

Appendix E 8.1b

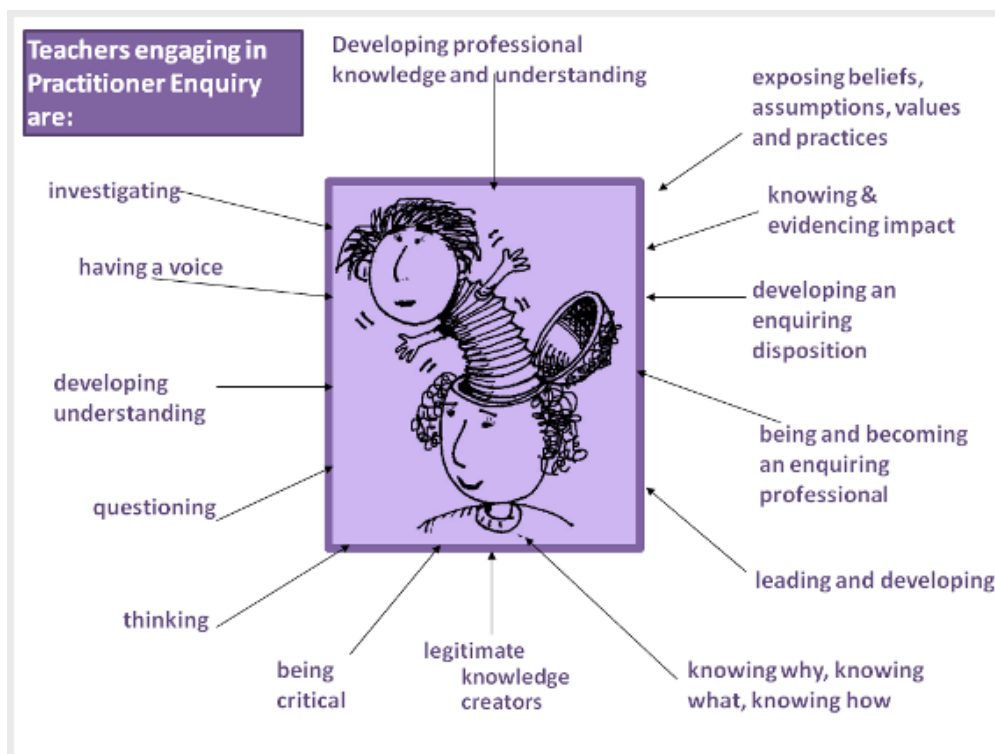
Professional Learning

There are many ways in which teachers might choose to engage in and pursue professional learning. It is most likely that teachers will engage in a multi-layered approach to professional learning throughout their careers.

Teachers may wish to consider the following questions when considering their professional learning:

- What is the focus of my professional learning and why is that important for me? For my pupils? For my colleagues? For my school/establishment?
- How will I know the impact of my professional learning in the short term? Medium term? Long term?

What is an enquiring professional?



Model of Professional Learning

The following model places the practitioner at the centre where the focus is on self-directed learning:



A model of Professional Learning (Education Scotland)

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What is self-directed learning?

In self-directed learning, teachers map out their own development and work individually or collaboratively with colleagues to reflect on and evaluate their practice. They identify learning goals and opportunities for learning, participate in professional learning and enquiry and evaluate outcomes. This could be informed by their own context, experience, expertise and areas of interest, the needs of learners/colleagues, the evidence they have about impact (on them as an individual and on others), ongoing professional dialogue.

Research into professional learning suggests there are four interrelated processes that support professional growth of teachers and transformation of practice. The table below provides some more details about the 4 areas:

1) Reflection on practice	2) Experiential learning	3) Cognitive development
<p>Asking questions, being curious and looking closely at practice;</p> <p>Developing skills in observing what is happening;</p> <p>Developing skills in analysing and evaluating what is happening;</p> <p>Exploring roles and approaches in professional practice.</p>	<p>Trying out and exploring the impact of approaches;</p> <p>Experimenting and taking risks with innovative practice;</p> <p>Examining outcomes and identifying learning from innovative practice;</p> <p>Building new ideas into practice in structured ways.</p>	<p>Being open to and seeking new ideas and practices;</p> <p>Questioning assumptions about practice;</p> <p>Using different sources to critically examine experience and practice;</p> <p>Testing ideas and exploring the implications for practice</p>
<p>4) Collaborative learning</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working collaboratively to support each other in changing practice • Sharing ideas and experiences through professional dialogue • Seeking constructive feedback on practice and the impact on pupil learning • Providing constructive feedback on practice and the impact on pupil learning 		
<p>Examples of Collaborative Learning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning Rounds • Teaching/Professional Learning Communities • Subject Development Groups • Schools based working groups • Local authority/external working groups (including inter-agency colleagues) • Co-operative/Team Teaching • Mentoring/supporting a colleague • Lesson observation & analysis (of self/other) • Online learning community/discussion/blog • Professional/Academic conference/seminar • Reading group • Classroom/school visits (with follow up professional dialogue) • SQA Assessor development/meetings 		

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Teachers may also choose to undertake leadership activities:

- Leading a working group (internally/externally)
- Leading the development of a new initiative/curriculum/development/programme
- Leading an enquiry

GTC Scotland's Professional Recognition process provides the opportunity for teachers to focus on and develop their professional learning in particular areas of interest and/or expertise and gain recognition for enhancing their knowledge, understanding and practice.

How will I know if my professional learning is making a difference?

Professional learning experiences will be different for everyone. It will be about trying things out and seeing what works for you. In broad terms your professional learning should:

- Enable you to progress, enrich, develop and enhance your practice and knowledge
- Be about advancing professional skills and knowledge
- Develop your pedagogical expertise
- Allow you to develop a critical and informed understanding of educational contexts and current debates in policy, education and practice
- Allow you to develop your career pathways through planned, sustained and significant professional learning.

Impact of Professional Learning

The process of gathering evidence of impact is a crucial part of professional learning. Evidence is wide ranging. It should be useful, meaningful and relevant for you. It need not always be a written record. It could be part of your ongoing critical reflection and dialogue. What is key is that, whatever you use, it must be analysed, reflected on and used to inform next steps.

Examples of Evidence

Reflections on and analysis of lessons and/or discussions with learners

Reflections on professional dialogue with learners, peers, colleagues and parents

Individual critical reflections on practice including reflective journals

Quantitative data

Samples of pupils work to show progression and development

Analysis of surveys taking account of the views of children and young people, parents and colleagues

Analysed pupil interviews/group discussion, pupil talk (individual, group and pair), teacher talk (from audio and/or video recording)

<http://www.gtcs.org.uk/professional-development/professional-learning.aspx>

<http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/learningteachingandassessment/professionallearning/framework/index.asp>

Professional learning should provide opportunities for all forms of learning experience to be combined and sustained as the new practice becomes fully integrated into professional action.