COSCA
Counselling & Psychotherapy
in Scotland

COSCA's 4th Counselling Research Dialogue - Monday 26 November 07

DUNBLANE HYDRO HOTEL
Monday 26 November 2007

**COMPETENCIES and REGULATION:
How do we evidence our competence as
counsellors and psychotherapists?**

PORTFOLIO OF ABSTRACTS

Sally Aldridge

Professional Role: **Head of Regulatory Policy**
Institution/Affiliation/Workplace: **BACP**
                                            Leicester University

ABSTRACT: **Paper**

Competencies and Regulation: Fish on Bicylces?

This abstract is submitted under the society strand B

Background
In August 2007 the Department of Health (England) stated that a competence framework for psychological therapies was being developed and would be used as the "basis for regulation." (Mead 2007) This is a theoretical paper that arises from It arises from doctoral research on the professionalisation of counselling in the United Kingdom and my current job as Head of Regulatory Policy for BACP.

Aims
The aim is to understand the role competences might play in the regulation of professions, in particular counselling and psychotherapy.

Results
The regulation of professions began in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Government regulation was regarded by occupational groups as a mark of status and recognition that the profession demonstrated skill, knowledge, high levels of competence and possessed professional values. It enabled the regulated profession to control both entry to the profession and the supply of its services, thus establishing a market monopoly(Johnson 1972; Larson 1977). Government regulation was one of the weapons in a profession's jurisdictional struggles over the control of work (Abbott 1988). Government regulation often brought benefits in the form of increased employment.

In the late 20th early 21st century such regulation has ceased to be a mark of status and become a method by which the government can control and reduce the power and autonomy of professions in the name of public protection, e.g. the White Paper "Trust Assurance and Safety" (2007).

Competencies in counselling and psychotherapy first appeared in the1990s in the work of CAMPAG to develop National Occupational Standards (NOS) in counselling and psychotherapy, followed by National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs). 'Competencies' have recently re-emerged into the arena of regulation – National Occupational Standards have been adopted by the Department of Health in England as the means of regulating the psychological therapies. (DH presentations 2005, 2007). This forms part of a wider agenda of de-professionalisation to be found in the "New Ways of Working for Everyone" (2007).

Implications

The use of competencies to judge a professional's performance removes the essence of professional practice, that is, the ability to work with indeterminacy through the intellectual process of diagnosis, inference and treatment (Jamous and Peloille; Abbott 1988). The use of competencies as the basis for regulation of the psychological therapies will reduce the practitioners' ability to develop as a professional. It will de-professionalises in a fundamental way, and as a result in time reduce the effectiveness of the work. The emphasis on competencies can also be interpreted as a means to reduce costs in the delivery of services in the NHS. This indicates de-professionalisation rather than professionalisation.

Joe Armstrong

Professional Role: **Lecturer in Counselling**
Institution/Affiliation/Workplace: **University of Abertay Dundee**

ABSTRACT: **Paper**

The effectiveness of paraprofessional counsellors: analysis of CORE outcome data.

Aims/ Purpose/ Approach: To examine the outcomes of counselling delivered by a group of 14 volunteer mental health counsellors within a community agency used by clients reporting a wide range of mental health and interpersonal difficulties.

Design / Methodology (including sample and ethical approval): The CORE system was used. Counsellor completed standard assessment and end of therapy forms. Clients completed the 34-item CORE scale at the beginning of every counselling session and at 3 month follow-up. Data were collected from 120 clients over a 12 month period. Ethical approval was obtained from relevant bodies.

Results/Findings: Clients reflected a broad spectrum of problem areas and levels of severity, with a significant minority reporting non-clinical levels of difficulty at intake. The overall effectiveness of the counsellors was marginally lower than that reported in some recent studies of professionally-trained UK counsellors working with similar client populations. There were no significant differences found in effectiveness level across individual counsellors.

Research Limitations: Relatively small sample size.

Originality/Value: Outcome data was collected on a session by session basis and not just before and after counselling. Detailed information was collected about counsellors' levels of experience and training.

Conclusions/Implications (including practical implications): The implications of these findings for further research, and for the role and the evaluation of competence of paraprofessional counsellors within mental health services will be discussed.

John Birrell
Professional Role: **Chair**
Hazel Stevenson
Professional Role:
Institution/Affiliation/Workplace: **Cruse Bereavement Scotland**

ABSTRACT: **Paper**

Responding to Research – the development of an evidence based approach to bereavement care.

A key competence for any counsellor is to be able to reflect on his or her own practice in the light of research evidence. This is also true at an organizational level. While there has been an ever-growing body of research into the nature and effects of bereavement following the death of a significant other, this has not always been matched by developments in the work of those who respond to the needs of the bereaved.

With over 55,000 deaths in Scotland each year, and research evidence to suggest over 300,000 significantly affected by those deaths, it is important that those who offer intervention support listen to the evidence of what helps who, and when.

Cruse Bereavement Care Scotland exists to promote the well-being of bereaved people in Scotland. With over 500 volunteers, responding to over 12,000 calls per year, and delivering over 3,000 hours of face to face support, CBCS has over 40 years experience of working with bereaved people. Over the past three years, CBCS has faced the challenge of planning and implementing a radical review of its practice in the light of recent research evidence, and has developed a totally new service model based on that evidence.

This presentation will look at the major research findings which brought about the change in service delivery, and outline how those findings have been integrated into a new approach to bereavement care. The presentation will then focus on the development, by CBCS, of a new evidence based grief assessment tool, based on the pioneering work of Dr Holly Prigerson at Harvard University on which the new approach rests.

Professor Liz Bondi
Seamus Prior

Professional Roles: **Co-directors of Counselling Studies and**
Professor of Social Geography
Institution/Affiliation/Workplace: **The University of Edinburgh**

ABSTRACT: **Paper**

(Un)Learning to Listen: the experience of first year counselling trainees in their development as listeners.

Background
While it is established practice wisdom within the counselling profession that a crucial aspect of counselling competence is the counsellor's capacity to listen actively, accurately and empathically, little research has been published on how trainees acquire their listening skills and whether in fact such skills are learned on course or already present beforehand. This paper will present initial findings from one part of an interdisciplinary multi-method research project on the development of listening skills among first year trainees on a counselling training programme, namely an interpretative analysis of trainees' subjective accounts of their development as listeners obtained through individual interviews.

Aims
The aim of the part of the research project presented in this paper is to identify key themes in accounts of the development of listening offered by five trainees interviewed by the first-named author. All had recently completed their first year of counselling training, which consists of a COSCA-validated Postgraduate Certificate in Counselling Studies.

Results
Trainees offered rich accounts of their experiences of listening to others, including how their training had impacted on their capacities as listeners. All felt that they had arrived on the course with a good aptitude, or a predisposition, for listening to others, whether developed informally or through workplace training and experience. Some described a paradoxical process in which they had learnt to "do less" and to "let go" of task-focused activities as they listened. But they all also described the enormous challenge of integrating new theoretical knowledge and self-awareness with listening attentively and receptively. Learning to listen emerges from these accounts as entailing a shift from "doing" to "being" and "being with".

Conclusions/Implications
This presentation will consider the implications of the findings for regulatory processes which seek to define core competencies and fitness to practise.

Michelle Conway

Professional Role: **Lead Psychotherapist**
Institution/Affiliation/Workplace: **Huntercombe Edinburgh Hospital**
                                     PhD Student, Edinburgh University

ABSTRACT: **Paper**

The use of focus groups in psychotherapy research: An exploration of recovery from anorexia nervosa

Background
Competence in counselling and psychotherapy can be measured in a number of ways. One important aspect of competence is the efficacy of the intervention offered to the client. Moreover, an important method in assessing efficacy is to hear from the users of counselling and psychotherapy services about what they have found helpful and why.

Aims
The research project I am undertaking as part of my PhD with Edinburgh University aims to elicit further information relating to subjective meanings of participants' experience of psychotherapy. This study will specifically explore the use of a range of talking therapies in the treatment of anorexia nervosa in adults. Adopting a qualitative research strategy, I intend to explore the complex subjective accounts of recovery from anorexia nervosa and in particular the role that psychotherapy served in aiding the individual's recovery process.

Results/Implications
I propose to present a research paper exploring the initial stage of data collection, which involves the use of focus groups. The research paper will specifically examine the method of focus groups as a means of eliciting service user feedback. This will straddle both the client and researcher perspectives. Client perspectives will be highlighted by exploring the themes which emerge from the focus groups about competent psychotherapy and the role played in recovery from anorexia nervosa. Researcher perspectives will be examined though dialogue about ways in which competence of counsellors and psychotherapists is identified and measured in psychotherapy research.

Edith Cormack

Professional Role: **PhD Student**
Institution/Affiliation/Workplace: **University of Abertay Dundee**

ABSTRACT: **Paper**

A commitment to competence – exploring therapists' perceptions

Background
Competence is an ethical requirement of the counselling profession, but the definition and assessment of competence is both elusive and complex. This study argues that definitions of competence need to be informed by the meaning and value that the term has for counsellors and should be explored within the context of therapeutic practice.

Aims
The data is reported here are part of a wider study which explored the role of values in the practice of psychotherapy. The study aimed at identifying the values which were considered important to the individual therapist and the function these served in professional practice.

Methodology
This is a qualitative research study based on semi structured interviews with eleven experienced therapists from three main stream traditions. Transcripts were analysed using a grounded theory approach

Findings
Although a high value was placed on the pursuit of competence as an ethical requirement of their profession, participants saw the acquisition of competence as the development and maintenance of qualities which reflected their beliefs about people and about therapy... They also believed that relational competence was the most important ingredient in the process of therapy. In pursuit of this competence, self awareness, theoretical knowledge and integrity were considered to be essential acquisitions.

Conclusions
Perceived competence is more than an ethical requirement for therapists. It is a core value relevant to their self concept and constitutes a significant part of their personal and professional identity. Incompetence within this framework is considered to be a betrayal of the self rather than lack of adherence to some external standard.
Subjective competence influences the level of behavioural investment an individual is likely to make in any project or profession and strongly held values and principles are the main motivational force in the pursuit of high standards and ideals.

Professor Robert Elliott
Professional Role: **Professor**

Gary Mooney
Professional Role: **Research Associate**

Grahame Jack
Professional Role: **Research Associate**

Rebecca Black
Professional Role: **Research Associate**

Institution/Affiliation/Workplace: **University of Strathclyde**

ABSTRACT: **Panel**

Developing a Person-Centred/Experiential Approach to Social Anxiety: Initial Heuristic Investigation and Research Protocol

Background:
One of the current challenges for mental health provision is the increase in demand for evidence-based practice. In November 2006, a group of ten counsellors began meeting at the University of Strathclyde to research Social Anxiety difficulties.

Aims:
(1) To develop a Person-Centred /Experiential (PCE) theory of social anxiety (SA) difficulties; (2) To develop a PCE practice formulation for how to work with clients suffering from with SA difficulties; (3) To develop a research protocol for an open clinical trial of PCE therapy for SA. The participants decided to begin with a heuristic investigation of their own experiences of SA, including (a) the experience itself; (b) the perceived sources of SA in their lives; (c) what had helped them to deal with their SA; and (d) what had interfered with their dealing with their SA. Ten accounts of significant SA were then analyzed by four sets of participant-researchers.

Results:
In this panel, Gary Mooney will first present the results of an Emotion Scheme Analysis of SA episodes, organized into the five emotion scheme elements (e.g., Bodily Expressive); he will also summarize the sources of SA identified in these accounts (e.g., Experiencing oneself as different from others). Second, Grahame Jack and Rebecca Black will present the results of the analyses of helpful and unhelpful processes. For example, good interpersonal relationships provided support and validation; on the other hand, fear of criticism, rejection and not being understood, accepted or supported hindered recovery. Third, Robert Elliott will present the SA research protocol, including recruitment and screening procedures, outcome measures, and client and therapist post-session instruments.

Implications:
It would appear that the particular group of therapist-participants in our group had worked through their SA difficulties, but it remains to be seen how well our results will apply to clients with clinical levels of SA.

Keywords: Social anxiety, person-centred/experiential therapy, heuristic research

Professor Robert Elliott
Professional Role: **Professor**

Beth Freire
Professional Role: **Researcher**

Professor Mick Cooper
Professional Role: **Professor**

Institution/Affiliation/Workplace: **University of Strathclyde**

ABSTRACT: **Panel**

Empirical Support for Person-Centred Psychotherapies: A Meta-analysis

Background: Person-Centred/Experiential (PCE) counsellors and therapies are typically unaware of the large empirical literature that supports the effectiveness of their practice.

Aims: Building on previous meta-analytic studies by Elliott (2002) and colleagues, we analyzed results from 150 quantitative outcome studies on person-centred, process-experiential/emotion-focused, gestalt and related experiential therapies, in order to evaluate multiple lines of evidence on the effectiveness of these therapies with a broad range of clients.

Results: (1) Clients in PCE therapies experienced large amounts of pre-post change. (2) Posttherapy gains were maintained over early and late follow-ups. (3) Clients experienced large gains relative to untreated groups. (4) In general, PCE therapies appeared to be statistically and clinically equivalent when compared to nonexperiential therapies. (5) CBTs did better than person-centred or nondirective therapies, but the difference is small, and may be due to researcher allegiance. (6) Process-guiding experiential therapies show some superiority to nonexperiential therapies (but this may be due to allegiance effects). (7) In the handful of existing studies, process-guiding therapies showed modest superiority to CCT/ Nondirective therapies. (8) The strongest support for PCE therapies is for couples problems, depression and PTSD/trauma, for which Empirically Supported Treatments

criteria are met. (9) There is suggestive evidence of effectiveness for severe disorders (schizophrenia, borderline process) and psychosomatic problems.

Implications: These results are consistent with process-outcome research relating empathy to outcome (Bohart et al., 2002), and indicate that PCE therapies should offered in primary care, NHS, and other mental health settings. Relying on multiple lines of evidence, such as provided in the present study, provides a sound basis for establishing public mental health policy.

Keywords: Outcome research, Person-Centred/Experiential therapies, mental health policy

Angie Fee

Professional Role: **Psychotherapist/Trainer**
                                          Student

Institution/Affiliation/Workplace:

ABSTRACT: **Paper**

Who put the 'Hetero' in Sexuality?

The purpose of my paper is to raise questions about what 'makes a competent counsellor' by drawing attention to the regulatory character of heterosexuality in counselling and how it has become the 'unspoken' in psychological theories and as such, has become an organising principle which remains unexamined.

This paper is based on my PhD research which explores how people who self-define as 'transgender' experience sexuality and gender. I use narrative methodology which gives precedence to storytelling as a method of investigating not only how experiences are described but also how these experiences are grounded in cultural and historical processes.

My research data shows that transgendered people highlight how there is little room for thinking about gender and sexuality outwith the constraints of the current classification systems within the heterosexual paradigm.
I will draw on those findings to illustrate the centrality of the heterosexual matrix in counselling and how as a major discourse, it influences the way people experience and think about their sexual and gendered identities.

This paper goes beyond calling for tolerance and acceptance of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender clients and calls for an examination of the influence of heterosexual ideology. Heterosexuality is continually produced and reproduced in social practice and psychological therapies without any exploring and inquiring into how the concept of heterosexuality came to be constructed. The challenge of this paper is for therapy trainings to begin to think about addressing the role heterosexuality has in their theories which I believe , will then enable a more flexible psychic and social space for thinking about clients desires out with a heteronormative paradigm.

Dr Robert Hamilton
Professional Role: **Senior Lecturer**

Dr Alison M Mackenzie
Professional Role: **Honorary Research Fellow**

Institution/Affiliation/Workplace: **University of Glasgow**

ABSTRACT: **Paper**

Students' Perceptions of First-Stage Training in Counselling: Personal, Work and Study Outcomes

The study explores students' perceptions of outcomes of first-stage training in counselling. Data were collected by means of postal survey questionnaires of all students during the first nine years of the course (N= 148). 86 students returned the questionnaire, a response rate of 58%. Most students believed they had derived personal and professional benefits: greater understanding of self and others, improved communication skills, and enhanced confidence. Enjoyment of the course and intellectual stimulation had encouraged many to undertake or at least consider further study. It is acknowledged that data from students' self-reports alone should be treated with caution. However since the data are drawn from student intakes over a nine year period, arguably they represent more than a single snapshot of student experience.

Ioanna Karaoulani

Professional Role: **Student**
Institution/Affiliation/Workplace: **University of Strathclyde**

ABSTRACT: **Paper**

How Person-Centred Counsellors in Greece feel they have been affected by not finding work

Many person-centred therapists provide their services on a voluntary basis wishing to enrich and expand their experiences as individuals and counsellors. I believe though that together with their voluntary work and experience (one on one and group sessions) they face and are affected by the difficulty of finding employment. The aim of my study is to gain a more in depth understanding of how counsellors feel when they are unemployed. Participants (9 Person Centred counsellors in Greece, holding Certificate and Diploma in Person-Centred Counselling aged 22-65; 2 men, 7 women) were interviewed about their experiences and their understanding of how their feelings related to not finding employment might affect their clients, themselves and the therapeutic relationship. Results indicated that unemployment substantially reduces the counsellors' belief in their knowledge, skills and counselling abilities while at the same time it introduces doubts about their choice of profession even the very nature of the person centred counselling process.

Professor John McLeod
Professional Role: **Professor**
Institution/Affiliation/Workplace: **University of Abertay Dundee**

ABSTRACT: **Paper**

The benefits of workplace counselling – a review of the research evidence

Background:
Employer-provided workplace counselling services are now available to a significant proportion of the UK workforce. An important attraction of this source of counselling is that it is oriented toward the needs of people in work, and enables clients to avoid NHS waiting list. Typically, workplace counselling services are based on a brief therapy model, with the majority of clients receiving around 6 sessions.

Aims:
To review research into the effectiveness of workplace counselling, in terms of the contribution that it makes to economic and social outcomes, mental health, and individual well-being. A comprehensive scoping review, commissioned by the BACP, was carried out of all English-language research studies of workplace counselling published between 1980 and 2005..

Results:
Key findings include: within the organisations that make workplace counselling available, around 6.5% of employees make direct personal use of the service each year; the vast majority (over 90%) of employees who make use of workplace counselling are highly satisfied with the service they have received, would use it again if necessary, and would recommend it to colleagues; people who make use of workplace counselling typically report high levels of psychological distress; counselling interventions are generally effective in alleviating symptoms of anxiety, stress and depression; counselling interventions have been found, in the majority of studies which have examined this factor, to reduce sickness absence rates in clients by up to 60%; counselling interventions have a lesser, but still significant, positive impact on job commitment, work functioning, job satisfaction, and substance misuse; there is no evidence that any one approach to counselling is more effective than any other in this field; positive results have been found using a variety of models of counselling; significant benefits for clients can be achieved in 3-8 sessions of counselling; only the most severely disturbed clients appear to require long-term counselling help or referral to specialist services; placing a limit on the number of counselling sessions available to service users makes no difference to the cost of operating a service; the average number of sessions per client is the same in 'capped' and 'uncapped' services.

Conclusions/implications:
Although the review identified a number of positive benefits associated with workplace counselling, the methodological quality of studies was generally poor. Recommendations are made concerning strategic directions for further research.

Dr Sue Pattison
Professional Role: **Degree Programme Director**

Karen Cromarty
Professional Role: **Lead Advisor for Children & Young People, BACP**

Institution/Affiliation/Workplace: **University of Newcastle upon Tyne**

ABSTRACT: **Paper**

School Counselling in Wales: Competencies, Regulation and Recommendations

This paper presents the findings of a BACP research project commissioned by the Welsh Assembly Government. An evaluation of the counselling services available to children and young people in Wales and across the rest of the UK was carried out over a period of six months, reaching completion in September 2007. The research team was brought together by BACP, led by Nancy Rowland (BACP) and Sue Pattison (Newcastle University) with team members: Karen Cromarty (BACP); Kaye Richards (BACP); Mick Cooper (University of Strathclyde); Peter Jenkins (University of Salford) and Filiz Polat (University of Bristol).

The aim of the research was to assess whether current models of counselling service provision used in Wales and other parts of the Uk are sufficiently robust and flexible enough to apply more widely throughout Wales and whether they are adaptable enough to fit in with the new planning and joint working arrangements put in place to address the Children Act 2004.

The project used three main types of research methods: desk research, qualitative fieldwork in schools and a survey of secondary, primary and special schools in Wales. The research involved an extensive consultative process with stakeholders and the Welsh Assembly counselling children and young people steering group.

The research produced results that led to the development of a set of Good Practice Recommendations for counselling in schools in Wales (and the rest of the UK). The Welsh Assembly Government will use these recommendations to inform their national strategy to make counselling available in all secondary schools in Wales. Therefore, this presentation represents a research project that has far-reaching implications for the policy and practice of counselling in schools. There are implications regarding counsellor competencies in terms of working with children and young people and this is set against the backdrop of the forthcoming regulation of the profession.

Tracey Sanders
Professional Role: Lecturer

Beth Freire
Professional Role: Researcher

Professor Robert Elliott
Professional Role: Professor

Institution/Affiliation/Workplace: University of Strathclyde

ABSTRACT: Paper

The Therapeutic Relationship Scale – a New Person-Centred Measure

Following on from the development of the Strathclyde Inventory (a person-centred outcome measure), we are in the early stages of development of the Therapeutic Relationship Scale. This new measure aims to capture the client and therapist's experience of the quality of their relationship, focusing particularly upon the person-centred core conditions of empathy, unconditional positive regard and congruence in the therapeutic relationship, and the experience of the therapist's nondirectivity. Although some measures already exist in the area of the therapeutic relationship, such as the Working Alliance Inventory and the Barrett-Lennard Relationship Inventory, these measures have limitations that will be discussed. The development and use of such measure is essential if we are to clearly demonstrate the efficacy of Person-centred, Experiential and other relationally-based counselling and understand in more detail the impact the quality of the relationship has upon therapeutic process. Feedback on the draft measure will be sought, as we are in the early stages of development. Some attendees may also wish to participate in a pilot of the measure.

Key-words: therapeutic relationship, measure development, person-centred counselling

Christopher Vlasto
Professional Role: **Palliative Care Counsellor Student**
Institution/Affiliation/Workplace: **Fife Palliative Care/University of Strathclyde**

ABSTRACT: **Paper**

A Comparison Between Groupwork and One to One Counselling as Agents of Change in the Bereavement Process

This is a small scale qualitative study of therapists' perceptions of the relative benefits of facilitated support groups and individual counselling for the bereaved. Nine experienced bereavement therapists were interviewed by the researcher, using semi-structured questions. The interviews were analysed using "grounded theory" methodology.

The results indicate that the interventions are seen as conveying different benefits. Groups are seen as helping clients in the latter stages of grief, when the distress is less intense and they are more ready to engage with the outside world. They are perceived as conveying hope, facilitating social contact and generating a sense of belonging which is helpful in breaking down the isolation of "social loneliness" (Weiss 1975).

Individual counselling is perceived as safer and easier for shy or vulnerable clients. It is therefore suggested as a primary intervention, providing an forum for telling the story, enabling the therapist to build a picture of the client in his/her world, building trust, and enabling systematic working with the person's issues. It also provides a forum for the expression of extreme or unacceptable emotions. It may be particularly useful for clients suffering from "emotional loneliness" due to death of a spouse or security figure (Weiss 1975).

In the absence of literature exploring the differences, this study indicates ways that the two interventions help in the process of bereavement. It is, however limited, both by the size and lack of homogeneity of the sample and by the fact that it conveys therapists' rather than clients' perceptions of the relative benefits of the interventions. Furthermore the respondents came from different theoretical perspectives and were describing different group formats and different client groups. The results are therefore not directly comparable with each other.

Future studies, both quantitative and qualitative, into clients' perceptions would build on the present work.

Professor Sue Wheeler

Professional Role: **Director of Counselling**
Institution/Affiliation/Workplace: **University of Leicester**

ABSTRACT: **Paper**

Sugar and Spice and all things nice: What are competent counsellors made of? Development of a Core curriculum for Counselling and Psychotherapy

The statutory regulation of counselling and psychotherapy has gained momentum in the past two years and is now seen as inevitable. It is now becoming urgent that we agree on what a professional counsellor or therapist needs to be able to do in order to be included on register when it opens. In November 2006 BACP took the decision to commission a report to provide a comprehensive summary of the core competencies required to be a well-qualified counsellor or psychotherapist. These competencies appear to have substantially influenced the 4th Draft of National Occupational Standards for Counselling produced by Skills for Health. In April 2007, BACP commissioned a similar team to produce Regulations for a core curriculum for counselling and psychotherapy. This work has now been completed and a summary of it will be presented at the conference. Development of both the core competencies and the core curriculum have involved a substantial research enquiry into academic standards, syllabi and regulations for training in similar professions, government department documents, a detailed work study of counsellors' day to day responsibilities, activities, knowledge and skill needs and a plethora of other sources. This presentation will provide an overview of the background to these projects, details of the methodology used to gather and synthesise information and a brief description of the core curriculum that has emerged.