

PAPER FOR CURRICULUM FOR EXCELLENCE MANAGEMENT BOARD: SUPPORT FOR STAFF (EXEMPLIFICATION & TESTING THE FRAMEWORK)

Introduction

1. This paper summarises a strategic approach to supporting staff in planning the curriculum through exemplification and seeks Management Board's endorsement and advice.

Definition

2. Support for staff should stimulate reflection on practice and confidence in the context of the new and emerging guidance without constraining creativity and professional responsibility for local interpretation. It should rarely, if at all, be considered a prescription; it may comprise case studies, presentation material, self-evaluation toolkits, video material, podcasts, or, indeed, any other material that can be used by staff to reflect on aspects of the curriculum.

Building on a sound foundation

3. The Curriculum for Excellence website currently contains a range of papers for professional reflection and specific exemplification on:

- Studies of primary practice in numeracy, science, active learning and collaborative learning
- A 5-18 approach in the special sector
- Studies of secondary practice in transitions, health and wellbeing, inclusion (MCMC), interdisciplinary learning, planning for curriculum change, supporting young people's positive and sustained destinations, financial awareness and partnership with youth work.
- Materials to support curriculum planners in reflecting on and developing curriculum structures are now available in the "Building your Curriculum" section of the website
- examples of college sector practice are being sourced through the Professional Advisers working with Scotland's Colleges

4. LTS has been involved in the design, organisation and running of a series of *Testing the Framework* workshops which provided opportunities for staff from all education authorities to work intensively together, and then with colleagues within their own establishments and education authorities, on key features within *Building the Curriculum 3*. To date, around 120 practitioners from 32 schools and centres, education authorities, SCIS and higher education have taken part. The purpose of the TtF programme has been to build capacity for the implementation of curriculum change. It is not to provide a template for curriculum structures. The nature of the activity has moved beyond 'testing the framework' to implementation of changes to the curriculum, and the name of this area of work is better described as 'building your curriculum'.

5. Work in hand for publication in the near future includes a major DVD resource for early years practitioners, trailed earlier this month, and due for completion in the autumn, a comprehensive set of resources on Scottish history in the curriculum and

a number of insights on *Building your Curriculum*. In the medium term, publications such as the proposed *Building the Curriculum 4* document on skills, will be supported with vignettes/case studies of practice.

6. Other relevant material is available at national level through a range of other sources, including Schools of Ambition, Journey to Excellence and Determined to Succeed. The website encourages readers to make links with the outputs from HMIE good practice conferences and Journey to Excellence.

Principles

7. These various examples of practice begin to illustrate the principles which should underpin all support for all staff – they should be reflective, inclusive, proportionate and realistic.

What are the immediate priorities?

8. The Scottish Government, Learning and Teaching Scotland and Scotland's Colleges will review current work against these principles and, in order to build on the foundation of existing examples, will ensure that support is fully inclusive, covering:

- Learners with particular talents and high achievement
- Learners in need of more choices and more chances
- Learners with additional support needs
- Learners who require additional challenge to meet their potential

9. In putting together a framework for the next stage, the Scottish Government will work with partners to ensure that support materials and examples are more extensive, ensuring:

- priority coverage of the issues raised in the Glasgow University report
- illustrations of flexible pathways through the system from pre-school onwards, and beyond the classroom alone
- support for education authorities who wish to instigate events either singly or in cross-authority groups
- illustrations of partnership in achieving positive outcomes for young people

10. The purpose of the current exercise is to aim to have sufficient advice available to enable that dialogue and reflection; material already available or planned will provide a good start for staff planning for full adoption of the reviewed curriculum guidance from August 2010. Taken together with work to be done over the coming academic year on the priorities outlined above, staff will be well equipped to plan, and continue planning, from August 2010.

11. Providing support for staff will not come to an end in August 2010; the ambitious principles set out here will continue to apply to ongoing work beyond that date.

How will support for staff through exemplification be guided?

12. Given the ambitions set out for support for staff and the varied nature and sources of examples, an improved system of governance is required. This needs to recognise the ambitions, be proportionate and flexible, encourage creativity and provide the reassurance of an appropriate approach to quality assurance.

13. Material for exemplification may be initiated and developed by a wide range of sources, including other government initiatives, education authorities' own initiative, or at the initiative of third parties from the voluntary sector such as environmental bodies, Scotland's Colleges, or bodies concerned with health and justice issues. This list is illustrative, and far from exhaustive. In promoting support for staff, the Scottish Government, LTS and partners will seek external views from a range of stakeholders with expertise in specific areas.

14. All material designed to support staff, from whatever source, should embrace the main principles; the Scottish Government will work with partners to seek to achieve optimum coverage of priority areas as identified in the Glasgow University report.

15. There remains a very important role for materials developed locally, or which represent work in progress [for example the emerging work by authorities and colleges on Building your Curriculum] as sources of inspiration and reflection for staff in establishments.

Risks and expectations

16. The development of agreed guiding principles and clarity around the scope of the immediate and future exercises are a necessary steps to help manage expectations of the nature, purpose and scope of exemplification.

- Without a set of principles, examples may be developed that do not fully reflect the values, purposes and principles of Curriculum for Excellence
- the development and agreement of a plan for the range of exemplification required and those areas of priority will mitigate against the risk of focus on any one context for learning
- The involvement of partners such as the college sector, community learning and development and the third sector will mitigate against exemplification which reflects only a school perspective.
- A defined workplan will mitigate the risk that expectations of the extent and scope of support for teachers will not be met
- Over-provision of detailed exemplification risks undermining the creativity and flexibility central to the principles of Curriculum for Excellence

Next steps

17. Ultimately, much exemplification of the curriculum in action will be driven by professional dialogue and sharing of practice. This exercise is designed to enable and kick-start that dialogue, whilst providing a set of principles that will act as a springboard for ongoing support in future.

18. Management Board is invited to:

- endorse the work in progress set out in paragraphs 3-6
- agree the principles set out in paragraph 7, as expanded in paragraph 8
- consider and advise on the extent of support for staff that needs to be centrally driven under paragraph 9 to achieve the ambitions of paragraph 10.
- Consider and advise on flexible and sufficient governance for exemplification across the programme

On the basis of the Board's advice, the Scottish Government, LTS and partners will develop and bring forward more detailed plans for meeting the priorities at the August meeting.

SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT

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