



**BROADER APPROACHES TO LEARNING**  
Better Tackling Early School Leavers in Europe -  
Restart

**Crowne Moran Hotel**  
**London**

# What I will cover

- About Northern Ireland
- CCEA
- Change:  
Structural  
Curriculum
- Other issues

# Northern Ireland - opportunities



- Over 1.7 million
  - Very prosperous region – low unemployment (4.2%) House prices rising dramatically
  - More culturally diverse – Eastern European
  - Emerging from a difficult period – no regional govt
  - Very high standards of educational attainment  
- 333,000 pupils in all our schools
- (Green, lots of rain – but wonderful scenery: Do come and see us)

# Northern Ireland – challenges



- IALS survey – 25% literacy and numeracy difficulties
- Accession States – less funding from EU
- Too high a dependency on public sector – need for entrepreneurial culture
- Concern about lack of interest in sciences and technology
- Meeting the needs of a knowledge based economy
- Fall in demographic trends: 80,000 spare school spaces!
- 1,000 Educated Other Than in School (EOTAS)

# CCEA Who are we?



- Northern Ireland Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA)
- Statutory advisory body to Department of Education
- Conduct assessment and 11+ test
- Set examinations: GCSE and GCE and Vocational Options
- Regulate and monitor qualifications and performance of other Awarding Bodies

# Change: Curriculum



Higher Education (two Universities in NI)

16 - 18

Further Education, Training or Employment

14 - 16

Post-primary School: Key Stage 4

11 - 13

Post-primary School: Key Stage 3

4 - 11

Primary School: Key Stages 1 and 2

# Change: Structural



Grammar School

“Secondary” School

Primary School – Selection at 11 **X**



# Change: Curriculum Why?



- Young people spoke!
- Business need different skill set
- Over-emphasis on qualifications/culture of examinations
- Entrepreneurial Northern Ireland
- Global economic environment
- Literacy and numeracy issue

# Change: Curriculum

## What are we doing



- Change to the “core” curriculum
- Reduced subject content – greater flexibility for teachers and schools
- General education up to 14
- Schools/collaboration must “offer” 27 courses to 14 – 16 year olds and 24 options to 16 – 18 year olds
- One third of the above courses must be “applied”

# Change: Curriculum



## Key Stage 4

- **Skills and Capabilities**
- **Learning for Life and Work**
  - **Personal, Social and Health Education**
  - **Citizenship**
  - **Education for Employability**

As below

but access to 27 different courses (one third applied)

## Key Stage 3

- **Skills and Capabilities**
- **Learning for Life and Work**
  - **Personal, Social and Health Education**
  - **Citizenship**
  - **Education for Employability**
- **Home Economics**

The Arts  
English and Irish  
Env and Society  
Modern Languages  
Mathematics  
Science and Tech  
R Education  
P Education

# Change: Curriculum

- Education for Employability
  - Personal Career Planning
  - Work in the Local and Global Economy
  - Enterprise and Entrepreneurship
  - Skills and Capabilities for Work
- Unique!

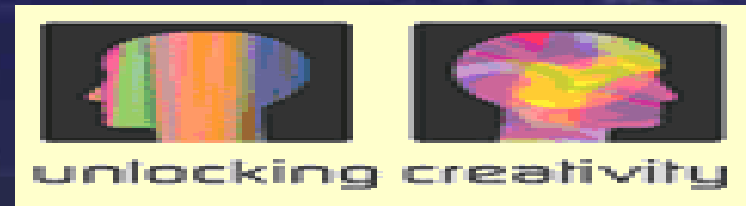
# Change: Curriculum

- Skills development a priority: relevance
- Flexibility and choice for individual pupil
- Access to “applied” courses – often in a college of further education
- Stronger links with business
- Progress File: individual target setting

# Employability – many lists!



- Key skills
- Networking
- Critical analysis
- Being able to work under pressure
- Explore and create opportunities
- Willingness to learn
- Commitment
- Coping with uncertainty
- Imagination and creativity



## Cost in financial terms

*"Poor employability in the UK was recently estimated to cost an annual £8 billion, without taking into account the social costs of crime and unemployment"*

*Learning beyond the Classroom*  
*Tom Bentley*

# Other issues

- Choice must be underpinned by adequate guidance
- Links with business must be coherent and facilitated by an efficient structure
- Enterprise must be school-led and not dependent on external Providers
- Synchronisation of Departmental policies
- Qualifications must be relevant and fit for purpose – work with Sector Skills Councils