

If it doesn't kill you, it will make you stronger: A journey towards successful accreditation

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Accreditation is a process not an isolated event limited to a two-day inspection. It involves all staff and filters through to the classroom; it has an impact on the daily functioning of the institution. The challenge is not only in responding effectively to the standards and requirements of the scheme but to convert the process into sustainable practice and an ongoing journey towards excellence, and ensure that everyone involved in the process understands its rationale and shares values.

The session will be based on the Equals Accreditation Scheme. It will focus on its key areas – the quality standards for academic management and in particular course design, assessment, adoption of the CEFR and GSE, teaching and learning practice, design of CPD programmes and internal QA which constitute 5 out of 12 categories of the scheme.

The session will look at various stages of the course delivery process starting with the institution's educational philosophy, through the principle of programme design, monthly and weekly schemes of work and lesson planning to their implementation in the classroom. It will explore the importance of learning outcomes at each stage of the process and the ways they can be written and used effectively to ensure that every lesson reflects the overall course design.

The session will examine the Equals CPD Scheme and its reference to 2 of the 12 Categories: Quality Assurance and Staff Profile and Development and how some aspects of internal procedures for quality assurance inform staff development programmes. The session will also explore the potential of institutional self-assessment as a goal-oriented process, a vehicle for improvement and a tool which facilitates the accreditation process both prior to an inspection and as its follow-up.

