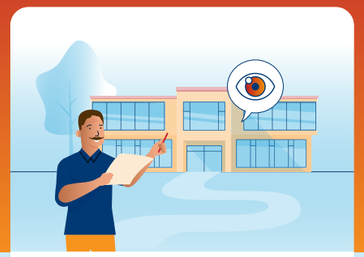
HE

Professional Learning Communities in Higher Education

In PLCs, education professionals work on education improvement in a systematic way. PLCs contribute to education quality and improve results for students, teachers and their organisation.

Supporting and sustainably embedding PLCs



Recommendation 1
Embed PLCs within the organisation during the preparation phase

- Align the PLC with the institution's policy and vision on education.
- Check what qualities participants should possess in terms of motivation, expertise and roles/seniority, and what diversity of roles, seniority and backgrounds is required.
- Allow participants room to change their own practices as they relate to the vision and implement the PLC's findings in their practices.
- During the process, communicate and disseminate information about both the process and the findings.
- Provide support for the PLC from the institution's executive management and line managers, and establish policies for Recognition and Rewards.



Recommendation 2
Support PLCs

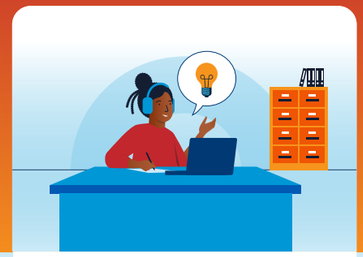
- Provide time and resources: for meetings (online and face-to-face), meeting preparations and follow-up; block out this time in the participants' calendars.
- Provide facilitators/coaches (or external experts) to support the PLC's progress.

Participating in and/or coaching the PLC process



Recommendation 3
Establish a clearly defined collective focus for the PLC

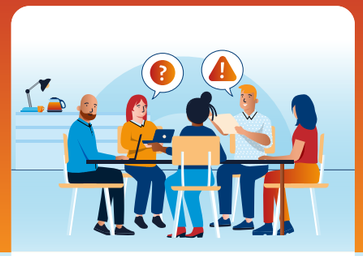
- Decide on the subject matter or thematic focus.
- Decide what specific approach best fits the PLC's focus.



Recommendation 4
Encourage learning during and between PLC meetings

- Foster positive relationships within the PLC that are based on respect, trust and safety; make arrangements about the participants' attendance at meetings.
- Encourage a critically reflective dialogue, with active participation from all participants.
- Experiment with the ideas produced by the PLC's efforts and implement the ideas that work.

Monitoring the PLC process and evaluating its outcomes



Recommendation 5
Monitor collaboration and progress during the process between meetings, and make adjustments as necessary

- Collect and document feedback about the PLC's goals, the cyclical approach, collaboration and progres.
- Adjust the form of collaboration during the process, based on feedback and reflection on that feedback.
- Communicate the approach and findings arising between meetings with direct stakeholders, management and the institution as a whole.



Recommendation 6
Evaluate the PLC's outcomes against the collective focus, communicate the findings with all stakeholders, and decide how to move forward with the PLC

- Evaluate whether the PLC has achieved its goals, and document its research into the impact on teaching pratices.
- Communicate with direct stakeholders, managers and the institution as a whole about whether the approach and findings will be embedded within the organisation.