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# **Initial and continuing professional development for teachers of adult literacy: experiences and challenges**

**Helen Casey**  
**Executive Director NRDC**

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# Four decades of development (and a quiz...)

- Changing patterns of initial teacher education
- Teacher qualifications and formal requirements
- Continuing professional development
- Subject-specific knowledge





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## In the 1970s...

- Growth of adult literacy programmes in England
- Development of professional development activity to share expertise and learn from each other
- Emergence of training to equip new practitioners (post-16 Teaching Certificate did not meet the needs of literacy/ESL teachers)





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## In the 1980s...

- Growing levels of professionalism
- Variety of qualifications and expectations
- Subject-specific teacher qualifications in literacy and second language teaching, some up to masters level, but not recognised by state as qualified teachers
- Separate, recognised post-16 Teaching Certificate for teachers of all subjects



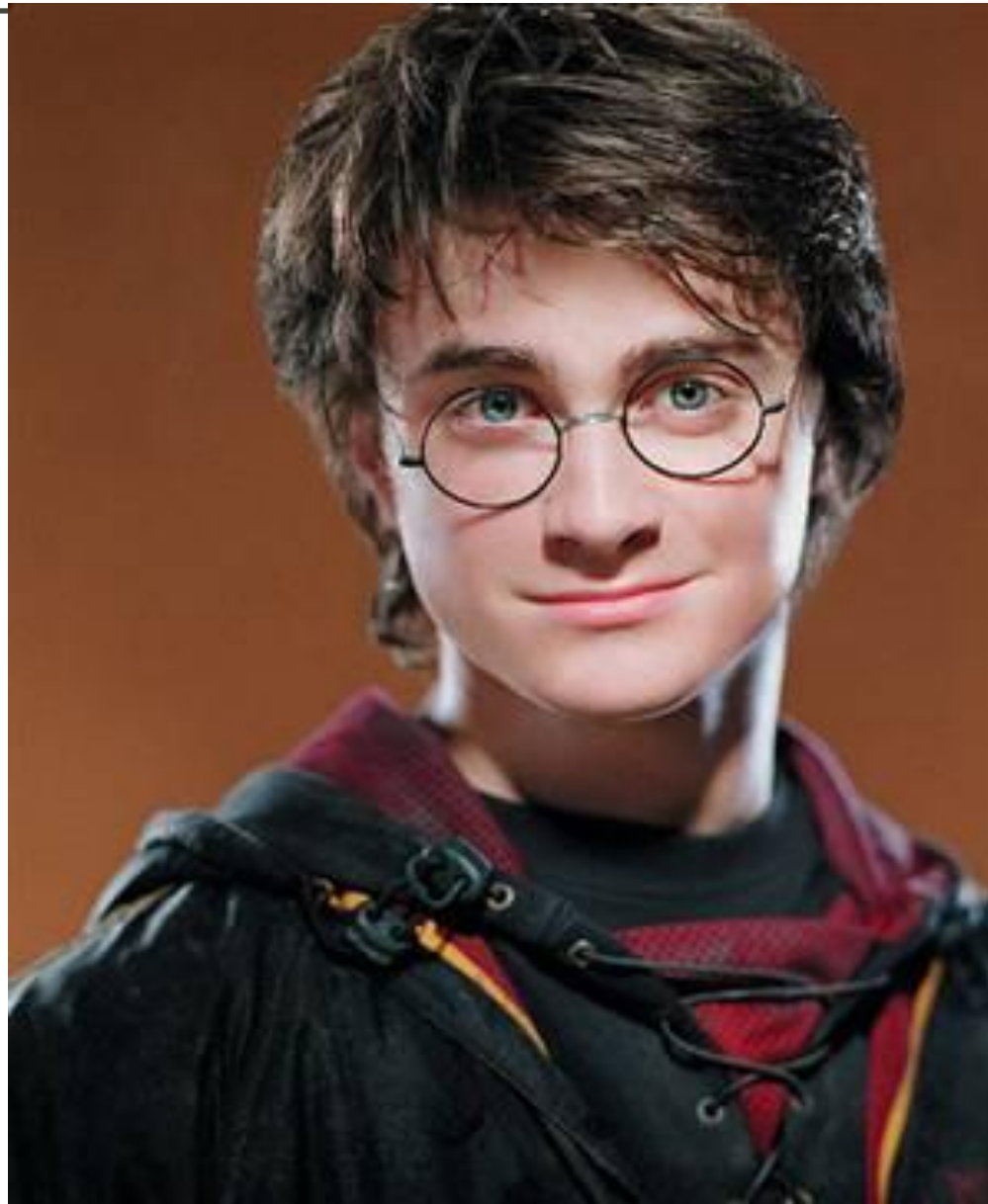


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## In the 1990s...

- Emergence of national system for vocational qualifications, competence-based
- Literacy/ESL teaching qualifications from 1980s discontinued
- Replaced by standardised suite of lower level, shorter qualifications (often only 30 hours)
- Matching set for Literacy/Numeracy/ESOL







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## The Skills for Life era

- Change of government in 1997, regulation changes:
- All post-16 teachers to have teaching qualifications (took effect in 2001)
- Teachers of adult literacy, numeracy and ESOL to have subject specific qualifications (introduced in 2002-3)
- Still separate quals (generic and subject)



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## **2007 review of teacher qualifications**

- Review of national teaching standards
- Integration of literacy/numeracy/ESOL subject requirements
- Now possible for a new adult literacy teacher to qualify in single integrated qualification (120 credits at degree level)



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## Current developments

- Recent research confirms support for the professionalisation agenda
- Probability that an adult literacy learner is taught by a qualified teacher is now higher
- Intention to bring the separate systems closer together for schools and post-16
- Currently different status for QTS (schools) and QTLS (post-16)



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## Literacy teacher education

- Includes more than generic skills in teaching adults: learning how to to work with adults who have not previously succeeded in decoding text, for example.
- Trains people to develop the means of communication by which all the other subjects are taught (speaking/listening/reading/writing).
- Needs subject-specific pedagogical content – simply being a literate adult does not make someone a professional literacy teacher.



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## **To quote the NRDC 2006 review of research on teacher education**

“Literacy/numeracy/ESOL teachers need to be taught as they are expected to teach by taking part in practical professional development activities which help them ‘see’ the subject from their learners point of view”



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# **A literature review of research on teacher education in adult literacy, numeracy and ESOL**

**Baynham, Mike, Maguire, Terry, Morton, Tom**

**NRDC December 2006**



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**[www.ioe.ac.uk](http://www.ioe.ac.uk)**



## Who were they?

- David Bowie (musician) as Ziggy Stardust on the cover of *Aladdin Sane*, 1973
- Joan Collins (actor) as Alexis in *Dynasty*, TV soap opera, 1981-89
- Kurt Cobain, Nirvana, with Courtney Love, Hole (both musicians), and their daughter, 1993
- Daniel Radcliffe (actor) as Harry Potter, series of films, 2001-11