

Consultations on the Concept of Chartered Educational Assessor

Background

Between April 2006 and January 2007 the Institute of Educational Assessors (IEA) held consultation sessions on the concept of Chartered Educational Assessor (CEA).

Objectives of the consultation process

- To invite a range of educational stakeholders to join a limited consultation exercise on the IEA's proposals for a CEA
- To receive comments and suggestions on the proposals from those consulted

Purpose of the consultations

- To gather respondents' comments and suggestions and, as decided by the IEA, make recommendations and determine appropriate actions

Consultations

Consultations were held with teachers, examiners, awarding bodies, teacher associations and trade unions and other educational stakeholders. In total 61 people were consulted. Of these, 49 people were representing 18 educational organisations and 12 were teachers and external examiners invited by the IEA to participate in two CEA development groups. A list of those consulted follows.

Who were consulted?

The following organisations and individuals were consulted on the IEA's Chartered Educational Assessor concept between April and December 2006.

- **AAIA**
- **ARG**
- **Awarding Bodies:**
 - AQA
 - Edexcel
 - OCR
- **DfES**
- **GTC (England)**
- **LLUK**
- **NAA**
- **QCA**
- **SSAT**
- **Teacher Associations/Unions:**
 - ASCL
 - ATL
 - NAHT
 - NASUWT
 - NUT
 - PAT
- **TDA**

- Teachers and external examiners who participated in the IEA's Chartered Educational Assessor development groups

Focus of the Consultation	Comments and Suggestions
<p>Chartered Educational Assessor Definition</p> <p>The proposed definition is:</p> <p><i>'A Chartered Educational Assessor applies the highest professional skills and judgements to assure the quality of assessment and thereby sustain and improve confidence in the standard and consistency of assessment'</i></p> <p>Although a wide range of comments and suggestions were forthcoming from those consulted there was no uniform agreement about how the definition should be amended.</p>	<p>The vast majority of those consulted agreed that the definition should clearly state that a CEA should be involved in quality assuring and not quality controlling assessment. A few respondents offered comments on this as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'The key is quality assuring' • 'Quality assurance not control' • 'Should assure be replaced by ensure?' <hr/> <p>The majority of those consulted agreed that 'sustaining and improving confidence in the quality and consistency of assessment' should be included in the definition. The following comments reflect this although there was a wide range of suggestions as to how this should be worded, as is shown in the range of respondents' comments that follow:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Improve and sustain/maintain quality and confidence' • 'Should it be quality and integrity of assessment?' • 'Improve confidence and consistency of assessment' • '3 key terms are used in the definition, i.e. quality, standard and consistency. This is a lot for one sentence. Is quality of assessment needed, as it is implied by the use of Chartered Educational Assessor?' • 'Could 'properly and consistently applied' be inserted?' • 'It should be 'Improve confidence and consistency in assessment'' • 'Link confidence, consistency and quality assurance' • 'Improving standards is very important, so make this clearer' • 'Need to consider how to sustain measuring the impact that is desired over time, not at a particular moment. How will the IEA measure sustaining and improving confidence?' • 'The quality of assessment and consistency are key rather than measurement of confidence' <hr/> <p>A minority of those consulted requested that the definition clarifies what assessment means, as the following comments from individual consultees show:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Does it need to show the purpose to which assessment is put, i.e. AfL/formative development?' • 'Make it accommodate all aspects of assessment' • 'Does assessment need its meaning clarifying?' • 'It should relate to both AfL and AoL' • 'Does the definition need 'development of learners' in it?'

	<p>A small minority of those consulted thought the emphasis of the definition could be improved by reversing the order of the key statements.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Should the sentence be re-structured to make the focus clearer? E.g. reverse the sentence' • 'The key is to improve confidence and consistency so could the definition be reversed?' <p>A small minority of those consulted thought the definition should be clear about what is meant by the standard of assessment and that only awarding bodies have ownership of 'the standard'.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Make sure it is clear as to what is meant by the standard of assessment' • 'Make it clear that a CEA is to be a practitioner not someone building the principles of assessment' • 'Need to build into the definition a reference to an appropriate or established national standard' • 'It must be clear that a CEA will have no control over 'the standard'' <p>A few respondents challenged whether it is appropriate to use 'highest professional skills' in the definition on the grounds that this would be demeaning to teachers who already possess such skills, or, that the use of 'highest professional skills' would leave no room for future skill improvement. The following comments were received:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Aren't 'highest professional skills' expected of all teachers?' • 'Is 'highest professional skills' accurate, as how can someone improve from that point?' • 'Is there a danger of creating two tiers of assessors, where CEAs are seen as the only effective assessors?' <p>Additionally, some minor word alterations were recommended and most of these have already been incorporated into the definition as the consultation process was rolled out. One respondent proposed the following wording change that has yet to be considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Replace 'applies' with 'has''
<p>Chartered Educational Assessor Operational Models</p> <p>At the time of the consultation process three proposed operational models were included in the consultation process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At subject level in a secondary school • Across subjects in a secondary school • Within a primary school 	<p>A minority of those consulted offered suggestions on how to improve the clarity of the operational models, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Add two-way arrows on the diagram to reflect its cyclical nature' • 'The green box (i.e. the check on the application of processes) should link to all teaching staff' • 'Add 'as an assessor' to models where they are monitoring effectiveness' • 'In the models add 'understand how to improve' to the learners benefits' • 'Should there be a clearer link to formative assessment? Run dual arrows on the model, the second one for formative assessment, so it is clear how the learner is engaged' • 'Can see that formative criteria need developing' • 'Be clear when showing feedback to assessors and learners, as they have a different focus' • Use co-ordinator instead of subject co-ordinator in the primary school model'

<p><i>The IEA is currently developing other CEA operational models for vocational and workplace assessment. The IEA will issue further information on these in due course.</i></p> <p>Of the models outlined in this consultation process, a large majority of those consulted agreed that the secondary school models and primary school model had merit in them and with flexible application they could fit into those learning environments.</p>	<p>A sizeable minority of those consulted offered suggestions as to how flexibility could be built into an operational model of a CEA, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Allow centres to work out their own system and let the model develop' • 'In the models think how the CEA role relates to other roles in centres' • 'The key challenge is to build on assessment across a school' • 'How is the performance of an assessor to be improved and managed?' • 'It is important to consider why will a CEA be needed alongside other departmental priorities and will a CEA be needed in all schools?' • 'In larger primary schools, issues about how CEAs would fit into existing staffing structures will need resolving' • 'Much is integral to the existing 'head of subject' role' • 'There may be workload issues in primary schools' • 'The model needs to be flexible to meet each school's needs' • 'Ensure assessment is integral to teaching and learning' <p>A significant minority of those consulted made the following proposals to help the development of a functional primary school model, although some of the suggestions could also apply to secondary school models:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Different primary school staffing structures are evolving and need taking into account, e.g. responsibility for Key Stages, curriculum, ECM, cross curricular and development managers will need different models' • 'The models should be capable of fitting into evolving federation models within LAs' • 'Could there be a generic model to fit clusters/federations of schools rather than primary school and secondary school models?' • 'LAs have a strong role in collaborative schemes' • 'Smaller schools, e.g. in rural areas, would be reliant on LA support through cluster arrangements and to help remove barriers, e.g. staffing and resources' • 'Non-centre based CEAs will work well where schools are federated' • 'Shared CEAs could work' <p>A minority of those consulted were concerned about the capability of CEAs to consistently apply the 'national standard' and insisted on clarification that ownership of 'the standard' lies with the awarding bodies. One respondent could see the CEA as acting as a 'proxy' in helping to deliver 'the standard'.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'We would want to see 'national standard' removed from the model and replaced with internal standard' • 'If we routinely expect the lead assessor to demonstrate the required skills then they will need to know awarding body marking standards. Through the applied GCEs there are accredited programme leaders at subject and centre level. A CEA could be 'proxy' to meeting the standard required'
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	<p>One respondent commented on the possibility of light touch moderation being introduced if CEAs are operating:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Light touch moderation (LTM) is being carried out through applied GCEs but LTM arrangements must satisfy awarding body risk assessments prior to being allowed'
<p>A Proposed Accreditation Process for a Chartered Educational Assessor</p> <p>The vast majority of those consulted thought that the accreditation process for a CEA could operate successfully.</p>	<p>One respondent thought the proposed process could be improved by a relatively minor word change, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Should it be 'reflect or follow' instead of 'applied' when referring to the IEA Professional Framework?'
	<p>Two of those consulted sought clarification about statements in the proposed accreditation process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'In step 2 how will the IEA ensure the 'standards' are correct (i.e. in line with the Awarding Bodies' national standard)?' • 'What is role of the awarding bodies in the accreditation process?'
	<p>A sizeable minority of those consulted put forward constructive comments or suggestions to assist the implementation of the proposed accreditation process, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Will the IEA have identified standards of competency? What criteria will be used in this?' • 'Take-up will be affected if teachers have to pay for accreditation' • 'LAs will be useful in recruiting and operating the programme' • 'Support from the head of a centre will be needed for CEA trainees to be signed up' • 'The CEA CPD programme must be meaningful and useful' • 'A new model of performance management based on the collection of evidence has been introduced so this may have a relevance to the CEA's CPD scheme' • 'Check how CEA accreditation fits with NPQH' • 'It is important that accreditation is kept up to date but how sustainable will it be to re-accredit all CEAs?' • 'Could use a credit system in the CEA accreditation process' • 'What re-accreditation criteria will be used?'
	<p>Two respondents proposed the following amendment to the model:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'We would like to omit 'national standard' and replace it with 'consistent' or 'accepted' or 'as agreed by Awarding Bodies' or 'as approved by Awarding Bodies''

	<p>A sizeable minority of those consulted offered comments or raised questions about how a CEA's role could operate in practice.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Can see CEAs as being disseminators of good assessment practice' • 'CEAs must have a proven level of competence' • 'There needs to be a link between CEA's personal standards and standards expected at the school' • 'What are the IEA's thoughts about the organisational freedom of internal CEAs?' • 'What level of independence will CEAs have within an institution?' • 'Will a CEA be a role or someone meeting a set of pre-determined standards?' • 'The IEA will need to work with awarding bodies on assessment standards and sub-levels of assessment' • 'What is the role of awarding bodies?'
<p>General Comments and Other Concerns</p> <p>A large majority of those consulted offered comments showing support for the concept of Chartered Educational Assessor although there was a strongly felt concern from a small minority of respondents about a CEA's operational responsibilities and clarification of these was requested.</p>	<p>The following comments reflect the majority of respondents' support for the introduction of CEAs, although a small number of comments show compliance rather than support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'We are generally welcoming the CEA concept' • 'I can see how it will operate' • 'I see this as being able to fit into secondary schools and, with work, into primary schools' • 'I can see a place for CEAs' • 'I can see relevance in developing CEAs in helping to maintain or improve public confidences in assessment' • 'We are interested in collaboration or a partnership with the IEA on their framework and CEAs' • 'We have no objections' • 'CEAs provide a huge scope for teachers in schools as an opportunity for personal development' • 'We would be willing to help the IEA develop the concept of CEAs and want further sessions on this' • 'It would be beneficial to have like-minded professionals in schools' • 'A CEA could be 'proxy' to meet the standard required' • 'CEAs could help to keep standards acceptable in the assessment of the extended project' • 'We are not stating support but are pleased to be involved in the CEA development process' • 'We can see it working if it is for quality assuring processes, not standards' <p>Towards the end of the consultation process a few respondents offered the view that QCA coursework proposals (October 2006) may have an impact on the development of the CEA concept.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'New QCA coursework proposals may have an impact on the development of a CEA.'

	<p>A sizeable minority of those consulted offered some points for the IEA to consider on how to establish the viability of a CEA.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'The IEA will need to present a case that CEAs would be part of the drive to raise standards, i.e. as part of a virtuous circle' • 'CEA processes must be developmental' • 'The IEA will need to emphasise that CEAs are part of a capacity building move with benefits of cascade training and for school performance, especially by helping learners' • 'In larger primary schools, issues about how CEAs would fit into existing staffing structures will need resolving' • 'There needs to be a statement from the IEA to clarify that only awarding bodies determine the 'standard' and that CEAs cannot make judgements on what the 'standard' is' • 'Light touch moderation could be considered providing awarding body risk assessments are complied with' • 'We have worries over workload issues if a chief examiner or their equivalent is a CEA' • 'If a CEA has an awarding body examiner or equivalent role then there could be workload issues' <p>A small minority of those consulted were concerned over the possibility of legal conflicts or conflicts of interest arising due to the introduction and operation of CEAs. The following comments or questions were made by two respondents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'There can be no guarantee that CEAs will be able to consistently meet the national standard as only awarding bodies can guarantee this. This means possible conflicts of interest could arise.' • 'There could be conflicts of interest if CEAs' judgements differ to the awarding body standards' • 'Awarding bodies control the standard but heads/parents may seek to challenge them if CEAs are adjudged by awarding bodies to be applying the standard wrongly' • 'What would happen if a parent or school legally challenge an awarding body if the CEA's application of the 'standard' is different to the awarding body's?' • 'What happens if a CEA gets the 'standard' wrong as per the awarding body's requirement? How will this conflict be resolved?' • 'We have worries over accountability issues if a chief examiner or equivalent is a CEA'
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