learning, wellbeing and sharing of best practice. Staff felt that receiving a greater level of remission, would legitimise the time they spend on CPD and would allow them to focus on implementing learning. Continued support from senior leadership was also felt to be important in maintaining momentum towards building a more inclusive and supportive college environment.

### Impact Case Study B

#### Introduction

Organisation B is a large further education college offering programmes from entry level to higher education in a number of subject areas. The college has three main sites and three satellite apprenticeship centres. For several years the college was consis WHQWO\ UDWHG μ\*RRG¶ E KRZHYHU LQ WKLW UDWLQJ GURSSHG WR μ5HTXLUHV ,PSURY to re-evaluate their leadership, approach to teaching, learning and assessment, and quality improvement processes. The college is working towards a culture of continuous improvement with a clear focus on improving learner outcomes and experiences. A decision was made to forgo formal teaching observations, instead implementing a more holistic approach to quality improvement to allow practitioners to have a say in their own professional development.

At the college, Advanced Practitioners are called Teaching and Learning Quality Leads (TLQLs). Most of the TLQLs time is focused on professional development of staff alongside monitoring and improvement of teaching, learning and assessment. However, they also all teach for at least a few hours each week. This role has evolved over time with the culture shift of the college, from a formal quality role of observing and grading to a more supportive coaching role. Each TLQL supports GHVLJQDWHG μEXVLQHVV DUHDV\$RKRZLQYDWHU¶¶KEN\WWDU LWQRJ ¶HF¶SR their peers so that different business areas can learn from one another.

Representatives from the college have been involved with APP since its inception four years ago. In 2021-22 all six of the TLQLs participated in the programme, alongside other staff members such as curriculum managers, members of senior leadership and Learning Engagement Achievement and Participation mentors (LEAPs) who are responsible for pastoral care.

This case study is informed by interviews with four representatives from the college, including three TLQLs who have been involved in the APP for two or more years, and one member of the senior leadership team responsible for quality, who has also participated in APP this year and in past years. Case study interviews have been supplemented by programme management information and Ofsted inspection reports.

### **Engagement and satisfaction**

Throughout their four years of involvement in APP, staff from the college have participated in various activities, including all iterations of the Constellations Communities of Practice, training courses on topics such as *Thinking Environments*, and the National Conference where a number of staff members have presented in the past. In 2021-22 participation in Constellations C has continued, while staff have also participated in new strands such as the Northstar and Skylark.

As part of their Northstar project, two experienced TLQLs have been developing training for members of curriculum teams who will then go on to train others in their areas. These are

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possibly become future APs for the college.

A small team, led by one of the TLQLs, developed two college-wide professional development days as part of the Skylark strand. Through these training days staff from different curriculum areas across the college (including apprenticeship sites) were invited to participate in different themed professional development sessions, which used *Thinking Environments* and *Ideas Rooms*, and were then expected to bring back and co-evaluate learning with colleagues in their team, to identify ways they could use learning in their area. Topics included pedagogical techniques, for example retrieval practice.

these groups contained maths and English practitioners alongside other curriculum areas, to work together to better embed maths and English in other subject areas and vice versa. This year, they are focused on bringing curriculum areas back together in person after the disruptions of the pandemic, and next year they plan to create further cross-curriculum groups, to

The TLQLs interviewed indicated that they had improved their teaching practice, by implementing concepts such as *Thinking Environments* and *Ideas Rooms* within their own teaching. As all three teach on the teacher training course, these concepts were being naturally passed along to future teachers. The two TLQLs participating in Northstar, who are very experienced, felt they were still learning new skills through this programme, particularly on how to effectively plan and conduct professional develop sessions.

In addition to professional practice, participation in the APP has led to improved confidence for all programme was for them. However, as soon as they got involved, the ability to connect with other practitioners and find new creative ways of supporting peers and improving teaching learning and assessment led to improved confidence in themselves and their role. In addition, interviewees felt that by using *Thinking Environments* and other concepts learnt through APP throughout the college has provided practitioners with a voice and ownership over their own CPD, improving their confidence as well. This has changed the mindset of many staff members, removing barriers and allowing them to explore ways to improve and develop their craft, with the support of TLQLs and colleagues.

### Outcomes for organisational performance

All interviewees indicated that the college has experienced a major cultural shift in recent years, particularly around quality processes for improving teaching, learning and assessment. While this culture shift, from traditional formal observation and improvement strategies to a more open and practitioner-led approach to quality improvement, began before participation in APP, interviewees felt that the programme has certainly contributed to and likely sped up the changes that have been implemented. Examples included:

*Thinking Environments* are used throughout the college at all levels. Interviewees indicated that senior leadership within the college is very supportive, and this has been helpful in implementing learning from APP. This is reflected in the fact that they use this concept in their own meetings.

staff with a voice and creating a safe non-judgemental space for knowledge to be shared and problems to be solved.

knowledge sharing within and across curriculum areas. These activities have contributed to the more holistic learning experience.

Prior to participating in APP, the college was considered to be very insular, with few relationships with other colleges. Interviewees felt that APP provided them with countless opportunities to network and learn from other practitioners and colleges, which has enabled the sharing of resources and best practice and provided a sounding board for new ideas. The profile of the college has also been raised through participation in these communities, as they are often asked to share learning from the significant changes they have been implementing.



Interviewees felt that they have made considerable progress in improving teaching, learning and assessment since their last Ofsted inspection, and they expect this to be confirmed in their next inspection which is expected imminently. Interim inspection reports (in 2020 and 2021)

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**Impacts for learners**

College staff interviewed stressed the fact that learners and their outcomes are at the core of everything they do. The learner voice has become increasingly important within the college quality improvement processes. Students have been invited to participate in learning walks with TLQLs and staff and have been consulted through *Thinking Environments* and *Ideas Rooms* to hear their thoughts and opinions about their learning experiences. Using these techniques has made it possible for quality to hear from a range of learners and has made learners more comfortable with quality staff.

The senior leader reported that data for this year indicates that there have been improvements in learner attendance and attainment, particularly in maths and English when compared to last year. However, they did stress that is it difficult to compare year on year given COVID disruptions over the last couple of years. Other interviewees also felt that they had seen improvements to learner outcomes, for example the TLQL responsible for A Levels has seen improvements in attainment there and those teaching teacher training have seen improvements in attendance. In addition, TLQLs felt that digital skills have been improved across the college, as learners and staff alike have had to adapt to online learning. Practitioners have used techniques learnt in APP in sessions with V W X G H Q W V I R U H [ D P S O H X V L Q J E U H D N R X W U R R P V D Q G μ F K D W this, they feel students have learnt crucial digital literacy skills, as well as employability skills needed for an increasingly online professional world.

An area of focus for the college has been around improving the overall learning experience for learners to ensure they are happy and healthy and to improve confidence. A programme has been implemented which covers safeguarding and employability topics while also providing a supportive and caring space. One of the TLQLs who has participated in APP has worked with colleagues to transform the way these topics are taught. As many practitioners find some safeguarding topics difficult to teach (sexual harassment for example), the TLQL has brought together staff from different roles, such as practitioners, LEAPs and safeguarding representatives using *Ideas Rooms* to come up with creative ways to teach challenging topics. These sessions have been well received, with a lot of student involvement asking questions during and after sessions. Following these sessions, the college has experienced a significant increase in reports by students to the safeguarding team. While this is alarming, it also means that the messages from these sessions are getting through to students and they feel more comfortable reporting challenging issues they may be facing in their lives.

**Impact Case Study C**

**Introduction**

Organisation C is a large general Further Education college delivering technical, professional and community education in a wide range of curriculum areas. The catalyst for change at the college was an Ofsted in March 2020, just prior to the Covid-19 lockdown. Previously, the college had been graded as an Outstanding provider under the common inspection framework (CIF), which put focused on outcomes for students. In 2020, they were inspected under the new education inspection framework (EIF), which had more emphasis on the quality of teaching and learning and changes to V W X G H Q W V I R U H [ D P S O H X V L Q J E U H D N R X W U R R P V D Q G μ F K D W were rated as good by Ofsted but not consistently excellent at

teaching and learning. Following this, they decided to internal

community of practice amongst themselves. Different members of the team were working on different projects, e.g. a sustainability project, a gifted and talented approach. They were supported by the Assistant Principal for Curriculum and were given exposure across the college to share their learning. In addition, the Skylark team have grown in confidence and self-belief and were seen as leading the conversation on effective teaching and learning practice within the college. As they believe the concept of *Ideas Rooms* is so worthwhile, they have a drive to get people to buy into it and were planning to hold an *Ideas Room* with the executive team to get senior buy-in to the model.

### Outcomes for organisational performance

There was evidence of better cross-departmental sharing as a result of the Skylark project. One of the APs on the Skylark programme, who works on the built environment and was running the T level programme, has developed a strong approach centred around project-based learning. They had started developing this practice with their neighbouring engineering department who were also developing new approaches to teaching. This was said to be having a positive impact and was one example of the way in which the culture of bottom-up improvement was raising standards of teaching and learning by , rather than relying on one person to pull it all up.

However, one challenge the APs had faced was disseminating information about the Skylark project and gaining buy-in from across all staff groups. The Assistant Principal for Curriculum said that this was partly due to a lack of staff capacity, as well as the disruptions experienced in the past year, leading to absenteeism and students struggling with the concept of being in college. The APs were looking for a way to promote the programme in an easily understandable and digestible way.

### Impacts for learners

Whilst consultees felt it was too early to evidence impacts on learners, it was acknowledged that one of the APs had started using the same approach in their delivery to students. The AP who worked on the digital curriculum had been using the *Ideas Room* approach for project meetings with computer software designers for brainstorming ideas and fault-finding. The students had bought into this approach and had been learning how to listen, deal with differences of opinion and give equal Z H L J K W W R R Wsk and so, they said. Their students were getting better ideas and getting their assumptions challenged without feeling threatened. The APs hope to cascade this approach to other student groups and roll it out more widely in the college.

The APs said that they would not have achieved any of these outcomes without the APP. Certain individuals might have worked on their own project or developed their practice but being involved in the programme has given a joint understanding and the concepts and ideas discussed were more likely to become adopted and become shared practice.

## Impact Case Study D

### Introduction

Organisation D is a medium-sized FE college with three main campuses as well as some off-site provision for students with SEND. It is an occupationally focused college offering a wide-ranging curriculum including full-time courses for 16-18-year-olds, Higher Education courses for over 18s, apprenticeships and full-time and part-time courses for adults. The college has made a strategic decision in the last few years to focus on a transformation programme, create AP roles, and empower professionalism. The organisation has a stated aim to put staff development and teaching innovation at the core of its strategic developments. Each staff member has a performance and development review and can access a budget for professional development.

Advanced Practitioners (APs) are known as Teaching and Learning Coaches (TLCs) at the college.



assessment plans, by doing peer observations as well as thinking through how to creatively deliver

implement its wider strategic programme of work.



**Effective CPD will:**

**The reasons for this are:**

**To achieve this principle, providers should:**

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**Delivery Principles**

7 Model effective teaching practice

The medium is a part of the message

Ensure that all materials and trainers are informed by a



