



**association of  
chartered teachers  
scotland**

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### **Welcome**

Welcome to the Autumn 2009 edition of the ACTS Newsletter. We hope that you find it informative and we know you will let us know what you would like to see in future editions.

In these 15 pages you can read articles outlining some of the work that Chartered Teachers and those on the route are doing in their classrooms. You can find a summary of the current discussion around the limits and opportunities of this new role and an avenue for you to make your opinion known. There's also a link to 3 fascinating articles about Chartered Teacher.

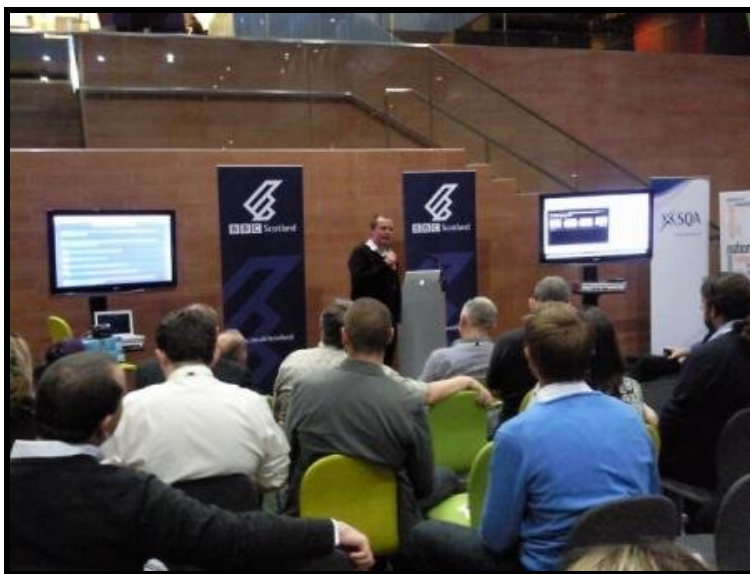
We've also included the text of the latest Code of Practice for Chartered Teachers, which is also available on the ACTS website <http://acts.edublogs.org> where you can also comment.

You are free to download and print copies of this newsletter and pass them to colleagues.

## ACTS – where are we now?

ACTS committee members have been working hard to take forward the aims of the Association.

- We had a presence at the GTCS conference.
- We await the result of our application for charitable status.
- We considered and commented on the Revised Standard for Chartered Teacher
- We considered and commented on the Proposals for an Independent GTCS
- We are investigating ways for Chartered Teachers to access professional journals online.
- Committee members have published articles in the professional press.
- Committee members attended and presented at SLF09 and TeachmeetSLF09
  - The Chartered Teacher Glow Group was launched at SLF09



David Noble, Vice Chair of ACTS presenting at TeachmeetSLF09

## ACTS – what's in the pipeline?

- [Monthly Glowmeet sessions](#) are planned with a variety of themes.
- An ACTS CPD event with relevance to Chartered Teachers will take place early in 2010.
- The AGM is likely to be in February.

## SNCT Code of Practice for Chartered Teachers

ACTS Vice Chair, David Noble, spoke with TES Scotland on the day that the Code of Practice was published (29/9/09). He welcomed the clarity that the document provides for Chartered Teachers in stressing that the lists of professional actions which Chartered Teachers **could** do was for illustrative purposes only.

He noted the emphasis on ongoing, professional and respectful local dialogue, through the PRD process, which would see Chartered Teachers having the same involvement in planning their development and role in the workplace for the forthcoming year as teaching colleagues.

David said that Chartered Teachers would be looking for guidance on where to access the latest theory, research and practice to enable themselves to develop, and to disseminate to their colleagues, particularly as following the achievement of CT status most Chartered Teachers no longer have free access to academic journals.

Finally, David made clear ACTS' commitment to engaging with 'good practice', policy and research, all key features of the Code, by revealing that the association is planning a one-day conference around this theme in February 2010.

This document can be accessed at the ACTS website <http://acts.edublogs.org/> where you can also post your comments and thoughts about it.

## Reading in the Science Curriculum - Sarinder Bhopal, Chartered Teacher

Article published in Times Educational Supplement Scotland, 24 July, 2009

### Reading in the Science Curriculum

A key aim of *A Curriculum for Excellence* in secondary schools will be the development of literary skills across subject areas. To some extent this follows initiatives from the past such as language across the curriculum. However, the nature of language demands across subjects and departments can vary considerably and an appreciation of this variety is important when addressing issues to do with classroom pedagogy, policy and practice.

The following account describes an investigation that I undertook on reading difficulties in the S2 Science curriculum and highlights some areas of concern.

Subjects often have specific language characteristics associated with them. For example, during English lessons pupils frequently write in the first person and read narrative texts. Indeed, pupils initial reading experiences are mostly confined to the narrative genre. They are mostly introduced to the scientific register in S1/2 but after this are often expected to cope with quite complex forms of this register with which they are relatively unfamiliar and for which they may lack appropriate strategies to effect useful learning. Characteristics associated with the language of science subjects may include excessive sentence length, a high degree of subordination, subject specific terminology, ellipses and passive grammatical constructions.

In this investigation which focused on a text taken from an S2 Science course, only one of six teachers commented on sentence length as a potential source of difficulty, despite most of the sentences being twenty to forty words in length,. Some pupils were uncertain about words like "*impurities*" and phrases such as "*quarter fill*" and "*micro tube*" but only two out of six Science teachers felt that technical vocabulary was a source of difficulty. However, three teachers did mention the lack of illustrations, sub headings, paragraphs and font types as factors which could affect readability and understanding.

Subjective assessment by teachers of the readability of school texts has been shown to be inaccurate with most underestimating levels of difficulty. This is perhaps due to their own reading competence and familiarity with subject content. However, research has highlighted that many fourteen year olds can only hold up to thirteen or fourteen words in their short term

memory before they begin to experience comprehension difficulties. Despite this, many school textbooks continue to be written beyond the reading age of many pupils. This not only affects comprehension but also the motivation of many students to engage with subject matter.

### **What might we do?**

A whole school approach to literacy is important. In practice, this could consist of working groups from a variety of subjects and departments focusing on key developmental objectives and disseminating information freely to colleagues. Possible areas for discussion could include the following: *'the use of oral language in the classroom'*, *'language of different school text books'* or *'common writing mistakes'*. Such activities will help to raise awareness all round.

Lastly, language skills should be cultivated holistically in the classroom with students being allowed to learn by talking and writing as well as by listening and reading. Activities should not solely centre around the teacher as a presenter and learners as passive recipients but on interaction between pupils in pairs or small groups as it is through the use of oral language as well as by reading and writing that pupils will learn best.

*Sarinder Bhopal is a teacher at Hillhead High School, Glasgow.*

### **Can an integrated Blues course increase pupils' motivation and enjoyment of music? – Duncan Mackay, on the route to Chartered Teacher**

The rationale of this research was to ascertain whether a blues course could increase motivation and enjoyment of music among S2 pupils.

At my school, during the second and third term, S2 pupils decide which subjects to choose to continue studying for S3. The effect of this was that many pupils from around February were bored with the music curriculum, whether they decided to choose music or not.

I felt that S2 pupils needed a new course that was fun, practicable and interesting. It was important that it should appeal to pupils of all abilities, allowing all pupils to make a contribution.

I chose the style of blues because it has a simple straightforward structure and basic chords. It is accessible to pupils of all abilities, providing a structure that enables improvisations that can range from being effective and basic, to improvisations that, with the inclusion of 'blues notes', can be extremely accomplished.

Topics discussed included the music curriculum, formal and informal learning, valuing and labelling, teaching composition, assessment and motivation.

Pupils were introduced to a blues course involving listening, performing and improvising.

Pupils' current perceptions and attitudes to music were investigated before the start of the

course and were compared to their attitudes to music after integrating elements of music through the blues. Data gathering methods included two questionnaires, 'before and after' interviews, naturalistic observation and video recordings.

The sample consisted of 12 pupils (6 male and 6 female) from a population of 36 pupils from two S2 practical classes who attended music twice per week.

The study found that initially, fewer pupils enjoyed music in class than they did at home, and that theory was the most disliked aspect. After the introduction of the blues course it was found that many more pupils rated the blues course more interesting than normal class music. They made more effort, felt more involved, and wanted the course to be a permanent part of the S2 music curriculum.

Implications for the curriculum, resources, assessment, learning and teaching, and the researcher's own professional development were considered.

It was concluded that the integrated blues course increased pupils' motivation and enjoyment of music considerably.

*Duncan Mackay is a Teacher of Music at Strathaven Academy, South Lanarkshire.*

## Using a document camera to enhance teaching and learning – Dorothy Coe, Chartered Teacher

Document cameras are electronic imaging tools for displaying 3-D objects, such as books, insects or photographs, onto a projector screen, whiteboard, plasma or LCD monitor.



I had become aware of document cameras through my general reading and thought they were a great idea, but slightly expensive for us. However, I happened to be with my Quality Improvement Officer Liz Marroni at the Scottish Learning Festival 2008 and spotted the new SMART document camera on show. Both Liz and I were extremely impressed with the potential for a significant impact on learning, so we acquired one for the school on a trial basis.



As soon as it arrived, I displayed a pupil's jotter with work from the previous day, and we talked as a class about why it had fulfilled the criteria we had set. Following this the work of every child improved. As they finished we looked at

pupils' work using the document camera to reinforce teaching points. Of course, every child wanted their work displayed, so they worked as hard as they could to improve on their handwriting and presentation skills as well as paying closer attention to success criteria.

The next day, our writing task was to retell a story, placing pictures of the events in the right order and using vivid words to describe the characters. The document camera made this a whole class activity where all 26 children could work as a team and see and give their reasons for the changes they wanted to make and then capture the finished version. The children then had the start of a story which they all felt was theirs, and set about writing their own versions.

When we continued our story, I displayed some of the individual work the children had produced. The children were quick to spot and highlight on the board vivid words and detail. As they produced more of the story we could do very immediate and effective peer assessment. The children produced work of much higher quality, knowing it was going to be viewed by their peers and because they could see clear examples of how our success criteria were being met. This simple technology engages pupils and their confidence and independence increase. Peer assessment is easy and very powerful. Evidence of our class work is also easily recorded – images are captured using Smart notebook10.



When she saw it in action and heard the children's enthusiastic comments, my Head Teacher was persuaded that we should purchase one of our own and this year we've bought a second as demand has been so high for its use across the school!

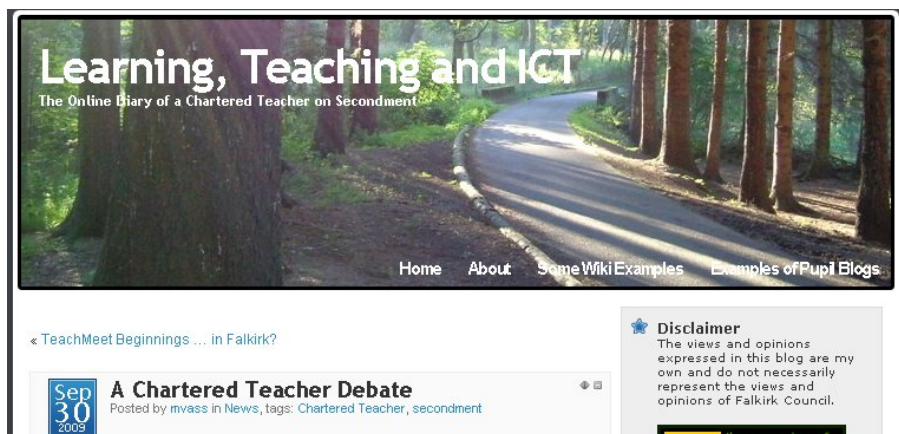
edited from: <http://www.teachingtimes.com/articles/dear-diary.htm>

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*Dorothy Coe is a class teacher at St Peter's Primary School, Galashiels.*

## A Chartered Teacher Debate – Margaret Vass, a Chartered Teacher on secondment



This is the content of a recent post on Margaret’s blog, produced here with her permission.

To add your comments to the debate, go to her blog at <http://mvass.net/2009/09/30/a-chartered-teacher-debate/>

Margaret writes:

Recently on [twitter](#) I noticed a comment by [Fearghal Kelly](#) . He wrote:

*“As you can probably tell this has irked me. I’ve been paying thousands for my MEd/CT I don’t want to be told what I can do with it”*

I tried to trace the conversation that led up to him becoming so irritated and I discovered an exchange of views about the role of [Chartered Teachers](#) in Scottish education. it was apparent that there was a difference of opinion as to what this role should be. I’ve copied some of the comments from the twitter conversation here (I’ve left out the names of the contributors because some of them have chosen to protect their twitter updates).

- *Do we encourage our best teachers to become CTs, to do research to apply for promoted posts or do we not want to lose them?*
- *is it not all about promoting cpd/learning however teachers want to do it? Then you end up with a great workforce.*
- *Is it not recognition for the process & learning which you have undertaken – in the past. That doesn’t go away when you leave!!*
- *So if they move into something else, what harm will that do? You now have a masters level educator out there you might not have*

- *Why? If you've paid yourself through a Masters why on earth should that close doors? Couldn't disagree more!*
- *What are you going to do about CT's who stay in the classroom but don't do much to warrant the status/cash?*
- *I think financial rewards via promotion are readily available. CT status, for me, is a recognition rather than a promotion!*
- *Seems, again, just as with Senior Teacher, Chartered T is being used as a stepping stone away from the classroom.*
- *I thought the entire point of CT was to reward those that stayed in the classroom, without forcing them into promoted posts?*

But it was the following statement that caused much of the controversy:

- **I think any teacher leaving the classroom within 5 years of gaining CT status should have it rescinded!!!!**

As a result of the 'debate', Andrew Brown wrote [this post](#).

I've copied just a small section of his post here:

*".....To me, the entire point of CT was to reward and recognise someone's dedication to classroom teaching. I have no objection to people taking up secondments and spending some time out of the classroom – in fact, I think many educators would benefit from doing so. But if someone is out for more than 5 years, are they dedicated to classroom practice? Should they go back in at the same level? I think that rescind is too strong a word, but I would call into question someone's commitment to classroom teaching if they haven't been doing it for more than five years."*

I've tried to view the debate objectively, but this has been difficult because every individual has their own personal reasons for deciding to embark on the Chartered Teacher journey – different incentives. The reason for this blog post is to help me clarify what motivated me to spend almost 6 years (and a lot of money!) to gain full Chartered Teacher status. So here's my story  
....

- I've now been teaching for 15 years – and I distinctly remember graduating as a mature student swearing that I was finished with studying and writing essays/assignments. I'd spent 4 years at Moray House and had sacrificed a lot of time and effort getting that honours degree whilst bringing up three young children (thanks to JV's contribution!)

- 7 or 8 years on, I was aware that the initial 'buzz' I'd felt at the start of my career had begun to dwindle. Things were beginning to feel a little repetitive. Around that time, the Chartered Teacher initiative was launched and (after a LOT of soul searching) I was ready to 'go for it'
- I learned loads during the first 8 modules (2 a year for 4 years) but it was a great deal of hard work .... Christmas and Easter holidays were always spent writing up essays explaining what I'd learned from the various action research projects I'd been involved in.
- I decided to combine the last 4 modules (2 years worth) into one large dissertation. It took me a while to collect the evidence (and a lot of blood, sweat and tears) so that I could write up [the case study](#), but I'm enormously proud of it 😊
- After graduating as a Chartered Teacher, I applied for a secondment post as an ICT Curriculum Support Officer. It's a two year secondment, and I've spent my time sharing all the great things I learned from my C.T. journey about how the use of free online tools can improve learning and teaching.

The twitter debate has led me to ask questions about my right to retain C.T. status if I was given the opportunity to continue to share what I've learned after my two year secondment was completed. I suppose the two questions in my mind are:

- Would my time be better spent back in the classroom using what I've learned to improve (hopefully) the education of my own primary school class?
- Would my time be better spent trying to spread what I've learned to colleagues who can then use this, in turn, to (hopefully) improve the education of their pupils?

No matter what the answer is – I believe that I've earned the title of 'Chartered Teacher' and, as long as I'm continuing to try to make a difference to learning and teaching, why should it be rescinded? Or maybe it's the financial aspect that's upsetting people???

Anyway, I've copied a bit from a post I wrote a while ago on here after attending the launch of The Association of Chartered Teachers in the Scottish Parliament building:



*".....I felt very proud to be part of the Association. The speeches were uplifting (as was the music!) and I'll 'bullet point' just a few of the messages I heard on the day:*

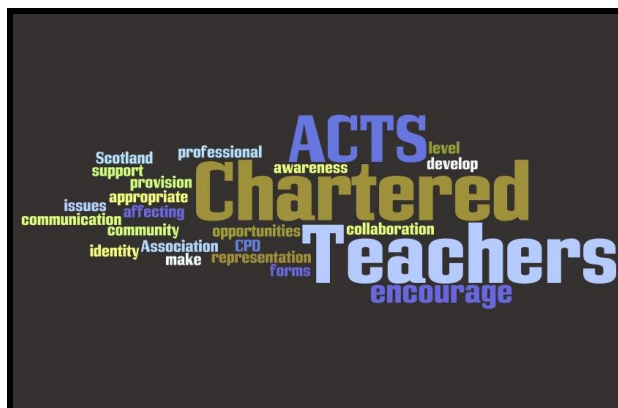
- *It has to be a group decision as to what our role now is – it's important not to sit passively and be told the way forward*

- *We are now in a unique position to take things forward.....”*

## **Co-operative Learning**

Look out for an interview with Chris Ward, talking about co-operative learning, in the next newsletter.

## GLOW – Chartered Teacher Glow Group



## Chartered Teacher Glow Meets



23/9/09 19:00 This first, short Chartered Teacher Glow Meet saw the launch of the Chartered Teacher Glow Group.



Use your Glow login to join us for these discussions.

29/10/09 17:30 **October** Glow Meet: Discussion on the Revised Standard for Chartered Teacher

17/11/09 16:15 **November** Glow Meet: Discussion on the Code of Practice for Chartered Teachers

2/12/09 16:30 **December** Glow Meet CPD for Chartered Teachers

18/01/09 19:30 **January** Glow meet: Chartered Teacher – Getting started

6/02/09 16:00 **February** Glow Meet: ACTS AGM

6/03/09 10:00 **March** Glow Meet: International perspectives on Chartered Teacher

28/04/09 16:30 **April** Glow Meet: Chartered Teacher and Leadership

10/06/09 20:30 **June** Glow Meet: "CTMeet"

## GTCS conference

### ***"Enhancing Learning, Leading Change"***

The fourth National Chartered Teacher Conference was held on Saturday 30 May at the Hilton Hotel, Glasgow.

The keynote speech was delivered by Professor Andy Hargreaves, who invited the audience of 200 plus teachers to go beyond their comfort zones and take informed risks to lead and support change in their own contexts and in the wider teaching profession.

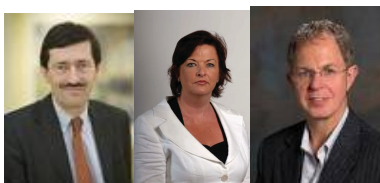
After the speech there was an opportunity for participants to discuss key issues raised by Professor Hargreaves including:

- What role do you see for Chartered Teachers in 5 years' time?
- What needs to change for Chartered Teachers to contribute to schools in the way envisaged for the Standard for Chartered Teacher?
- Are Chartered Teachers irritants in the system or agents for change?
- What factors have enabled Chartered Teachers to adopt a leadership role?
- What barriers might Chartered teachers encounter?
- What support is necessary to adopt a leadership role within the school?
- Which aspect of your school setting do you believe would benefit most from a teacher leadership role?
- What are the necessary conditions for teachers to act as autonomous professionals?
- How can leadership be distributed without management responsibilities?
- How can hierarchical leadership in schools afford teacher leadership?

[http://www.gtcs.org.uk/About\\_GTCS/Events/CharteredTeacherConference/chartered\\_teacher\\_conference.aspx](http://www.gtcs.org.uk/About_GTCS/Events/CharteredTeacherConference/chartered_teacher_conference.aspx)

The link below is to videos of the talks by Tony Finn, Fiona Hyslop, and Andy Hargreaves

[http://www.gtcs.org.uk/About\\_GTCS/Events/CharteredTeacherConference/conferencevideos/ct-conference-videos.aspx](http://www.gtcs.org.uk/About_GTCS/Events/CharteredTeacherConference/conferencevideos/ct-conference-videos.aspx)



**Published articles about Chartered Teacher**

Chartered Teachers and the process of professional enquiry: the experience of five Scottish teachers

Mike Carroll

University of Glasgow, UK

Online Publication Date: 01 March 2009

The Chartered Teacher scheme in Scotland: a survey of the views of teachers

Joseph McGeer

University of the West of Scotland, UK

Online Publication Date: 01 March 2009

'Challenge', 'freedom', 'change': an emerging language of activism from Chartered Teachers?

Zoë Williamson; Gillian Robinson

University of Edinburgh, UK

Online Publication Date: 01 March 2009

These articles are available online by downloading the free sample copy of:

Professional Development in Education

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:

<http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/title~content=t716100715>

## Join ACTS

Join by completing the form below and returning it to:

ACTS, 6 Monar Court, Dalgety Bay,

DUNFERMLINE, KY11 9XJ,

AND either:

Making a BACS payment to

Association of Chartered Teachers Scotland.

Sort Code 80-06-55. Account Number 06033226

Or: Sending a cheque to the address above



### MEMBERSHIP FORM

Name

Address

Email:

I wish to become a member of  
the Association of Chartered Teachers Scotland.

- I am a full Chartered Teacher (£25)
- I am following the CT Programme,  
having completed at least Module 1 (£15)
- I have made /will make a BACS payment
- I enclose a cheque

## More information about ACTS

<http://acts.edublogs.org/>

Contact ACTS at : [actscotland@yahoo.com](mailto:actscotland@yahoo.com)