

We have previously reported [1] on the work of the three-year project *Support for Science Education in Scotland through CPD* (known affectionately within SSERC as 'The Project'). Through this collaborative, Scottish Government funded project, SSERC and its partners offer experiential professional development opportunities to a range of groups who are key to providing a stimulating learning environment for school science. As we approach the end of the first year of the work of *The Project* it is worth taking stock of what we have achieved.

Primary and Secondary teachers: more than 150 teachers attended two-part 'Bridging the Gap' courses, each lasting a total of five days. These courses provide resources and equipment to take back into school. Delegates move forward their own practice by carrying out a 'gap task' in the classroom between Parts 1 and 2 of the courses.



"This is a superb course full of excellent material with very professional and extremely likeable presenters".

Technicians: a range of units have been developed by the SSERC / STAG partnership and credit-rated and levelled by the SQA. Training courses which offer technicians the opportunity to gain these qualifications are being held by Local Authority Training Partnerships across the country. During the year over 150 technical staff have attended SSERC courses covering topics including Chemical Handling, Microbiology for Schools, Electrical Safety and PAT Testing, and Safe Use of Fixed Workshop Machinery.

Trainee teachers: In January 2009, one hundred and seventy student teachers from across Scotland came together to experience some high quality,

experiential professional development for two days at the Scottish Universities Science School. The programme offered presentations (including one from Professor Stuart Monro, Scientific Director of *Our Dynamic Earth*), laboratory work suitable for early secondary students, together with sessions on formative assessment, discussion techniques, and services offered through SSERC.



"This course was absolutely excellent. I honestly could not fault it and I regard it as one of the most impressive and informative activities I have participated in with regard to teacher training."

Probationer teachers: To offer the 'C' in CPD, we invited twenty delegates who had attended the Scottish Universities Science School in 2008, to come together again during their first year of teaching. The formula was 'more of the same but different' and we provided sessions on co-operative learning as well as practical work and formative assessment activities that could be taken back into the classroom.



"This course was excellent – great activities I will actually use, superbly organised and amazing staff who are willing to answer any questions – very inspiring!"

The Scottish Science Education Conference (SSEC): Organised as a partnership by ASE Scotland and SSERC this conference was held at the

Dunblane Hydro Hotel on 6th and 7th March 2009. Some 250 delegates attended what was generally accepted to be a highly successful event. Plans are already at an advanced stage for SSEC 2010 so watch this space!

Curriculum leaders: Twenty eight new or aspiring curriculum leaders participated in Part 1 of a five-day two-part course, 'Leading for Excellence in Science', held at Crieff Hydro in March 2009. The course provides opportunity to take on board new ideas and acquire and develop skills necessary for leadership and management of school science departments.

What next? Between now and the end of the 2008/2009 academic year we have a range of CPD courses (both residential and non-residential) including Summer Schools for secondary teachers of biology, chemistry and physics.

Further details of all our courses can be found at www.science3-18.org.



"The courses are very useful - every science teacher should go on one of these!"

For 2009-2010, we plan to build on the very successful programme of CPD with an increased variety of courses.

Registration and programme details will be posted at www.science3-18.org – why not visit the Professional Development part of the website on a regular basis?

References

SSERC Bulletin (2008) No. 226. or http://www.sserc.org.uk/members/SafetyNet/bulls/226/CPD_at_SSERC.htm