



Technology in S1/S2

Consultation Seminar Report

Summary

In March 2002, with funding from SEED, Learning and Teaching Scotland ran a seminar for a range of invited participants from education and industry to review current practice in technology education in early secondary and explore what might be done to help schools to implement the technology component of the 5–14 guidelines for environmental studies.

Taking account of the national context and the experiences of teachers and other educational developers, participants identified a series of issues and challenges that face technology education, particularly at the S1/S2 stage, and produced a set of recommendations that would help to address these.

Issues and challenges

The terms 'science' and 'technology' need to be used more precisely.

The importance of a good technology education in every child's school experience is yet to be fully realised. At its best, technology education can address many of the national priorities and, when it does it deserves increased recognition. While it provides the basis and stimulus for further study it needs to be acknowledged that technology education 5–14 is not simply a preparation for a later stage.

There is a lack of a national strategy, framework and network to support developments in technology education.

Existing staff members need opportunities to update and refresh their appreciation of technology education, their knowledge and skills and to share successful practice. Insufficient numbers are being recruited to an ageing profession.

Models are needed for planning coherent and progressive experiences for pupils that include a suitable range of contexts and inputs from the wider community and appropriate use of ICT. Exemplar teaching materials and advice on their adaptation are required.

Some technology education takes place in an inappropriate environment and manner and with insufficient resources to reflect the pace of technological change.

Recommendations

Take or create opportunities to brief decision-makers on the contribution that quality technology education can make to pupils' education.



Promote a national framework for learning and teaching technology, for supporting curriculum and professional development.

Develop curriculum support materials and advice on adaptation that enables schools to address comprehensively the 5–14 guidelines.

Develop curriculum networks, approaches, courses and resources to meet personal, professional and curriculum needs.