



Action Research for School Improvement

Professional Learning Board integrated self-study professional development courses are conveniently available 24 x 7 to teacher-learners. Each self-study PD course includes:

- Course content delivered in an interactive online textbook,
- Practical suggestions that can be implemented immediately,
- Quiz
- Printable certificate of completion
- Lifetime access



“Have you wondered how you can bring about change or improvement in certain educational issues that are close to your heart? Have you also sometimes wished to find solutions to real everyday problems you have encountered in your teaching practice?”

Using research as a tool to bring about change is a key feature of action research. Action research is used in real educational situations, focusing on solving real problems in education, to bring about change quickly and holistically.

Research often conjures up a picture in people’s minds of academics working in isolation for years proving theories. To make a distinction from academic research, those involved in action research participate in ongoing testing and monitoring of improvements in their practice. This course provides a framework for teachers to use action research as a means to change or improve their practice.

Another important aspect that the course introduces is intellectual collaboration among teachers. This means working together to identify issues in their teaching context and developing processes for improvement. Action research facilitates the necessary context to help build a strong professional learning community and can be used either as a school improvement tool or as an individual professional development option.

Standards:

This course aligns to the INTASC Standards including Learning Environments, Content Knowledge, Application of Content, Planning for Instruction and Instructional Strategies.

It also aligns to the McRel Teacher Evaluation Standards including Teacher Leadership, Teachers Know Content, Teachers Facilitate Learning and Teachers Analyze and Reflect.



Course Outline:

Lesson 1: Introducing Action Research

Understanding action research by reviewing key definitions and its history

What are the key features of action research

Identifying the benefits of action research in the context of education

Exploring the teacher's role in action research

Considering the various types of action research

Lesson 2: Focus Area

How to select the right area of focus for the action research project

Looking at possible focus areas in education

Lesson 3: Key Pre-planning Questions

Questions to ask yourself before getting started

Developing the research agenda

Identifying the project team that will work with you on the project

Defining the various types of data that are available and data collection techniques

Explaining how to use a Structured Action Research Model

Identifying the right sample for your research

How to analyze data, draw conclusions, and sharing findings

Lesson 4: Data Collection Phases

How to use an Action Research Matrix as a guide to identify the student learning goal

The process of collecting data – keeping a checklist in mind

How to organize & display data in a way that's easy to retrieve and analyze

Analyzing and interpreting data

Using the help of professional literature in your research project

Arriving at short and long-term plans

A reminder on the ethics of practicing action research