

Explaining A Scottish Pedagogy Model

Frequently Asked Questions

Overview

What is pedagogy and doesn't pedagogue just mean teacher?

In Scotland and other predominantly English-speaking countries, the term pedagogy has been used to describe the science of education, referring specifically to theories of teaching and learning.

In most other European countries, however, the term has a much broader meaning with a focus on the 'whole' child – their social, emotional and cultural needs as well as their education.

Pedagogues work across Europe in a wide range of services including the early years, schools, family support and youth work, disability services and in some countries support for older people. In addition to providing the main staffing group in some services such as nurseries and school age childcare they work in a complementary role alongside the more established professions such as teachers, social workers, doctors and nurses.

What are the principles of the pedagogue's work as used in many other countries?

Researchers have identified these as:

- a focus on the child as a whole person, and support for the child's overall development;
- first and foremost, to build on the ongoing relationship between herself and the child which is both professional and, equally importantly, personal;

- being constantly encouraged, like other professionals, to reflect on their practice and to apply both theoretical understandings and self knowledge to the sometimes challenging demands with which they are confronted;
- being engaged in practical work, and having had training which prepares them to share in many aspects of children's daily lives and activities including attending to their physical needs;
- fostering and making use of children's associative life, which is seen as an important resource
- bringing creative activities to their practice – a major component of their training is in the arts such as drama, music and the visual arts.
- building on an understanding of children's rights that is not limited to procedural matters or legislated requirements - there is an emphasis on team work and on valuing the contribution of others in 'bringing up' children: other professionals, members of the local community and, especially, parents;
- the centrality of relationship and, allied to this, the importance of listening and communicating.

[This list is an expanded version from Petrie et al (2006) *Working with Children in Care: European perspectives*, OUP.]

What would the model involve in Scotland?

It would involve:

- adopting Scottish pedagogy as a basis for workforce reform,
- developing a new group of pedagogues at graduate or equivalent level and assistants trained to Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework, Level 7,
- Scottish pedagogues and assistants could work in all services for children and young people from birth to 18 – including pre-school education and care services, school-age childcare, play and youth services, residential, foster and family support services and alongside teachers in schools. There would also be scope for considering how it might fit in with newly emerging health roles.
- all those working with children, including teachers, health and social workers to receive common grounding in Scottish pedagogical theory and practice.

[Children in Scotland (2008) *Working it out: developing the children's sector workforce*.]

Could pedagogues be given another name which people would find easier?

Yes – *social educators* has been suggested but like the name *social pedagogues* this is felt by many pedagogues to focus too much on the social aspects of their role. There are lots of advantages from keeping a name which is widely recognised in other EU countries and would make it possible to develop qualifications in partnership with institutions in these countries. The name Scottish pedagogue would be recognisable as a pedagogue qualification in the sense used by many other countries but would also emphasise that it would be a Scottish interpretation of this – building on Scotland’s historical approaches, such as Robert Owen’s New Lanark integrated school and nursery, the Kilbrandon report and our distinctive youth justice system and responding to the Scottish context.

What would the content of the qualification look like?

It would obviously be open to Scottish institutions to adapt current models. The 3.5 years **Danish Pedagogue** course at one Danish institution looks like this:

- Pedagogy (43 ECTS)
- Danish language, culture, communication (28 ECTS)
- Individual, institution, society (18 ECTS)
- One of these 3 fields:
 - a) Health, body, movement
 - b) Expression, music, drama (30 ECTS)
 - c) Arts, nature, science
- Practice in centers (74 ECTS)
- Specializing in one of these three fields:
 - a) Children and young people
 - b) People with mental problems (5 ECTS)
 - c) People with social problems
- Degree project (12 ECTS)

Danish pedagogues work in the following services:

Nurseries (0-3)

Kindergartens (3-6) 0-6 childcare centres

Kindergartenclasses at primary schools

School-age childcare (6-9)

Clubs for children and young people (10-14, 14-18/21)

Residential care

Full time centres for young people and adults with special needs

[From Stig Lund (2008) presentation at Children in Scotland conference April 2008.]

The course content for the **Hungarian óvodapedagógus qualification** (kindergarten pedagogue who works with children aged 3–6 or 7 years) includes some compulsory subjects such as pedagogy, psychology, social sciences and a foreign language (32-35% of subjects) and subjects preparing for work in kindergartens such as Hungarian language and literature, mathematics, visual arts, music, natural science and methodology (45-48% of subjects). There are also pedagogues working in elementary schools and with families and pedagogy makes a significant contribution to the initial education of social workers. *(Marta Korintus personal communication: based on information from ELTE University website.)*

The course content of the pedagogy based **BA Honours in Curative Education** offered at the **University of Aberdeen** in Scotland covers:

- a sound knowledge of the holistic understanding of the human being,
- an understanding of human life course development and of general care, educational and therapeutic principles, theories and approaches,
- practical care, educational, therapeutic and creative attitudes, skills and methods,
- social and organisational skills to facilitate working in and building community with children and adults with complex needs, colleagues and parents,
- the ability to work within the professional, socio-political and regulatory context of the field,
- the creative ability to develop new ideas for transformative action,
- personal and professional development through reflection and enquiry, supported by the use of the Learning Journal, Personal Development Planning and the medium of the arts.

[Children in Scotland (2008) *Working it out: developing the children's sector workforce*, p.21.]

Would it cost a lot to introduce?

No, there is no reason why it should be more expensive to offer as a qualification than any other. The scope of the qualification would be likely to make it far more cost effective whilst links with other countries could help to attract students from other countries to Scotland. The major cost for any workforce reform will be the cost of upskilling the current workforce through professional development courses.

Why have a qualification that covers so many groups?

It makes a lot more sense to develop a qualification that covers a wider range of services than to upskill groups separately. The Scottish Pedagogy qualification would cover around half the children's sector workforce and could also be used as a contribution to the initial education of all groups would contribute to the whole sector. The greater mobility it would bring to the children's sector would assist career progression and reduce the prospect of labour shortages in particular areas. It would ensure consistency of approach and values – and this would be particularly helpful for children with additional support needs.

Could we make use of any existing qualifications in Scotland ?

There are a number of qualifications that might contribute to the new qualification. The new Standard for Childhood practice, the University of Strathclyde's new BA in Childhood Practice which is broadly based on the Standard but includes provision for creativity, music, dances, languages and learning, and the BA (Hons) in Curative Education might all be used. But it would be essential to also draw on examples from countries such as Denmark in developing a qualification which could cover a wider range of groups.

How would the model contribute to workforce reform?

In addition to providing a vehicle for upskilling a wide range of groups in the children's sector it would also promote shared understanding and child and family centred values across the children's sector, encourage mobility, and assist career progression - key issues in the current reform agenda. It is thought that through encouraging mobility it could help in addressing current gender and ethnic balance within the workforce. The breadth and flexibility of the qualification could assist staffing of children's services in rural areas.

Could it help with the growing issue over paraprofessionals?

Yes, the Scottish Pedagogue model includes not only pedagogues trained at graduate or equivalent level but also provision for assistants trained to Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework Level 7. This would enable the development of a single assistant post across the sector with ability to move to a full pedagogue qualification. Again this would be particularly helpful in promoting the inclusion of children with additional support needs.

How would the Scottish pedagogue model help the health agenda?

The Scottish pedagogue and assistant pedagogues would offer a broad-based qualification which would fit well with the requirements being identified in such initiatives as the Parent and Child Together services in Glasgow [See Christine Duncan and Linda de Caestecker in Children in Scotland (2008) *Working it out: developing the children's sector workforce*, p.39] and the NHS Fife Family Health and Acorn projects, and in particular with the understanding of how to work with children in the context of their families, carers and the community. Many of the pedagogue courses include, as in Denmark, optional elements on health and on the body and mental development. Some of the work which is now taking place in Scotland, which is informed by our health agenda, could form the basis for developments which would make our courses attractive to students from other countries.

'Working it Out: Reforming Scotland's children's sector workforce' is a rare and revealing birds' eye view of Scotland's children's sector workforce, with analysis of its composition and how reform is required for it to operate as a single unitary system, with the child firmly at the centre. For more information and to order go to <http://www.childreninscotland.org.uk/wio>