

## **Professional Learning - Update**

### **1. Introduction**

At the request of the Curriculum and Assessment Board, this paper provides a progress update on Education Scotland's work to improve the professional learning offer available to practitioners, including:

- the implementation of the Professional Learning Strategy
- enhanced leadership development offer
- the development a new approach to support subject specific professional learning
- information on how the restructured Education Scotland will work to support professional learning

There will also be a short presentation as part of this agenda item at the CAB meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> March.

### **2. Professional learning and leadership: supporting the curriculum**

The Scottish Government's Education Governance: Next Steps report (2017) confirmed professional learning and leadership as part of Education Scotland's enhanced remit. This paper sets out key developments undertaken since that point and identifies a number of next steps in ensuring appropriate support for system wide development and engagement in professional learning.

- a. The Short-Life Working Group on Professional Learning, commissioned by the Strategic Board for Teacher Education in 2018 made 16 recommendations across four themes:
  - communicating a consistent professional learning model
  - improving access to professional learning resources
  - accreditation and endorsement of professional learning
  - developing professional learning partnerships
- b. A scoping study undertaken between December 2017 and April 2018, gathering the views of over 600 teachers from 30 local authorities regarding their aspirations for their own professional learning.
- c. Agreement on a new national model of professional learning, with collaboration across sectors including education, universities and teacher professional associations.
- d. Revised processes for endorsement of professional learning and leadership provision, due to be relaunched in April 2019.
- e. Revised vision, structure and strategy for Education Scotland. Education Scotland's new corporate plan identifies five strategic priorities:

- A strong focus on learning, teaching and leadership
- National collaborative professional learning networks
- Getting it Right for Every Child
- Best use of high quality evidence
- Effective partnerships

Strategic priority one states:

“We will have a renewed focus on professional learning and leadership, providing strategic vision and direction at all levels, working in partnership with the wide range of professional disciplines throughout Scottish education.”

Within an enhanced Education Scotland, the Scottish College for Educational Leadership (SCEL) team has strategic responsibility for professional learning and leadership development. The team has been building on the previous work of SCEL ensuring leadership programmes continue to be available and accessible across the system and have contributed to sector working groups focused on broader professional learning including empowerment, career pathways and establishing foundations for future developments. The team has a clear role in addressing this strategic aim and in supporting activity across the other four priority areas through increasing teacher voice and agency through a renewed emphasis of, and support for, professional learning which empowers practitioners and impacts on learners and outcomes.

Central to Education Scotland’s professional learning strategy are the themes of cohesion inward (throughout Education Scotland), outward (across the professional learning landscape) and forward (supporting system change).

### **3. Inward: What’s already in place to build cohesion?**

Since the move into Education Scotland, the SCEL team has made early steps towards achieving these aims and implementing the recommendations agreed by the SBTE to embed the model of professional learning, and thereby effective professional learning, across the system. Outlined below are examples of specific actions against the recommendations with planned next steps.

*Recommendation (1) Replace existing guidance that has been developed separately with revised model of professional learning and incorporate into other support and guidance materials as appropriate (e.g. Framework for Educational Leadership, National Improvement Hub). (SBTE May 2018)*

#### **a. New national model of professional learning**

Central to Education Scotland’s professional learning strategy is the new national model of professional learning which provides guidance on what high quality, effective professional learning looks like for education professionals. It identifies the key principles and features of professional learning and offers strategic guidance on how to support, structure and plan professional learning. The model, building on previous work by GTC

Scotland, offers a shared language and aspiration, acting as a guide for providers to help inform the nature and purpose of the professional learning offered.

A range of online resources and guides are in development to support the use of the model of professional learning and to generate conversations about learning. The guides unpack the research behind the key themes and are designed to encourage reflection and inform professional learning. The guides will be available as digital resources.

b. Supporting curriculum development in Education Scotland

At its meeting in late October 2018, CAB welcomed Education Scotland's proposal to develop collaboratively with practitioners a support package for subject-specific professional learning, in partnership with RICs. Building on previous CAB discussions around progression and transition, CAB accepted the ES proposal to begin by focusing on support for progression in learning from S1 to S3 into the senior phase. Support for early learning and the primary stages will then follow.

Education Scotland's curriculum area teams have been working with Education Scotland's professional learning team (formerly SCEL) to ensure that development of materials takes full account of new approaches to professional learning and actively involves collaboration through co-constructive, creative approaches to generating support. The aim is to work with practitioners to provide clear, practical support for ensuring approaches to learning, teaching and assessment in subjects/curriculum areas support effective learner progression, meet current needs and reflect local priorities and timescales.

Depending on local needs, Education Scotland will collaborate either through identified curriculum leads in RICs or at local authority level to take this work forward. Education Scotland's Strategic Director for Regional Working, Maria Walker, wrote to RIC leads and Directors of Education in January outlining the offer and inviting them to nominate a contact. It has been important to take the time to achieve an authorising environment for this work. Maria and Gayle Gorman discussed the initiative further and agreed the way ahead with RIC leads when they met in mid-February.

Education Scotland has already received a number of nominated contacts and is now in discussion with them to scope out the work. Discussions are focusing on: which practitioners are to be involved, based on local intelligence; the exact nature of the support needed in different subjects/curriculum areas; and ways of working. Some early contacts have already indicated the subjects/curriculum areas they wish to work on and these are: numeracy and mathematics; geography; home economics; physical education; science; and STEM.

Education Scotland will continue to encourage RICs and local authorities to take up this offer, and will continue to take work forward over the coming weeks and months. The design, nature and content of the support and related resources will vary according to the needs of different subjects/curriculum areas. However, they may include short video clips, invitations to join networks, and visits to practitioners in local areas. Finalised resources will be hosted on the Education Scotland's National Improvement Hub as they become available.

Further to this work, the SCEL team has begun to build collaborative partnerships with curriculum teams within Education Scotland to support the delivery of subject-specific professional learning. Engagement to date includes work with Curriculum Leads, Attainment Advisors, Digital Team and Creativity Teams. Sessions with HM Inspectors are planned for May 2019.

#### **4. Outward: How we are building cohesion across the system**

System engagement through Education Scotland continues to grow in scale through its SCEL programmes and its work within broader aspects of professional learning.

##### **a. Leadership programmes**

The SCEL team are currently delivering high-quality professional learning and leadership programmes supporting Early Years, teacher, middle, school and system leadership.

##### **b. Enhanced leadership offer**

Feedback from head teachers has helped shape and evolve existing programmes, including the Excellence in Headship Programme with a revised induction residential, a peer coaching prototype, an enhanced focus on curriculum leadership and design and work supporting a better understanding of whole school capacity building and culture. Two new systems leadership programmes: Leading Systems Change and Evolving Systems Thinking (EST) were launched in 2018. The EST programme will also be available regionally during 2019 to support regional working. Cohorts for these two programmes include head teachers, as well as participants working in local authorities, RICs, Scottish Government and national organisations. A Leadership of Early Learning prototype programme launched in early 2019.

##### **c. Career-Long Professional Learning (CLPL) Leads**

*Recommendation (13) Education Scotland to work closely with Career-Long Professional Learning Leads in local authorities and Regional Improvement Collaboratives to develop greater linkages with the Framework for Educational Leadership and the revised national model of professional learning guidance. (SBTE May 2018)*

The SCEL team has engaged with local authority CLPL Leads to establish a series of bi-annual development meetings to provide opportunities for greater dialogue on:

- embedding the national model of professional learning and how CLPL Leads will engage with, and use this, in their contexts
- programme engagement including updates on the range of SCEL programmes and learning opportunities and opportunities for individual and collaborative discussion

- horizon scanning - identifying potential opportunities/challenges within contexts, supporting local, regional and national working and the emerging policy landscape

d. Scottish National Professional Learning Network

Education Scotland now provides support and facilitation for the Scottish National Professional Learning Network. This network is composed of colleagues from across Scotland who have strategic lead roles in supporting professional learning and leadership within their context e.g. local authority, university, college, voluntary sector, independent sector. The network delivers three professional learning days in support of emerging agendas and plays an important role in shaping the strategic support for professional learning and leadership. Two recent events have had a strong focus on the national model of professional learning.

e. Independent Schools' Professional Learning and Leadership Support

SCEL contributes to the support for colleagues in the Independent sector through working collaboratively with the Scottish Council for Independent Schools (SCIS) and the Education through Care Sector (EtCS). A recent SCIS Deputies' Conference featured a workshop focused on the national model of professional learning and SCEL Programmes, including recruitment for the Into Headship programme.

## 5. Forward: Supporting system change

This final section outlines plans already in place to expand the cohesive approach to professional learning and identifies further actions across four areas:

- Organisational development in Education Scotland
- Partnership and regional working
- Framework for Educational Leadership
- Endorsement process

a. Organisational Development in Education Scotland

SCEL's remit within Education Scotland includes contributing to an ambitious organisational development plan focused on strengthening organisational capacity to support local, regional and national working and to progress a number of system priorities. This includes capacity-building of Education Scotland teams to plan and deliver high quality professional learning aligned to the national model of professional learning, and to augment processes for induction and ongoing professional learning for those new to the organisation. In order to build the national conversation around the importance of schools as learning organisations, we need to mirror and model these approaches within Education Scotland.

b. Partnership and regional working – next actions

*Recommendation (2) Education Scotland to work with all national organisations and Regional Improvement Collaboratives to share the seven propositions for professional learning and the revised national model of professional learning, enabling professional learning strategy to reflect and align with national guidance, and to support the availability of a broad range of offers. (SBTE May 2018)*

April 2019 will see a revised structure in place across Education Scotland which is designed to better reflect developments in the education system and provide more individualised and targeted support to regional groupings. As part of this revised structure the SCEL team will form part of a new Professional Learning and Leadership directorate, led by Gillian Hamilton, Strategic Director. The Directorate will have responsibility for supporting professional learning and leadership both within Education Scotland and throughout the education system. The directorate will have increased capacity to support both existing SCEL leadership programmes and broader professional learning.

An expanded team of Lead Specialists in Professional Learning, working with Education Scotland colleagues, will support professional learning within each of the RICs in collaboration with colleagues from local authorities and regional groupings. A linked Lead Specialist will support coherence and consistency of practice regionally, ensuring they add value to existing work. It is also important that these Lead Specialists continue to build strong links with national teams with an appropriate balance of time between national and regional working which will be supported through weekly/monthly meetings.

c. Education Scotland Professional Learning Stakeholder Forum

*Recommendation (16) Education Scotland to build on the work of the previous SCEL Stakeholder Forum and the SBTE short life working group on professional learning by establishing and Education Scotland Professional Learning Stakeholder Forum to support on-going sector engagement in professional learning and leadership policy and practice. (SBTE May 2018)*

The first meeting of the Education Scotland Professional Learning Stakeholder Forum will be held at the end of March 2019. This forum provides an opportunity for stakeholder engagement and collaboration to guide and support the strategic development of professional learning and leadership throughout Education Scotland. Group membership stems initially from the previous SCEL Stakeholder Forum and has members from key partners across the education system, the list of current partner can be found here <https://www.scelscotland.org.uk/who-we-are/our-partners/>

d. Framework for Educational Leadership

*Recommendation (8) Given the collective aspiration for a streamlined and coherent professional learning offer, the Framework for Education Leadership should be expanded to incorporate professional learning activities as part of*

*an enhanced national offer, including subject specific professional learning as appropriate.*

*Recommendation (10) Education Scotland to review and enhance the online professional learning presence, ensuring a 'one stop shop' for teacher professional learning, with clear signposts to other resources and supports. This should include coherent links with the current development of MyPL (GTC Scotland). (SBTE May 2018)*

The Framework for Educational Leadership is an online resource supporting career-long professional learning for educational professionals at all stages of their career. It has been available to teachers through SCEL since 2015 and to date has focused solely on leadership professional learning. To reflect Education Scotland's enhanced remit, the Framework is being redesigned to incorporate wider professional learning.

One of the newly recruited Lead Specialists within the SCEL team will provide dedicated support to the Framework. This will enable a refreshed and realigned Framework to become the 'one stop shop' for professional learning for teachers. A priority for the SCEL team is to extend the number of subject specific professional learning opportunities available, working closely with Education Scotland teams and to embed system changes related to the Empowering Schools Framework and the work of the Independent Panel on Career Pathways.

Learning activities currently available on the Framework already map to the GTCS standards and work is underway to ensure more effective integration between MyPL and the Framework to enhance the recording functionality and streamline this process for teachers. There are a number of specific actions identified to support wider engagement with the revised Framework. These include:

- The SCEL team to engage with teams across ES in the redesign of the Framework ensuring to encapsulate broader aspects of professional learning including subject specific learning activities
- Design and delivery of a suite of workshops to engage with Education Scotland teams about the resource and identify ways of working together to best facilitate subject specific learning
- Ensure induction for new starts includes early engagement with the Framework to build awareness of, and confidence in, using the Framework as a learning tool

#### d. Endorsement Process

*Recommendation (9) Education Scotland to enhance engagement with subject associations to support access to subject specific professional learning through the Framework for Educational Leadership, recognising current concerns that the current subject specific offer available on the National Improvement Hub is not sufficient in terms of and quality. (SBTE May 2018)*

The endorsement process will be the lynchpin of a more cohesive approach to professional learning across the education system in Scotland. Currently endorsed

programmes and providers are featured on the Framework for Educational Leadership. Endorsed programmes and providers are accessed by a wide range of educational professionals and organisations who are utilising the Framework for Educational Leadership as the key resource to plan their professional learning support. A professional learning programme or provider endorsed by SCEL/Education Scotland has demonstrated that it is informed by the national model of professional learning and links effectively to relevant Professional Standards and policy. This gives those who commission programmes or providers comfort that they are purchasing and engaging with high-quality experiences for participants which have a long-term positive impact on professional learning and leadership development, and therefore children and young people.

A series of actions to take forward this work include:

- A revised process for providers to seek Education Scotland endorsement of their professional learning and leadership offers will be available in April 2019. The process will be piloted and co-shaped during 2019 with a range of learning partners across Scotland to ensure we have a robust, meaningful process that is welcomed by providers of professional learning and education professionals alike. This will include a Quality Mark which endorsed programmes and providers can use for up to five years
- A phased approach to endorsement will be established which will target subject specific/curriculum providers in the first phase of the endorsement roll out to fill the identified gap in subject specific learning

## 6. Summary

The professional learning strategy outlined above is driven by Education Scotland's strategic priority of 'a renewed focus on professional learning and leadership.' Key to this strategy is collaboration both inwardly, with colleagues across Education Scotland, and outwardly, across the professional learning landscape, including GTCS. Successful partnership working will ensure the strategy moves professional learning across the system forward effectively supporting system change.

## 6. Questions

Curriculum and Assessment Board members are asked to consider:

- Other areas of possible focus not highlighted in the update that they would have expected to see as part of Education Scotland's developing work in professional learning and leadership
- Any specific advice to support teams in Education Scotland responsible for curriculum and leadership professional learning as the organisation moves to a regional working model.