

## **PAPER FOR MANAGEMENT BOARD - RECOGNISING ACHIEVEMENT**

### **BACKGROUND**

We are developing a framework for recognising achievement. We have been looking at ways in which greater recognition can be given to young people's achievements beyond formal qualifications for a number of reasons:

- more effective recognition of achievements can increase self-esteem, improve motivation and keep young people engaged in learning;
- to encourage young people to reflect on their learning – where they are and where they want to go – and help them to articulate their skills gained in interviews with potential employers, colleges or higher education
- to help deliver aims, values, purposes and implementation of CFE – where planning opportunities for personal achievement is an integral part of the curriculum.

Over the past two years we have engaged with a wide range of stakeholders and have identified a number of key principles behind recognising achievement. Throughout this engagement we have returned to four key questions:

- What should Recognition of Achievement look like?
- What should it cover?
- Who should be involved and how?
- How do we give it currency?

### **WHERE ARE WE IN THE PROCESS?**

#### **Collaborative Enquiry Projects**

In order to explore the above key questions and the wider issues involved with recognising achievement at a local level (and ultimately to develop guidance and support for authorities, schools and other education providers) we have set up 12 collaborative enquiry projects in partnership with Learning and Teaching Scotland and 12 local authorities. These authorities will explore all of the four key questions in Learning Community Groups (LCGs) from August 2008 until April 2009.

The 12 LCGs involve a range of schools and key partners, including: 7 colleges, 3 universities, local employers, Careers Scotland, voluntary sector organisations, private training providers and youth work.

We are exploring how best to involve universities in supporting LCGs in evaluating their own projects, and are currently drafting a specification (with Schools ASU) for a national evaluation of the projects, which would commence in January 2009.

#### **Wider engagement**

The collaborative enquiry projects will form an important part of the work on recognising achievement but they are not the sole means by which we intend to engage with stakeholders to promote this area of work. We are developing our strategy for wider stakeholder engagement. The work being taken forward by each of the 12 LAs requires that they make links with local employers, Colleges and HE. However, we plan to engage also with

representatives of these areas at national level, in particular, ASC, Universities Scotland, CBI, Federation of Small Businesses and Sector Skills Councils.

## **WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?**

### **Collaborative enquiry projects**

We will be working closely with LTS to provide ongoing support for the collaborative enquiry projects, and are in the process of organising a 2<sup>nd</sup> networking event on 13<sup>th</sup> November for all those involved in the projects. We are also holding a seminar on recognising achievement at the Scottish Learning Festival on 24<sup>th</sup> September.

We will be seeking approval from the Cabinet Secretary for a national evaluation of this work and once we have this will be advertising for this work over the autumn 2009.

### **Further internal and external engagement**

We will be working to ensure that developments on recognising achievement are linked effectively with work on a number of key policy areas.

We will also be continuing to:

- Engage with key stakeholders, and in particular develop strong links with employers, colleges and universities;
- Link up with the work that SQA have been doing on recognition of prior learning and e-portfolios (John Allan will represent SQA on the small project planning group that oversees our work on recognising achievement);
- Feed into work on widening the scope of the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF); and
- Liaise with other authorities not involved and map out other existing practice across Scotland.

## **KEY ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED**

### **Issues for the policy development phase**

The development of the policy for recognising achievement can be summarised in three broad areas:

- **Developing opportunities for achievements:** the broadening of opportunities for pupils to gain achievements, which needs to include in and out of the classroom.
- **Evaluation of achievements:** if out of classroom achievements are to be evaluated, what impact this will have on the emerging assessment framework. How will this information be used to support learning through personal learning planning.
- **Reporting of achievements:** the formal reporting of achievements that have been attested, through a variety of mechanisms (e.g. national qualifications and certificates, teacher led assessments, etc).

The key question dropping out of these strands is what sort of achievements do we value and how does this relate to the emerging skills framework?

In order for any approach to recognising achievement to be taken seriously, it must have credibility with employers and HE/FE. The collaborative enquiry projects will test these relationships, though it would be sensible to also investigate/complement this at a national level. One way of doing this could be through the S3 profile.

Striking the correct balance between a pupil owned record of achievements with a teacher attested record of the progress against curriculum outcomes, ensuring it builds upon personal learning planning.

The timing of when pupils should be recording achievements, when these should be assessed, and when they should be reported.

Ensuring parity of esteem between national qualifications and other achievements.

Outcomes from the collaborative enquiry projects will not be available until June 2009, and we envisage that it will be August 2009 before we have had these fully analysed and in a format to be published. Work is being undertaken to develop Assessment Guidance under the Building the Curriculum series. We must ensure that this work coheres with one another. One way of doing this will be to draw case studies from recognising achievement work into the BtC4 final document.

### **End of S3 Profile**

One way to help to develop the recognising achievement reporting element, and to develop the links with the assessment, skills and qualifications frameworks, is through the S3 profile.

Management Board has agreed that the aim of the S3 profile would be to provide a robust teacher-led report of a young person's progress in learning at the end of S3. It would describe progress in learning across all curriculum areas. The statement would be used for two purposes: (1) to inform future decisions about that young person's next steps at one of the critical transition points (particularly pathways into National Qualifications) and (2) act as an externally credible guarantee of the extent of the learner's breadth and depth of learning achieved during the general education.

We propose to develop the S3 profile with assessment, skills and national qualifications colleagues as a practical means of developing and understanding the policy links. We will devise a detailed programme of work and update management board at a later date.

### **Issues for the implementation phase**

We have had strong steer from teachers, authorities and other key stakeholders that a nationally imposed model for recognising achievement would not be welcome. However, we need to ensure that in developing their own approaches, authorities adhere to the principles behind this work and take into account the lessons learned from this development work.

To this end, there needs to be thought into how far we extend national guidance, tools and support for local authorities to draw upon. This can be informed by the development of the recognising achievement section on GLOW and the STAR assessment resource.

### **Issues that relate to the system once it is implemented**

How can we ensure that whatever approaches are developed don't turn into bureaucratic tick box exercises x years down the line.

How can we be sure of continued credibility with employers, HE/FE, etc.

Striking the right balance between local flexibility and maintaining quality of approaches across the country.

### **MANAGEMENT BOARD ACTION**

Management Board is invited to:

- Note progress on the recognising achievement work streams; and in particular
- Note the proposal for development of the S3 profile.

Schools Directorate  
Scottish Government  
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