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Issue 3

April 2014

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Waiting to hear the sound of our own voice?

Alongside our three main functional roles of the registration of CLD practitioners, the approval of training courses, and the continuing professional development of the workforce, the Standards Council aims to develop the voice of the CLD sector. We all seem to be agreed, as we face up to immediate challenges shaped by restricted resources and constant change, that this is important. But what does “developing the voice of the CLD sector” mean and how can we make it matter?

We all have an individual voice, with varying opportunities to be heard. Most if not all of us are members of trade unions; some of us are members of a political party; some of us are involved in pressure groups of one sort or another. Should the Standards Council try to substitute itself for any of these “voices”? There’s probably wide agreement that we shouldn’t, and it’s difficult to see how it would be possible.

So - what is the distinctive role the Standards Council should seek to play in strengthening the voice of CLD?

A sustainable role in this needs to link back to the basic elements of what the Standards Council is for, and we could describe these as being: firstly, and as a reference point for everything we do, to improve and assure standards of CLD practice; secondly, to develop a learning culture among CLD practitioners as the key means to this end, through this contributing to the broader growth of a learning society; and thirdly, to grow the CLD profession so that it can take the lead in all of this.

Our current work to develop the voice of the CLD profession is intended to flow from these roles of the Standards Council. So for example, in commenting on policy developments, we can assert a mandate to highlight the needs that they generate for the use of CLD expertise. We can champion the importance of developing a learning culture across the CLD sector and beyond. Most importantly, we can improve the opportunities for registered Standards Council members to engage with these debates.

- **How do you think the Standards Council can do more to strengthen the voice of CLD?**
- **What do you see as your part in this, bearing in mind that the Standards Council is a peer-led, membership-based body?**
- **What more could Standards Council committees and staff do to assist you to contribute actively?**

We will be consulting with members soon about how the Standards Council should develop its role in being a voice for the workforce. Make sure you tell us your views! If you haven't yet registered – join now and be a part of making it happen!

The Standards Council for Community Learning and Development for Scotland:
Policy Commentary

Growing a learning culture in CLD: how far have we come?

In 2010 and 2011, the Standards Council worked with the CLD sector to develop the first national CPD strategy for CLD in Scotland, A Learning Culture for the CLD Sector in Scotland. The strategy outlined how practitioners and employers, supported by the Standards Council and other national bodies, can work together to develop a learning culture where professional development is an integral part of practice.

Three years on, we know that plenty has happened. The strategy looked to the development of a framework using an electronic platform to support creative learning for CLD practitioners, ensuring that all learning is valued: this is in place as i-develop, with both content and usage continuing to grow.



New partnerships have developed, linking practitioners across sectors and geographic areas. Innovative programmes have embodied the principle that “true education is something that people do for themselves with the help of others, not something that is done to them by experts”. Groups of practitioners have used the CLD competences as a

framework for working together to explore and improve their practice and its impact.

This has all been happening through a period when resources have been stretched and reduced and organisational change is the rule. On the one hand, this makes progress particularly impressive and provides strong evidence of resilience. On the other, it warns against thinking that progress is secure.

We know that excellent and innovative professional development is happening:

⇒ *How widespread is it across the workforce?*

We know that new partners are engaging in CPD partnerships:

⇒ How much do we know about who isn't, across the broader spectrum of CLD?

How do you see your own role in all of this:

⇒ As a leader, at whatever level, are you enabling those that you manage, directly or indirectly, or those that you support, to take responsibility for their own learning?

⇒ How do you manage your own development as a practitioner?



There are also initiatives and developments in related fields that we may be able to benefit from. Workforce Scotland aims to support networking, sharing resources and collaborative working for those working within public services in Scotland. Its Skilled Workers, Skilled Citizens initiative in particular already has involvement by CLD practitioners. GTC Scotland is emphasising “Career-long Professional Learning”. Is there scope for you to make links with these or other

initiatives to open out opportunities to develop CLD practice?

In the coming months, the CLD Standards Council will be refreshing the national CPD Strategy. **We want this to be shaped by the experiences and views of the field**, and we hope to see Standards Council members playing a leading part in this; please start thinking and discussing how you think we can go on improving CLD practice by working together to develop practitioners.

The Standards Council for Community Learning and Development for Scotland:
Policy Commentary

From Ambitions to Delivery?

The new National Youth Work Strategy and the Statement of Ambition for Adult Learning in Scotland are now in place, together with implementation plans. Some form of statement on community development may follow.

The ambitions for CLD are welcome – members and colleagues will be engaging with the challenge of translating them into practice that makes a difference in the communities where we work. One critical part of this is developing the skills and capacity of the workforce. The Statement of Ambition emphasises the need to do this:

“Creating these effective learning experiences requires skilled adult learning practitioners who are themselves lifelong learners...There will be a framework of professional development learning opportunities available for practitioners involved in delivering adult learning.”

The Youth Work Strategy goes further, stating that:

“Young people in Scotland have an entitlement to be supported by skilled, competent youth work practitioners who take account of their whole well-being.”

It highlights that practitioners include both paid staff and volunteers: we need to give consideration to who is a part of the workforce, what their different roles are, what support and opportunities volunteers need and the skills required of the practitioners who support them—and how we can grow the learning culture that will enable all of them to continuously improve practice .

What do we need to do to meet this entitlement in a consistent way?

What do you see as your role in ensuring that CLD practitioners (paid and volunteers, full and part time) are lifelong learners?

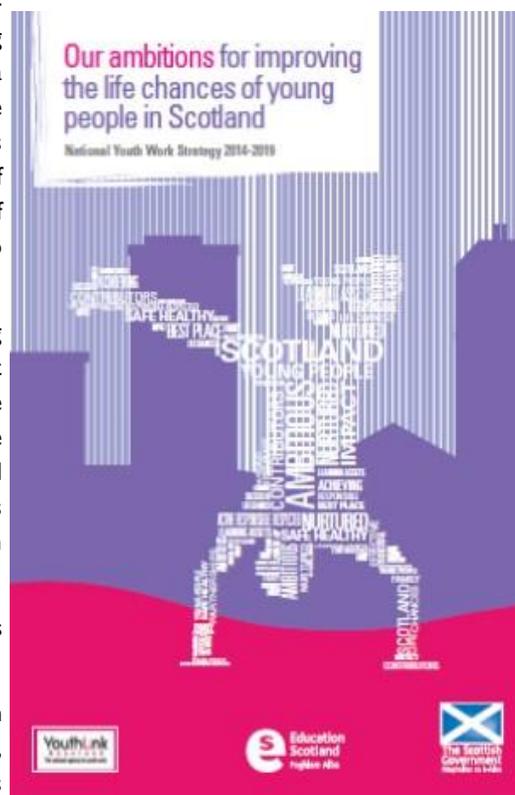
The implementation plans include tasks that the Standards Council is to lead on. Among these are existing key roles of the Council: promoting registration and supporting

application of the CPD Strategy and i-develop. As part of this, we are to work with YouthLink Scotland on developing support and training for volunteers.

The Standards Council is also to work with YouthLink Scotland to establish national standards for Youth Work. **Do you have views about how this could assist youth work practitioners, and any potential issues that could arise? Do you think the idea of national standards for community-based adult learning and community capacity building/ community development should be explored?**

The Youth Work Strategy and the Statement of Ambition link back to the Strategic Guidance on CLD, and can refer to the “requirements” for CLD set out in secondary legislation last year. The Standards Council will want to ensure that standards for youth work, and for community-based adult learning and community capacity building if these follow, are clearly based on and consistent with the CLD Competences and Code of Ethics.

We see this clarity about a common practice base as important for CLD practitioners in whatever setting, because it is important for the impact of our work. Community development skills are needed to deliver the ambitions of both the adult learning statement and the youth work strategy. Ambitions for adult learning and to empower communities should acknowledge the role and the development potential of those involved in youth work in a voluntary capacity. Empowerment of communities needs to include all age groups and embrace the role and skills of youth workers.



The Standards Council for Community Learning and Development for Scotland:
Policy Commentary

By any other name...

Words used to argue for change and describe new ways of working are sooner or later co-opted for other purposes.

“Outcome-focused” practice was intended to be the model for moving away from continuing to do the same things without regard to impact because “it’s our job to do them”; from starting the planning process by thinking about what we can do with the resources we have, to focusing on the change we want to achieve, and designing activity to get there.

A report by the English-based organisation Locality, [Saving money by doing the right thing](#), covers ground that’s familiar from the “post–Christie” policy agenda in Scotland. The first two of its four “new principles for services that meet people’s needs” are that they should “be local by default” and “help people to help themselves”.

Locality then say that services should have “a focus on purpose, not outcomes. Better outcomes are a consequence of effective intervention and thus cannot be managed directly. Management by purpose enables learning and improvement, as opposed to outcome-based management that drives dysfunctional behaviour, fosters cheating and hides failure”.

These are certainly not the results that the Christie Commission and others have aspired to through a focus on outcomes. Perhaps a focus on outcomes can be seen as a way of articulating what Locality and their partners refer to as “purpose”. But does what they call “management by outcomes” sound uncomfortably familiar from what can often happen in practice?

Public services in Scotland are grappling with how to shift the balance of their activities to preventive approaches. CLD practitioners offer skills and a methodology for developing community and individual assets, but are often pulled towards providing services to address presenting problems. Are there lessons that we could draw from Locality’s analysis?

The fourth principle may be of interest as well. They say that we should “manage value not cost”.

Leadership update

As we noted in the first edition of this policy commentary, the Standards Council sees developing leadership as a key issue for CLD and we have been looking at how we can usefully focus on this. We are now delighted to announce that our first members’ only event will look at leadership and how we might apply the work of one author, Margaret Wheatley, to our context.



Wheatley’s *Leadership and the New Science* has been translated into 18 languages and won many awards; its third edition was published in 2006. In addition, Meg has published *Finding Our Way: Leadership for an*

Uncertain Time, (2005) a collection of practice focused articles and most recently *So Far From Home: Lost and Found in Our Brave New World* (2012) which invites us to become warriors for the human spirit. [You can explore more of Meg’s work online.](#)

On the 12th June, in a substantial and rarely available professional development opportunity, Standards Council members will gather in Glasgow to hear from Meg and reflect together on what we might apply from her work to our work here in Scotland. The morning session will be led by Meg, with plenty of opportunity for group discussion and feedback; the afternoon will be spent in professional dialogue led by members.

Places at the event are limited to 120 and will be allocated on a first come, first served basis. The event will take place in Glasgow on 12th June 2014. We ask that members attend for the whole day.

To apply for your place, please email registration@cldstandardscouncil.org.uk with the following details:

- Your name
- Your membership number
- Any access and/or dietary requirements



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About us:

The Standards Council for Community Learning and Development for Scotland is the body responsible for the registration of CLD Practitioners, the approval of training courses and the continuing professional development of the sector workforce.

Help shape our future, today

This policy commentary has been developed for members of the CLD Standards Council for Scotland. To receive the commentary direct to your mailbox, register with us today.

The registration scheme is open now for all practitioners including volunteers. True to our collaborative approach, the scheme has been developed for the sector, by the sector.

Shaped by the views and experiences of a wide range of CLD practitioners, the CLD registration scheme will continue the culture of dialogue and debate, championing a shared sense of identity amongst practitioners, providing a national voice for the sector, and reaffirming the importance of CLD in Scotland.

Become a member and you can:

- Engage in professional dialogue, nationally and locally
- Drive forward new developments in our sector
- Support and evolve peer-led learning opportunities
- Be involved in Standards Council events and activities
- Play a lead role in shaping the future of the Standards Council
- Have a key influence on policy initiatives and responses

The Register is open to all CLD practitioners who demonstrate the values, principles, competences, Code of Ethics and commitment to CPD that underpin the sector, with two types of membership, based on qualifications and experience: Registered associate members and Registered members.

