

Top tips on evaluating teacher CPD in your school



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One of the greatest influences on student outcomes is by improving both teaching and learning through effective teacher CPD. Yet few schools evaluate its impact adequately, or even at all. Unless you do so, it is difficult to know to what extent a CPD programme has benefited a school or offered value for money.

The following initial framework will help you go about evaluating CPD:

1. Decide what you want from a CPD programme. If you don't have set expectations for changing teacher behaviour or other headline objectives, you will never know how successful the programme has been.
2. Determine the tools and criteria you will use to assess progress. These should measure the difference that the CPD programme makes to teacher practice and student outcomes, rather than just evaluate the CPD activity itself. You may be already collecting relevant metrics. If not, you will have to start from scratch.
3. Employ a range of quantitative and qualitative measures, which could be collected by, for example, questionnaires, interviews, focus groups, observations, feedback sheets and reflection logs. This will give you holistic view of any changes that are happening.
4. Apply these tools over an extended period. Research shows that most CPD evaluations are based on participants' reactions immediately or soon after the CPD programme is finished. As a result, assessment is generally brief, subjective and difficult to interpret. So don't simply tack evaluation to the end of your CPD programme as an add-on.
5. Make evaluation a positive experience. Unfortunately, all too often it is seen as highlighting failure and undesirable outcomes rather than a necessary requirement for ensuring improvement is appropriately targeted and on-going.

6. Take CPD evaluation seriously. Don't see it as some tick-box exercise to appease governors, inspectors and other external stakeholders. Properly embrace it as a means to develop pupil learning and the quality of teaching in your school.
7. Don't make CPD evaluation burdensome. With the right training, a practical and collaborative approach, and the use of appropriately rigorous tools, CPD evaluation can be surprisingly straightforward.
8. Involve everyone who will participate in the evaluation process from the start. CPD evaluations should not be left solely to members of the senior team to impose on others.

CPD evaluation is an often neglected step because it is perceived as challenging. And yes, it does require long-term commitment and planning. However, to ensure that your school and its pupils gain maximum benefit from any professional development programme, assessment of training is not a nicety, but a necessity.

If you struggle to measure CPD effectively, seeking advice and guidance is imperative, because only then can you create the long-term training programmes that are so vital to your school's development.

Kind regards,

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