



## **Biology Support Service - A Model of CPD that Promotes the Development and Use of New Technologies in Biology Teaching**

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### **Abstract**

In the Republic of Ireland the Biology Support Service provides a range of supports to teachers of Leaving Certificate Biology. The Leaving Certificate is the terminal examination at second level and biology is offered at two levels and in two languages – Irish and English. This paper will describe the structure and evolution of the support service, the range of materials produced, the supports provided and the benefits to teachers and students. The support service consists of part time Associates and Local Facilitators who are primarily serving teachers. Facilitators and Associates are drawn from across the country. The full team meets periodically and in-service training is provided on a regional basis by teachers from that area. Much of the work is done in teachers' own time.

This team has produced materials and training which empower teachers across the country to use diverse teaching techniques and exploit new technologies such as interactive white boards and iPads. The range of materials produced will be described - the most tangible product being a DVD with support materials relevant to the Leaving Certificate Biology course. This is essentially a "one stop shop" for the biology teacher. Such DVDs are now being produced for other using a similar structure of associates and facilitators. Details of the development of inservice course content and materials in Weebly, quizlets, tarsias etc will be given. The potential impact of on-going changes to funding on this model of CPD will be discussed.