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## ***Introduction***

This document has been produced as part of a Leonardo da Vinci – Transfer of Innovation project entitled ‘ePathways: Personalised Professional Training Pathways for VET Teachers’ (IE1 LLP-Com-Leo-Gru-SV(LEARGAS)).

The aim of the ePathways project was to support personalised and professional training pathways for VET teachers through the development of innovative and ICT based CPD tools and materials mainly in the form of an ePortfolio.

This document deals with one of the work packages and key objectives of the project which was to:

***Develop a CPD policy for City of Dublin Education and Training Board (CDETb) and a model for VET schools that would guide organisations in implementing innovative and ICT based CPD strategies for VET teachers.***

## ***Structure of the document***

This document is divided into two sections.

***Section One:*** outlines the model or steps in the process used by the ePathways project partners to develop a CPD policy for CDETb and gives a brief overview of each step.

***Section Two:*** includes the CPD policy document that was developed for CDETb. The policy is designed as a guiding document to enable CDETb's Schools, Colleges and Centres to develop their own practices and procedures in relation to CPD. It should be noted that while most elements of the policy are relevant in the context of writing a CPD policy for another VET organization, there are some structures or features included in the policy that may be unique to CDETb.

## **Section One:**

***Model Used to Develop:***

***A Continuing Professional Development  
Policy for City of Dublin Education and  
Training Board***

## ***Identifying the need for a CPD policy***

*Before developing any new policy there needs to be a clear rationale for its development.*

The work of the ePathways project was timely as it supported City of Dublin Education and Training Board (CDETb) to progress the development of a Continuing Professional Development (CPD) policy as an Education and Training Board (ETB) (formerly a VEC) and as part of its new Education and Training Plan.

Prior to becoming an ETB the CPD of staff had been addressed through the City of Dublin VECs Education Plan.

The ePathways project facilitated CDETb to develop a comprehensive and wide-ranging policy document on CPD to guide and supports its schools, colleges and centres when developing CPD practices and procedures at a local level for all staff members.

The CPD Policy document was developed over an eight month period between October 2013 – August 2014.

## ***A Model of CPD policy development***

*A CPD policy document should be perceived as a relevant and appropriate framework for guiding the design and development of CPD for an organisation. When it comes to implementation there should be a positive response to the policy and engagement with it.*

The key steps undertaken by the ePathways project to develop the CPD policy are outlined in this document. The steps were not always sequential but rather interconnected and involved moving between the various steps with the project partners and stakeholders as required.

## ***Research on CPD policy***

*Research helps to identify current thinking on CPD policy and practices and helps to highlight important considerations that need to be given to planning, developing and reviewing a CPD policy.*

Much has been written on both the subject of professional development and policy development and the ePathways project was able to draw on a rich resource bank of research, knowledge and experience.

While developing the CPD policy the project engaged in:

- Analysing CPD policies from other VET organisations to look at the structure, content, and style of the policies. All of the project partners contacted providers that they were acquainted with and requested that they complete a survey on CPD. To assist this process a survey tool was developed by the project to help compile case studies on CPD innovation across Europe. The providers that were contacted were providers that it was felt could help to inform the project about CPD innovation and CPD Policy. Once responses to the survey were received the project partners were then able to do some follow up work and request copies of exemplar policies to inform the CPD policy writing process.
- Reviewing of some National and European literature and guiding documents on CPD. This included reviewing documentation from the European Commission, OECD, Teaching Council Ireland, Department of Education and Skills Ireland and Quality and Qualifications Ireland. The review focused on areas linked to teacher education, CPD, quality assurance, self-evaluation, and school and programme improvement.
- Collaborating amongst the project partners and sharing CPD practices and experiences.
- Conducting bi-lateral visits to project partner organisations to learn first-hand about CPD policy and practice

## ***Roles and responsibilities***

*It is important to establish from the outset how the CPD policy development process will be managed and the stakeholder groups and specific individuals that will be involved in various stages and elements of the development process.*

The ePathways roles and responsibilities involved the interrelationship between the following:

- The project partners informing and guiding the overall process, research etc.
- A small leadership team in CDET B taking responsibility for:
  - convening meetings and engaging with stakeholders
  - managing, tracking and amending versions of the policy document as it progressed through the stages of consultation and development
  - managing a consultation and piloting process for the CPD policy
  - managing the timeline and deadlines
- An advisory group of Senior Managers and Principals guiding and informing the process and reviewing the policy as it developed
- An independent facilitator supporting an initial meeting of the leadership team and advisory group and supporting the writing of the early drafts of the policy document
- Other stakeholders supporting the consultation process e.g. the IVEA, Directors of Education Centres, Chief Executives and Education Officers within the ETB sector.



## **Consultation and feedback process**

*Consulting with internal audiences is important to ensure buy in at local level.*

*Staff need to feel part of the development process as many of those consulted will be involved in implementing the policy.*

*Consulting with external audiences is valuable because of their added breath of experience of CPD and their ability to stand back from the policy and look at its wider applicability to an organization and to the wider VET sector.*

Consultation was carried out by the ePathways project with a number of objectives in mind.

By engaging with internal and external groups the consultation process helped by:

- Creating awareness of the ePathways project and the CPD policy development process being undertaken
- Improving the overall quality of the policy by:
  - inviting feedback from a wide range of perspectives
  - seeking out new / different ideas and suggestions for improvements
  - identifying omissions in terms of sections parts or sections
  - ensuring clear unambiguous language
  - identify any barriers to implementation
  - considering if the policy overall was fit for purpose.

During the consultation process feedback was facilitated through:

- One to one meetings
- Advisory group meetings
- Larger meetings of CDETB Senior managers including Principals and Heads of Centres
- Electronic means such as email with external stakeholders
- Discussion with project evaluators

## ***Writing and refining the policy***

*An iterative consultation process provides useful feedback and insight and helps to shape and improve the writing process. Sufficient time needs to be given to the consultation and writing process which go hand in hand with each other. Editing and version control of the draft policy documents require careful organization and management throughout.*

The ePathways CPD policy leadership team collected a significant amount of feedback during the consultation period. All feedback was reviewed and as much of it as was relevant and practicable was incorporated into different stages of the policy writing.

The writing process spanned several months and six draft versions of the policy were produced. While originally it was envisaged that fewer drafts of the policy would be required, the quality of the feedback and the willingness of the stakeholders to engage was such that the process continued for an additional period.

Version control during the development process was critical. Edits were applied by one member of the team only and all versions were dated and numbered. A record was also kept of key changes so it was clear how the policy was emerging and developing.

As a result of the iterative process of development, the policy document is now structured to begin with a brief introduction to the policy before elaborating seven key aspects of CPD strategy. These include: scope, aims and objectives, general principals, identification of needs, responsibilities, support and implementation of CPD, monitoring, review and impact of policy on CPD.

## ***Communicating, implementing, reviewing and celebrating the CPD policy***

*The CPD policy is not an end in itself but rather a guide to support schools, colleges and centres when developing CPD practices and procedures at a local level.*

*Strategies need to support promoting awareness of the policy, implementation, monitoring and review and the celebration of what has been achieved.*

A number of factors have been considered by the ePathways team to support communicating, implementing, reviewing and celebrating the CPD Policy in CDETb:

- Communication strategies to create awareness of the policy amongst staff and support implementation:
  - Media and events such as the CDETb website, CDETb Newsletter, CDETb Curriculum Development website, CPD Calendar, CPD events, ePathways events, and staff meetings
- Strategies to review policy implementation and feedback on CPD
  - Early and on-going review with Senior Management, Principals and Heads of Centres
  - Staff survey and feedback activities: evaluation of staff development activities; their effectiveness and impact; the extent to which the development undertaken has achieved the intended objectives; and appropriate next steps
  - Exploring and providing suitable short and long term evaluation approaches and tools to support the collection and analysis of organisational wide data that evaluates the relationship between the impact on teacher, school and student.
- Monitoring of international and national research, reports and developments in CPD and sharing best practice that is taking place both internally and externally to the organisation
- On-going monitoring and review of the policy
- Updating of policy taking into account the experiences of implementing the policy, the on-going currency of the policy, emerging CPD good practice and national requirement
- Annual CPD report

## **Section Two:**

***City of Dublin Education and Training Board  
(CDETb)***

***A Continuing Professional Development Policy  
for CDETb Staff***

## ***Structure of the policy document***

This policy document is structured as follows:

- Introduction;
- Scope;
- Aims and Objectives;
- General Principles;
- Identification of Needs;
- Responsibilities;
- Support and Implementation of CPD;
- Monitoring, Review and Impact of Policy on CPD.

## *Introduction*

CDETБ (formerly CDVEC) has been providing education services across the City of Dublin since the 1930s. Our services have grown to include 22 Schools and Colleges, 10 Youthreach Centres, an Education Service in 7 Prisons, a CDETБ Adult Education Service operating in five separate areas, a Youth Service (CDYSB) operating citywide and a series of specially targeted programmes.

The purpose of the CDETБ is to develop, to provide, and to support high quality person centred learning opportunities for young people and adults in Dublin City. The Education and Training Board Act 2013 gives a wide remit to CDETБ in education at first and second level as well as adult education and training.

In delivering on the statement of purpose, CDETБ believes that:

- Every person has a right to education, training and learning opportunities that will enable them to achieve their full potential;
- Every person should be provided with educational, training and learning opportunities in a flexible and responsive manner that best suits their learning needs and styles;
- Learners should be informed and advised about appropriate education and training progression routes;
- Education and training is a key response to addressing social inclusion;
- All stakeholders should be consulted in the development and delivery of our educational and training services;
- Equality and fairness must inform our policies and actions;
- Our staff are our most important resource in providing a high quality education and training service and in the development of curricula.

CDETБ's success depends on all staff having the relevant values, attitudes, beliefs and technical knowledge and capacity to fully participate in a learning community. A strategic, professional approach to staff development helps the CDETБ to attract and retain high-calibre staff with the skills and competencies necessary to deliver its objectives.

This policy document is designed to guide CDET B Schools, Colleges and Centres planning implementation and evaluation of Continuing Professional Development (CPD).

CPD refers to all the policies, practices, and procedures used to develop the values, knowledge, skills, and competencies of staff to improve their effectiveness and efficiency both as an individual, as part of a team and as a colleague to others.

CPD obligations are common to all staff in CDET B. CPD is understood to be a structured approach to learning to ensure competence to practice taking in knowledge, skills and practical experience and can involve formal, informal, structured and self-directed learning

CDET B is committed to supporting the development of staff in the context of a lifelong framework and learning to learn, so that they are able to contribute fully to the achievement of their teaching teams or work teams, their Schools, Colleges and Centres and the CDET B objectives in the context of the education and training plan and realising its education and training goals.

CDET B acknowledges that as an educational and training provider it has a unique responsibility to support and encourage the development of its staff, and recognises that CPD can play a critical role in better informing CDET B policy and capacity.

## Scope

This policy applies to all staff employed within the CDETБ with the overall purpose of creating a nurturing learning environment for all learners.

CDETБ recognises the wide range of themes and modes of CPD that can be, for example, centre based, cross centre based, network based, externally based and locally, regionally and nationally based.

Continuing professional learning embraces all forms of formal and informal CPD including: personal study, e-learning, internal or external programmes, workshops, work shadowing, professional networks, reflective practice groups, peer sharing, mentoring and planned experiences.

CDETБ will aim to support individuals CPD through a variety of effective and efficient means within the prevailing budgetary provision and identified CDETБ need.

This policy is set within the strategic objectives and priorities of the CDETБ which take into account the policies of the Department of Education and Skills, SOLAS, The Teaching Council, QQI and other relevant state agencies.

These include:

- CPD refers to life-long learning and comprises the full range of educational experiences designed to enrich the professional knowledge, understanding and capabilities of staff throughout their careers;
- CPD is a responsibility of all staff. In that context, staff members should take reasonable steps to maintain, develop and broaden the professional knowledge, skill and capabilities appropriate to his or her role;
- Effective CPD, which is participative in nature, should encourage staff members to evaluate their pedagogical beliefs and practices, to critically reflect on their professional practice and working environments and to engage in professional collaboration;
- Effective CPD should be constructivist in nature, involving both formal and informal ways of learning where emphasis is placed on reflection, joint problem solving, networking and systematic sharing of expertise and experience.



## ***Aims and objectives***

The main aim of this CPD policy is to provide a framework that supports and encourages the CPD of staff in line with CDETБ's Education and Training Plan.

The CPD policy will operate within the following framework:

- Staff development is informed by CDETБ's strategic aims and by the needs of staff and learners;
- The CDETБ Curriculum Development Unit (CDU) works in partnership with CDETБ Head Office and CDETБ Schools, Colleges and Centres to support a co-ordinated approach to staff development, maximising the use of available staff, and financial and physical resources;
- Principals and Heads of Centres work in partnership with their staff to support their continuous CPD;
- Staff are encouraged and supported within available resources to acquire and develop the relevant knowledge, skills and competencies to enhance their performance in their current role and other possible future roles;
- An appropriate balance is created between the individuals well-being and desire to maximise their potential and the priority needs of the organisation;
- All newly appointed staff to CDETБ participate in a CDETБ induction process in a timely fashion. Induction is at organisational level and at local School, College or Centre level. This induction process is in addition to and compliments any induction programmes provided nationally. The role of the mentor is also crucial to the support of newly qualified teachers.

## *General principles*

The CDET B CPD Policy is guided by the following principles as follows:

- CDET B will support the creation and fostering of a professional learning community which recognises the value of all stakeholders;
- Staff should have, as part of their working life with CDET B, equitable opportunity to access CPD opportunities;
- CDET B is subject to a number of statutory regulations and must ensure that staff are trained to levels appropriate to their roles and responsibilities. Participation in certain CPD activities may therefore be mandatory;
- CDET B will through democratic dialogue identify the CPD requirements for its staff
- CDET B management is expected to encourage and support staff to take advantage of relevant CPD resources and staff development opportunities. It is CDET B's expectation that all of its Schools, Colleges and Centres participate in appropriate staff development activity;
- CDET B recognises that, for its continuing CPD policy to be effective, staff must also take responsibility for their own development, to enable them to keep their skills updated and respond flexibly to change;
- It is expected that staff undertake mandatory and relevant training defined nationally and locally and as requested for a particular role.

## ***Identification of needs***

Staff development needs may be identified throughout the year. The planning processes will retain flexibility for agreement of additional development needs as they become necessary.

The CPD needs of staff can be identified in a number of ways, for example through:

- Discussion between management and staff;
- Staff development feedback;
- Following the progress of staff new to CDETБ or staff who have transferred to new roles in CDETБ;
- The annual / cyclical review of programmes and services;
- Listening to feedback from learners;
- The Quality Assurance self-evaluation process;
- Evaluation of feedback from current programmes;
- Actions arising from reports generated as a result of monitoring, external authentication and inspections;
- Keeping up to date with policy and research reports e.g. Future Skills Needs.

## ***Responsibilities***

There are a number of key partners that inform and take a shared interest in and responsibility for the development of CDET staff. These partner roles are interconnected and are outlined below.

It is recognised that there will be some differences across Schools, Colleges and Centres as to how these responsibilities are fulfilled.

### ***Department of Education and Skills (DES)***

The DES through SOLAS sets the strategic priorities for vocational education and training within the Country. The Minister for Education and Skills enacts these strategic priorities through legislation and policy. The Minister also sets, via the Department of Education and Skills and the Teaching Council, the requirements for initial teacher education and training.

A range of support structures funded by the DES provide CPD support to staff:

**The Network of Education Centres**, whose statutory remit on behalf of the DES, as per the Education Act 1998, is the provision of CPD to schools, parents, Boards of Management etc.

**The Professional Development Service for Teachers (PDST)** is a cross-sectoral support service under the remit of the Teacher Education Section of the Department of Education and Skills which offers CPD support to teachers and school leaders. The work of the PDST contributes to school improvement by providing high quality CPD on curricular and educational issues, fostering reflective practice and ongoing development among teachers and school leaders.

**The Further Education Support Service (FESS)** is funded through the Further Education Unit of the DES / SOLAS. It supports the CPD of staff within providers of further education and training in delivering quality assured programmes and services to learners. The range of services provided by FESS includes advice and CPD, website support and resources in areas such as: programme development and

review, managing and conducting assessment, locally devised assessment, self-evaluation of programmes and service, and equality action planning.

### ***The Teaching Council Ireland***

The Teaching Council is the regulator of the teaching profession and promotes professional standards in teaching. It acts in the interests of the public good while upholding and enhancing the reputation and status of the teaching profession through fair and transparent regulation.

The Council's functions in relation to the continuing CPD of teachers are set out in Sections 7(2)(h) and 39 of the Teaching Council Act, 2001. This provides that the Council will "advise the Minister in relation to...the CPD of teachers".

Under the Act, the Council promotes this development and conducts research into it. It encourages understanding of the benefits of CPD, among the public and teaching profession alike.

### ***Chief Executive CDETБ***

The Chief Executive is responsible for leading the development and execution of CDETБ's long-term strategy. This leadership role also entails responsibility for all the executive management decisions and for implementing CDETБ's long and short term plans which include leadership and enabling CPD for CDETБ staff within the context of CDETБ's continuing CPD strategy and national and local policy and priorities.

### ***Principals and Head of Centres***

CDETБ School / College Principals and Heads of Centres are responsible for:

- Demonstrating commitment to excellence and continuous professional development;
- Liaising with the CDETБ CDU regarding CPD and appropriate developmental interventions;
- Providing appropriate resources for staff development activities;
- Ensuring that training opportunities are supported in accordance with CDETБ's policy on Equal Opportunities;
- Identifying established members of staff / members of the management team to undertake aspects of CPD co-ordination at local level;

- Prioritising whole school, college or centre CPD activities to develop collegiality, team working and sharing of good practice;
- Providing opportunities for staff to discuss their staff development needs and identify strategies to help meet these needs;
- Supporting the implementation of CPD that supports staff to meet learner needs;
- Giving staff as appropriate constructive direction on CPD needs and possibilities;
- Establishing priorities taking account of individual,
- departmental and CDETБ's priorities and making appropriate provision to meet these with the resources available;
- Enabling individual and team CPD needs which take account of School, College, Centre requirements and relevant aspirations of individuals;
- Identifying development needs which may be required by individuals or groups to respond effectively to internal and external changes;
- Approving where appropriate attendance of staff at relevant staff development activities and making appropriate provision for the release of staff from their duties;
- Providing opportunities for staff that participate in staff development activities to engage in briefing and de-briefing to facilitate effective consolidation of their learning and dissemination of learning more widely;
- Encouraging staff to work collaboratively to support shared learning;
- Creating awareness of and promoting participation in CPD opportunities in CDETБ such as those provided by the CPD calendar and the CDU;
- Encouraging staff to be active in CDETБ's ePathways ePortfolio and join professional networks to facilitate learning between colleagues and across Schools, Colleges and Centres in CDETБ;
- Encouraging staff to participate in flexible learning models e.g. online learning;
- Supporting staff to undertake short industry / business placements, work shadowing activities etc. to help to keep course delivery relevant and aligned to industry / business developments;
- Evaluating CPD at School, College, Centre level to measure the effectiveness and impact of CPD provided.

## **Staff**

Individual CDETБ staff members are responsible for:

- Reflecting at regular intervals on their practice in their current role and future career aspirations and identifying their appropriate development needs;
- Discussing CPD needs with local management with a view to establishing how priorities in relation to their personal, departmental or CDETБ's objectives might be met;
- Taking full advantage of CPD opportunities including flexible models of online learning;
- Participating in CPD opportunities in CDETБ such as those provided by the CPD calendar and ePortfolio;
- Keeping and maintaining individual CPD records as evidence of development and learning;
- Applying newly-developed knowledge and skills to their work and the development of their careers;
- Raising CPD challenges / issues with management;
- Sharing formal and informal developmental learning and understanding with colleagues in a mutually supportive manner that promotes professional collegiality;
- Ensuring that where CPD is being undertaken during school, college, centre time that it is relevant to the strategic priorities and objectives of CDETБ.

## ***Support and implementation of CPD***

### ***CDETБ Curriculum Development Unit***

The CDETБ Curriculum Development Unit (CDU) is a support organisation within CDETБ which works in partnership with CDETБ Head Office and CDETБ Schools, Colleges and Centres to support a co-ordinated approach to CPD.

The CDU supports staff as essential contributors to the development of a flourishing learning community in CDETБ and the broader national and international educational community. This is achieved through initiating, developing, exchanging, implementing, supporting or managing educational initiatives, projects and support services.

CDU supports the CPD of staff using a range of approaches and is responsible for:

- Supporting effective staff development resources and provision, from helping to clarify need, designing and selecting methods, through to delivery and evaluation;
- Supporting managers and personnel with CPD co-ordination responsibilities, to identify and prioritise CPD activities for staff;
- Providing guidance to Schools, Colleges and Centres on accessing the provision of internal and external CPD;
- Monitoring that CPD activities are conducted in accordance with CDETБ's policy on Equal Opportunities;
- Supporting collaboration and peer learning by encouraging CDETБ staff to be providers of CPD activities for other CDETБ staff;
- Promoting professional networks support through the CDETБ ePortfolio;
- Providing a CPD calendar each academic year that reflects priority areas identified for CPD as well as a range of interest areas of CDETБ managers and staff;
- Developing and publishing resources to support teaching and learning;
- Providing curriculum enrichment initiatives and services;
- Identifying transferrable initiatives, innovation and models of CPD for CDETБ
- Rewarding CDETБ CPD through certification and other models of recognition / accreditation;
- Providing a mechanism to ensure that records are maintained for CDU led CPD;
- Reporting on matters relating to CDETБ staff CPD.



### ***Monitoring, review and impact of policy***

- CDETБ is committed to the continuous improvement of staff development provision and encourages feedback from all staff.
- Staff development activities will be evaluated. Providers of CPD at School, College, Centre and CDU level will evaluate the effectiveness and impact of what they provide and the extent to which the development undertaken has achieved the intended objectives and where necessary agree appropriate next steps.
- CDETБ is committed to exploring and providing suitable short and long term evaluation approaches and tools to support the collection and analysis of organisational wide data that evaluates the relationship between the impact on teacher, school and student.
- Where appropriate, best practice will be shared as part of CDETБ's commitment to improving its service provision.
- Application of the CPD policy will be monitored by the CDETБ CDU. An annual report on CPD will be made to the Chief Executive.
- This CPD policy will be reviewed on a regular basis taking into account the experiences of implementing the policy, the on-going currency of the policy, emerging CPD good practice and national requirements.

