

# Measuring Success

newsletter

Welcome to the first edition of the Measuring Success newsletter. It is produced by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC), the Department for Education and Skills (DfES), the Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI) and the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) to keep you up to date with the development of new success measures. These are key components of *Success for All* Theme 4, 'Developing a Framework for Quality and Success'.

For this to happen, strengths and weaknesses in the sector need to be identified, which in turn requires fair and accurate performance measurements of education and training providers.

This newsletter will appear every two months until September 2005 to coincide with continuing work on New Measures of Success.

## ***Do you want to know more about New Measures of Success?***

*Keep yourself up to date on the development and the future of the measures.*

*Visit [www.successforall.gov.uk](http://www.successforall.gov.uk) and choose Theme 4 and then New Measures of Success.*

It will be sent with the *Success for All* newsletter to those organisations affected by the new measures. These include further education colleges, schools with sixth forms, adult, community and work based learning providers, and higher education institutions delivering further education. National representative bodies with an interest in the learning and skills sector will also receive a copy. An electronic version will be available at [www.successforall.gov.uk](http://www.successforall.gov.uk)

An introduction to the New Measures of Success and the priorities identified for 2004/05 was produced in June 2004.

Comments or enquiries relating to the measures are welcomed and should be sent to: [successforall@lsc.gov.uk](mailto:successforall@lsc.gov.uk)

## Value Added and Distance Travelled measures

Value Added and Distance Travelled measure how much progress individual learners have made by looking at their prior educational attainment. These measures are intended to help institutions assess and then improve their teaching, learning and quality management. They should also help fair comparisons of institutional performance across the learning and skills sector to be made.

Development of these measures is being undertaken jointly by the LSC, DfES, Ofsted and the ALI. They are being advised by a large group of stakeholders, who are represented on technical and policy advisory groups.

Work is taking place to develop a national system to measure the success of learners aged 16-19 years. This is reported below, along with developments in the work examining the feasibility of measuring adult Distance Travelled.

### Value Added

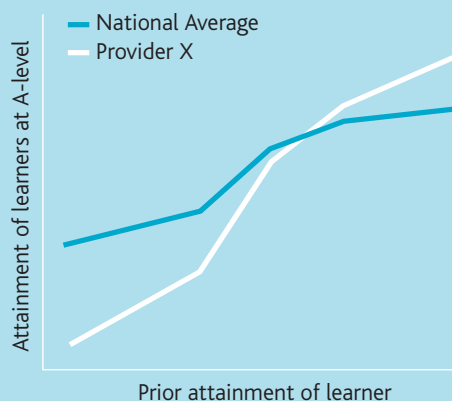
Major progress has been made in the development of a Value Added model for 16-19 year olds on Level 3 graded qualifications. The model has been agreed by the Value Added and Distance Travelled Policy Group and will produce:

- Value Added calculations for individual learners;
- a method of setting targets for current and future learners;
- the ability to compare performance across subject areas and between teaching groups in the same subject;
- detailed, Value Added results that allow learning and skills providers to compare the performance of students of different ages and genders; and
- an overall headline figure for an institution that indicates whether its performance is above, below or at the national average.

A number of learning and skills providers will be consulted and will then test the model. This will take place from September 2004 to March 2005. It will give providers an opportunity to let

**Figure 1**

Performance of Provider X at A-level English for learners with different prior attainments



**Figure 2**

Performance by Area of Learning in a work based learning provider

### Work based learning provider X

TSC Sector:	FA score	AA score
Agriculture	0.21	2.02
Business Administration	3.05	<b>1.23</b>
Construction	<b>1.13</b>	<b>3.43</b>
Hospitality	<b>-2.65</b>	–
Management and Professional	–	-0.54
Retailing and Customer Services	0.15	–
Transportation	-2.32	0.12

FA Foundation Apprenticeship  
AA Advanced Apprenticeship

us know the best ways in which the model can be used to enhance their performance. The process will also inform the work in 2005 that will create materials to aid staff development.

Figure 1 shows the kind of results that will help learning and skills providers calculate Value Added performance. Providers will be able to see clearly how their results compare to the national average. They will also be able to see how these can vary depending on the prior attainment of the learners involved. This example compares the Value Added scores in A-level English for Provider X with national results. The graph suggests that Provider X is performing relatively well when compared with the national average for learners with higher prior attainment. However, Provider X is below the national average for learners who start the course with lower prior attainment.

### Distance Travelled for 16-19 year olds

The Distance Travelled measure for 16-19 year olds is likely to work on similar lines to that described for Value Added. However, this measure will apply to qualifications at all levels being taken by this age group. This makes it necessary to take into account the full range of qualifications used for both prior attainment (the 'input' measures) and for achievement (the 'output' measures). For instance, any method of representing entry and pre-entry level qualifications must be reliable enough to ensure that the Distance Travelled measure will apply fairly to learners making relatively small but significant amounts of progress.

Figure 2 demonstrates how reporting performance by Area of Learning enables a

learning and skills provider to highlight whether their Distance Travelled score was at, below or above the national average for that area. A positive Distance Travelled score would indicate performance above the national average and a negative Distance Travelled score would show performance below. In this example of a work based learning provider, bold figures indicate statistically significant scores. They show that the provider is performing close to the national average in Retailing and Customer Services, Agriculture, Management and Transportation. Performance is significantly below average in Hospitality, but above average for Advanced Apprenticeships in Business Administration and in Construction.

A model for Distance Travelled will be agreed in the next few weeks. Some providers involved in the testing described above will also be looking at this model.

### Distance Travelled for adult learners

Calculating Distance Travelled for adult learners is more problematic. Following the consultation on New Measures of Success, the LSC will examine the feasibility of calculating this, starting with:

- how the Recognising and Recording Progress and Achievement (RARPA) process standards might be applied more generally for adult learners; and
- whether there is a link between learner outcomes and geographic and/or demographic factors.

Further progress on all these areas will be reported in the next Measuring Success newsletter.

## Qualification Success measures

The Qualification Success work is a priority for the overall New Measures project. At the moment, different methods are used to calculate success rates in further education and completion rates in work based learning provision. This makes it impossible to make a fair or realistic comparison of the effectiveness of further education with that of work based learning provision.

The challenge here, is to come up with ways of measuring Qualification Success for work based learning that seems fair to both further education and work based learning providers, and which provides a more level playing field. An initial agreement has been made with the Association of Learning Providers (ALP) that the method for categorising learners will be based on 'learning aim expected end date'. This represents a shift from the current method, which is based on 'learners who have left training'. This change brings this part of the work based learning calculation into line with methods used by the further education sector. The new measure of Qualification Success aims to smooth out other differences between the two systems. This will not only increase consistency but will also provide a more reliable way to measure the success of work based learning provision.

The ALP continues to help the LSC develop Qualification Success measures, particularly through its membership of an advisory group that also includes work based learning providers and other stakeholders. An agreement has already been secured to detail the separate success rates for the underlying elements of Apprenticeships, such as the NVQ, technical certificates and key skills.

The key to the success of the new measure is securing agreement on the definitions to be used for the following issues:

- when to record a learner as having started a course;
- when to record a learner as having transferred to another learning aim;
- how to derive an 'expected end date'; and
- what criteria to use to determine success, retention and achievement.

In addition to support from the ALP, the initial proposals have been met with early encouragement from the ALI and other stakeholders, including the LSC, DfES and Ofsted. All this will help ensure that the new measure of Qualification Success is fair and reliable, and can be understood and accepted across the sector.

Technical development of the new measure of Qualification Success is scheduled to be completed by the end of 2004. In the first half of 2005, detailed figures will be sent to all learning and skills providers, along with an explanation of the new measure. This will precede implementation of the plans which will happen in 2005/06.

Future newsletters will include updates on the other New Measures of Success, particularly the other two key priorities of employer engagement and value for money, and how in all our work we will seek to minimise bureaucracy.

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