



Centre for Applied Learning Annual Report 2008-2009



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Chair of the CAL Strategy Board

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Foreword by Aideen McGinley Chair of the Centre for Applied Learning Strategy Board 2006/2009

As the first, and now outgoing, Chair of the Centre for Applied Learning's (CAL) Strategy Board it is with great pleasure that I take this opportunity to write the foreword of CAL's 3rd Annual Report.

CAL now is very much a fixture in the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) landscape and is only three years old. It was 2 October 2006 that CAL assumed responsibility for all NICS generic training and since then CAL's story has been one of continuous improvement and business growth which CAL's 3rd Annual Report demonstrates: with productivity up by over 10%; quality improved and prices reduced by 20% in-year.

The figures in this report underline the steadily increasing confidence in CAL's performance, delivery and capability. In setting corporate priorities, Departmental HR Directors and Training Commissioners have helped to ensure the alignment of CAL's provision both strategically and operationally. This partnership with Departments has been fundamental to CAL's success. Particular highlights include CAL's recognition as an Investor in People organisation in April 2008 and later its success in the 2008 Whitehall and Westminster Civil Service Excellence Awards which was recognised by the Permanent Secretaries' Group and important external Departments as recognition of the quality of CAL's training provision.

Many have been instrumental in CAL's success and I would like to acknowledge the support at the highest level of the NICS, Head of Civil Service and Permanent Secretaries who collectively shared the vision that a single internal provider of generic training would be a strategic asset in the reform agenda and could deliver a step change in quality. They have supported and encouraged CAL's progress as the first NICS Shared Service Centre (SSC) to move to hard charging and full cost recovery. My colleagues on the Strategy Board both past and present, have provided strategic direction, commitment and continued support and encouragement to the CEO and staff during CAL's successful establishment and rapid consolidation. In particular I would like to recognise the excellence of the CEO, of the Directors and staff who have achieved improvements in the quality, quantity and range of training provided whilst maintaining focus on delivering value for money through efficiency and better productivity. It was their sheer hard work, personal commitment, expertise and indeed tenacity that have made CAL the success it is.

Finally I would also like to convey my thanks to the 'customers' who have shown their loyalty and support to CAL over the past three years. Without them it is somewhat obvious we would have no story to tell!

I leave the CAL Board with a real sense of admiration at what the organisation has achieved in such a short time. I wish my fellow Board members, and in particular Leo O'Reilly the new Chair, continuous success in positioning CAL to effectively meet the challenges that lie ahead. I have no doubt it will go from strength to strength under such stewardship.



Aideen McGinley

Introduction

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I am pleased to introduce the Centre for Applied Learning's (CAL) third annual report for the period 1 April 2008 to 31 March 2009. This report outlines CAL's achievements during the year and the issues the organisation faces as we look ahead.

CAL has now been up and running for three years and I have to say that time has flown. We have continued to develop and grow the business as well as provide our customers (Departments) with value for money through reduced course costs while continuing to improve the quality of the services we provide. You will find evidence of these achievements in this Annual Report. We have continued to work towards achieving the benefits identified from the establishment of the Shared Service Centre (SSC) for the delivery of generic training. In terms of cash releasing savings actual savings in 2008/09 were £1.3m against a target of £1m.

During the year CAL has continued to show that it is strategically placed to support NICS reform through increasing the level of skills and qualifications. We continue to support Professional Skills for Government and during the year CAL commenced the development of a competence linked policy training programme to meet the needs of the NICS in terms of policy development. The programme itself will be accredited by the Institute of Leadership and Management at Level 7.

It is always good to receive recognition and during the year I was particularly pleased that CAL won gold at the prestigious Whitehall and Westminster World Civil Service Awards in relation to the development and delivery of a pilot Essential Skills (Skills for Life) programme. This recognition further endorses the quality of the programmes CAL offers.

While I am obviously proud of what has been achieved with CAL, I realise that these achievements would not have been possible without the input and contribution from many other business areas. My particular thanks go to the Heads of Profession and other subject experts who provide quality assurance of CAL's courses. I also wish to thank CAL's Board for their direction throughout the year and our external delivery partners for adding value and quality to our programme range. My thanks also to the Training Commissioners' Group for their insight into the training needed to support their businesses and for their encouragement on CAL's improvement journey. I recognise that on some occasions we rely on experienced staff from areas of the NICS to deliver aspects of courses – what I refer to as practitioner based delivery. My thanks to those individuals for their input to our programmes. Finally, my thanks to staff in CAL for their continuing commitment, professionalism and support.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Steve Hare". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Steve Hare
Chief Executive

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About CAL

Following earlier strategic reviews of training and development in the NICS, in January 2006 the Permanent Secretaries' Group (PSG) agreed that a SSC should be established to provide all generic training and specialist ICT training in the NICS. As a consequence CAL was established in April 2006 as the first SSC in the NICS. The establishment of CAL was a response to the view that training required a more strategic and corporate approach.

The decision to establish CAL was also based on the significant potential benefits which could be achieved from implementing a shared service approach. The benefits centred on four main areas i.e. increased efficiency and effectiveness, improved quality and a greater focus on customer service. In addition it was recognised that CAL would play a valuable role in supporting NICS Reform by providing staff with new skills.

Governance Arrangements

CAL has unique governance arrangements. Through its Chief Executive it is accountable to the Accounting Officer of the Department of Finance and Personnel (DFP) but responsible for delivery and performance to the Chair of the CAL Strategy Board. CAL is an NICS Corporate HR (CHR) Learning and Development (L&D) service located within DFP. CAL's governance is designed to ensure that it answers to its primary stakeholders through its Strategy Board which is made up of nominees from a number of NICS Departments. The purpose of the Board is to give strategic direction and guidance to CAL and provide high level oversight of its operational delivery. A list of Strategy Board members during 2008/09 is shown at Annex A.

The Strategy Board is also supported by an Audit and Risk Committee (A&RC) which has responsibility for issues of risk, control and governance and associated assurance. Details of Committee members during the year are also included in Annex A.

CAL is headed by a Chief Executive, at SCS Grade 5 level, who is responsible to the Strategy Board for CAL's performance against the targets set out in the annual Business Plan. The Chief Executive leads a Senior Management Team of four Grade 7s with responsibilities covering training delivery, corporate services and customer services.

The content of this Annual Report provides substantial evidence that the benefits sought by PSG in establishing CAL have been, and continue to be delivered, and that CAL's performance continues to improve year on year.

Summary of Performance

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The following is a summary of CAL's performance (Table 1 below refers); it does not include ICT technical training which is reported on separately in this report.

Service Delivery

- CAL trained 13,475 people – an increase of 4% on 2007/08.
- This equates to 17,737 trainee days – an increase of 10.2% on 2007/08.

Productivity

- The average attendance on classes was 11 – compared to the average attendance of 10 in 2007/08.
- CAL delivered 1,264 events, a decrease of 4.8% on 2007/08 arising in part because of larger class sizes.



Dougie Cusin - Training Consultant

Sales

- Total income was £3.827m against expenditure of £3.78m giving a cost recovery rate of 101.2% (target 100% i.e. Full Cost Recovery).
- Departments were charged almost £3m for training, of which 9% (£268k) was for cancellations.
- The average charge to Departments for a trainee day was £169 compared to £220 in 2007/08.

Quality of Training

- 97.5% of trainees evaluated the overall standard of training as good or very good (Box 1 and 2 of a 5 box scale) compared to 96% in 2007/08.

	2008/099	2007/08	2006/07
Service Delivery			
People trained	13,475	12,962	9,828
Trainee days	17,737	16,091	13,919
Productivity			
Events delivered	1,264	1,328	1,215
Average attendance	10.7	9.8	8.1
Sales			
Total charge	£2,991k	£3,533k	£3,009k
Cancellation charge	£268k	£411k	£312k
% cancellation	9.0%	11.6%	10.4%
Average charge for a trainee	£169	£220	£216
Quality of Training			
Very good / good	97.5%	96.0%	<i>not available</i>
Satisfactory	1.9%	3.4%	<i>not available</i>
Less than satisfactory	0.6%	0.6%	<i>not available</i>

TABLE 1: SUMMARY OF RESULTS 2008/09

Table 1 above shows the steady improvement in CAL's performance over the past three years. The year on year improvements have been achieved without an increase in staffing resources which has averaged 51 over each of the three years.

CAL Productivity and Service Delivery

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Delivery of Training Priorities during 2008/09

During 2008/09 CAL provided training on all the NICS corporate training priorities which were:

- Leadership and Management Development
- Programme and Project Management
- Financial Management
- Administrative Development
- Diversity and Equality
- Legislative and Statutory Training
- G6/G7 Programme
- Policy and Legislation
- Sustainable Development
- Freedom of Information.

Due to the increasing rate of change in the NICS, such as, the ongoing work of the NI Assembly in making legislation and ensuring Departmental accountability and, the implementation of reform projects across the service, a wide range of other programmes were successfully designed and delivered including the following:-

- Certificate in Training Practice (CTP)
- Criterion Based Interviewing
- Financial Management Overview
- International Financial Report Standards (IFRS)
- Implementing EU Directives
- Introduction to Sustainable Development
- Sustainable Development for Decision Makers.



Presentation of CTP certificates

Not only have these programmes met the training needs of Departments, they have also provided opportunities for participants to network and in instances, such as the EU visit, secured funding for departmental projects.

To verify that Departments were content that CAL had provided training to meet the NICS corporate training priorities, CAL sought and obtained written assurances from the HR Directors which confirmed they were satisfied.

Training Delivery

The increase in numbers of people trained and trainee days achieved in 2008/09 has contributed to CAL being able to reduce costs of providing its services through increased efficiencies. Table 2 below and Chart 1 overleaf show that the large Departments have accounted for the majority of the training with five Departments – DARD, DFP, DOE, DSD and DRD – accounting for two-thirds of the training places and trainee days. The number of trainee days is a more accurate measure of productivity and indicator of the quantity of training delivered to each Department, as it takes account of courses lasting more than one day and of half day courses.

Department	Training places	% of Total places	Trainee Days*	% of Total Trainee Days	No. of Non-Ind Staff (Apr 08)	Ratio (Attendance per 100 Staff)
AFBI**	87	0.6%	151	0.8%	n/a	n/a
CMED***	356	2.6%	532	3.0%	1,636	21.8
DARD	2,188	16.2%	2,575	14.5%	2,654	82.4
DCAL	234	1.7%	318	1.8%	251	93.2
DE	344	2.6%	540	3.0%	657	52.4
DEL	941	7.0%	1,301	7.3%	1,814	51.9
DETI	616	4.6%	871	4.9%	675	91.3
DFP	2,006	14.9%	2,902	16.4%	3,165	63.4
DHSSPS	936	6.9%	1,318	7.4%	881	106.2
DOE	1,929	14.3%	2,367	13.3%	2,738	70.5
DRD	1,399	10.4%	1,891	10.7%	1,994	70.2
DSD	1,500	11.1%	1,822	10.3%	5,892	25.5
OFMDFM	319	2.4%	457	2.6%	416	76.7
OTHERS	620	4.6%	692	3.9%	n/a	n/a
TOTAL	13,475	100.0%	17,737	100.0%	22,773	59.2

TABLE 2: COURSE ATTENDANCE BY DEPARTMENT

Notes to Table 2:

* A Trainee Day is a day of training received by one person so a two-day training course attended by 15 people would be 30 trainee days.

** Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute (AFBI), a non-departmental public body, was formerly part of DARD and during 2008/09 DARD continued to fund its training.

*** Child Maintenance and Enforcement Division (CMED), formerly Child Support Agency, is shown separately from DSD as it had separate funding arrangements.

4%
increase in
the number
of staff
trained

10%
increase in
trainee days
delivered

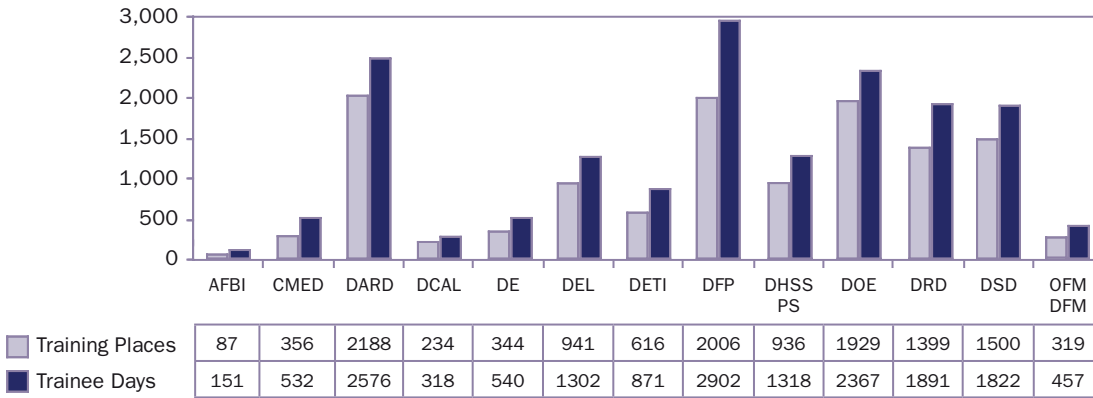


CHART 1: COURSE ATTENDANCE BY DEPARTMENT

Chart 2 below shows a comparison between the number of training places filled by each Department and the size of the Department. There is little correlation between Department size and number of training places. Table 2 above shows that the average number of training places for every 100 staff is 59, i.e. three places for every five members of staff. The variation between Departments could be attributed to several factors; for example, DSD staff are among the least likely to attend courses run by CAL (one place per four staff) but this is largely due to the agreed arrangement for in-house delivery of generic training to staff below Executive Officer level, which are a high proportion of DSD staff.

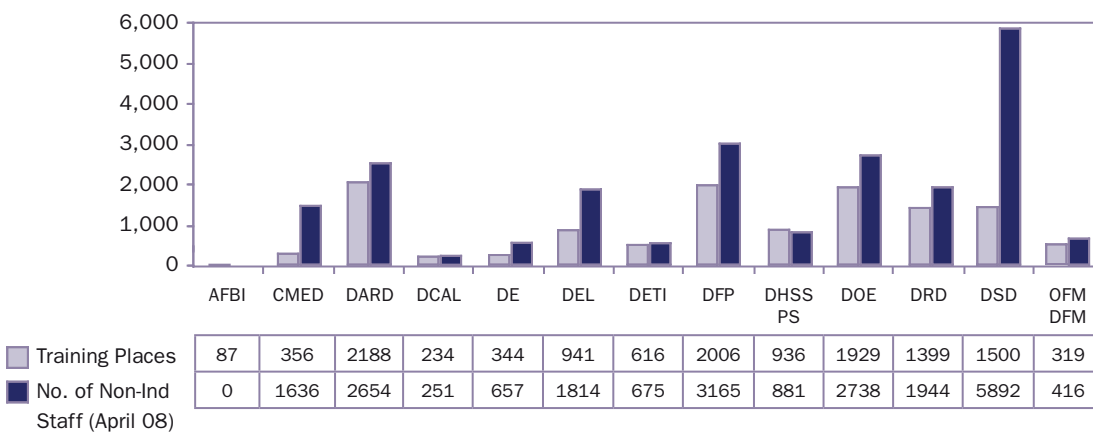


CHART 2: COURSE ATTENDANCE BY DEPARTMENT COMPARED WITH DEPARTMENT SIZE

Attendance at Events

The average attendance per course is calculated by dividing the total number of attendees (13,475) by the number of events (1,264). This resulted in an average attendance of 11 (rounded) compared to an average attendance of 10 in 2007/08.

Whilst the average rate of attendance has increased by 9% on the previous year, CAL still has capacity to deliver up to one-third more training volume from the present resource if demand was better matched to provision and the failure to attend rate (9.3%) reduced significantly. An increase in the number of trainees on courses means that CAL can increase its productivity through a higher level of output for the same resource input. This enables CAL to deliver the same volume of training through a reduced number of courses and ultimately reduce the cost of training.

Average attendance
at CAL courses
increased
by around 9%

Events delivered by CAL

During 2008/09, CAL held 1,264 training events, see Table 3 below, a reduction of 4.8% on the previous year. While fewer events were delivered more staff were in attendance thereby increasing productivity and creating spare capacity. Just over half (54.5%) of these events were delivered by CAL's own trainers with the remainder delivered under CAL's framework contracts.



Colette Leeson - Senior Training Consultant

Type of Training	CAL Trainer		External Provider		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Generic	689	54.5%	575	45.5%	1,264	100.0%

TABLE 3: EVENTS DELIVERED

The 1,264 events were delivered as 127 different courses within 11 categories of training, as shown in Table 4.

Category	No of Events	% of events
Health and Safety	249	19.7%
Leadership and Management	221	17.5%
People	201	15.9%
ICT End User	155	12.3%
Recruitment and Selection	120	9.5%
Policy	113	8.9%
Project and Programme Management	51	4.0%
Information and Communication	50	4.0%
Resources	47	3.7%
Legislation	34	2.7%
NVQ	23	1.8%
Total	1,264	100%

TABLE 4: EVENTS DELIVERED BY CATEGORY

Annex B contains a list of the courses that CAL delivered during the year, together with their frequency.

Masterclasses for Senior Management

CAL, on behalf of CHR in DFP (formerly Central Personnel Group), delivers each year, a series of half-day Masterclasses designed to expose senior managers, Grade 7 and above, to high profile speakers and leading edge thinking on relevant topics. The aim is to stimulate thinking and increase awareness/knowledge of subject areas relevant to the work of the NICS and/or Professional Skills for Government. The Masterclasses also provide a networking opportunity for attendees. CHR provides CAL with the funding for the Masterclasses.

The Masterclasses in 2008/09 were developed around the theme of Leadership in the context of Professional Skills for Government and, as Table 5 below shows, five Masterclasses were delivered to a total audience of 492 (average 98 per event). The total direct cost of the first four events was £24,991; the fifth event was funded by OFMDFM.

Despite the continuing success of the Masterclasses and the positive feedback, the high numbers that fail to attend (FTA) continues to be a concern – overall a third of those booked on Masterclasses did not attend. CAL will consider the most appropriate action in 2009/10 to highlight and reduce the FTA rate.

Event Date	Speaker / Presenter	Subject	Number attended	Cost	Cost per person	Failure to Attend Rate
08-May-08	Pete Ronayne Federal Executive Institute	Leadership in Operational Delivery	102	£5,384	£53	36%
28-May-08	Keith Allred Harvard Kennedy School	Leadership in the Common Interest	68	£6,484	£95	42%
30-Oct-08	Drama for Training	Leading an Inclusive Workforce	79	£7,145	£90	27%
25-Feb-09	Tim McKane Chairman of Institute of Practitioners in Advertising, NI Forum	Magic & Logic – Creating Conversations	75	£5,978	£80	44%
13-Mar-09	Sir Gus O'Donnell Cabinet Secretary and Head of Home Civil Service	21st Century Civil Service	168	n/a	n/a	24%

TABLE 5: MASTERCLASS EVENTS

Charge to each Department

Table 6 below shows how a total charge of almost £3m was applied to Departments for generic training and also highlights the significant cost to Departments of cancellations which amounted to 9% of the total charges. This is an improvement on 2007/08, when cancellation charges amounted to 11.6% of the total charges.

Department	Course charge	Cancellation Charge	Total Charge	% of Overall charge	Cancellations as % of Dept Charges	Total Trainee Days	Average Charge per Trainee Day
AFBI	£21,955	£488	£22,443	0.8%	2.2%	151	£149
CMED	£74,436	£7,474	£81,910	2.7%	9.1%	532	£154
DARD	£361,169	£21,203	£382,372	12.8%	5.5%	2,575	£148
DCAL	£52,658	£5,458	£58,116	1.9%	9.4%	318	£183
DE	£86,638	£10,794	£97,432	3.3%	11.1%	540	£180
DEL	£203,205	£19,090	£222,295	7.4%	8.6%	1,301	£171
DETI	£142,620	£11,371	£153,991	5.1%	7.4%	871	£177
DFP	£456,429	£48,673	£505,102	16.9%	9.6%	2,902	£174
DHSSPS	£218,086	£22,277	£240,363	8.0%	9.3%	1,318	£182
DOE	£364,546	£56,520	£421,066	14.1%	13.4%	2,367	£178
DRD	£267,664	£18,498	£286,162	9.6%	6.5%	1,891	£151
DSD	£273,914	£24,994	£298,908	10.0%	8.4%	1,822	£164
OFMDFM	£75,700	£2,480	£78,180	2.6%	3.2%	457	£171
Others	£123,508	£19,059	£142,567	4.8%	13.4%	692	£206
Total	£2,722,528	£268,379	£2,990,907	100.0%	9.0%	17,737	£169

TABLE 6 CHARGES per DEPARTMENT

Decrease in the average charge for a trainee day

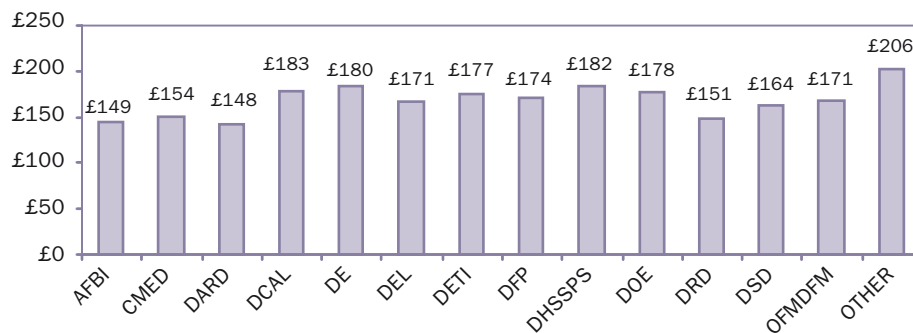


CHART 3: AVERAGE CHARGE PER TRAINEE DAY

The average charge for a trainee day was £169 (Chart 3).

The variation between Departments can be explained by product mix and the impact of cancellation charges.

ICT Technical Training

From 1 September 2008, CAL delegated the management of ICT Technical Training to the ICT Training Commissioner who reports to the Head of Profession for ICT. As a result CAL is now reporting management information in relation to ICT Technical Training separately from other generic training.

During the year 65 events were delivered to 505 staff which equated to 1,805 trainee days. The total cost of this training was £315,000 i.e. an average charge per trainee day of £175.

Quality of Training Provision

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Quality Assurance

CAL courses are quality assured in a number of ways. At the design stage NICS subject experts or Heads of Profession quality assure and approve course content. Delivery is by professionally qualified CAL trainers or top quality external consultants and is continually monitored by CAL's training managers. Trainees evaluate the course in terms of what they have learned, the quality of delivery by the trainer and the relevance of the content to their work. Departments assess the impact of the training on their business in terms of improved performance by the trainee. Further information on trainee and departmental evaluation, known as first and second level evaluation respectively, is provided in this section.

Strategic Partnerships

During the year CAL continued to operate through a framework contract of strategic partnerships with a range of leading external providers. CAL has been working closely with these partners to ensure that all course content is authoritative, current and relevant to the needs of our customers. The partnership is one of collaboration which has included joint delivery in some areas and there has been close involvement with NICS subject experts to quality assure content and delivery. Feedback mechanisms are in place to ensure that the very high levels of quality being provided are maintained.

97.5% of trainees rate CAL training as good or very good (Box 1 or 2 in a five box scale)



DEL staff who obtained a Level 2 Award in Business Administration

Oxford Cambridge RSA (OCR)

- Level 2 Award in Customer Service
- Level 3 Award in Customer Service
- Level 2 Award in Business Administration
- Level 3 Award in Business Administration
- Level 3 Award in Assessing Candidates using a range of methods (A1 Assessor Award)
- Level 4 Award in Conducting Internal Quality Assurance of the Assessment Process (V1 Internal Verifier Award)

Accreditation

Where appropriate, CAL courses and programmes are accredited as nationally recognised qualifications. See Table 7 overleaf for the number of accredited qualifications awarded during the year. This involves a process of robust independent external accreditation and ensures that CAL's standards of programme administration and delivery matches national standards. CAL is the NICS accredited centre for the following:

Institute of Administrative Management (IAM)

- Level 2 Introductory Award in Administrative Management (designed for Administrative Assistant and Administrative Officer grades)

Institute of Leadership and Management (ILM)

- Level 3 Award in First Line Management (aimed at E02 and E01 grades)
- Level 5 Award in Management (designed for Staff Officer and Deputy Principal grades)



Janine McBride (CAL) (R) receiving her Level 2 Award Certificate in Business Administration from Claire Kelly (NVQ Assessor)

In addition to accredited centres, CAL trainers are also licensed by the Northern Ireland Tourist Board to deliver Welcome Host and Welcome Host+ programmes. This customer service based training is delivered by specially trained staff and awards participants with a recognised certificate on completion. During the 08/09 year 14 trainees achieved Welcome Host with 161 being awarded Welcome Host+.

During the 2008/09 year CAL extended its suite of accredited programmes by achieving recognition as a CIPD accredited centre for the Level 3 Certificate in Training Practice. This programme is aimed at new and existing training officers who wish to develop their skills and knowledge in this career specific area.

CAL is also striving to develop its ILM provision with the introduction of two new Level 7 Awards in the upcoming year. The Grade 6/7 Leadership Programme – Leading for Change was launched by CAL in April 2008. The programme is designed for leaders at Grade 6/7 who are either newly appointed/promoted or for those who wish to develop and increase their leadership and core professional skills. Work is ongoing to accredit this programme as the ILM Level 7 Award in Strategic Leadership. CAL has also been working closely with the NICS Head of Profession for Policy to develop a competence linked policy training programme to meet the needs of current and future NICS policy practitioners. This programme, designed for Grade 6/7s, will be accredited by ILM at Level 7. As each unit will be placed on the Qualifications Credit Framework (QCF) and Scottish equivalent, it will be available for delivery by any Level 7 centre throughout the UK.



Sir Nigel Hamilton (centre) with some staff who attended the Grade 6/7 Programme

Awarding Body	Qualification	No of Candidates Completed	No of Candidates Progressing
ILM	Level 3 Award in First Line Management	124	162
	Level 5 Award in Management	48	61
NVQ	Level 2 in Business Administration	0	25
	Level 3 in Business Administration	0	26
	Level 2 in Customer Service	3	0
	Level 3 in Customer Service	10	4
CIPD	Certificate in Training Practice	12	20
IAM	Level 2 Introductory Award in Administrative Management	393	83

TABLE 7: SUMMARY OF ACCREDITED QUALIFICATIONS 2008/09

Evaluation

Approximately ten and a half thousand Training Assessment Questionnaires (i.e. Level 1 evaluation) were completed. Table 8, below, shows that trainees have rated their training very highly, with almost everyone reporting that the course had met their objectives; similar very high levels of satisfaction were expressed for relevance, content and delivery of courses. Between 94% and 98% of respondents have awarded the top two ratings in each of the key assessment categories, while a tiny proportion (1% to 2%) considered the standard to have been unsatisfactory.

The results show that, as part of CAL's objective to ensure that it provides a high quality service to its customers, CAL has exceeded its targets of 90% for customer satisfaction with courses meeting participants' objectives and being of relevance to work. Satisfaction levels in these areas were around 98% (assessment boxes 1, 2 and 3). CAL also achieved a rating of 99.4% for satisfaction with the standard of training provided by trainers.

	Number of Assessments	Good or Better (Box 1 & 2)	Satisfactory (Box 3)	Less than Satisfactory (Box 4 & 5)
Pre-course Level of Skills and Knowledge	10,120	17.0%	36.1%	46.9%
Post-course Level of Skills and Knowledge	9,644	83.9%	13.8%	2.3%
Extent to which course met objectives	10,254	94.4%	3.9%	1.7%
Extent to which course relevant to current/future work	10,485	92.8%	4.8%	2.4%
Satisfaction with content of course	10,491	94.4%	4.6%	1.0%
Satisfaction with overall standard of training	10,453	97.5%	1.9%	0.6%
% that had pre-course discussion with line manager	39%			

TABLE 8: CUSTOMER SATISFACTION WITH TRAINING

Financial Report

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Summary of Financial outturn

- Financial figures are provisional pending final reconciliations and receipt of outturn reports from DFP.
- The Source & Application of Funds Statement is shown at Annex C. Outturn income and expenditure is shown at Annex D.
- Operating surplus was £45K leading to cost recovery of 101.2%.
- Spend exceeded profiled budgets by £89K.

Full cost
recovery
achieved

Expenditure

Cash spend for 2008/09 was £3.78m, a net overspend of £89K (2.4%) over profiled budgets. The extra spend was funded through additional receipts and included an unanticipated compensatory payment for loss of employment.

Income and Cost Recovery

Total sales for the year including income from cancellation charges were £3.827m. This resulted in a net surplus of £45K and a cost recovery rate of 101.2%.

Funding arrangements

2008/09 was the first year of hard charging and was operated under arrangements agreed collectively with Departments. These were incorporated into individual Service Level Agreements (SLAs) with each NICS Department which included a budget for the year for generic training. Under these arrangements, Departments paid 80% of their agreed budget in April 2008 as a payment on account. From January 2009, Departments were issued with invoices monthly when the value of training, based on published prices, exceeded that of the payment made on account. Other areas not in the NICS e.g. some Non Departmental Public Bodies were invoiced for training post delivery.

Hard charging and cost recovery proved to be extremely challenging as the funding arrangements are very sensitive to the volume and mix of products requested by customers, in particular the mix between internally and externally delivered courses. There were also wide variations between the estimated budgets for generic training agreed with Departments and the final spend, much of which were not apparent until late in the year. The arrangements for 2009/10 have been modified to take account of the product mix issue. However, because the funding arrangements are based on low level transactions (training course daily rates), they are resource intensive for both CAL and Departments to manage. They will also be impacted by the availability of management information from HRConnect. It has, therefore, been agreed by the CAL Strategy Board and A&RC that the arrangements should be reviewed.

As a result of an in year review, prices were reduced by an average of 20%.

Customer Services

7

As a service delivery organisation CAL recognises the need to listen to its customers and meet their needs whenever possible. During 2008/09 CAL made the following improvements to ensure it continues to put customers at the centre of the organisation.


- Revised its organisation structure to create a new Customer Service Delivery Directorate headed by a Grade 7;
- Published its Customer Services Standards including the introduction of a formal complaints procedure;
- Provided its staff with Customer Service training through the Welcome Host and Welcome Host + programmes.




CAL staff with their Welcome Host and Welcome Host + Certificates



centre for
applied learning
NORTHERN IRELAND CIVIL SERVICE



Centre for Applied Learning
Our Customer Service Standards



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

changing
to
better

8

External Recognition



Sir Reg Empey MLA Minister for Employment and Learning presenting CAL staff with IIP accreditation

Investors in People

In April 2008 CAL achieved recognition as an Investors in People (IIP) organisation. This was a tremendous achievement for CAL bearing in mind it was only established in April 2006.

Whitehall and Westminster World Civil Service Awards

In November 2008 CAL won gold at the prestigious Whitehall and Westminster World Civil Service Awards in the HR, L&D category. The award was in relation to CAL's development and delivery of a pilot Essential Skills (Skills for Life) programme in 2007 which transformed the futures of 300 support grade staff providing messenger, security and reception services for NICS buildings. The pilot provided staff with a package of training covering IT, communication, literacy and numeracy. These essential skills opened up different career pathways for staff, helping them to move from support grades to administrative roles.



Colette Leeson holds the award for CAL achieving gold in the Whitehall & Westminster World Civil Service Awards



DARD staff with the then Finance Minister the Right Honourable Peter D Robinson MP, MLA at the Essential Skills Award Ceremony

Issues

9

The previous sections of this Annual Report demonstrate how CAL is improving productivity and delivering the benefits envisaged from creating a SSC. During 2008/09 there were issues outside CAL's immediate control which impacted on productivity and efficiency. This section highlights the main issues which require attention in the year ahead.

Issue – Training Commissioning Process

The Training Commissioning process continued to present a number of problems during the year with many Departments experiencing difficulties in predicting training demand accurately. This resulted in a large number of events being cancelled, as outlined below.

Issue – Cancelled Events

Table 9 below shows that nearly one out of every seven planned events were cancelled. The main reason was that Departments were not able to provide the trainee numbers they had previously declared through the commissioning process. The cancellation rate in 2008/09 was 14.7%. We are unable to provide a comparison with 2007/08 because of changes made during the year to the planning and scheduling [of courses] process.

CAL Trainer			External Provider			Total		
No. of Events Planned	No. of Cancelled Courses	% of Cancelled Courses	No. of Events Planned	No. of Cancelled Courses	% of Cancelled Courses	No. of Events Planned	No. of Cancelled Courses	% of Cancelled Courses
789	100	12.7%	693	118	17.0%	1,482	218	14.7%

TABLE 9: CANCELLED EVENTS

The reasons for events being cancelled are shown in Table 10 below and by far the main reason was that Departments did not fill the number of places that they had previously requested, to the extent that events were not viable. The other major reason for cancellation was that courses were being reviewed and/or redesigned, the main one being Diversity where 31 events were cancelled once it became apparent that the expected delivery date for the new course was not going to be met. In an effort to reduce the likelihood of this situation recurring, events will not, in future, be scheduled until the new or revised course is ready for delivery.

Reason for Cancellation	No. of Occurrences	% of Occurrences
Department could not fill its allocation	112	51.4%
Course being reviewed and/or redesigned by CPG	31	14.2%
Course being reviewed and/or redesigned by CAL	11	5.0%
Department cancelled event	18	8.3%
No trainer available – external provider	13	6.0%
No trainer available – CAL trainer	3	1.4%
Department not satisfied with course content	9	4.1%
Department no longer requires the course	6	2.7%
Department asked for training to be brought forward	4	1.8%
No reason recorded	4	1.8%
Department nominated inappropriate staff	3	1.4%
Department unable to arrange regional event	2	0.9%
Course materials not available	1	0.5%
Department claimed insufficient notice	1	0.5%
Total	218	100.0%

TABLE 10: EVENT CANCELLATIONS - REASONS AND OCCURRENCES

Issue - Failure to Attend (FTA) Training Courses

Department	Number expected	Number attended	Number cancelled	Number No Shows	Total Failed to Attend (FTA)	% of Total FTA	FTA Rate by Department
AFBI	90	87	1	2	3	0.2%	3.3%
CMED	401	356	17	28	45	3.3%	11.2%
DARD	2,294	2,188	26	80	106	7.7%	4.6%
DCAL	266	234	6	26	32	2.3%	12.0%
DE	397	344	15	38	53	3.8%	13.4%
DEL	1,065	941	60	64	124	9.0%	11.6%
DETI	676	616	32	28	60	4.4%	8.9%
DFP	2,236	2,006	56	174	230	16.7%	10.3%
DHSSPS	1,028	936	26	66	92	6.7%	8.9%
DOE	2,179	1,929	57	193	250	18.1%	11.5%
DRD	1,524	1,399	20	105	125	9.1%	8.2%
DSD	1,687	1,500	55	132	187	13.6%	11.1%
OFMDFM	342	319	8	15	23	1.7%	6.7%
Others	669	620	11	38	49	3.6%	7.3%
Total	14,854	13,475	390	989	1,379	100.0%	9.3%

TABLE 11: FAILURE TO ATTEND (FTA) RATE BY DEPARTMENT

Table 11 above shows that 1,379 people failed to attend (FTA) courses either by cancelling in advance (390), without a replacement, or not showing up on the day (989). This amounts to 9.3% of the total number that were booked onto courses (1 in 11), which is a significant improvement on the 12.7% (1 in 8) for 2007/08. CAL contributed to this improvement by raising awareness through the Training Commissioners' Group and, each month, publishing performance figures and providing Departments with lists of those that failed to attend courses.

As would be expected the Departments that filled the most training places are among those that accounted for the majority of those that failed to attend. Chart 4 overleaf shows some correlation in most Departments between the share of attendees and those that failed to attend courses, though DARD stands out as the Department with the greatest difference between proportion of attendees and FTAs.

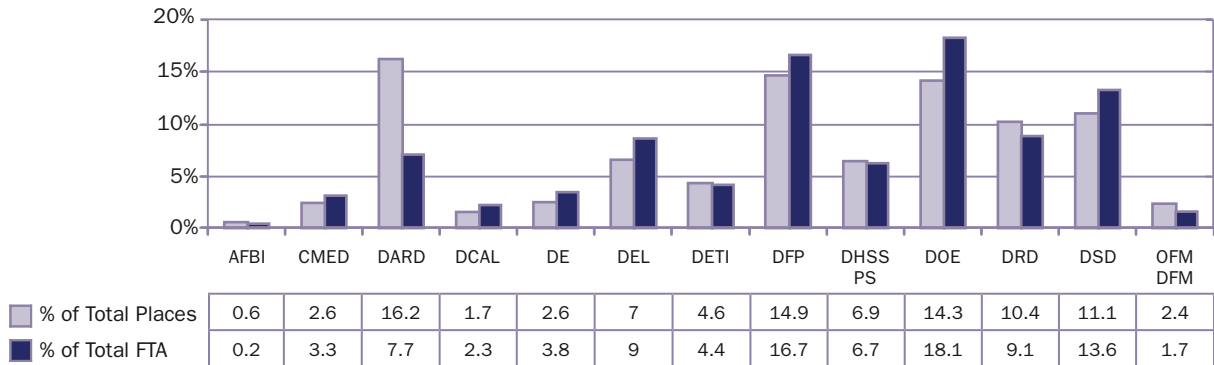


CHART 4: COMPARISON BETWEEN TOTAL TRAINING PLACES AND TOTAL FTAs

Whilst the information above is helpful in highlighting the issue of non-attendance, a more accurate measure is the FTA rate. Chart 5 below shows the FTA rates for each of CAL’s customers. The chart shows that whilst the overall FTA rate is 9.3% (1 person in 11), the FTA rate varies significantly between Departments from under 4.6% (1 person in 20) in DARD to 13.4% (1 person in 7) in DE.

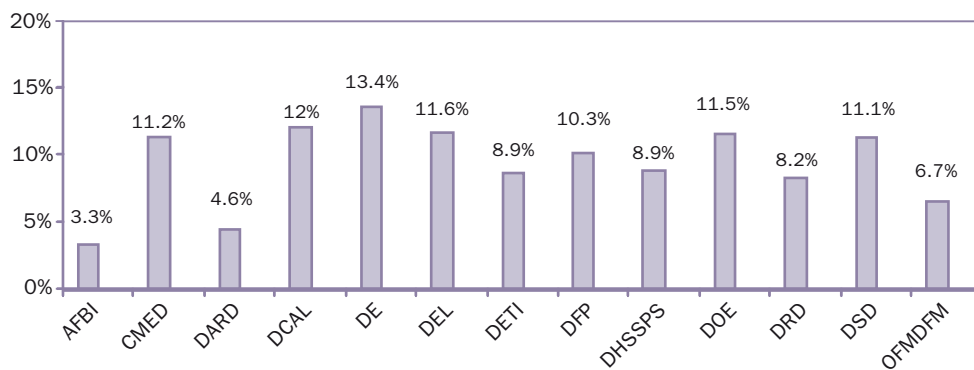


CHART 5: FAILURE TO ATTEND RATES (FTA) BY DEPARTMENT

Actions

A number of actions have taken/will take place to address these issues:-

- With the introduction of the HRConnect L&D service, in February 2009, people now enrol directly onto courses. This represents a very significant change to the previous process where Training Commissioners provided the names of trainees to CAL, having been allocated a number of training places based on the demand for places they had predicted and forwarded to CAL. In early 2009/10 CAL will meet with Training Commissioners to agree a revised method of scheduling courses, which is aligned with HRConnect and which has the potential to reduce the rate of cancellations.
- CAL has introduced a cancellation policy across Departments which implements a sliding scale of charges for participants who fail to attend.
- Information on FTA and course cancellations rates with associated reasons are provided to the Training Commissioners' Group at its monthly meeting for discussion.
- Departments are taking action to tackle cancellations including 'name and shame' and reporting at Grade 5 or Board level.

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Looking Forward

2009/10 brings about further opportunities for CAL to develop and improve services. During the year CAL will focus on the following areas:

Quality

CAL will continue to ensure that course content is authoritative, up-to-date and of high quality. It will achieve this by ensuring all mandatory programmes are accredited, obtaining Heads of Profession and or subject expert endorsement and observing delivery of programmes by internal and externally qualified training consultants.

Value for Money

During 2008/09 CAL reduced course prices by an average 20% with no impact on the quality of the products it offers. During 2009/10 CAL will continue to seek improvements in productivity and efficiency and will pass savings on to Departments through reduced course prices of 4-6%. The funding arrangements will also be reviewed in an effort to identify a more efficient and less resource intensive mechanism for charging and cost recovery.

Optimising HRConnect

The switch to the HRConnect L&D service, in February, brought about a significant change in how CAL administers training and it will have a considerable effect on how training courses are scheduled and how staff book onto these courses. Perhaps the most significant change is that staff now enrol directly onto courses, whereas previously Training Commissioners provided the names, having been allocated a number of places based on their demand in each quarter.

CAL is fully committed to the successful implementation of the HRConnect L&D service, which we consider has the potential to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of our training administration and the quality of our management information.

Customer Service

Section 7 of this report outlines actions CAL has implemented to improve its services to customers. During 2009/10 our Customer Service Delivery Directorate will build on these actions including establishing a dedicated customer support service function enabling timely and consistent response on customer enquiries. We will record and monitor enquiries, complaints and compliments and analyse data to identify trends and actions to improve the customer experience. We will look for new and innovative ways of seeking customer feedback.

Building “Internal” Capacity

Provision of high quality value for money services is to a large degree dependant on having the right number of staff in place with the right skills. CAL will examine ways of increasing capacity.

Research and Development

A properly resourced and skilled Research and Development (R&D) function is an essential element of a fresh thinking and innovative organisation. While CAL has always had an R&D function, during 2009/10 CAL will put greater emphasis on this function to ensure our customers receive the most up to date products which meet their departmental and business needs.

Annex A

Centre for Applied Learning – Strategy Board Members 2008-09

The membership of the CAL Strategy Board at 31 March 2009 is shown in the table below.

Board Member	Title	Department
Aideen McGinley (Chair)	Permanent Secretary	DEL
Geoff Allister	Chief Executive, Roads Service	DRD
Paddy Anderson	Director of Corporate Services	DOE
Philip Angus	Director of Personnel	DETI
Derek Baker	Director of Central Personnel	DFP
Gerry Cosgrave	Director of Personnel	DFP
Paul Priestly	Permanent Secretary	DRD
Alice Quinn	Independent Board Member	External
David Trelford	Director of Personnel	DARD
Susan Foster	Director of Personnel & Corporate Services	DHSSPS
Deborah Brown	Director of Corporate Services	DCAL
Maura McCusker	Director of Corporate Services	DE
Alan Shannon	Permanent Secretary	DSD
Paddy Mackel	External Member	NIPSA
Steve Hare	Chief Executive	CAL

During the year the following also held CAL Board positions:

Anthony Carleton, Director of Corporate Services, DCAL

Strategy Board Audit and Risk Committee Members during 2008/09

Committee Member	Title	Department
Alice Quinn (Chair)	Independent Board Member	External
Paddy Anderson	Director of Corporate Services	DOE
Philip Angus	Director of Personnel	DETI

Annex B

Courses delivered by CAL in 2008/09

Category	Course Title	No. of events
Health & Safety	Accident Investigation	4
Health & Safety	Construction Site Safety Awareness for Visitors	5
Health & Safety	Display Screen Equipment Risk Assessment	19
Health & Safety	Fire Warden	3
Health & Safety	General Risk Assessment	15
Health & Safety	Health & Safety Awareness	34
Health & Safety	Health & Safety Awareness for Managers	67
Health & Safety	IOSH Managing Safely	2
Health & Safety	Manual Handling Risk Assessment	8
Health & Safety	Manual Handling Techniques	47
Health & Safety	Premises Officer	5
Health & Safety	Safe Use of Computers (DSE Awareness)	27
Health & Safety	Safe Use of Evacuation Chairs	13
ICT End User	Advanced PowerPoint	1
ICT End User	Advanced Word	7
ICT End User	Basic Excel	22
ICT End User	Basic PowerPoint	5
ICT End User	Basic Word	5
ICT End User	Introduction to Microsoft Project	8
ICT End User	Audio A Course	2
ICT End User	Audio B Course	2
ICT End User	Content Manager for Approvers	4
ICT End User	Content Manager for Authors	30
ICT End User	Manuscript Course	1
ICT End User	Writing for the Web	2
ICT End User	TRIM Administrator	1
ICT End User	TRIM End User Training	54
ICT End User	TRIM Power User Training	11

Information and Communication	Effective Writing AA/AO	5
Information and Communication	Effective Writing E02/E01	5
Information and Communication	Presentation Skills	3
Information and Communication	Secretaryship of Meetings	11
Information and Communication	Editing Staff Magazines	1
Information and Communication	PR Skills	1
Information and Communication	Provision of Design & Print Services	1
Information and Communication	Data Protection Act	5
Information and Communication	Environmental Impact Regulations	2
Information and Communication	FOI Decision Maker	4
Information and Communication	Practical Data Protection	2
Information and Communication	Speech Writing	7
Information and Communication	Working with the FOI Act	2
Information and Communication	Working with the FOI Act & Internal Reviews & ICO Appeals	1
Leadership and Management	Good Management Practice	41
Leadership and Management	ILM Level 3 Award in First Line Management	77
Leadership and Management	ILM Level 5 Award in Management	64
Leadership and Management	Line Managers Role in Managing Stress	4
Leadership and Management	Managing for Managers	12
Leadership and Management	Strategic Planning	1
Leadership and Management	G6/7 Programme - Analysis & Use of Evidence	1
Leadership and Management	G6/7 Programme - Induction	4
Leadership and Management	G6/7 Programme - Influencing & Negotiating	3
Leadership and Management	G6/7 Programme - Leadership Expectations	3
Leadership and Management	G6/7 Programme - Leading People	3
Leadership and Management	G6/7 Programme - The Authorising Environment	1
Leadership and Management	Quicker Reading	7
Legislation	Disability Discrimination Act Awareness	6
Legislation	Implementing European Directives	2
Legislation	Introduction to Legislation	9
Legislation	Preparing For Judicial Review	2
Legislation	Subordinate Legislation	7
Legislation	Subordinate Legislation Template	8

NVQ	Business and Administration NVQ Level 2	12
NVQ	Business and Administration NVQ Level 3	11
People	IAM Level 2 Introductory Award in Administrative Management	38
People	Assertiveness	6
People	Customer Service	2
People	Dealing with Difficult Situations	4
People	Diversity	6
People	Influencing & Negotiating Skills	7
People	JESP	1
People	Managing Attendance	15
People	Managing Conflict	3
People	Managing Personal Stress	9
People	Performance Management - 1 day	23
People	Performance Management - 2 day	22
People	SGB Interview Skills	2
People	Staff Officer Graduate Course	3
People	Time Management	2
People	Welcome Host Plus	9
People	Certificate in Training Practice (CTP)	15
People	Developing a PR Strategy	1
People	Handling the Media	1
People	SCS Mentoring Training	2
People	Coaching Skills	2
People	Healthworks	2
People	IIP Assessor Training	1
People	Leading / Managing Change	3
People	Retirement	13
People	JEGS	3
People	Harassment Contact Officer	4
People	Certificate in Management Consulting Essentials	1
People	Staff Inspection Techniques	1

Policy	Appearing before Assembly Committees	7
Policy	Assembly Questions	38
Policy	Business Continuity Management	5
Policy	Introduction to Europe	2
Policy	Understanding Devolution	6
Policy	Working with Ministers	17
Policy	Conducting an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)	8
Policy	Developing Policy	13
Policy	Evaluating Policy	8
Policy	Professional Policymaking in Government	2
Policy	Professional Policymaking in Government - Action Learning Set	1
Policy	Screening of Policies	2
Policy	The Consultation Process in Northern Ireland	4
Project and Programme Management	Microsoft Project Overview	4
Project and Programme Management	Managing Small Projects	4
Project and Programme Management	Practical Project Management	11
Project and Programme Management	Programme and Project Management Overview	7
Project and Programme Management	Understanding the Gateway Process	5
Project and Programme Management	Benefits Management	6
Project and Programme Management	Developing a Business Case	5
Project and Programme Management	Introduction to Business Cases & Economic Appraisal	7
Project and Programme Management	Gateway Reviewer	2
Recruitment and Selection	CBI - Board Specific	18
Recruitment and Selection	CBI Refresher - Board Specific	17
Recruitment and Selection	Criterion Based Interviewing	33
Recruitment and Selection	Criterion Based Interviewing Refresher Training	52
Resources	Financial Management - Overview	4
Resources	Effective Sponsorship of Arms Length Bodies	2
Resources	An Introduction to Corporate Governance in the Public Sector	1
Resources	An Introduction to Risk Management	13
Resources	Fraud Awareness	6
Resources	IFRS	8
Resources	IFRS for SCS Staff	1
Resources	Practical Skills for Budgeting	12

Annex C

Source and Application of Funds

	2007-08	2008-09 Projected Income	June Outcome	Sept Outcome	December Monitoring	Year to Date
Source of Funding	£k					
DFP-CPG	489	552	552	10	123	685
DOE	33	504	504			504
DFP	484	451	451		50	501
DARD	319	417	417			417
DSD	299	301	301			301
DRD	751	271	271	15	10	296
DEL	89	240	240			240
DHSS	193	235	235			235
DETI	298	156	156			156
DE	83	114	114			114
Other Income (NDPBs, etc)	125	100	100	50		150
OFMDFM	76	80	80			80
DCAL	49	52	52			52
DFP - Finance						
HR Connect	5					
NISRA	(3)					
CPD - Salary Costs	(17)		(21)			(21)
OFMDFM			(17)			(17)
AccountNI	5			(14)		(14)
LPS				3	12	15
Total	3,278	3,473	3,435	61	183	3,694
Admin Receipts (SCS)	(322)	(405)	(405)		(115)	(520)
Admin Receipts	(125)	(2,470)	(2,470)	(50)		(2,520)
Net Total	2,831	598	560	11	68	654

Application of Funding	2007-08		Projected Allocation 2008-09	Received 2008-09	September Monitoring Allocation (£k)		December Monitoring Allocation (£k)		February Monitoring Allocation (£k)	
	Allocation (£k)	Estimated Outturn (£k)	Allocation (£k)	Allocation (£k)	Bid/ (Surrender)	Revised	Bid/ (Surrender)	Revised	Bid/ (Surrender)	Revised
Staff Costs										
Salaries & Wages	1,639	1,622	1,843	1,805	(88)	1,717	12	1,729	(50)	1,679
T&S	20	20	20	20		20		20		20
Staff Training	7	5	10	10		10		10		10
Staff Membership Fees	5	6	5	5		5		5		5
Total Staff Costs	1,671	1,653	1,878	1,840	(88)	1,752	12	1,764	(50)	1,714
Operating Costs										
Advertising										
Accommodation Running Costs	100	90	100	100	14	114		114		114
Books & Training Materials	6	5	15	15		15		15		15
Computer Current & Software	10	6	10	10	(5)	5		5		5
External Consultancy	30	30	5	5		5		5		5
External Generic Training	672	680	659	659	81	740	10	750	50	800
External ICT Training	289	272	250	250		250	50	300		300
External SCS Training	387	396	476	476		476	123	599		599
Accommodation & Hospitality	2	1	2	2	3	5		5		5
Incidentals	1		1	1	4	5		5		5
Phones	20	13	20	20		20		20		20
Stationery	15	10	12	12	3	15		15		15
Training Accommodation/ Refreshments	75	68	45	45	52	97		97		97
Total Operating Costs	1,607	1,571	1,595	1,595	152	1,747	183	1,930	50	1,980
Total Costs	3,278	3,224	3,473	3,435	64	3,499	195	3,694		3,694
Admin Receipts DFP-SCS	(322)		(405)	(405)		(405)	(115)	(520)		(520)
Admin Receipts Other	(125)		(2,470)	(2,470)		(2,520)		(2,520)		(2,520)
Net Total	2,831	3,224	598	560	64	574	80	654		654

Annex D

Provisional Outturn Income and Expenditure Report 2008/09

	2007 - 08	2008- 09	1ST QUARTER			2ND QUARTER	
	Outturn	Budget	Budget	Actual	Variance	Budget	Actual
Income	£k	£k	£k			£k	
Other	294	150	45	45	()	20	20
NICS Departments	2,563	3,024	928	928		465	465
SCS		520					
Total Income	2,858	3,694	973	973	()	485	485
Staff Costs							
Salaries & Wages	1,492	1,679	398	398		405	405
T & S	23	20	4	4		3	3
Staff Training	17	10	1	1	()	1	1
Staff Membership Fees	3	5	3	3		2	3
Total Staff Costs	1,535	1,714	406	405		411	411
Operating Costs							
Accommodation Running Costs	84	114	23	23		31	31
Books & Training Materials	55	15			()	4	4
Computer Current & Software	11	5	1	1			
External Consultancy	32	5					
External Generic Training	502	738	190	190		90	90
External ICT Training	226	301	99	99	()	59	59
External SCS Training	413	599	35	35	()	18	18
Accommodation & Hospitality	6	5	1			3	2
Incidentals	6	5	1			2	2
Phones	13	20	1	1		4	4
Stationery	19	15	2	2	()	4	4
Training Accommodation/Refreshments	43	158	45	45		26	26
Total Operating Costs	1,410	1,980	397	396	1	240	239
Total Controllable (Direct) Costs	2,946	3,694	803	801	1	651	650
Surplus/(Deficit)	(88)						



Bankmore House
62-66 Bedford Street, Belfast, BT2 7FH
intranet site: <http://nical.nigov.net>



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