

ACTS

Acknowledging Creative Thinking Skills

Update 7.9.17

The project is going very well. All the transnationals have been successfully completed and we are on track to start piloting later this year. There has been a big step forward with the UK regulator, Ofqual, granting Sector approval (with no preconditions) for the ACTS suite of qualifications to go into the 'Foundations for Learning and Life'. This would place it onto the register in the same Sector as the International Baccalaureate, once Crossfields Institute (the awarding body) have completed their own due diligence and met all the necessary regulations.

The proposed suite of qualifications will be called 'Integrated Learning: Creative Thinking Skills' and will have, at each of UK NQF Levels 2 and 3 (European Qualification Framework Levels 3 and 4), a Certificate in Creative Thinking Skills (CTS) which will include an Independent Project. This certificate can stand alone or form part of the Core Diploma at each level. The core Diploma, in turn, can stand alone or form part of the Extended Diploma. This will make it as relevant and accessible across the widest possible demographic including disadvantaged students. We have developed a marking matrix for the CTS Certificate module which can over-arch any content from which appropriate evidence can be drawn, alongside the personal project component, allowing schools or training courses to trial this approach in a managed way alongside existing provision. This has attracted positive interest in UK and overseas. The other diploma modules for piloting have content aims but with an emphasis on trans-discipline working, personal projects/studies and the incorporation of non-formal and informal learning. There will be no required exams as such.

The associated High School Teacher Training Course is due to begin next year in collaboration with our partners in Norway, Finland and Denmark and will be accredited by Alanus University, Germany. This course has already been approved by the Danish Ministry of Education for Danish Steiner Schools, who have just been granted funding for classes 11 and 12 (ages 17-18). The Ministry would also like to extend the training to all Upper School Teachers in Denmark.

The Norwegian Director-General of Education and Training, Johan Raaum, was impressed with the ACTS project when we presented it in Oslo, especially as it reflected findings and creatively met aspirations expressed in their recent white paper 'The School of the Future', which he was very keen to give us.



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Most recently, on 23rd August, ACTS representatives went to meet with Tiina Silander, the High School Development leader within Finland's Ministry of Education. She was very interested in the Creative Thinking Skills component and suggested it could be incorporated for use in all High Schools throughout Finland. Seven Finnish Steiner schools want to implement it immediately. Things are now moving quite fast.

'Measure What Matters', a Canadian government advisory group on education has made contact and expressed interest. The Waterloo Global Science Initiative (WGSi 2030), a collaboration between Waterloo University, and the Perimeter Institute for Theoretical Physics, Ontario, has given their support: <http://www.wgsi.org/blog/423000-awarded-program-inspired-learning-2030>

Floris Books is very interested in publishing the ACTS book on Creative Thinking Skills, which is intended to explain the principles both to academics, schools, parents and the wider public. It will also be a set book for the Upper School Teacher Training. It will be written by International Education Consultant to SWSF, Elaine Holt. The readers for the book will be: Mark Runco (*Professor of Education and Creativity at Georgia University USA, editor of the 'Creative Thinking' Journal and the award-winning Sage Encyclopaedia of Creativity*); Oren Lieberman (*Professor of Architecture, Salford, UK*); Marcella da Veiga (*Rector, Alanus University, Germany*); Dr Angus Ferguson (*Crossfields Institute*); Lars Wilmar (*recently graduated Steiner school student*).

Mark Runco, has in the last few days offered full support and a vast resource of research that will back up the findings of the ACTS Project. He has invited Elaine Holt to present a research paper to the next International Creativity Conference in USA next August. This conference will co-ordinate with the American Association of Psychologists conference, in San Francisco.

ACTS has an up-coming UK open conference event 'Educating for a Creative Future' at Michael Hall, Forest Row, on 23rd - 25th October where we will present our work, through talks and workshops, to any interested parties including parents, teachers and School Governors. The Executive Director of AWSNA, representing USA, Canada and Mexico, booked her plane ticket to attend the conference within 1 hour of being informed of it. They are very interested for US Steiner Schools.

Only good news, I'm afraid!

EH 19.9.17

