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# Union Learning Representatives: Facilitating Professional Development for Scottish Teachers

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## Changes in teachers' work and the challenges facing teacher unions

Howard Stevenson, Guest Editor

### *Union Learning Representatives: Facilitating Professional Development for Scottish Teachers*

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**ABSTRACT:** In the United Kingdom, teachers' professional associations and labor organizations, notably in the form of trade unions have historically been involved in education and training in the workplace. Recently, in the United Kingdom this activity has gained greater credence and importance due to the emergence of trade union learning representatives who are a new category of unpaid lay representation with statutory rights who operate within the workplace. They are part of the present UK government's drive to expand and improve lifelong learning and continuing professional development (CPD) in order to create the new learning society within the UK. In Scotland, a constituent part of the UK with its own distinctive education system, the McCrone Report (2000), particularly its CPD recommendations and the subsequent 21st Century Agreement (Scottish Executive Education Department [SEED], 2001) has added impetus to the role of these learning representatives within the Scottish teaching profession. This article examines how the Educational Institute of Scotland, a professional trade union, which represents the overwhelming majority of teachers in Scotland, has launched a learning representatives initiative with the aim that the representatives work to advise, broker, and facilitate improved CPD opportunities for their colleagues, particularly in relation to Chartered Teacher status (O'Brien & Hunt, 2005).

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For the successful delivery of education, teachers must themselves be able and equipped to deliver. The advent of trade union learning representatives is a key development in ensuring that this is the case, particularly in the United Kingdom with the New Labour administration's emphasis on "Education, Education, Education" (Blair, 1996) and the "Learning Society" (DfEE, 1998).

This is particularly so in the Scottish education sector, where the Educational Institute of Scotland (EIS), which

represents the overwhelming majority of teachers has embarked on a learning representatives initiative in a context of significant CPD developments in the sector that intriguingly is enabling educators to become learners once again as teachers are becoming brokers and facilitators of learning, by taking on the learning representative role.

Who are these learning representatives? They are trade union lay representatives who receive no financial remuneration apart from expenses accrued in pursuance of their activities. According to the Trades Union Congress (2001), anyone can become a learning representative, either by volunteering for the role or being elected by fellow union members. The Scottish Trades Union Congress (2005, p. 6) which enthusiastically supports this development through its lifelong learning strategy states that the role of this type of representative should encompass the following:

- \* Establishing and running trade union learning centers
- \* Negotiating learning agreements with employers, including time off for study
- \* Helping establish employee development schemes
- \* Monitoring quality
- \* Raising awareness of benefits of learning
- \* Supporting innovative workplace development, such as SULF [Scottish Union Learning Fund] projects
- \* Securing equal opportunities in learning
- \* Providing learning advice and guidance to employees.

The key objectives of this article are: to briefly outline the Scottish context especially in relation to teacher professionalism, renewal, and CPD; to examine and understand why union learning representatives have emerged and what their role is becoming in relation to the aims and objectives of labor organizations especially in relation to members' learning and development particularly in relation to the EIS initiative; report on how they are developing within the EIS initiative and to highlight if teachers are benefiting in terms of improved CPD opportunities through the presence of these learning representatives within their local authority area and schools.

### **The Emergence of Union Learning Representatives**

The creation of union learning representatives can be traced to several significant initiatives that have been launched by the present New Labour administration in the UK. The first was the establishment of the National Advisory Group for Continuing Education and Lifelong Learning (Nagcell), with the express remit of advising the Secretary of State for the Department for Education and Employment (DfEE) on matters concerning adult learning (Fryer, 1997). In its first report Nagcell asserted that the:

...active involvement of trade unions will assist in legitimising the purposes and processes of workplace learning in the eyes of their members facilitating take up of learning and the development of learning partnerships at work (Fryer, 1997 Para.10.16).

The second initiative was the creation of the Union Learning Fund announced in The Learning Age Green Paper (DfEE, 1998), followed by the Scottish Executive setting up the Scottish Union Learning Fund in 2000 (Scottish Trades Union Congress [STUC], 2005, p. 3). The Union Learning Fund was established as part of the Department for Education and Employment's strategy to encourage a culture of lifelong learning through developing workplace initiatives and boost unions' capacity as learning organizations (Labour Research Department [LRD], 2001; National Literacy Trust, 2003).

The Scottish Trade Union Congress (2005) illustrates developments by pointing out that in:

...the first round of the Scottish Union Learning Fund, 12 projects were approved and many of these looked to build an increased capacity with the union to promote learning in the workplace. Central to this was the development of the role of the Union Learning Representative-a new form of activist who would become the major focus for driving learning activity within trade unions at local level (p. 3).

Further credence and authority was given to both the unions and the learning representatives in the Department for Trade and Industry (DTI) and the Department for Education and Employment White Paper entitled Opportunity for All in a World of Change (2001) which stated:

We are committed as a Government to ensuring that Union Learning Representatives can play their part in both the competitiveness of the enterprise and the personal investment and gains for the employee for lifelong learning (DTI and DfEE, 2001, Para. 2.42).

Following the publication of the White Paper (DTI and DfEE, 2001), the United Kingdom Government set about giving the representatives greater credence and statutory recognition through the Employment Act 2002 (Parliament, 2002). This legislation put them on a statutory footing (as of April 2003) giving recognized trade unions the right to appoint learning representatives and allowing ULRs to have paid leave to perform their duties (Section 43 (1)). Section 43 (2) of the Act sets out the activities of the representatives as: analyzing learning or training needs, providing information and advice on learning and training matters, arranging learning or training, and promoting their value. The legislation also requires the representatives to be trained and to be entitled to reasonable time-off to undertake their duties. The amount of time itself must relate directly to the representatives' activities (Section 43 (3-6)).

Thus the United Kingdom is unique in the developed world in that it has established by law through the Employment Act 2002 (Parliament, 2002) the right of trade unions to appoint learning representatives with paid time-off to train and perform their duties. Of equal significance and unusually in the case of the United Kingdom, it has given this right to employees not given in the rest of the European Community, where in many other respects employees have rights denied those in the United Kingdom (Vincenzi & Fairhurst, 2002).

### **Workplace Learning and Training from a Trade Union Perspective**

Dehmel (2005), discussing the role of vocational education and training in promoting lifelong training indicates that it has "...increasingly emerged as a key focus at national as well as international levels" (p. 7) and we would contend none more so than for the trade union movement based on the policy initiatives highlighted above. Forrester (2004) points out:

For trade unions, the workplace will always remain the primary focus of learning and attention...There can be little doubt that recent union activities on workplace learning, such as the creation of a network of union learning representatives and the promotion of lifelong learning, marks an important and significant development in the search for relevance in today's world of work (p. 418-419).

Payne (2001) asks "What do trade unions want from lifelong learning?" (p. 355). This question is in part answered by Haunch and Bennett (2002) in their discussion of learning partnerships and ULRs. They argue that it:

...has long been recognised that unions in the UK have accepted the need to embrace new learning in the workplace...Furthermore, increasingly, training and development and lifelong learning are becoming a more general focus of union activity nationally, and more specifically in the workplace. Critically, developing learning opportunities is seen as a key strategy for retaining and enhancing union membership (p. 3).

Sutherland and Rainbird (2000) continue this debate by suggesting that unions need to develop a strategy towards workplace learning based on the following questions:

...should the initiation of learning strategies be left to management? Should trade unionists simply add learning opportunities to the list of periodic demands in the context of traditional collective bargaining and the annual pay round? If not, what might the role of trade unions be in the development of learning strategies and the identification and planning of learning needs (p. 195)?

These questions we would argue are central to the success or otherwise of the EIS initiative, as at school level, the representatives will be (or should be) seen as conduits between the teachers and school management; school management will want to input into the CPD of its teachers; presently the learning representatives do not have statutory bargaining rights but through the very nature of their work will be advising at an individual level on teachers' learning needs and strategies.

Whilst, Wallis, Stuart, and Greenwood (2005) take the view that:

After almost two decades of government hostility and antipathy this [the ULR initiative] represents a significant gain for the British trade union movement, since the advancement of the learning agenda has been intimately connected to the issue of trade union revitalization (p. 283-283).

Two stances are evident, one based on the educational and learning aspects and the other directed at the position of trade unions in contemporary Britain and their need to survive, indicating there are dual expectations of learning representatives. Not only are they regarded as brokers or conduits of guidance and information with regard to learning and training in the workplace, they are also seen as trade union representatives that are the new face of British unionism that can help to halt the decline in trade union membership by acting as ambassadors and recruiters for unions. A point highlighted by Wallis et al. (2005) who state that:

Not surprisingly, the expectations of ULRs amongst policy makers are high. ULRs, it is claimed, offer the potential of increased learning opportunities for individual members, new members for trade unions and improved performance for employers (p. 284).

Sutherland and Rainbird (2000) point out that the "...development of trade union strategy towards workplace learning is centrally concerned with questions of organisational renewal" (p. 191). Heery, Healy, and Taylor (2004) argue that society expects them to change and evolve and that:

...the source of this pressure lies in deep-seated changes in the economy and society that are altering the structure of interests and preferences that workers are bringing to their employment and, by extension, to trade unions. This, in turn, requires a new form of trade unionism better matched to the requirements of a changing workforce (p. 3).

Forrester (2001, p. 318-319) points out that developments such as union learning representatives are part of the trade unions modernizing agenda that is aimed at giving them a new role and *raison d'être* following the reduction in their power and influence in the 1980s and 1990s. He backs this up by stating that if:

Waddington (1995) is correct in suggesting that the 1980s and early years of the 1990s can be seen as a period in which British trade unions were "searching for an agenda," the role of workplace learning can be seen as being one of the agenda items in this search' (p. 321).

Stuart (2004) not only supports the sentiments of Forrester but argues that "...training and learning issues have attained a more strategic position in recent times" (p. 2) He argues that:

...employees and employers may have different needs and interests in relation to learning and training, [and] much will depend on the employment relations in which ULRs operate, the nature of their engagement with employers and the trade union support structures into which they are inserted (p.1).

Such arguments are pertinent to the analysis of the EIS learning representatives initiative as not only is it taking a gamble with setting up such a group of lay representatives outside its "cultural norms" but the manner in which it is helping to deliver the McCrone Agreement will also impact on how its members perceive it is dealing with their CPD needs.

Heery et al. (2004) argue that:

Unions' increasing engagement with workplace learning has stemmed from developments in training policy and the growing propensity of the state to use trade unions as agents of policy delivery in this area (p. 34).

This is a key point from the Institute's perspective, firstly how will the key stakeholders take to the learning representatives and secondly, will employers be sympathetic to another layer of representation that will seek time-off and other facilities which may well stretch the already tight finances of the Scottish education system? Wood and Moore (2005, p. 28-30) found that a significant number of formal learning agreements had been reached where there was a learning representative presence. Many of the learning representatives felt that such an agreement was important in terms of securing for example, the long term future of a learning centre and that the main barrier to concluding more of these agreements were the employers. Learning was separate from the collective bargaining agenda but their case studies showed "...that union learning can have a positive outcome for both the unions and employers involved" with more than half their respondents stating that union learning encouraged greater cooperation with employers on learning issues (Wood & Moore, 2005, p. 31-34). This questions how far cooperation and

partnerships can be developed between unions and employers without it being seen to dilute what both stand for and strive for.

### **Questions of Partnership**

Sutherland and Rainbird (2000) point out that "...some trade unions and many trade unionists believe that any form of partnership with management is a denial of the fundamental conflict of interest between workers and managers" (p. 199-202) but argue that learning partnerships should be distinguished from other workplace collective bargaining partnerships by highlighting the partnership approach behind the Ford Employee Development Assistance Programme, the Return to Learn partnership between Unison and employers and the Union Learning Fund that supports joint union/employer learning projects. However, they point out that if unions are to be successful they need to have an agenda in place that "...is independent of management."

This issue of partnership is significant as the push for lifelong learning has been regarded as a partnership initiative amongst all stakeholders by this present New Labour administration; within the context of Scottish education and particularly the McCrone Agreement (Scottish Executive Education Department [SEED], 2001), partnership is a central tenet. However, the optimism highlighted by some of the discussion above must be tempered somewhat by the warnings of Terry (2003) picked up by Forrester (2005) who points out that there is a:

...real danger...of partnerships possibly being a form of corporate-level "political" exchange, whereby unions forgo significant opportunities for challenging managerial decisions in exchange for recognition of their procedural and institutional standing (p. 261-262).

Trade union activity in workplace learning has increased significantly, with Forrester (2005) arguing that "...the promotion of learning opportunities for members has emerged as an important success story" (p. 258) and continues to point out that there has been a:

...political repositioning of trade unions and the TUC in particular, as important players in the government's lifelong learning policy agenda and institutional arrangements."

### **Teacher Trade Unions and Professional Development**

The discussion above has concentrated quite rightly on workplace learning and the impact of learning representatives. However, there is a need to understand how a teacher trade union and its representatives operate within a school environment. It is important to note Stevenson's (2003) finding when reviewing the literature in this field (which is comparatively sparse compared to other sectors) that "...they had little to say about the role of [teaching] unions in the workplace" (p. 343).

Healy (1999), in her study of the National Union of Teachers and teacher career development points out that unions have always been involved in this area,

...particularly in relation to the perceived equity associated with both the allocation of career development resources such as training and with decisions surrounding career progression (p. 212).

This is clearly in line with the current activities of the EIS in relation to learning representatives and CPD and as Bascia (2000) points out, North American trade unions are now "...focussing increased attention on their membership" and this is primarily directed at their professional development which she argues is "...not uniformly popular with their members" (p. 386).

Poole (2000) argues that teachers can only improve through professional development and "renewal" and this can in part be achieved by a positive input from teachers' unions. Participants in her study stated that "...the union should pursue ...PD [professional development] interests as well as education quality" (p. 110). Stevenson (2007) in considering the restructuring of English teachers' work and how their trade unions have responded briefly touches upon CPD. He states that there is some evidence to suggest that teachers in England are beginning to have "...higher expectations in relation to CPD" (p. 233). The issues highlighted above clearly have a resonance in the case of Scotland with the McCrone Agreement (SEED, 2001) and the Institute's involvement in the CPD process through its learning representatives initiative.

Healy (1999) found, teachers "...recognised the crucial relationship that exists between state action, teaching as a profession and teachers' own careers" (p. 226), which encapsulates the McCrone Agreement and the EIS' response to it. Whilst Bascia (2000) points out that in some teacher unions in the U.S., "...professional development priorities influence collective bargaining" (p. 399), for example, funding and time-off to study have found themselves negotiated into agreements.

Stevenson (2003) asserts that in British teaching the "...tradition of collective organisation is as old as state education, and today teachers represent one of the most highly unionised sectors of any occupational grouping" (p. 341) and has in fact started to increase membership in recent years unlike most other sectors of the economy. In turn he goes on to state that this should be of considerable interest, particularly as "...the environment within they function has clearly changed" (p. 342).

Bascia (2000) succinctly sums up teacher trade unionism as follows in terms of what drives teachers to become representatives. She states they are "...teachers who recognize potential opportunities in union involvement that are not obvious to the majority of their colleagues" (p. 397). Whilst the flipside to this definition is the one put forward by Stevenson (2003) in his discussion on "active workplace representation" when he points out that there is a need for greater clarity and a recognition "...that it is perfectly possible for a school representative to play an active role in promoting the union to its members, but they take no part in representing their individual and collective interests to management" (p. 348) and this may well be the case with the EIS learning representatives who by the nature of their role do not have official or statutory bargaining powers. This is compounded by Stevenson's (2003) finding that school union representatives had contact with Headteachers over a wide range of issues but overall "...contact is clearly limited to a relatively few instances" (p. 350).

Stevenson (2003) points out that due to the increasing devolvement of management to school level the teaching unions will have "...to consider how they most effectively support their school-based representatives" (p. 355) in terms of providing them with suitable information and training and how best to deploy their full-time and lay officials. Stevenson (2005) further argues that because of this significant shift it:

...is important, therefore to develop a better understanding of the role that school union representatives play in shaping the interplay between teachers and their managers in school (p. 220).

He also suggests that in this changed environment:

...the role of the school representative can be crucial not only in shaping key issues affecting teachers' experience of work, but also in developing the future capacity of the union organisation (Stevenson, 2005, p. 220).

This supports Carter's (2004, p. 137-138) observation that in the UK teaching unions are having to deal with the issue of union renewal due to the "radical restructuring" of the public sector in the 1980s. This can be directly linked to the EIS and its initiative as it is an example of a teaching union getting to grips with the modern day realities of the education sector.

The EIS is a long-established traditional representative body that has its own historical way of doing things and traditional structures and systems in place but has now stepped out of its comfort zone with the radical (from its perspective) introduction of learning representatives. How they are accepted and assimilated into the union at all levels will be a mark of how successful this initiative will be.

Calveley and Healy (2003) commenting on what they term "...radical education reform in England and Wales" warn that greater decentralisation "...has created a managerial role for head teachers, with responsibility for financial and human resources devolved to local school managers from the local education authority (LEA)" and that "...local union structures may be too fragile to withstand managerial and competitive pressures" (p. 97-99). The same concern applies to Scotland as the learning representatives can be described as fledgling union representatives, they may not be at all effective if Headteachers either regard them as a threat or as part of the adversarial bargaining forum that naturally exists.

However, it is important to note that the Labour Research Department (2005, p. 9) has identified a number of benefits that school management may accrue in working with teacher LRs. They are:

- \* Building positive relationships with head teachers and employers of teachers
- \* Providing the opportunity to address inequalities in access to learning and training opportunities
- \* Assisting head teachers to meet the requirements of the contractual right to a reasonable work/life balance which teachers now have by providing information about non-work related opportunities
- \* Helping to shape INSET days to meet teachers' needs
- \* Improving retention and morale
- \* Making potential financial savings
- \* Providing learning opportunities for teachers to change or develop their role.

Kerchner (2001) adds to this by bringing in the issue of partnership between teacher unions and other stakeholders by pointing out that in the U.S. they "...have participated in efforts to create national standards through membership in the New Standards Project [and] the National Commission on Teaching" (p. 223). This is akin to the EIS and its involvement with McCrone.

It can be argued that the setting up of the EIS initiative is a move in this direction and one that sets the Institute aside from the vast majority of teaching unions not only in the UK but the world. Bascia (2000) clearly demonstrates this is the case when she argues that if:

Teachers unions that are serious about professional development of their members need to recognize how their own actions contribute, through the many dimensions of the work they do as organizations, to the narrowing or expansion of teachers' authority and capacity to act (p. 396).

Added to this, Bascia (2000, p. 399-400) goes on to argue that if teacher unions are serious about professional development and getting their representatives to be active and effective in this area, they in turn must have the structures in place; ensure meetings are relevant and accessible and be able to disseminate the right information.

A number of crucial issues associated with the potential success of the Institute's initiative have been highlighted in the discussion above. There is a need not only to recognize such representatives as legitimate union representatives but also to give them all the support they require and embed them in the union's culture, structures, and constitution. In turn this will make them bona-fide representatives in the eyes of their colleagues and the school and local authority management they have to deal with. It is to the particular Scottish background and context we now turn to.

### **Scottish Education: Context and Teacher Professionalism**

Scotland is a distinctive jurisdiction within the UK, since 1999 with its re-established Parliament and historically distinctive education system. Schooling is dominated by state schools enjoying the support of the vast bulk of the population who regard education as a critical factor in social and economic success in an increasingly competitive and globalized world. Recent events have provided a watershed in Scottish education.

The McCrone Report and Teacher Professionalism.

An independent committee of inquiry into the pay and conditions of service for Scottish teachers was established in response to the breakdown in negotiations over pay and conditions between the employers and unions in 1999 (McCrone, 2000, p.1). The final report made a number of recommendations that would impact on teacher CPD and teacher status that would lead the EIS to embrace the concept of learning representatives.

In relation to CPD the report made a number of recommendations including:

Courses offered under the heading of CPD should be accredited at national level to ensure their quality and relevance...

Every teacher should have an individual CPD plan agreed once a year with his or her immediate manager...

All primary and secondary schools who have not yet done so should designate a CPD co-ordinator from among the

teaching staff to facilitate the management of CPD in the school. For smaller schools, a co-ordinator could be designated for each cluster.

In view of the importance of CPD, local authorities should, in consultation with the teaching unions, increase time available for professional development by the equivalent of a further five days a year. This may be undertaken flexibly either outwith the school day or outside the pupil year. This additional commitment should be reflected in the salary structure (McCrone, 2000, p. 63-64).

A number of recommendations in relation to career structures also emerged, most notably to establish the status of Chartered Teacher (McCrone, 2000, p. 66; O'Brien & Hunt, 2005) in the profession. In a spirit of partnership, all the key stakeholders in Scottish education agreed to the recommendations (SEED, 2001).

There is a growing academic debate in relation to what the McCrone Agreement is really about, particularly in relation to CPD and Chartered Teacher. Boyd and Norris (2006) point out that CPD is regarded by key strategic and operational stakeholders such as the Scottish Executive, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education and local authorities as "...at the heart of the [quality] improvement process" (p. 13) that the Scottish education sector is currently grappling with. Kirkwood and Christie (2006) take this point one step further by arguing that: "Teachers CPD can be seen as having different purposes depending on the conceptions of teacher professionalism which are held" (p. 431).

Kirkwood and Christie (2006) go on to argue that in relation to the Chartered Teacher program there seem to be contrasting purposes for CPD in that:

...it is defined as both a contractual obligation and a professional entitlement...Teachers' accountability for standards in schools is explicitly stated in terms of the expectation that the CT is capable of demonstrating enhancements in pupils' learning...At the same time, new opportunities for career progression and promotion have been added through a structured CPD programme leading to the status of CT (p. 432).

Reeves (2007) is far more damning and forthright in her discussion on why there is this push to improve teacher professionalism within Scottish education. She states that:

One way of representing what is occurring is to envisage Chartered Teacher status as entering a space between competing discussions of teacher professionalism: the "old" bureau professionalism, managerialist view of teachers as operatives and progressive managerialism's/educationalists construct of "new" professionalism...Thus, whilst Chartered Teacher status may have a blueprint on paper there is no basis for any agreement in practice (p. 60).

If there is this lack of agreement about the key objective of Chartered Teacher, this may well cause the teaching profession to question the motives of the key stakeholders in supporting it which in turn may well impact on how they view the EIS's learning representatives who will be called upon to give teachers advice and guidance in relation to Chartered Teacher.

Kennedy, Christie, Forbes, Fraser, Macdonald et al. (2007) argue that CPD within Scottish education is central to the process "...of change and reformation of teacher identity, both of the individual and as professional group" (p. 60). This stems from the 21st Century Agreement and will impact on the type of relationship the learning representatives will have with teachers as Kennedy et al. describe it as "...the battle for teacher professionalism in the changing context of teaching in Scotland" (p. 60). They indicate that there seems to be "...a greater reliance on CPD as a means of 'ensuring' teacher professionalism" (p. 64).

They go on to state that in Scotland: "...teacher professionalism and development are inextricably linked to processes of educational reform and change, whether they serve to facilitate or to impede change" (p. 68). This final statement may well be a key factor in how teachers and other stakeholders at both the strategic and operational level relate to the learning representatives.

## **The Educational Institute of Scotland and Professional Development**

The Scottish teaching profession is extensively unionized and the EIS is the largest teaching union in Scotland (Certification Officer, 2007, p.72). The EIS was officially formed in 1847 and,

...not merely for mutual benefit did these teachers associate; believing in the worth of human personality, they wished to proclaim the necessity for education and establish the value of sound learning (Belford, 1946, p. 63).

Thus the foundation stones were laid not only for the EIS as a representative body but as an organization that would seek to put the education of the populace at the core of its mission and invest in the CPD of its members. This tradition seems to have been maintained to this day by the Institute's response to the challenges laid down by the McCrone Report (2000), in relation to teacher CPD and its learning representatives' initiative.

Rainbird (2000, p.10) highlights the conflicting nature of learning within the workplace, which in turn impacts both on trade unions and their members in terms of how they deal with this issue. Rainbird, Munro, & Holly (2004) add to this by arguing that: "...consensus and participation have to be constructed as a means of facilitating learning on the basis of recognizing the different and opposing interests of workers and employers, rather than taken as a given" (p. 52).

These observations fit in with the situation faced by the EIS Learning Representatives, as they are helping to implement the McCrone Agreement (2001) and as Rainbird (2000) states we must at all times bear in mind who initiates and who benefits from workplace learning. Particularly, as Rainbird (2000) goes on to argue that unions "...owe it to their members to retain critical appreciation of where their interests lie" and they "...need to formulate strategies towards the work modernisation agenda which encompass workplace learning" (p. 10). In summary this is what is happening in the Scottish education sector as a result not only of the McCrone Agreement but also the EIS response to it through its learning representatives and CPD initiatives.

The Scottish Executive (government) has championed lifelong learning through involvement in a number of initiatives and reports that have underlined its commitment (Fairley, 2003). Such support has had a direct impact on the EIS's learning representatives e.g. in 1998, the Department for Education and Science set out its vision for lifelong learning in Scotland for the period 1998-2002 in Opportunity for Scotland (Scottish Office, 1998) and Fairley (2003) identified the five key themes of this document as "...raising awareness; improving access; extending participation; encouraging progress; ensuring quality" (p. 133).

In 2003 the Scottish Executive set out its five-year lifelong learning strategy entitled Life Through Learning; Learning Through Life. In the foreword to this document Iain Gray, the then Minister for Enterprise, Transport and Lifelong Learning stated that: "...We want people to be motivated to expand their learning and develop their skills and be enterprising in their attitudes to work" (Scottish Executive, 2003, p. 4-5).

The strategy has what it terms five people centred goals, with the two key goals being:

...A Scotland where people's knowledge and skills are recognised, used and developed to best effect in their workplace...A Scotland where people are given the information, guidance and support they need to make effective learning decisions and transitions (Scottish Executive, 2003, p. 6).

The EIS learning representatives should in theory be able to play a significant role in helping the Executive deliver this strategy within the Scottish education sector. This assumption is backed up to a degree by the strategy stating that trade unions as stakeholders:

...have a key role to play in workforce development through influencing employers to provide training and employees to take up the opportunities. They also play an important role in providing learning themselves and leading workplace learning projects (Scottish Executive, 2003, p.13).

Following the McCrone Inquiry's (2000) damning attack on the inadequacy of CPD provision, the Institute took some positive action. Aided by a grant from the Scottish Executive, it launched a learning representatives initiative with the

expressed aim that these representatives work to advise, broker, and facilitate improved CPD opportunities for their colleagues (EIS, 2003; Macaulay, personal communication, 2004; McClintock, personal communication, 2004).

The initiative is a significant development within the Scottish education system. Firstly, it was a departure for the Institute, creating a new tier of lay representatives who are not typical trade union representatives since they have no bargaining role and no negotiation rights. Secondly, the representatives have moved the Institute from its traditional role as a union that dealt in the main with pay and conditions to one that is fully engaged with the learning agenda (Macaulay, personal communication, 2004). Thirdly, it was a major initiative by a strategic stakeholder in the Scottish education system in relation to creating a partnership approach to CPD (between the Institute, Scottish Executive, General Teaching Council Scotland, and the University of Paisley) based on mutual respect and trust, which was one of the anticipated outcomes of the McCrone Agreement (SEED, 2001). This has been achieved by developing courses that allow teachers to be awarded not only the Council's certificate for achieving Chartered Teacher status but an academic qualification from the University of Paisley that could lead to the award of a Masters degree by continuing their studies (EIS, 2003, Macaulay, personal communication, 2004).

Macaulay (personal communication, 2004) explained that the initial objective of the Institute was to have 50 learning representatives within its 32 Local Associations (which mirror the number of local authorities in Scotland). At the time of the research, McClintock (personal communication, 2004, 2005) stated that the first tranche of 31 learning representatives had successfully completed their course; had been accredited between September 2003 and June 2004 and are now fully established at local authority level. For the purposes of this research, the first group was evaluated, as they were already in place and it was a feasible number to examine in-depth.

### **Evaluation Approach**

This research is underpinned by the 'democratic evaluation' approach to educational research, where the voice of the participant is primary (House, 1993; Kushner, 2000; Stake, 2004). Through a case study approach a number of different methods were used to gather and disseminate the data:

- \* background information was collected from key policy documents and academic literature.
- \* national officials of the Institute and other Scottish education stakeholders were either interviewed personally, by e-mail, or provided a personal written record in order to provide background, context and views as to the current situation and future of the Institute's initiative.
- \* the first group of learning representatives (31 in total) was asked to participate by completing a questionnaire; writing a personal record of their experiences to date; participating in consultation forums and question and answer sessions at their regular meetings.
- \* the findings were augmented by a short telephone survey of Headteachers.

Thirty one questionnaires were distributed and twenty nine were returned, a 93.5% response rate. Fourteen (45.2%) of the participants agreed to write a personal record and 32 Headteachers were contacted for the telephone survey with 31 (96.9%) responding. Such a significant response indicates that, not only is this cohort of representatives committed to the whole concept of this type of representation but they along with the other participants had faith in the research process, which in turn helps to validate the research data.

The research approach outlined above can be described as interrogating the data with data (Kushner, 2000) with the aim of ensuring the validity of the research process and to triangulate the primary research data. This in turn ensures that the findings and observations stand up to scrutiny (House, 1980).

### **The Place and Position of the EIS Learning Representatives**

The research aims included ascertaining how the representatives were viewed by some of the key strategic stakeholders in the Scottish education system. As with any initiative of this magnitude their support or otherwise could have a beneficial or detrimental effect on the long-term success of the initiative.

### *Strategic Stakeholder Views.*

The General Teaching Council of Scotland does not have an official policy on learning representatives but Mathew MacIver, its Chief Executive commented:

I have always seen the advent of Learning Representatives as an indication by the EIS that it has returned to its educational roots...Towards the end of the 20th Century it did tend to concentrate all its efforts on pay and conditions of service. Whilst doing that it did drift away from placing itself in the centre of informing educational policy... I believe that Learning Representatives are quite integral to a return of its educational roots...I see Learning Representatives as an integral part of the whole CPD process in Scotland. It appeared to me that Learning Representatives indicate that the EIS is well aware that a new world of CPD is emerging and that the EIS must be at the centre of it. I feel that Learning Representatives continue to operate at a level which is of critical importance to the practising teacher. They will know the needs of classroom teachers better than anyone. It is in that critical area then that Learning Representatives are crucial. They will have credibility in the classroom that others will not (MacIver, personal communication, 2006).

These comments are backed up by Learning and Teaching Scotland whose Chief Executive, Bernard McLeary states that "...We fully support them; we support them in principle and want to offer them practical support to develop their role" (personal communication, 2005). He went on to state that his organization is looking for more consultation at local authority and school level and the representatives can be part of this consultation process, adding that in terms of where they fit in the Scottish education system they "...have a high potential to fit into the delivery of CPD and of the reflective practitioner and they fit into the new way of being a teacher." He expanded upon this by stating that teachers need to start and continue to be reflective practitioners for their whole careers based on CPD and the learning representatives are a central element of "...the brokerage and mentoring potentiality" linked to this (McLeary, personal communication, 2005).

The views above indicate a positive response to the Institute's initiative and that partnership is regarded as a key factor in the representatives' potential effectiveness. Equally important is MacIver's observation that they have the credibility with those that matter the most, the teachers themselves.

A key question is how is the initiative functioning in practice? The following analysis attempts to provide answers to this question based on the experiences of the first cohort of learning representatives and the observations of the stakeholders to some of the issues that the representatives have raised.

### *Choosing to Become a Learning Representative.*

Of the questionnaire respondents seventeen (54.8%) were women and twelve (38.7%) were men. Proportionately more men than women volunteered to become learning representatives. This resonates with the findings of other evaluations that have examined learning representatives most notably those of Cowen, Clements, and Cutter (2000) and Wood and Moore (2005). However, in terms of direct comparison with other unions, the Institute leads the way with over twice as many learning representatives who are women as any other union. This is significant from another perspective, as the other evaluations mentioned above have highlighted the fact that this new tier of lay representation is breaking the mould and stereotype of the typical lay representative, who is White, male, and middle-aged.

The participants were asked if they had held any type of trade union representative post before volunteering to become a learning representative. Fourteen (48.3%) confirmed they had, whilst the slight majority, fifteen (51.7%) had not prior to volunteering to become one. Compared to the findings of the other evaluations the number of new activists recruited by the Institute far outstrips any other union. For example, Cowen et al. (2000, p. 10-11) found that 9% of their participants were new activists and more likely to be women, whilst Cutter (2003, p. 10), Wood and Moore (2005, p. 11), and Wallis et al. (2005, p. 296-297) found that 21%, 22% and 27% respectively of their participants were new activists. In the last five years the number of new activists has more than doubled if not trebled in most unions but the Institute dwarfs these figures by showing that the number of new activists it has recruited is five times the figure of just a few years ago and in most cases double what any other union has been able to achieve. A key

question at this early juncture was why did members that had held no type of position before suddenly become interested in this role?

Thirteen of the questionnaire respondents stated it was for their own professional development and a further thirteen for their own personal development. Twenty one stated it was to improve the professional development of their colleagues, whilst ten wanted to become more involved in the Institute. Volunteering to become a learning representative is about the personal and professional development of not only of themselves but of their colleagues, rather than getting involved in the political nature of trade union representative work and resonates with the comparative findings of Wood and Moore (2005, p. 11-13).

In the personal records the evidence shows that disillusionment also played a part in volunteering to become a learning representative as this participant's statement indicates:

...I had always held the view that the courses for teachers should be of a high academic standard and should be applicable to the classroom-teaching situation. As my years in teaching rose the lack of continuum of learning became apparent and courses became repetitious and I stopped attending. I thought that by becoming a Learning Representative I would have an input to in-service course. I commenced the PGCOW [Post Graduate Certificate in Workplace Organisation] course in September 2001 and am now convinced that steps should be taken to make it as easy as possible for all teachers to study at postgraduate level.

### **Obstacles and Prospects for the Learning Representatives**

This section of the analysis deals with the experiences of the respondents following the successful completion of their training. It examines their relationships with key operational stakeholders; obstacles they have encountered; dealing with colleagues and their interaction with colleagues. It also highlights their experiences of in order to analyze their effectiveness and impact at an operational level.

#### *Participants' experiences of being accepted by their Local Association.*

Overall the local associations have been welcoming and supportive; in some cases they have invited learning representatives to be members of the committee and a standing item on agendas. At local level the representatives are becoming embedded within the structure of the Institute and have their own distinct identity. In a few instances this has been made easier because some of them have held significant office within their local associations, notably the positions of Chair and Secretary.

However, the issue of local associations negotiating time-off for the respondents cropped up on a number of occasions and it was clear that occasionally this had caused friction between officers of the local association and participants, as the former are uncertain of the exact nature of a learning representative and how much time they require to fulfill their roles and responsibilities.

McClintock (personal communication, 2005) sheds some light on this, describing the situation when she first approached the local associations to help the national officers negotiate facilities and time-off for the learning representatives. She states:

...I met with some resistance from a few of the Local Association Secretaries-there appeared to be some resentment of the fact that they had not been allowed to choose who would be an LR and there was even a question mark with one or two over the necessity for LRs. In the same way that we had to break down barriers with Directors of Education and CPD Co-ordinators we were also having to do this with some of our own Local Associations-I don't think some people were too enamoured of my persistence in chasing them to negotiate time off as they did not understand the role itself or the significance of the role.

Acceptance of representatives is key to the success of the whole initiative and the Institute may well need to think how it formalizes this type of representative within its structures.

### *Participants experiences of being accepted by Operational Stakeholders.*

The participants indicated in both their questionnaire responses and personal records that they had been accepted by their own institutions and Headteachers to a degree but the question of time-off was highlighted by several of them as causing problems. A different story emerged at their meetings and consultation groups. The representatives highlighted a non-connection with many schools in their Authority area and anecdotally it seemed that many in the Scottish education system were still not aware of learning representatives and their role. It is fair to surmise that they are down the list of priorities and concerns of Headteachers.

McLeary (personal communication, 2005) confirmed that in his own local authority there had been suspicion of the learning representatives. As they were emerging, more negotiating processes were being introduced and Headteachers were unused to negotiating directly with groups of trade union teachers and they categorized learning representatives as another representative they would have to negotiate with. Heads questioned what the role of such a representative would be in relation to brokering a relationship with the CPD member of the senior management team in terms of promoting CPD for the school and the individual. Also, questions were being asked if the two roles were complementary within a school or otherwise.

Problems still existed and based on this evidence we decided that in order to analyze how deep-seated this problem was a number of Headteachers in primary and secondary schools would be contacted by phone and asked at least one and possibly two questions. The first was if they knew what a learning representative is and if they answered in the affirmative they were then asked what they thought a learning representative's role and responsibilities are.

Fifteen out of the 16 (93.8%) primary Heads responded and of those 10 (62.5%) stated they knew what a learning representative is, whilst 5 (31.3%) stated they did not. In contrast for the secondary Heads (all of whom participated in the survey) there was a fifty-fifty split in the answers. Disturbingly for the Institute, overall 13 (40.6%) did not know what a learning representative is. This suggests the Institute's message has failed to get through despite the overwhelming majority of Headteachers contacted being members of the union. The majority of the Heads that answered in the affirmative, were also able to describe what the role and responsibilities of a learning representative are. Interestingly, a participant asked one of the researchers if they were surprised that he knew what a learning representative was. This suggests that there are a large number of individuals in the Scottish education system who do not know what one is and what they do.

This is supported by some of the answers to this survey, most disturbingly from those who claimed to know what a learning representative is. One of the respondents stated that a learning representative was "...trained to work with the Authority and that there should be one in every school" and admitted that she was not sure if she had mixed this up with another initiative.

That almost 41% of the respondents did not know who learning representatives were must be of concern, particularly as their negative answers included such phrases as "...not a clue" and "...no idea." It also begs the question as to where this leaves the partnership approach to lifelong learning, so clearly set out by all the major stakeholders in the Scottish education system.

The situation with local authorities is mixed and the evidence suggests that there are significant difficulties for some of the participants as described below:

The Education Authority who have their own network of CPD coordinators formally acknowledge us but are essentially suspicious of everyone who may exercise any autonomy in this area regardless of any commitment to partnerships & providing a service to both members & CPD Coordinators.

McClintock (personal communication, 2005) elaborates further on this issue as follows:

To assist in making Directors of Education and CPD Co-ordinators more aware of the role of LRs [National Officials] attended meetings of both explaining the role and how essential it was that the LRs were allocated specified time off to carry out the role. There appeared to be misconceptions initially in both these groups of what Learning

Representatives were-they thought that it was going to be a negotiating role and that this was another layer of the union they would be required to negotiate with.

McLeary (personal communication, 2005) concurs and highlights a number of issues related to learning representatives that are a cause for concern from a Director of Education perspective. Notably, the lack of clarity about the long-term objectives for these representatives and he felt the Institute's initiative is still a "wait and see" innovation.

However, one of the participants at a question and answer session warned that representatives need to be careful that they are not sucked into partnerships with local authorities who in turn end up defining their role. This suspicion that participants have of local authorities' activities and motives in relation to CPD and themselves was expanded upon. One representative stated that her authority was putting CPD courses online so staff could access all courses on offer and not those filtered by management. Another based in a different authority argued that local authorities put CPD online because it is cheap and fulfills their obligation and they are not bothered whether teachers take up courses or not.

Such responses put the partnership approach to teachers' professional development in the spotlight, as historical precedent and lack of knowledge and trust on both sides at the operational level are proving to be barriers to the participants working effectively.

In relation to local authority and school CPD Advisers, the responses were again both positive and negative but as with the previous issue a number of the representatives indicated that the relationship with their Local Authority and CPD advisers are tenuous in a number of cases. McClintock (personal communication, 2005) sheds further light on these comments as she observed that there:

...was also suspicion and concern amongst some CPD Co-ordinators that the Learning Reps would take over their role. We had to explain to them that the LRs were added value to the CPD service already being provided by the authorities...A Frequently Asked Questions leaflet was drawn up and widely circulated to educate both people outwith and within the union on the role and benefits of LRs.

This combination of comments clearly highlighting a non-connection between the representatives and the operational stakeholders brings into question the partnership approach to the professional development of teachers. Particularly, as strategic stakeholders have clarified that the Institute's learning representatives have an important role to play. A key problem involves the suspicion of participants and lack understanding of their role and responsibilities which has led to a major barrier between them and the coordinators.

Obstacles the participants have faced in undertaking their roles and responsibilities as a Learning Representative. A number of obstacles were highlighted that have significantly hindered participants' ability to carry out their roles and responsibilities. The personal records of the respondents highlighted that the issue of time-off was again a major obstacle.

It was clearly indicated that very few teachers had contacted the LRs for advice and guidance and the following statement is indicative of the current situation faced by the respondents:

...to date the number of members who have contacted me has been in the low tens and most of these have been in connection with the CT program. I have sent out publicity material to all schools but feel that if I want to make more of an impact I must first work with the CPD coordinators and then secondly, get out to schools and let teachers know what I look like and what I can do to help them. Visiting schools' will be a priority this year since it is only by being seen will people contact me. (The main reason that I think I get very few enquiries is that within my authority we have a very well structured CPD set-up and most people get access to courses through our advisory service).

Other obstacles highlighted (and that relate to those above) were actually having the time to act as a learning representative as no cover was provided; the seemingly negative attitude of the Local Authority towards them and what they were trying to achieve; the inability to create a constructive working relationship with CPD coordinators and

accommodation in terms of having a dedicated space from which to carry out their activities free from interruption and interference.

McClintock (personal communication, 2005) backs up these claims as she states that a:

...lot of time has been taken up with discussions with the LRs regarding their time off, the role etc. and liaising with the necessary people to try and secure the time off. Even when time off has, we believe, been agreed there have been some local difficulties for some LRs and this takes a lot of time and effort both in relation to myself and in discussions with [other national officers].

At a question and answer session one of the participants felt that the senior and line managers in schools could end up being the real barriers to CPD for a number of reasons with the most significant being the cost of CPD to schools. The participant went on to add that if managers are not to become barriers to CPD then they need the time and the training to deal with CPD effectively. These factors further highlight the lack of commitment to the partnership approach to professional development at the operational level and those who need to interact with the participants at this level do not seem to have a clear understanding of what a learning representative is.

#### *Participants experiences in dealing with their colleagues.*

Overall the participants stated that their experiences with colleagues who have contacted them (albeit on a limited basis) have been positive and rewarding and they have been able to deal with the requests either immediately or as soon as they could get the information required by the member as illustrated by the following statement:

Most experiences have been positive. I have visited schools and spoken to groups of teachers. Any queries I couldn't deal with then have been answered in due course. The main problem is the fact that members are not using the Learning Representative services. I'm not sure if this is down to a lack of awareness amongst colleagues, or down to the fact that, like any other union service, members don't want to use the union until they feel disadvantaged or threatened.

However, there is significant concern that very few colleagues are coming through the door to seek assistance from the participants and this is causing them concern and to a degree questioning their role. One of the learning representatives stated that he was starting to feel quite frustrated (by early 2006) by the lack of response from members despite putting on a lot of initiatives, for example, a CPD seminar that had a good attendance but not a lot of response afterwards. He stated that he felt it was "...like working in a vacuum" as he was (perversely) getting support from his local authority and the Institute at local and national level but not from the members.

The issues of when CPD is delivered, the content of CPD courses and the type of professional development that teachers should pursue were also highlighted as areas where the representatives are having problems engaging with members. One of the participants felt that CPD should not just be about courses and that other types of professional development should be recognized and they were supported by one of the other participants who argued that there is a need to talk about personal rather than professional development. Whilst another was of the opinion that the "35 hours" (a contractual obligation to engage annually in this number of CPD hours) is a tick box exercise and it is not what the teachers want in terms of CPD. The participant went on to argue that professional development is becoming the schools' development and not the teachers' development and thus members are adhering to their school's development plan. It is fair to surmise that if this is the case and it is widespread in Scotland, this could negate the role of the learning representative to a degree.

One participant expressed the view that far too many school managers are not genuinely interested in CPD or CPD is not made explicit enough and in turn this creates apathy. They felt that this was the case in the majority of schools and school management was happy with this situation, but it was the role of the learning representatives to get into schools that have this negative culture and to change it.

This negative approach to CPD by teachers is not just anecdotal as two recent studies by Draper and Sharp (2006) and Connelly and McMahon (2007) back up the arguments and statements of the participants. Draper (personal

communication, 2006) elaborated on the findings of her study and the experiences and views of the learning representatives. Indicating that until relatively recently, CPD was not an integral part of a teacher's job; only in the last ten years has CPD become part of practice and pre-McCrone much more formal professional development tended to be tied to school management rather than professional practice. Therefore a significant number of teachers have not seen professional development as relevant to their needs. This in part explains the low take-up of CPD and Chartered Teacher in particular but does not fully explicate the apathy of the teachers that the respondents have highlighted above.

Draper (personal communication, 2006) pointed out that many teachers cannot undertake Chartered Teacher because they are required to wait till they are on the top point of the main pay grade scale and that the teachers who do undertake Chartered Teacher fall into two groups those who are enthusiastic and those who want to enhance their pensions. Draper added that Scottish teachers are suspicious of Chartered Teacher because they are naturally conservative and because the Scottish Executive is supportive of it.

### **A Way Forward?**

The answer may in part lay with the initiative pioneered in Aberdeenshire where the Council (employers) and the Institute have signed a Partnership Learning Agreement (Aberdeenshire Council and EIS, 2005). It can be regarded as a model of best practice as the Council clearly sets out its commitment to lifelong learning and CPD by working in partnership with the Institute and recognizing the importance of learning representatives in this process. As the agreement states:

The aims of both Aberdeenshire Council and Trade Union Learning Representatives and Advisers are therefore compatible and will be realised when all parties communicate, co-operate and share ideas, information and resources. Both parties are committed to the implementation of this agreement and will work together to ensure its success (p. 1).

The purpose of the agreement is clearly defined with a set of principles and lays out the rights and roles of learning representatives; responsibilities of the Institute and the Council; the roles of line managers and school CPD coordinators and the relationship between the Council's Corporate Development and Training Unit and the learning representatives (Aberdeenshire Council and EIS, 2005, p. 2-6). This is how partnership in learning should work between employers and trade unions and one that should be noted by the other 31 local authorities in Scotland. Such agreements may well help to avoid a number of the issues and problems highlighted above.

### **Concluding Thoughts**

The creation of the learning representatives initiative was a risk by the Institute as it took it out of its "comfort zone" and into unknown territory as a trade union that is primarily in existence to represent the collective bargaining interests of its members. However, the Institute was formed to look after the professional development needs of its members and its modern day commitment to this is its support of the McCrone Agreement (SEED, 2001); its partnership with the University of Paisley in relation to the delivery of CPD courses and the learning representatives initiative. The evidence presented in this article shows that overall it was worth the Institute taking this risk but there is work to be done by not only the Institute but by both strategic and operational stakeholders in the Scottish education system.

The first cohort of learning representatives are a dedicated and enthusiastic group who are committed to the cause of teacher professional development and have demonstrated their initiative and resourcefulness when it has come to not only establishing themselves but also overcoming obstacles that have been put in their way either deliberately or inadvertently.

The fact that so many new activists have been recruited should not only be celebrated in terms of the Institute recruiting more than any other union proportionately but also that these representatives have volunteered because they have bought into the whole concept of CPD for teachers and believe they can positively help their colleagues.

The key strategic stakeholders in Scottish education, namely the Scottish Executive, General Teaching Council of Scotland, and Learning and Teaching Scotland not only openly support the initiative but are committed to it. They recognize the benefits to the teaching profession of such representatives and that they fit into the partnership approach to learning that all key stakeholders in Scottish education have signed up to. They also regard the representatives as integral to the success of the CPD element of the McCrone Agreement (SEED, 2001).

However, despite some promising developments, at the operational level of Scottish education our research has highlighted a number of issues and problems that could endanger the bi-partisan approach to lifelong learning and the effectiveness of the learning representatives to help their colleagues. The evidence presented demonstrates that there is a non-connection between the representatives and local authorities, CPD coordinators, school management, Headteachers, and teachers. This is in part due to historical adversarial relationships between the Institute and employers; a lack of trust and understanding of who and what the learning representatives are and do amongst local authorities, CPD coordinators and Headteachers and a continuing scepticism about the CPD benefits of the McCrone Agreement (SEED, 2001) amongst teachers.

The actions and attitudes of local authorities and Headteachers affect the manner in which the representatives are able to operate effectively and they have been further hampered by CPD coordinators erroneously seeing them as a threat to their jobs. Such a breakdown in communication between the Institute and key operational stakeholders must be addressed as a matter of urgency. The learning representatives are an additional resource for teachers to use and as MacIver (personal communication, 2006) states they have credibility amongst their colleagues and may be the logical and comfortable first point of contact when teachers seek initial advice and guidance on CPD, particularly if they have been out of the learning loop for a period of time.

There also seems to have been a breakdown in communication between the Institute and its members in terms of the learning representatives' profile or in this case the distinct lack of one. This requires action as the lack of significant numbers of teachers coming forward may affect the long-term sustainability of the initiative. This may in part be down to the high proportion of new activists that are only now getting to grips with their role and responsibilities and in time will learn the "tricks of the trade" and raise their profile amongst colleagues. It may also relate to the cynicism with which teachers have greeted the new CPD developments, particularly Chartered Teacher. To a degree the latter is out of the control of the Institute and the learning representatives but both have a role to play in changing attitudes amongst the membership and show that current CPD initiatives are there to help teachers not hinder them.

The evidence presented in this article shows the Educational Institute of Scotland's learning representatives are in part helping New Labour deliver the Learning Society, by brokering, facilitating and promoting the CPD of Scottish teachers. However, the Institute's initiative is being significantly undermined due to the non-connection with the operational stakeholders and the apathy and suspicion of Scottish teachers.

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