

Professional Exchange South West

The Association of Colleges (AoC) has been commissioned and funded by the Education and Training Foundation to lead a Professional Exchange in the South West in 2018-19.

About the Professional Exchange

The Professional Exchange is a network of practitioners coming together to share ideas and resources and to test and trial innovative approaches to teaching, learning and assessment. It's about teaching staff across the education and training sector in the South West having the space and time to reflect on their professional practice with a view to improving the teaching, learning and assessment of their students. The Professional Exchange in the South West runs from October 2018 to July 2019.

Ways of working

Each Professional Exchange member will join a peer group of 5-8 individuals to work on a topic during the academic year. Topics include: English, Maths, SEND, Mental Health and Quality assessment.

Professional Exchange participants can be teachers, tutors, assessors, trainers or managers working in colleges, independent training providers, adult and community learning providers and third sector providers in the South West. Please note that this Professional Exchange does not cover Cornwall, Hampshire and parts of Devon as another Professional Exchange takes place there. Instead, the Professional Exchange in the South West covers areas east and north east of Exeter, all the way to Gloucestershire and Oxford.

Expectations from Professional Exchange participants include:

- Adopting a self-motivated, self-directed approach to learning. The Professional Exchange is an exchange between peers. Experience from previous year's Exchange delivered by AoC shows that participants who commit and give time to the Exchange benefit the most.
- Attending the AoC whole group meetings taking place on:
 - A mid-point meeting on Thursday 24 January 2018, 10-4pm
- Engaging with your peer group and attending peer group meetings. The schedule of peer group meetings and venues will be agreed in consultation with the peer group lead.
- Committing to working on the agreed topic in between peer group meetings, communicating with group members as agreed with the peer group lead
- Sharing learning with at least two other colleagues, who are not directly involved in the Exchange.
- Maintaining a reflective diary (template will be provided) to capture learning throughout the Exchange, submitted to AoC at mid-point and end of the Exchange. This can be used to support the professional development and appraisal processes in your organisation.

- Completing the Professional Standards survey and a pre- and post-Exchange skills survey to help evidence distance travelled during the Exchange.

The organisations represented on the Professional Exchange will be asked to sign collaboration agreements to ensure senior management support for the Exchange participants.

Benefits of joining the Professional Exchange

Joining the Professional Exchange is a great professional development opportunity for practitioners working in the education and training sector. Previous experience has shown that practitioners find peer-to-peer working and sharing the most valuable form of CPD. The Professional Exchange is all about structured peer-to-peer collaboration, with support provided to enable participants to reflect on their learning and evidence the impact that this is making to their teaching, learning and assessment.

Professional Exchange participants will receive support from peer group leads who are fellow practitioners working in the sector. Further advice and support will be provided by AoC and senior advisors with extensive experience of improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Information on additional activities, courses and discounts provided by the Education and Training Foundation will be widely circulated with the participants.

All participants will receive a certificate at the end of the academic year to evidence their participation and contribution to the Professional Exchange in the South West.

How to get involved

If you are interested in joining the Professional Exchange, please complete the attached application template and submit it to projects@aoc.co.uk.