



Welcome to the February edition of the CfE Implementation e-bulletin. As with every monthly edition we aim to provide easy access to the most up to date resources, materials and information available to help promote positive engagement among practitioners, pupils and parents as we work together to embed Curriculum for Excellence.



Bill Maxwell

Chair of the CfE Implementation Board

More Support for Teachers in Schools

The Scottish Government has announced that secondary school teachers across Scotland will get more time and support to deliver the new national qualifications, through a package worth £5 million.

Following discussions with teachers, teaching unions and other national organisations, Minister for Learning Dr Alasdair Allan has put in place a further package of support for secondary schools. Find out more on the [Scottish Government website](#).

Insight

The Scottish Government, together with Education Scotland and other partners are developing a new benchmarking tool for secondary schools and local authorities. Insight, formally called the Senior Phase Benchmarking Tool, is going live in August and will help analyse, compare and improve the learning and teaching of pupils in the senior phase.

Insight is being developed with input from schools and local authorities who have been given access to a series of prototypes to help them become familiar with the Tool and provide feedback. The Preview Update will be released in April and will be the last prototype before the Tool goes live in August.

The Insight Project Team is holding a series of regional events between April and June in 15 different locations across Scotland to help secondary schools and local authorities to use the tool for self-evaluation and improvement.

Each secondary school and local authority will be invited to send three representatives to the events. They will receive up-to-date information before the tool goes live and be taken through practical scenarios during a hands-on session with the tool. Education Scotland will discuss how they will work with schools in using the tool to provide evidence for school inspections.

More information is available on the [Scottish Government website](#).

Phase 2 National 1 Units

SQA is developing new National 1 Units in three phases. Phase 1 Units are currently available for centres to deliver, and Unit Support Notes and Unit assessment support packs for Phase 2 Units have now been published. Unit Support Notes for Phase 1 and Phase 2 Units are [available on the SQA website](#).

Unit assessment support packs are held securely and teachers/lecturers can arrange access to them through their SQA Co-ordinator.

Unit Support Notes and Unit assessment support for Phase 3 Units will be available by the end of May 2014. Please note that Units in Phases 2 and 3 are valid from August 2014.

Common questions on new National Courses

SQA is continuing to publish questions and answers in response to subject-specific queries on the new National Courses, and are also updating the question and answer documents to include any new queries that they receive.

The questions featured have come directly from teachers and lecturers who have contacted SQA. [Find out more on the SQA website](#).

Unit assessment support for new Higher Courses – package 2 now available

SQA has published the second of its Unit assessment support packages for Units in the new Higher Courses. Packages 1 and 2 are now available and teachers/lecturers can arrange access to these materials through their SQA Co-ordinator.

The third Unit Assessment Support package for the new Higher Courses will be published by the end of April 2014. All packs are valid from August 2014 and must therefore be held securely and treated as confidential.

Further information on Unit Assessment Support can be found on the [SQA website](#).

Specimen question papers for new Higher Courses

SQA has published specimen question papers for all new Higher Courses that will include a question paper (exam) as part of the Course assessment. These illustrate the standard, structure and requirements of the 'live' question papers that candidates will sit from session 2014/15, and show how SQA would mark the question paper.

Specimen question papers can be downloaded from the [subject pages of SQA's website](#).

Key Guidelines Being Developed

Education Scotland, in partnership with the SQA, has prepared a sequenced list of main messages and links for N4 and N5. These might be thought of as 'route maps' or 'step by step' guides, and will help practitioners ensure they have referred to the key guidelines and advice for learning, teaching and assessment in the new N4 and N5 qualifications.

These guides will provide reassurance of the key documents and the sequence

they should be used in. This can help teachers to reflect on their approaches this year, ensure they've done all they need to do and prepare for next year. The first of the route maps will be ready in the coming weeks and will be published as they become available. Watch out on the [Education Scotland website](#) for more details.

Leadership Events

The first in a series of leadership events has taken place for secondary school leaders and partner organisations and agencies. Hosted by Education Scotland, ADES, SLS, SQA and the Scottish Government these events explore how CfE is transforming learning and achievement for young people with a focus on the senior phase.

Jim Thewliss, Headteacher at Harris Academy in Dundee who attended this event said: "Today's event was ideally timed within the process of the implementation of the Senior Phase of Curriculum for Excellence in that it left school leaders with reassurance that all agencies with a locus in supporting the implementation of Curriculum for Excellence, are aware of and understand the inevitable issues which will arise from an initiative of this scale, and are able and willing to respond positively to them."

Ruth McKay, Headteacher at Kelso High School in the Scottish Borders said: "Today's event has been invaluable in giving senior leaders from schools across Scotland an opportunity to share their learning. Hearing about the approaches which are being developed in other schools and authorities will allow attendees to reflect on and refine their own approaches. These are challenging times in Scottish education so it was good to hear inspiring stories from schools around Scotland which remind us that Curriculum for Excellence is improving outcomes for learners. School leaders will also be reassured to know that Education Scotland and SQA are listening to school's experiences around implementation."

Local authorities are given an allocation of places and invited to ask each secondary and special school in their authority to attend. The events will run throughout March.

Annotated Unit assessment support for Literacy

SQA has produced an annotated Unit assessment support pack for the National Literacy Units at National 3 and National 4, to support teachers/lecturers of Literacy who may have deaf/hearing impaired learners in their class. This complements the existing annotated Unit assessment support pack for candidates with reading and writing difficulties.

Both annotated Unit assessment support packs are held securely and teachers/lecturers can arrange access to them through their SQA Co-ordinator.

Opportunities for Young People to Consider Careers Using Gaelic

Work is on-going to encourage pupils in Gaelic-medium education and those learning Gaelic to consider ways in which they could use the language in their future careers. A booklet has recently been published by Bòrd na Gàidhlig, in which 16 people reflect on how they use Gaelic in their jobs in, for example, teaching, media, language development and working with others in roles with Police Scotland and the National Health Service.

The Minister for Learning, Science and Scotland's Language, Dr Alasdair Allan, who learned Gaelic as an adult, is among those who gave testimonial in which he speaks of how he uses the language in his role as MSP for the Western Isles and as the Minister with responsibility for Gaelic and the effect this has had on

him. All those who contributed, play a vital role as ambassadors for Gaelic and act as role models for young people interested in using more than one language in their future career.

The booklet can be [downloaded from the website](#) or hard copies can be obtained by e-mailing: teagasg@gaidhlig.org.uk

'Better Eating, Better Learning – A New Context for School Food'

Last year Ministers convened a working group to produce a refocus of the 2003 Hungry for Success school food strategy. The group represented head teachers, ADES, COSLA, caterers, procurement specialists, food industry experts, parents representatives and more.

The refreshed guidance - 'Better Eating, Better Learning – A New Context for School Food' - will publish in March and will support anyone involved in school food and food education to make sense of the ever-changing policy landscape. It has drawn on wide input, including input from children and young people. In the meantime check out how you can get involved in International School Meals Day on 6 March by visiting the [International School Meals Day website](#).

