

# 'Extended' professionalism for enhancement

fostering cultures of reflective practice



QQI

Quality and Qualifications Ireland  
Dearbhú Cáilíochta agus Cáilíochtaí Éireann

ENHANCEMENT SEMINAR

## SELF-EVALUATION AND REFLECTIVE PRACTICE SEMINAR

Exploring the benefits of self-evaluation and reflective practice from strategic and operational perspectives

Weds 6<sup>th</sup> April 2016, Farmleigh, Phoenix Park, Dublin

Keynote address delivered by  
**Professor Linda Evans**  
University of Leeds, UK

# Institutional improvement

## Deficit-focused approach:

- ▶ Rectifying weaknesses
- ▶ Filling gaps or omissions
- ▶ Reducing inadequacies, etc.
  
- ▶ Responsive mode
  - ▶ Improvement is a response to perceived 'imperfections'

## House-proud approach:

- ▶ Refashioning - keeping everything pristine and fresh
- ▶ Keeping 'on top' of things
- ▶ Continually amelioration-focused
- ▶ On-going appraisal
- ▶ An attitude or mindset that is constantly alert to opportunities for improving
  - ▶ creativity
  - ▶ innovation



# Further Education and Training Strategy

## 2014-2019



The research and consultation process identified the need:

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- ▶ To implement a co-ordinated and integrated planning and funding approach to FET, based on the evidence
- ▶ To continually evaluate programmes at all levels using appropriate measures
- ▶ To strengthen engagement with employers both locally and nationally
- ▶ To meet the needs of learners, including those who choose FET and also existing and new priority groups identified by DSP (Dept. of Social Protection)
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# Tackling institutional improvement

- ▶ Fostering the ‘right’ kind(s) of culture(s):
  - ▶ Institutional culture(s)
  - ▶ Professional culture(s)
- ▶ Cultures of reflective practice
- ▶ What do such cultures look like?
- ▶ A culture of reflective practice is one in which there is evidence that reflection is a pre-eminent activity and the basis of, and an influence on, professional practice.

BUT

- ▶ There are degrees of everything!

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# What is reflective practice?

## What does it involve?

- ▶ ‘A practitioner’s reflection can serve as a corrective to over-learning. Through reflection, he [sic] can surface and criticize the tacit understandings that have grown up around the repetitive experiences of a specialized practice, and can make new sense of the situations of uncertainty or uniqueness which he [sic] may allow himself to experience’.
- ▶ (Schön, D. A. (1995) *The Reflective Practitioner*, Aldershot, Arena, p. 61)
- ▶ ‘To me, reflective practice is about ... the constant striving for improvement by a process involving evaluative reflection to identify areas for improvement and creative reflection to identify remedial practice’.
- ▶ ‘In relation to educational research this is achieved by a cycle whereby researchers analyse what they do, evaluate their output, seek a better way of doing things where they feel one is needed, and then apply to their research practice as much of that better way of doing things as circumstances permit. This is the approach of what I have identified as the analytical researcher. It is an approach that leads to the development of advanced research skills. It is an approach that constitutes educational researcher development’.
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# Further Education and Training Strategy

## 2014-2019



### Standing of FET

‘The standing of vocational education compared to academic education is still an unresolved problem throughout Europe. The former has a strong standing in some countries but has a low standing in others. In Ireland, the lower standing of FET compared to academic education is no exception. Consequently, the Irish FET sector has to work out its own response to improving FET and its standing in Irish society.’

# Professionalism orientation: schoolteachers

Eric Hoyle, 1975

## 'Restricted' professionalism

- ▶ Skills derived from experience
- ▶ Perspective limited to the immediate in time and place
- ▶ Introspective with regard to methods
- ▶ Value placed on autonomy
- ▶ Infrequent reading of professional literature
- ▶ Teaching seen as an intuitive activity

## 'Extended' professionalism

- ▶ Skills derived from a mediation between experience & theory
- ▶ Perspective embracing the broader social context of education
- ▶ Methods compared with those of colleagues and reports of practice
- ▶ Value placed on professional collaboration
- ▶ Regular reading of professional literature
- ▶ Teaching seen as a rational activity

# 'Restricted' and 'Extended' Professionalism

## *'restricted' professionals*

- ▶ adopt an intuitive approach to practice
- ▶ use skills derived from practical experience
- ▶ do not reflect on or analyse their practice
- ▶ are unintellectual in outlook and attitudes
- ▶ avoid change and are set in their ways

## *'extended' professionals*

- ▶ adopt a rational approach to practice
- ▶ use skills developed from both theory and practice
- ▶ are reflective and analytical practitioners
- ▶ adopt intellectual approaches to the job
- ▶ experiment with and welcome new ideas

# Key characteristics of 'extended' professionalism

- ▶ Reflectivity
- ▶ Analyticism
- ▶ Rationality

# Defining professionalism

Professionalism is: *an ideologically-, attitudinally-, intellectually-, and epistemologically-based stance on the part of an individual, in relation to the practice of the profession to which s/he belongs, and which influences her/his professional practice.*

Evans, L. (2002) *Reflective Practice in Educational Research* (London, Continuum)

Hoyle (2008) 'the service component of professionalism'

# 'Restricted' and 'Extended' Professionals





# Key features of institutional improvement

- ▶ Promoting 'extending' professionalism
- ▶ Moving along the continuum represents professional development:
  - ▶ Developing from 'restricted' towards 'extended' professionalism
- ▶ Changing professionalism(s)
- ▶ Fostering the professionalism(s) that support(s) institutional:
  - ▶ Vision
  - ▶ Purposes
  - ▶ Goals
  - ▶ Improvement

# Key components of professionalism

- ▶ What practitioners do
- ▶ How and why they do it
- ▶ What they know and understand
- ▶ Where and how they acquire their knowledge and understanding
- ▶ What kinds of attitudes they hold
- ▶ What codes of behaviour they adhere to
- ▶ What purpose(s) they perform
- ▶ What quality of service they provide
- ▶ The level of consistency incorporated into the above

# professionalism

## behavioural component

processual dimension

procedural dimension

productive dimension

competential dimension

## attitudinal component

perceptual dimension

(e)valuative dimension

motivational dimension

## intellectual component

epistemological dimension

rationalistic dimension

comprehensive dimension

analytical dimension

# How are professionalisms shaped?

- ▶ Through a myriad of constantly shifting contextual and agential influences, including:
  - ▶ Resources
  - ▶ Leadership
  - ▶ Management
  - ▶ Working conditions
  - ▶ Collegial relations
  - ▶ Promotion policy and criteria
  - ▶ Institutional vision
  - ▶ Institutional strategy
  - ▶ Implicit or inferred expectation of others
  - ▶ Articulated expectations of others

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  - ▶ **Articulated expectations of others**

## The University of X academic ...

is typically - and often unwillingly:

- ▶ self-serving;
- ▶ secretive and suspicious of colleagues;
- ▶ competitive - to the detriment of others;
- ▶ not a team player;
- ▶ unsure of what's required to become a respected and successful researcher;
- ▶ focused narrowly on playing the points system and accruing points.

# The 'new' University of X academic

Must be, *inter alia*:

- ▶ ambitious for her/himself *and* the university;
- ▶ committed to playing her/his part in enacting the Strategic Plan:
  - ▶ and supporting others to do so
- ▶ collegial and co-operative;
- ▶ a team player;
- ▶ aware of the highest standards of scholarship and intellectual achievement that prevail in her/his discipline;
- ▶ focused on reaching those standards.



# 'Old' and 'new' University of X academics

The 'old' breed of academic typically:

- ▶ chased points and accrued promotions-based currency
- ▶ was self-serving in setting goals and work agendas
- ▶ did not consider her/himself accountable to line managers
- ▶ perceived academic tasks as disjointed and separate and lacking synergy
- ▶ performed service and citizenship only for strategic purposes
- ▶ trod a lonely path, emotionally detached from the rest of the university academic community

The 'new' breed of academic typically:

- ▶ chases scholarship and intellectual recognition
- ▶ seeks to marry her/his own goals with those of the university
- ▶ accepts that responsibility implies accountability
- ▶ recognises the holism of academic professionalism & synergy between activities
- ▶ accepts the shared responsibility of service and university citizenship
- ▶ is a loyal University of X team player who willingly contributes to enhancing its community

<b>The under-developed researcher typically:</b>	<b>The University of X researcher typically:</b>
conducts research that lacks rigour;	conducts highly rigorous research;
draws upon basic research skills;	draws upon basic <i>and</i> advanced research skills;
fails to develop or extend her/his methodological competence;	strives constantly to develop and extend her/his methodological competence;
utilises only established research methods;	adapts established research methods and develops methodology;
fails to develop basic research findings;	generates and develops theory from research findings;
perceives research methods as tools and methodology as a task-directed, utilitarian process;	perceives research methodology as a field of study in itself;
applies low level analysis to research data;	strives constantly to apply deep levels of analysis to research data;
perceives individual research studies as independent and free-standing;	recognises the value of, and utilises, <i>inter alia</i> : comparative analysis, meta-analysis, synthesis, replication, etc.;
perceives individual research studies as finite and complete;	constantly reflects upon, and frequently revisits and refines, his/her own studies;
struggles to criticise literature and others' research effectively;	has developed the skill of effective criticism and applies this to the formulation of his/her own arguments;
publishes mainly in 'lower grade' academic journals and in professional journals/magazines;	publishes frequently in 'high ranking' academic journals;
is associated mainly with research findings that fall into the 'tips for practitioners' category of output;	disseminates ground-breaking theoretical issues and contributes to, and takes a lead in developing, discourse on theory;
perceives research activity as separate and detached from wider contexts requiring interpersonal, organisational and cognitive skills.	recognises the applicability to a range of contexts (including, in particular, work contexts) of generic skills developed within and alongside research activity.

<b>The 'restricted' lecturer at XX College typically:</b>	<b>The 'extended' lecturer at XX College typically:</b>

The 'restricted' lecturer at XX College typically:	The 'extended' lecturer at XX College typically:
	Is analytical
	Is innovative
	Works collegially and co-operatively with others
	Embraces challenge
	Is reflective
	Values research as an evidence base for improving practice

The 'restricted' lecturer at XX College typically:	The 'extended' lecturer at XX College typically:
	Understands the diversity of our student body and adopts an individual needs-focused approach to course delivery
	Values digital technologies as teaching and learning aids and incorporates them into her/his course delivery appropriately
	Understands the need to engage students, and continually seeks stimulating delivery approaches
	Recognises human potential and is ambitious in her/his goals for what individual students can achieve
	Analyses the factors influencing her/his successes and failures, and makes modifications accordingly
	Is generously collegial and willingly advises, supports and helps colleagues

# 'Restricted' and 'Extended' Professionals



# Further Education and Training Strategy

## 2014-2019



### Continuous Professional Development (CPD) within the FET Sector

‘Interviews with stakeholders point to the specific needs of the sector as a whole, and in particular those engaged directly in the provision of FET programmes. International research indicates that high quality initial and continuing education for staff involved in direct provision of education and training is key to fostering better learner outcomes. Teachers’ competences have powerful effects on learner achievement. SOLAS intends, in partnership with the ETBI and ETBs, to systematically collect data around the current qualification and skills profile of FET staff with a view to developing and implementing an effective CPD strategy.’

... ‘Feedback from the Strategy consultation process clearly indicates that it is essential to ensure the establishment of a more relevant professional and competency skill roadmap for those entering and those currently engaged in the FET sector in its broadest sense ...’



# 'Enabling teachers to become reflective practitioners and life-long learners'

AN ROINN OIDEACHAIS AGUS SCILEANNA/ DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION & SKILLS, 2015

- ▶ Professional development does not only occur on courses or workshops
- ▶ It most often occurs implicitly, without our being aware of it:
  - ▶ Often in day-to-day working life
  - ▶ Often outside work
- ▶ Any environment has the potential to foster professional development:
  - ▶ But fostering cultures of developmentalism will enhance workplace learning
- ▶ *What* are we developing, or hoping to develop, when we speak of professional development?

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# Leadership and leading in the FET sector

## the 'extended' leader?

- ▶ The field of educational leadership may be at a crossroads
- ▶ Critical leadership studies
- ▶ Questioning the notion of leadership
  - ▶ Embodied in one person - as leader
- ▶ Is the very notion of leadership a socio-constructed myth?
  - ▶ The French attitude to leadership
- ▶ If leadership does exist, what is it, essentially?
  - ▶ Visionising?
  - ▶ Setting examples - role modelling?
  - ▶ Influencing others?
- ▶ Jim Krantz
  - ▶ *Leaders of Leadership: the century of the system*, Inaugural lecture of the Further Education Leadership Trust

# Jim Krantz on leaders and leadership

- ▶ ‘Many believe, as do I, that the idea of the dynamic leader, looking over the horizon, discerning the correct direction and guiding the ship is becoming an outmoded myth. It can actually stand in the way of what is needed. An idea that can be used defensively for purposes of safety rather than for confronting today’s complex, confusing realities.
- ▶ ‘A darker view that, I believe, also warrants consideration, is that the singular focus on the leader can become a kind of collective escape from responsibility. What I would like to consider with you is that we may be looking for leadership in the wrong place.
- ▶ ‘The old joke about the gentleman who comes home inebriated illustrates my point. Unlocking his door, he drops the keys, which are difficult to see in the dark. Across the way is a streetlight, so he decides to go over and look there because the light is better. I’m suggesting that the warm glowing streetlight across the way might well be the familiar idea that leadership is found within the individual. I want to suggest that we’ll find other valuable keys under another streetlight, keys to understanding vitally important dimensions of leadership.
- ▶ ‘The alternative to the person is, of course, leadership as an aspect of the system. Leadership as a property of the system itself rather than something that simply emanates from talented individuals. Systems thinking is best condensed in the everyday phrase that the whole is greater than the sum of the parts. It is these special qualities, created by the countless interactions, yet beyond the individuals, which hold, I believe, important keys to 21st century leadership.’

# Leading institutional improvement through reflective practice

- ▶ Reflective practice is but one desirable aspect of professionalism that is aligned with institutional improvement:
  - ▶ Analyticism
  - ▶ Rationality
  - ▶ Reflectivity
- ▶ Leaders need to promote cultures of reflective practice, and ‘extended’ professionalism.
- ▶ Leaders need to demonstrate analyticism, rationality and reflectivity.
- ▶ Is *anyone* who manifests such qualities a leader?
- ▶ How may leaders demonstrate rationality?
- ▶ Do leaders necessarily need to be the most ‘extended’ professionals in their institutions?



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# Recommended Reading

- ▶ Evans, L. (2015) Professionalism and professional development: what these research fields look like today - and what tomorrow should bring, *Hillary Place Papers*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (Jan. 2015)
- ▶ Evans, L. (2013) Amanda's tale - and what it tells us about the multidimensionality of professional development, *Professional Development Today*, 15 (3), 24-30
- ▶ Evans, L. (2014) Leadership for professional development and learning: enhancing our understanding of how teachers develop, *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 44 (2), 179-198.
- ▶ Evans, L. (2001) Delving deeper into morale, job satisfaction and motivation among education professionals: re-examining the leadership dimension, *Educational Management and Administration*, 29 (3), 291-306.
- ▶ Evans, L. (2000) The effects of educational change on morale, job satisfaction and motivation, *Journal of Educational Change*, 1 (2), 173-192.
- ▶ Books:
- ▶ Evans, L. (2002) *Reflective practice in educational research: Developing advanced skills*, London, Continuum - chapter 1 only
- ▶ Evans, L. (1999) *Managing to motivate: A guide for school leaders*, London, Cassell
- ▶ Evans, L. (1998) *Teacher morale, job satisfaction and motivation*, London, Paul Chapman