

QSITE POSITION STATEMENT

Guidelines for effective ICT related professional development for Queensland teachers

The Queensland Society for Information Technology in Education (QSITE) commissioned a report in order to develop an informed position statement reflecting contemporary literature and the experience of QSITE members. It has emerged that there are four distinct yet interrelated elements that are instrumental in the success of PD: personal growth, context, community and time. Inherent in these guidelines is the recognition that there needs to be a high level of support for the program from school administrations and a system in place to allow continued participation and support.

Background

QSITE has been recognised as a professional association since its formation in 1981 as the Computer Education Group (Queensland) (CEGQ) becoming QSITE in 1992. Through this time the association has provided relevant and timely professional support for system leaders and education professionals who have been involved in integrating ICTs in education. This support has taken many forms and has involved a diverse selection of people.

In 2005, QSITE is a professional association with a large membership consisting of some of the most respected practitioners in Australia. These members have a wealth of experience in the implementation of ICTs in education and around what makes effective ICT-related professional development for teachers.

This position statement has been developed in response to concerns raised within the QSITE community around current trends in the provision of professional development. QSITE members felt that given the wealth of experience we have to offer, we were well positioned to develop a series of recommendations around effective ICT-related professional development.

Process

A research assistant was engaged to conduct the background research in consultation with QSITE. This consisted of an environmental scan and literature review, data collection and analysis and the development of interim recommendations. These documents have been produced as individual reports and are located on the QSITE website. This position statement has been developed as a synthesis of the findings from the reports.

The QSITE study corroborated the findings in much of the literature and the collation of real experiences of practitioners in Queensland's educational contexts and clearly demonstrated

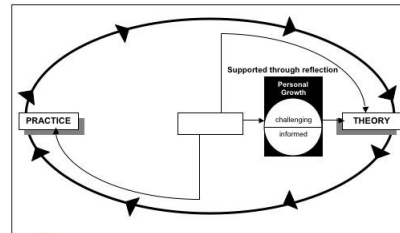
that professional development is a complex issue. While there is no single solution, there are clear guidelines relating to personal growth, context, community and time, which can be applied to the benefit of teachers and students. QSITE believes that recognition of and adherence to the guidelines will assist in the development and delivery of effective professional development programs.

Guidelines for effective professional development

The over-arching guidelines for effective professional development are:

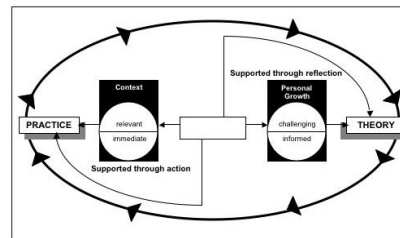
1. **It must support teachers' lifelong learning through reflection (practice to theory).** Indicators of this occurring would be that it:

- adds to personal knowledge
- increases personal skills
- enhances status (within learning community)
- takes account of teachers' prior knowledge, different levels and learning styles
- enables reflection
- allows personal selection
- allows teachers to take responsibility for their own learning



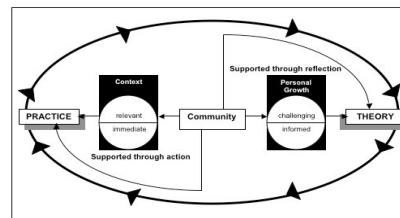
2. **It must improve teaching practice through action (theory to practice).** For this to occur it must:

- be relevant (authentic, local and real)
- be meaningful
- be practical
- meet immediate needs (direct impact)
- meet ongoing needs (sustained impact)



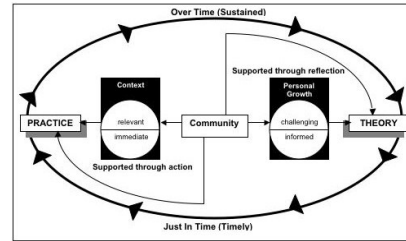
3. **It should foster active membership and collegiate relationships within professional communities.** This occurs through:

- encouraging sharing with others, hearing other stories from the field
- providing ongoing support and heightened collaboration
- expanding professional and personal networks

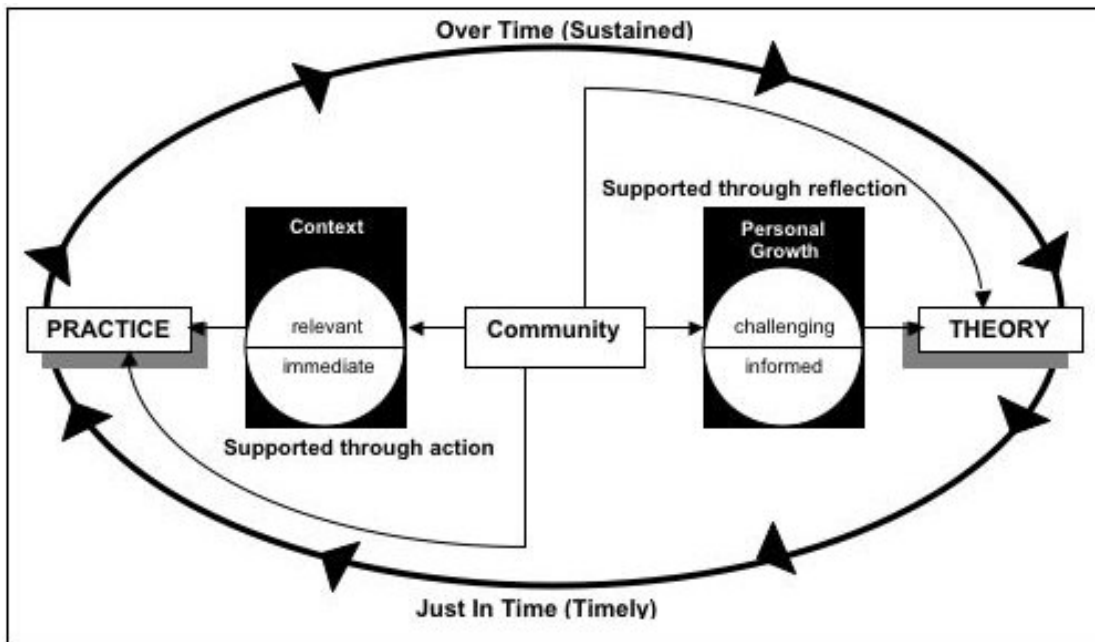


4. **It should consider the need for timeliness and reflection over time for practicing teachers.** To cater for this, professional development must:

- be timely (just-in-time)
- be sustained (over time)
- provide adequate time for participation, reflection and implementation



Effective professional development has, therefore, to immerse an individual in his or her community, directly address the context of teaching and learning, add to personal growth, and be both “over” time and “in” time. These elements are to be viewed as being the stepping-stones between practice and theory.



In summary, a format incorporating extended time and opportunities to “play”, in a supportive environment is instrumental in the success of PD. As stated earlier, it is recognised that there also needs to be a high level of support for the program from school administrations.

QSITE Report

Towards a Model of Effective Professional Development in ICT for Teachers

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