Wider professional practice

Task 1 Wider Professional Practice We were selected to deliver a learning activity on the concept ofProfessionalismin the LLS. Tasked to investigate the meaning of professionalism, using the perspective of organisations such as the Lifelong Learning UK (LLUK), the training and Development Agency (TDA), Institute of Learning (IfL) and also considering the broader context of business. In order to broaden the scope of research the group were allocated specific tasks.

We gathered the definition of professionalism from a eight separate sources such as traditional dictionaries, the internet, business sources, including government bodies' interpretations. This was beneficial as I learned the range of definitions and how professionalism is interpreted in different sectors. The group dynamics were completely normal, with some members not meeting dead lines for submission of resources, others being too dominating with unrealistic expectation, members not being regular attendees, some contributing too little others contributing too much.

I would say that it was a typical group mix and as the groups were selected randomly; the result was the best mix. I was very happy to work with all the members. We were able to agree on the most comprehensive definition as " continually achieving excellence through a willing, eager and responsible approach to: •enhancing one's own relevant qualifications and competence (LLUK); •the development of one's own knowledge and the application of good practice relative to teaching and learning (CPD); •developing people and improving young lives (TDA)'.

It was also agreed that ateachershould follow some principles of professionalism; Teachers should take a responsible and proactive approach

to: 1. Improving knowledge; 2. The application of good practice; 3. Addressing quality, diversity and inclusivity issues; 4. Complying with the law; 5. Respecting professional codes of practice; 6. Accepting governance andaccountability; 7. Being altruistic in professional duty and 8. Embracing change and making it work.

Through our research we came across the business idea adopted by the Japanese methodology where the process of work has been organized into five stages, so in-order to understand work there are 5 phases or the 5 ' S; 1. Sorting, 2. Straightening or setting in order, 3. Sweeping or systematic cleaning, 4. Standardising, 5. Sustain the discipline or self discipline. We looked at a report by Ashwin Kini (2011) who gave his view on professionalism and distilled this into the 3 " P's" of Passion, Persistence and Professionalism. Therefore qualities an individual should have to perform well and gain authority.

However when I looked at a report from Brown and Turk (1998) the mmisuse of power can happen when a professional person takes control of a situation. People on the receiving end of power misuse feel powerless. Brown and Turk (Brown, 1998) suggest that children and vulnerable adults can be subject to physical abuse because of an abuse of power. These vulnerable people are usually in care and because of their special needs, the professional have access to their bodies beyond what would be considered typical (Brown, 1998, p114).

We all were included in the discussions and opinions were heard but clear boundaries were laid down to which the group was able to follow set targets. The planning was clear and developed a good foundation to which we were

able to include a good volume of material with varied critical opinions. Learning took place when we introduced the concept and coupled with our level of interest we were able to engage the learners, with our idea.

We also handed out a very comprehensive amount of additional critical material in order so that the learners could refer back to it for future reference. Furthermore, if I had to do this again we would organize our handout material in either one simple handout, so that the learners could follow the speaker or have the other group members stand at the back of the class, to hand out information. In order not to overshadow the main speaker and keep the noise level down as mentioned on the evaluation feedback sheet (see Appendix1). In the findings t was clear that predominately the individuals felt that the presentation, the group activity was fit for purpose. The group aim was to ensure we structured the presentation in a comprehensive way and at the same time handout more than enough information for the individuals to have and read in there own time. I understand that a level of professionalism is an important part to the role of a teacher and although it is incorporated in the standards, guidelines and policies of organizations, is often not implemented nor highlighted in practice.

Certainly inrespectto my currently college and I feel this acts as a restraint on my progression and my ability to be " professional". The importance of this subject I feel goes beyond what a teacher may know, but if they lack a clear understanding of professionalism they are missing a broad area of the profession. As teaching is such a demanding profession, careful consideration needs to be given to how effort is distributed so that every

student gets equal attention. As a professional it is important that consistency is maintained.

When teaching students they will need to know what the learning objectives are so I clearly explained at the beginning of the lesson and recapped at the end. These are some of the patterns of behaviour that I have adapted in my practice. I have discovered that these simple practices help to make students aware of how the topic connects to the Big Picture. Ginnis (2002: 32) proposes, ' if pupils are allowed to see the big picture, the purpose of the lesson, what it contains, how it fits with what's gone before and where it is going, then more interest andmotivationwill be shown in lessons. As teachers we demonstrate a passion that stimulates learning by giving examples, ensuring clarity, providing individual as well as whole class practice in applying knowledge. These are some of the ways that I am able to support students in lessons to think for themselves and gain a better understanding of the subject, thereby applying knowledge in light of other situations. Appendix 1 – Peer feedback Feedback #1 •Group facilitator should have hovered instead of walking & talking within group instead of letting us just get on with it. 0 handouts disturbed flow but also good resources & research!! Professionalism – looked & delivered well Feedback #2 •The overall presentation was very good. Evidence of research was evident, you seemed to have confidence in what you were doing and your findings will help me in my own professionalism. Learning took place but there were too many distractions handing out handouts. Feedback #3 •Group member should not be speaking whilst one member is delivering. Handouts could have been sent via email really Feedback #4 Please do not talk to other

group members whilst one of your group is giving the presentation Feedback #5 •If we had more time on the activity, would've been more useful. I know you were pressed for time. I really enjoyed it, otherwise everything was very professional. I want to know more. Thanks. Feedback #6 •Lots of handouts which were given out at the same time as the information which proved a little distracting. Very well planned & executed presentation. Feedback #7 •I thought it was put across very professionally, very good, sharp and interesting - well done!!

Feedback#8 •Too much/many pieces of paper. References: Brown. H, TurkV, (1998) ' Defining sexual abuse as it affects adults with learning disabilities' in K100 UnderstandingHealthand Social Care, Offprints Book, Milton Keynes, The Open University Ginnis, P. (2002) The Teachers Toolkit. Wales. Crown House Publishing. Kini. A. A Personal View of Professionalism @ http://www. ipthree. org/blog/professionalism-what-does-it-mean? start= 5 (Last accessed 22. 05. 11) http://tlp. excellencegateway. org. uk/tlp/cpd/puttingcpdintoa/putting (Last accessed 29. 4. 11) http://www. ifl. ac. uk/(Last accessed 29. 04. 11) http://en. wikipedia. org/wiki/5S_(methodology) (Last accessed 29. 04. 11) Task 2. The role of Quality Assurance in LLS. Following the brief introduction by the group we were asked to address the question " How would you evaluate the role of a teacher in terms of quality assurance? " Following this statement the group continued to move to the group activity. The activity charted out a " time-line" in which individuals were asked to see what there role at each stage.

I found this a little challenging initially as I haven't considered my role in term of quality assurance in terms of the complete cycle of the learner on a

course of study. The aim of the learning activity was useful in as much as it increased my understanding of the full range of a learner's route broken across a time line, which I have not seen demonstrated in this form. I would recommend that the introduction be extended on the simple fact that the time used by the individual to understand the activity and its purpose the group could have eased the learners in to the activity without disrupting engagement.

But it did not give a simple explanation of Quality Assurance, something like " is a type of quality improvement, which provides provisions with recognition that they have achieved quality against a set of standards. This provides settings with satisfaction and shows parents/carers that the provision has raised standards above minimum. " (National Children's Bureau 2007). Clearly the subject was well researched by the group being demonstrated through the material provided as well as the delivery of the presentation had a good rapport, which allowed for a smooth transition between group members.

As a result of having participated in the activity I now realize the importance of quality assurance at a number of different stages. Also that the aim of the quality assurance ineducationis to provide a framework for reviewing, measuring and improving the quality of the work being done by approved institutes. I also learned that the systems operate on a number of process's which measures the quality of provided by the service and identifies areas for ongoing quality improvement.

With the ultimate aim of these quality assurance systems for learning providers to promote and ensure quality outcomes for learners. But the

learning activity did not cover the possible methods which can be used to increase and improve Quality Assurance in institutes by increasing its awareness to teachers. I feel that this can only be achieved through a shared understanding of service aims, priorities, policy developments and monitoring and evaluating mechanisms. This requires everyone involved to have a clear vision of what they are working towards and commitment?

I would like the group to also be specific and maybe tried addressing the issue of whether it is possible to provide an overall service for learners which encompasses every learner in every aspect of society. Furthermore I would have liked the group to mention the definition of what constitutes ' quality' as I have found out that it has been the subject of an ongoing debate particularly in relation to the balance between parent-led and professional-led services for children and families. Overall having participated in the activity I now realise the importance of quality assurance across a much wider range of events.

I have in the past given little attention to quality assurance and certainly following the presentation I have further investigated this topic in relation to broadening my own learning. It has been an important experience for me to investigate further the areas that I may not have considered very important but where now for me a Tutorials can be seen as a form of quality assurance as they offer the learner advice and give feedback on their learning journey – how far they have come, where they are now and where they are going to.

Reference: National Children's Bureau (2007) Putting children and young people first [online] Available from: http://www. ncb. org. uk/Page. asp (Last accessed 22. 05. 11) Group 3 An aspect of equal opportunity policy and its

impact in LLS It was clear that this group had done there research and demonstrated a relatively competent understanding of equal opportunity. Through there presentation the aim was to get the information concisely delivered to the class by means of power point material as well as by a main speaker.

A colorful leaflet was also created. The contents were, concise bits of information regarding the definition of " disability" under theEqualityAct 2010. The leaflet was very concise and I feel that under the circumstances the information that I got was very limited and in order for me to get a stronger grip with the subject I would certainly require further research in the area, in my own time. I felt this to be a negative aspect to the material and would have hoped to get a more detail list of resources.

As for the presentation, this group decided to hand out a group activity. This involved a list of three open questions designed to draw from the group its understanding on issues relating to equal opportunity. I felt that the initial request to undertake the questioner was very vague in its instruction announced to the class. Following this the supervising staff I felt were a little too keen to get the group started in there discussion, rather than allowing the groups a moment to absorb the requirement.

The aim of the learning activity was useful in as much as it increased my understanding of barriers of education, equal opportunity for all for an inclusive classroom by setting achievable targets, managing facilities and differentiation related to diverse learning needs and of the relevant Acts of law related to equal opportunity but these area did not cover any in-depth

explanation on these areas which I could refer to at a later date. Question one required a list of potential barriers to learning and assessment.

For the initial question our group was able to chart out a number of barriers. Although the second question took relatively longer to understand, one reason could be that it was not to the point. I felt that the group also realized this fact as they attempted to ask an additional two questions in order to lead to the desired outcome. The final question required the group to list relevant Acts relating to equal opportunity, with the ability to use the internet to gather the answers.

Under the circumstances this was not practical as it was a class activity limited by time, I was in a group of mature individuals who through their long experience in teaching have come across a number of the government Acts. Listing the Government Acts related to equal opportunity was useful in as much as it highlighted my understanding of what they are, but it would have been better if they could have given a simple Executive Summary, which would have helped me more. As a result of me participating in the activity I now realize that it is important for me to investigate further Policies in the education sector.

Group 4- A government policy- Every Child Matters (ECM/ELM) The group introduced the activity which was an introduction to the government green paper Every Child Matters (Children Act, 2004). In 2003, the Green Paper ' Every Child Matters' was published and designed to protect children and maximise their potential in response to the death of Victoria Climbie[1], This opening sequence had me completely engaged. I learned that the tragedy of

Victoria's death uncovered the weaknesses in our ability to protect the most vulnerable pupils.

This publication sets out a framework for the new approach to the well being of children and young people from birth to the age of 19[2] and it is aimed at helping reduce the number of educational failures, offences and anti social behaviour and those who suffer from ill health, teenage pregnancyand abuse. I learned that although the currentcoalitiongovernment has moved away from the term ECM and withdrawing its funding, it has simply replaced the term to ELM (Every Learner Matters). Although the principle of ECM is preserved by the Children Act (2004) and even though the terms have changed the organizations linked with ECM i. social workers, health workers, and the police continue to base there practice on ECM ideology. Regarding the activity, the instructions could have been more clear and concise to avoid asking the group to repeat the instructions. The group members demonstrated a competent understanding of the subject area as they were able to share there knowledge confidently and answer all questions. The group worked well together as they were able to demonstrated a smooth transition from each member. I felt that the learning activity was extremely helpful but I think they could have explained in detail the Government aim for a learner.

This resulted in me finding out that the Governments aims for all young people whatever their background may be: 1. To be healthy 2. To stay safe 3. Enjoy and achieve 4. To make a positive contribution 5. To achieve economic wellbeing The aim of the learning activity was useful in that it increased my understanding of how and why the policy of ECM was

introduced but it did not cover in-depth the main outcomes of this policy. I would have liked to have more information to allow me to further investigate this area and i feel if a critical material list was provided it would have been very helpful in my learning.

This has clearly highlighted a need for me to extend my understanding with the regulations of ECM/ELM. Reference: [1] BBC News : www. news. bbc. co. uk/1/hi/in_depth/uk/2002/victoria_climbie_inquiry/default. stm (Last accessed 22. 05. 11) [2] http://www. everychildmatters. gov. uk/aims/ (Last accessed 22. 05. 11) Task 4. In light of the experience of the other group discussions I was very much interested in the subjects covered. I personally feel that these subjects although covered before were far more effective when delivered by peers in this format.

The interest and passions was certainly palpable in there delivery. I learned something new with each subject either through the group activity or through the presentation. The area of the Life Long Learning Sector (LLS) is constantly changing and in order for me to keep up with the changes I plan on investigating further ongoing progress. I would be certainly looking deeper in to the idea of professionalism in the context of my teaching and college. The aim being I incorporate it more heavily in my future teaching and development for the future.

The Every Child Matters initiative is integrated into the college system. But it is not openly publicised and following the presentation I feel it's certainly something I need to incorporate in my personal understanding. Currently the college that I work at is undergoing radical and extensive changes with the introduction of regular staff training days and I will make sure to attend are

the ECM/ELM initiative. The systems are under constant review to match this initiative and as a result the college has adapted various approaches to ensure learners receive the best support and guidance.

The aim of each and every new development I pursue is to ensure that I learn that each pupil is considered on their own merits and that where help and assistance is required I enable the pupils to access the curriculum to achieve their full potential. In addition I will need to explore the following reports in greater depth, Success for All (2002), Skills for Life (2001), 14-19 Education and Skills The Tomlinson Report (2005), The Foster Review (2005) looking at the future of further education colleges. Further: The National improvement Strategy (2007) from the quality improvement agency.

These are just a few of the significant material that I feel can further enhance my future development. Education: Raising Skills, improving Life Chances (2006), Raising expectations and Pursuing Excellence. Furthermore I will like to investigate why it is that in the current political and economic climate the government is sending contradictory messages, where on the one hand major cuts are being implemented to the university funding in the LLS initial teacher education. Whilst on the other hand sending and supporting a message of the importance and magnitude for the country to have a qualified, fully trained and professional LLS workforce.