



CLD Standards Council Scotland

Submitted Response
to

Scottish Government Consultation

Professor Hayward's Independent Review of Qualifications
and Assessment

13th January 2023

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January 2023

Introduction

The Scottish Government is conducting a number of reviews across 2022/2023 into the future of Scottish education with the aim of hearing from the widest possible range of voices and views. Arising from recommendations in the Muir Report (2022), Putting Learners at the Centre, the National Discussion is focused on gathering views from the public on a future vision for Scottish Education. This review, on the future of Qualification and Assessment, is specifically focused on the review of qualifications and assessment in the Senior Phase.

The Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills announced in October 2021 the intention to reform qualifications and assessments. This reform process seeks to ensure that all learners' achievements are fairly recognised to afford every learner an enhanced and fair opportunity to demonstrate the breadth, depth and relevance of their learning. It is being led by Professor Hayward supported by an Independent Review Group (IRG) comprising of those for whom qualifications matter most (learners and parents/carers), designers, developers and those who offer qualifications (extended profession and policy) and those who use qualifications (colleges, employers, universities, voluntary sectors).

The CLD Standards Council Scotland is the professional body for people who work or volunteer in community learning and development in Scotland. We are a member led organisation. Our approach and work plans to deliver our core responsibilities are defined by our member committees and based on feedback from the wider membership.

Our core responsibilities are:

- Deliver a professional approvals structure for qualifications, courses and development opportunities for everyone involved in CLD
- Maintain a registration system available to practitioners delivering and active in CLD practice
- Develop and establish a model of supported induction, professional learning and training opportunities

We have a growing membership of over 2850 members, an Executive and 3 functional committees which are made up of members from across the sector. In 2021/2022 we had 23 approval requests for professional and developmental courses degree level and below, along with 31 submissions for our Standards Mark, which provides national recognition of organisations who offer CLD learning opportunities for practitioners with strong focus on the values, principles, competences and Code of Ethics for CLD.

The CLD Standards Council have formed this response to the Hayward review as we are critically aware that Community Learning and Development (CLD) practitioners, across Scotland, in Local Authority, Third Sector and other organisations are delivering learning and accreditation to Young People, Adults, Families and Communities. Many local authorities have their own SQA accreditation centre which CLD practitioners support by programmes such as delivering and assessing core skills for Modern Apprenticeship learners who left school without the required levels, as well as offering learning and accreditations to learners of all ages who are looking for learning opportunities to develop skills that will ultimately improve employability and life chances.

The purpose of CLD is to empower people, individually and collectively, to make positive changes in their lives and in their communities, **through learning**. The Government's National Performance Framework sets out the strategic objectives for all public services, including those delivering CLD. CLD's specific focus is:

1. improved life chances for people of all ages, through learning, personal development and active citizenship.
2. stronger, more resilient, supportive, influential and inclusive communities.

The CLD sector is an integral part of Scottish education. It plays a central part in ensuring individuals, families and communities across Scotland reach their potential through lifelong learning, mutual self-help and community organisation. CLD Standards Council recognise that there is common ground as well as robust partnerships between traditional education establishments such as Schools, Colleges, Universities, and CLD in terms of values, outcomes and practice methods. It strongly believes that it should not just be traditional educational bodies making decisions which affect education and learning opportunities for all of Scotland's learners, and that it is critical that Scottish education is about all learners at all ages and stages in life, life wide and lifelong

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1. Should information be gathered across all four capacities?

Yes– and should include information on educational achievements that happen outside school i.e. youth clubs

2. Please consider each of the capacities in turn. What kinds of information should be gathered on learners' progress and achievements in each capacity?

Early CfE documentation states that the proposed purpose of the curriculum was to ensure that all children and young people developed the four capacities of being 'Successful Learners', 'Confident Individuals', 'Effective Contributors' and 'Responsible Citizens'. Further, that these four capacities should be applied at all stages from pre-school through to the end of secondary schooling and beyond school, into adult life and recognising lifelong and life wide learning. The documentation also set out that the curriculum intended to be much more than the sum of the courses and programmes offered in formal classroom settings, and that it should include learners experience of community, their contribution to it and the context of the wider world and the opportunities it offered for wider achievement.

The CLD Sector works with learners to grow learners' community participation and identity through a wide range of learning programmes and experiences. Recognition of the benefits regards wider achievement can be life changing for young people who have not thrived in the formal school environment. Participation and the outcomes for experiences for young people should be included. It is key that we have a focus on learning experiences that develop and prepare skilled, knowledgeable and confident learners for academia and research, the world of work and industry, public services, the third sector and in our communities. The delivery of skills with and for learners of all ages should be relevant to their lives, develop curiosity and critical thinking skills such as communications skills (verbal and written), numeracy skills, meta skills, digital skills, hand and tools skills, problem solving, motivational intelligence, open minds, growth mindsets.

Recording attendance and engagement with extra-curricular / community activities / school holiday programmes which contribute to the four capacities should be considered. Using a skills based approach to the recording of all achievements across formal and non-formal settings not only assists in giving value to these achievements at all levels and settings, but it enables the learner to understand the breadth and depth of their learning journey, and assist with individual profiling. Each learner must have ownership and lead or be equally involved in the process gathering and recording of achievements to support their understanding and progress of their lifelong and life wide learning.

3. What, if any, information on learners' achievements obtained outside school and college should be gathered? Please explain your response.

Beyond the Classroom. There needs to be an education system which is life wide and facilitates all pathways to learning. One which regards all learning occasions including informal and vocational aspects as having equal value to academic qualifications. Through discussions with our CLD Practitioner members, it was thought that there needed to be a change in mind-sets regards excellence and that it is not about accomplishment of highest grade qualifications but excellence is achieved when each individual is enabled to access the skills and learning opportunities required to reach their personal potential, to permit learners to comprehend and excel within their interests, and consequently support Scottish economy.

There needs to be parity between formal and informal achievements. Young people learn, grow and develop lifelong skills through community based learning opportunities and a holistic wider lens approach to a person and their achievements is critical.

4. Should information be gathered on learners' skills and competencies as part of their senior phase?

Yes

5. If you have views on how this might best be done please provide them here.

Community learning and development youth, family and adult practitioners support learners to develop a deeper understanding of the underpinning knowledge that goes alongside learning a new skill or topic, providing the basis required for those individuals. This information and evidence of progression needs to be collated/connected between educators and education establishments.

The Adult Learning Strategy for Scotland sets out key aims and ambitions which support improved delivery arrangements for upskilling and re-skilling to help achieve this ambition. One of the key actions within the Adult Learning Strategy is to appraise the usefulness of present systems regarding Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), which this will hopefully be included in the forthcoming Scottish Government's Youth Work strategy. Correctly recognising prior skills, learning and experience through an effective initial assessment and recording framework is crucial to supporting learners of all ages to person centred learning programmes. Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) has a Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Policy. The CLD Standards Council believes that achievement of this recognition of prior learning ambition will support the development of our frameworks and systems towards a culture which recognises lifelong, life wide learning as well as the equitable value of multiple individual pathways towards further learning and employment for people of all ages.

Careers Education, Information Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) provision around vocational education pathways could be extended further to young people and learners in all contexts who are looking for training and support. There is the opportunity to recognise and include wider achievements and the skills and competencies gained so that all options and pathways can be considered. There is the opportunity to raise awareness of alternative pathways beyond university places for senior phase young people and their parents and guardians. . Young people's achievements, skills, abilities and competencies should be collated in order to offer them the best advice. Communication between Schools, Community based learning and third sector organisations, as well as with the young person needs to be systematically improved and developed to ensure robust and accurate information sharing for the benefit of the learner.

Whilst My World of Work is a useful tool it is not widely used/accessed by adults or employers. It should support lifelong and life wide learning pathways ([Adult Learning Strategy](#)) and enable learners of all ages to understand the choices they have, so they can access information and support regards the path that suits their learning needs and ambitions at that specific time. The quality, level and location of information is inconsistent and often difficult to manoeuvre for learners of any age and ability. For people with any additional needs or lower levels of literacy there seems very little assistance to support their ability to access guidance and information on skills, learning and employment, within the current information and advice systems. This system would seem to be the most suited one stop shop for any learner and educator to inform, collate and save information regards skills gained, competencies met and then how they become transferable to other sectors. The Scottish Transitions Forum in their [Principles of Good Transitions](#), state that it is critical that young people and parents/carers are provided with clear advice and guidance to support a positive and successful post school transition, and that support should be co-ordinated across all services. This support should be afforded equitably to learners of all ages and levels to support their skills development needs.

We should also support young people and learners of all ages by drawing from Skills Development Scotland's meta skills profile. These are lifelong skills required to be practised over the life-course from employers, academics, researchers, volunteers. We also need to fully implement and recognise the full range of qualifications recognised on the the SCQF Framework.

6. Please share your thoughts on what a 'better balanced' assessment system would look like. As well as considering the balance between external examination and internal assessment you may also wish to comment on the frequency of examinations.

We would like to see an accreditation system that focusses on SCQF levels, and values achievement at all levels. We would advocate for learners to have access to the range of qualifications available at all levels on the SCQF framework. Not only would this enhance and extend curricular choices but the range offers a variety of assessment, reflection and review techniques that can be matched to individual learner needs.

Using this approach would enable equality of access to learning that is recognised at each SCQF level rather than on one or two levels such as Nat 4, 5 and Higher.

7. Please share your thoughts (advantages/disadvantages) on the idea of introducing an achievement, award or qualification at the end of the BGE.

Whilst we firmly feel that recognising all achievements at all levels is critical to the continued growth and lifelong/life wide learning of any aged learner we would offer caution regards certification. A final certificate can become binary i.e. viewed as pass / fail. The recognition and recording of the detail of the personal, academic and vocational achievements contained within may be lost.

8. Please share your thoughts (advantages/disadvantages) on the idea of introducing a type of leaving certificate at the end of the Senior Phase.

As stated above, A final certificate can become binary i.e. viewed as pass / fail. The detail contained within may be lost

9. How should Scotland's qualifications and assessment system make best use of digital technologies?

Digital pedagogy needs to be embedded in all learning and teaching environments from early years to beyond school environments. Up to date professional learning for all practitioners needs to be available alongside ethical and competence training.

Use of a compatible and accessible system across all local authorities, or integration of compatible systems between local authorities, FE/HE and third sector organisations which allow a more collaborative approach to collation of achievement data.

Community Learning and Development Youth, Family and Adult practitioners being given recognition of their role as educators in Scotland, and access to digital platform alongside traditional educators such as teachers. Working together with parity would foster better collaboration, and ultimately offer enhanced focus and level of support for the individual learners.

Offer online learning as an all year round option for those learners who cannot access education via a school building or community setting. It worked during lockdown when everything went online and a number of young people were able to access a respectable and more equitable level of learning and achievement, which prior to lockdown had been unobtainable, and unfortunate has become unavailable again since.

10. How can we make sure that proposals for a future qualification system will uphold the rights of all learners to demonstrate their achievements?

CLD Workforce. A fully funded CLD workforce, recognised with a parity of esteem alongside other professional educators, such as teachers. Discussions were had regarding the benefits of

this, including how it may ease pressure on teachers, and give a clear message regards life wide learning and benefits of partnership working, enabling development of further learning pathways which are perhaps more suitable and supportive of all Scotland's learners.

Include community based learning outcomes in order for this to happen. This will ensure that learners at all stages and contexts will be recognised and included.

Key points from discussions with members of the CLD Standards Council:

a) Learners of All Ages. View education as all aged learners, and should be accessible for all ages and stages in many formats, not just in classrooms or in schools, with clear associations to the lifelong learning journey - Scotland's Adult Learning

b) Partnership. Education is not the sole responsibility of schools and teachers. Widen the partnership, give equity to alternative learning opportunities. Supported links to partners such as CLD, FE, HE, Industry and Community

11. Is there anything else in relation to the reform of qualifications and assessment which is not covered in this consultation which you would like to raise?

We would like to make the most of this consultation opportunity to raise and promote the lifelong learning, empowerment and inclusion principles surrounding community based learning including Adult, ESOL, Family Learning and Youth Work. We also would like to highlight the role and agility of Community Learning and Development practitioners and organisations who support and offer Learning, accreditation and assessment opportunities to Scotland's learners and communities all year.

MICRO-CREDENTIALS: TAKING A STRATEGIC APPROACH TO MAXIMISING. Community Learning and Development is well placed to contribute to the refocus of Scottish Government skills strategies, particularly with respect to its key role as a provider of lifelong learning and opportunities for reskilling. Skills 4:0 presents a model of skills for the future termed as 'meta-skills', and defined 'as timeless, higher order skills that create adaptive learners and promote success in whatever context the future brings (Skills Development Scotland, 2018). 'These are the skills that enable individuals to perform highly today; in a changed world of work they will be required by all of us.'

'Skills Development Scotland's intention is to further define these skills as measurable and observable standards that will make their adoption in learning programmes straightforward'.

The CLD Standards Council proposes that these meta-skills should be embedded within the development of micro-credentials targeted towards those furthest from the labour market and those 'at risk of unemployment' who require to reskill'

CLD Standards Council members voiced the importance of recognition regards CLD as a professional workforce within education, delivering and assessing skills to learners of all ages. There was discussion around the ways to evidence the value of CLD to support obtaining the required funding to ensure we have a well-resourced CLD profession, which enables it to be valued and embedded across Scotland.

Access for All. Enable learners for all ages and stages in life to access SCQF learning opportunities to suit their needs and the growth of the Scottish economy, with a funding model that supports lifelong learning. Ensure that all learners get listened to, get access to support needed and education is adapted to meet need, not the learner/learning adapted to meet assessment need.

Pathways. Develop alternative pathways to learning and vocations. Enable learners of all ages to access a person centred approach to learning and reskilling. A more flexible and dynamic

system which can adapt and respond, as well as be proactive, to understand the challenges faced and the needs of the Scottish economy.

Equality and Inclusion. Make sure everyone who is an educator in Scotland is involved and valued in the processes, and move away from school and teacher led/focused system. We feel strongly about the importance of capturing diverse voices from all lived experiences and interested parties to continually improve and adapt the new inclusive education system.

Culture Change: Recognise, from Government right down to parents and carers that education doesn't just happen in Schools and by teachers, equality of recognition of educators in all settings and stages of life Critical to use a wider lens to recognise and capture life wide achievements and skills, for all learners

Rights based approach: UNCRC embedded in all learning, for all ages. Critical need to educate parents, carers and communities on this, as well as children to ensure understanding and support the rights.