

A GLOSSARY GAME

From 2007

Written for CPD Update

I always liked Glossary Games as part of professional learning and, with New Labour throwing policies at us thick and fast, back at the start of 2007 I thought that as editor of CPD Update I would attempt to devise a contemporary one. It was also an opportunity to clarify the terms and sets of initials that were fast becoming a linguistic obstacle course.

Perhaps someone might care to update my glossary. A lot has changed and change (referred to by governments as 'reform') will not end.

Here is the draft of my article including the game. Many of the links and phone numbers included here stopped working once Michael Gove came into office. I have left them in to show that at one time it was possible to call and ask what on earth was going on. A sensible answer was not guaranteed.

Words, meaning, policy and confusion

So, here we are at the start of 2007 with lots of speeches and statements emerging from ministers, inspectors and other agents of government policy telling us what education is for and how teachers and related professionals should do their jobs. We seem to be promised more tests, differentiated by task rather than by outcome, and different targets in Key Stage Four, as well as a big push by Lord Adonis on how we should teach children to read. I guess that you will be familiar with lots of the new documentation and are already aware of the new National Standards and how Performance Management is to be made to happen. You will soon see some of the guidance and exemplification of the national standards being produced by the Training and Development Agency for schools.

APEL - This usually stands for Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning.

APL - This usually stands for Accreditation of Prior Learning. Sometimes it is called Accreditation of Prior Certificated Learning because it is taken to refer to learning that is formal and endorsed by some form of certification. Occasionally you will see AP(E)L

because institutions have procedures that allow them to choose between learning that is experience-based or learning that is certificated when deciding how much credit to allow to people joining programmes at a higher level than normal.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA - (see also *Learning Outcomes and Performance Descriptors*) In most cases assessment criteria are the overall sets of skills, knowledge and understanding that form the basis for examination in Higher Education (sometimes also called Generic Learning Outcomes). They are akin to Attainment Targets in the National Curriculum and Assessment Objectives in GCSE and GCE. All the different modules and pathways within a masters degree might, therefore, have the same or similar assessment criteria.

CAT POINTS - These are Credit Accumulation and Transfer Points. Higher Education normally allocates sixty credits to a postgraduate certificate, another sixty totalling one hundred and twenty for a postgraduate diploma and another sixty totalling one hundred and eighty for a full masters degree. They are also the currency for AP(E)L.

CEPD - This is the Career Entry and Development Profile that Newly Qualified Teachers take with them as they progress from Initial Teacher Training/Education to their Induction year. It could be a useful basis for starting a Critical Journal of Professional Development and a Portfolio of Evidence for Impact. Details are available from the TTA at www.tta.gov.uk or phone number: 020 7925 3700.

COACHING - This term is increasingly being used to describe the way in which professionals can be supported by colleagues and others as they develop skills, knowledge and understanding. It's meaning overlaps with Mentoring and is often qualified by use of the terms 'peer coaching' and 'expert coaching'. All of these terms have largely replaced the term, and the process of, 'appraisal' which was often perceived as a relatively top down instrument. Watch out for the DfES sponsored report on Mentoring and Coaching.

CONNECT - This is the CPD Co-ordinator Network of the GTCE. To register an interest in the Network email cpdnetwork@gtce.org.uk or telephone 020 7841 2908.

CPD - This stands for Continuing Professional Development. Most professions use the term, which has largely replaced INSET (see below). It implies more than simply courses undertaken during professional life. It encompasses all the ways in which professionals can develop.

CRITICAL REFLECTION - This is one of Higher Education's most favourite terms and is usually to be found, either explicitly or implicitly, within assessment criteria. It is often explained as being different from the power to describe. For example, it is not sufficient to describe an event or a personal, professional history or to summarise what has been written; it is necessary, also, to identify and explain critical features, factors, relationships and consequences. Using more than one perspective can help. If something is thought by a writer to be significant the reader must be given a fair chance of understanding why.

CRITICAL JOURNALS OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT- (The exact terminology will vary and you might find the word "log" or "diary" also being used). Sometimes the word "portfolio" is used to mean something like a teacher's Record of

Achievement. A Critical Journal, however, tells a reader what is significant about the contents of a portfolio. It is a strong and structured critical reflection upon a period of professional development, supported by the contents of the portfolio in which can be placed evidence, or descriptions of evidence, for the impact of a teacher's CPD. It has often been said that the more serious teachers are when interrogating their own CPD the more they will discover how much they have achieved.

E-PORTFOLIO- This term is often used to describe how professionals may compile a portfolio electronically. There are examples all over the World and for many different professions but the one available on Teachernet is well designed to respond to the needs of teachers.

GTCE - This is the General Teaching Council for England. There are GTCs for each of the countries of the UK. You will find it useful to visit www.gtce.org.uk/tplf. See also, Teacher Learning Academy.

GTCW- This is the General teaching Council for Wales that can be visited on www.gtcw.org.uk. Watch out for the results of the consultation on Professional Milestones and Standards (the Professional Development Framework for Teachers in Wales).

HEI - This stands for Higher Education Institution. It is in general use to describe universities and colleges etc.

IMPACT - The term and concept of impact is in widespread use now. Used narrowly it can be applied to very short-term targets and easy to achieve and easy to measure results. In this way it may be that professional life becomes obsessed with avoiding the long-term and the risky. On the other hand, impact can be so loosely defined that it serves little purpose. It is a concept that can be very rich in meaning, especially if it is subject to analysis, discussion and evaluation.

INSET - This stands for In-service Training and for many years was the preferred term to apply to any course undertaken by a teacher during their professional life (see CPD above).

IPDA - This stands for the International Professional Development Association. It is a UK based organisation that brings together teachers, schools, LEAs, HEIs, government agencies and others. It can be found at www.ipda.org.uk.

LEARNING OUTCOMES - Almost all HE modules are designed with outcome statements. It is possible to become very confused when presented with Aims, Objectives, Purposes, Intended Learning Outcomes, Generic Learning Outcomes, Key Skills, Content, Assessment Criteria and Performance Descriptors. Sometimes it can seem that they all mean the same but use slightly different wording. It helps to keep in mind that, largely, modules have specific learning outcomes that participants are required to demonstrate (they may be cross referenced with Key Skills) and that whole pathways or programmes usually have overarching assessment criteria (or generic learning outcomes) that are used to examine the results of all modules. This helps to maintain a standard irrespective of the subject of particular modules. (See also Assessment Criteria and Performance Descriptors).

MENTORING - Professionals who have participated in Initial Teacher Training/Education will be familiar with this term. As far as CPD is concerned mentoring and coaching are often used interchangeably and we still have much to learn about the difference between the two terms. See **Coaching** above.

NCSL - This is the National College for School Leadership. Its web site is www.ncsl.org.uk. It is responsible for a range of professional awards (NPQH, LPSH and Leading from the Middle) that are linked into postgraduate provision. The College is also responsible for NLCs (see below).

NLCs - This stands for Networked Learning Communities. They are run by the National College for School Leadership. It would be wrong to assume that they are all the same. They each decide for themselves their shared vision of opportunities for pupils, teachers and headteachers. They can be contacted by email at nlc@ncsl.org.uk or by telephone at 08707 870 370.

OfSTED - The Office for Standards in Education has produced a number of relevant reports. In particular you may find it useful to consult *The Key Stage Three Strategy: evaluation of the third year*. You may contact freepublications@ofsted.gov.uk. You may also make use of www.ofsted.gov.uk.

PERFORMANCE DESCRIPTORS - HE will usually have a way of describing different levels or grades of achievement. Sometimes these are built into Assessment Criteria and sometimes they are separated out as Performance Descriptors. The important thing is to have a clear notion of what is required in order to obtain a grade.

PORTFOLIO OF EVIDENCE FOR IMPACT- (See also Critical Journals, E-portfolio above). This is an organised portfolio in which teachers (and related professionals) can assemble evidence to support claims made in a Critical Journal.

PPD - This stands for Postgraduate Professional Development. It is a scheme partly funded by the Teacher Training Agency and is designed to provide accreditation for teachers. Details are available on the TTA website: www.tta.gov.uk.

SCETT- This is the Standing Committee for the Education and Training of Teachers. All the major associations representing teachers, together with a range of stakeholders and individuals are members. It provides a forum for discussion of issues and presentation of views. Details are available from www.scett.org.uk.

TEACHERNET - This is a website designed to support teachers. It not only provides useful information on research and some of the very practical elements of teaching but it also offers up-dates on latest policy. It can be found at www.teachernet.gov.uk.

TEACHER TRAINING AGENCY (TTA) - This is the Agency established by government to manage both teacher training and CPD. There are likely to be some changes to the remit of the TTA during 2005, including a name change. In order to find out more contact www.tta.gov.uk.

TLA - This stands for Teacher Learning Academy. The pilot project undertaken by the GTCE with a number of LEA and other partners ends in July 2005. It seeks to establish

a national system for professional recognition of teachers' learning which can also be linked to the graduated accumulation of postgraduate credit. The Six Core Dimensions to be demonstrated by teachers joining the TLA are:

- Engagement with an appropriate knowledge base
- Planning of professional learning and change activity
- Application of learning in practice
- Accessing peer support, coaching and/or mentoring
- Evaluation of the impact of the change activity on practice and on own learning
- Dissemination of what has been learned

UCET - This is the 'Universities Council for the Education of Teachers'. Virtually all HEIs in the UK are members. Its home page has very useful links. Try www.ucet.ac.uk.

WORKFORCE REMODELLING-This was outlined in the last issue of CPD Update but for more information go to www.remodelling.org.uk.

VERIFICATION - This is the process by which, for example, a Critical Journal of Professional Development supported by a Portfolio of Evidence for Impact, may be examined for its credibility. If you are presenting a Journal and Portfolio to HE in support of an APEL claim, for example, then it will be stronger if you have had the work verified. This could be by a staff development co-ordinator or any one of a number of responsible people.

Using a glossary to support professional development activities.

The Glossary Game.

When working with new colleagues or colleagues who are about to embark on something for the first time the Glossary Game is a very simple, cheap and amusing ice-breaker that overcomes that awkward point when nobody wishes to admit that they do not know what any of the new terms or initials mean.

All you have to do is to take the key names, initials, terms or items of, say, a government initiative that has just arrived in school then type them out with their definitions (the Performance Management glossary available on the DfES website is a good one for this), photocopy sets, cut the names etc. from the definitions (make sure the definitions do not contain too many clues), put them into large envelopes, make sure they are well mixed up, tip them out in front of groups of colleagues and set them a time for correct re-assembly. A combination of laughter and frustration will follow; also a lot of learning when you bring people out of the activity and they realise that, for example, there are confusing overlaps in meaning and that there may be something missing that will be crucial to successful implementation of the initiative. Best of all may be the realisation by colleagues that they are not alone in being confused but that they can have fun learning with others. If you wish to start by using this or parts of this glossary remember to blank out some of the giveaways in the definitions.

Note: in future issues we shall be looking at how a CPD co-ordinator can begin to construct links for teachers between accredited programmes at postgraduate levels and the Primary Strategy, the Key Stage Three Strategy, NPQH, LPSH and Leading from the Middle.