

# EFFeCT Project: Comparative Analysis of Good Practice Criteria

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Cases of good practice from each of the six EFFeCT partners were compared. The method of comparing the cases was undertaken as follows. The submitted report of each case was read and any accompanying portrait viewed. The content of each report was distilled into a 'comparative analysis template' for each case. The latter is structured according to the headings of the 'case study template' agreed in Budapest in 2015.

The purpose of the comparative analysis is to examine themes, commonalities and differences in the data against each of the good practice criteria - namely participative professionalism; deep level collaboration; equity; deep learning. In addition, other headings comprised context, facilitating factors, barriers - and the strengths/weaknesses of the evidence on which the case study is based. These headings were included in the 'comparative analysis template'. The completed templates are being used to build up a comparative picture of the cases. Findings from the cases relevant to each heading are being brought together under the respective headings, then themes identified from the findings once they are set alongside each other.

This working document concentrates on the four good practice criteria and sets out some of the emerging themes.

## Range of cases and methodologies

A wide variety of cases of good practice, 22 in all, were submitted. They include innovative initiatives within single schools, professional development and collaborative programmes involving multiple schools, the use of alternative pedagogies, the application of peer-group mentoring programmes, innovations in pedagogical development in a university and an innovative practitioner-run MEd.

Table 1 shows the distribution of cases by source and level.

	Tempus Public Foundation (Hungary)	University of Jyväskylä (Finland)	National Centre for Education (Latvia)	National Institute for CPD (Czech Rep.)	University of Hertfordshire (UK)	Mary Immaculate College (Ireland)	TOTAL
school level	1 (H3)	1 (F1)	1 (L1a, 2)	1 (C3)	1 (UK1)	1 (I1)	
local level	1 (H2)	1 (F2)	1 (L3)		1 (UK2)	1 (I3)	
regional level	1 (H1)	1 (F3)	1 (L1b)	1 (C2)	2 (UK3,4)		
national level	0 [national summary being provided]	1 (F4)	1 (L4)	1 (C1)	1 (UK5)	1 (I2)	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b> (5 templates)	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>22</b> (23 templates)

**Table 1: Cases of good practice**

The methodologies for studying the cases encompass both qualitative and quantitative approaches and include analysis of existing sources of data, interviews, arts-based data generation and observations carried out specifically for the EFFeCT work, surveys, analysis of internet sources. Two of the countries (Finland and the UK) used a nested case study approach in which the cases as parts of a larger whole have an integrity and meaning through that identity, over and above the individual characteristics of each case.

## **Comparison by good practice criteria**

### **Participative professionalism**

#### **Decentred agency / distributed leadership**

This refers to the development of the capacity amongst teachers and others for identifying problems to tackle, taking initiatives and leading change and. Instead of relying on senior figures who drive change, 'leadership and change agency become identified with the systemic self-organisation of learning by broadening leadership theory to encompass participative models of learning across the whole organisation' (Caldwell 2006: 2). Cases particularly featuring this are: I1, I2, I3, H1, H1, H2, H3, C3, L1a, UK1, UK2, UK3, UK4, UK5. Decentred agency and the distribution of leadership are seen in a large number of cases as being integral to a model of participative professionalism.

For example, a theme across H1, H2 and H3 is the agency of individuals in making a difference to something they have a professional stake in. In H1, the focus is on both pedagogy and a vision of equity. In H2, the focus on pedagogy dominates. In both cases, collaboration appears to strengthen teachers' commitment and capacity to effect change. In H3, where the focus is on equity and the need to support children seen as disadvantaged, collaboration appears to strengthen teachers' commitment and capacity to effect change. Teachers' belief in the moral warrant for their activity remains strong.

The six cases generated by the Hungary and Ireland partners evidence the positive effect of a participative, democratic model of professionalism. In all case studies, educational professionals see it as within the remit of their role to take action to ameliorate social injustice. Their approach to securing change in this area is often seen to begin with their own development. The case studies do not focus on attempts to influence public policy, although this may be an ultimate aim or end. Instead, they foreground the actions of individual teachers or groups of teachers who, often through learning from one another, seek to provide an enhanced educational experience for the children in their care. Teachers are often the frontline action-takers, although supported by organisational contexts conducive to individual or collaborative agential activity.

L3 refers to feeling more holistic and that what they do really matters.

In UK1, the concept of distributed leadership draws on the proposition that leadership in organisations is the outcome of the actions and interactions of the people within the organisation, rather than on the actions of one or more designated leaders (Woods and Roberts, 2016). Teacher-led development work demonstrates this proposition in action. Here, teachers initiate activity based on their moral purpose and their determination to effect meaningful change for teachers and students. In UK2, teacher leadership is enacted through teacher-led development work. Here, teachers focus on an issue which matters to them. They collaborate with colleagues to plan and lead change processes, gather and interpret evidence of the impact of what they have done, and share their enhanced understanding with others. In so doing, they inspire colleagues to also work to change things for the better. The strength of the approach is that they have been allowed to choose and they seem to pass this gift on to other stakeholders – especially the students.

UK3, the HertsCam MEd is a distinctive programme that enables teachers and others to develop an active participative professionalism in which educators from any part of the conventional school hierarchy can initiate and lead change collaboratively. It promotes in a practical way non-positional distributed leadership. The programme has led to hundreds of projects created and led by teachers that have and are making a difference to the quality of teaching and learning in schools.

### **The practice as an expression of participative professionalism**

In most cases, the nature of the practice was seen implicitly or explicitly as following a democratic model or as an expression of participative professionalism (I3, H1, H2, H3, L1a, L1b, F1, F2, F3, F4, C2, C3, UK1, UK2, UK3, UK4, UK5). In some it was suggested that the practice develops participative professionalism (F1, UK1, UK2, UK3, UK4, UK5).

The report of L3 highlights that as well as teachers, young people and other staff such as teacher assistants, kitchen staff and cleaning ladies also are involved and suggests that this demonstrates the democratic and distributed leadership model that the projects are generating. L4 highlights collaboration and reflection as the necessary precondition for the model to succeed. In the case of C1, the reporting suggests that the participative aspect is the willingness to recognise and respond to the expressed needs of those working in school clubs.

### **Deep level collaboration**

#### **Structural framing of collaboration**

The notion of analytically distinguishing between the institutional, cultural and social aspects of structure (Woods 2016) is used here to identify some important themes. In practice, these structural aspects interrelate. In the case of C3, the school is reported as being imbued with collaborative approach so suggesting its institutional, cultural and social features are all orientated to supporting a deep collaboration. This is also evident in the UK cases. The case of H3 highlighted the innovative uses of structural change to support collaborative working. It is also interesting to note that, in the case of L3, that collaborative learning happened as a “by-product”, resulting in innovative forms of cooperation among teachers, between school, teachers and other local stakeholders.

Cases where aspects of structure are highlighted are indicated below.

#### *Institutional structures*

Institutional structures include roles, procedures and working arrangements (such as teams and committees), as well as allocation of resources and the opportunities offered for professional development and training. Cases where these were highlighted include I1, I3, F1 (which explained the stages used), F3 (which referred to the bottom up, top down approach undertaken through meetings at different levels) and F4 (the regular meetings of its structured partner forum).

#### *Cultural structure*

Cultural structure refers to the ideas and values that people share in an organisation and which influence everyday behaviour. The cultural ‘bank’ of ideas and values is not fixed at one point time but develops over time, though its development may be more top-down or more participatory in different contexts. Cases where culture was highlighted include F1 (its ideas and values, which are expressed institutionally through the stages), C2, L1a (which highlighted shared goals), L1b (where the philosophy of valuing and seeking collaboration with other schools is an explicit philosophy of the school), L2.

In the case of L1a, the school’s promotion of collaboration between teachers and stakeholders is driving a more participatory culture with an emergent sense of distributed leadership between the

practitioners, students, stakeholders and the community. It has developed the school as a resource for community development. It is evident that the value and support for collaboration (the cultural framing), gives rise also to changes in practice - diverse activities have proven themselves to be very closely connected with teachers' job and self-perception as teachers, as they both provided opportunities and required constant learning within and outside the formal school setting.

Culture as an emerging factor is highlighted by L£ and L4. L3 explains how the practice developed a cohesive culture and shared goals. Teachers in L4 agreed that collaboration with their colleagues has developed a common ownership of values. Collaboration enables the surfacing and sharing of values which in turn allows for a more democratic vision for development, advancing equity and a deeper sense for what learning can be.

### *Social structure*

Social structure refers to the patterns and textures of relationships. The social aspect highlighted by cases include collegiality (I3, F2), group cohesion (H1), group identity and purpose (H1, F4, C2), peer group support and community (F1), consistency of membership (L1a) and the safe and friendly atmosphere that encourages dialogue (L2).

L3's report explains how it leads to improved relationships - better relationships with families of their students and students on the basis of more holistic knowledge about their situation, personal characteristics and interests etc. L4 highlights the solidarity of the group, its supportiveness and trust; and also stress involved in lesson observations.

## **The role of senior leadership**

The importance of the support of senior leadership was made clear in the case of H2 and L1b (the latter referring to the moral and material support of school management. Senior leadership can be positive and helpful, but can also diminish the scope for decentred agency. H3 explained that areas for development are chosen predominantly by the principal and, although anyone can suggest a topic for discussion, structural impediments, such as the act that the principal arranges external speaker, in practice often curtail this apparent democratic approach.

## **Equity**

A number of themes are emerging with regard to equity:

### **Overt purpose to address inequalities between areas, between schools, between students**

This is the case with these cases: I3, H1, H2, H3, F3, F4, UK1, UK2, UK3, UK4, UK5, and L2 (the latter addressing 'instructional inequity').

### **Inequities in teacher opportunities or relationships addressed**

This is an explicit part of the following cases: H2, F1, F2, L1a, L2 (the latter concluding that it changed attitudes) and L3 (also citing the changes taking place).

### **Inequities in teacher opportunities or relationships recognised**

Such inequalities are recognised in cases C2 and UK3.

### **Participative and cultural justice claimed to be strong**

Participative justice refers to rights to be heard and involved in decision-making; cultural justice to rights to respect for identity and beliefs (Woods and Roberts 2016). A sense that these were strongly recognised are apparent in C2 and C3, and L2 refers to allowing open expression by all, i.e. participative justice.

**Open to all**

Cases L1a, L1b and L3 associate equity with collaborative opportunities being open to all teachers; in the case of L4, being open to all schools

**The process of collaboration leads to more equal relationships**

Cases L1a, L1b and L3 highlight the positive role of collaborative processes leading to more equal relationships.

**Includes non-teachers**

Some cases highlighted the involvement of non-teachers as a dimension of equity: L1b, L3, UK1, UK2, UK3, UK4, UK5.

**Better community relationships**

L3's reports states that teachers or other active representatives of the local community are publicly evaluated, ensuring satisfaction and providing motivation for further work.

**Transforming dialogue in contexts of division and conflict**

Several cases show the role of collaborative learning where there are deep-seated traditions of division and conflict. I2 focused on securing societal change through cross-border collaboration. In this it connects with cases H1 and H3, and with the UK international case (UK5) which was about teacher leadership in Bosnia. I2 highlighted:

- The use of teacher dialogue and collaboration as a key support for the peace process
- The development of teacher education as a vehicle for one of the most successful North South projects
- The function of identifying areas of common educational concern as a catalyst for collaboration

**Deep learning**

The themes are structured according to Biesta's dimensions of learning (Biesta 2009).

*Socialisation***Professional identity construction**

The development of a particular kind of professional identity, which is collaborative, participative and guided by democratic values, is a feature of most cases: I3, F1, F2, H1, H2, H3, C2, L1a, UK1, UK2, UK3, UK4, UK5). For example, one of the four stages in F1 is *identity construction* - participants are focusing on identifying the strengths and weaknesses of their professional selves; explicating their values, principles and philosophies; and locating themselves in their personal histories and future plans.

L4 explains that teachers' learning is based on the philosophy that change arises from the teacher's immersion in practice and that, in order to make changes happen, teachers have to be immersed in their own and their colleagues' experience analysing and reflecting on it.

UK4 - the HertsCam annual conference - highlighted how it works as a **collective construction of professional identity**. The conference is an event that reflects in its practice the teacher-led ideals of the Network. It acts as a collective construction of professional identity, both through information shared and through the practice of the conference itself. It is an active ingredient in building a culture of collaborative learning that embeds and supports distributed leadership. The conference has an important affective impact on participants. There is evidence that participants experience positive mutual affective and cognitive reframing through the activities that take place during the day. Participants influence, support and bring about positive change in the feelings and ideas of each other, helping to forge a predisposition to a professionalism that challenges the assumptions of teaching built into the dominant policy frame in England. The impact of the annual conference does

not occur simply as an effect of the day itself. It arises from the conference being a planned and integral component of the yearly cycle and activities of the Network as a whole. This provides a framework, resources (chiefly enthusiastic people who live the active, participative professionalism) and an energy that creates an effective and inspiring annual event.

The importance of **reframing** was also identified in UK cases (UK3, UK5) - i.e. the process of changing the usual frame of meanings, viewpoints and associations concerning leadership. The identified 'self-esteem' in UK5 could indicate that the worth or value of such projects is not only as an extension to the professionalism of practitioners but also as something that adds ontological value - to life, to humanity.

### **Institutional or community socialisation**

This is socialisation into an institution or group or community, L2 features institutional socialisation. I3 refers to the development of a culture of inter-school sharing. Cases I2 and L1a the development of community or group identity/belonging.

Other themes emerging are as follows.

### **Emotional learning**

Cases F1, F2.

### **Strengthening of professionalism and expertise**

Case L1b.

### **Civic engagement**

L3 refers to demonstrating a civic engagement needed for successful civic and citizenship education, leading to a school that develops as a multifunctional community centre promoting the development and well-being of whole rural territory.

### *Subjectification*

Several themes emerged in relation to subjectification.

### **Enabling individual agency**

Cases H1, C2, UK1, UK2, UK3, UK4, UK5

### **Developing critical, independent thinking**

Cases L1a, L2, L3, UK3, UK5. L3 refers to raised self-awareness and criticality being engendered by value-led engagement with the community and leadership distributed from the school across the local community. L4 features the fact that their research shows that the process helps develop individuals as both critical thinkers and as participatory or democratic professionals with a sense of belonging.

### **Being exposed to alternative ideas**

Cases H2 and L1a, the latter developing more equal, listening relationship with stakeholders.

### **Becoming democratic professionals**

L1b interprets socialisation in this way and owning their ideas, and is featured in L1a.

### **Reflection**

In the case of I1, the POT session allowed an enhanced depth of reflection about their aims as an educator and the way in which they were planning to achieve these aims in the teaching session. L4 highlights the value of reflection: oand analysis of each other's lessons improve the analytical and reflexive skills of every individual teacher and their insight, enriching experience improving individual practice; the importance of the reflection skill is underscored by the fact that it is crucial for teachers' daily activity as well as implementing any changes in the future.

**Enabling voice**

Case H3

**Developing confidence**

Case F1.

*Qualification*

A theme around pedagogical learning emerged, as might be expected, as the most prominent theme in relation to the qualification dimension of learning.

**Pedagogical learning**

Learning about teaching methods is explicitly highlighted in cases H2, F1, C2, L1a, L4, UK2, UK3, UK4. In L1b and L2, a development from subject-specific to wider collaboration is apparent, and a shared enthusiasm for pedagogy.

An alternative to the concept of professionalism in teaching, the European notion of *social pedagogy* (concerned with human beings' learning, holistic well-being and inclusion into society, and seeing students as active agents and competent, resourceful human beings) could be very useful in these contexts which include a holistic approach to community, as well as the concept of pedagogical isomorphism (L1b). With regard to UK1, the 'teacher led' initiatives here have inspired *heutagogic principles* to come into play so that the leadership is distributed to students to promote equity.

**Tools/skills for collaborative learning**

Cases H1, H3, F2, UK1, UK2, UK3, UK4, UK5, and L4 (teacher skills to collaborate and support other teachers and help them learn).

**Knowledge/skills relating to leadership**

Cases UK1, UK2, UK3, UK4. The report of L4 states that their research offers evidence that the network learning model helps to improve teachers' skills including reflection and collaborations skills as well as to develop their leadership skills.

**Affective learning**

Cases I3 (self-efficacy), H2 (motivation), F1 (emotional learning, confidence), F2 (enthusiasm, confidence), L2 (becoming more open and eager to collaborate), UK2 (dispositions).

**Collective knowledge**

This is about enhancing the knowledge, understanding and dispositions of teachers as a community in the school (L1a, L1b). L2 refers to community of practice. Collective knowledge is seen in the UK cases.

**Student learning**

There are examples in UK1, UK3, UK5, H2 and L1a (the latter referring to the development of a beneficial learning culture for students); L4 refers to gaining a more effective teacher-led learning process during the lesson with subsequent improvement of student skills.

**Knowledge and diversity and about the community**

Case L3 refers to learning a methodology to identify community problems, possible solutions, to choose the most appropriate solution and to develop action plans; and teachers learning how to use this approach in the interactive workshops engaging in collaboration and reflection, and then in their teaching.

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