Professional development in and for the lifelong learning sector

Dr Janet Hamilton Broad
Aims

• Examine the recent legislative framework
• Explore what is meant by professional development
• Examine models of professional learning
• Identify drivers for professional development
• Explore the forms of professional development and analyse these in light of own practice and experience
Underpinning legislation

• “CPD”, in relation to a teacher, means continuing professional development, which is any activity undertaken by him (sic) for the purposes of updating his knowledge of the subjects he teaches or developing his teaching skills

Number of CPD hours teachers are required to do by the legislation
Number of hours of CPD actually undertaken

![Bar chart showing the distribution of CPD hours undertaken.]
Activity

• What for you is meant by ‘professional development’
Professional development

• Can be understood as either initial training or continued professional development (CPD)
• CPD is undertaken post qualification stage to:
  – Maintain
  – Enhance
  – Further develop
  – Skills necessary within an occupation
The purpose of professional development

- Staff development
  - Training of individuals
    - Skills and techniques
      - Necessary to meet the aims of the institution
  - Pedagogic knowledge
- Professional development
  - All types of learning beyond initial qualification
    - Enhances student learning
    - Subject/occupational expertise
    - Career development and promotion

Trorey (2002)
Theoretical approaches to understanding CPD

- **Learning as product**
  - Learning as acquisition – learners are containers to be filled with new knowledge and skill which can then be applied to new situations
  - Outcomes/ competence model – NVQ (context specific)
  - Suggests formal approaches such as courses attended independent of context

- **Learning as process**
  - Learning by doing – problem based/ inquiry based approach (Dewey)
  - Learning as participation (Lave and Wenger & Engeström)
  - Suggests that learning is contextualised, informal and that knowledge is tacit
Reflective practice as a form of professional development

‘... looking back on an experience and making sense of it to identify what to do in the future.’

(Drew and Bingham, 2001 p221)

‘...do something, think about it what you did, come to conclusions about what you did and plan to try again.’

(Kolb 1984)

“All learning comes from experience”

--John Dewey
The benefits of being a reflective practitioner

• Like other professionals, teachers cannot become effective by following scripts. Instead, the need to create knowledge in use as they practice...Knowledge does not exist apart from teacher and context.

• Thomas Sergiovanni
Kolb’s ‘Experiential Learning Cycle’

Concrete Experience → Reflective Observation

Active Experimentation → Abstract Conceptualisation

- Actual learning experience
- ‘doing’
- Comparing what learnt with what already known
- Thinking about what happened

Putting it into practice
- ‘relevance’
Schön the reflective practitioner

- Reflection-in-action V reflection on action
- Reflection-in-action is the ability of professionals to ‘think what they are doing while they are doing it’.
- Schön asserts that the only way to manage practice is through the ability to think on your feet, and apply previous experience to new situations. This is essential work of the professional.
  - Tacit knowledge.
    - Pick out a familiar face in a crowd. This does not require thinking about, or a systematic analysis of features. We cannot verbalise how this is done, and so the knowledge is ‘unspoken’ or ‘tacit’.
  - Knowing in action
    - Being able to carry out a task automatically as it is so familiar to us
  - Reflection in action
    - Using our knowledge and expertise in a ‘tacit’ and ‘knowing’ way when the situation becomes unfamiliar or ‘different’ from the norm
Reflection in action

• Enables the practitioner to deal with the current situation in a professional way but does not build on knowledge and knowing

• The incident is dismissed and not analysed in great detail

• negative experiences focused upon rather than positive experiences
Reflection on action

- Reflection on action is when we reflect back on an experience, draw from it and try to use it as a basis for development and growth.

- “The retrospective contemplation of practice undertaken in order to uncover the knowledge used in practical situations, by analysing and interpreting the information recalled” (Fitzgerald, 1994pp67)

- “The process of creating and clarifying the meanings of experiences in terms of self in relation to both self and world. The outcome of this process is changed conceptual perspectives” (Boyd & Fales, 1983pp101)
What drives professional development?

• Thinking about the types of professional development you have been involved in recently, what were the reasons you did it?
The importance of maintaining and developing subject expertise
CPD activities are meaningful for teachers when they link to the following:

1. Maintaining and developing subject expertise
2. Developing teaching skills
3. Meeting student needs
Forms of CPD

• Thinking again about your own experiences, what forms have your recent professional development taken?
The forms that CPD takes

- These are many and varied...

- Course
- Short course
- Reading a specialist publication
- workshop
- Sharing ideas
- shadowing
- Networking
- Working back in occupational area
Characteristics and forms of CPD least valued by teachers

- Formal
- Short course format
- Generic
- External requirement
Issues with formal training - relevance

• The last one we did as far as I can recall, we spent a lot of time talking about how the new student disciplinary procedures were to be implemented. And, a lot of it was not appropriate for [my subject] anyway because of the nature of our students. (applied sciences teacher)
Issues with formal training – too generic

• It wasn’t really relevant for lots of the stuff I mean bits of it were, but most of it wasn’t and it was done in a very fluffy way. Not very specific and bits and pieces like that. (applied sciences teacher)
Issues with formal training – context free

• We have a new intranet system, that sort of stuff, trying to learn how to use that but it’s so bitty that you can’t get your teeth into it. By the time you’ve done it on a Friday afternoon, come back Monday morning you’ve not got time to put it into practice because you’ve got to get on with your job. (business management teacher)
Characteristics and forms of CPD activities LLS teachers value

- Informal
- Collaborative
- Professional organisations
- Industrial exp.
- Experienced – non-accredited ext. courses
- Newly qualified – further accredited courses
Issues and concerns with this conceptualisation of teachers’ professional learning

• Largely tacit
  – Non-formal
  – Naturally occurring as part of everyday activity
  – Difficult to codify and recognise
• Will teachers as they record their CPD acknowledge it as valuable or even existing?
• I’d got so many hours I couldn’t be bothered adding more, so I put the official course I’d been on...but I didn’t put in any informal stuff. Some years I have but that year I didn’t bother because I had enough. (literacy teacher)
• Yes, I dare say that’s the majority of it but you don’t think about it as training, but of course it is...That’s the vast majority of CPD and that happens in an hour or half an hour and you don’t really think that it’s CPD but it is. You’ll say show me how you do this and that’s what happens. (painting and decorating teacher)
CPD references


Trorey, G. (2002), 'Introduction: meeting the needs of the individual and the institution'. In G. Trorey and C. Cullingford (eds), *Professional development and institutional needs* (pp. 1-14). Aldershot: Ashgate.