

Issue 5: October 2014

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Planning for real or planning for nothing?

All local authorities are under a statutory requirement to publish a three year plan for CLD in their area by next September. What are the plans for? What impact will they have on the support communities and learners get to bring about change in their lives? What’s your role in determining this?

First things first: what do the requirements on local authorities actually consist of? Much of the focus currently is on the CLD Plan but the regulations are clear that the plan is a means to the end of ensuring that CLD is “secured” within the area; reference back to the Education (Scotland) Act makes clear that the CLD that’s secured must be “adequate and efficient”.

Alongside this, the guidance issued makes clear that the expectations set out in the CLD Strategic Guidance still apply and aren’t modified by the regulations.

In other words, the local authority is under a statutory requirement to secure at least a standard of adequacy and efficiency in the CLD provision in its area and it is expected to provide leadership in maximizing “the contribution of CLD partners in the reform of public services”. The CLD Plan is a means to these ends, not an end in itself.

No doubt local authorities will produce their plans; this in itself doesn’t mean they’ve met the expectations on them, or even “complied” with the law. A quick fix may be convenient but is unlikely to bring benefits for communities and learners.

What does this mean for us as CLD practitioners, in whatever role and setting? We’re committed to our “primary client” being “the community, the young person, or the adult learner with whom we engage”, and to “supporting constituents in holding those with power accountable.” What are the implications of these commitments for our roles in developing CLD Plans in ways that benefit communities and learners, and “extend the reach of effective democracy”? Or for enabling the communities, young people and adult learners we engage with to reach and express a view about the “adequacy and efficiency” of CLD?

What’s the scope here for practitioners to take the lead? What are the leadership responsibilities of managers of CLD at all levels? And what are the challenges in reconciling these responsibilities for professional leadership with those for managing the process?

Much attention in the next few months will be captured by the timescale for production of plans. This is to a greater or lesser extent inevitable but will the plans be the means for creative engagement with communities and learners, for empowering the people we work with to articulate their “requirements” and for positive steps towards more and better CLD practice? Or will they be a sterile process ending with a document that may or may not be produced on time, but in any case is then filed away?

We need debate on these issues – not as an alternative to dealing with the practical issues, but to drive productive action.

What can you do to promote it?

Making the CLD Plans work - 10 key questions

Who is your “primary client” when you’re developing the CLD plan?

What impact will the plan have on the support communities and learners get to bring about change in their lives?

How will the development of the plan help communities to take the lead and hold you and other partners accountable?

What’s your role in all of this?

As a practitioner what opportunities are there for you to take a lead?

Are you clear about when you should do this?

As a manager, what are your leadership responsibilities?

Are there tensions with your role in managing the process?

How will you reconcile these?

How will the CLD Plan improve CLD practice?

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

Refreshing our development

In 2011, when the Standards Council published the first national CPD strategy for CLD in Scotland, our emphasis on nurturing a learning culture as the core of the strategy and the key to improving practice - rather than delivering training - was a relatively unfamiliar one.

Coming up for four years on, we think there's been some progress in embedding professional development as an integral part of practice;

with the aim of pushing this a stage further, we've started the process of refreshing the strategy and will be engaging with members on this and on moving from strategy to planning for professional development.

Because of course, developing the strategy document is only the first step. We will follow up the



refresh by challenging all CLD employers to ensure that the CLD Plan in their area includes a comprehensive professional development strategy that is embedded in the first 3-year cycle of implementation. The lack of professional development as an integral part of CLD planning and practice is no longer acceptable.

Over to you...

What's your experience of CPD? Do you make it a part of your day-to-day practice? How much support do you get to do this? How do you think we can best improve professional development opportunities for CLD practitioners in all settings? [We'd be interested to hear from you.](#)

CPD and the Standards Council: peer and member led

Our work on continuing professional development, including the refresh of the strategy and i-develop: learning for CLD, is driven forward by our CPD Committee. The Chair of the committee is Ann Swinney, lecturer at the University of Dundee. [The full membership list can be found online here.](#)

Time to re-think "initial training" and "professional development?"

In refreshing the CPD strategy we want to emphasise that professional development takes place at all stages. The distinction between "initial training" and "continuing professional development" seems less and less useful – we need to think in terms of learning pathways that enable all those involved in CLD practice to develop their capacities to the full, while preparing us all for the challenging, varied, often complex roles that are needed.

The Standards Council believes that the need for degree-level courses, as one key part of the professional development pathways for CLD practice, is greater than ever and it is essential to build on what already exists. CLD needs the rigour, the links with thinking in other disciplines and the opportunities for structured reflection and learning that academic institutions can bring.

We also believe that the time is ripe to rethink how professional development in CLD works as a whole system, how the different parts of the system contribute and how it can be re-designed to engage dynamically with the needs and opportunities of the future. The refresh of the CPD strategy – the professional development strategy for CLD as it'll now be known – is one part of this re-thinking but we think the process needs to go further if we're to meet the challenges ahead.

We look forward to a dialogue with colleagues from across the field, from educational institutions involved in providing CLD courses (and those that aren't but could be in future) and from Education Scotland/Scottish Government. The Standards Council is exploring the most effective way to foster this dialogue and will create the opportunity for it happen. We need to work together to grow a truly excellent professional development system for CLD.

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

Democratic challenges, practice opportunities

In the wake of the referendum campaign, democratic participation is in the news and some stereotypes about political apathy have been shaken. What does this mean for CLD practitioners?

As with any set of changes in the wider society, it's important for us to be aware of opportunities and of risks. For instance, are people in the communities we work with more ready to engage in public issues? Are there young people in particular, whose interest in the wider world has been sharpened, wondering where to go next with this and how to relate it to day-to-day realities? If so, CLD has a role to play.

Political literacy, for the moment at least, has become a more immediate issue for many; important to remember that different people may be talking different languages – and that it may be important to stimulate interest while it is fresh. Are there new or different divisions in communities? Again, CLD skills may be important, while there may also be challenges for practitioners. Also challenging may be situations where political parties themselves take on a direct role in mobilising communities.

In all of this, making choices as practitioners based on our recognised values, Code of Ethics and competences will mean we can clearly explain what we're doing to everyone we work with – and make best use of opportunities to widen democracy.



Reviewing Community Development Standards

While we wait for a statement about community development, or community capacity building, to complement those on youth work and adult learning, the review of National Occupational Standards for Community Development (CD NOS) offers an opportunity to explore how practice in Scotland can be supported and improved, while contributing to the UK wide process.



The Federation for Community Development Learning (FCDL) is leading this Review with the Standards Council, ensuring that it happens despite funding restrictions. The

Standards Council, as well as being part of the core group of partners at UK level, is working alongside Scottish Community Development Centre, Scottish Community Development Network and Glasgow University to ensure that the particular context for and issues affecting practice in Scotland are taken account of.

Discussions in the first phase of consultation have confirmed that the CD NOS are relevant to practice in Scotland, complementary to the CLD Code of Ethics, values and competence framework, and potentially a useful tool for practice development and learning. However it is also clear that, in Scotland, the CD NOS are used infrequently.

Draft revised standards, based on the first phase of consultation, will be available for comment in November (you can keep in touch [via the FCDL website](#).) As well as encouraging members and others to contribute their views, and providing a Standards Council response, we will be looking to explore with partners how the refreshed Standards can be better utilised to support and improve community development practice in Scotland.

If you are interested in being involved in that, [please get in touch](#).



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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.

