

## **The Educational Institute of Scotland**

### **Building Membership Engagement: The role of the Institute in the provision of CPD opportunities to members**

1. The role of the EIS in relation to supporting and potentially providing CPD has formed part of the discussion/consultation on 'Building Membership Engagement', which has been on-going over the past year. A broader context for this consideration has been provided by developments in Scottish education around the issue of teacher professionalism such as the Donaldson report, CfE, the introduction by GTCS of new standards, and the emergence of Professional Update.
2. The Institute, of course, has experience in this area through previous partnership working with various Universities (Glasgow, Edinburgh, Stirling, West of Scotland, Aberdeen), the work of our Learning Reps, and other partnerships such as with Tapestry and ACTS (Association of Chartered Teachers Scotland). All of these collaborations have proved to be fruitful in terms of the profile of the union and the involvement of members in events. Feedback from participants has been overwhelmingly positive.
3. For example, learning reps have organised, often in conjunction with a local authority, 17 events in just over a year, attracting more than 1,000 attendees and covering areas such as CfE, Health and Well-Being and professional update. Attendance at many of these events is often greater than at local association general meetings and it is clear that for a significant section of members the CPD agenda is an important professional motivation for being involved in the EIS.
4. A case in point is the recent Anti-Poverty conference which was over-subscribed; significantly, most of the delegates were what could be described as 'non-activist' EIS members.
5. Internationally, there are several examples of teaching unions which are substantive providers of professional development in their systems; indeed, such provision often achieves a significant income stream to the union.
6. In terms of feedback from 'Building Membership Engagement' there is a clear view that the professional development agenda is a relevant, and potentially vital, area of activity for the EIS in terms of the recruitment and retention of members. For more recent entrants to the profession, sometimes viewed as being less inclined to union involvement than previous generations of teachers, CPD is an established agenda in their working lives and potentially an effective avenue for cementing union affiliation.
7. The Institute has always had a concern, of course, as a professional association in the broad educational issues. At present we offer more than any other Scottish teaching union in terms of CPD support and perhaps we need to capitalise on this. (It is worth noting that the two head teacher organisations have been attempting to develop their CPD profile as a recruitment strategy.)

8. It would seem to be prudent, therefore, to give some consideration at this stage to the future development of the professional development service provided to members by the Institute.
9. One area already identified as potentially useful is that of on-line member communities/networks, and the Education Department has been charged with looking at this in respect of the two existing networks which were not constituted this year owing to lack of response from members. Considerable scope exists for developing this area in terms of, for example, subject areas, stages, specialism.
10. A second area where foundations have already been laid relates to partnership working. University partnerships are currently being reviewed and discussions are on-going with Tapestry where we have co-badged a seminar programmes and have been invited to consider deeper involvement around Teacher Learning Communities and a new leadership programme. There is the possibility of some funding from Scottish Government for partnership approaches to training on aspects of CfE and ADES has expressed a willingness to work jointly on CPD events aimed at teachers. City and Guilds has also made an approach considering a potential joint bid to the Scottish Government for partnership proposals.
11. A significant benefit of partnership approaches is that it allows us access to the nature of the training being offered, potentially brings direct benefit to EIS members in terms of participation, shares any potential costs, and allows for an immediate breadth to the work we are undertaking which may be beyond our own immediate capacities.
12. A concern which has been raised around EIS CPD provision is that we may unwittingly substitute ourselves for a lack of employers' provision of CPD arising from shortfalls in funding given the current financial situation. Clearly, such a scenario would need to be guarded against. Again, partnership working allows the Institute to act as a catalyst to the provision of high quality CPD opportunities without necessarily being a direct provider.
13. Partnership working is possible at various levels from co-badging/endorsement to detailed involvement in planning courses and direct delivery of aspects of courses. Specific protocols should be developed to guide this area of work, including consideration of potential charging for events.
14. In addition to the above, the Institute has its own internal learning/training agenda which needs to be developed in tandem with professional learning; indeed there is a significant crossover between the two and many EIS activists benefit directly in terms of professional learning by their involvement in activities such as representing the EIS in working group memberships or simply receiving training in areas such as communication and assertiveness. The post-graduate study undertaken by EIS Learning Reps would be a case in point. It is essential that the importance of training in terms of the needs of the Union is incorporated into the overall strategy of this policy development.
15. **Recommendations**

The Committee is asked to consider and agree the following:

- a) that we recognise that the CPD agenda provides a fruitful avenue in terms of recruitment and retention of members;
- b) accordingly we agree that it be given a high status priority within the work of the Institute;
- c) that initially we seek to build upon existing initiatives, primarily the work of Learning Reps and existing partnerships with external bodies such as Universities;
- d) that we are open to future partnership working on CPD initiatives with a range of bodies, such as GTCS, Scottish Government, Dyslexia Scotland, Show Racism the Red Card, City and Guilds, ACTS and Tapestry.
- e) that we recognise, also, the important locus within the professional learning agenda of the Union's own training and development needs.

#### 16. **Action**

In pursuit of the above objectives a work-stream plan should be developed, and processed as appropriate through the EIS Committee structures, to include the following:

- a developed policy paper around the support and provision of CPD by the Institute;
  - consideration of staffing and resource requirements;
  - proposals for the operation of on-line communities;
  - development of articulated partnership protocols;
  - a publicity and communications strategy for this area of work, including a calendar of all planned CPD and CPD related events;
  - a review of internal EIS trade-union focussed training opportunities including consideration of the integration of such within the development of the EIS professional learning agenda.
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