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## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **Teaching Intelligence and The Truth About Learning**

Taunton based education charity Learning South West brought together more than 100 learning and skills practitioners to explore ways of improving teaching and learning, at recent events held at The Exchange in Bridgwater.

More than 50 teaching staff from across the region attended the first one-day workshop led by best selling author Geoff Petty on January 30. The 'Teaching Intelligence' workshop focused on raising the achievement of learners by developing their thinking and learning skills.

"There is now very strong evidence that 'learning to learn' skills, critical thinking and study skills are processes which can be taught and learnt," said Paula Jones, Learning South West's Professional Development Manager. "In fact, intelligence itself is learned, and this workshop looked at how to teach it," she said.

'The Truth About Learning' conference, held on January 31, brought together a diverse range of people who work to support excellence in teaching and learning. More than 50 academics, policy makers, providers and practitioners attended the event.

The conference explored how listening to learners can enhance teaching and learning and examined, 'Learning Lives: Learning, Identity and Agency in Lifecourse,' the research project which inspired the event\*. Professor Gert Biesta, from the University of Stirling, and Professor Kathryn Ecclestone, from Oxford Brookes University, gave the keynote addresses.

Learning South West, which is co-coordinating a regional Centre for Excellence in Teacher Training (CETT) plans to work in partnership with The Learning and Skills Council (LSC), Exeter University and

NIACE ( National Institute for Continuing Education) to set up a regional learner and practitioner panel for the South West region.

Conference delegate, Mavis Zutshi, South West Regional Development Officer with NIACE said: "It was a really stimulating event bringing together very different organisations and people, and we were encouraged to challenge accepted ways of looking at learning."

**ENDS**

*For further information please contact Learning South West PRO Beth Jerrett on 07969355459 or email [jerrettbeth@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:jerrettbeth@yahoo.co.uk)*

#### Photo Caption

**(L to R)** - Simon Mauger, Regional Development Officer, South West NIACE; Paula Jones, Learning South West's Professional Development Manager; Gert Biesta, Professor of Education, Institute of Education University of Stirling; Kathryn Ecclestone, Professor in Education, Westminster Institute of Education Oxford Brookes University; Michael Tedder, Research Fellow, 'Learning Lives' Project School of Education and Lifelong Learning University of Exeter.

#### Notes to Editors

- Find out more about Learning South West and the Centre for Excellence in Teacher Training (CETT) at [www.learning-southwest.org.uk](http://www.learning-southwest.org.uk).
- \* The inspiration for this event comes from the insight and learning arising from the national research project 'Learning Lives'. This substantial research project, funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) as part of the Teaching and Learning Research Programme (TLRP), has used life history methods as one of its strategies for understanding processes of change and transformation in the learning dispositions, practices and achievements of adults.
- The Truth About Learning event supports a response to policy statements that encourage professionals involved with adult learners to 'listen to learners' in order to understand more fully their engagement and progression in education and to enhance provision. It also responds to the Learning and Skills Council development of a 'Learner Involvement Strategy' (June 2007.)

