



scottish social services
learning network
tayforth

Feedback and outcomes from workshop held on 07/09/2010 to discuss sustainability of PLQ (SS) SCQF Level 10 Award

Aim of event: was to facilitate an open discussion amongst stakeholders about the sustainability of the PLQ (SS) SCQF level 10 award delivered by Tayforth and UHI. It was anticipated that this gathering would promote some initial discussions and provide a platform for future discussions with the other Networks, the SSSC and the SQA around the funding, delivery and assessment arrangements for this suite of awards.

Audience: Tayforth Strategic Board, PLOSS Delivery board and Practice Development Group plus those with a key involvement in our programmes.

Desired outcomes: to achieve clarity about what funding, delivery and assessment arrangements are preferred and or required to sustain the PLQ (SS) SCQF level 10 awards delivered by Tayforth and UHI. To outline next steps and plan actions

Morning - Presentations

Rhoda MacRae presented on the models of funding, delivery and assessment used by RGU, South West, Tayforth, South East and the North.

Gill Lappin, PKC and Eleanor Brown, Perth UHI, presented on 'what works well' in relation to the Tayforth and UHI awards and where the potential may be for collaboration between the 2 awards.

Linda Grierson presented on an assessors perspective

Afternoon – Discussions

The large groups split into 2 smaller groups. One group discussed the sustainability of the Tayforth and UHI awards in the short term and the other explored the wider and longer term issues associated with the sustainability of the PLQ (SS) level 10 awards.

Group 1 – Tayforth/UHI short term

There were felt to be both risks and benefits of uniting the Tayforth and UHI awards. Need to explore whether UHI and Tayforth partners both interested.

UHI needs to construct a business case, but locating the award with an HEI offers security.

A united integrated award would avoid confusion and make use of best of both models of delivery (VLE and face 2 face = blended learning).

Options such as going into partnership with the South East could be explored Falkirk considering offering the award across Tayforth and could build the capacity of an employer co-ordinating delivery.

Options considered were award continues being delivered by Tayforth network with Falkirk coordinating delivery and uniting the Tayforth and UHI awards.

Actions – Tayforth to run another programme (third cohort)
To do a SWOT and PEST of both options

Group 2 – Wider and longer terms issues

The market which seems to want practice teachers doesn't dovetail with the vision of the new PLQ (SS) level 10 and practice educators working in learning organisations.

Will the demand for the award lessen over time with decreasing numbers of people becoming qualified social workers and other disciplines developing their own practice educator awards?

Courses that are operating at capacity or are over subscribed are RGU and the West, both of these were set up to supply the demands of the market to produce Practice Teachers. (RGU aligned its award to the degree programme and the need for student placements). It was felt that the RGU award probably had less assessment requirements as they don't use the SQA framework and it would be useful to see the content of the award. The West got buy in from employers who contribute to costs. Both are meeting the demands of the market.

Need to look at the drivers of employers for putting staff through the award. What is its currency in the current landscape of qualifications? Can the award be linked to other qualifications and developments such as the leadership agenda and the CLF? Can it become an award that people can dip in and out of (modular); mix and match with other qualifications (use credits) and become part of a career pathway? Can it be situated within other awards offered e.g. level 2 is situated in a masters programme which makes it part of a career pathway (which appeals to employers). Can these issues be explored with HEIs and the SSSC?

SQA system for assessment very onerous, how can this effort be rationalized and made less effortful? Is panel assessment an option? Is group assessment an option? How can the portfolio be made less onerous? Does having a portal make this less onerous and resource intensive? HEI own assessment processes, they are probably have a more rationalized and less onerous approach to assessment (which may have appeal to employers). Can the SQA be approached to rationalize outcomes and evidence requirements?

If placement fees go the awards will not be sustainable – this representation needs to be made.

May need to rationalize the number of programmes running but do not want to repeat mistake of having no awards running

Marketing – needs to be supported and promoted as an award that promotes workforce development. It has very high completion rates.

Are there two types of programme that can meet the demands of the market?

Option 1 – A model such as the West has (SQA assessment) West provide SQA centre, satellite courses run to demand via local hub and using web portal to provide a more blended approach to learning.

Option 2 – An HEI model (HEI assessment) blended / distance learning.

Actions

To form two small working groups to explore options that would provide sustainable models of delivery and the other to explore ways to make assessment less onerous and resource intensive.

Assessment Group – Gill Lappin, Vivian Fitzsimmons, Margaret Smith and Fiona Mossman

Delivery Group – Eleanor Brown, Pam Gillespie, Linda Grierson, Pat MacCowan, Kathleen Allison, Joanne McMeeking* (*Fiona nominated Joanne TBC)

These groups can be supported by Rhoda who will be resourced by Tayforth Learning Network to provide time to supply any information they may need, be a resource to organise a venue, a date, an agenda, to take minutes, to facilitate etc. Rhoda will be in touch with nominated people on both groups to action.