
ESDGC Schools Networks 2009-2010

Cydweithio er mwyn Galluogi Cefnogaeth Effeithiol i ADCDF yng Nghymru

Working together to Enable Effective Support for ESDGC in Wales

>ESDGC Schools Networks 09-10 proposal to DFID<, 31st July 2009

N.B. This proposal to the Department for International Development has, pending some minor changes, been accepted for funding by DFID. Funding from the Welsh Assembly Government has also been agreed for the work of ESDGC Schools Networks.

This proposal responds to a request by DFID for the submission of a one year plan – set within the context of a five year programme – to enable the continued delivery and development of the Enabling Effective Support initiative in Wales. This one year plan is based on a five year plan which was discussed and agreed at an ESDGC Schools Networks Programme Management Group meeting on 18th May 2009, and takes into account developments that have taken place in Wales and more broadly in EES since then.

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1 Situation analysis: key issues

During the past five years the focus has been on support and resources for ESDGC in schools. We have achieved this by supporting regional networks where they exist and developing new ones where they did not. Ten ESDGC Networks now provide coverage across Wales.

All the networks include local authority officers as well as representatives from the voluntary sector, schools and other WAG initiatives. Our monitoring information shows that there are over 250 organisations actively engaged with these networks and over half the schools in Wales have already benefitted from EES supported Continuing Professional Development opportunities.

A huge amount of valuable data and information has been collated during 2004-2009. This has enabled the Programme Management Group to ascertain the impact of EES in terms of numbers of schools, teachers and organisations that have either benefitted from or been engaged with EES to date. The impact has clearly been significant, but if the networks are to really help schools move forward in terms of ESDGC the model needs to be strengthened and the more in depth qualitative issues need to be addressed. The new 5 year plan 2009-2014 takes account of this, particularly by addressing the following recommendations which were a result of the review:

Recommendation 1.

That regional networks are further developed and supported and that they establish links with their respective Consortium.¹

Recommendation 2.

In collaboration with the higher education sector and ITE develop a robust monitoring and evaluation framework integrating both qualitative and quantitative methods that will also add clarity to what is meant by 'quality' ESDGC. The framework should complement any research that may already be taking place or is being planned and will consider:

1.1 putting in place mechanisms that will enable the consistent collection and collation of comparable data for the duration of the project

1.2 including opportunities to examine ESDGC as a whole not just the EES supported activities.

and explore the possibility for:

1.3 incorporating a more in-depth longitudinal study that examines how schools have moved from 'basic' to 'embedded' as outlined in the *Suggested Guidance for Evaluating Progression in ESDGC* (DCELLS 2008 p 45)²

Recommendation 3.

The monitoring and evaluation framework should focus on the quantity and quality of outputs and outcomes. In order to maximise the learning opportunities the framework needs to be developed alongside the communication strategy and both should be in place by January 2010.

Recommendation 4.

An external, independent evaluation is undertaken mid way through the programme (July 2011) that will focus on: the whole programme - the processes it uses to engage educators and other stakeholders; and the sustainability of ESDGC Networks beyond 2014.

In addition the EES in Wales review and the discussions and other information gathering that followed it have informed the development of a new five year direction for the ESDGC Schools Networks, and this

¹ Consortia Cymru is one of the ADEW (Association of Directors of Education in Wales) strategic groups. The Consortia Cymru primarily deals with developing regional collaborative arrangements. Prior to the Trickey Report and the Making the Connections Agenda, Consortia existed within Education in Wales and these have been developed further in the last few years. This sub-group includes North, Central South, South East and South West.

² DCELLS (2008) Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship A Common Understanding for Schools Information Document No: 065/2008. Welsh Assembly Government, Cardiff

one year plan of objectives and activities. In addition to the four review recommendations listed above the following SWOT analysis summarises the key points which the plan builds on and wishes to address over the coming years.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A network of motivated individuals (educators, advisers, inspectors, policy makers, voluntary sector personnel, and others) 2. Collaborative work and networks across authorities (which, in some instances, without EES support would not happen) 3. Networks and partnerships throughout Wales, involving a large number of people and organisations 4. Knowledge and experience/sharing best practice. 5. A clear structure for successful promotion of and support for ESDGC 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Annual planning cycles (for ESDGC Networks)/cumbersome admin 2. Info sharing/partnership working between networks/ESDGC Networks not well developed 3. Need for a longer term strategic approach 4. Fragile model – reliant on a few individuals to coordinate and maintain momentum 5. Not enough finance to pay for support to every school that wants it
Opportunities	Threats
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. WAG policies -ESDGC strategy and the existence of a 'Common Understanding' of ESDGC 2. Commitment from WAG <i>"to intensify (their) support for ESDGC"</i> 3. Integration of ESDGC into the strategic planning of Local Authorities. 4. Information Technology, in particular relationship with the National Grid for Learning 5. Growing involvement in ESDGC from FE/HE/Adult/ Youth/Community education. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Change in political priorities and finances 2. Long term funding availability to the voluntary sector and reduced capacity and closures amongst voluntary sector organisations 3. Retirement or –as a result of restructuring- redeployment of key people in Local Authorities, other government bodies, voluntary agencies 4. ESDGC insufficiently or not embedded as part of Local Authority strategic planning 5. Understanding of ESDGC is still fairly basic and insufficiently embedded in professional practice, development and inspection

2 Long term aims and strategies

Goal

To prepare young people to understand and shape the globalising and interdependent world they will inherit.

Aims

ESDGC Schools Networks aims to:

- support embedding of ESDGC in the curriculum and infuse it throughout the life of the school;
- enable educators to have access to ideas, resources and support and enable them to be proactive in developing the implementation of ESDGC;
- facilitate and contribute to the development of a 'joined up' approach to ESDGC in schools, nationally and regionally.

ESDGC Schools Networks' understanding of ESDGC:

This is based on – but not exclusive to – the description of ESDGC in the 'ESDGC: A Common Understanding for Schools' document³:

³ [http://www.esd-wales.org.uk/english/school_sector/downloads/ESDGC%20common%20\(e\).pdf](http://www.esd-wales.org.uk/english/school_sector/downloads/ESDGC%20common%20(e).pdf)

“ESDGC is about:

- the links between society, economy and environment and between our own lives and those of people throughout the world;
- the needs and rights of both present and future generations;
- the relationships between power, resources and human rights;
- the local and global implications of everything we do and the actions that individuals and organisations can take in response to local and global issues.”

The ‘Common Understanding’ document goes further by saying: “The challenge for schools is to provide opportunities for teachers and learners to consider global issues; make links between what is personal, local, national and global; engage in culturally-diverse experiences; critically evaluate their own values and attitudes; and develop skills that will enable them to challenge injustice, prejudice and discrimination. This is ESDGC: embracing it has the potential to enhance and enrich education.”

It is such an approach that enables the work of teachers in Wales to build, for example, a greater understanding of and engagement with international development issues.

Strategies

In relation to ESDGC in Wales there are 5 common strategies that provide the framework for work in all sectors. These strategies are evident in the WAG’s ESDGC Action Plan and the suite of recently published Common Understanding documents for each sector. It is therefore proposed to apply the same strategies to ESDGC Networks.

A. Commitment and Leadership:

Developing sustainable and sustained support for educators⁴ through effective regional networks

B. Teaching and Learning:

Enabling educators to develop their professional understanding, capabilities and creativity in relation to teaching and learning, subject requirements, school ethos and management of ESDGC by providing awareness raising, training and curriculum development opportunities

C. School Management:

Providing financial support to schools to pilot whole school and cross school ESDGC projects and programmes and to make learning from these available to other schools

D. Partnerships:

Encouraging and enabling collaboration between teachers, their schools and external organisations and initiatives in the development of new work that assists in the development of ESDGC

E. Research and Monitoring:

Developing a body of evidence demonstrating practice in ESDGC, and research into opportunities for improvement and making this available to schools and their partners.

In addition to the above it is proposed to have a sixth cross cutting strategy:

F. Communication:

Ensuring that relevant information is available to enable the ESDGC networks to operate efficiently and effectively

⁴ ‘Educators’ includes (head)teachers, other school managers, education advisers and inspectors, and ITE tutors

3 Relevance to DFID’s Enabling Effective Support initiative

DFID’s Enabling Effective Support initiative aims to bring statutory and voluntary sectors together in joint programmes and work that raise awareness and understanding of global development efforts, “assisting young people to understand and help shape the changing world.”⁵ The content focus of EES bears a close relationship with the intentions of ESDGC – as described in for example the ‘ESDGC: a common understanding for schools’ publication - , while the strategic connection between statutory and voluntary sectors is exemplified in ESDGC Schools Networks management, projects and activities across Wales.

To date the focus of EES in Wales has been on encouraging and supporting the development of policy formulations and guidance documents (at national level), and on the development of structures and processes that give practical support to educators (at regional levels). Over the coming years it is the intention that those structures and processes will be used

- to assist teachers and other educators in developing their professional understanding of and creative responses to ESDGC, including in relation to issues of sustainable development, poverty reduction and global citizenship.

That will not only be done at individual levels but also at institutional levels:

- to assist schools (in particular) to (as the EES initiative requires) “integrate global dimension issues, concepts and approaches in development plans, and in responses to national and local education initiatives and requirements.”

Amongst the challenges, relevant to DFID, that ESDGC Schools Networks will face in doing this are:

- that attention to global development issues – and their relevance to young people - amongst teachers is given a less high profile than attention to environmental issues;
- that interpretations of ‘sustainable development’, of ‘global citizenship’, of ‘development’ and of the incorporation of a global dimension or global learning as an education approach is still very narrow or basic amongst many educators (teachers, advisers and inspectors);
- that interest groups and programmes exist that are active in the education sector endeavouring to promote their own understanding of particular issues to the exclusion of others: helping neither educators nor young people to develop their critical skills and own responses to the issues ESDGC raises.

As this proposal makes clear, ESDGC Schools Networks has the appropriate management structures, strategies and programme framework which will enable it to meet these challenges and the requirements of the EES initiative over the coming years.

We are aware that changes to our proposals may be required as a result of the recent BSD Reviews.

4 Management and staffing

Management of the programme rests with a recently reformed Programme Management Group.⁶ A sub-group of the Welsh Assembly Government’s Advisory Panel on ESDGC, the PMG consists of individuals with an interest in the various ESDGC stakeholder groups: schools, inspectorate, environmental (education) networks, development (education) organisations, and government.

⁵ ‘Enabling Effective Support’, DFID 2003

⁶ Copies of the relevant terms of reference have been forwarded to DFID. Additional copies are available on request.

Operational management of the programme rests with a part-time (0.8 fte) Programme Manager (to be appointed)⁷, whose role is to provide and be responsible for the management, leadership and development of the Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship Schools Networks in Wales. In supporting the administration of and communication about the ESDGC Schools Networks programme of work the Programme Manager will be assisted by a part-time Programme Assistant. A further four (part-time) Regional Coordinators will “lead and support the implementation and development of the ESDGC Schools Networks programme in one of four regions of Wales.”

One of the reasons why staffing is planned to be increased is to give *sustained* and coherent support to teacher networks, schools and local authorities in their development of ESDGC. It addresses one of the weaknesses of the current situation namely the sense that EES in Wales has operated with a “fragile model – reliant on a few individuals to coordinate and maintain momentum” (see SWOT analysis in section 1), i.e. contributors supporting and developing ESDGC as an often relatively minor part of other commitments. WAG also considers that support to date has been insufficiently sustained and structured to be able to meet the challenges that ESDGC now faces, and in response is looking to, for instance, ESDGC Schools Networks to provide this.

The new posts exist primarily “... to enable others to work together – not by introducing an additional level of bureaucracy or by duplicating services. The mainstay of the work to be done should focus on enabling educators to work together in developing their personal understanding of ESDGC in order to affect their professional expertise in teaching and learning. A measure of success – and a key challenge - for each of the posts will be the extent of sustained attention to ESDGC and its development by educators ...”

A formal agreement, on the financial reporting and legal accounting for ESDGC Schools Networks funds, is currently under development between the Networks and Cyfanfyd. Given that the ESDGC Schools Networks is not a legal body in its own right, PMG considered that Cyfanfyd, as a core stakeholder in and contributor to the initiative in Wales, has the required financial capacity and expertise to play this role, but that previous arrangements between the two were inadequate for the future, hence the development of a properly constituted agreement between the two bodies.

5 2009-10 objectives and activities

The following pages provide the main areas of work to be carried out by ESDGC Schools Networks in the coming year. They provide the basis for the development of individual staff and project workplans of educator groups and networks across Wales.

⁷ Until the end of 2009 the role is fulfilled on an acting basis by Colette Pitts, formerly Coordinator of the EES initiative in Wales.

Management, staffing and funding					
This aspect aims to ensure that ESDGC Schools Networks develops, implements and manages its plans and budgets effectively and efficiently					
At the start of the school year ESDGC Schools Networks will have in place <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an Acting Programme Manager (Colette Pitts): responsible to the PMG but directly contracted by DFID • a part-time South East Wales Regional Coordinator • an agreement between PMG and the 'host organisation' Cyfanfyd • financial support from WAG (£50k until 1.4.10 + £10k until 31.8.10) and from South East Wales Local Authorities (£10k until 31.8.10) • financial support from DFID (£266.7k for the period 1.4.09 to 31.8.10) 					
Outcomes	Actions	Success indicators	Timescale	Lead responsibility	Relationship to review recommendations or to SWOT analysis
Appointment of Programme Manager, and three Regional Coordinators	Recruitment	Capable staff appointed	September/October to take up posts by January	Chair of PMG (other PMG members)	Rec 1
Ability to implement long term plans as envisaged	Negotiate with WAG on long term funding from 1.4.10	2010-2014: £160k p.a. contribution by WAG	September to January	Act Progr Mgr (PMG members)	W 1, W3, W4, T2
	Negotiate with DFID on long term funding from 1.9.10	2010-2014: £163k p.a. contribution by DFID ⁸	September to December	Act Prog Mgr (PMG members)	W 1, W3, W4, T2
Effective management support and supervision of staff	Regular one-to-one support, guidance and supervision	Staff find the provided support (and their professional development) effective	Ongoing	In the case of the (Act) Programme Manager: allocated PMG member In the case of other ESDGC staff: the Programme Mgr	Rec 1, W4

Strategy A: Commitment and Leadership:					
Developing sustainable and sustained support for educators through effective regional networks					
Outcomes	Actions	Success indicators	Timescale	Lead responsibility (and main support)	Relationship to review recommendations or to SWOT analysis
Effective and efficient regional networks are able to develop and implement plans that meet the strategic objective, and are efficiently able to report on the outcomes and learning from their work	Develop regional plans. Develop and agree terms of reference for regional groups and projects, including reporting procedures	Regional plans and reporting procedures in place	By January 2010. Implementation of plans from January 10	Act Prog Mgr (regional networks) Regional Coordinators (regional network partners, incl. LAs and voluntary organisations)	Rec 1, S1, S2, S3
Involvement of Local Authorities in – and commitment to – the work of regional networks is increased	Engage with Local Authorities and their regional consortia	All LAs are represented on the regional networks by their advisory services (advisor/advisory teacher)	By Sept 10	Act Prog Mgr/Regional Coordinators (regional networks, ADEW ⁹)	Rec 1, S1, S2, S3, O1, O2
	Joint project in SE Wales LAs to pilot cross LA and cross departmental support for ESDGC in schools	Learning informs future developments (incl. at WAG level and at work of LA consortia across Wales)	Sept 09 – Aug 10 (application of learning from Sept 10 onwards)	Regional Coordinator SEW ((Act) Prog Mgr, SEW Consortium)	Rec 1, Rec 2, W3, W3, O3, O2, T4

⁹ Association of Directors of Education in Wales

Strategy B: Teaching and Learning: Educators develop their professional understanding, capabilities and creativity in respect of ESDGC					
Outcomes	Actions	Success indicators	Timescale	Lead responsibility (and main support)	Relationship to review recommendations or to SWOT analysis
Effective projects are developed and implemented	local/area networks each with their planned programme of work for the spring term	Time-bound, outcome focussed projects successfully support educators and their students to think more critically, feel empowered and/or motivated to accept more responsibility in different local-global sust devt aspects of their lives.	Autumn term 09 for implementation from Jan 10	Regional network partners (Act Prog Mgr)	W2, S3, S2, Rec 3
Increased profile of ESDGC Networks and participation of educators in the work of regional networks	local/area networks each with their planned programme of work for the Autumn term	Positive feedback from participants on regional network events (such as INSET and networking meetings)	Autumn term 09	Regional network partners (Act Prog Mgr)	W2, S3, S2
Educators are aware of the requirements of ESDGC in the revised curriculum and develop creative responses to these	Regional networks facilitate training and workshop events	At least 30% of participants who attended an event implement actions they suggested	From Jan 10	Regional coordinators (regional network partners)	W2, S4, S2
Educators are aware of what 'progression' in ESDGC might look like and are able to suggest actions to increase ESDGC being better embedded in their curriculum area, school, institution or authority	Using the 'Common Understanding' as a starting point regional networks provide workshops and inset events. Schools will be encouraged to complete the ESDGC audit.	Feedback from participants suggests increased awareness, understanding and skills in teaching and learning on and in sustainable development and on and in global citizenship	From Jan 10	Regional coordinators (regional network partners)	T5, Rec 3

Educators (and other stakeholders) have the opportunity to exchange experiences, learn from each other and collaborate in joint work	Develop educator + partner organisations working groups and opportunities for shared learning	Working groups are in existence in all regions. Feedback from participants indicates positive experiences and increases in cross-school exchange and collaboration.	From Sept 09 where working groups already exist. New working groups to start in all regions from Jan 10	Act Prog Mgr/Regional Coordinators (network partners, incl. schools)	W2, T5
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Strategy C: School Management					
Financial support to schools to pilot whole school and cross school ESDGC projects and programmes					
Outcomes	Actions	Success indicators	Timescale	Lead responsibility (and main support)	Relationship to review recommendations or to SWOT analysis
Schools are aware of the financial support available to enable them to address ESDGC across the school	Each region to offer (a limited number of) grants for pilot projects	Evidence of action research applied by the schools in seeking progress in curriculum organisation, teaching and learning practice, ethos and school policies. Dissemination of learning to other schools.	From January 10	Criteria: Act Prog Mgr and PMG Implementation: Regional Coordinators (regional network partners, schools)	W5

Strategy D: Partnerships					
collaboration between teachers, their schools and external organisations and initiatives in the development of new work in support of ESDGC					
Outcomes	Actions	Success indicators	Timescale	Lead responsibility (and main support)	Relationship to review recommendations or to SWOT analysis
Successful collaboration between ESDGC Schools Networks and other initiatives/ organisations	Explore opportunities for joint projects with other networks (for instance WIDE ¹⁰ , ADEW and Cyfanfyd) in particular in relation to learning as sustainable development ¹¹	Projects that extend, challenge and develop existing understanding of ESDGC	From Jan 09	Prog Mgr/ Regional Coordinators (partner organisations)	S1, W3
Influence on national strategy documents and action plans of statutory bodies	Collaboration between ESDGC Schools Networks, its partners and participants	Experience of ESDGC partners and participants is reflected in WAG and other gvt documents	From Sept 09	(Act) Prog Mgr (regional networks)	T1, T4, W3
Partners, participants and other stakeholders in the ESDGC Schools Networks exchange and communicate about issues, experiences that are pertinent to ESDGC and use these to develop their own practice	Investigate and set up a 'community of practice approach as part of ESDGC's partnership strategy	Research indicates that such a community of practice approach is likely to succeed	From Jan '10 to be implemented from Sept '10	Prog Mgr, Regional networks	W2, Rec3

¹⁰ Wales International Dimension in Education: a British Council managed education and training network

¹¹ See for a description for example: Paul Vare & William Scott: <http://www.dea.org.uk/resources/item.asp?d=884>

Strategy E: Research and Monitoring					
Evidence is collected and made available that demonstrates practice in ESDGC, and research into opportunities for improvement is carried out					
Outcomes	Actions	Success indicators	Timescale	Lead responsibility (and main support)	Relationship to review recommendations or to SWOT analysis
Standard format for monitoring and gathering of feedback on ESDGC sponsored events	Development of an M&E framework	Provides effective information for the efficient management of the programme to the Programme Manager and to PMG	By Jan 10	Development: Act Prog Mgr (PMG) Implementation: Regional Coordinators (event facilitators)	Rec 3, O1, O5
Regular analyses of programme processes and effectiveness in achieving objectives mentioned under A, B, C, D, F	Development of reporting process and timetable for consideration by PMG	PMG (and Programme Manager) apply lessons learned to development of future work. New external opportunities are taken on board, weaknesses are addressed and threats are averted where possible	From Oct 09	Development: Act Progr Mgr (PMG member) Implementation: Progr Mgr and Chair of PMG	Rec 2, Rec 3, W2, T5
Case studies of school based practice are collected, collated, analysed and disseminated where relevant	Develop system for collection, analysis and dissemination	Case studies inform future practice in ESDGC Schools Networks and elsewhere.	From Jan 10	Development: Act Progr Mgr (regional networks) Implementation: Regional Coordinators	Rec2, W2
Evidence of how ESDGC Schools Networks activities and outputs effect educators' professional understanding and skills		Evidence informs future development of ESDGC Schools Networks (and others') strategies, activities and outputs	From Jan 10	(Act) Progr Mgr (HE sector)	Rec 2

Strategy F: Communications: relevant information is available to enable the ESDGC Schools Networks to operate efficiently and effectively					
Outcomes	Actions	Success indicators	Timescale	Lead responsibility (and main support)	Relationship to review recommendations or to SWOT analysis
Clear rationale and process for collection and dissemination of information	Information and communications strategy to be developed and implemented	Access to up to date ESDGC Schools Networks information is available by internet	From the autumn term 09	(Act) Prog Mgr /Prog Assistant (Regional Coordinators/regional networks)	Rec2, Rec 3, W1, W2,
Information relevant to educators from ESDGC Schools Networks is available at one site	Develop ESDGC micro-site as part of the NGfL	Successful partnership with NGfL. Site traffic shows site is of use and value	From the autumn term 09	Act Progr Mgr/ Programme Assistant	O5, O4

6 Sustainability of work to be done and further development

EES has already made a significant contribution to educational policy in relation to ESDGC: contributing to both the WAG's action planning on ESDGC and to the development of the 'Common Understanding'. The regional Networks have proved to be successful and are likely to be integral to any of the WAG's future plans to support ESDGC. EES will continue to work closely with the WAG and increasingly with the LAs to ensure that this support is maintained once EES completes this final phase.

ESDGC is now an integral part of education in Wales. All of the organisations (voluntary, private, Welsh Assembly sponsored initiatives and professional associations) who have contributed to EES, and most importantly the schools that we have reached, will continue to carry forward and further develop what has been started.

A review will be undertaken during 2011 to assess progress and impact and act on any changes that may be necessary. That review will address Recommendation 4 (see section 1) in particular but also build on Recommendations 2 and 3. It will also investigate the effectiveness and efficiency of processes used by ESDGC Schools Networks.

A significant aspect of the new programme is the need to enable educators themselves to embed ESDGC concerns, understanding and approaches in their professional practice as a matter of course. As mentioned elsewhere, the extent to which the programme is able to do this will considerably inform its success.

7 Monitoring and evaluation

Details of the intended M&E framework and system are mentioned in section 1 and in section 5 (Strategy E: Research and monitoring). Intended actions will:

- assist staff and network partners to assess progress

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- assist PMG in assessing the value of the strategies employed, and their results for teaching and learning amongst educators and students
 - inform stakeholders in ESDGC of the value of the programme
 - inform the future development of the programme

Partly using systems already in existence, the emphasis during 2009-10 will be on the further development and implementation of a monitoring and evaluation system. Discussions have already started with Swansea IoE on the design of a robust and informative system of collecting relevant evidence from teachers and pupils. (Outside of the ESDGC Schools Networks Programme Swansea IoE is leading a consortium of HE ITE institutions in Wales in the design of relevant evaluation systems.) We are aware of DFID's interest in obtaining more robust evidence of achievement and impact of the EES initiative and the evaluation plan will fully address that interest too.

8 Assumptions and risks

The threats identified in the SWOT analysis (section 1) highlight many of the external risks that may have an internal impact on the programme, including its feasibility. Early actions identified in this year plan aim to reduce or indeed take away the negative effects which these threats may cause on the envisaged programme of work.

A major assumption of this plan is that apart from funding from DFID, the Welsh Assembly Government will match DFID's contribution from April next year (i.e. at a level of £160k p.a. each). If this assumption is incorrect there will be a shortfall of *up to* £66k in the budget as shown. The response from ESDGC Schools Networks will be a reduction in regional activities (during the spring and summer terms of 2010), and a reconfiguration of staffing levels. Information from within WAG suggests, however, that this unlikely (footnote: see for example 'World Class Wales: international education strategic framework', Welsh Assembly Government, 2009. WAG already describes itself as providing matched funding to DFID for the EES work). Nevertheless, during 2009-10 ESDGC Schools Networks will only make staffing appointments which will potentially come to an end in August 2010.

Other assumptions underpinning the programme are that externally the identified opportunities will continue to exist and that this programme will be able to positively respond to them through its processes and structures.

Internally, risks hinge significantly on the programme's ability to continue to engage quality staff: both those employed by ESDGC Schools Networks, and those employed by collaborating authorities, agencies and organisations. As with the external assumptions and risks that exist, the strategic focus of the management board should assist in ensuring that quality staff will be available – and will be supervised effectively - to implement and further develop this programme.