

Appendix: Accreditation routes

How do I run accredited CPD using the *Strengthening Pedagogy with ICT* pack?

Introduction

The *Strengthening Pedagogy with ICT* pack follows an action enquiry model, and we have seen how Bristol LA and Bath Spa University have used the pack to support accredited study at Masters' level. Joe in North Lincolnshire also makes reference to the use of the pack in accredited CPD. *Strengthening Pedagogy with ICT* includes the critical evaluation of current practice, the identification of an issue or an area for development, action and re-evaluation, examined in the light of relevant research and reading. The structure, used as it stands, provides many opportunities for high quality CPD activities. However, an additional level of engagement can be offered by accrediting teachers' use of the materials. The Teacher Development Agency (TDA) provides funding to support CPD at postgraduate level, which means that this could be available free of charge to teachers in England. This funding depends on all teachers completing an impact evaluation at the end of the CPD, whether they wish to accredit their work or not.

Many universities already offer action enquiry CPD modules. These recognise and reward teachers' professional development activities with a postgraduate certificate, diploma or Masters degree credits. It is possible to accredit teachers' work with the *Strengthening Pedagogy with ICT* materials because of the structure and content. Gaining accreditation for the work will probably involve teachers producing critical reflections or evaluations of the impact of the materials, but this need not mean writing long essays or assignments. Some universities have developed alternative methods of assessment including portfolios, electronic/online records and logs. These can provide participants with proformas, writing frames and guidance on how these can be produced. The activities in the pack can contribute to these forms of assessment.

Credits at postgraduate and Masters level may be transferred between universities. This means that a teacher already engaged in a Masters course could transfer credits from this work to his/her existing course. Conversely, previous credits could be transferred to the university accrediting this module if the teacher wished to go on to complete a dissertation and Masters degree. The transfer of credits is at the discretion of the university and will only be considered if the subject matter is related. Teachers who qualified through a PGCE course in 2005, or more recently, may be entitled to 30 credits towards a Masters degree. This should be discussed with the university involved or the TDA.

Getting started

If accreditation is required, you may wish to involve senior LA personnel to ensure their support for the project. This could include National Strategy managers, CPD managers, senior officers or heads of Children's Services. It is worth checking whether there is an existing relationship with a university and how that has worked in the past.

In order to offer teachers this opportunity, the LA should start by approaching a local university that offers Initial Teacher Training or an education degree. There may well be an established relationship due to the existing support for trainee teachers in local schools. Contact the person in charge of CPD within the education department of the university. If there is not someone with this responsibility, try contacting the leader of the PGCE or education degree or the person in charge of school placements. If this approach doesn't work, you can obtain a list of universities offering postgraduate professional development courses from the TDA (http://www.tda.gov.uk/teachers/continuingprofessionaldevelopment/ppd_intro/ppdcourse.aspx) or email the agency at ppd@tda.gov.uk. It is worth noting that not every university will be willing to offer accredited courses that include the use of these materials.

Who to involve

An LA representative, who knows the *Strengthening Pedagogy with ICT* materials well, such as the ICT across the curriculum (ICTAC) consultant, Secondary ICT Consultant or Secondary Strategy Manager, should meet with the appropriate person at the university to go through the materials. It is also important to make sure that the university can offer a member of staff to work with LA staff on the planning and delivery of an accredited module. This member of the university staff should have in-depth knowledge of ICT and pedagogy and experience of supporting teachers up to Masters level. Once the appropriate LA and university staff have been identified, work on the module will fall to them, with support from the university's CPD team.

Creating an accredited module

Ideally, use an existing module, already validated by the university. This can be adapted, or the *Strengthening Pedagogy with ICT* materials fitted into it. The existing module may focus on action research, action enquiry, independent study, work-based enquiry, pedagogy, learning and teaching, ICT across the curriculum or another open, generic area. If there is no validated module that can be used, it may take some time for one to be approved.

A module outline should be produced that includes the module structure, timetable of sessions, details of assessment, handbook and online materials, as well as identifying suitable research and readings. The university may provide templates for handbooks and support materials. It is wise to divide this work appropriately between the LA and university staff. University staff will be experienced in producing these kinds of materials and will be able to find appropriate research quickly. However, LA staff will need to be involved and learn about how to support teachers through accreditation and what it entails. LA staff may also be able to provide more in-depth knowledge about the participants, local and national CPD approaches and keeping the module relevant to teachers' everyday experiences.

In the production of module materials and the delivery of the module, you may be able to make use of university facilities such as a VLE, library, online journals and e-books. The library may have staff with expertise in online research methods and the use of academic databases to support work off campus (depending on the location of the participants and university). You may wish to involve such staff in the preparation of materials, but also in offering their expertise to the participants. They may be available to run sessions introducing online journals and research, either on or off campus.

Once the module has been designed, it will need to be costed. Costing for different numbers of participants should be produced and a minimum number agreed. This should cover the cost of staff time, production of materials and travel for the university and LA staff. It is also a good idea to set a maximum group size and consider the possibility of running an additional cohort, but this will depend on university and LA staff availability.

For an example of one model of implementation and the recruitment, preparation, delivery and evaluation of an existing module, please see the Bristol/Bath Spa University case study.

'This initiative was ideal for our action research module on the Masters course. Teachers really liked the balance between the theoretical and practical elements and how it made them examine their pedagogical practice when using ICT.'

Process summary

