



Scottish Qualifications Authority

Curriculum for Excellence: the next generation of national qualifications

Action Research Projects

Applications are invited for funding to carry out action research projects which will inform thinking, in preparation for the introduction of Curriculum for Excellence.

Qualifying institutions: projects may be from single institutions or from partnerships and may be submitted by schools or FE colleges.

Qualifying categories: projects should provide the opportunity to trial practice in the assessment and delivery of qualifications at SCQF levels 4 and 5 or Literacy and Numeracy. These might include:

1. *Literacy and Numeracy*

Degrees of involvement and methods of assessment for Literacy and Numeracy across different contexts will vary from sector to sector and school to school. We would like to explore this with practitioners on the ground. The focus would not be on delivery but on methods of assessment and collection of evidence, cross curricular change in a school or with partners which may present cultural challenges. We would be particularly interested in any centre keen to try using a portfolio approach to gathering evidence from a range of different subject areas or partnership contexts in both Literacy and Numeracy.

2. *Good practice in bi or multi level delivery and assessment*

Addressing the issue of bi or multi-level delivery and assessment within specific subjects. The project should show good and effective practice in managing delivery and assessment across two levels and highlight the challenges, particularly relating to progression, assessment and quality assurance issues. It should also highlight any aspects of the methodology which were particularly effective and which motivated learners.

The project could cover the use of more open-ended tasks, problems or projects to ensure both realistic challenges at a lower level and motivating opportunities to show achievement at the higher level.

3. *Using coursework to assess outcomes across Units*

Addressing the issue of integrating outcomes across Units for assessment purposes in for example a Course or a Group Award. The coursework will be used to provide opportunities for the learner to draw on skills and knowledge across Units and to provide challenging and motivating tasks for the learner. The Action project should demonstrate innovative and effective ways of using coursework to integrate assessments across Units in

meaningful and efficient ways.

Examples of the transfer and adaptation of existing guidance to other subjects (eg the assessment approaches used in Project-based National Courses, Skills for Work Courses and Core Skills) could also be covered.

4. *Generic Skills — across the curriculum*

Addressing the issue of integrating skills across the curriculum and researching how this might be managed in centres for staff and for learners. The learners will be aware of and negotiate the need to develop and apply certain generic skills in parts of their learning, and assessment will stimulate them to demonstrate that they have learned to do this. Particular attention would be paid to inclusion issues, including the needs of disabled candidates.

The generic skills can be any of the Core Skills or other broad skills which contribute to the four capacities.

5. *Developing teacher internal assessments for certification*

Developing in-centre guidance to reliably create high quality assessments for certification. We are interested in internal systems which are designed to enable teachers to develop assessment for certification purposes and which encourage understanding of the purposes of assessment. The system should also be capable of interfacing with SQA systems in order to facilitate prior moderation of assessments.

6. *Investigating approaches to internal quality assurance of internal assessments for certification*

Investigating innovative approaches to the Quality Assurance (QA) of internal assessments. Such a project may, for instance, involve trialling approaches which support cross-curricular delivery — which may include inter-departmental professional dialogue. Or perhaps a proposal may look at ways which internal QA can support assessments undertaken in partnership with colleagues outwith your centre and include an ‘e-enabled’ dimension. All project proposals should clearly demonstrate the potential to standardise internal assessment decisions and increase the likelihood that those decisions are accurate.

Where relevant, projects must be able to demonstrate how they are taking into account issues related to the inclusion of disabled learners.

Conditions of grant: grants of between £4,000 and £8,000 are available and must be supported by matched funding either in cash or in-kind to the same amount. Projects must be unique and original — funding cannot be provided to support projects which are already receiving funding from other sources. It is expected that projects will be championed by a member of senior management and provide time and space for practitioner and learner involvement. Funding will be paid on receipt of a final project report. A funding contract and project report pro forma will be provided to successful institutions.

Applications should be submitted to: Dr John Allan, Scottish Qualifications Authority, the Optima Building, 58 Robertson Street, Glasgow, G2 8DQ by Monday 7 September 2009. Application forms should be signed by the Headteacher/Principal of the lead institution.