

# Section 6

## Appendices

There are four appendices in this section.

### ■ **Appendix 1. The Children's Services Managers Competence Framework**

This contains the Children's Services Managers Competence Framework.

The Framework sets out the capabilities required of those who work in the management and delivery of children's services. The most up to date Framework can also be viewed on the Virtual Staff College website at [www.virtualstaffcollege.co.uk](http://www.virtualstaffcollege.co.uk). The work of Children's Services managers can cover a wide range of tasks and responsibilities. Given this range each individual manager will not be required to be competent in all of the different parts of the Framework. Despite that, the Framework is very useful for:

- considering a manager's work
- developing job descriptions
- undertaking performance appraisal
- establishing individual development plans
- designing training and development programmes to meet individual needs.

### ■ **Appendix 2. The Management Development Programme**

Those who complete the Programme gain a Certificate of Completion from the Virtual Staff College. The PDA is an integral part of the Management Development Programme. In addition, successful participants can also gain a Post-Graduate qualification from the regional partner university, through some additional accredited pieces of work.

### ■ **Appendix 3. The Virtual Staff College Professional Development Portfolio**

This appendix contains the inserts for the Virtual Staff College Professional Development Portfolio. If you do not already have a portfolio, these inserts will help you to develop one.

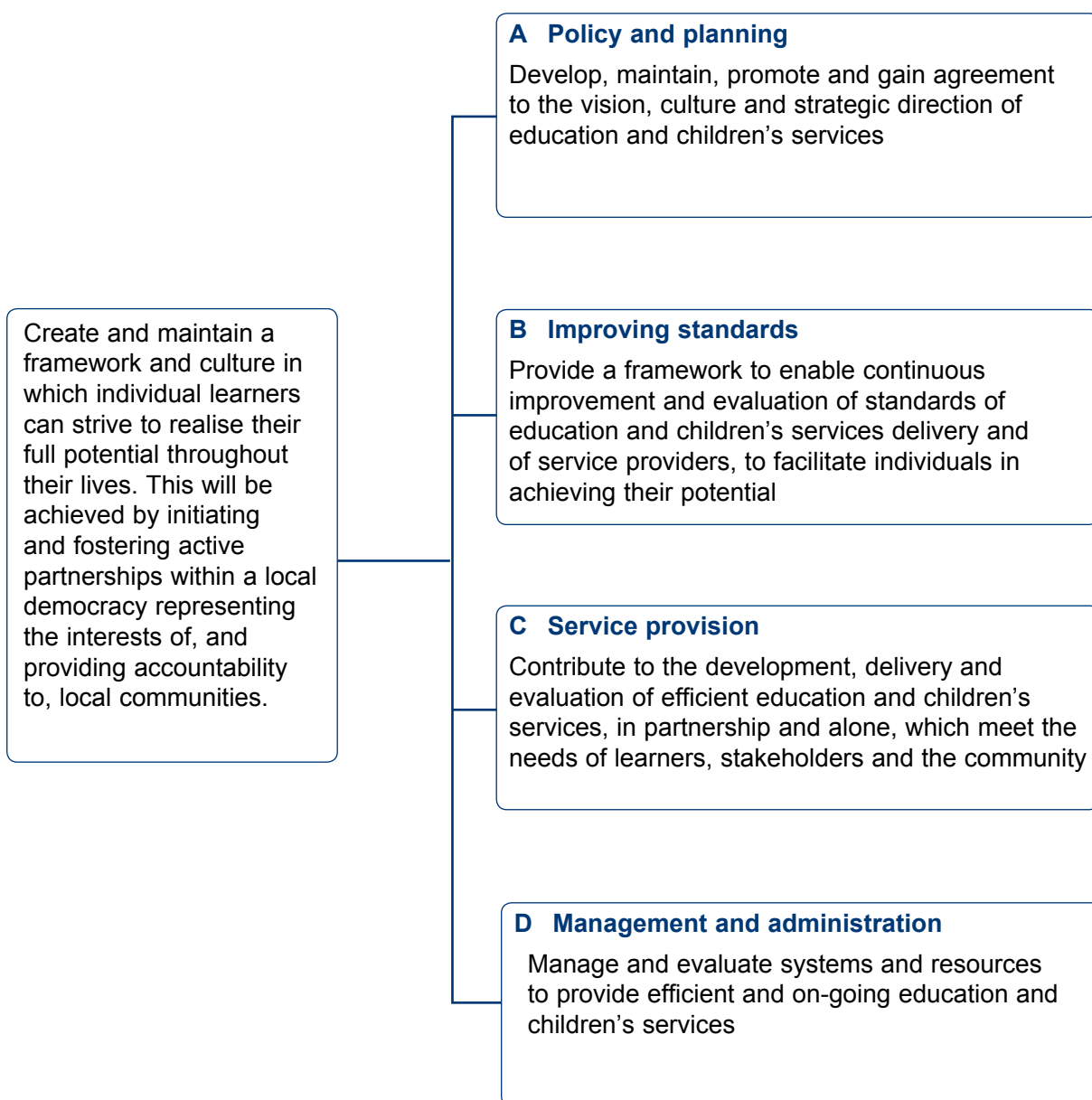
### ■ **Appendix 4. The Readers for Activity 9**

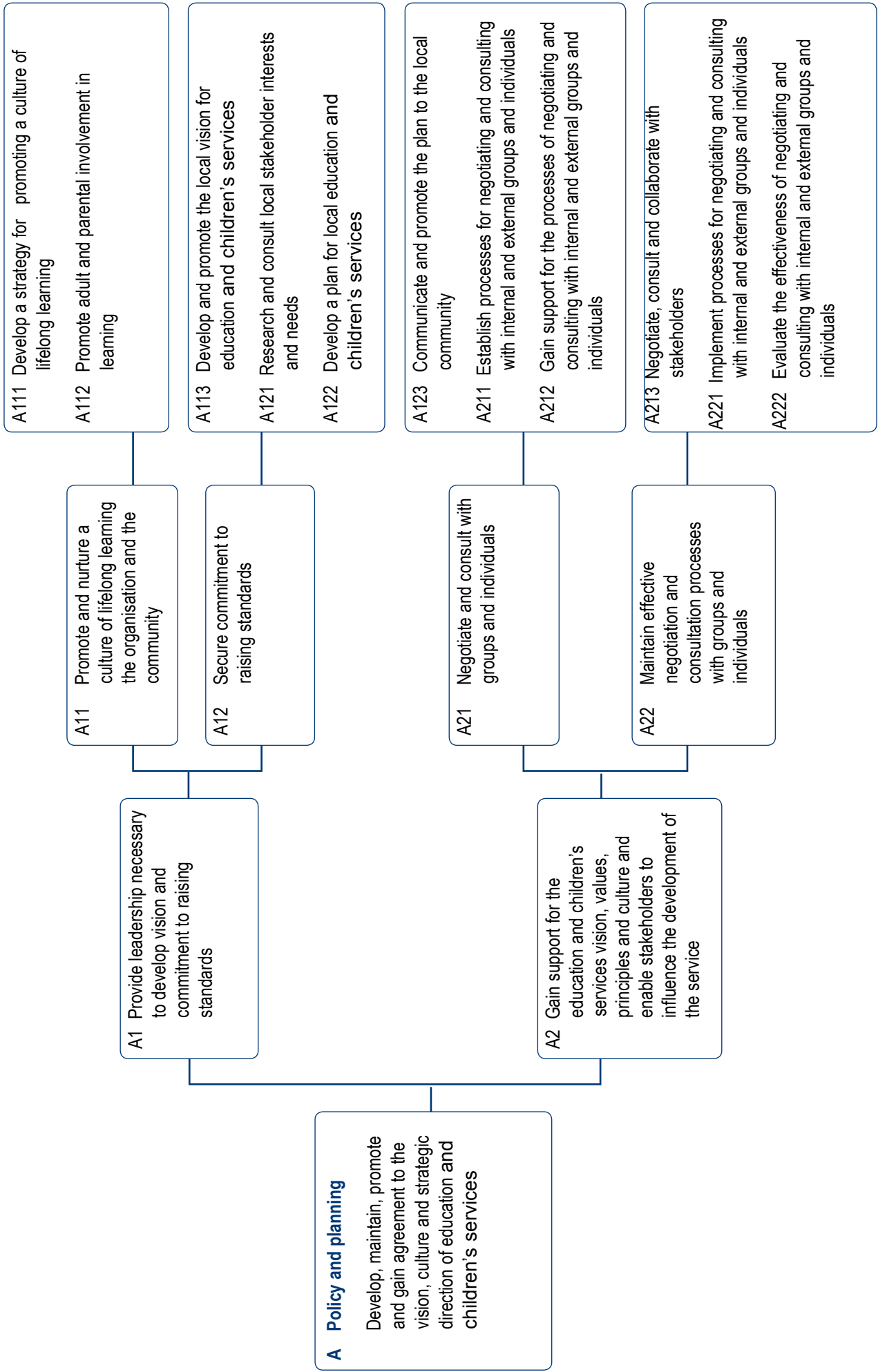


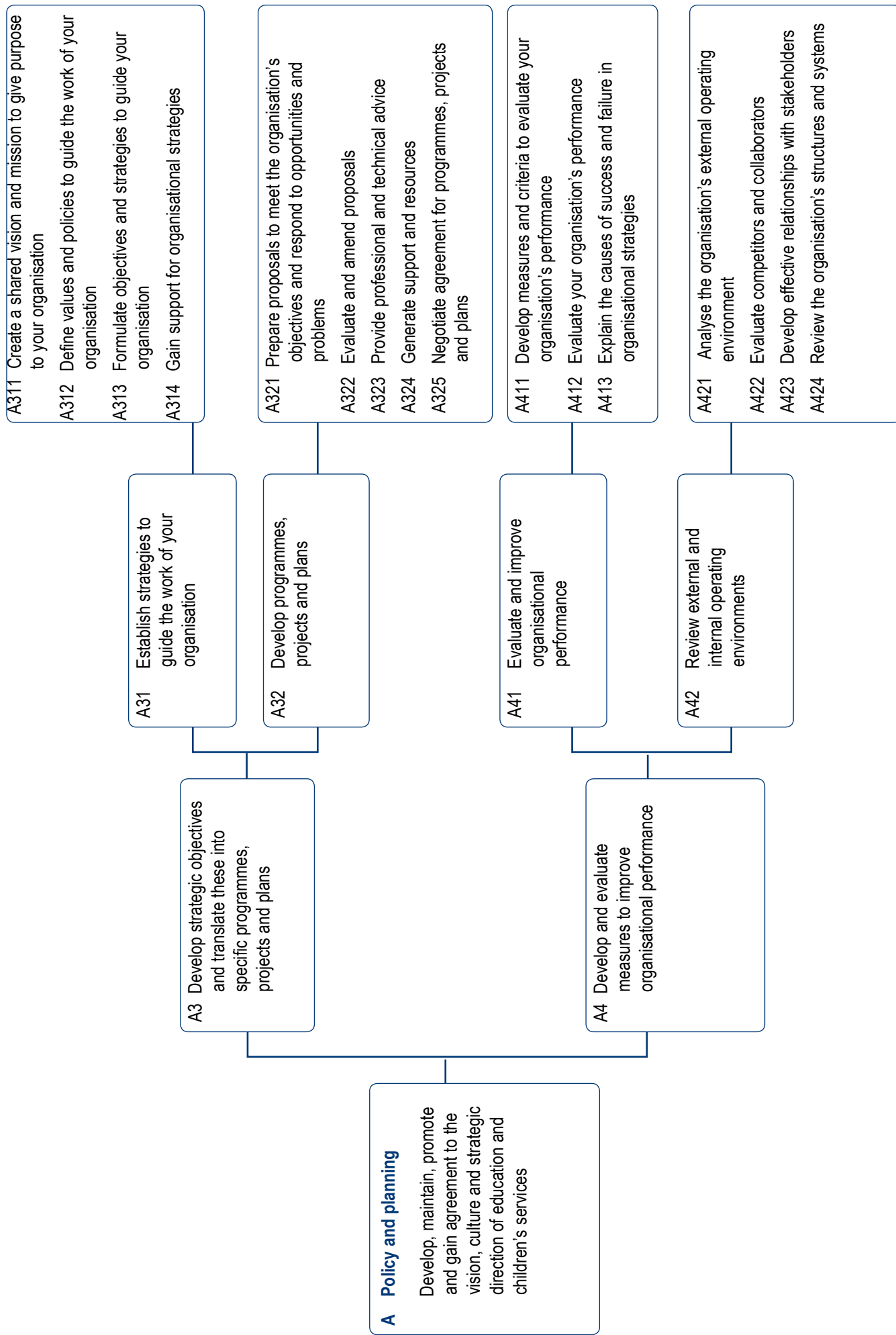
# Appendix 1. The Children's Services Management Competence Framework

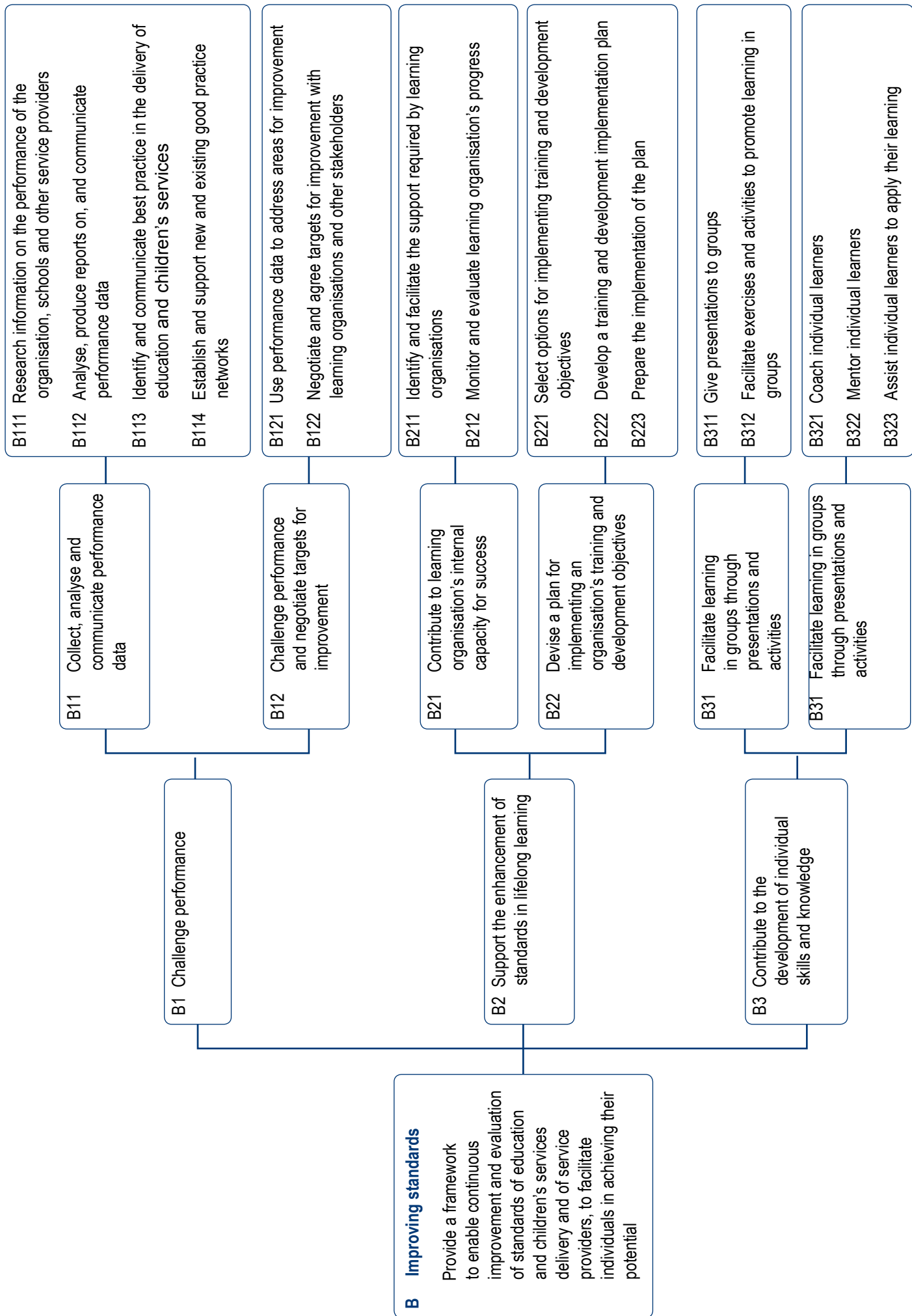
## Overview

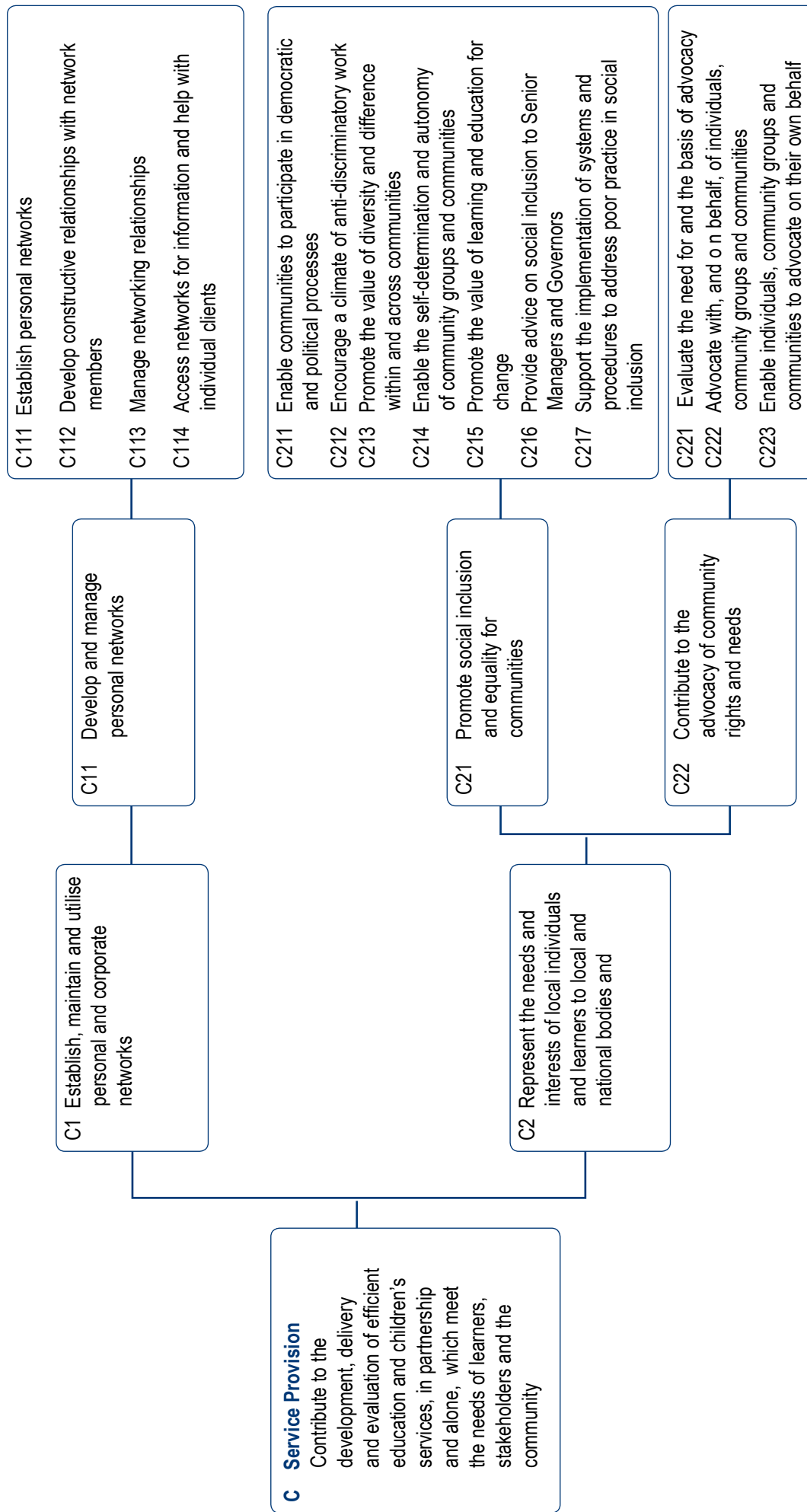
### Key Purpose

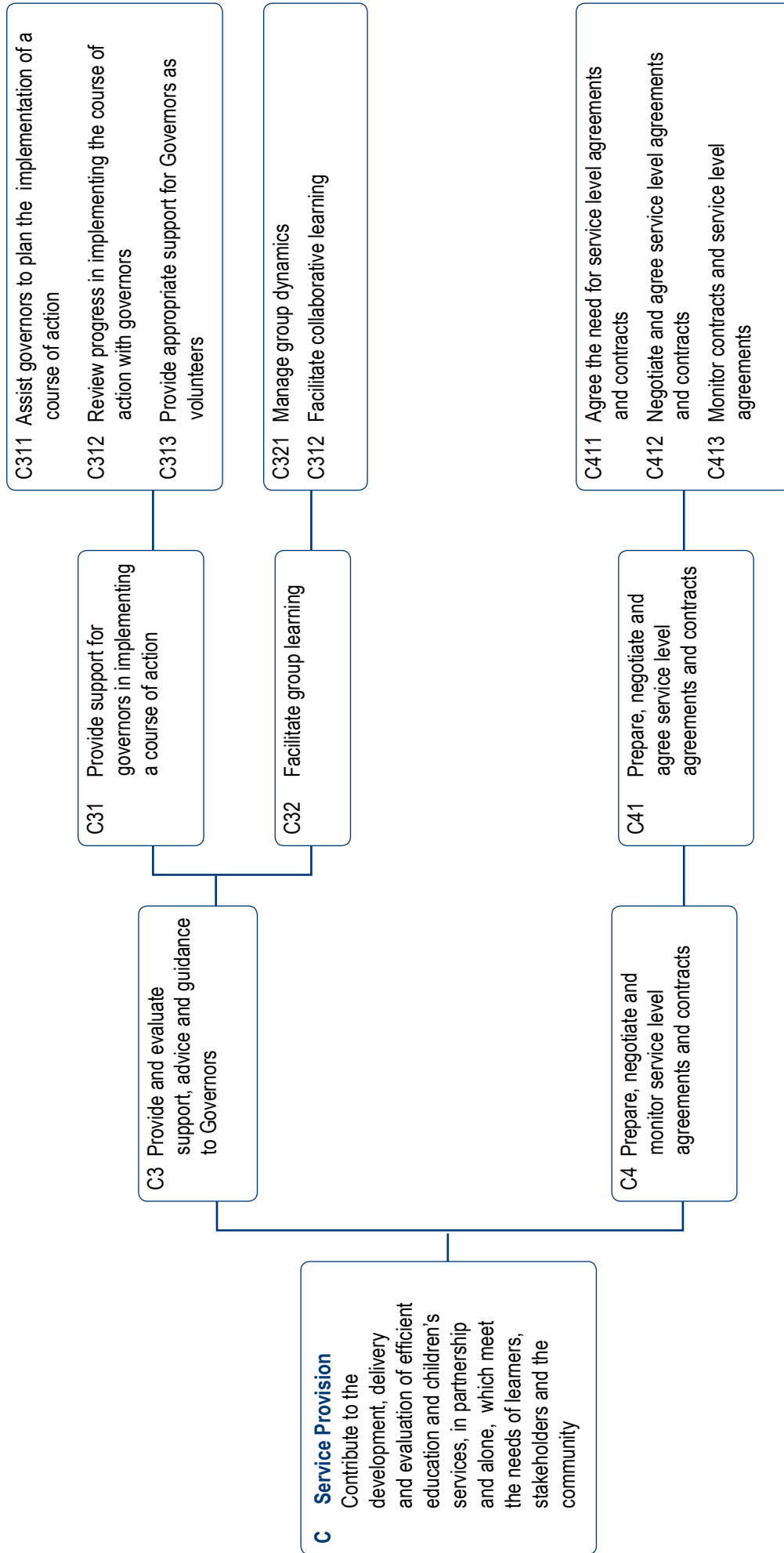


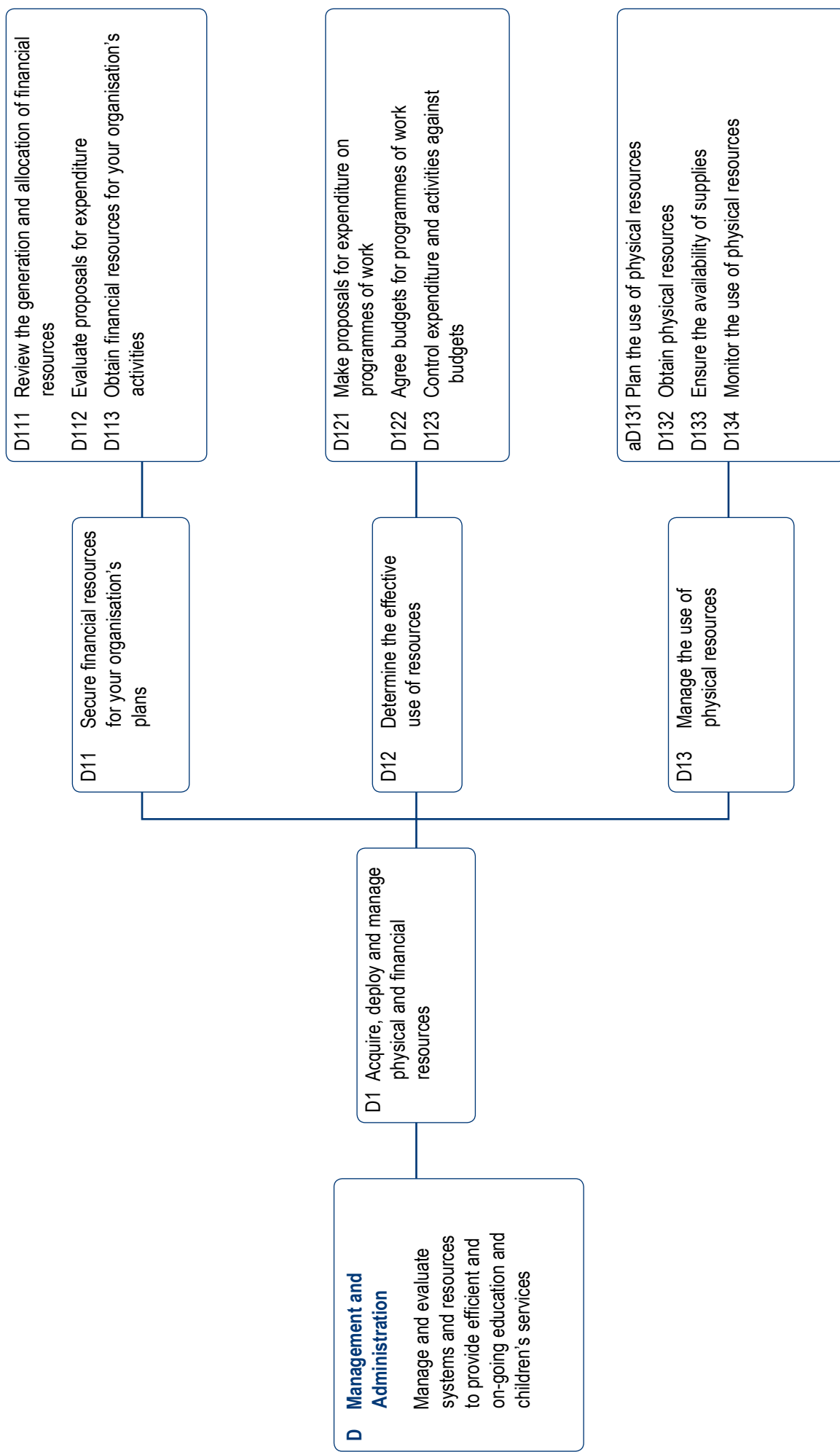


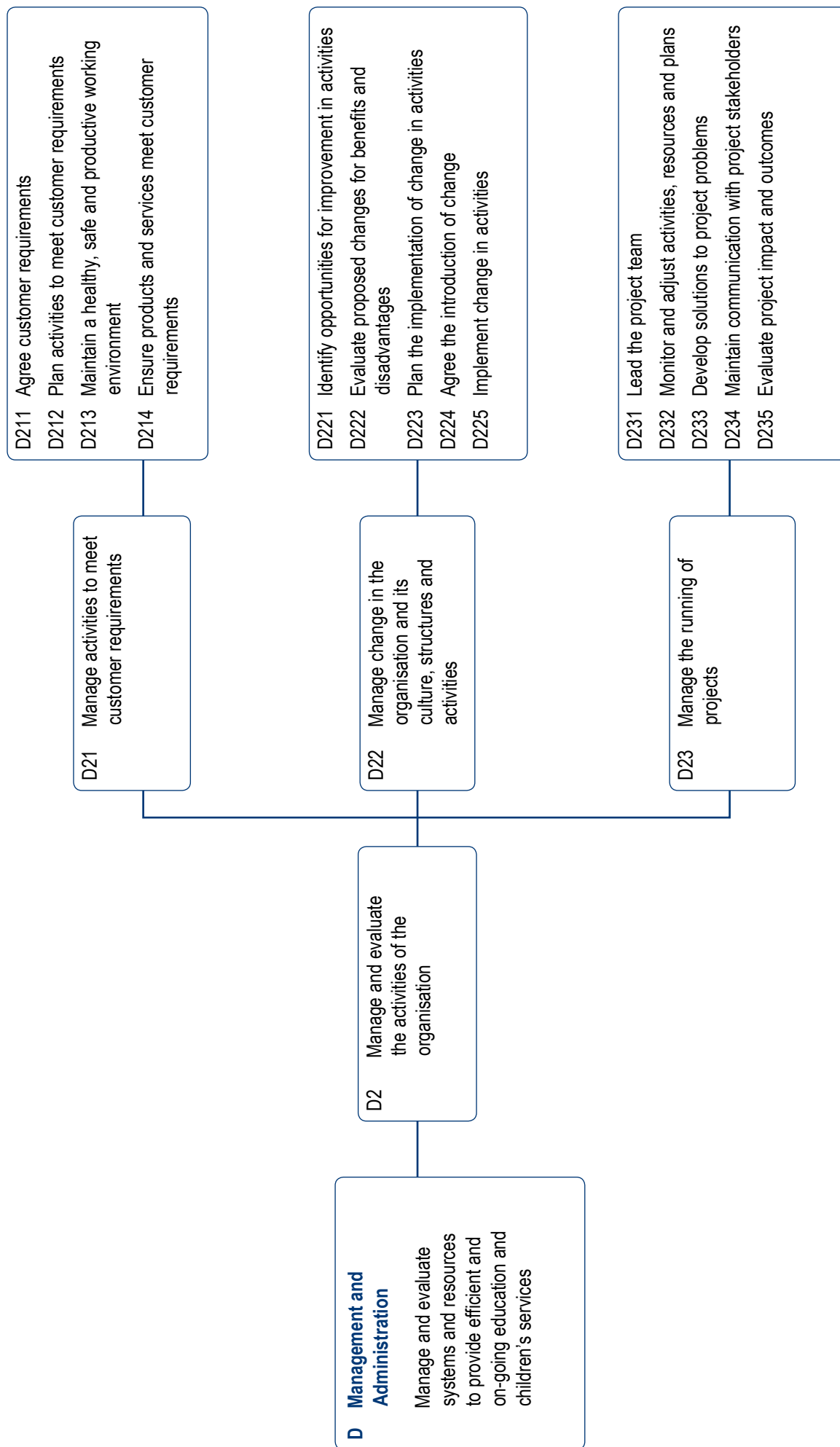


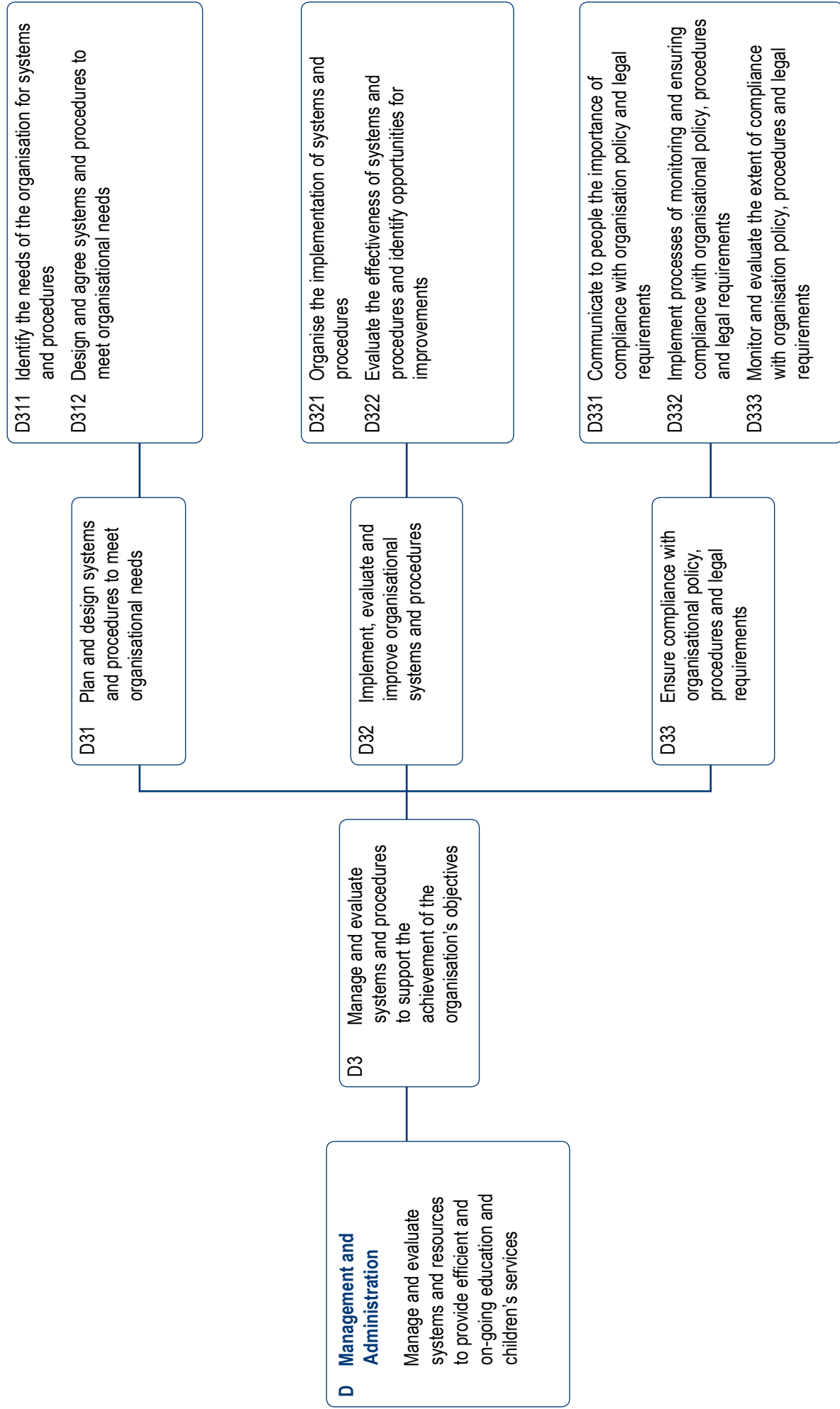


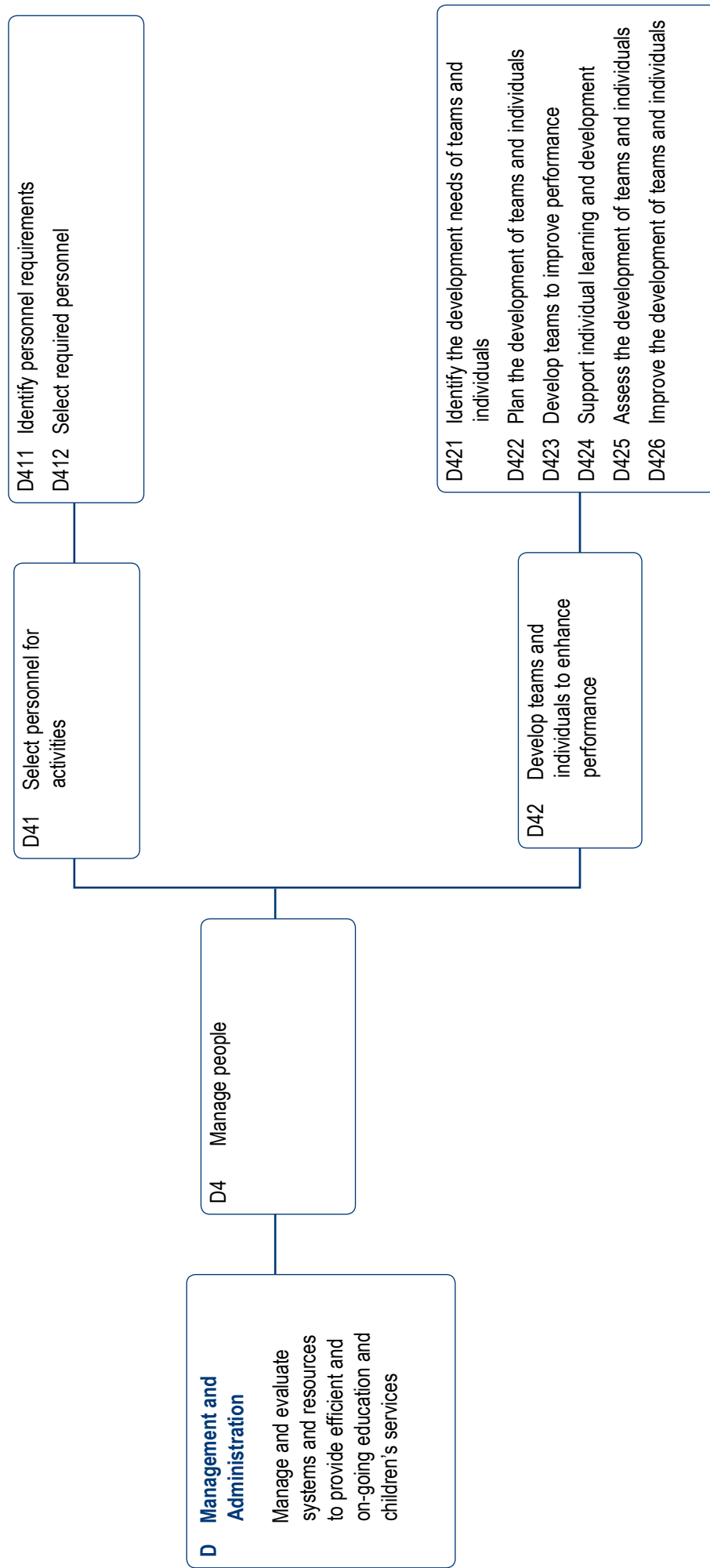


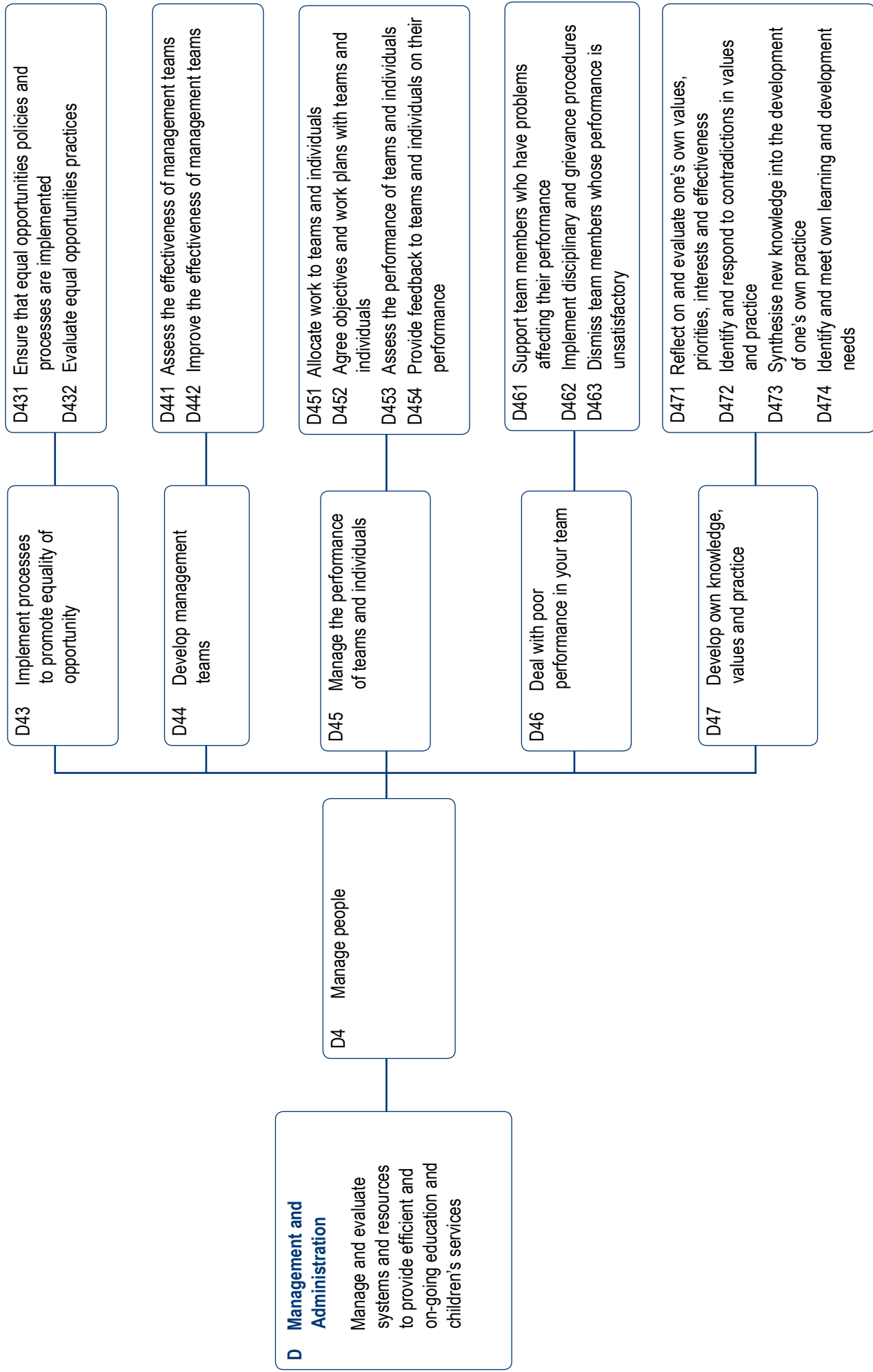


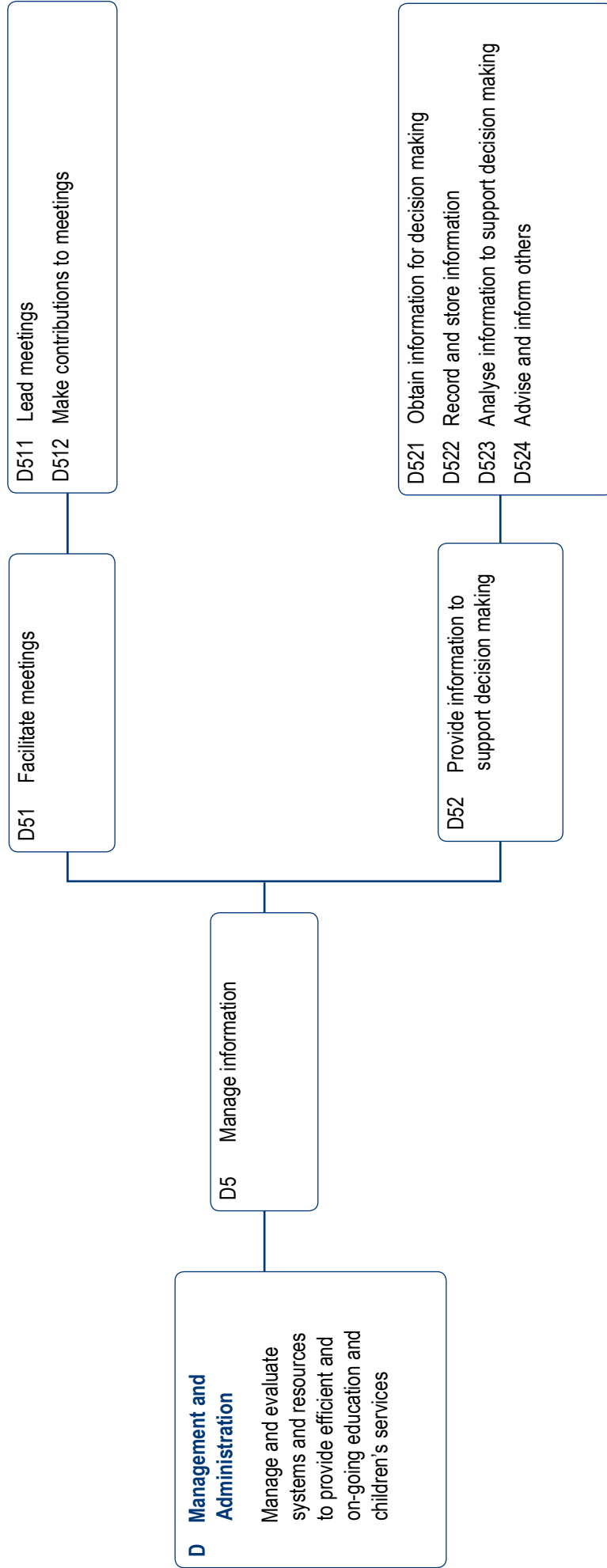












# Appendix 2. The Management Development Programme

## Introduction

In many organisations, especially those with responsibility for education and children's services, the leadership and management capability of those who 'manage in the middle' of the organisation is increasingly recognised as being vital. It is essential to effective operation and to the capacity to improve. This section of the PDA outlines the structure of a development programme for middle managers in education and children's services in local authorities. It is designed to enhance leadership and management capability at middle and senior levels.

## The Programme

This inclusive, progressive and flexible programme provides continuing professional development for managers of children's services in local authorities. It focuses on the development of autonomous, self-sustainable professionals, who are responsible and responsive.

It is located at the interface between research, scholarship and practice that supports the exercise of informed judgement in challenging and complex social and educational settings. The teaching and learning methods are collaborative and reflective. The learning outcomes are integration of theory into professional practice.

The programme is designed to provide management development for managers of children's services in local authorities. It is the first element of a three-stage programme leading from Certificate to Diploma and a Masters Degree.

The programme is designed around five full days of attendance, comprising taught elements and group work elements. All participants will be supported by their local authority on the basis of their potential for progression. They will carry out a professional development analysis and a management development project with appropriate supervision from line managers and tutors. They are also expected to do pre- and post seminar reading. Those wishing to achieve accreditation will also complete pieces of reflective writing.

At the end of the year and successful completion of the PDA and MDP, participants will receive a VSC Certificate of Completion. Those wishing to can enrol with the University to undertake assignments which will draw from their professional experience and from the Management Development Programme. This will enable subsequent entry to the University's Masters programme.

## **Aims of the programme**

- to encourage participants to review and analyse their professional history and experience in education and children's services and to assess their personal development needs
- to support the development of participants as autonomous, reflective practitioners
- to help participants to define their professional and career development plans
- to explore the major management issues facing the delivery of education and children's services in local authorities
- to increase understanding of professional practice
- to strengthen each participant's leadership and management capacity through the production of a management development project
- to provide a flexible pathway for middle/senior managers in local authorities to develop their own professional competences
- to enable students to prepare for progression to Diploma and Masters qualifications

# Appendix 3. The Virtual Staff College Professional Development Portfolio

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  - F) National and regional representative roles
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- 4.4 Competences Comparison
- 4.5 Inspection Comparison
- 4.6 Record of Job/s Applied for

## Introduction

Note: All the key pages of this portfolio are available on the VSC web site ([www.virtualstaffcollege.co.uk](http://www.virtualstaffcollege.co.uk)) so that individuals can create both electronic and hardcopy versions. Please see statement on confidentiality and security in the Introduction.

## Purpose of the Portfolio

The aim of this Personal Development Portfolio (PDP) is to help individual Children's Services Managers to take control of their own career development and life long learning by creating a one-stop supporting tool.

## Confidentiality and security of the Portfolio

The portfolio is private to the individual who creates it. It is up to that individual which elements they share with those that may need access to the information it contains. Individuals need to think carefully about security of the hardcopy information and any electronic versions that they create.

The Key Descriptors of the PDP are:

- **Individual** – providing a personal record of employment, development and training.
- **Authoritative** – in that it gains a high degree of recognition and currency within and outside LEAs.
- **Easily transferable** – moving with the individual, from one job/employment to another.
- **Relevant** - to the needs of individuals and the competences needed in their work.
- **Current** – up-to-date with the national and local context and required knowledge, skills and understanding.
- **Flexible** – basic format with scope for individual additions.
- **ICT based** – a version is available on the VSC web site.
- **Dynamic** – taking you forward.

## Why should I develop a PDP?

In this fast changing world you need to maximise your potential for lifetime employability. It is essential that you maintain high levels of professional competence by continually upgrading your skills and knowledge.

The job market is changing all the time. You may no longer be able to rely on your employer to identify and satisfy your individual development needs. Additionally, you may change jobs several times during your working life possibly becoming self-employed. Therefore you need to take ownership of your career and its continuing development.

This PDP is designed as a tool to help you achieve personal 'ownership' of your development and to help you 'maximise your potential'.

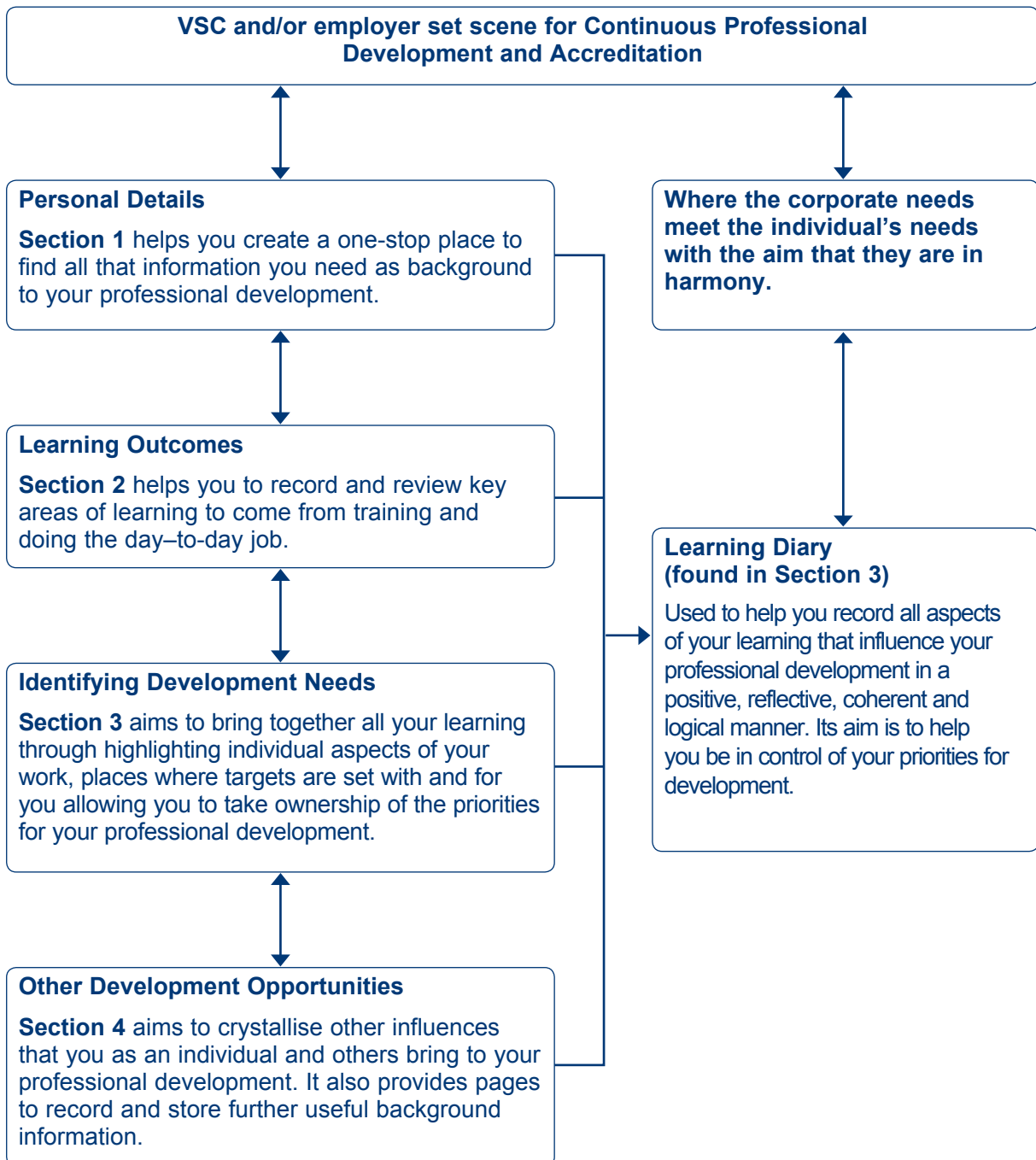
By undertaking development of a PDP you will be:

- Demonstrating your continuing commitment to your profession
- Developing the good practice of regularly reviewing needs and selecting relevant learning activities

- Save time in the longer term by developing a one-stop place for information you need to assist you in your development
- Supporting your professional aspirations
- Helping with accreditation

Below is a map of the PDP to help you understand how it works. We are constantly learning in all the activities and roles we undertake in our daily lives, which has a clear impact on the quality and range of what we have to offer. What tends to happen is much of this learning goes unrecognised or forgotten.

The aim of this PDP is to capture this learning. Using the PDP sections which are most appropriate for you, alongside the priorities and targets set for and with you, should enable you to take charge of your professional development.



# Section 1. Personal and Professional Details

## 1.1 Basic Personal Information

Note: You do not have to fill out all the information below, but all are regularly asked for when applying, taking up new posts and for use during your current employment (eg car registration details for security/fire reasons when parking on LA property and visiting schools or other establishments). Remember all this information is private to you unless you agree to allow others to see or all of it.

<b>Your contact details</b>		
Second or Family name	Maiden name (If appropriate)	
First name/s		
Marital status (if appropriate)	Children names and ages	
Address		
Postcode		
Tel: Home	Fax	
Tel: Mobile	Email	
Emergency contact person and contact details		
Work related numbers (eg DCSF, GTC, professional association)		
<b>Medical information</b>		
Doctor		
Blood group	Allergies	Medic Alert
Other information		
Are you registered disabled (Yes/No)	Details (if appropriate)	
Date of birth	National Insurance number	
Nationality	Birth place	
<b>Pension provision details</b>		
Tax number	Tax Office registered with	
Passport number		
<b>Car details</b>		
Driving licence number	Registration plate	
Insurance company	Policy number	
<b>Bank details</b> (needed for salary and expenses payments)		
Bank Account number	Sort Code number	
Bank address		

## Section 1. Personal and Professional Details

### 1.2 Employment History Overview

<b>Present employment</b>				
Date you started present employment				
Employer's name				
Address				
Phone		Fax		Email
<b>Your work contact details (if different from above)</b>				
Line manager				
Address				
Phone		Fax		Email
Position you hold				
Present grade		Salary		Salary range
Notice period				
<p>Main duties and responsibilities: insert into portfolio a copy of your current job description, job personal specification, Terms and Conditions of Employment and any other relevant employment documentation (eg Professional association membership). Record here details of where to find documents held by employer re conditions of service, for example Grievance Procedures and Health and Safety information.</p> <p>Curriculum Vitae (CV): insert into portfolio a copy of your current CV. The following sections of the portfolio may repeat much of what is in your CV. However, they also provide an opportunity to record details that may not appear on your current CV, but might be useful in the future when applying for other posts.</p>				
<b>History of employment overview</b> (starting with the most recent)				
Dates (from/to)	Position held	Grade/salary	Nature of employment	Employer

# Section 1. Personal and Professional Details

## 1.3 Qualifications

Insert copies of certificates as appropriate under all qualification sections. In the following lists, start with the most recent qualifications.

<b>Professional qualifications</b>			
Date awarded	Qualification	Grade	Awarding body

<b>Higher education leaving qualifications and exam results</b>			
Date awarded	Qualification/examination	Grade/level	University/College

<b>School/college leaving qualifications and exam results</b>			
Date awarded	Qualification/examination	Grade/level	School/College

<b>Other qualifications</b>			
Date awarded	Qualification	Grade/level	Awarding body

## Section 2. Learning Outcomes

### 2.1 Professional development/training

Again, start with the most recent courses in the following lists.

Inductions		
Date/s attended	Course description Format, duration, etc	Accreditation/Qualification/Competence Skills and name of Awarding Body
<p>Optional: Record an overview of the learning to come out of the course. Cut and paste it into your Learning Diary in Section 3. Include your personal satisfaction rating of the course.</p>		
<p><b>Long courses (longer than one week)</b></p> <p>This is the place to record an overview of the long courses you have attended. Give a brief outline of the course. For example was it for research; up-dating for service development, skills acquisition; personal reflection; and/or acquiring competences? Record any outcomes such as qualifications or skills acquired eg Diploma, Degree, Counselling Qualification. The use of these courses to assist your professional development is covered in Section 3 of this PDP and it is particularly important to transfer any learning outcome from a course if you're keeping a Learning Diary see box below.</p>		
Date/s attended	Course description Format, duration, etc	Accreditation/Qualification/Competence Skills and name of Awarding Body
<p>Optional: Record an overview of the learning to come out of the course. Cut and paste it into your Learning Diary in Section 3. Include your personal satisfaction rating of the course.</p>		
<p><b>Short courses (up to one week)</b></p> <p>This is the place to record an overview of the short courses you have attended. Give a brief outline of the course. For example was it for research; up-dating for service development, skills acquisition; personal reflection; and/or acquiring competences. Record any outcomes such as qualifications or skills acquired eg Certificate of Attendance, First Aid. The use of these courses to assist your professional development is covered in Section 3 of this PDP and it is particularly important to transfer any learning outcome from a course if you're keeping a Learning Diary.</p>		
Date/s attended	Course description Format, duration, etc	Accreditation/Qualification/Competence Skills and name of Awarding Body
<p>Optional: Record an overview of the learning to come out of the course. Cut and paste it into your Learning Diary in Section 3. Include your personal satisfaction rating of the course.</p>		

## Section 2. Learning Outcomes

### 2.2 Appraisal

#### Background paper work

Insert copies of your:

- Appraisal Statements
- Records of Appraisal Outcomes
- Copy of Appraisal Cycle Outline

Note: a more detailed tool for tracking overall development needs is found in Section 3.4.

<b>Training and development needs to come out of Appraisal</b>			
Name of Appraiser/s	Time scale of present Appraisal Cycle	Key dates	
<b>Overall targets to come out of most recent appraisal</b>			
Dates/timescale Start/end	Priority/target	What will success look like	With whom agreed
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
etc.			
<b>Training and development needs identified from most recent Appraisal meeting</b>			
T&D need	Activity used to meet need	Timescale Any deadlines	Cost Time/money

## Section 2. Learning Outcomes

### 2.3 Learning by Doing and Learning by Supporting the Learning of Others

Much of personal development comes through preparing and delivering aspects of your every day work (called projects in this portfolio) and supporting the learning of others. This is the place to record that involvement. Again, list the most recent items first.

<b>Projects involvement</b>		
Date/s	Description of project Format and duration	Competence Developed/Accreditation/ Qualification and Name of Awarding Body
Optional: Record an overview of the learning to come out of the course. Cut and paste it into your Learning Diary in Section 3.		
<b>Courses or sessions I have led</b>		
<p>This is the place to record an overview of the courses you have run or helped to run. Give a brief outline of the course. For example was it for research; up-dating for service development, skills acquisition; personal reflection; and/or acquiring competences. Record any outcomes such as competences, qualifications or skills acquired as a result of involvement in the course.</p> <p>The use of the learning to come out of involvement in these courses to assist your professional development is covered in Section 3 of this PDP and it is particularly important to transfer any learning outcome from a course if you're keeping a Learning Diary.</p>		
Date/s	Description of project Format and duration	Competence Developed/Accreditation/ Qualification and Name of Awarding Body
Optional: Record an overview of the learning to come out of the course. Cut and paste it into your Learning Diary in Section 3.		
<b>Other learning activity</b>		
<p>This is the place to record learning by doing from other activities especially supporting the learning of others, for example, researching, mentoring, work shadowing, working with a schools in special measures and as an appraiser.</p>		
Date/s	Description of project Format and duration	Competence Developed/Accreditation/ Qualification and Name of Awarding Body
Optional: Record an overview of the learning to come out of the course. Cut and paste it into your Learning Diary in Section 3.		

## Section 3. Development Needs

### 3.1 Annual Development Audit Checklist

This is an overview checklist of your professional development in the year.

Activity	Date/s
<p>Suggest reviewing and updating at least every <b>six months</b>:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Personal and professional PDP details</li><li>2. Priorities and target: <b>Section 3.2</b></li><li>3. Training provided: <b>Section 2.1</b></li><li>4. Any professional dialogues recorded (eg under Appraisal or Management Reviews): <b>Sections 3.4A, B</b></li><li>5. Professional support provided if asked for: <b>Sections 3.2, 3.3, 3.4</b></li><li>6. Appraisal Cycle Progression or completed: <b>Section 2.2</b></li></ol>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>Suggest reviewing and updating at least <b>once a year</b>:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>7. Job description: <b>Section 1.2</b></li><li>8. Relevant sections of development planning provided by employers: <b>Section 3.4A</b></li><li>9. Organisational/department/team targets set and given to you: <b>Section 3.4B</b></li><li>10. Staff development Calendar: <b>Section 3</b></li><li>11. Data related to monitoring and evaluation: <b>All sections</b></li><li>12. Statutory updating (eg first aid, swimming, outdoor pursuits): <b>Sections 3C &amp; 4</b></li><li>13. Personal philosophies and priorities: <b>Section 4.1</b></li><li>14. Competences comparison: <b>Section 4.4</b></li><li>15. Others:</li></ol>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

## Section 3. Development Needs

### 3.2 Professional and Personal Development Priorities, Targets and Audit of Skills

This is the place to record an overview of your professional and personal priorities for the coming year and in the longer term. It is the place to bring together all your priorities from other pages of the Portfolio. These could include the need for skills development identified during appraisal, such as improving your ICT skills or long term career aspirations. Start with the most recent.

<b>Short-term priorities and targets</b>			
Dates/timescale Start/end	Priority/target	What will success look like	With whom agreed
<b>Long-term priorities and targets</b>			
Dates/timescale Start/end	Priority/target	What will success look like	With whom agreed
<b>Audit of skills</b>			
<p>What can I offer to the Organisations, Departments or Teams I work for, particularly related to the current targets of these groups?</p> <p>In this fast changing world it is important that you are aware of the skills you have to offer to both your current employers and possible future employers. This section is to help you build up a record of your skills so that you can be an 'entrepreneur' for your own development.</p>			
	by groups I work with		to take

## Section 3. Development Needs

### 3.3 Learning Diary

You may wish to create an overview of your learning from across all aspects of your work using the tool below to focus on achievements and next steps. In your diary, list the most recent items first. Under 'learning outcomes', paste in the learning statement from other portfolio activity.

<b>Learning activities</b>	
Title and type of learning activity	Date
<hr/>	
Learning outcomes	
<hr/>	
Title and type of learning activity	Date
<hr/>	
Learning outcomes	
<hr/>	
Title and type of learning activity	Date
<hr/>	
Learning outcomes	
<hr/>	
<b>Learning needs not met</b>	
This is a place to review planned but unfulfilled learning.	
Title and type of learning activity	Date
<hr/>	
Why Learning Activity was not met	
<hr/>	
Next Step	
Title and type of learning activity	Date
<hr/>	
Why Learning Activity was not met	
<hr/>	
Next Step	
Title and type of learning activity	Date
<hr/>	
Why Learning Activity was not met	
<hr/>	
Next Step	
<hr/>	

## Section 3. Development Needs

### 3.4 Tracking Training and Development Needs over the Longer Term

The aim of this section is to keep track of your development needs that have been identified over the years across many aspects of your work. Not all sections will be relevant at any one time. Building up a comprehensive record of these activities will provide you with strong evidence when planning and prioritising the next stage in your development. Needs identified through:

- 3.4A Corporate Needs Assessments/Management Reviews
- 3.4B Job challenges
- 3.4C Career needs
- 3.4D Self-evaluations and assessments
- 3.4E Non-qualification study
- 3.4F National and regional representative roles
- 3.4G Secondments, sabbaticals, work placement, overseas experiences, publications and other communication media activity
- 3.4H Other activities

#### A) Corporate Needs Assessment/Management Reviews

Name of manager leading corporate assessment or management review			
<hr/>			
Time scale of assessment			
<hr/>			
Key Dates			
<hr/>			
Overall targets to come out of most recent assessment			
<hr/>			
1			
<hr/>			
2			
<hr/>			
3			
<hr/>			
etc.			
<hr/>			
<b>Related training and development needs identified</b>			
T&D need	Activity used to meet need	Time scale Any deadlines	Cost Time/money
Optional: Record an overview of the learning to come out of the activity. Note particularly any links to the development of competences and additional qualifications. Cut and paste the overview into your Learning Diary in Section 3.			

## B) Job challenges

There are times when the job has particular challenges; this can be either within your current employment such as re-organisation and when taking up a new post. These are important development opportunities and below is a place to analyse what the challenges are and to plan how to meet them.

Define the current job challenges

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Overall targets to come out of most recent job challenge:

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**Training and development needs identified**

T&D need	Activity used to meet need	Time scale Any deadlines	Cost Time/money

Learning Outcomes: Record an overview of the learning to come out of the activity. Note particularly any links to the development of competences and additional qualifications. Cut and paste the overview into your Learning Diary in Section 3.

## C) Career needs

There are times when you need to look at your overall career development needs. Below is a place to analyse what the challenges are and to plan how to meet them.

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**Training and development needs identified**

T&D need	Activity used to meet need	Time scale Any deadlines	Cost Time/money

Optional: Record an overview of the learning to come out of the activity. Note particularly any links to the development of competences and additional qualifications. Cut and paste the overview into your Learning Diary in Section 3.

## D) Self-evaluation and assessments

Many of us now regularly use self-assessment materials to identify our learning needs, preferred learning styles, leadership and management qualities/styles and personal attributes. Employers also regularly use self-evaluation exercises and assessments (eg use of an Occupational Personality Quotient) during job interviews and appraisals. These activities have an important role to play in defining our development needs. Below is a place to analyse what the challenges to come out of these evaluations and assessments are and to plan how to meet them.

<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>			
<b>Relevant training and development needs identified</b>			
T&D need	Activity used to meet need	Time scale Any deadlines	Cost Time/money
<p>Optional: Record an overview of the learning to come out of the activity. Note particularly any links to the development of competences and additional qualifications. Cut and paste the overview into your Learning Diary in Section 3.</p>			

## E) Non-qualification study

Below is a place to analyse what the challenges are to come out of non-qualification study and to plan how to meet them.

Examples are; night school in art or membership of literary club.

<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>			
<b>Relevant training and development needs identified</b>			
T&D need	Activity used to meet need	Time scale Any deadlines	Cost Time/money
<p>Optional: Record an overview of the learning to come out of the activity. Note particularly any links to the development of competences and additional qualifications. Cut and paste the overview into your Learning Diary in Section 3.</p>			

## F) National and regional representative roles

Below is a place to analyse what the challenges are to come out of being involved in national and regional representational roles and to plan how to meet them. Examples include involvement with national and regional organisation committees, such as unions, professional associations and government Quangos or acting as a trustee to a charity.

<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>			
<b>Relevant training and development needs identified</b>			
T&D need	Activity used to meet need	Time scale Any deadlines	Cost Time/money
<p>Optional: Record an overview of the learning to come out of the activity. Note particularly any links to the development of competences and additional qualifications. Cut and paste the overview into your Learning Diary in Section 3.</p>			

## G) Secondments, sabbaticals, work placements overseas experiences, publications and communication media activity

Below is a place to analyse those challenges which have emerged as a result of being involved in Secondments, Sabbaticals, Work Placements (eg. in business/industry/schools), Overseas Experiences, Publication, other Communication Media (eg working with radio, video, web sites) and to plan how to meet them.

<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>			
<b>Relevant training and development needs identified</b>			
T&D need	Activity used to meet need	Time scale Any deadlines	Cost Time/money
<p>Learning Outcomes: Record an overview of the learning to come out of the activity. Note particularly any links to the development of competences and additional qualifications. Cut and paste the overview into your Learning Diary in Section 3.</p>			

## H) Involvement in other activities

Below is a place to analyse those challenges which have emerged out of being involved in any other activity and to plan how to meet them

<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>			
<b>Relevant training and development needs identified</b>			
T&D need	Activity used to meet need	Time scale Any deadlines	Cost Time/money
<p>Optional: Record an overview of the learning to come out of the activity. Note particularly any links to the development of competences and additional qualifications. Cut and paste the overview into your Learning Diary in Section 3.</p>			

## Section 4. Other Developmental Opportunities

### 4.1 Personal Philosophy and Priorities

When engrossed in the day-to-day involvement with our work we can find that many of our personal beliefs, philosophies and priorities come under pressure. This page is for you to record your personal and professional values, the principles which underpin and guide your judgements, decisions and actions.

Being clear about your own values enables you to gain understanding and appreciation of the values of others with whom you work. It is also designed for you to reflect on and review your philosophies and priorities in the light of experience and the changing context of your professional development.

Date:
My current philosophies and priorities are:

## Section 4. Other Developmental Opportunities

### 4.2 Recreational Interests

This is a place to record you personal recreational interests. This might include recreational study, skills you have and sporting achievements especially representation at regional, national or international level in your specialist field. Start with the most recent.

Nature of activity	Period of involvement From/to

Note this information could be used as a contribution to your learning diary and/or in your CV.

## Section 4. Other Developmental Opportunities

### 4.3 Professional Acknowledgements

This is a place to keep an overview of special letters, emails and notes you may have which confirm your hard work and success. It is also a place to store copies of references and testimonials, reports that refer to your work and any other morale boosting comments that come your way. It is also important to add any acknowledgements to your learning diary if that is appropriate, for example when such a testimonial provides evidence demonstrating a competency met.

Start with the most recent.

Date	Nature of acknowledgement	Who from

## Section 4. Other Developmental Opportunities

### 4.4 Competences Comparison

The VSC has published on its web site a set of national competences covering all educational leaders and managers.

- These competences are being developed as the main way of evaluating and measuring an education manager's competence.
- It is useful to download the overview of the competences against which to make a comparison of your personal development.
- Note the full list of competences is a large document. It can be seen on the VSC web site. All LEAs have copies and further copies can be purchased by contacting the VSC.

## Section 4. Other Developmental Opportunities

### 4.5 Inspection Comparison

OfSTED have produced an Inspector's Professional Profile and a Training Needs Analysis and this is a good place to enclose the details of this Profile if you are involved in Inspection. Note OfSTED now require Inspectors to undertake five days training a year. They issue training plans for two years ahead. Information from this Inspection Profile should be added to your learning diary and priorities list.

The OfSTED Profile covers:

- OfSTED Inspector Number
- Relevant qualifications
- Endorsed subjects and aspects to inspect
- Relevant previous experiences
- Present position
- Record of inspections undertaken (focusing on the 10 most recent)
- Training record
- Record of monitoring (focusing on the last two years)
- Self-evaluation: my strengths in inspection work and areas needing improvement
- Training and Development Action Plan covering the next two years.

## Section 4. Other Developmental Opportunities

### 4.6 Record of Job/s Applied for

It is a useful tool to have a record of jobs applied for, especially when preparing another application form. Copies of previous application forms, letters and details of any interviews attended are worth keeping in a separate folder. A key part of career development is building up a network of contacts. The details surrounding applying and interviewing for jobs helps to build such a network.

Start with most recent.

Date applied	Title of job	Employer's name	Successful/ unsuccessful

# Appendix 4

## The Readers for Activity 9

This appendix contains the readers for 'Activity 9. The Readers'.

- **Reader 1. Experiential learning**  
An explanation of the experiential learning cycle and its relevance for professional development.
- **Reader 2. Adult learning**  
An outline of the principles of adult learning and how those principles are helpful understanding the ways in which adults learn.
- **Reader 3. The nature of professional practice**  
An explanation of models of professional practice and their relevance for understanding professional development.
- **Reader 4. Continuing professional development**  
An outline of the nature of continuing professional development (CPD), to help you to understand your own CPD, the need for CPD and its value.

After each Reader, there is a series of questions. You will be asked to complete them as part of your submission for academic accreditation. You may find the questions helpful in focussing your thoughts even if you are not intending to gain accreditation. We suggest that you look at the questions before you start reading in order to guide your thinking and to focus your reading.

# Reader 1. Experiential Learning

An explanation of the experiential learning cycle and its relevance for professional development

## Introduction

It has never been in doubt that experience can be a very effective teacher. But the whole idea of learning from experience is highly problematic.

- What is the process?
- What kinds of experience help us to learn most effectively?
- If we do learn from experience why do we make the same mistakes time and again?
- What is the relationship between experiential learning and other ways of learning?
- What do we learn from experience?

The purpose of this Reader is to review theories of experiential learning, to look at what they tell us about learning and teaching styles and to review some of the many issues that surround this way of learning.

The Reader begins with an exploration of the nature and value of experiential learning. It then goes on to look at models of experiential learning with Kolb's experiential learning cycle as the focus. The Reader also discusses the idea of preferred learning and teaching styles.

## The nature of experiential learning

The defects and inadequacies of a crude and simplistic view of experiential learning were made clear by Huxley almost a hundred years ago.

*'Nature's is not even a word and a blow, and the blow first: but the blow without the word. It is left to you to find out why your ears were boxed. The object of artificial education is to make good these defects in Nature's methods.'*

Huxley, 1983, p85

Huxley is saying here that mere exposure to experience is insufficient. It is a question of learning from experience and doing so effectively.

Henry (1989) makes the point that *'experiential learning is a broad church encompassing a number of different traditions'*. In a survey, she collected a large number of different kinds of learning activities that respondents had indicated were 'experiential'. She categorised them under the following headings.

- **Independent learning** – offers the learners control of the learning process often using problem-solving and project-based methods.
- **Personal development** – focuses on affective learning, which is to do with changing attitudes and opinions, through group discussion.
- **Social change** – a broad group of activities with the general purpose of building *'a more harmonious world for all'* (Henry, 1989). Non-traditional learning may include a combination of independent study, prior learning, and open learning or distance study.
- **Prior learning** – involves the assessment of previously completed work for accreditation towards an educational qualification.
- **Work experience** – can take a variety of forms: the classic apprenticeship, 'shadowing' one or more individuals, or working in a relevant environment.

- **Learning by doing** – two main categories: project-based learning and activity-based learning.
- **Problem-based learning** – in essence:

*'... the procedure is to start with a problem, explore it, generate possible solutions, select one, implement it and revise it as necessary'*

Henry, 1989

Henry's list gives a very broad view of what might be called experiential learning. From the broad viewpoint she has chosen there is a case for arguing that all learning is experiential. Even a lecture where the student is typically seen as the passive recipient is an experience of sorts from which the student will learn.

Jamieson (1994) proposes a definition of experiential learning. His definition helps to limit the concept and narrow down the field although he acknowledges that there are difficulties with it. He states that experiential learning:

*'... is often defined as learning in which the learner is directly in touch with the realities being studied and makes use of that direct contact to acquire changed insights which are carried forward to subsequent encounters with other realities. It is to be contrasted with learning in which the learner reads about, talks about or writes about these realities but keeps this process separate, in both time and location, from lived contexts in which the learning thus acquired is put to use.'*

Jamieson, 1994

He suggests that there are three important issues to do with the role of the experience in the learning.

1. The experience may be planned, specific and related to what is being learned. He gives the example of teaching practice as a specific learning experience in the process of learning to teach.
2. The experience refers to the provision of contrived experiences when it is expected that the learner will derive learning of a more general nature. An example of this kind of experiential learning would be a role-play, which is part of a professional development course. It can be helpful because during the role-play the learners can draw on *'the vividness of action'*.
3. The experience may be broad but it allows the learner to learn from within the experience because of the learner's habitual mode of operating in such situations. For example, in a classroom setting, a teacher may extract from that very rich experience insights into a relatively narrow aspect such as the allocation of learning resources.

Kolb (1981) sees experiential learning as *'the process that links education, work and personal development'* and argues that development involves not only gathering knowledge at experiential and intellectual levels but also in transforming it. He criticises academic institutions for failing to provide sufficient opportunities for this transformation. Such opportunities would entail:

*'learning how to learn, and.... appreciation of and competence in diverse approaches to creating, manipulating, and communicating knowledge'*

Kolb, 1981

## The value of experiential learning

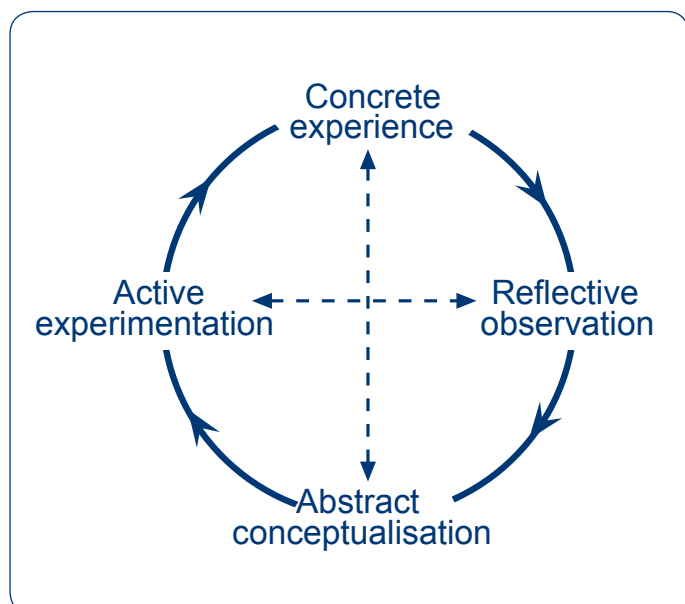
Warner Weil and McGill (1989) list some of the specific objectives that people identify with their use of experiential learning.

1. A better idea of what theory from reading or lectures might mean in practice.
2. Reflection on prior experience in relation to new ideas and information.
3. An active consideration of the implications of research in real life situations.
4. The assimilation and application of intellectual understandings to actual problems.
5. The consideration of a particular range of professional assumptions from the perspective of a specific social or occupational group.
6. The integration of a variety of disciplinary or meaning perspectives in relation to a real life problem.
7. Reframing the ways in which we perceive, and respond to, particular situations.
8. Reflection upon, and appraisal of, personal and occupational goals from alternative vantage points.
9. A more self-aware approach to one's own professional practice.
10. A deeper understanding of how we feel in certain situations, and of the limitations of our understanding and practice.
11. A recognition of how institutional, social and cultural factors may cause individuals to act in different ways that contradict personal and professional intentions.
12. An awareness of how personal values and meanings influence our perceptions and choices of action.
13. Actual experience of, for example, industry and commerce, or social change groups, and how they operate.
14. Opportunities to experience different kinds of values and assumptions in action, in relation to particular activities and enterprises.

## A theory of experiential learning

The most well known model of experiential learning is that developed by David Kolb (1984). Kolb's contribution in the field of experiential learning has been as a 'synthesiser'. His model clearly draws in the work of others such as Kurt Lewin.

Kolb's model is as follows.



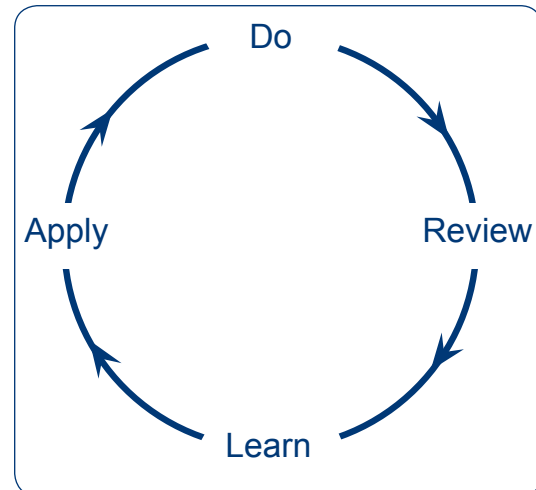
An experience of some kind is the beginning of the cycle of experiential learning. Reflection on that experience then follows where the experience is reviewed and considered. There is then a phase of abstract conceptualisation or theorising when the learner makes sense of the experience and their reflections upon it to form new ideas, theories and ways of acting. That phase is then followed by a period of active experimentation when the new theories are tried out and used to create new experiences. The cycle then starts all over again.

It is interesting to note that experience and theorising and action and reflection are at opposite poles in the cycle.

Dennison and Kirk (1990) describe an experiential learning cycle, which they acknowledge has broad similarities to Kolb's model.

They distinguish their model from Kolb's on the following grounds.

1. They see Kolb's model as having wider applicability than their own which they suggest is more useful for learning situations '*constructed specifically within programmes or timetables within schools or colleges*' (p18).
2. They see a crucial role for the tutor in their Do-Review-Learn-Apply cycle.



## Learning styles

Kolb (1984) recognises that individuals will find particular stages of the cycle easier than others. They will have strengths and weaknesses in particular dimensions and stages. These strengths and weaknesses will be influenced by and will influence their own preferred learning style. Honey and Mumford (1986) categorise learning styles according to strengths in particular dimensions of the cycle.

- **Pragmatists** – with a strength in the concrete experience/doing stage
- **Reflectors** – with a strength in the reflective observation/review stage
- **Theorists** – with a strength in the abstract conceptualisation/learn stage
- **Activists** – with a strength in the active experimentation/apply stage.

The characteristics of these different styles are as follows.

### Pragmatists

Pragmatists are keen on trying out ideas, theories and techniques to see if they work in practice. They:

- positively search out new ideas and take the first opportunity to experiment with applications
- are the sort of people who return from courses brimming with new ideas that they want to try out in practice
- like to get on with things and act quickly and confidently on ideas that attract them
- tend to be impatient with ruminating and open-ended discussions
- are essentially practical, down-to-earth people who like making practical decisions and solving problems
- respond to problems and opportunities 'as a challenge'.

Their philosophy is: 'There is always a better way' and 'If it works it's good.'

Pragmatists learn best from activities where:

- there is an obvious link between the subject and a practical problem
- they are shown techniques that have obvious practical advantages
- they have the chance to try out and practise techniques with an expert who can provide feedback
- they are shown a model they can copy, a successful person, a film showing how something is done, etc
- they are given immediate opportunities to try out what they have learnt
- they are given good simulations and real problems to solve
- they can concentrate on practical situations.

## Reflectors

Reflectors like to stand back to ponder experiences and observe them from different perspectives. They:

- collect data, both first hand and from others, and prefer to think about it thoroughly before coming to any conclusion
- tend to postpone reaching definitive conclusions for as long as possible because the thorough collection and analysis of data about experiences and events is what counts
- are thoughtful people who like to consider all possible angles and implications before making a move
- enjoy observing other people in action
- listen to others and get the drift of the discussion before making their own points
- tend to adopt a low profile and have a slightly distant, tolerant, unruffled air about them
- act as part of a wide picture which includes the past as well as the present and others' observations as well as their own.

Their philosophy is: 'Be cautious'.

Reflectors learn best from activities where:

- they are allowed to watch, think and chew over activities
- they are able to stand back and observe, observing a group at work, watch films, videos etc.
- they are allowed to think before acting and have time to prepare
- they can carry out painstaking research, investigation and probing
- they have time to review what has happened and what they have learnt
- they are required to produce carefully considered analyses and reports
- they are helped to exchange views within a structured learning experience
- they can reach a decision without pressure and in their own time.

## Theorists

Theorists adapt and integrate observations into complex but logically sound theories. They:

- think problems through in a vertical, step-by-step, logical way
- assimilate disparate facts into coherent theories
- tend to be perfectionists who won't rest easy until things are tidy and fit into a rational scheme
- like to analyse and synthesise

- are keen on basic assumptions, principles, theories, models and systems thinking. frequently ask questions like: ‘Does it make sense?’ ‘How does it fit with that?’ ‘What are the basic assumptions?’
- tend to be detached, analytical and dedicated to rational objectivity rather than anything subjective or ambiguous
- have an approach to problems is consistently logical
- rigidly reject anything that doesn’t fit with it and prefer to maximise certainty and feel uncomfortable with subjective judgements, lateral thinking and flippant remarks.

Their philosophy prizes rationality and logic: ‘If it’s logical it’s good.’

Theorists learn best from activities where:

- the learning material is part of a system, model, concept or theory
- they have time to explore the associations and relationships between ideas, events and situations
- they have the chance to question and probe the basic methodology, assumptions and logic behind something
- they are intellectually stretched, i.e. analysing a complex problem, being tested in a tutorial session, being asked searching questions
- they are in structured situations with a clear purpose
- they can read or listen to ideas and concepts that are rational and logical
- they can analyse and then generalise problems
- they are offered interesting ideas and concepts even if they are not relevant.

## Activists

Activists involve themselves fully and without bias in new experiences. They:

- enjoy the ‘here and now’ and are happy to be dominated by immediate experiences
- are open-minded, not sceptical, and this tends to make them enthusiastic about anything new
- tend to act first and consider the consequences afterwards
- fill their days with activity
- tackle problems by brainstorming
- tend to thrive on the challenge of new experiences but are bored with implementation and longer-term consolidation
- are gregarious people, constantly involving themselves with others, but in doing so they seek to centre all activities on themselves.

Their philosophy is ‘I’ll try anything once’.

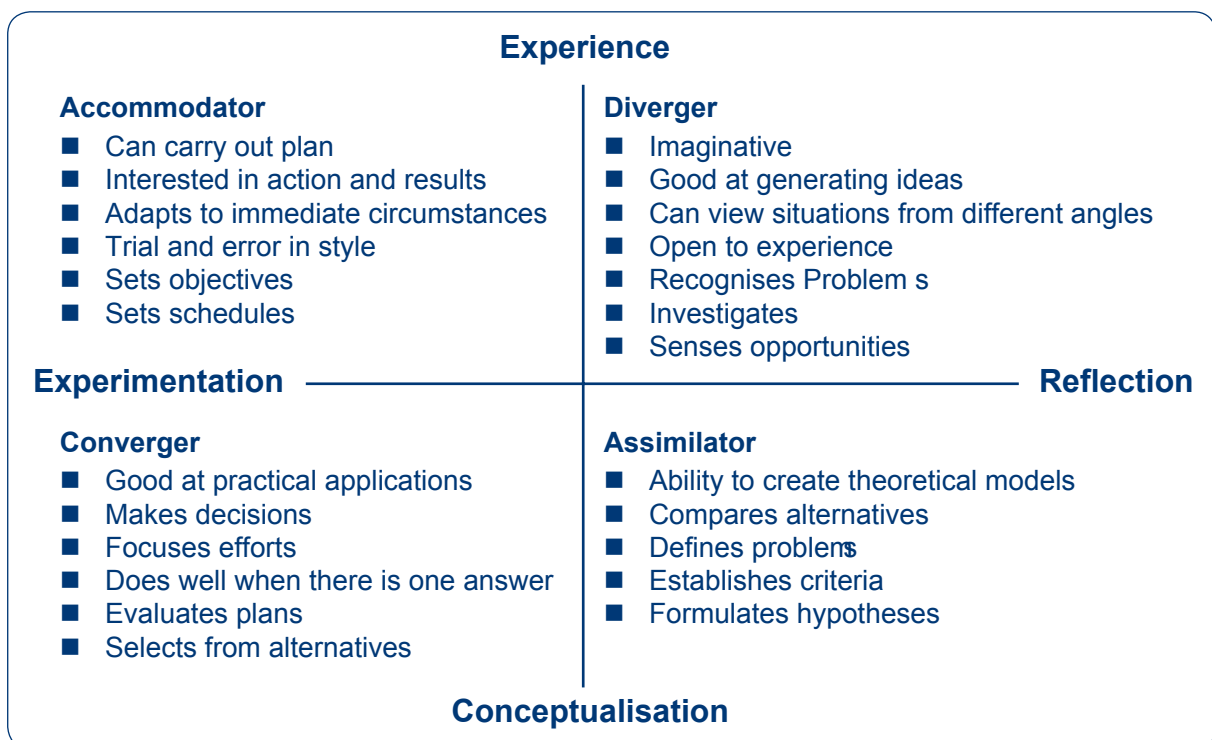
Activists learn best from activities where:

- there are new experiences/problems/opportunities from which to learn
- they can engross themselves in short ‘here and now’ activities such as business games, competitive teamwork tasks and role-playing exercises
- they have a lot of the limelight
- they lead discussions, give presentations
- they are allowed to generate ideas without restrictions of policy
- they are thrown in at the deep end with a task they think difficult
- they are involved with other people, solving problems as a team
- it is appropriate to ‘have a go’.

Gibbs (1988) classifies the various styles slightly differently. He assigns learning styles to different quadrants of the Kolb's experiential learning cycle as opposed to the poles of the cycle in the case of Honey and Mumford. Gibbs defines the four learning styles as follows.

- **The divergent learning style** emphasises concrete experience and reflective observation. Individuals who have this style are referred to as divergent, because they thrive in situations that call for the generation of alternative ideas and interpretations. Students with this style are most likely to be found in the arts and humanities.
- **The assimilative learning style** describes those who are predisposed towards abstract conceptualisation and reflective observation. They are able to reason inductively, to create theoretical models and to assimilate disparate observations into an integrated whole. They are also able to assess that the theories are logically sound and precise. Students who have this as their dominant style tend to be found in mathematics and the natural sciences.
- **The convergent learning style** predominantly draws on the learning styles of abstract conceptualisation and active experimentation. Individuals who have this strength have an ability to solve problems and apply ideas in a practical way. They perform best when there is one correct answer to a question or problem and as a result are called convergers. They are to be found typically in the physical sciences.
- **The accommodative learning style** indicates an ability to accomplish plans and tasks with success in uncertain situations. Accommodators have the facility to adapt themselves to different circumstances. Individuals with this as their dominant style are to be found in business studies.

He classifies the learning styles as follows.



*Learning styles and the experiential learning cycle (Gibbs, 1988)*

## A critique of learning styles

Jamieson (1994) considers that the Kolb's work has provided a 'very useful heuristic' device with which to think about learning. However he raises a number of questions.

- **The concept of learning style.** This is a central notion but it is unclear what the psychological status of such an idea is. Would such a learning style be innate? How do individuals develop a predisposition to a particular style?
- **The stages in the learning cycle.** The separation of the cycle into distinct phases appears to be at odds with the idea of 'reflection in action' (Schon, 1983) where action and reflection occur simultaneously. Also the idea that concrete experience must come first and we then proceed around the cycle. Kolb himself recognises that this is not necessary either logically or empirically. It is quite possible to 'start' anywhere in the cycle.
- **Does the model apply equally to learning in children and adults?** Bell (1990) has used the learning styles as a prompt for teachers to ensure that a balance in the 'learning styles' addressed in a lesson. This kind of activity is only valid if Kolb's model is applicable to learning in children.

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## Questions

1. Describe three strengths of experiential learning.
2. Describe an example from your own professional work where you can identify the specific stages of the Kolb's experiential learning cycle.
3. Evaluate a professional development activity you have undertaken or organised using the different stages of Kolb's experiential learning cycle or Dennison and Kirk's Do-Review-Learn-Apply model.



## Reader 2. Adult Learning

An outline of the principles of adult learning and how those principles are helpful understanding the ways in which adults learn

### Introduction

This Reader is concerned principally with the notion of learning in adults. It is appropriate to look at this issue because learning in adults is central to the process of professional development. The Reader explores the background to the development of theories of adult learning drawing on the work of Eduard Lindeman, Carl Rogers and, importantly, Malcolm Knowles. It considers the implications of the work of Knowles in particular for the practice of adult education and seeks to contrast learning in adults with learning in children. Although the Reader focuses on learning in adults, the issues it raises have implications for learning in all settings. The nature of human learning is not easily understood and the literature on it is vast. An indication of its size – and complexity – is given by Knowles (1984) who, in a review of different theories of learning, lists 56 different ‘*propounders of theories*’ spanning the 95 years from 1895 to 1980. The list includes many famous names including Dewey, Pavlov, Freud, Kohler, Skinner, Piaget, Rogers, Bruner, Gagne and Friere and Knowles himself. To this list he adds a further group, the major ‘*interpreters of theories*’, who total 30 in number.

Knowles makes the crucial point about theories of learning, that is, the vast majority of them and certainly all those that claim a scientific basis ‘*have been derived from a study of learning by animals and children*’ (Knowles, 1984). Only in recent times have theories of learning been espoused which focus on learning in adults. This Reader explores that particular issue using, quite appropriately, the work of Malcolm Knowles as a central theme, but also drawing on the work of other important writers and researchers in the field. Knowles is generally acknowledged as the first person to offer a coherent set of principles that could underpin thinking about the way adults learn. Although he insists that he himself did not originate the term ‘*andragogy*’ – the art and science of helping adults to learn – he is very closely associated with it and its elucidation. He was also the first person to make a clear distinction between *andragogy* and ‘*pedagogy*’ – the art and science of teaching children.

### Background

It was in the 1920s that the underpinning assumptions of adult education began to be challenged. Until that time teaching and learning was based on pedagogic principles and were principally concerned with the **transmission** of skills and knowledge. Didactic approaches such as lectures, memorising, drill and practice of routines characterised the teaching for all adults and children alike. Increasingly these were rejected by adults and in the 1920s and 1930s when examples of practice began to appear in the published literature that described different approaches.

Knowles draws on the thinking of A N Whitehead (in Donham, 1931) to explain one of the sources of ‘*discomfort*’ with using ‘*traditional*’ models of teaching with adults. Whitehead suggested that it was appropriate to describe education as a process of transmission of what is known only when the timespan of cultural change was greater than the life span of individuals. Whitehead proposed that:

*‘We are living in the first period in human history for which this assumption is false.... today this timespan is considerably shorter than that of human life and accordingly our training must prepare individuals to face a novelty of situations’*

*Whitehead 1931, pages viii – xix*

The pace of social change is increasing under the influence of developments in technology, mobility, communications and political systems, for example. It is important therefore that learners – adults and children alike – **learn how to learn**.

## The work of Eduard Lindeman

Since ancient times many experts – and non-experts – have ‘philosophised’ about adult learning. This thinking has tended to focus on the ends (for example, ‘What is an educated person?’) rather than the means and processes (for example, ‘How do adults learn?’). In the 1920s, two ‘*streams of inquiry*’ (Knowles, 1984) were discernible.

1. **The scientific stream** sought to discover through scientific experimentation a theory of learning in adults (see for example Thorndike, 1928).
2. **The artistic approach** sought to: ‘*discover new knowledge through intuition and the analysis of experience, that was concerned with how adults learn*’ (Knowles, 1984, p28).

It was Eduard C Lindeman in 1926 who led the way in the artistic approach. Drawing on the work of Dewey principally, he laid the foundations of a theory of adult learning with several key ideas.

- The motivation of adults to learn will arise from their needs and interests, and these should be the starting points for learning activities.
- The orientation to learning of adults is not subject-centred but life-centred.
- Experience is the richest resource for adults’ learning. Analysis of that experience should be the principal methodology.
- The need to be self-directed is strong in adults. The implication of this is that adults must be engaged in a process of mutual enquiry. This contrasts with a view of the process that requires the learners to be passive recipients of transmitted knowledge and then to conform themselves and their experience to it.
- Individual differences in adults are great and these must be catered for in the process of adult education.

The notion of ‘student-centredness’ underpins all of Lindeman’s ideas. It is a concept that has very important implications for the learning process and the role of the ‘teacher’. The student-centred approach was taken up by the psychotherapist, Carl Rogers.

## The work of Carl Rogers

Rogers began with the notion that ‘*therapy is a learning process*’ (Rogers, 1951) which led him see student-centred teaching as parallel to client-centred therapy. Rogers’ view of student-centred teaching was based on five central ideas.

- ‘*It is not possible to teach another person directly: we can only facilitate his/her learning*’. The implication of this is a change of focus, from what the teacher does to what is happening in/for the student.
- ‘*A person learns significantly only those things that he/she perceives as being involved in the maintenance or enhancement of the structure of her/his self*’. The implication of this idea is that learning must be relevant to the learner.
- ‘*Experience, which if assimilated would involve a change in the organisation of the individual’s ‘self’ tends to be resisted through denial or by other barriers*’. That is, any individual is resistant to change it if involves changing fundamental aspects of her/himself.

- *'The structure and organisation of self appear to become more rigid under threat. However, the boundaries of the structure of an individuals' self become more relaxed when completely free from threat. Experience that is perceived as inconsistent with the self can only be assimilated if the current organisation of self is relaxed and expanded to include it'.* The implications of this point, especially when taken with point 3, are that since significant learning is threatening, it is essential to provide an accepting and supportive learning environment. Only in this environment will an individual be susceptible and willing to change.
- *'The educational situation that most effectively promotes significant learning is one in which the threat to the self of the learner is reduced to a minimum'.* This hypothesis is an extension of 3 and 4.

## The work of Malcolm Knowles

Although it was in the 1950s that Knowles published some general principles for adult learning, it was not until the 1970s and 1980s that he was able to draw his ideas into a general theory (Knowles, 1975; 1980). The comparison of andragogy and pedagogy is given below and is taken from Knowles (1980). It compares both approaches under four headings.

### 1. The concept of the learner

- **Pedagogy.** The role is by definition a dependent one. The teacher is expected by society to take full responsibility for determining what is to be learned, when it is to be learned, how it is to be learned, and if it has been learned.
- **Andragogy.** It is a normal aspect of the process of maturation for a person to move from dependency towards increasing self-directedness, but at different rates for different people and in different dimensions of life. Teachers have a responsibility to encourage and nurture this movement. Adults have a deep psychological need to be generally self-directing, although they may be dependent in particular temporary situations.

### 2. The role of the learners' experience

- **Pedagogy.** The experience that learners bring to a learning situation is of little worth. It may be used as a starting point, but the experience from which learners will gain the most is that of the teacher, the textbook writer, the audiovisual aid producer, and other experts. Accordingly, the primary techniques in education are transmittal techniques such as lectures, assigned reading and audio-visual presentations.
- **Andragogy.** As people grow and develop they accumulate an increasing reservoir of experience that becomes an increasingly rich resource for learning – for themselves and for others. Furthermore, people attach more meaning to the learning that they gain from experience than that which they acquire passively. Accordingly, the primary techniques in education are experiential techniques, laboratory experiments, discussion, problem-solving cases, simulation exercises, field experience, and the like.

### 3. Readiness to learn

- **Pedagogy.** People are ready to learn whatever society (especially the school) says they ought to learn, provided the pressures on them (like fear of failure) are great enough. Most people of the same age are ready to learn the same things. Therefore, learning should be organised into a fairly standardised curriculum, with a uniform step-by-step progression for all learners.

- **Andragogy.** People become ready to learn something when they experience a need to learn it in order to cope more satisfyingly with real-life tasks or problems. The educator has a responsibility to create conditions and provide tools and procedures for helping learners discover their 'needs to know'. Learning programs should be organised around life-application categories and sequenced according to the learners' readiness to learn.

#### 4. Orientation to learning

- **Pedagogy.** Learners see education as a process of acquiring subject matter content, most of which they understand will be useful only at a later time in life. Accordingly, the curriculum should be organised into subject matter units (for example, courses) which follow the logic of the subject (for example, from ancient to modern history, from simple to complex mathematics or science). People are subject-centred in their orientation to learning.
- **Andragogy.** Learners see education as a process of developing increased competence to achieve their full potential in life. They want to be able to apply whatever knowledge and skill they gain today to living more effectively tomorrow. Accordingly, learning experiences should be organised around competency-development categories. People are performance-centred in their orientation to learning.

### Summary of assumptions

Knowles bases his view of andragogy on four assumptions and these contrast with the assumptions on which pedagogy is based. As individuals mature:

- they move from dependency to self-direction
- they acquire experience, which is a rich resource for learning
- their readiness to learn is increasingly oriented to learning about their social role
- their desire to apply their knowledge immediately grows and their learning orientation shifts from being subject-centred to being performance-centred.

There is a clear similarity between these ideas and those of Lindeman (1926) discussed earlier.

By 1980, Knowles was keen to point out that andragogy and pedagogy should not be seen as alternatives but as different ends of a spectrum. Since many teachers were successfully using 'andragogic' methods with young children it was clear that the situation should determine which approach is more appropriate. Further, it is not that andragogic methods are appropriate only for adults and pedagogic methods only for children. It is the level of self-directedness in the learner that is crucial (Knowles, 1975).

### Implications of Knowles' ideas for practice

Knowles (1980) has outlined some of the implications of his ideas for practice.

#### The learning climate

- The physical aspects of the learning environment and climate must reflect the adult status of the learner.
- The psychological climate must generate feelings of acceptance, valuing, respect and support.
- There should exist a '*spirit of mutuality between teachers and students as joint inquirers in which there is freedom of expression without fear of punishment or ridicule*' (Knowles, 1980, p47). Knowles considers that the teacher's attitude should reflect this climate.

## Diagnosis of needs

It is essential that the learners are involved in diagnosing their own learning needs. Knowles outlines a model to achieve this. The learners should participate in:

- (i) formulating an idea of the characteristics required to achieve an ideal model of performance;
- (ii) assessing their present level of competence;
- (iii) assessing the gap between the outcomes of (i) and (ii) so that they can identify, and be motivated to pursue, new directions for growth.

## The planning process

Knowles (1980) sees the crucial element of andragogy as the involvement of the learner in their own learning with the teacher acting as a *'procedural guide and content resource'* (p48).

## Conducting learning experiences

In the classical teaching situation the teacher takes full responsibility for the teaching; the learner is simply the passive recipient. In more self-directed situations *'andragogical practice treats the learning-teaching situation as the mutual responsibility of the learners and the teacher'*. Knowles (1980) sees the teacher's role as *'procedural technician, resource person, and co-inquirer, more a catalyst than an instructor, more a guide than a wizard'* (p48). Rogers (1969) sees the relationship between the teacher (or facilitator in Rogers' terms) as crucial.

He suggests that achieving an appropriate relationship is dependent on the qualities of:

- warmth – non-possessive caring, prizing trust and respect
- genuineness or realness
- empathy – sensitive and accurate listening and empathetic understanding.

Rogers (1969) gives the following guidelines for facilitators of learning.

- The facilitator has much to do with setting the initial mood or climate of the group or class experience.
- The facilitator helps to elicit and clarify the purposes of the individuals in the class as well as the more general purposes of the group.
- He/she relies upon the desire of each student to implement those purposes that have meaning for her/him as motivational forces behind significant learning.
- The facilitator endeavours to organise and make easily available the widest possible range of resources for learning.
- The facilitator regards herself/himself as a flexible resource to be used by the group.
- In responding to the expressions in the classroom group, he/she accepts both intellectual content and emotionalised attitudes, endeavouring to give each aspect the approximate degree of emphasis that it has for the individual or the group.
- As the accepting classroom climate becomes established, the facilitator is able increasingly to become a participant learner, a member of the group expressing her/his views as those of one individual only.
- He takes the initiative in sharing herself/himself with the group – her/his feelings as well as his/her thoughts – in ways which do not demand or impose but represent simply the personal sharing which students may take or leave.

- Throughout the classroom experience, he/she remains alert to the expressions indicative of deep or strong feelings.
- In her/his functioning as a facilitator, the leader endeavours to recognise and accept her/his own limitations.

### Responding to the adult orientation to learn

- Adult educators must themselves respond to the learning needs of adults.
- The adult orientation to learn demands a reorganisation of the curriculum, which moves away from a structured sequential subject-based curriculum to a problem-based one, which may cross traditional curriculum areas.
- The problem orientation of adults implies that the most appropriate starting point for adult learners is the problem they bring to the course.

### Assessment of learning

Knowles sees the involvement of adults in the assessment of their own learning as crucial:

*nothing makes an adult feel more childlike than being judged by another adult; it is the ultimate sign of disrespect and dependency'*

*Knowles, 1980, p49*

He suggests that self-evaluation is more appropriate than being judged by others. Knowles further suggests that more central than the self-evaluation is the re-diagnosis of learning needs.

Condition	Teaching principle
The learners participate actively in the learning process.	<p>The teacher:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ exposes the learners to new possibilities for self-fulfilment</li> <li>■ helps the learners clarify their own aspirations for improved behaviour</li> <li>■ helps the learners diagnose the gap between their aspirations and their present level of performance</li> <li>■ helps the learners identify the life problems they experience because of the gaps in their personal skills and abilities.</li> </ul>
The learning environment is characterised by physical comfort, mutual trust and respect, mutual helpfulness, freedom of expression, and acceptance of differences.	<p>The teacher:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ provides physical conditions that are comfortable (with respect to seating, smoking, temperature, ventilation, lighting, decoration) and conducive to interaction (preferably, with no person sitting behind another person)</li> <li>■ accepts the learners as persons of worth and respects their feelings and ideas</li> <li>■ seeks to build relationships of mutual trust and helpfulness among the learners by encouraging co-operative activities and refraining from inducing competitiveness and 'judgmentalness'</li> <li>■ exposes his or her own feelings and contributes resources as a co- learner in the spirit of mutual inquiry.</li> </ul>
The learners perceive the goals of a learning experience to be their goals.	<p>The teacher:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ involves the learners in a mutual process of formulating learning objectives in which the needs of the learners of the institution, of the teacher, of the subject matter, and of the society are taken into account.</li> </ul>
The learners accept a share of the responsibility for planning and operating a learning experience, and therefore have a feeling of commitment toward it.	<p>The teacher:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ shares his or her thinking about options available in the designing of learning experiences and the selection of materials and methods and involves the learners in deciding among these options jointly.</li> </ul>
The learners participate actively in the learning process.	<p>The teacher:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ helps the learners to organise themselves (project groups, learning-teaching teams, independent study, and so on) to share responsibility in the process of mutual inquiry.</li> </ul>
The learning process is related to and makes use of the experience of the learners.	<p>The teacher:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ helps the learners exploit their own experiences as resources for learning through the use of such techniques as discussion, role-playing, case method, and so on</li> <li>■ gears the presentation of his or her own resources to the levels of experience of particular learners</li> <li>■ helps the learners to apply new learnings to their experience, and thus to make the learnings more meaningful and integrated.</li> </ul>
The learners have a sense of progress towards their goals.	<p>The teacher:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ involves the learners in developing mutually acceptable criteria and methods for measuring progress toward the learning objectives</li> <li>■ helps the learners develop and apply procedures for self-evaluation according to these criteria.</li> </ul>

## Knowles' ideas and the role of the teacher

Knowles' ideas and the general implications they have for practice have further implications for the role of the teacher of adults. These are summarised in the table opposite under the various 'conditions for adult learning' outlined by Knowles.

The table is taken largely from Knowles (1984).

## The importance of experience in the adult learning process

The experience of adults is far greater than that of children. This has important implications for adult learning.

- **Experiential techniques are important.** Because adults are a rich source of experience, learning activities should draw on that experience. Active engagement in the learning is crucial.
- **Practical application is important.** It is important that new ideas should relate to the life experiences of the learners. Furthermore, in the learning activities there should be provision for the learners to plan and rehearse how they intend to apply their learning.
- **Learning to learn.** Knowles refers to '*unfreezing experience*'. By this he means encouraging adults to engage in activities which allow them to engage in introspection more readily and to recognise and acknowledge the experience they possess.

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## Questions

1. Summarise three of the key principles of adult learning that you consider to be most important. Indicate why you consider them to be important.
2. Evaluate a professional development activity you have recently undertaken or organised from the standpoint of Knowles' theory of adult learning.
3. Critically appraise Rogers' guidelines for facilitators of learning. Which do you consider to be most important and why? Which are least important and why?

## Reader 3. The Nature of Professional Practice

An explanation of models of professional practice and their relevance for understanding professional development

### Introduction

This Reader explores some of the key issues in the ways that professional practitioners think and act. The notion of professional practice is used here in a very broad way to encompass all those who work in complex and uncertain circumstances, where people – clients, customers, colleagues – are central and where there is some kind of moral purpose to the enterprise.

### Key ideas

For professional practitioners, especially expert ones, it is easy to forget that professional work, especially in what we might call the human professions – education and educational management, health and social care, medicine – is complex and difficult. So what do we know of professional practice?

It was Donald Schon who in the mid-eighties gave some important insights into the world of professional practice.

**Schon's first contribution** was to suggest that although professions appear to be very diverse, they do in fact have a great deal in common. For Schon professional practice is characterised by *'uncertainty, uniqueness and value conflict'*. The problems that professionals face are *'complex and messy'*. There are very few, if any, absolutely correct answers, certain rights or certain wrongs. Answers to most of the problems professional practitioners solve – and solve apparently with consummate ease – are best characterised as being 'the best option'. Their world is characterised by ambiguity and paradox, features they are stuck with and have to stick with.

Professional practitioners bring a wealth of knowledge to bear on the problems they solve. Their knowledge:

- is not narrowly focused nor is it purely technical
- is extraordinarily diverse
- contains different elements from the 'technical' to the 'personal', from the immediate lived world of their practice to the wider social, political and economic context
- embraces the knowing 'that' – factual knowledge and the knowing 'how' – practical knowledge, and professional practitioners know how to enhance both
- is also deep. In their practice, professional practitioners draw on knowledge that was accrued in the earliest stages of their lives.

For professionals, the context in which they act – that is the conditions prevailing at the moment of acting – is important and significant and it contributes to the uniqueness of their actions. This means that answering 'What would you do if?' questions can be very difficult for the professional, because 'It all depends....'. They want to know more about the context before offering an answer. Professional practice is very difficult to talk about and to articulate.

Professional practitioners know more than they can say. There is something about their work which makes it difficult to explain which often means that the real complexity – and value – of practice is not made known to those outside the field.

Professional practice is not simply technical problem-solving and professional practice cannot be understood in terms of skills alone. To use technical solutions 'objectivises' and dehumanises the other. It creates an 'I – it' relationship and denies what Buber refers to as the 'I – thou' relationship. Expert professional practice involves a whole host of higher order abilities – planning, predicting, preparing, solving problems, abstracting, synthesising, making decisions and evaluating actions. Sometimes, expert professional practice is characterised by deciding not to deploy a skill. Although it may be the scheduled time for a nurse to take a patient's blood pressure, it may be more appropriate, say because of the patient's discomfort or distress, to delay a short while. So the professional's work is not simply a matter of applying a technical solution to a particular problem. The simple technical rational approach is not good enough.

Added to this daunting list, is the moral responsibility borne by professionals, especially those in the human professions. For example, this responsibility is lived out in the teaching profession by what Andy Hargreaves refers to as care, closeness and commitment. Green sets this idea out by saying:

*The professions are always practices in response to some fundamental human need or social good whose advancement is already a moral aim.... The professions, in short, are practices related to the central life giving, life sustaining, and life fulfilling events of human existence.*

*Green, 1984, p30*

So the world of the professional practitioner is complex, uncertain, conflicted, immediate, contextualised, action-based, characterised by uniqueness where problems are not and generally cannot be solved simply by the application of technical knowledge but by the use somehow of knowledge which has remarkable breadth and depth in a way which is difficult to explain to others and arguably has a moral purpose.

**Schon's second contribution** was to explain how the professional practitioner copes with these difficulties. In essence, he said that professional practitioners bring to their practice all their previous knowledge and experience and metaphorically 'converse with the context'. They apprehend the context, interact with it and review their intentions. Through the outcomes of that ongoing conversation, they act. The process of the conversation he called **reflection in action** which, he went on to say, results in the practitioner **knowing in action**. This reflection creates the rationale for the act, which is then implicit in the act and in the expert practitioner this goes on almost intuitively.

This view of professional practice has some very important implications not least in the form of professional knowledge created by reflection in action. What is its validity? What is its scope? How is it best studied? Schon proposed and called for an exploration of a form of knowledge of practice that is:

*'implicit in the artistic, intuitive processes which some practitioners bring to situations of uncertainty, instability, uniqueness and value conflict'*

So, for example, while a teacher is at work in the classroom, she is simultaneously reflecting and acting. A child asks a question and almost instantly, the teacher begins responding in the light of her knowledge of that child and while making an explanation adapts that explanation to the child's quizzical look or to the sight of the penny dropping as the child begins to understand and to another child not paying attention or to the clock on the classroom wall telling her there's ten minutes of the lesson left and so on and so on.

**Schon's third contribution** was to assert that professional practitioners use reflection in another way. They reflect **on** their actions – particularly they reflect on their reflections in action in order to learn from them. This reflection on action is reflection that takes place outside the moments of action. Of course, the difficulty of deciding as professionals when we are 'in action' makes it difficult to make the distinction between reflecting in and reflecting on. Nonetheless, the reflective practitioner model remains a robust and helpful one. Before going on to explore the implications of Schon's ideas, it is worth looking at another development which took root around the same time at which Schon's work was becoming known.

At about the time when Schon published 'The Reflective Practitioner', David Kolb published a highly influential text entitled 'Experiential Learning' in which he described what has come to be known as the Kolb experiential learning cycle. Although it is familiar now to many, it is worth rehearsing briefly. Kolb, drawing on the ideas of Kurt Lewin from the 1940s and Dewey before that, shaped learning as a four-stage cycle. The immediate concrete experience is observed and reflected upon which results in a process of accommodation and assimilation from which abstract concepts and generalisations are made. These implications and hypotheses serve as guides to create new actions that result in yet more concrete experiences. So learning from experience has four elements.

1. **Concrete experience**
2. **Reflective observation**
3. **Abstract conceptualisation**
4. **Active experimentation**

These four elements follow each other in a sequence or cycle as an individual learns from experience. The link between the ideas of Schon and Kolb are clear and the significant link is reflection.

## The notion of reflection

Reflection is a cornerstone of Schon's Reflective Practitioner model of professional practice and it is central to Kolb's model of how we learn from experience. It is the key, to use David Boud's phrase, to '*turning experience into learning*'.

Of course, reflection as a way of thinking and acting is not new. Dewey, writing at the turn of the century saw reflection as:

*'... the active, persistent and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it and the further consideration to which it tends'*

p9

This 'thinking about thinking' conception of reflection, a metacognitive view, remains important but it is the role of reflection in learning and in developing new understandings which is important. Boyd and Fales (1983) suggest that:

*'... reflective learning is the process of internally examining an issue of concern, triggered by an experience, which creates and clarifies meaning in terms of self, and which results in terms of a changed person'*.

Boud, Keogh and Walker (1985) consider that:

*'... reflection in the context of learning is a generic term for those intellectual activities in which individuals engage to explore their experiences in order to lead to new understanding and appreciations'*.

And in professional practice reflection is an essential idea. Reflection-in-action is a mode of operating for many professionals as they seek to make sense of the problematic nature of their practice. Reflection on action and on experience is an important part of learning from experience.

## So what might professionals reflect upon?

The short but not particularly helpful answer to the question 'What might professional reflect upon?' is 'Most things'. The unhelpfulness of this answer lies in the fact that any professional's personal practical knowledge (see Connelly and Clandinin, 1984) – the knowledge that they bring to their practice – is vast, complex and interconnected. Because of this complexity, any attempt to place the knowledge of any professional practitioner into different categories runs the risk of destroying the value and the integrity of the whole. However, it is helpful to put some shape on the content of reflection. Drawing on the work of Habermas, (1971), Van Manen (1977) Mezirow (1981) and others, (James and Clarke, 1992; 1994) reflection for professional practice can be seen to take place in four domains.

Firstly, professionals can reflect upon the **technical aspects** of practice, that is, those elements of practice that are understandable in scientific/rational terms alone. So, for a doctor, it may be the therapeutic effects of frequently used drugs. For a teacher, it could be to do with the readability of print of different sizes. For the professional engineer it could be the technical specification of a piece of equipment. For a manager, it could be the production costs of one of the companies leading products. Reflection on this form of knowledge leads to improvements in the efficiency and effectiveness of practice. Reflection helps to inform the practitioner what the most efficient and effective action will be.

Secondly, professional practitioner can reflect upon the **lifeworld** where they act out their practice. This lifeworld is the complex array of routines, expectations, roles, norms, axioms, and unwritten rules that makes up the practitioner's everyday world. Reflection on this kind of knowledge is concerned with establishing appropriateness. What is the best thing to do within the accepted professional norms? For teachers, that would be concerned with, well, a multitude of things – but for example, what kind of additional task to set a pupil who has already completed the task set. What kind of feedback to give a pupil whose work is not as good as it could be. What is it that characterises an appropriate conversation between two teachers when there are pupils in earshot? For the educational manager, reflection in this domain would be concerned with the kind of guidance a new teacher will require, or deciding when to call a parent in over a child's misbehaviour.

Thirdly, professionals can reflect upon **the social, political and economic context** of their work. For example, a nurse may reflect on the financial constraints that are placed on her as a result of changes in the way healthcare is funded and as a result change the way she works. A primary school teacher may consider that preparation for testing at Key Stage 2 has led to greater collaboration and staff development and write an article in the TES as a result. A manager may review the options of a change of government and write a strategy paper for the board of his company based on that review. An outcome of reflection in this domain is the growth and transformation of the individual, which can result in increased empowerment, autonomy and emancipation.

Fourthly, an important dimension of knowledge upon which practitioners can reflect is their **personal knowledge** of themselves. What personal qualities, experiences and attributes do individual practitioners bring to their practice? For the consultant in palliative care, what are the important life experiences from before he entered medicine? For the social worker deciding the best course of action to protect a child, what are her own values, beliefs and experiences which impact on her practice? For the manager, what aspects of her life-history does she bring to the present in dealing with a bullying boss? The outcome of such reflection can result individual development, empowerment and autonomy.

The balance of these domains will vary in different practitioners and of course there is a lack of separation between the categories. Also there are other ways of framing reflection and this framework I have offered for understanding the content of reflection is but one model. There are others, Carper (1978) for example gives us a range of categories of nursing knowledge and Michael Eraut has given similar categorisations in teaching and other professions (Eraut, 1990). Management standards can also give a useful framework for reflection in the practice in management. Helpful though these models are, particularly for untangling the vast and hugely complex lifeworld knowledge there is a danger that they destroy the holistic nature of practice. They also distract us from the really important issue of coming to an understanding of the nature of the individual practitioner's knowledge-in-action. It is important that we see any categorisation as domains of reflection in action rather than prescribed acts. This notion has important implications for understandings of professional action.

## When might reflection take place?

So, when might professionals reflect? The short but again not particularly helpful answer is 'All the time – before, during and after practice'. Schon's distinction between reflecting in and on practice can mistakenly give the impression that reflecting on action only happens **after** practice. A better way of considering the distinction is to view reflecting on action as that reflection which takes place **outside** the reflection occurring during the moment of acting. Van Manen (1991) helpfully reminds us that reflection before the event – anticipatory reflection – is an important part of reflecting on practice. He says that:

*'Anticipatory reflection allows us to deliberate about possible alternatives, decide on courses of action, plan the kinds of things we need to do, and anticipate the experiences we and others may have as a result of expected events or our planned actions. Anticipatory reflection helps us to approach situations and other people in an organised, decision-making, prepared way.'*

Van Manen also offers 'stop and think' reflection. Van Manen also describes what he calls 'recollective reflection' which 'helps us to make sense of past experiences and thus gain insights into the meaning of the experiences'. He parallels this kind of reflection with Schon's reflecting on action. Interestingly, Van Manen questions the notion of reflection in action suggesting that in many situations: 'We do not usually have the time or opportunity to reflect'

## Where does reflection take place?

The answer to the question 'Where might professional practitioners reflect?' is, of course, 'Most places!' Although reflection in action must take place at the point of action, reflection on action can take place anywhere and at any time. This presents a challenge for educators: When and where does learning take place? In the lesson? Or in the lecture? In the laboratory? Or afterwards, in the bar? In the bath? Or on the beach? The desired behavioural change from a learning activity may not occur until sometime subsequent as the learner reflects on the learning experience and this reflection may occur in an entirely unpredictable location. The learner may just not be ready to learn when and where you want them to.

## How might professionals reflect?

How might professionals reflect in action? The fact is we do not know. The ways in which professional practitioners actually reflect in action is substantially under-researched.

Explanations of reflection – particularly after action – often involve the direct **analysis** of experience (see for example, Dennison and Kirk, 1990). This approach conveys a sense of coming to understand experience through a rational process of untangling and disaggregating the constituent parts in order to establish their meanings against pre-set criteria. This analytical mode of operating is a feature of the process of grasping experience through comprehension

as opposed to the more intuitive and holistic modes of apprehending the immediate concrete experience.

The 'How' question of reflective practice helps to pull out two kinds of reflection which have been referred to as deliberative and deep reflection (Clarke, Kelly and James, 1994).

**Deliberative reflection** allows professionals to practice thoughtfully, intelligently and carefully. This kind of reflection involves higher order processes of reflection such as planning, preparing, analysing, synthesising, predicting and evaluating. These important reflective processes require practitioners to draw on both their knowledge of the context in which they are working and the notions that make up the corpus of their non-contextualised professional knowledge.

The scope of deliberative reflection is defined by the everyday norms of practice. These represent the frame within which practitioners operate. This frame gives us guidance on the validity of reflective practice and the authenticity of its outcomes. In judging the validity, we should use the standards of reasoning that reflect everyday practices which are embedded in the culture of professional practice. What are the cultural norms for thinking about practice? How do practitioners think in their everyday practice?

**Deep reflection** represents another kind of reflection. It is a process that allows us to know about what we know and how we acquired that knowledge. It allows us to consider all aspects of practice including the processes of deliberative reflection and to ask fundamental questions about the underpinnings of practice. The processes in this level of reflection allow us to consider 'Why?' questions and 'What makes me?' questions about the totality of practice and its various elements. Reflection at this level would enable practitioners to consider in a fundamental way the basis of their practice. It would also enable them to understand the limits of their reflective practice, that is, 'What it is not possible to reflect upon?'

An example of deep reflection might be a nurse considering the care of a man of her own father's age and considering the influences in her own life-history that affect her actions with that client. As part of these reflections, she might consider what aspects of her practice she is not willing to reflect upon and why. This kind of reflection is probably too challenging and disruptive of professional fluency to be part of reflection in action. The fundamental consideration of practice through deep reflection may not be possible during the moment of action.

The scope for deep reflection is an important consideration. What are the limits to such processes? What obligation can we place on practitioners to indulge in this kind of reflection?

A thorough exploration of the totality of reflection could lead us to a real understanding of its value. That value may not be directly to do with the practitioner learning **about** practice and improving it but is concerned with practitioners learning **through** practice and improving their understanding of themselves. In this sense, reflective practice is educational.

## Why might practitioners reflect? What is the purpose?

Reflection in and on practice has a range of different purposes.

To reiterate, one purpose of reflection is to make sense of our experience. Experience here has two meanings. Firstly, it is the everyday events that happen to practitioners or that they effect in their professional lives. Secondly, it is the ideas, concepts and theories that make up the personal practical knowledge held by professionals and that they bring to the context for action.

Another purpose of reflecting during the act of practice is to draw upon the vast array of professional knowledge we possess in order to exercise professional judgement as we act individually and with autonomy, efficiently, effectively and appropriately.

Another way of viewing reflection is that its purpose is to **improve** practice. For the professional, achieving this improvement is a complex matter, particularly because of the diversity of those who have a stake in the enterprise. Consider the professional practice of the manager of a professional development course run by a university. For the manager of that course, the learners are important stakeholders but so are their employers and their professional associations. The university also has a big stake too, the lecturers, the course manager her/himself, the head of department and so on. The improving of efficiency, effectiveness, appropriateness and autonomy in relation to all these stakeholders is a very challenging activity.

Although the improvement purpose is important – that interpretation of the purpose of reflection and learning from experience implies a need for improvement. This interpretation suggests a deficit model for reflective practice. It conveys a sense of ‘You could do better and through reflective practice you will be able to’. An opposite view sees reflection as empowering practitioners and enhancing their autonomy as the full value of their experience and their practice is recognised.

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## Questions

1. Consider your own practice using the way that Schon characterises the nature of professional work. Describe how your work is 'professional' in the way that Schon describes professional work.
2. List aspects of your work that you could reflect upon using the four domains of reflection: the technical, the lifeworld of practice, the social political and economic context and personal knowledge.
3. Summarise an example of when you were aware that you were either reflecting in action or reflecting on action. What did you consider and what was the outcome?

## Reader 4. Continuing Professional Development

An outline of the nature, need and value of continuing professional development (CPD), to help you to understand your own CPD, the need for CPD and its value

### Introduction

This paper briefly explores the notion of continuing professional development. It first examines the notion of 'the professions' and what it means to be 'a professional', and attempts to distinguish between training, staff development and professional development. The paper then explores aspects of professional development and in the final section, the paper raises a number of issues – or hypotheses for discussion – about aspects of continuing professional development.

### Professions and professionals

The features defining a profession have been widely reviewed in the literature. Madden and Mitchell (1993) define a profession

*'A discrete body of individuals applying advanced learning or scientific knowledge and expertise to provide a service to clients and bound together by a membership of a professional body which assumes responsibility for monitoring professional standards and which confers benefits and may impose sanctions on members.'*

*Madden and Mitchell (1993, p8.)*

The term professional – a member of a profession – can be defined in a number of ways. Garret (1996) considers that there are three key dimensions that define a member of a profession. They are as follows.

- A 'professional' will have undergone a lengthy period of professional training in a body of abstract knowledge and will have experience in the relevant field
- A 'professional' is controlled by a code of ethics and professional values.
- A professional is committed to the core business of the organisation.

In recent years, the notion of the profession has been expanded to include a wider range of occupational groupings. A larger number of work groupings would consider themselves to be professional in their preparation, expertise and approach to their work. As we move increasingly to client/customer-centred, knowledge-based, improvement-oriented occupations, that change is understandable. Further, a key concept underpinning the notion of a professional is that of autonomy. Professional action demands some kind of independent, self-directed, responsible action. It is these qualities that are in much demand in contemporary institutions.

## Training, staff development and professional development

In the development of professionals there is a wide range of terms in use to cover a range of development activities. There are three main ones in use ‘training’, ‘staff development’ and ‘professional development’ and the meaning of these overlap. O’Neill (1994) defines the terms as follows.

- **Training** – for individuals and groups with similar needs about an externally identified subject and is essentially short-term in nature in that it ‘fills a clearly identified gap’.
- **Staff development** – has broad meaning. Sparks and Loucks-Horsely (1990) define it as those processes that improve the job-related skills, knowledge or attitudes. The focus on development in specific job-related roles is confirmed by Matheson who sees staff development as:

*‘The activity of staff training that is a conscious institutional approach intended to improve the capability of staff to fill specified roles’.*

If there is a defining characteristic of staff development it is that it refers to the development of a defined group of staff to meet an externally defined but broad need.

- **Professional Development** – is for individuals with needs identified by them or their organisation; is career-orientated or personal; and is long term. Oldroyd and Hall (1991) consider that the term ‘professional development’ is broader in meaning than staff development since it implies control over working conditions, enhanced professional status and career advancement.

Professional development is in many ways an all embracing term. It sees development as career long, complex, not simply the meeting of short term and narrowly focused need (although it may include that) and does not simply focus on the individual.

## The development of professional knowledge

There is a bewildering variety of options available to those who wish to develop their professional practice. This section briefly explores some of the relevant issues.

### The importance of reflection

Providing the opportunity to reflect is crucial to any professional development activity. However, the value of any activity is maximised when the reflective potential – particularly reflection on the reflections in action – is maximised.

### Relevance to practice

In any development activity that takes place outside the learner’s workplace, it is important that the reflection is focused onto the practitioner’s practice. For the learning to impact on practice, the learner must be engaged in a consideration of the outcome of the activity in relation to practice. An active exploration of the practice of reflection in action is an essential part of professional development activities. Without this focus, the value of the activity will be lost and the learner may be left with a sense of – to put it bluntly – ‘So what?’

## Reflection on reflection

Thirdly, following any activity, such as creating a learning log, where an individual has reflected on or about his/her practice, the value of that activity is increased enormously by discussion with another practitioner who can understand and empathise. Similarly, the value of a discussion of practice is increased if it is preceded by an activity that promoted reflection on practice. The discussions can focus on the reflection on practice instead of to the practice itself. Through this kind of discussion, practitioners gain insights into how they learn about their practice not just insights into how they do their professional work. They learn about their learning.

## The importance of the other

The significance and power of others is enormous in promoting reflection. If organisations are keen to promote continuous improvement, they must develop their abilities to help others to reflect. It is a central component of leadership. It is a key aspect of the collaborative practice of the professional practitioners. The challenge and support essential to the process particularly of deep reflection probably best comes from a collaborating colleague – a ‘critical friend’.

## Holistic reflection – broadening the scope

It is easy over-emphasise the direct analysis of experience, which leads to critical comprehension as a way of making sense of experience. In this way of operating, reflection is all too easily seen as part of a technical problem-solving activity. Modes of reflection should be broadened out into other modes of appreciation. Such a broadening would require a wider range of forms of representation. Representation is used here in the way that Elliot Eisner uses it. Representation means transforming *‘the contents of consciousness into a public form so that they can be stabilised, inspected, edited, and shared with others’* (Eisner, 1991).

Aesthetic forms of representing understanding such as poetry, drawing, painting, sculpture, collage, narratives of a variety of kinds and dance and drama make possible unique forms of understanding that are not possible through rational ways of knowing. Aesthetic forms invite interpretation and can convey meaning beyond the form of presentation. For example, the meaning of a poem transcends the meaning of the individual words. The images created they can reveal and communicate emotional, spiritual and aesthetic dimensions.

## Establishing reflective cultures

An important issue in thinking about the place of reflection in professional development is the influence of the setting in which the practitioner works. A reflective organisational culture can be a significant positive influence on individual reflection. And the reverse is true; a non-reflective organisational ethos will discourage reflection in individual practitioners. There is a variety of pressures on professional organisations which can make them more or less likely to be reflective.

- The gendered nature of any organisation may have an influence on its reflective or non-reflective nature although this is a complex matter. The work of David Bakan (1966) gives some useful insights here. He argues that there are two predominant life-strategies that are associated with gender.
- **The life-strategy of communion** is characterised by holistic approaches to issues, openness, a willingness to share and a readiness to accept new ideas. Bakan suggests that the communion life-strategy is generally more associated with women. It could be argued that these are important precursors to reflective practice.

- **The life-strategy of agency** is characterised by a desire to control, a tendency to separate off the non-controllable features of life and to deny the life-strategy of communion. He suggests that agency is more associated with men. It can be argued that these characteristics are likely to inhibit reflectivity. The work of Belenky et al (1986) suggests that women's ways of knowing emphasise knowing in personal and interpersonal ways in contrast to ways of knowing in men.
- Organisational cultures, which are judgemental, are likely to inhibit reflective approaches. An over-emphasis on judging performance could discourage reflection and encourage rule-based, non-reflective practice. By the same token developmental cultures which recognise the problematic nature of professional competence and the difficulty of learning to perform competently are more likely to encourage reflective practice.
- Organisational structures which are organic, flexible and collegial in nature are likely to facilitate reflective practice while those that are more hierarchical and mechanistic in forms are likely to inhibit it.
- Organisations which are characterised by the use of empowering power are more likely to encourage reflection as opposed to those characteristics by the use of controlling power.
- Because 'acting' is such a different activity from 'reflecting on acting', it is important to allow space in the activities of the organisation for individuals to reflect on practice. While busy organisations can be energising places in which to work, frantic activity can block out space for reflection. Their needs to be space for contemplation.
- Finally, organisations which focus on outcomes instead of processes are likely to be concerned with reflection simply because reflection is essentially a process activity.

## Issues in Professional Development

This section raises some issues in relation to professional development.

- Opportunities to reflect are important in any professional development activity.
- If professional development is to lead to improved performance in the short, medium or long term, it must involve:
  - an investigation of needs
  - support after the development activity as the newly acquired skills and knowledge are put into place
  - ways of ensuring the best use of the new knowledge for the individual and the organisation
  - evaluation and feedback
- The development needs of the individual that are to be met by a professional development activity must relate – even if only indirectly – to the needs of the institution. That is, professional development must be relevant to the institutional development needs.
- The development of individuals must be part of a coherent institutional development plan with agreed policy statements, setting out aims, responsibilities and a budget.
- Professional development activities must relate directly to individual needs. It must be responsive.
- The development of individuals must take place in parallel with organisational change. It is not possible for an individual to change their practice without there being change in the organisation. This change will be met with the kinds of resistances and defences that any change calls up. There is therefore a political dimension to professional development.
- Professional development must be varied in style and focus in order to develop the full range of capabilities.

- As well as reflection within a professional development activity, there needs to be reflection on the professional development activity itself so the individual professional can come to understand themselves as learners, how they develop as professionals and very importantly how they prevent themselves developing.
- Competence frameworks can provide a very valuable resource for auditing present levels of expertise and areas for development.
- In modern organisations, ‘people’ are the central and vital resource. The development of that resource is essential for organisational effectiveness.
- In modern times, the environment for work organisations is continually changing. Continuing development is essential for those who work in those organisations in order to ensure that the organisation remains effective.
- There is an imperative on all organisations to improve. A continuous improvement culture is fundamental and professional development is crucial to continuous improvement.
- Leaders have a central role in changing organisations so that they improve organisational performance. Leaders therefore have central role in leading the professional development of individuals, groups and the whole institution. They have to be the leading educator for the organisation – and of course for themselves.
- Professionals need to lead and manage their own professional development.
- Professional development activities can be of a range of different kinds – formal informal, in-house or away from the institution, planned and structured or ad hoc and unstructured, following a set curriculum or independent learning based, groups based or individual, focused on a narrow topic or broad in scope.

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## Question

Choose three of the ‘Issues in professional development’ and critically appraise them in the light of your own professional development experience.