

REVIEW OF SCOTLAND'S COLLEGES

WORKING GROUP: STAFFING, LEARNERS AND LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

SUBGROUP: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF STAFF

CPD Audit: Progress Report

- 1 The Funding Council has been asked to conduct an audit of CPD activities with the following remit:
- 2 “The Funding Council should work with colleges and other stakeholders to:
 - undertake an audit to quantify the amount of time spent on CPD activity across the sector;
 - estimate the resource implications of setting a minimum requirement; and
 - advise on how this requirement could be implemented.”
- 3 Following discussions with the HR Community of Practice on a pilot questionnaire, the finalised questionnaire was issued to colleges at the start of June, with a completion date of 31 July. To date we have had over 30 returned questionnaires and we expect to receive a few more.
- 4 The following section presents our initial analysis of the returns from colleges.

Volume, spread and cost of training

- 5 Due to differences in interpretation of the question, analysis and comparison are problematic. However, it is clear from the responses that there is a significant volume of training activity in colleges, that this is spread across all staff groups and is supported by financial resources.
- 6 It is clear that some respondents chose to exclude activity such as health and safety training or equalities training or induction. Others did include this activity. Similarly, some colleges chose not to include travel and subsistence costs in their figures for training costs, others

did. As a result the lowest per capita annual spend figures are above £100 and these can rise to above £1000.

- 7 It is clear, however, that even where colleges have excluded “all staff” training, at least 50% of staff will experience other training during that year. Overall, the average of the all staff training averages gives 6.3 days of training activity per year.

Informal activity

- 8 It is clear that respondents consider that this is significant in the CPD of staff. Estimates of volume vary depending on their perceptions of “informal” but most consider it to be “significant” with estimates of proportion varying from 25% through to five or six times that of formal activity. A handful of colleges mention the recent or intended introduction on CPD logs and the place of informal activity within those. The types of activity cited vary widely but membership of committees and contribution to course team meetings are cited regularly.

iP Accreditation

- 9 27 colleges report being accredited, 2 that they are not and 1 makes no comment.

General entitlement to CPD

- 10 The entitlement most often cited is for TQFE and, to a much lesser extent, PDA. These are dealt with in the next section. As for general entitlement for all staff, there are 2 references to a general entitlement (number of days per year), there are also 3 references to allocated time within the year for all staff during which CPD may take place. Other references are focussed on particular groups of staff (eg professional updating), more generic commitments to staff development or cite the opportunity to engage in general lifelong learning through night classes.

Entitlement to TQFE / PDA & remission

- 11 All but three of our respondents cited remission for TQFE study. This varied from 1 hour a week to one day (6 hours). Only two mentioned similar arrangements for PDA teaching FE and for other relevant professional qualifications.

Contractual obligations for professional updating

- 12 Outside of TQFE, there are references to entitlement / obligation to undertake training such as induction or diversity training. More generally many respondents made reference to the onus on staff to manage their own CPD within existing workloads and as part of their normal duties. It could be questioned whether “normal duties” means that staff have the opportunity to apply for remission from duties to attend events / training and there is evidence in the returns that this is probably the norm. However, a few colleges seem to describe this approach in stronger terms suggesting that, say, remission from teaching, would be problematic. “Normal duties” may also, in the case of academic staff, refer to contractual time allocated to academic reflection / professional updating but there is no detail on this in the responses.

Formal procedures for identifying CPD needs

- 13 All our respondents identified a process based around periodic, (usually annual), review meetings. In some cases a link to a personal development plan was mentioned.

Union Learning Representatives

- 14 Where colleges make a comment on this it is to cite the Representative’s involvement in relevant committees. In one case a college does mention that the representative has helped to identify the learning needs of junior staff who do not always engage in career review processes. In two cases the role has been merged with that of the staff development officer. In four cases the Representative is fairly newly appointed and time will tell as to impact. In three cases the college states that no Representative has been nominated whilst in 11 cases respondents consider that their Representatives have had little or no impact.

Next Steps

- 15 We plan to extend our analysis and in particular to provide a more detailed account of the range of specific practices used in different colleges – although we currently propose to report on these anonymously. It is clear that there is already widespread use of the concept of ‘entitlement to CPD’ in the sector, but that this tends to refer to either a sub-group of possible CPD activities and/or a sub-group of all college employees. It will be important to be very clear about the scope of any recommendations which are made about extending or endorsing the use of ‘entitlements’.

- 16 We have agreed to meet with the HR Community of Practice and the Professional Development Network to discuss the outcomes of the survey, and their implications, before making final recommendations to the SLALE group. We hope to arrange these meetings in late September or early October, and thereafter we will bring a final paper to this group, either at its 12 October meeting, or at its 20 November meeting.

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