

Fahy, John, 1995, *Professional Development through Appraisal*

DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

In this study, the professional development of teachers is presented as being of major importance if the problems within Irish education are to be addressed. The changes deemed necessary within the system are focused on and the role of the teaching profession is examined, in relation to those changes. An evaluation of existing provisions for a professional enhancement takes place. Appraisal is presented as an opportunity for change and development and as a mechanism suitable for the generation of growth and renewal. An analysis is made of the purposes, criteria and systems of appraisal, with a view to establishing a system suitable in an Irish context.

The benefits of an Action Research appraisal system are evaluated and presented as offering professional growth. The values of action research and its ability to provide increased participation, collaboration, autonomy and enhanced professionalism, are examined. The conclusion argues for an appraisal system designed to generate professional growth and also satisfy the concerns of those seeking increased accountability. The proposed system acknowledges the existing demands within the profession for increased autonomy but it is also designed to accommodate the changes deemed necessary by recent reports on Irish education.