

While more time is needed to measure the full impact, the project has altered the culture of designing education:

Learning is not treated as another task for senior management to deal with but becomes the central organising principle of the college. Learning takes place at individual, group and organisational levels; all tutors are learners and all learners tutors (Coffield; p9)

Disturbance:

1

- Teaching is too centred on learning outcomes.
- Is the skill achieving learning outcomes or preparing learners for progression?
- What, then, is the purpose of education?
- The answer is multi-layered as Biesta indicates:



Learners:

2

...It is almost universally believed that college diplomas give...a competitive advantage in the global knowledge wars...there is now a change though that is driving a high-skill, low-wage workforce” Ashton, Lauder, Brown ‘The Global Auction’

- What motivates learners now?
- Learners tend to lack intrinsic motivation because if a weak job market and because the link between education and income and opportunity has been severed since the collapse of Lehman Brothers.
- Moreover, parents and family members have lost their jobs which reinforces the perception of diminishing hope.

4
‘The central problem of curriculum study is the gap between our ideas and aspirations and our attempts to operationalize them...The gap can be closed only by adopting a research and development approach to one’s own teaching, whether alone or in a group...’

Stenhouse

Scaling New Mountains: How can Joint Practice Development support the design and delivery of curriculum?

Staff

3

“Why...have our efforts – and they were many and expensive – met with intractability? Why should we expect that what we now recommend will be any more effective than our past efforts?” Sarason, 1998:3

- What is needed is not more centralised reform. Instead staff need the opportunity to research and engage in a theoretical underpinning of what ‘good’ teaching is as well as increasing their understanding of progression opportunities. Staff need to be trusted.

Therefore, we decided a new way to approach curriculum design, involving collaborative reflective practice, with information from key sources was needed to redefine the learning experience on offer.

Set up ‘clusters’ to look at development of curriculum:

- held research conferences
- undertook ‘Communities of enquiry’ to consider the purpose of curriculum
- set up ‘Communities of Practice’ to focus on raising attainment by developing thinking skills in learners.

Impact:

- 1) Transformation to the learning experience
- 2) Consideration of the ways the constraints of policies and procedures can be navigated
- 3) Staff engage at a range of levels – change takes time.

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