

New professional standards for further education teachers and work-based learning practitioners

Survey response form

Responses should be returned by 20 July 2017 to:

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or completed electronically and sent to:

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Name	Hayden Llewellyn
Organisation	Education Workforce Council (EWC)

Please select your job role

- Further education practitioner
- Work-based learning practitioner
- Further education manager
- Work-based learning manager
- Other (please specify).

Aims, principles and model

Question 1 – Do you agree that the aims and the key principles on which the standards have been developed are appropriate as a basis for developing these new professional standards?

Agree	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Neither agree nor disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Supporting comments

We think the aims and principles are sound, however, we are not convinced that the standards as proposed are sufficiently aligned with the principles to be able to achieve the aims.

Question 2 – Do you agree with the statement that a particular blend of values, skills and knowledge taken together define professionalism in action and high-quality learning?

Agree	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Neither agree nor disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Supporting comments

Yes we agree and would add that similar taxonomies are the norm and commonly used internationally in developing professional standards for education professionals, for example in Scotland and several states in Australia.

This model does provide clarity, however it is curious why the standards have not been organised under the headings; 'values, skills, knowledge.'

Question 3 – Do you agree that the values, skills and knowledge capture the appropriate requirements for sustained highly effective teaching?

Agree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Disagree	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Neither agree nor disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Supporting comments

While we commend the attempts made to produce a clear and concise document, there is a danger that the proposed standards will seem 'basic' and reductive. In places they read like a 'job description' rather than standards which will not provide sufficient stretch nor encourage development for experienced professionals beyond their initial years in post.

Question 4 – Do you agree that the personal commitment statement and descriptors for further education (FE) teachers/work-based learning (WBL) practitioners will support them to take responsibility for their career-long professional learning?

Agree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Neither agree nor disagree	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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Supporting comments

The Council agrees that the personal commitment statement and descriptors will provide a helpful framework for practitioners to take responsibility for career long professional learning, however it considers that the absence of “leadership” within the standards is a notable omission in this regard.

Question 5 – What are your views on how well the new standards will support you to reflect on your practice and to plan your professional learning?

Comments

N/A

Organisation/employer

Question 6 – What are your views on how well the new standards will support your organisation to engage your staff to reflect on their practice and to develop their and your own organisation’s professional learning?

Comments

The Council is answering questions 5 and 6 from the perspective of its registrants.

As a professional body, the EWC believes that all practitioners must have the appropriate knowledge, skills and experience to maintain their registration. The new standards offer a useful framework to aid practitioners in this regard, however it must be recognised that the standards will not achieve this objective on their own.

The Council is working with Welsh Government officials to incorporate the new standards within the Professional Learning Passport. This is an important step as the Passport is a tool intended for use by practitioners in planning, recording and reflecting on their professional learning. The Council would urge the Welsh Government to fully utilise the benefits of the Passport in launching the new standards and encouraging practitioners to ‘plan, record and reflect’ against them.

Question 7 – We would like to know your views on the effects that the proposed new professional standards would have on the Welsh language, specifically on:

- i) opportunities for people to use Welsh
- ii) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

What effects do you think there would be? How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?

Comments

The Council notes the references to Welsh language and culture within the standards. This is clearly needed. The Council also highlights the part that FE and WBL will need to play in ensuring the Welsh Government reaches its target for 2050 of 1 million Welsh speakers.

Question 8 – Please also explain how you believe the proposed new professional standards could be formulated or changed so as to have:

- i) positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language
- ii) no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

Comments

See response to question 7.

Question 9 – We have asked a number of specific questions. If you have any related issues which we have not specifically addressed, please use this space to report them.

The Council welcomes the review and development of standards for FE teachers and WBL and considers this to be long overdue given the:

- new focus on the sector in the delivery of Welsh Government reforms
- introduction of registration and professional regulation to the FE and WBL sectors

We commend the Welsh Government for the clear and concise way in which the standards have been prepared and hope that they will contribute to greater parity of esteem between the school and FE / WBL sectors.

While welcoming this development, we invite the Welsh Government to consider the following points:

1. As a standards body with a legislative remit that explicitly emphasises that the EWC has a significant role in standards,

Principal aims of the EWC in the Education (Wales) Act 2014

(a) to contribute to improving the standards of teaching and the quality of learning in Wales, and

(b) to maintain and improve standards of professional conduct amongst teachers and persons who support teaching and learning in Wales

we are strongly of the view that standards rightly should be owned, developed and promoted by a profession, through its professional body working with its registrants and stakeholders. This is the model followed successfully in many jurisdictions within the UK and internationally. Indeed, it is the model that the Welsh Government has established for social care in Wales (through Social Care Wales – formerly the Care Council for Wales). This would, in theory, be easy to accomplish as standards in FE and WBL do not have a statutory basis in Wales.

The current position whereby the EWC is required to regulate against sets of professional standards it does not own or develop is highly irregular internationally.

2. We think the proposed standards as currently expressed do create some difficulties for the EWC in undertaking our fitness to practise work, which involves assessing areas of practitioner conduct **and competence**.

The Council notes that there is no reference to the use of the standards for regulatory purposes in the aims listed on page 5 of the consultation document.

We also consider that a specific reference to the Council's Code of Professional Conduct and Practice should be included within the standards, thus making it clear that there is an expectation on registrants to adhere to the Code.

3. The Council notes that the standards for school teachers, FE / WBL and learning support staff are being developed separately. We feel that this is a missed opportunity to highlight a shared vision and the core knowledge and practice common across educational sectors and settings. Including the EWC Code in all standards would have been one small step in this direction. While recognising that professional practice across sectors and roles is different, we would look for standards which recognise, express and enable the professional practice(s) required to deliver new curriculum reform, as well as other Welsh Government reforms which impact school and post 16 / compulsory sectors, such as the Additional Learning Needs agenda and Welsh language strategy.

We also are aware that the standards for school teaching and leadership are conceptually very different to the FE and WBL standards and have been prepared in a way that is out of kilter with both the FE and WBL standards and other standards models internationally.

4. The Council considers that a small number of refinements to the structure of the standards ought to be considered. For example:
 - why are the standards introduced as “standards **and** personal commitments”?
 - the use of a ‘root’ plus statements, although clear, also restricts what the statements can express;
 - are all the standards of equal importance?
 - what is the relationship between the bulleted statements and the statements underneath?
 - some standards are broad while others are prescriptive, for example ‘other appropriate professional skills’, compared with ‘contributing to professional learning networks’
 - in places, the standards as presented seem repetitive, and the wording clumsy. For example, how can a practitioner demonstrate dignity towards others? It would also be difficult to ‘critically reflect on one’s own values and practice to improving (sic) learning:’

5. We query the omission of the following specific matters in the standards:

- leadership
- safeguarding

6. The standards will require accompanying guidance and exemplification if they are to be used effectively by practitioners and employers. We trust the Welsh Government has this intention?