

Foreword

It's difficult to remember a period over the last fifty years when the college sector has undergone (and is still undergoing) such radical change to the delivery of learning and teaching. The role of the sector in supporting recovery from the Covid pandemic is acknowledged by Scottish Government, particularly through colleges' engagement with key business, to reposition and upskill their workforces.

Central to colleges' success are the thousands of practitioners who plan, create and deliver learning that engages learners to gain the necessary knowledge and skills that lead them to further study or employment. Allied to that are the teams of dedicated college staff who provide such vital pastoral and practical support to ensure learners can complete their studies successfully.

Career long professional learning (CLPL) is vital to ensuring all staff remain current in their knowledge and skills, developing an awareness of the shifts in emphasis on pedagogical thinking and being alert to new and innovative approaches to delivering learning and student support. In the best examples, this CLPL is evidence-based, often drawing upon the findings of academic and action-based research, both nationally and internationally. This gives practitioners greater confidence that this professional learning is grounded in contexts that they can relate to and is relevant to their professional daily lives. In the current circumstances, the sector is very receptive to understanding better how remote and blended learning, particularly the use of digital technology, is contributing to our current pedagogical thinking and practice.

CAIRN's first edition is a welcome contribution to the sectoral discourse on learning and teaching, informed by critical research and discussion. Take part in the debate, offer an opinion . . . and look critically at the creativity of practice in your own institutions and carry out your own bit of research. Colleagues at CAIRN will be only too happy to support you.

John Bowditch

HM Inspector of Education

12th February 2021