

## Overview

My CfE team and I have worked with Changing Point for around 4 years now since 2010. This was a brand new team with a new project and right from the start a connection was made with Changing Point. They understood our business and development needs. Regular CfE team development events have been supplemented by 1:1 Executive Coaching to support my leadership team. This has been of immense value to my direct reports as well as to myself.

**The Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) qualifications development programme** is the biggest single programme of qualification and assessment development ever undertaken in Scotland. The programme has high aspirations and aims to achieve a transformational change in Scottish education by providing a coherent, flexible and enriched framework of qualifications and assessments which support education and enable all learners to reach their full potential and recognise their achievements.

The Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) is one of the three partner national organisations responsible for Curriculum for Excellence (CfE). SQA is responsible for the development and delivery of the new National Qualifications, which are starting to be introduced from session 2013/14.

The new National qualifications have been developed with more of a focus on skills development compared to the existing qualifications; the new qualifications are better suited to testing the skills required to succeed in the 21st century. There is also a greater emphasis on “deeper learning” by helping learners to think for themselves; to apply and interpret the knowledge and understanding they have gained and to demonstrate the skills they have learned. The new qualifications offer increased flexibility, provide more time for learning and more scope for personalisation and choice. Assessments in the new qualifications have been designed to complement and support learning and teaching, but are also robust, credible and maintain standards.

Political and public demand means that the new qualifications and assessments were developed under intense media, professional and public scrutiny. The team had to be results-focused and deliver to very tight timelines, to budget and to a very high quality standard. This required strong leadership and motivation to drive forward team performance in this very challenging environment. It has also required positive and proactive communication engagement with stakeholders, a critical factor in ensuring the quality of the new and revised qualifications and their acceptance, adoption and implementation. This has required a strong stakeholder focus and SQA have consulted widely with practitioners and subject experts.

Since the start of the development, formal engagement groups have met over 700 times and involved nearly 1,000 practitioners and subject experts, there has been targeted engagement with over 5,000 practitioners and SQA has hosted further nearly 200 events for some 15,000 teachers. They have also had regular contact with stakeholders at a strategic level, including the Scottish Government, Education Scotland, Directors of Education, Head Teachers, colleges, universities, teaching unions, and parents.

To ensure corporate delivery against very challenging timescales, SQA established a dedicated CfE development team. A team of 70 staff was recruited, all with a strong commitment to delivering to the high aspirations of the programme. SQA put in place strong risk assessment and accountability measures and established a programme management system within which to plan, implement and monitor deliverables, timelines and budgets. This has involved detailed reporting on qualification and assessment development within corporate governance structures as well as to the Scottish Government.

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