

2.2 - 13.11.24 - BCS Submission

From: Tim Bullock
Sent: 24 November 2013 21:44
To: Tim Oldham
Subject: RE: States Assembly, Scrutiny Office: Digital Skills Review

Dear Tim

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this review.

It is very pleasing that Education Sport and Culture recognise the need to radically improve the education of IT in the island. Whilst Highlands provides a good service for the BTEC and Foundation IT Degree courses, IT education in secondary and primary schools is inconsistent.

The 'Vision for IT in Education' document doesn't really contain enough content to comment on. However, there is a significant concern with one particular area.

Schools and Highlands College will be expected to develop clear, coherent and ambitious plans for integrating technology into the curriculum. Plans must incorporate specific measurable outcomes linked to the IT Skills Strategic Vision and aligned to their school development plan. Individual plans will be presented to the Strategic Sponsoring Group for approval and funding will then be made available for implementation so schools can continue to build upon their existing good practice.

Schools will have the freedom and responsibility to decide the most appropriate solution for their pupils. This may include the choice of mobile devices and other digital media to encourage innovation and creativity. It will be important for schools and businesses to share best practice and avoid duplication where possible.

It is not clear why the schools and Highlands College must create these plans themselves.

It is already apparent that IT education and IT knowledge in secondary and primary schools is inconsistent. If the schools have to create their own plans, they will only be as good as their current knowledge and this will only increase the inconsistency. In fact, if a school's plan does not get approval, they will not receive any funding.

It is not clear why Education Sport and Culture are not working with the schools, to formulate the plans for each age category. The 'hands-off' approach appears to be inappropriate.

The overall concern is that the current gap between IT literate schools and those that aren't so IT literate, will widen. The consequence will be (IT) disadvantaged children and an even more inconsistent IT education.

I hope this helps. Happy to discuss.

Kind regards

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Tim Bullock
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