

LETTER CIRCULAR - Institute for Education

Date: 29th July 2019

Ref: IfE 63/2019

From: Joanne Grima – CEO

To the attention of: Heads of Schools (State and Non-State schools)

Subject: Professional Development Opportunity for Heads of Schools

Application: <http://bit.ly/2LHTUEV>

Deadline: Noon, 30th August 2019

Course Commencing: October 2019

Fee: N/A

LP/01/2019 – CPD Award: Educational Leaders as Action Researchers: Improving Problem Solving and Communication Competences through Self-Reflection Partnership Coaching and Learning Communities

The Institute for Education is offering a one-year course to a limited number of Heads of Schools (Primary or Secondary). Details about the course are provided in a separate attached document. This Professional Development is carried out by Dr. Claudette Portelli, specialized in Problem Solving, Communication and Educational Leadership.

At the completion of the professional development, participation will be awarded an **8 ECTS Award in Educational Leaders as Action Researchers: Improving Problem Solving and Communication Competences through Self-Reflection Partnership Coaching and Learning Communities** at MQF Level 6 accredited by the NCFHE.

Thank you.

Joanne Grima
CEO Institute for Education

Course Ref: LP/01/2019 - Professional Development Opportunity for Heads of Schools

CPD AWARD: EDUCATIONAL LEADERS AS ACTION RESEARCHERS: IMPROVING PROBLEM SOLVING AND COMMUNICATION COMPETENCES

Educational leadership can be one of the most rewarding yet stressful jobs, if one does not acquire the necessary competencies to induce and manage the various changes necessary in the complex school system. As Kotter (1989) sustains guiding change may be the ultimate test of a leader—no organisation survives over the long term if it can't reinvent itself.

General Objective

This professional development is a training-inquiry experience with a major objective of bringing educational leaders to acquire and employ an action-research approach to their everyday work. By the end of the course participants will have acquired, practised and have come to skillfully implement an effective inquiry-operative tool to handle more effectively the array of educational difficulties and changes encountered in their school context. This learning by doing training will help participants become agents of change since it will help them improve their problem solving and communication skills which, according to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2009) are the most fundamental competencies for School leadership.

Course Modules & Outline

Module 1: The Educational Leader as Action Researcher

Module 2: Problem Solving & Action Planning

Module 3: Effective Communication for School Success

Module 4: Coaching and leading others towards change

Module 5: Learning Communities and the use of virtual platforms

The Training will have 4 parallel learning modalities:

1. Training by an expert: the trainer will hand over basic operative knowledge on Action Research, Problem Solving, Communication, Coaching, Community Learning and other topics chosen by the group. Ten (10) training sessions each three (3) hours- long will be held in the one-year period.
2. Practitioner inquiry: (Self-reflection and informed action carried out on the field). Participants will be able to apply the given instruments to reflect and evaluate their practice and actions. By applying an action research approach to their work, they will be able to look at what they do and learn from the actions, so as to try to improve. Each individual will be requested to keep track of his observations, reflections, actions and results. A minimum of 10 hours per month.
3. Partnership Coaching is a reciprocal learning relationship between two Heads of Schools who work together as professionals, equally committed to facilitate each other's learning and professional development. These structured reflective coaching meetings are managed by the partners but a minimum of 4 hours per month are requested.
4. Learning Community serve to connect and network Heads of Schools to learn from their and others practice through structured dialogue following an inquiry-oriented approach. They collaborate and engage in face-to-face and on-line dialogues (social network, blogs, skype, etc.) with other Heads of Schools from the Maltese and Italian groups to widen their reflections and inquires, while share knowledge and experiences. A blog will be created so that participants could share the action research project and progress, as well as learn from reading others' blogs on action research, problem solving, communication and more. This entails a monthly meeting and regular on-line interactions with a contact frequency of a minimum of 4 hours per month.

Target group

Primary and Secondary Schools Educational Leaders (Heads of Schools), committed to professional development and school improvement.

Registration & Participation:

Interested candidates are invited to apply online via the IfE Portal <http://bit.ly/2LHTUEV>. Applications should be submitted by not later than **noon (Central European Time) of 30th August 2019**. A maximum of **ten (10)** candidates will be chosen. An interview will be carried out, if considered necessary.

Assessment:

Participants will be requested to keep an-ongoing reflective-assessment method of their practice, which will be presented (final presentation) and assessed by the learning community group at the end of the training. Since this training is also a pilot study for professional development and school improvement, participants will be interviewed at the beginning, during and at the end of the course so as to carry out a Research Process of the training.

At the completion of the training, participation will be awarded an MQF Level 6 Award accredited by the NCFHE.

Testimonials of Previous Participants:

"The course is a great experience for self-reflection. Very often we do what we have always done - daily, habitually and instinctively. Indeed, the course helped me to become awake and realise that what is habitual and instinctive does not always work fine."

**Head of School
Gharghur Primary**

"I'm finding this course truly beneficial as it is challenging me to think outside the box. The course material is very relevant to our daily practice and it imparts essential skills for our role as EL. I recommend this course to anyone who is seeking self-development. I am pleased to say that I have embarked on a self-reflective journey, whereby I'm open to innovative yet effective problem solving and communication strategies."

**Head of School
San Gorg Preca College
Paola Primary B**

"I am really glad that as an educational leader I was given the opportunity to participate in this professional development. It was an extremely insightful course which focused on the necessary competencies to increase our ability to handle more productively the diversity of challenging experiences we encounter."

"Thank you Dr Claudette for conducting this course with enormous energy, passion, enthusiasm and conviction in what you shared with us in such a friendly, personal manner. Now the onus is on us- to reflect and perform."

**Head of School
St Margaret College
Senglea Primary School**

"Participation in the course Educational Leaders as Actions Researchers is an opportunity to reflect, practice, share and learn how to deal with daily challenges encountered at school. A unique educational opportunity worth embracing!"

Head of School
St Ignatius College
Primary Qormi St Sebastian

"The action research course has certainly helped me to grow professionally but even more so personally. It gave me insight and effective tools I can use when I am in situations I was uncomfortable handling. I also had the time to stop and reflect on my practices as a school leader and to work at making my journey better....not to mention the positive experience of working, learning and sharing with colleagues who have now become friends!"

Head
St. Joseph Sliema

"What I liked best about this course was the incredible variety of strategies that were modeled in order to empower my leadership qualities. I felt lucky and enthusiastic that I attended! I absorbed every bit of information delivered to us by our lecturer. Everything we did was immediately applied to my role and I would highly recommend this course to new leaders!"

Fortini Learning Support Centre Coordinator

