



PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL CREATING A CURRICULUM FOR EXCELLENCE ADVICE ON FLEXIBILITY AND INNOVATION IN THE CURRICULUM

In Creating a Curriculum for Excellence, the key criterion is that any changes should lead to educational gain for all pupils. Any school introducing more flexible and innovative approaches should evaluate the initiative using the key principles set out in **Setting the Standard: Learning – Realising Potential** and the five part strategy for **Creating a Curriculum for Excellence**.

There are five key criteria that should form the basis of the development of innovative and flexible approaches to the delivery of the curriculum and courses.

1. **Rationale**

Any curriculum initiative should have a clear and well thought through rationale based out in the principles set out in *Creating a Curriculum for Excellence Part 1*. It should have a clear focus on intended outcomes that relate to educational gain for all learners in terms of maximising learning and achievement. Educational gain can be defined in a range of ways including:

- improved attainment;
- improvement in general achievement;
- improved attendance and discipline;
- improved pupil motivation, self-esteem and confidence;
- enhanced personal or social development;
- improved vocational preparation; and
- increased opportunities for further study and progression.

2. **Full consultation with stakeholders and general consensus**

The extent of consultation will depend on the stages affected by any curriculum innovation or use of flexibility. Comprehensive consultation should be well-informed. It should provide those consulted with sufficient and relevant information. Furthermore, it should explain not only the potential benefits from a change, but also the possible disadvantages. Effective consultation is likely to involve the following:

- service managers
- staff
- pupils
- parents
- other schools
- colleges and other providers
- local employers

3. Well-planned implementation

The planning of any curricular initiative should itself be reflected in both school and departmental plans. Targets, tasks and timescales should be clearly defined with specific, measurable and achievable success criteria. Particular attention should be paid to ensuring that resource and staff development implications of any curricular initiative have been carefully costed and adequately met.

4. Effective short-term and long-term monitoring and evaluation of implementation and outcomes

There should be rigorous procedures in place which ensure that any curriculum initiative is carefully monitored and evaluated. Senior and other staff remits should reflect responsibilities for monitoring and evaluating initiatives.

Progress on any initiative should be considered on a regular basis and the outcomes shared appropriately. Monitoring activities and evaluation should relate directly to the intended outcomes stated in the rationale. Where possible in evaluating any initiative, baseline measures should have been established, for example attendance, attainment and discipline information, against which progress can be measured. Schools should have clear arrangements by which more “qualitative outcomes”, such as maximising pupils’ learning and achievement, are clearly evaluated.

5. Improved pupil outcomes/attainment

There should be a clear link between the intended outcomes of any curriculum initiative, as stated in the rationale, and any emerging educational gain. It should be recognised that some outcomes, such as improved attainment and motivation, will only be realised over a period of time. Schools should be able to provide sound evidence that demonstrates the benefits of the curriculum initiative accruing to pupils.